

Pearl Jam blows hot and heavy; singer takes high dive into crowd

In this time of hurricanes, both devastating and threatening, Hurricane Pearl Jam blew a new kind of storm into Andrews Amphitheater last night, a wind of change.

It was a change because this show was the first heavy concert at Andrews for years. It was a change because the band is on the cutting edge of the latest hot sub-genre of heavier music, called "Grunge" or the Seattle sound.

But most importantly, perhaps lighting a spark of change in the minds of the audience.

In the gutsiest concert stunt seen by Honolulu crowds in a long time, lead singer Eddie Vedder took about a 20-foot leap off the canvas roof covering the stage into the waiting arms of the crowd.

The message: You can do anything, we can do anything, your will is the power for change.

Vedder's impromptu sky-dive came at the end of a steam-heated night. Pearl Jam is hotter than a football tailgate barbeque right now, with three major hits off their latest album, "Ten," all of which they played, "Jeremy," "Alive," and "Even Flow."

Vedder was the eye of the hurricane, working the stage like a whirlwind and fueling the flames of the band's melodic and muscular sound.

His voice has unusual range for a hard-core-flavored band, and its quality gives Pearl Jam an extra depth not possible for screamer-type bands.

You can tell a lot about a band by how well they play slow songs.



MUSIC REVIEW

By Chris Alper

Pearl Jam excelled. Though they hammered at full speed on a couple songs, showing the hard-core roots from which they sprang, the dynamics on the slower songs made for epic sweep on those tunes.

The guitarists — Stone Gossard and Mike McCready — worked well as a unit, treading the high roads deftly and often.

Bassist Jeff Ament was outstanding, holding up the low end with intricate, lyrical craftsmanship in support.

Technically, the show was smooth, they have obviously been on the road as a crew for a while. The sound was loud but not ear-bloodening. The instrument changes went without a hitch.

The best thing about this show was the place. Andrews is absolutely the best place for a concert.

Emotion, powerful music, free-form platform diving and a night under the open sky: What more could you ask for in a show?

There's another tonight. Tickets are probably still available from people who work in restaurants and have been called in to work tonight and can't get out of it.