

Historic Hemet Theatre

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JAMES ELLIOTT BUILDS TRIBUTE MANIA SUCCESS AT HHT

By Emily Rand

Five years ago James Elliott was introduced to the Bryan Carrier and Historic Hemet Theater (HHT). And as with so many others, James fell under the spell of this charming venue and its quick-witted programming director.

As a music executive turned booking agent, he jumped at the chance to help the theater find the right combination of shows to draw the local audience and build a successful concert business.

“I met Bryan and his wife Susan and wanted to do everything I could to help them and see the theater succeed,” Elliott confided. He worked closely with Bryan to create and then finely tune what we now know as the Tribute Mania Concert Series.

“It is what the audiences like, not our opinion of what they like,” Elliott said, explaining the process.

James Elliott loves working in the music business. And for over 20 years that is exactly what he has done. Beginning his career as a music executive with Warner Bros, he moved to MCA Records. In both roles he decided which bands the companies signed. His experience gave him insight into which bands would create a good following allowing for commercial success. As Elliott explained, “I find the bands.” As Senior VP of Gasoline Alley, he signed Sublime with then lead singer, Bradley Nowell--just before his untimely death.

This business experience served him well as he made his way into the booking industry with his company, James Elliott Entertainment. He arranges bands for more than a dozen venues, including San Manuel Casino, Old Town Theater, Coach House, Fantasy Springs, and House of Blues.

Back in his days as a music executive, he did not really look at tribute bands. He changed direction when a friend introduced him to Led Zep (tribute to Led Zeppelin) and he visualized the next step in his career. “There are many tribute bands out there, but quality tribute bands are big business,” he explained. In 2005 he founded his own company and signed his first tribute band, Led Zep.

Elliot grew is company by signing quality bands. And it continues to create business



SATURDAY'S TRIBUTE TO ELTON JOHN IS THE LATEST TRIBUTE MANIA SUCCESS

success for both his bands and the venues he supports. “I book about 100 dates a month right now for the tribute bands I represent,” he said. Despite Covid restrictions he managed to maintain his business, which is now moving rapidly once again.

In addition to ensuring the continued success of Tribute Mania, Elliott also provides professional sound technicians for the shows at HHT. He is just the man to help HHT continue their success for many years to come.

The remaining shows in the 2021 Tribute Mania Concert Season are Tribute to Creedence Clearwater Revival, featuring Brad Ford and Fortunate Son (Jul 10), Tribute to Abba, with Abba Fab (Jul 24), Tribute to Santana, with Smooth Sounds of Santana (Aug 7), Tribute to Tina Turner, featuring Debby Holiday (Aug 14), Tribute to Neil Diamond, with Hot August Night (Aug 21), Tribute to Led Zeppelin, with Led Zepagain (Sept 4), Tribute to Bob Seger, with Turn the Page (Sept 18), Tribute to Foreigner featuring 4NR (Oct 2), Tribute to The Beatles, with Hard Day’s Night (Oct 16), and Tribute to Fleetwood Mac with Mirage (Oct 23).

Tickets for Tribute Mania are \$25, general admission. Showtime is 7:00 pm, with doors open at 6:15 pm.

Information on all theatre events is available at www.HistoricHemetTheatre.com or by calling the ticket office, (951) 658-5950. You can subscribe to the HHT email blast by enrolling on the website.

Event tickets are available at the theatre Box Office (Monday thru Friday 11 am to 5pm) or online at www.PurplePass.com. Tickets are also available at the Downtown Deli, 113 N Harvard St and the Harvard Street Music Exchange, 134 S Harvard St.