

# POP MUSIC REVIEW : Pearl Jam Survives the Anguish, Doubt of Youth

By **STEVE HOCHMAN**

OCTOBER 5, 1991

**T**he Who's "Hope I die before I get old" has been called the only statement any rock band ever needed to make.

But Seattle's Pearl Jam, some 25 years later, may have hit on a valid successor: "I'm still alive," crowed singer [Eddie Vedder](#) at the Cathouse on Tuesday, like a rooster announcing sunrise.

There was even a Who-like visual aspect to the show: Vedder leaping from stacks of speakers and twirling his microphone a la Roger Daltrey, and guitarist Mike McCready throwing his guitar at his amps, recalling Pete Townshend.

But these were displays of pure existential joy, not the acts of frustration that have become rock 'n' roll cliches in the years since the Who set the standards.

It was somehow fitting that this celebration of the death of nihilism took place at the Cathouse, a very temple of hollow live-for-todayism.

It's even more fitting that the declaration for life came from a band that is more or less the descendant of the promising Mother Love Bone, which dissolved with the 1990 overdose death of singer Andrew Wood.

Don't get the wrong idea: At the core of Pearl Jam's songs are the anguish and doubts of youth, but "I'm still alive" echoed throughout the hourlong set, right through the final encore of the Beatles' optimistic "I've Got a Feeling." Talkin' about *this* generation?

Copyright © 2019, Los Angeles Times

**This article is related to:** [Eddie Vedder](#)