

Pete Coates and Linda Kimball are looking forward to their next projects as their decade running the Cayuga Vault closes.

SHMUEL THALER/
SENTINEL



PERFORMANCE VENUE

Cayuga Vault to close doors

Small performance space filled a niche for 10 years

Buse

By WALLACE BAINE

wbaine@santacruzsentinel.com

SANTA CRUZ — It began in one bust cycle and it closes in another. But the shuttering of the Cayuga Vault is not, say the venue's longtime owners and managers, a victim of the recession.

Opened in 1999, in the middle of the dot-com bust, the performance space on Soquel Avenue is closing its doors for good at the

end of the month for reasons common to many small businesses. The stately old bank building, which holds the venue was sold earlier this year and the Vault was unable to negotiate a lease with the new owner.

"It was a good opportunity for us to stand back and ask ourselves why we are doing this," said Pete Coates, who with his partner Linda Kimball, ran the Vault since its

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opening.

"I'm glad we got to that 10th year," added Kimball who, with Coates, was a longtime volunteer at the Kuumbwa Jazz Center before the Vault opened. "It would not have felt right to stop at nine."

The venue will be hosting an "End of an Era" wake at the Vault, hoping to attract audiences who've supported the business throughout its existence. But it also will host a number of concerts through the end of December, including tonight's show with Amanda West and HuDost, Sunday's show with folksinger Bruce Mol-

IF YOU GO

AMANDA WEST AND
HUDOST

WHEN: 8 p.m., Saturday

WHERE: Cayuga Vault, 1100
Soquel Ave., Santa Cruz

COST: \$12 advance; \$15 at
the door

DETAILS: www.cayugavault.com

sky and a Friday date with the Balkan group the Black Olive Babes.

Throughout the decade, the 99-seat Vault fulfilled a specific need in Santa Cruz County, offering a performance venue for artists with limited audiences.

"(Before the Vault opened), you would have to

go to (the 200-seat) Kuumbwa, or do a house concert," said Coates. "There was nothing in between."

The space hosted both CD release parties for local singer/songwriters — such as Ariel Thiermann, Jayme Kelly Curtis and Amanda West, who also helped out with publicity — and tour dates for world artists passing through. Just last week, the venue brought in Pakistani devotional singer Riffat Sultana who commands substantial audiences throughout the world.

Other regular performers included the ethereal Middle-Eastern group Stelamara, didgeridoo player Stephen Kent, the klezmer trio Davka and Berber-music ensemble Aza.

Because it didn't have a bar or a restaurant, the Cayuga Vault had to look for operating revenues in other places and found them by hosting dance classes and similar events.

The Cayuga Vault played a role in reviving its stretch of Soquel Avenue, serving as an anchor venue opposite the Rio Theatre. Since then, new businesses have come in and the old Santa Cruz restaurant the Crepe Place has begun booking live music. It often attracted artists in specialized genres outside the mainstream.

"Really good stuff has always been attracted to us," said Kimball. "It really feels good to have played a part in revitalizing this neighborhood."