



Mike Hergenreter

OWNER AND BOOKER AT
HI-FI MUSIC HALL
AGE: 37

Mike Hergenreter, owner and booker at Hi-Fi Music Hall, got into the music business by chance when he and his wife were considering career changes. “She asked me what I wanted to do,” Hergenreter recalls. “And I answered that, ‘I’d like to go on tour but without traveling so I can raise a family.’ She replied with ‘Sounds like you need to work at a music venue.’”

After paying his dues with several Eugene venues, Hergenreter, along with his partner Danny Kime, opened Hi-Fi Music Hall in downtown Eugene.

The business partners designed Hi-Fi’s multiple stages with artist development in mind. Their approach is to introduce local acts “on the more intimate lounge stage,” Hergenreter explains, getting the band to make return visits every six to eight weeks. “From there,” he continues, “we

can sprinkle in a show supporting one of the larger national touring acts ’til they are ready to headline their own show in the main hall.”

What’s tough about developing local artists in Eugene?

The problem we face is there are so many good local bands and so many good touring bands that come to town. With Eugene only being a secondary market, it’s hard to support all the shows. The pro to this problem: We have a plethora of consistent high-quality entertainment to go to on a weekly basis.

What can Eugene’s music scene do to overcome its small size?

Eugene’s music scene always seems to be six months behind the major markets and will continue to, as it’s

more difficult to spread what’s new and hip with a smaller population. Moving forward, we’ll continue to follow the trends, while trying to make our mark in the industry.

Music, just like other entertainment, brings tourism to our community and additional money to local businesses. Additionally, having a thriving music scene, locally and on a national level, carries a “cool factor” to our town. That can bring additional revenue.

Just like other industries, it’s all about development, which was the basis of our business plan for Hi-Fi Music Hall. To me, next level is consistently developing talent out of Eugene, touring the country with valid representation. At this point, we don’t have too many. But with the amount of quality musicianship locally right now, I see this happening.

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