

PEARL JAM'S SECRET SEATTLE SHOW OFFERS GLIMPSE OF TOUR

ABOUT 500 FANS WERE GIVEN A SNEAK PREVIEW OF LONG-AWAITED SHOWS AND MATT CAMERON ON DRUMS.

GIL KAUFMAN

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It was the kind of show that every Pearl Jam fan hopes they'll have the chance to see when the band comes to their town, but few ever do. Caryn Rose was among the lucky.

"It was really excellent," said Rose, webmaster of the unofficial Pearl Jam website Five Horizons, of the 16-song, nearly hour-and-a-half show that PJ played Thursday as a warm-up to their long-awaited upcoming summer tour. "I didn't even really hear about it until 9:30 last night, and when I got there, people were driving by the place, riding their bikes by and checking it out. Word spread pretty quickly."

Pearl Jam played the secret show in their homebase of Seattle that night and fans who were clued-in enough to know where to go said the band gave them a rare treat, playing songs mostly from its latest LP, *Yield*, and giving them a first glimpse of its new tour drummer Matt Cameron. The last time PJ played this type of secret show in Seattle was a 1996 gig at the Showbox Theater.

This latest unannounced show -- held at the 500-capacity ARO-Space club and billed under the moniker "Shawn Smith and Friends" -- was weighted heavily toward material from the band's platinum-selling *Yield* and was the live concert debut of ex-Soundgarden sticksman Cameron.

"It was sort-of like the 'Letterman' vibe at first," Rose said, referring to the tentative start of a performance by Pearl Jam last Friday on the 1,000th episode of the "Late Show with David Letterman," their live debut with Cameron.

"Like, 'oh, this is really scary.' But then, about six songs in, they loosened up and started having fun." Rose said the group did not make much eye contact with the crowd for the first half of the 16-song set, which included songs such as "**Wishlist**" (RealAudio excerpt) and "**Brain of J.**" (RealAudio excerpt). "[Lead singer] Eddie [Vedder] was making

mistakes during 'Habit' and Stone took off his guitar before 'Mankind' and went to pick up a tambourine like he forgot he was supposed to play on it. The vibe seemed really good, though, and they seemed real happy."

The band's summer tour, scheduled to kick off on June 20 at Grizzly Stadium in Missoula, Mont., will feature Cameron behind the kit in place of PJ drummer Jack Irons, who was said to be sidelined for undisclosed health reasons.

Word of the midnight show -- held in the Capitol Hill neighborhood at a gay dance club, which recently played host to '80s pop-rapper Vanilla Ice -- had spread by early evening. Rose described the onstage vibe as "kinda weird" at first, but said the group's members seemed energized by playing in the close quarters of the small stage. Tickets for the show, opened by Satchel singer Shawn Smith, were \$10.

Rose characterized Cameron's drumming as "just totally on."

In one of his few comments from the stage, Rose said Vedder told fans it was " 'nice to be here,' " and that it was " 'nice to have a drummer,' " after which he raised one eyebrow.

Rose said the singer also dedicated a song in the set to Irons. "They really concentrated on the last two albums, which was fine. But it certainly seemed like they're teaching [Cameron] the stuff in reverse order, starting with the newest stuff. I wasn't that bummed to not hear stuff from [the band's 1992 debut] *Ten*."

The complete set list for Thursday's gig was: "Corduroy," "Do The Evolution," "Brain of J.," "Last Exit," "Given To Fly," "In Hiding," "Off He Goes," "M.F.C.," "Habit," "Wishlist," "Faithfull," "Hail Hail," "Mankind," "Leatherman," "Leaving Here" and "Last Kiss." The last song was a cover of a 1964 #2 hit by J. Frank Wilson, a song covered 10 years later by the band Wednesday, which Rose suspected was the version with which Vedder was more familiar.

Rose said most of the fans milling around outside the club who wanted to get into the show were allowed in for the last six songs. "This kind of a show is everyone's dream," Rose said. "Whenever they come to play your town, everyone is always insistent that it will happen in their town, but it's rare even here."