



Vancouver's Best Entertainment

As proud Vancouverites we are all aware that our fast-growing city is finally becoming a key concert destination for many worldrenowned performers. Although as “Hollywood North” we have long been used to seeing some of the biggest acts from the silver screen around our neighbourhoods, we haven’t always been considered a “destination” city when it comes to music. That’s all starting to change these days, though, and now we’re starting to see the musical heavyweights roll through Vancouver regularly! Another big source of local pride, however, is that British Columbia has begun to produce some of these very acts, and is well on its way to producing many more. On the following pages, we highlight six local must-see acts that are on their way up.



Famous Players Band The Ultimate Dance Party Band

Famous Players Band is “the king of live entertainment” on the West Coast. Based in Vancouver, the band has been performing locally for 15 years, and now word is beginning to spread across Canada and the U.S. Comprised of some of the best talent Canada has to offer, Famous Players Band is renowned for their high energy, musical prowess, and dynamic stage presence. They have performed over 2,000 events worldwide, including events for Fortune 500 companies, weddings, and private parties.

Famous Players Band started when bandleader Kelly Becker was approached by Vance Campbell, formally the GM of Granville Entertainment, to put a house band together for their new nightclub venture. The theme of the club was to be a take-off of Ricky Ricardo’s Cuban nightclub called Babalu as seen in the I Love Lucy Show. At the time, there were no smoking bylaws in place, and cigars were the “in” thing. Hence, the band was appropriately named The Smoking Section. One of the stipulations of being the Babalu house band was that the band name would always stay with the club should the band decide they wanted to move on, however, and that’s what happened. After about four years of performing three nights a week, a new “no smoking” municipal by-law was put into place that would inevitably lead to the demise of the club.

A few years later, another request to put a house band together came from legendary nightclub owner Nick Kerosyotis (Luv Affair, Celebrities, Graceland, etc.) for his newly-renovated Plaza Club on Granville St. One of the band members suggested the name “Famous Players Band” to commemorate the fact the venue had originally been a movie theatre, and the name has stuck ever since. Famous Players Band has evolved over the years into the ultimate dance party band, and is now highly sought after for functions such as corporate events, weddings and parties. And although the band has the reputation for being corporate entertainers, it has also developed a public cult-following as house band for the Commodore Ballroom on New Year’s Eve. This year will be the band’s seventh consecutive sold-out year for what is known to be the “hottest ticket in town” on New Year’s.

Recently, Famous Players Band were featured performers at GM Place where thousands of event planners and tourism industry types gathered for an Olympic “kick-off” celebration hosted by Tourism BC. The band took this opportunity to reveal its newest venture called FP “Epic”, featuring an 18-piece suite of musicians and dancers, complete with full choreography and multiple costume changes. The reviews have been outstanding, and the compliments are still coming in weeks after the event.

With the Olympics quickly approaching, Famous Players Band is already getting booked up. They will be featured entertainment for numerous events to be held at the Vancouver Trade and Convention Centre, slated to open in the fall of ‘09—the perfect venue to showcase “Famous Players Epic.” So if you are planning a function and looking for a group that can cater to all demographics with flexibility and professionalism, then there’s only one band to call. Famous Players— Epic or regular-strength—will entertain you with a highenergy party that will make you want to get up and dance!

—ISHRA SHARIF, Vancouver View July 2008 Issue