

Spirit of Rush

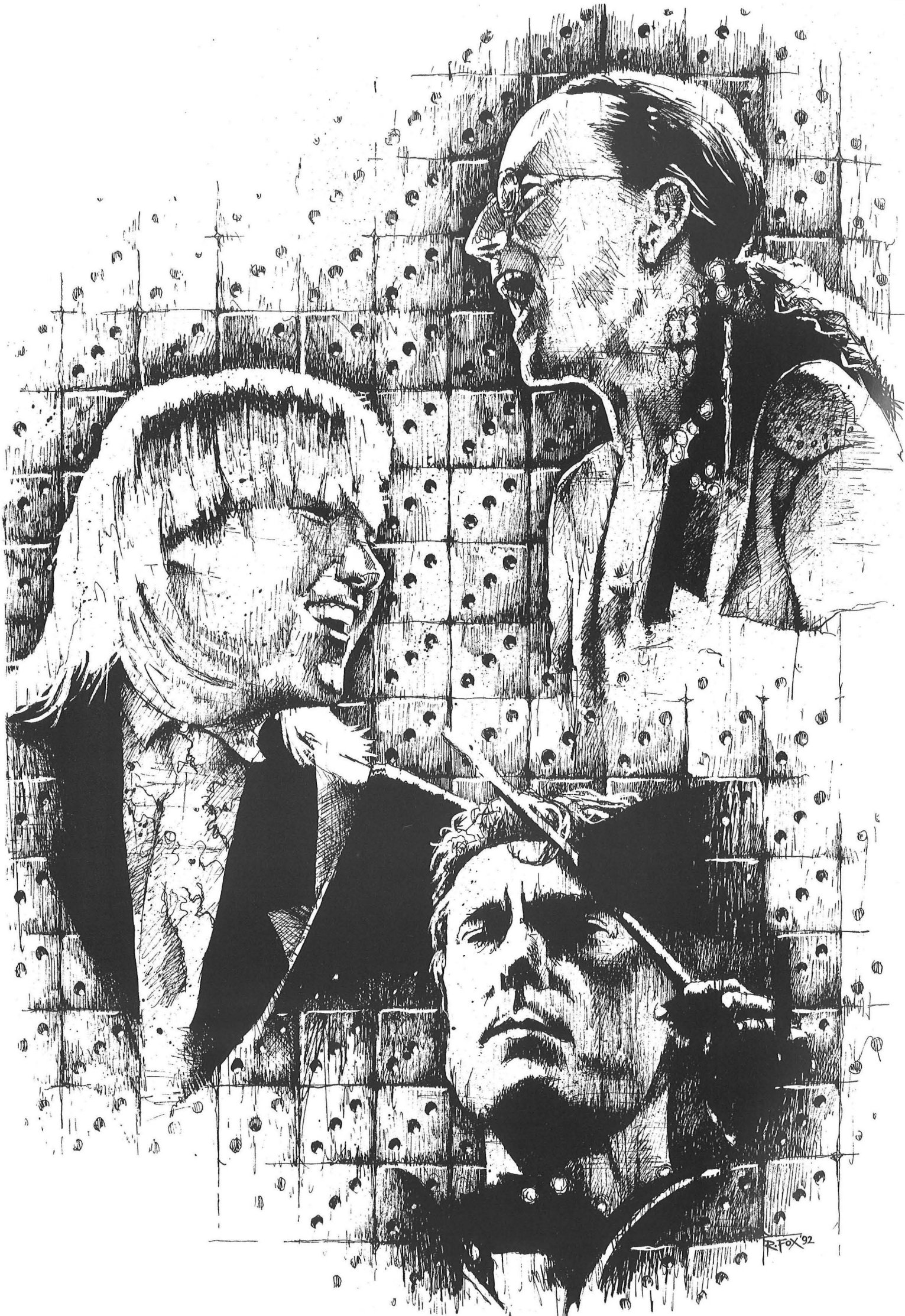
Summer '92

Issue 19



KENNEDY STADIUM BOSTON
MASSACHUSETTS
RUSH
PLUS GUESTS
ROLLING HOME

OK 92



SPIRIT OF RUSH EDITORIAL

Hello and welcome to the latest issue of Spirit Of Rush. Once again let us welcome all new readers that have joined us since the European tour dates. Thanks to everybody who has sent in items for use in the magazine, many of which we have used in this issue. If you do not see your piece this time please be patient, they will appear in future issue's. Please keep 'em coming!

