

Doo-Dah decides on Lez Zeppelin, The Meditations



By Nick Wolcott

Steph Paynes of Lez Zeppelin at the Conference Center this past March.

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By Elizabeth Guest, staff writer

Daily Planet

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Telluride, Colo. -

Three times a charm, but KOTO's bringing Lez Zeppelin back for a fourth performance in Telluride, this time at the 12th annual Doo-Dah on July 12 in Town Park.

The all-female Led Zeppelin cover band played their charged, wailing, high-voltage rock and roll songs this winter at the Conference Center, and twice before at the Opera House. Although it's predetermined that the music will be all Zeppelin, the show promises a dynamic, searing black-magic rock and roll show.

Suzanne Cheavens, KOTO music director, has seen Lez Zeppelin twice. When asked if she would see another show, her response was immediate:

“Easily,” she said. “The first time I saw them at the Opera House I was sitting in the balcony and the second time, I made sure to get right down in front.”

That’s where you get totally consumed by the hard-rocking sound that exudes confidence and charisma from the four-person girl band from New York City. They give the audience a chance to feel the intensity of live Led Zeppelin music.

“It’s not a note for note replication of the songs, but a powerful spin on the original,” Cheavens said. “It’s a really passionate and dynamic show.”

The KOTO Doo-Dah is a classic local concert. It’s even mentioned in the song “Whiter Than a Powder Day,” released at the KOTO Lip Sync three years ago and played often, you guessed it, on powder days. We heard it a lot this past winter, and the line about the ski bum who’s partying all the time:

“I blacked out at Jackson Brown,” he sings. That was the headliner at the Doo-Dah four years ago. Two years ago saw Lyle Lovett, and last year’s Doo-Dah welcomed Bob Dylan back for a second time.

This year, the band is lesser known, but potentially more powerful and provocative. It’s often the unexpected Doo-Dahs that really do wonders, like the Ozomatli show six years ago — when the audience danced alongside the band on the stage for the finale. Janice Zink, KOTO events coordinator, is happy to have the Doo-Dah details dialed. The show’s final lineup was announced last week, a little later than normal.

With Bluegrass beer booth preparations and the Doo-Dah ahead — two of KOTO’s big and labor-intensive fundraisers — the local radio station has seen nonstop activity. “I don’t even want to think about how many hours I’ve spent chasing after talent,” Zink said. “It comes down to a routing thing and it’s kind of luck of the draw in the end based on who’s coming through here.”

For the folks who like to sniffle about lineups, the issue always comes down to money. It’s just not viable to bring the Santanas and Tom Pettys of the music world to Telluride for a crowd of 7,000 people.

“It just doesn’t work,” said Zink.

There is, however, a connection to a big name coming via The Meditations, the opening band for the Lez Zeppelin. A roots era reggae band from the ‘70s, the trio sang backup vocals for Bob Marley on songs like “Blackman Redemption,” “Punky Reggae” and “Rastaman Live Up.”

Combining reggae and rock, the Doo-Dah promises to be an eclectic display of music. The doors open at 4 p.m., with The Meditations at 6 p.m., followed by Lez at 8 p.m. Volunteers will be needed, and can contact Zink, after the buzz over Bluegrass settles down. At that time, further ticket information will also be available. Still, weeks away, the only thing you need to know now is that there’s more fun music coming this way on July 12.

“It’s going to be a really fun local party,” said Cheavens.

Tickets for adults are \$27 in advance and \$32 day of show. For youth ages 13-18, tickets are \$20 in advance and \$25 day of show and for children 12 and under, free with an accompanying adult. Tickets are available at koto.org, at the KOTO offices at 207 North Pine Street and at Wizard Entertainment. KOTO is soliciting vendors for this great event and volunteers to help make it happen. Contact 728-8100 for more info.

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