

Entertainment Plus

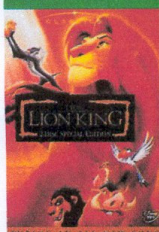
22.10.2003



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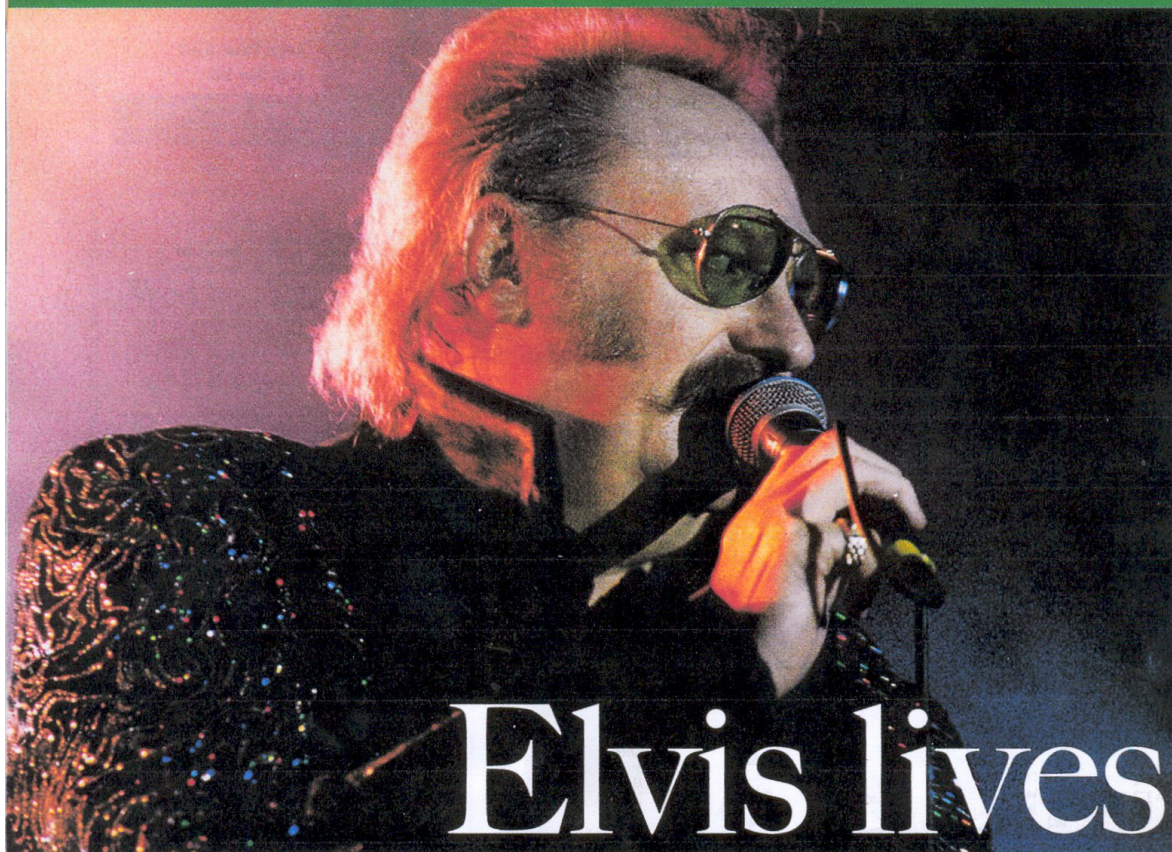


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Elvis lives

The King of Rock 'n' Roll may be dead, but his music lives on. In a tribute to Elvis Presley, Ty Tender, who sings just like the King, will be in Dubai to present a night of nostalgia
By Mubashera Asgher

Not everyone has a gift. And not all gifted people act on it. But, not Ty Tender. Looking at him might not ring any bells, but the moment he starts crooning old favourites such as *Are You Lonesome Tonight?*, *Blue Suede Shoes* and *Love Me Tender*, there can be no mistake. Tender has the voice of the King of Rock 'n' Roll. Elvis Presley.

Growing up in a post-Elvis world, filled with impersonators, how does Ty Tender react to being labelled as one?

"No! No! No! There is no way I can accept people saying that! There is only one Elvis. No one can be like him. I'm not Elvis, and I wouldn't dare insult a legend of that calibre by joining the ranks of those who copy him.

"I am Ty Tender. A man who has grown up admiring Elvis. He is my idol. My inspiration. His voice, his feelings, his passion for his work... I pay tribute to all that when I sing his music. But to impersonate him would be a crime.

The first time

"I started my first band at 16. I was in

love with Rock 'n' Roll. Three years later, I heard my first Elvis record on AFM Munich. Mind you, living in Germany, in those days, we didn't have access to American radio stations. The moment I heard Elvis, I knew I wanted my band to cover his music. As it turned out, my friends were amazed when I started singing. They couldn't believe how much like Elvis I sounded. Especially on slow songs such as *Are You Lonesome Tonight?*

Time stands still...

"One of the most upsetting moments in my career came in 1977. I was on holiday in Hungary and the car radio was on. All of a sudden the announcer said, 'Well ladies and gentlemen, remember Elvis Presley' and he let it hang. I was in shock I didn't realise Elvis was dead. I mean how could he be? He was one of the greatest men in the world!

"The tears in my eyes wouldn't go away. I just kept thinking of his voice, his persona...

The inspiration

"And that's why I can't - I won't - imitate Elvis Presley. I've seen and read about people from all over the world who change their hairstyles, get plastic surgery done to their face and go through all sorts of things to try and copy Elvis. That's not right. Elvis is Elvis. You, me, none of us can ever be him.

