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Lesh reanimates the Dead

BY HAL BIENSTOCK
Special to amNewYork

Tourists visiting Times Square are usually advised to be on the lookout for pickpockets, taxis and out-of-control bike messengers. For the month of November, they'll also need to avoid getting run over by throngs of tie-dye-wearing music fans, as former Grateful Dead bassist Phil Lesh takes over the Nokia Theater for three weeks with his new band Phil Lesh & Friends.

Beginning on Halloween, Phil & Friends will play 14 concerts at the Nokia. It's the second year in a row Lesh has scheduled a marathon of shows in New York, or as he calls it, a "Phil-athon."

"I like being in one place for a period of time," he says. "It allows us to settle in and just focus on the music, because you're in one place instead of getting on a bus each night and traveling six hours."

As the Grateful Dead did, Phil & Friends will play a



If you like the Grateful Dead, you need to check out the 14-show "Phil-athon" taking over the Nokia Theater. (GETTY)

different set each night to keep things interesting for themselves and the audience. While most of the material will be Grateful Dead songs, Lesh says there's a world of difference between a Dead show and

one with his new band.

"It's like apples and oranges," he explains. "What I'm trying to do is bring a new perspective to the Grateful Dead repertoire. It won't sound anything like the Dead, except that

ON STAGE

Phil Lesh & Friends are at Nokia Theatre Times Square from Friday through Nov. 18.

■ **Time:** Mon.-Sat. 8 p.m.; Sun. 6 p.m.

■ **Tickets:** \$55

■ **1515 Broadway, 212-307-7171**

we're playing the same songs. But for me it's not so much about the songs themselves, as what can happen with them at any particular moment."

In fact, when asked what he's most proud of about his time with the Dead, Lesh didn't choose the music. Instead, he talked about the community that surrounds it.

"The whole thing from the beginning was about the community and that's held true for all these years," he said. "A lot of the people who come to see us are repeat customers. They come back not just for the music, but to be together."

Tuesday

Music

JOHN LEGEND: Bowery Ballroom, 7pm, SOLD OUT. Five-time Grammy Award-winning soul singer Legend's debut studio album, "Get Lifted," featured the huge single "Ordinary People." 6 Delancey St at Bowery (J, M to Bowery; B, D to Grand St) 212-533-2111

TESLA: Blender Theater at Gramercy, 8pm, \$39.50-\$45. Tesla are most famous for their cover of the song "Signs," but the '80s rockers have sold more than 16 million albums total. Their newest album, "Forever More," came out earlier this month on their own record label, Tesla Electric Company Recordings. 127 E 23rd St, between Park Ave S and Lexington Ave (6 to 23rd St) 212-777-6800

BORN RUFFIANS: Union Hall, 7:30pm, \$12. Will the Canadian indie-rock invasion ever cease? Not if this Toronto three-piece has anything to say about it. Their spare pop-rock attack is similar to fellow young T-Town brethren Tokyo Police Club. With Plants & Animals and Mancino. 702 Union St, Fifth Ave, Park Slope, Brooklyn (2, 3, 4, 5, Q to Atlantic Ave; R to Union St; F to Fourth Ave) 718-638-4400 unionhallnyc.com

DAVID FORD: Mercury Lounge, 7:30pm, \$15. Ford plays several instruments and loops their sounds to create a backing band without any people. 217 E Houston St at Essex St (F, V to Lower East Side-Second Ave; J, M, Z to Delancey-Essex Sts)

212-260-4700

THE ROOTS AND GYM CLASS HEROES: Roseland Ballroom, 6pm, \$43.50. Gym Class Heroes rose through the ranks on a killer combination of emo and hip-hop, with vocalist Travis McCoy's raps earning more and more cred with each album. Live, the group has long been known for high-energy sets, mirroring their tourmates, the eternally-traveling Roots crew. 239 W 52nd St, between Broadway and Eighth Ave (C, E, 1 to 50th St) 212-777-1224



From left: Ashley and Mary-Kate Olsen (GETTY)

Comedy

NEW TALENT SHOW: Comix, 8pm, adv \$15, day of show \$20. New comics are showcased. 353 W 14th St, between Eighth and Ninth aves (A, C, E to 14th St; L to Eighth Ave) 212-524-2500

Talks and Readings

MARY-KATE OLSEN AND ASHLEY OLSEN: Barnes & Noble Union Square, 12:30pm, FREE. The twins have a new book called "Influence." 33 East 17th St, between Park Ave and Broadway (4, 5, 6, N, Q, R, W, L to 14th St-Union Sq) 212-253-0810

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Mon., Dec. 1, 6 p.m.

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Sixth Floor
177 Livingston Street

Mon., Nov. 10, 6 p.m.
Thurs., Nov. 13, 3 p.m.
Mon., Dec. 8, 6 p.m.

Staten Island
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Wed., Nov. 19, 6 p.m.
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