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THE '90s RETURN TO LEWISTON:

Artpark welcomes Gin Blossoms, Toad the Wet Sprocket, Blues Traveler, Bush

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I'm old enough to remember a time when teenagers ruled the world.

And so are you, since that time is now - at least as it pertains to pop culture and entertainment.

For many a streamer, TV show, movie and record company, the age 14-24 demographic is the largest content mover and most coveted demographic.

This is not a new trend, of course, but it is reminiscent of another time when youths totally and radically presided over the performing arts.

The 1990s. Neon's favorite decade began with "Beverly Hills, 90210," "The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air," "Saved by the Bell," MC Hammer and Vanilla Ice; jumped to Biggie, Tupac, Nirvana and Pearl Jam; and ended with "Titanic," Shania Twain, NSYNC and Britney Spears.

Musically, it was a time - like today - when the genre du jour changed about as fast as you can scroll through YouTube. Seattle, grunge, alternative, ska, R&B, rap, country, pop, boy bands - each took a turn dominating the airwaves.

While "TRL" has now given way to URL, there's no denying the

'90s still hold a place in our hearts.

Not only have the series and stars of that era returned to our living rooms (or debuted on our phones), but many of the most popular musicians have teamed up for successful co-headlining concerts and tour dates.

Artpark & Company's season is about to feature a string of artists that emerged in the 1990s, including Gin Blossoms, Toad the Wet Sprocket, Blues Traveler and Bush.

Interim President Dave Wedekindt said, "These bands and their smart, catchy yet melodic songs, formed the soundtrack for many people who came of age in the late '80s and '90s. They were college / indie rock at heart, but also enjoyed crossover success and their songs have held up well. And in many ways, they are now the 'classic rock' of this generation, who enjoy seeing them in part for the nostalgia of their younger days."

So, what can fans expect from this colorful decade and its hit-making acts?

For Bush lead singer Gavin Rossdale, "I hope it means that

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WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT AT THESE CONCERTS:

•Gin Blossoms + Toad the Wet Sprocket
 Aug. 11, Artpark Amphitheater



Toad the Wet Sprocket lead singer Glen Phillips said, "Live show, it's a good, homey vibe. I think we play well. We've really been enjoying our lineup right now. Carl Thompson coming in on drums, and our friend Jonathan Kingham with us. But you know, Todd (Nichols), Dean (Dinning) and I, you know, it's three out of the four originals there. Everybody's just been in a good space. We've been sounding better. Bringing out, I think, like seven songs that we haven't played in a very long time, like a decade or more. It's been a lot of fun."
 "We are not like a bombastic super show. It's not larger than life. But, hopefully, it connects. It's just life-sized, in a good way."

The band's biggest hits include: "All I Want," "Fall Down," "Walk on the Ocean," "Good Intentions," "Something's Always Wrong"

Gin Blossoms guitarist/vocalist Jesse Valenzuela said, "We're going to deliver all the songs that you would expect. A few surprises. We just want people to be satisfied."

The band's biggest hits include: "Hey Jealousy," "Follow You Down," "Til I Hear It from You," "Allison Road," "Found Out About You"

•Blues Traveler + Big Head Todd and the Monsters
 Aug. 16, Artpark Amphitheater



Blues Traveler drummer Brendan Hill said, "The songs that people want to hear, especially in an outdoor kind of amphitheater, with crowds that are maybe Big Head Todd fans, or maybe have not seen us before, we kind of have to play the songs that we're well known for - like 'Run-Around,' 'Hook,' 'But Anyway,' just to mention a couple of them. Those are kind of staples in the set. And then the rest of the show, we do a kind of a round-robin, where each band member gets to write the setlist for a song. I'm not sure whose set it'll be that night, but everybody has their kind of favorites they like to play from our catalog."
 "And then we mix it up with kind of different segues in and out of songs. Sometimes we divide songs in half and then go into another thing, and then kind of go back to it at the end to finish it out. That makes it interesting for us, because it's not just playing the same set every night. And then we strive to be an improvisational band where we have different solo sections for kind of highlighting each of the different members. That's always fun to kind of insert and do little riffs, alluding to different covers and all that kind of stuff."

The band's biggest hits include: "Run Around," "Hook," "But Anyway"

•Bush
 Aug. 17, Artpark Amphitheater



Frontman Gavin Rossdale said, "We've kind of honed it down to where we're taking people on a journey and giving people something different. Hopefully, touching on all records we've made."
 "I know it sounds ridiculous, but people have lots of choices. They don't even have to come to music venues at all. So, just to get people out in a really crowded world, it's all about the experience for the whole night. I hope we've got it down to where we satisfy everyone's appetite."
 He added, "So much of the time, I feel like a working musician. But, when I see those crowds and meet the people, I realize the connection is massive and real, and tangible, and alive and well."
 "Us being out on the road and connecting with people is just really nurturing that connection and solidifying that relationship between us and the people that love the music - young or old. It's just about the spirit - people understanding that the music is about connecting inside your heart. People use the songs as such solace and such comfort in times of need, in times of celebration, in times of hardship. And that's the most beautiful thing."

The band's biggest hits include: "Everything Zen," "Little Things," "Comedown," "Glycerine," "Machine-head," "Swallowed," "Greedy Fly," "The Chemicals Between Us"

Photo credits: Toad The Wet Sprocket by Chris Orwig // courtesy of Milestone Publicity • Gin Blossoms by Shervin Lainez // courtesy of Milestone Publicity • Blues Traveler by Graham Fielder • Bush photo by Shervin Lainez // courtesy of 2b Entertainment

Lewiston Art Festival

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Lewiston Art Festival

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