

REKORD! HAND JOB

K: Kakk! KK: Khronik! KKK: Kapable! KKKK: Kerrackin'!
KKKKK: Kataklysmik!

RUSH
'A Show Of Hands'
(Phonogram 8363461)
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THE FACT that Rush have reached a stage in their careers where they are able to release a third live double album is in itself enough to guarantee them a place in that awesome cliché 'Rock History'.

Having abandoned their absurd but humorous satin suits as youthful folly a live double album or two back, Lee, Lifeson and Peart appear as what they are; three thoughtful and successful musicians entering early middle age, with all the joys and cares that particular condition brings.

No stereotype rock 'n' roll badass mutha music. Instead a graceful and stately procession, instruments mastered with acquired flair and vigour, songs invested with the care and concern of master craftsmen.

You'd be hard pushed to find the last Rush song inspired by the swigging of Jack Daniel's, smashing of hotel rooms and laying of groupies. Try instead lyrics fired by Neil Peart's restless, agile mind.

'Subdivisions' spits at endlessly sprawling and character-free suburbia, and the cultist instincts of its inhabitants. 'Witch Hunt' is a sober lesson in how fear breeds mindless hatred and wanton destruction. 'Time Stand Still' touches on a feeling that life rushes by at such a pace there's precious little time to savour the moment, to even begin to grasp how much there is to say and do.

Cut through the torpid rendition of 'Big Money', a barely average Rush song that for some reason opens the set, and you'll find a band that still gets off on being on stage, that feeds on the fires whipped up by their spirited

musical interaction.

'Subdivisions' is big and bellicose, with guitar and drums featured more prominently than on the 'Signals' album version and benefitting from it, and Rush keep the excitement high through 'Marathon', where the 'click' as the band really hit their stride and bind together is almost audible above Lifeson's abrasive guitar.

'Turn The Page' and 'Manhattan Project' keep the pot boiling before a slowed up version of 'Mission' mellows everything out with a sweet melody and whispered sentiment. Sublime.

A pounding 'Distant Early Warning' not for the first time begs the question how do three guys manage to make so much noise and still keep it all powerful, focused and together. Then 'Mystic Rhythms' and 'Witch Hunt' highlight Rush's expanded use of keyboards and technology which probably saved the band from a Heavy Metal death of terminal boredom around the time of 'Hemispheres'.

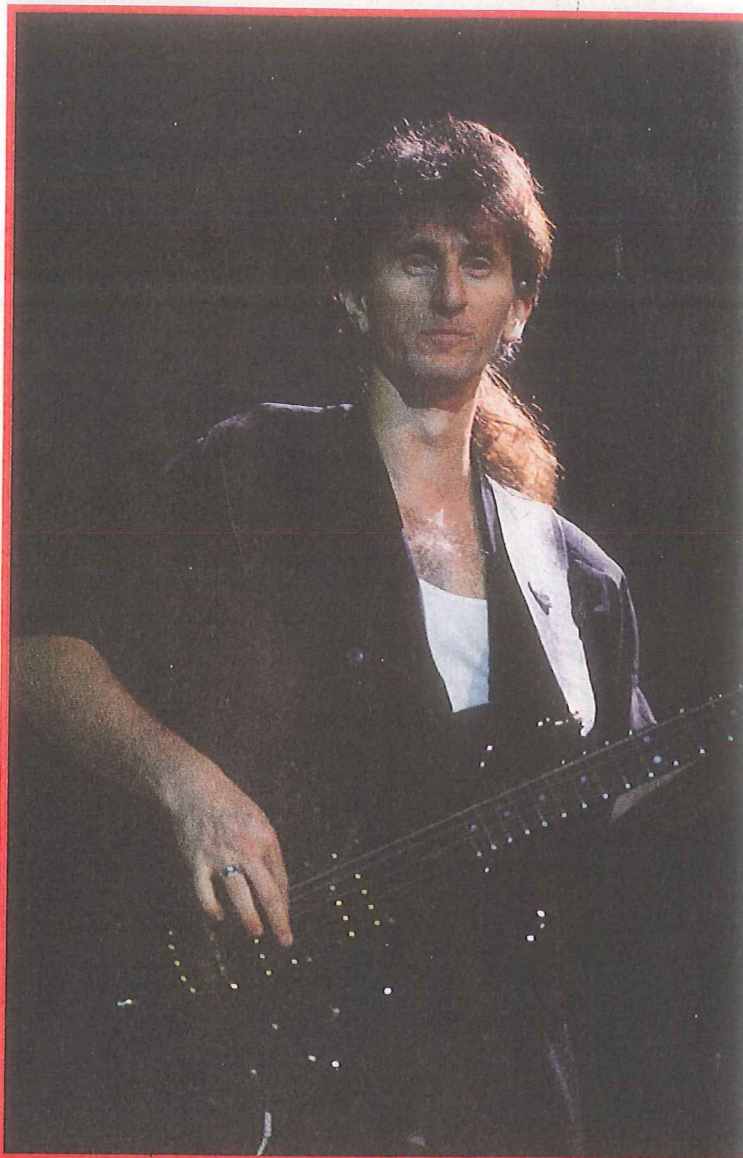
Peart's drum solo is incorporated into 'Rhythm Method'; the man makes it almost interesting, and there can be no higher accolade for a saucerpan basher.

Rush wind it all up with 'Force Ten', 'Time Stand Still' and 'Red Sector A', each played with such vigour that it leads me to believe that these three stoic and professional performers are actually enjoying being on stage, even after all these years.

Ignore the inclusions of the naive and lacklustre 'Closer To The Heart' and the dearth of material from my favourite Rush album, 'Signals', and what most would have you believe was to be a dull 'live in the studio' effort becomes an elegant, vibrant and alive album.

All grace, no sweat!

JON HOTTEN



RUSH's GEDDY Lee (above) and Alex Lifeson (below): still on fabulous full techno blow-out after all these double live albums



Pix Gene Ambo