News. Well not too much but, Neil appears on a new album by the Indie Canadian band RHEOSTATICS. It is entitled WHALE MUSIC and he appears on 3 tracks, namely Palomar, Guns & Rain, Rain, Rain. At present it is only available in Canada and there is no news of a U.K. release. The catalogue number is N41V 0011 on the Intrepid label distributed by Capitol Records.

As many of you will be aware, 3 songs, namely Vital Signs, Analog Kid and The Trees appeared in the set on the last leg of the American tour; they replaced The Pass and Subdivisions. The drum solo was also a bit longer. Also, during the European shows a snippet of Cygnus X-1 was added to the very end of the medley to close the show.

Revolutionary Comics, publisher's of the legendary Rock n Roll series have finally produced a comic about Rush. It is the July '92 issue number 49. If you cannot find a copy in your local comic shop, you could write to the publishers at Revolutionary Comics, 3841 Fourth Avenue, #229 San Diego, California, 92013, USA. Cost is \$2:50 an issue, but you should allow extra for P&P.

There have been several bootleg CD releases recently, including a few from the recent European dates. We will endeavour to bring you all the relevant details in future issue's.

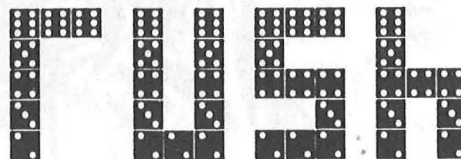
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The BBC recorded the bands first show at Wembley on April 17th, and then sneaked out 50 minutes worth on The Friday Rock Show without any warning!

Many thanks to Ken, Jules, Ray & Jimmy for putting up with me at the end of June. A good time was had by all, and we'll all be over again for the next tour. Count on it!

Finally, I am going to be working away in Hong Kong for 6 months, so there will be no auction for a couple of issues on the Permanent Trades page, but if you still want to advertise write to the editorial address. - Neil

RUSH

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49 JULY
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REVOLUTIONARY



RUSH JOB

STEVE ADAMS IN CONVERSATION WITH ALEX LIFESON.

- ** Rush to tour next October !
- ** New (heavier ?) LP due next fall !
- ** Lifeson to make film soundtrack !
- ** Guitarist seeks cure for sorayasis !
- ** Writer seeks correct spelling of sorayasis !
- ** Lee to visit Galapagos Islands ! (no Rush touring plans)

I've always been told to grab the reader's attention early on, hence the tasters above. Before I lose the momentum I'll quickly outline the scene: last April, about 11.00pm on the 13th to be exact, I was fortunate enough to be sitting in an empty dressing room -- save for a squeaky leather sofa and armchair -- backstage at the NEC with Alex Lifeson. As friendly, amiable, generous (he gave me more time than I was told to expect) and unassuming a brilliant guitarist as you're likely to meet, he was also surprisingly candid on a number of points, which I took to be an indication of his respect for the readers of this publication. I've quoted him at length as much as possible but avoided the traditional (simple) conversation format just to prove that I can.

The second (Monday) NEC gig, while not quite matching the previous night's, was still a brilliant show, and one of the best of the British tour. The acoustics were certainly superior to the barn of Wembley Arena.

"I don't remember this place sounding that great before," said Alex. "But with this P.A. system and Robert (Scovill) out there at the console the hall sounds so much better and it just comes back on stage and helps you. It always used to be very dry here but now it's more ambient and you can feed off that. You hit a note and there's good reverb around you."

The atmosphere at both NEC shows compared well with the last time Rush played the venue, which was for the recording of the "A Show Of Hands" video (and the bulk of the album). At the time I remember being surprised by how well the crowd reacted to the first U.K. shows in five years, given that there was an almost animosity towards the band for their aversion to playing Europe.

