

Versatile one-man show covers everything from Nat to Natalie

By SCOTT CRONICK Staff Writer,

Now appearing for a long engagement in the Atlantic City Hilton's much larger showroom, Pace's show is more fluid and entertaining, his material is better, and the performer seems much more sure of himself.

Unfortunately, those who saw Pace's show at Resorts will find the Hilton show very familiar. While there are some new elements thrown in, most of Pace's Hilton show mirrors his previous appearance at Resorts, which is surprising since so much time has gone by between his engagements.

Pace must have used the time wisely to hone his act, however, as his 75-minute show flies by.

Billed as the "man with the voice who happens to be funny," Pace really does possess a remarkable voice, which he shows off throughout the entire show. Pace's voice particularly shined during a powerful rendition of "Music of the Night" from "Phantom of the Opera," and a passionate rendition of Elton John's "Your Song," in which Pace showed off his own stellar voice instead of impersonating Sir Elton.

But most of the night was devoted to his musical impressions. Like Danny Gans, Pace has a knack for nailing celebrity voices and inserting some humor to break things up.

While some weren't the greatest, like his Kermit the Frog doing "Rainbow Connection" and Ray Charles singing "Georgia," Pace was dead-on impersonating Johnny Mathis in "Misty," Louis Armstrong's raspy style in "What A Wonderful World," Rod Stewart's "Have I Told You Lately" and Neil Diamond's "Sweet Caroline."

Pace really blew the crowd away when he stretched the boundaries. Offering a superb Nat King Cole would have been enough in his rendition of "Unforgettable," but Pace sang the song as a one-man duet, wowing the crowd by also singing Natalie Cole's part in perfect register. Pace's Cher was also noteworthy, singing "If I Could Turn Back Time."

Pace's voice is strong and impressive, but sometimes the performer's material seemed a little hokey, especially when he acted like his flatulent old uncle in a bid for cheap laughs. And, for some reason, Pace still insisted on bringing audience members on stage to make fools of themselves, which never works.

That said, Pace had some very funny routines.

As Elvis, Pace's voice sounded just like The King singing "Dixieland" and "The Battle Hymn of the Republic," but it was also hysterical as Pace emulated the crazy kung-fu side of Elvis battling his cape.

The show-stopper, just like it was at Resorts, was his Michael Jackson. Pace can moonwalk with the best of them, the jokes were funny, and his Jackson voice was perfectly high-pitched, including the trademark yelps.

Pulling off a one-man act is difficult. Pace almost made it work two years ago. This time around, he succeeds. It should be amazing to see what he can do in another two years.