

MUSIC

Fabled Palomino Club to reopen — just for one night — for an October benefit concert



Astrid Young, Neil Young's sister, was photographed in 1995 in front of the marquee at the Palomino Club in North Hollywood, which closed that year. (Francine Orr / Los Angeles Times)

BY RANDY LEWIS

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The venerable Palomino Club in North Hollywood, once revered as the country music capital of the West, will reopen for one night for an Oct. 8 benefit concert featuring several musicians who frequently played there decades ago.

Singer-songwriters Jim Lauderdale, Rosie Flores, James Intveld and longtime Barn Dance host Ronnie Mack are slated to appear at the show benefiting the

Valley Relics Museum in Chatsworth, which is moving to a new location at the Van Nuys Airport. The event also is timed as a salute to the Palomino's impending 70th anniversary, according to Billboard.

Along with the music, the night will feature an exhibit and auction of donated items related to the Palomino's run on Lankershim Boulevard from 1949 until it closed in 1995, the majority of that span under the ownership of brothers Bill and Tommy Thomas. Since 1995, the building has been used as a banquet hall.

For its 46 years, the club hosted virtually every great name in country music as well as rock and folk figures, from Johnny Cash, Willie Nelson, Waylon Jennings, Jerry Lee Lewis and Emmylou Harris to L.A.-based roots musicians including Linda Ronstadt, Dwight Yoakam, Lone Justice, and Rank and File.

"RAF played there with Lone Justice opening," the band's co-founder, Chip Kinman, told The Times on Wednesday. "Good gig, [we] encored with [Velvet Underground's] 'Sweet Jane' and it kinda freaked out the alt-country hardcore. It was the '80s after all."

Clint Eastwood filmed portions of two movies, "Every Which Way But Loose" and "Any Which Way You Can," at the club.

Speaking to Billboard, Intveld said, "The Palomino was the most important music venue for country music after the Ryman Auditorium [in Nashville]. Country music stars from Buck Owens to Merle Haggard and Gram Parsons to Dwight Yoakam recognized the difference in the freedom, lifestyle and the California upbeat sound that originated out here where the Palomino was its headquarters."

The benefit is being sponsored by Rebelle Road, a local female-run production company focused on promoting gender equity at concerts and festivals and supporting and strengthening California's country community.

"There are so many legacy and new country artists who consider California home and are receiving national attention again, so the timing is right to honor and celebrate the strong country community that exists here," Rebelle co-founder Karen Rappaport McHugh told Billboard.