Alex had different views: "I seem to recall that the audiences used to be a lot more fired up and they don't seem that way now. Unless it's just because it's so long since we played here and we're used to American audiences -- who are crazy for the whole two hours, cheering constantly."

"There are certain certain cues in the set that really jack the audience up and the band feeds off that and there's an energy. Sometimes it's hard when you wait for those cues from the audience and they don't happen. The audience here is much more attentive, they tend to listen and show their appreciation after the song for a period of time and then it stops as soon as Geddy talks or the next song starts."

But we Brits are a polite bunch...

"Yeah ! -- and I suppose it's because everyone wants to listen to what's going on -- Canadian audiences are exactly the same."

Alex carefully avoided giving a pointed answer to my question of which type of audience he preferred, but reading between the lines it's quite apparent:

"It's just... different. If we spent a month in Britain and played all the places we used to play 15 years ago, smaller halls and smaller towns and cities, then I think we'd get used to it. But we've been playing in America for so long and you get used to the feedback from the audience... it just takes a bit of adjustment that's all."



The Rush 'existence' -- the way the band and its individuals operate -- is something that particularly fascinates me. The whole thing seems to work in phases; (i) work on an album, (ii) record it, (iii) release it, (iv) tour, (v) stop for three months or so, then back to (i) again. I wondered how it all fitted together for Alex from a personal point of view, but although I learned a few things, afterwards felt that maybe I'd been too vague, or perhaps too 'deep', as if I'd only scratched the surface of the points I was trying to make and/or have answered.

"Well, the few months after a tour are really 'off time', when you kinda separate yourself from the band and that whole lifestyle. Then we start writing and record an album, and then we've got some more time off, but because you've just done the record you can never really separate yourself from it. So during that break for a few months we're working on a video or inputting on the release of the record or Neil is still getting the last bits of the cover together with Hugh. We start rehearsing a month and a half or so before the tour starts, so it's not really dead time."

Alex suggested that the limbo period between finishing recording and actually releasing an album is a trying time for the band.

"It's very difficult; you go through a period of withdrawal because that's all you've thought about for a six or seven month period. Every single day that's all you deal with, and suddenly it's over -- last day of mixing you have the playback and the following day you feel... lost !

"With this record (RTB) we finished so early we didn't know what to do. We hadn't planned to go out on the road until January, but weren't going to sit around from May when we finished mixing. After the Hold Your Fire tour we did want a long break, but not this time, so consequently we moved the whole tour up a few months."

Maybe that explains why they could fit European dates into the tour -- let's hope for another unbudgeted early finish to recording on the next album. Meanwhile Alex talked about what the band did during the main 'off-time' after a tour:

"We all have different interests and don't spend a lot of time together when we're off the road. Geddy and I used to get together at least once a week and play tennis or have lunch and hang out or at least talk to each other, but now everyone has their own circle of friends and family and we live in different areas of the city and outside the city so we don't spend that much time together in our off time. We spend eight or nine months of the year together so that only makes sense.

"Neil's an avid cyclist as you probably know, and he plans these trips -- primarily through Africa -- where he goes cycling for about a month. He also does a lot of cycling in Quebec where he has a house, he likes the countryside there, it's quite rural.

"I like a number of sports-related things. I play a lot of tennis and got into golf a couple of years ago. Golf has become my saviour on the road because it gives me something that's constructive. It's a sport that you really have to learn to play properly and practice at if you want to really be any good.

"The important thing is that being on the road is a very boring existence; you sit in a hotel room all day, go to the gig, have soundcheck and then sit in a dressing room for three or four hours before the show, and that show for two hours is the focus of your energy for the whole day. Then you're on a bus for five or six hours, so you're always in some place that feels like a cage a lot of times.

"In the beginning it wasn't so bad because it was a new thing and it was exciting and we played so much and in so many places, and we were very young. Now after 18 years it's not so exciting and it's not so much fun, so you really have to work hard at making it fun. Golf to some people I know sounds ridiculous, but it takes up four or five hours out of your day. You're outside in the fresh air, you get together with a couple of guys -- we have a regular group of four in amongst the crew and we go out every day off -- and I feel great for it. I get up earlier, I don't go to bed as late as I used to, don't spend as much time in the bar as I used to, and all those things. And I come back and I feel excellent ! I grab a shower, go to soundcheck and I feel like I've done something. Neil's the same way -- he cycles on days off for about a hundred miles, it's the same thing for him.

