

PSU IS INTO THE BLUES

Rhythm Devils to perform at State Theatre

By Josh Bollinger
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Deadheads unite: The Rhythm Devils are coming to State College.

The Rhythm Devils, led by former Grateful Dead drummers Bill Kreutzmann and Mickey Hart, will perform at 8 p.m. on Sept. 8 at the State Theatre, 130 W. College Ave. Tickets are \$49.

The Grateful Dead and its affiliated acts are known for extended jams during their performances and for exploring each song's musical territory.

Kreutzmann said he plans to keep this tradition alive with the Rhythm Devils, but with more focus on the songs' beats.

"We just do jams that are real conducive to dancing," he said.

Due to the band's jamming nature, it tends to transition between songs without stopping — something Kreutzmann said is planned out carefully.

"We plan it out, and play songs that work together," he said, who stressed the importance of matching songs played in compatible keys.

Kreutzmann said the band doesn't practice the body of the songs in their set lists

If you go

What: The Rhythm Devils

When: 8 p.m. Sept. 8

Where: The State Theatre, 130 W. College Ave.

Details: Tickets are \$49

that often, instead focusing on the transitions between one song and the next.

Brendan Plunkett (freshman-turfgrass sciences) said this is what makes the Grateful Dead's music unique.

"You feel like they're almost having a conversation," Plunkett said.

"They're speaking to each other through the vehicle of music."

Though fewer people listen to the Grateful Dead now, their music will never die, he said.

"There's never going to be another generation that can't relate to them," Plunkett said.

Kristy Cyone, marketing director for the State Theatre, said jam bands are becoming increasingly popular in State College.

"We're really excited about bringing them in," she said.

Even though ticket prices seem high for a student's budget, Cyone said the prices are justified.

"It's a little bit more than our average price for the theatre, but we're also talking about two members of the Grateful Dead," she said.

The Rhythm Devils typically include half old Grateful Dead songs and half Rhythm Devils songs in their set list, Kreutzmann said.

"We plan it out, and play songs that work together," he said.

Kreutzmann and Hart have recruited Gov't Mule bassist Andy Hess, blues guitarist Davy Knowles, the Mother Hips guitarist Tim Bluhm and percussionist Sikiru Adepaju on the talking drum for this tour, which will wrap up Sept. 11.

The Rhythm Devils feature multiple percussionists, an idea that Kreutzmann came up with in the early years of the Grateful Dead when he invited Hart to jam with the band.

Kreutzmann said that playing with another drummer was not an initially overly daunting task.



Courtesy of www.rhythmdevils.net

The Rhythm Devils will perform at 8 p.m. Sept. 8 at the State Theatre, 130 W. College Ave. Tickets are \$49. The band is known for their jam-session-like concerts.

"I don't think of it as getting used to," Kreutzmann said. "Mickey plays a more radical drum set than I do. The combination is perfect."

Kreutzmann has been playing the drums for more than 50 years and has been touring for many of those.

Still, he said he hasn't lost his love for music. "It's about the happiest thing I've ever known to do," Kreutzmann said. "It gives me the most joy when people are smiling, dancing and having a good time."

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Courtesy of www.rhythmdevils.net

Grateful Dead drummers Bill Kreutzmann and Mickey Hart created the Rhythm Devils.

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