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FEATURED GALLERY MUSIC **AM Pitting With Pennywise**  
by Jeff Nau and Catie Laffoon



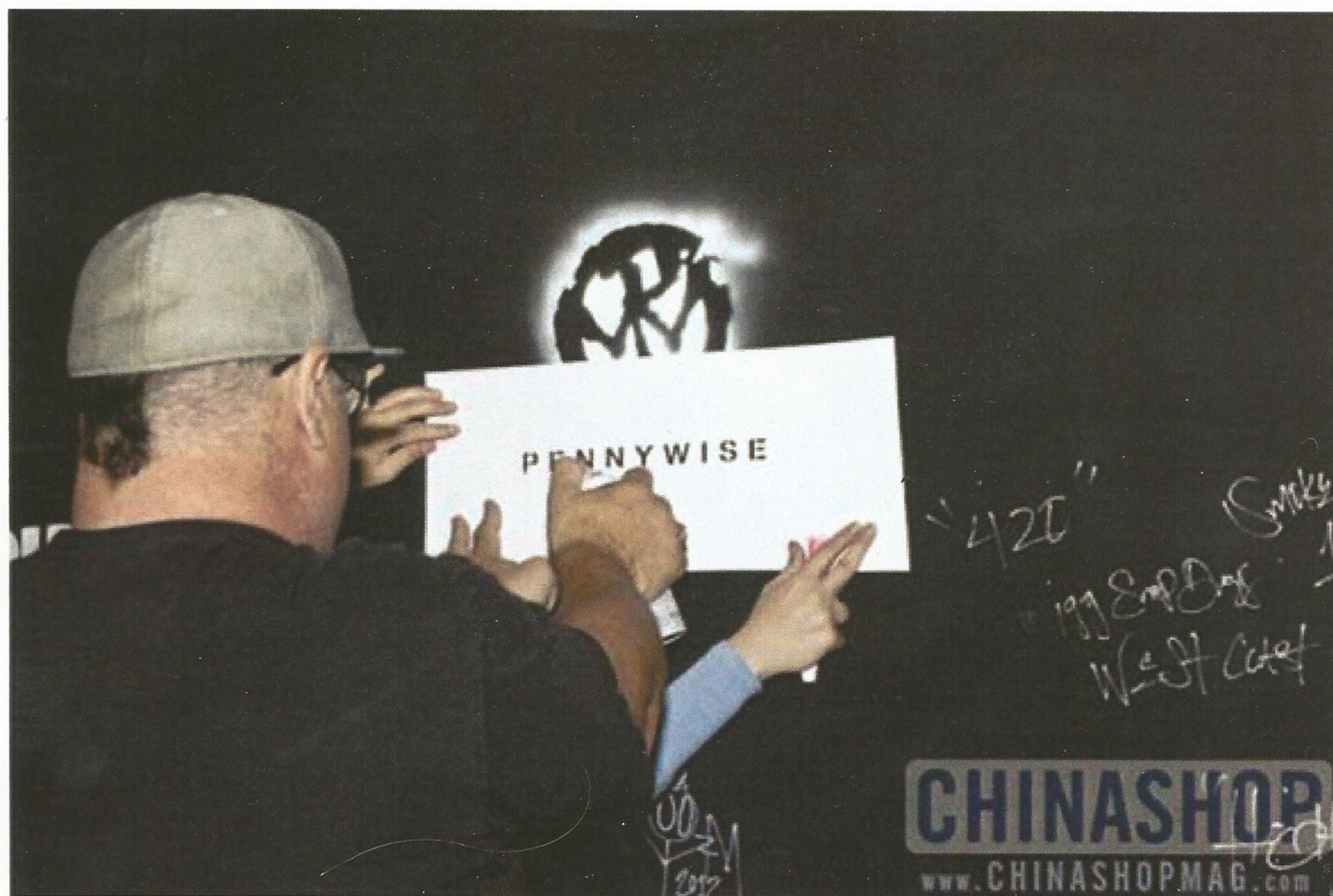
No, 7:30 AM isn't too early for a punk show. Or a mosh pit, or for a good 100 or so luckily-chosen fans to show up at Red Bull Sound Space at KROQ just to shout out loud the anthems of rebellion from their youth. And for good reason: In the annals of punk rock, few bands besides Pennywise have enjoyed as steady and loyal a cult-like following.



Ask any longtime devotee and they're likely to tell you: staying a punk is hard. Staying in a punk rock

band surely can't be much easier. Any of Pennywise's fledgling peers might attest to that: Black Flag hated being poor; Circle Jerks stumbled over repeated personnel changes; The Dickies loved heroin. Others, like The Offspring, struck multi-platinum success, selling gazillions of records (and, some would say, selling out) and watching certain longtime fans abandon them.

Through it all, Pennywise stayed strong, spreading from West Coast to East with the single "Allen" and all the while never really changing their sound. Still some questions begged to be answered: how would lifelong fans handle the departure of longtime singer and founding member Jim Lindberg, who'd left the band abruptly after 21 years? And could new singer Zoli Téglás, (from the band Ignite) compliment the revered style of Fletcher Dragge? Based on some of the new lyrics, Téglás is clearly trying his best to infuse the band with his own punk rock spirit in place of the more literary, Thoreau-inspired lyrics of Lindberg. Their new single, "Let Us Hear Your Voice," is proof he does it more than adequately.



Not only can the band still put out punk that's rebellious yet radio-friendly — but watching the crowd, you wouldn't have been able to tell the difference. Even within the relatively small confines of the studio, the fanatical fervor of both veteran and newbie fans was enough to incite a moshpit and repeated stage-dives. Zoli is more than an adequate shoe-in for Lindberg, and he proves it on both the new track as well as classics like "Bro-Hymn" and "F\*ck Authority" which had everyone in the crowd shouting in unison.

As for the new album — it's not out til May 1st, so we may have to wait to see what the fans say — but if Zoli and the band's performance Monday morning is any indication, Pennywise's fans are as devoted as ever. Let's hope it stays that way for another 24 years.