

'90s band brings eclectic sound to PSU

By Lindsay Cryer
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Big Head Todd and the Monsters may have been better known in the '90s, but the band is making a stop in State College to prove it hasn't gone anywhere.

Big Head Todd and the Monsters will perform at 8 p.m. Wednesday at The State Theatre, 130 W. College Ave.

Following the July release of its ninth studio album, "Rocksteady," the Colorado-based band is back with a different sound, but State Theatre Marketing Manager Kristy Cyone said its fan base is still the same.

"They obviously have a staying power," she said. "People are really excited that they're coming back."

Attendees may know the band best for their 1993 album "Sister Sweetly," which went platinum and produced hits such as "Bittersweet," "Broken Hearted Savior" and "Circle."

The band's frontman, Todd Park Mohr, said this tour may be different in a several ways.

"We're older and wiser, for one.

We tour pretty consistently throughout the years," he said. "In particular though, this trip we have a killer light show."

Mohr said the band tends to revolve around a rock 'n' roll, blues and R&B sound — citing songwriter Bob Dylan as inspiration — but added that, for this album, the sound is a bit Caribbean.

He said the band has a lot to offer younger audiences, specifically college-aged kids.

He said its songwriter- and guitar-oriented sound, similar to bands like Phish, really appeals to this kind of a crowd.

The band's eclectic sound is something attendees can really look forward to, Cyone said.

"What I see about genres is that there's such a mix of genre — no one is just rock or just pop or just Americana or just country," she said.

"If you're coming to just hear one genre, I don't think you'd be coming to see Big Head Todd [and the Monsters]."

The opening band, local group J. Mac and Friends, is Jason McIntyre's collaboration with some

If you go

What: Big Head Todd and the Monsters feat. J. Mac and Friends

When: 8 p.m. Wednesday

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

Details: Tickets cost \$25

of his favorite musicians in State College.

McIntyre said the seven-person band, because of the variety of instrumentation, makes it difficult to try and define its sound.

"We're still in our infancy as a band, but there's still a raw energy, and I can't wait to share that with the audience," McIntyre said.

The band tries to make the show particularly enjoyable for those who will be attending, Mohr said.

Big Head Todd and the Monsters takes song requests via the Internet before its shows and takes the time after each show for meet-and-greets.

Mohr said he understands the value in the artist-fan experience.

"We have a close relationship with our fans and we have an unusual career in that most of our lives revolve around the live show, and it's about the music and the people that listen to it," Mohr said.

Mohr said the band's success has been pretty constant over the years — more than 20 years.

"Our income and the amount of people that we play for has been consistent," he said. "We're pretty lucky to be playing to the audiences that we are."

The band has also proven to be particularly lucky in a recent competition held by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).

The band's song "Blue Sky" — which was also used in a Hillary Clinton campaign, Mohr said — has been used as a wake-up song for the astronauts and is now being challenged against other songs to be used again for the same purpose.

Mohr said being in the competition — and highly ranked — against artists such as Bruce Springsteen

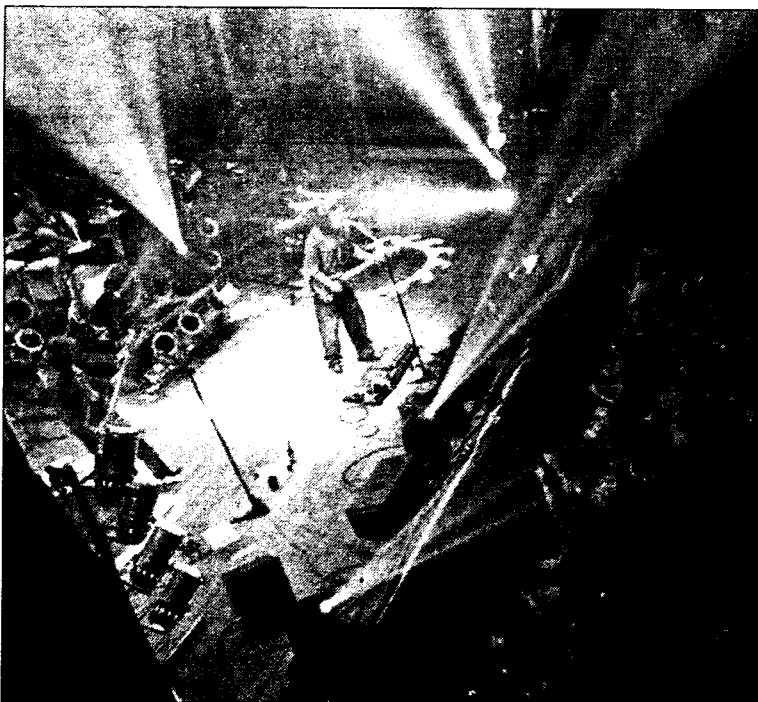


Courtesy of myspace.com

Big Head Todd and the Monsters is currently in a NASA competition that will choose a song to wake up astronauts in space.

"We have a close relationship with our fans and we have an unusual career in that most of our lives revolve around the live show..."

Todd Park Mohr
Musician



Courtesy of myspace.com

Big Head Todd and the Monsters will perform Wednesday night at the State Theatre. The band is known for their '90s hits.

and U2 is really gratifying.

But for now, the band is happy to play for a college town like State College.

"Those people come out because there's nothing else to do," Mohr

said, laughing. "So that's really fun."

Tickets for the show are \$25 and were still available by press time.

To e-mail reporter: lbc146@psu.edu

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