"But, we can remember him, honour him, pay tribute to him... That's what I do with my music. I'm honouring a man even time can't forget. When I'm on stage, I'm not copying anyone, I'm singing about how I feel, but through his music.

"I don't stand in front of the mirror and copy Elvis' moves. That's foolish. That's for imitators, impersonators... That's being stupid. My heart loves Elvis, I feel great joy when I sing his music. I would never dare to 'be' him!

"I believe that the younger generation today shouldn't be denied great music and this is my way of making the music of the '50s immortal.

Musical history

I've released 11 albums so far and am currently working on a double CD, *Back To The Roots: The Very Best Of My Early Years*. My albums are a mix of my favourite music, Elvis Presley - of course - Chuck Berry, Bill Haley, Eddie Cochran and some of my own music, too.

Change of name

"Here's something I should have said earlier. My name isn't Ty Tender. That's only my stage name. My real name is Freitag Weiler.

"I'm not ashamed of my name, but if you want to sell Rock 'n' roll, or most kinds of music for that matter, a name like Weiler is a liability. When I struck my first record deal in 1977, the company told me I had a beautiful, tender voice. For

Ty Tender, the voice of Elvis Presley

"We can remember him, honour him, pay tribute to him... That's what I do with my music. I'm honouring a man even time can't forget"

lack of a better word, Tender stuck. It was just a matter of finding the right first name. Eventually we settled on Ty, short for Tyrone. The two names jelled well together. And that's how people have known me ever since.

The Dubai concert

"It's hard to believe that I've never been to Dubai. Not even for a personal visit. But I am looking forward to it. I'm sure the show in Dubai will bring back fond memories for many. I'm coming with an entire orchestra, backing singers, the works.

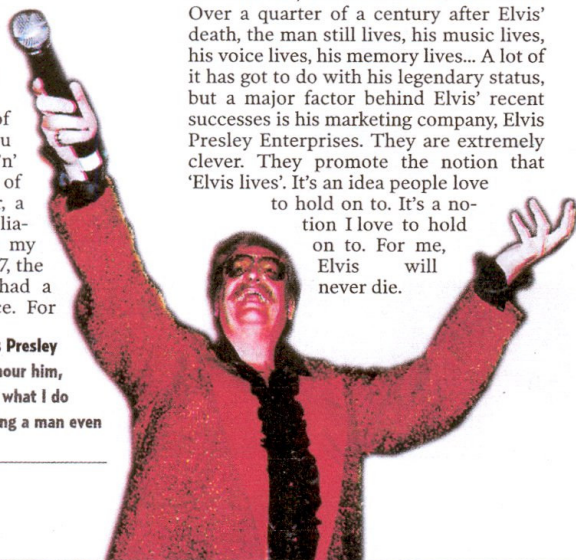
"I'd like to set the stage on fire. Depending on audience reactions, I might even add a few non-Elvis songs to the set. I would love to perform numbers from Elvis' era, but not necessarily by Elvis. The song *Rock Around The Clock* by Bill Haley And The Comets is a good example.

There is only one Elvis. No one can be like him. I'm not Elvis. I am Ty Tender. A man who has grown up admiring Elvis. He is my idol

"For Elvis fans, I'll be doing most of his greatest tracks (to do all would require more than one night) such as *It's Now Or Never*, *Teddy Bear*, *Heartbreak Hotel*, *That's All Right Mama* (Elvis' first record), *The American Trilogy*, *The Wonder Of You* and so many more. I'm not gonna say all, as I want there to be a few surprises. What I will say, however, is, expect between two to three hours of non-stop nostalgia.

Elvis lives

"What I'm about to say is not because I'm an Elvis fan, but because it's the truth. Over a quarter of a century after Elvis' death, the man still lives, his music lives, his voice lives, his memory lives... A lot of it has got to do with his legendary status, but a major factor behind Elvis' recent successes is his marketing company, Elvis Presley Enterprises. They are extremely clever. They promote the notion that 'Elvis lives'. It's an idea people love to hold on to. It's a notion I love to hold on to. For me, Elvis will never die.



OCTOBER 23

Ty Tender: A Tribute to Elvis Presley

Event: Ty Tender performs a tribute to the King of Rock 'n' Roll along with the Memphis Singers and the Elvis Project Orchestra.

Venue: Jumeirah Beach Hotel

Tickets: Dh350, Dh150

For details: 04-3911196/3480000

Deep Dish

Event: Witness this inspiring duo (Deep Dish) perform their chart topping masterpieces and underground beats. Also performing are DJ Behrouz from San Francisco and Pierre Ravan from the Spiritual Brothers

Venue: Le Meridien Mina Seyahi

Tickets: Dh175, Dh95

For details: 02-6443000/04-3911196

Jagjit Singh concert

Event: The ghazal maestro known his soul-touching melodies will be backed by a troupe of eight musicians.

Venue: Grand Hyatt, Dubai

Tickets: Dh1,000, Dh500, Dh250, Dh100

For details: 04-3902500/3902502

Dil Chahta Hai - Dance Masti

Event: Witness some of Bollywood's top talents take centre stage. The concert includes Shankar-Ehsaan-Loy, Instant Karma, Shaan, K.K., Mahalaxmi Iyer and Zubeen Garg.

Venue: Aviation Club, Dubai

Tickets: Dh400, Dh275, Dh200, Dh150, Dh75

For details: 04-3911048/050-3655795

Unity (House Music)

Event: Enjoy the best of Classic Anthems, Tribal House and Euro House Music with DJ Charlie C.

Venue: Planetarium, Dubai

Tickets: Free (normal club entrance policies apply)

For details: 04-3240072

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