

Kowloon's night club rides wave of change

■ The restaurant owner hopes to appeal to college crowds with the new Club Tsunami

By Jen West
Oregon Daily Emerald

Many college students probably remember Scandals, the night club at 2222 Centennial Blvd., near Autzen Stadium. Scandals is no more because the club has undergone a transformation. It now sports a new look, a new name and a new sound.

Club Tsunami, whose name means "tidal wave," held its grand opening last Friday and has begun a campaign to lure college students back through its remodeled doors. "We want to make (the club) a lot of fun," said Kit Chan owner of Tsunami and Kowloon, the adjoining restaurant. He said he wants to "make this the best place for (students) to hang out."

Chan said he decided to change the look of the club to something that was easier to decorate with a theme. When the club was Scandals, he said the atmosphere was more like that of a bar or tavern with several neon beer lights hanging on the walls.

Now, with jungle trees painted on the support beams, colorful lights suspended from the ceiling, new tables and new carpet, Chan said they are going for a more "Euro-Asian" look. "We're now using a lot of intelligent light — high tech," he said.

In addition to adding high-tech lighting, he said they have also updated their sound system making it by far a step ahead of other clubs, playing today's Top 40s hits, R&B and other mainstream dance music.

Chan said the club is geared toward the over-21 college crowd, and with student housing complexes such as Ducks Village and the University Commons just down the road, there should be no lack of clientele.

To further entice the students to spend their study breaks at Tsunami, Chan said they offer a discount on the cover price for those showing a valid University or Lane Community College I.D.

Though the club will cater more to the college crowd, Chan said they also offer live comedy on Saturday nights at 9 p.m. that might appeal to older patrons.

"If you pay the cover you can stay for the dancing after (with no extra

charge)," Chan said. "You get two for one."

However, not everyone has been enchanted by the revamped club.

Local resident Ray Delille visited Club Tsunami last Saturday and said he did not see a huge difference since the club changed names.

"I like the outside," he said. "The (new) entrance is nice."

Delille and his friend Cinammond Hollins both expressed frustration at the limited designated areas for smoking, though the club does offer an outdoor smoking deck. They said the building had been expanded, making the new smoking deck smaller.

Courtney Ellingsworth, a student at Lane Community College, said the smaller setting gave her a feeling that everyone was watching everyone else, and the location was not ideal.

Unlike the downtown locations, she said, "You can't pop from one club to the next."

Maria Pashova, a bartender and server at the club, said she loves the more intimate setting.

"The atmosphere is better, smaller — people know you," she said.

She said the downtown clubs were

more massive and impersonal.

Felicia Duke, a server at the club, said Tsunami provides a "good atmosphere, good spirits and good drinks."

Tara Sullivan, a delivery hostess, said she preferred Tsunami over the other clubs because it felt like a more modern, updated, "big city" kind of place, but isn't sleazy.

"They play good dance music," Sullivan added.

Club Tsunami is open from 11:30 a.m. to 2 a.m. on weekdays, and 11:30 a.m. to 3 a.m. on weekends. The cover charge is \$3 for the general public and \$1 for students on Friday and Saturday nights. The cover charge is \$6 for the Saturday comedy show and includes dancing.

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Easy Target

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"Eugene's been great to us," Brown said. "We've made some promising relationships."

The band members said they were happy being a regional band.

"It's nice to get established in (our) home region," Guyer said.

Steinberg said Easy Target delivers high-energy performances, and the band has no problem generating ticket sales.

"I feel without a doubt that they are the strongest band Eugene has to offer for the youth music market," he said. "They are the single biggest band in Eugene."

This high praise is met with modesty from the band members.

"We're not competitive; we just want to play," Portrait said.

In 1999, Easy Target released its nine-track EP entitled "Inappropriate Classroom Behavior" featuring

songs they had written when they were teenagers.

And like teenagers, they said they have had their fair share of difficult times in trying to create an identity for themselves. They said that audiences and critics often labeled them as a "pretty band" or a "punk band" — labels they said did not accurately suit their music or their style.

"We're not trying to claim to be punk rock," Portrait said, and though there are punk influences in their music, the band stressed that they play more rock songs.

The band members went on to say that they did not want to just be copies of another band, but have a sound and style all their own.

"We just want to be a rock band with a broad range of music," Guyer said.

Easy Target will soon start splitting their time between Portland and Eugene, as Portrait was recently hired to be production engineer for a Portland studio.

While in Portland, the band said they will also be recording their next CD set to be released this summer. It will be the band's first full-length album. They described the new album as being more focused than their first CD, and they want it to make a statement.

"It's a great opportunity for making lots of connections," Guyer said. "And we're hoping the local kids will keep supporting us."

Brendan Relaford, general manager of Big Green Music Events at the Wild Duck, said Easy Target has a good, local fan base made up of young adults that will continue to stick with the band for a long time.

"They are one of the few local bands that are really kicking butt," he said.

Tickets are available for \$7 in advance through www.fastixx.com and for \$9 at the door.

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'Matchmaker'

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Set designer Jerry Hooker had his own difficulties making the four sets required for the play. To minimize the transitions, Hooker created a basic framework that remains during the show while the furniture changes and large backdrops lower from the rafters to create the mood.

"The Matchmaker" is Hooker's first show at the University after coming from Sam Houston State University in Texas, where he worked for six years. Prior to that, Hooker was a freelance designer in Seattle, working primarily for professional shows.

Hooker said the transition from professional work to teaching involves some mental adjustments.

"I'm used to just telling people what to do and letting them do it. At a university, I have to tell people what to do and walk them through it," he said.

Most of the set work is done by students in production classes through the theater department or by work study students, Hooker said.

Hooker was a junior in college before he tried his hand at the technical side of theater; now he has been doing it for 20 years.

"A lot of students come in wanting to be actors, and then they try tech work and find it clicks," Hooker said.

Running around the stage, trying to do as much as possible, Hooker makes it clear that a lot of work has gone into a production that only lasts two hours. And Watson promises the play will end "happily ever after."

"The Matchmaker" starts Friday in the University Theatre and runs Jan. 26, 31, Feb. 1, 2, 8, 9 at 8 p.m. The performance on Feb. 3 begins at 2 p.m. Tickets are available at the EMU Ticket Office or at the theater's box office the day of the show. Tickets are \$5 for University students and \$12 for the general public.

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