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Rockapella Performs Popular Hits at Laguna Playhouse

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🕒 August 15, 2016

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Written By: Dave Carleen Rockapella at Laguna Playhouse

Rockapella is undoubtedly the seminal a cappella singing group in the US. In this era of NBC's *The Sing-Off*, movies like *Pitch Perfect* and innumerable school vocal groups, certainly with almost 25 years on the scene, Rockapella has been a strong influence on the genre. And their exciting, perfectly executed performance was a thorough pleasure to experience. Rockapella at Laguna Playhouse



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It is amazing for just five men to generate the sounds and vocals of which this group is capable. First of all, the four vocalists are exquisitely talented but what is particularly unique and impressive is the human percussionist, Jeff Thatcher. Other people make sounds imitating instruments within an a cappella group, but Thatcher—with astounding accuracy—recreates the numerous and sundry sounds of a full set of drums and several cymbals played by a talented, experienced musician. He does this only with his mouth into a hand-held microphone plus small microphones somehow attached to his throat. Imagine making the sound of a cymbal and it is apparent why he was referred to as the “Mozart of Spit” by Scott Leonard, the founder, chief song writer, arranger and the architect of Rockapella’s dynamic sound. Rockapella at Laguna Playhouse

Baby Boomers will recall much of the music and even a lot the words to the songs in the Rockapella repertoire. But even Gen Xers and Millennials should thoroughly enjoy the music because the show covers a selection of very familiar classic standards plus some contemporary hits and a few of their own songs. The entire show is entertaining, fast paced, and bolstered by basic but effective choreography and clever interaction with the audience.



Expect to hear music from Elvis, Macklemore, The Beatles, The Rolling Stones, Pharrell Williams, The Temptations, Michael Jackson, Johnny Cash, Earth Wind and Fire, Prince, Sam Cooke and many more.

Effectively presenting Motown, pop and soul classics is dependent on hard driving rhythm and a solid bass line. Bass singer, Bryant Vance, assists Thatcher at times to make the bottom of their sound even stronger. Steve Dorian and Calvin Jones complete the quintet. Rockapella at Laguna Playhouse

The lead vocals are shared by all four of the singers in various combinations and formations, usually including Thatcher providing the rhythm. The elements of percussion, bass, melody and harmonies constitute modern rock band music and this group sounds amazingly like a live band. Rockapella at Laguna Playhouse

On the comical side, some of the group's past work is quite familiar because they sang many TV commercial jingles, like for Almond Joy and Mounds, Dr Pepper, Folgers Coffee and even Preparation H. One definitely recognizes their work when they sing "N...B...C" and "Where in the world is Matt Lauer."

Of course, the climax of any "rock concert" is the drum solo and Thatcher does not disappoint. We heard audience members commenting after the show, "How does he make those sounds?" But that quandary comes far short of describing how unusual and utterly complete his performance duplicates the sound of a talented drummer.

The encore is the five men singing the melodic, The Drifters original, "Up On The Roof" in perfect harmony without any amplification. In short, the perfect ending to a magnificent performance, bravo!

Laguna Playhouse

[\(https://www.lagunaplayhouse.com/\)](https://www.lagunaplayhouse.com/)

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Rockapella Provides Fresh Take on Hits of Today and Yesteryear

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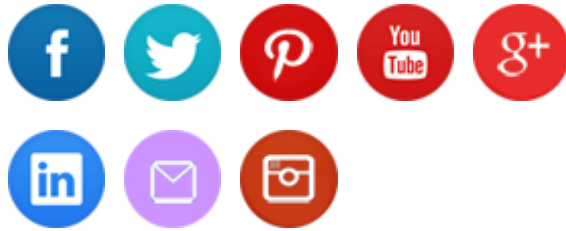


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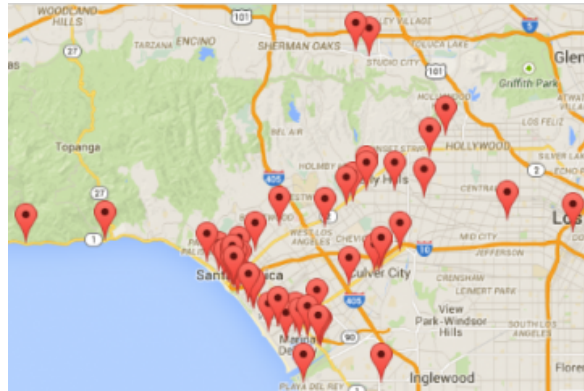
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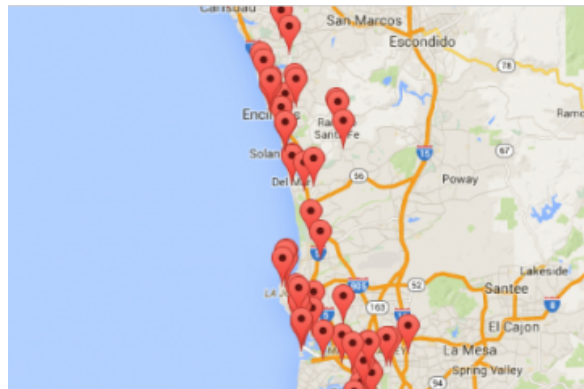
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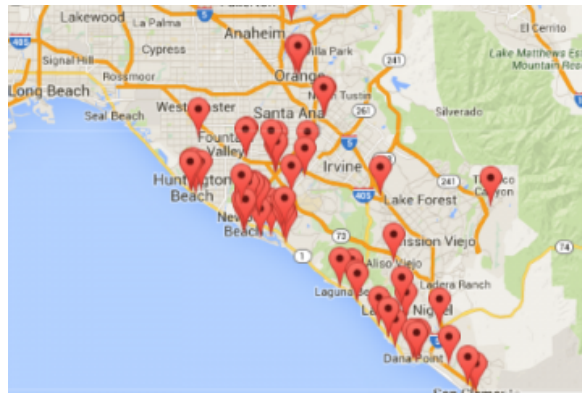
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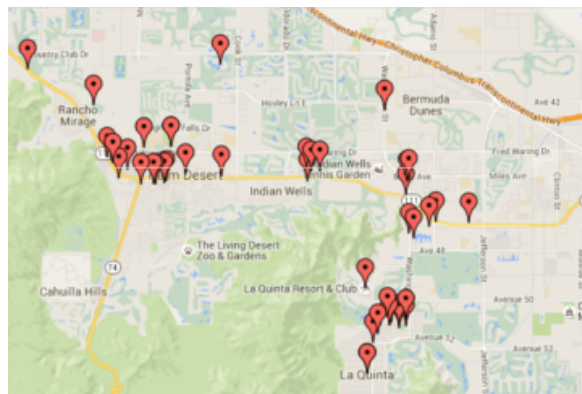
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