Mentalists to dazzle ISU students

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DAILY VIDETTE STAFF

Students looking for an exciting way to spend their evening can head to Braden Auditorium at 8 p.m. tonight for an unforgettable and electrifying performance by world-renowned mentalists, Jeff and Tessa Evason. The Evason's show offers audience's interactive entertainment featuring exciting predictions, mind reading and other mystifying skills.

"I hope for audience members to be open-minded, to expect the unexpected and to be prepared for an experience they've never seen before," Tessa Evason said. The two work together to use crowd participation to guide the performance along. "We work with people in the audience—it's a volunteer type of thing," Jeff Evason said.

"I'm out in the audience talking with people. I ask them to think about things and Tessa predicts what they are thinking about," he added.

Tessa Evason said the audience members are asked to focus on something specific, like an object. She said this is done because people often have many things on their mind at once.

"I don't know everything going on in a person's mind, but that's probably a good thing," Tessa Evason said with a laugh.

The reactions from the crowd when Tessa reveals her predictions really add excitement to the show.

"Their families usually know most of the answers to the questions, so the reactions of the family members really show the rest of the audience that it is real," she said.

Jeremy Schenk, a senior operating specialist for the University Program Board, was a chosen audience member at an Evason performance two years ago at a conference. "They told me my name and also they knew that I had my wedding ring in my pocket," Schenk said. "They knew my wedding ring belonged to my wife's grandfather and also what his name was."

Schenk said he was definitely surprised at the information they were able to tell him. The Evason's performance for tonight was arranged by the University Program Board's Redbird Nights Committee.

"The Redbird Nights Committee is responsible for providing programming for Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights for students," Schenk explained. ISU is just one of many stops the Evasons will be making this year. The Evasons spend a great deal of their time traveling. They are based out of Toronto, Canada and Annapolis, Maryland because they make appearances both in Canada and in the U.S.

The two have made multiple television appearances and have traveled to 28 different countries performing for audiences. Some of the recent destinations for the two include Africa, Stockholm, Sweden and Singapore. In addition to college campuses and television shows, the Evasons have entertained at corporate events, theatres, cruises and casinos. "Television is always nice, but campus tours are great and we love doing them," Jeff Evason said.

He said audiences at campus shows usually react strongly to the performances and don't hold back their feelings of amazement.

"It's great to see the reactions of a college crowd," he said.

Tessa Evason said they design the show around people's reactions. The pair is always thinking up new ways to surprise the audience. Jeff Evason said something audiences usually look forward to during the performance is the séance. He said the séance is not weirdly supernatural, it's just meant to be entertaining and fun for the audience.

"The séance is well-liked because it is a collective experience for the audience," Tessa Evason said. "It allows the entire audience to be involved." As with every performance, the Evasons make their $25,000 guarantee that there are no gimmicks involved with the show.

"People love to hear about our offer to give $25,000 to anyone who can prove that we are using any kind of hidden microphones or other devices during our show," Jeff Evason said.