

[WHAT'S HOT IN MUSIC]

# JAPAN GIRLS NITE US TOUR 2005

HOLLYWOOD WAS ON THE FRONT LINES OF A TOUR DE CUTE AS JAPAN SHOWED THE UNITED STATES THAT THEIR GIRLS CAN ROCK. JAPAN GIRLS NITE US TOUR 2005 BROUGHT EIGHT BANDS TO HOLLYWOOD AND J!-ENT WAS THERE TO COVER THE EXCITEMENT. BY GARLAND GEE



Clockwise from upper left: Tsushimamire, Puppypet, Petty Booka, Noodles, Pink Mochi and Titan Go King's.

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Concert photography by **NERGENE ARQUELADA**

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**H**OLLYWOOD, Calif. — When girlfriends do a night out, they usually go about the town. But when these girls do it, they leave the country.

For Japan Girls Nite, Japanese female punk rock bands went on tour in the United States.

Tour sites included Chicago, New York, Boston, Berkeley, Seattle, and Hollywood. On the Hollywood leg of the tour, bands Puppypet, Titan Go King's, Tsushimamire, Petty Booka, Noodles, The Emeralds, The Pillows and local band Pink Mochi played the King King club.

The bands, though relatively unknown in the United States, rocked the crowd while surrounded by the words "music", "love", "peace", and "happiness" written in Chinese calligraphy on scrolls hanging from the walls.

The intimate venue of King King served as a backdrop for the diverse people that would gather. Some fans took root in front of the stage, rocking to their heart's content. Others reclined on red leather couc

hes, enjoying their music and drink.

"I met a lot of fabulous people already," Kari Svendsboe, 30, says. Kari and her roommate Jen Miller, both of Los Angeles, moved to the rock sounds in the red and black ambiance.

They were commanded to attend the show. A friend who saw the show in Boston sent them an e-mail with the subject "You must go."

Jen, 28, originally planned on seeing another popular Japanese rock band playing that night just a few miles away. "I was going to see Shonen Knife, but wanted to see someone different," she says.



Top: The Pillows. Bottom from left: Noodles, Titan Go King's and The Emeralds.

Karrie Hyatt, 31, was similarly influenced by friends to attend the show. Karrie, of Pasadena, hadn't heard of the bands playing, but did have some experience with Japanese music.

"I'm a big fan of Japanese pop music and anime soundtracks," she said. Karrie left the event as a new fan of Puppypet and Titan Go King's.

It may have been the Japan Girls Nite tour, but they did bring along some guys... most notable was the male trio known as The Pillows, who opened the night.

The Pillows are largely popular in the United States for their contribution to anime soundtracks and this anime con-

nection would be a common draw for the people in King King that night.

"My kids watch a lot of anime and they turned me onto The Pillows," says Mary Lombard, 45, of Dana Point.

Mary had lived in Hollywood during the punk music era and says the Japan Girls Nite bands have the same feel. "They have a lot of the spirit of the bands of the early '80s," she says.

Pillows fan Alex Albueine was the lone sole in line outside King King at 6:14 p.m.

The show wouldn't start until 8 p.m., but as literally he put it, "The Pillows ga boku no sukina bando desu." ("The Pillows is my favorite band.")

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Clockwise from upper left: Pink Mochi, Tsushimamire, Petty Booka and The Pillows.

Armed with The Pillows' "Fool on Planet" CD, Alex, 22, of San Dimas, had hoped to catch The Pillows while they were warming up. "The Pillows were the first Japanese band that got me into other Japanese bands," Alex says.

"It's always good to hear different stuff," says Jared Simonetto, King King manager.

The turnout was better than he expected, so Jared was all smiles like the happy Buddha statue above the bathrooms.

King King has not played host to many Japanese-type bands, but "it brings good diversity of music to Hollywood," Jared says. It exposes people to see what else is out there, he says. ■

*For more information on Japan Girls Nite: US Tour 2005 or the following bands on the Benten label, please visit <http://www.sister.co.jp/GirlsUSTour2005/>.*



Music and anime at Japan Girls Nite was no coincidence.

In attendance was Nobu Yamamoto. Nobu is a business development director at Geneon Entertainment (USA) Inc., producer, licensor and distributor of Japanese animation and music in the United States.

Geneon Entertainment was granted rights by King Records (no affiliation with King King in Hollywood) for the

domestic releases of The Pillows' albums.

Nobu says Geneon has been making a push in anime-soundtrack and anime-related CD sales and are very pleased with The Pillows' CD sales.

The Pillows thus far have been happy with their American experience.

"They were surprised. The audience reaction was more than expected," says Nobu. "The audience sang in Japanese with them."

The Pillows will make another U.S. appearance in May. "King (Records) and Geneon are working together to make arrangements for Anime Central," Nobu says.

Geneon Entertainment will be doing more grassroots promotions and plans to bring more music artists into their stable, Nobu says.

*For more information on The Pillows, please visit <http://www.pillows.gr.jp/>.*