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## Fans insist on living no code

By LAURA CAPTANO  
Staff Reporter

Homer's Records on 61st and O streets paired with radio station KDGE-FM (101.9) Monday night for a midnight release party of Pearl Jam's latest album, "No Code."

For nearly two hours, a mild-mannered crowd of roughly 150 Pearl Jam fans enjoyed 101.9's live broadcast from the store.

"This was a really good turn-out for an in-sale, midnight release," said Amy Brechbill, buyer for Homers Records.

She said the release of this album is at least as big, if not bigger, than the midnight release of Metallica's "Load." Sales were still brisk Tuesday.

"No Code" contains 13 brand new tracks, including radio hits "Who You Are" and "Mosquito," and is available at Homer's and all area record stores.

## CD Review



Pearl Jam  
"No Code"  
Epic Records  
Grade: A

Pearl Jam has struggled with its past two albums to create a disc that can compare with the overwhelming emotional outlet captured on "Ten." While

"No Code" may not contain the belting vocals and surging grunge guitars of "Ten," it harnesses a more mature and intelligent message than past projects.

This disc goes where no Pearl Jam album has gone before. Pianos resonate in the background of several cuts. They are used in "Around the Bend," which asserts itself as a folksy tune with a bit of a Seattle-Spanish love ballad tossed in, to "Off He Goes," a lyrically soft and sorrowful song about the stress of existence and bowing out when it becomes too great.

Lyrically this album is unequalled by any of its predecessors. Eddie Vedder once again steps on the soap box as with "vs." and expounds lecture lyrics with songs such as "Habit"—about the trappings of drug use (anybody else smell the irony?). "Smile" sports some snappy Seattle-esque lyrics such as "When the sun don't shine, don't it make you smile, I miss you already."

"Who You Are" is a guaranteed Edge hit with Vedder accompanied by background harmonizing that would make Boyz II Men forget to match their khakis. "I'm Open" begins with a spoken word intro accompanied with sci-fi instrumentals—and here I think we see a glimpse of the pain puncturing his songs: "After spending half his life searching he still felt as blank as the ceiling at which he stared. He is alive

but feels nothing, so is he?" Vedder's deep vocals and ambient lyrics have attained a new level of insight and precision. He is jaded and poetic and angry and sad, as is the entire disc.

Vedder is backed brilliantly by the band, whose recent exposure to Neil Young is extremely apparent on tracks such as "Mankind" and "Smile." Pearl Jam's new drummer, Jack Irons (I assume it's his real name) makes an extremely strong showing and exerts blazing vibrance in "In My Tree." Gossard's vocals are simply cool in "Mankind" and he writes Vedder lyrics better than Eddie.

This is the best project Pearl Jam has put together since "Ten." While every album they assemble will constantly be graded in its shadow, "No Code" surpasses "Ten" with the strong variety of melodic, lyrical and instrumental style. They out and out jam on this disc. And Vedder allows us to see a little more of why he sings like he does.

—Bret Schulte

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