"These are just escapes from the drudgery of being on the road, there's nothing glamorous about it. Certainly in the beginning when it's a new thing, but when it's not and you've done it for so long it really is drudgery."

I opened something of a can of worms when I innocently enquired if Alex ever got blisters from playing golf -- something that happens to me every time I try tonking a few balls off the tee. Holding up his hands I was very surprised to see a pair of very worn, dry and scarred looking palms.

"No I don't get blisters, but my hands aren't the greatest. I've had sorayasis since I was about 18 years old, and it's a constant battle -- as you can see it's quite red and raw. I've just gone through a bad period and all these wrinkles are actually cuts where the skin splits open."

And it can hardly help when you're sliding your hand up and down the neck of the guitar all the time...

"Oh yeah !"

Obviously he has to look after his hands, but I wondered if Alex needed to treat the guitar neck with anything.

"I take medication and use some creams, but don't do anything to the guitar. Some older guitars I had the varnish removed from the neck because I liked the feel of bare wood, but the guitars I use now are very nice the way they are."

It must be very difficult to go back to work -- especially when realistically you don't HAVE to -- after months of serious 'off time' after a tour. Who decides when it's time to work again -- is it some sort of synchronicity or is it planned ?

"Our schedule's planned a few years in advance so we know where we're gonna be at a certain time. For instance when we finished the last record we knew that once we'd decided to go out and tour in October that we'd work through to the beginning of July. Then we take a few months off and start working on the next record in November so we can record it and be finished by mid-May, and start the next tour the following October. So that's a couple of years in advance.

"It's good to know work this way so we can plan on these kinda little expeditions that we like to take. Golf and tennis are one thing, but I also do some diving. I went to Papua New Guinea a couple of years ago to do some diving and trekking there for a few weeks, and am planning another dive off the coast of South America this October while Neil's in Africa. So we all plan these little things -- Geddy wants to go to the Galapagos Islands and take another trip to the Antarctic -- so you need to know where you're gonna be so that you can do these things. I mean, they're not like one week holidays, they're pretty major events !"



The band are obviously very lucky to be able to take such exotic holidays; a fact that Alex readily acknowledges:

"It's a fantastic luxury and we're very, very fortunate with the kind of work that we do that we've never had to grow up. We're gonna be kids for the rest of our lives, knock on wood, and we can do some of these exotic things that we've always dreamed about and a lot of people dream about."

In some respects the band earn their holidays by working lengthier hours (certainly on tour) than the typical nine-to-fiver during the nine months of the year that they are together.

"Yeah, absolutely. Most people have two weeks, but we can spread it out to three solid months. I think when you balance it all out I'd say we do put in a few more hours. We're certainly away from our families a lot more than someone working nine to five. I'm not complaining."

With the band using more and more twin vocals and background voices in the studio, Alex has started singing backing vocals on the last couple of tours (he never even used to have a microphone). Had he taken lessons?

"No, but I have a friend that's a music teacher and he gave me some pointers and some exercises to do, and I spent about a month before we got into rehearsals just practising my singing. I don't have a great deal of confidence in my singing, but he gave me some really good exercises and I followed them and it slowly came. I work at it and I really rather enjoy it actually. It's something new for me and I'm getting a little better at it with practice. It also adds a little more fullness to the sound."

"I considered going to a vocal coach but I couldn't find anyone who could tune in to what I wanted. They really want to teach you how to sing, and I didn't want that. I just wanted to learn how to use my diaphragm properly and take it from there."

Among the questions proffered by Spirit readers I met -- or had thrust upon me by Mick -- at the Sheffield and Birmingham shows was whether the band had ever finished a track and not put it on an album. Alex gave the expected, if disappointing from a collector's point of view, answer.

"No. We only ever record enough for the record. We've never gone in and said let's do 15 songs and pick the best ten. We figure if we're gonna have ten songs then we're gonna write ten songs."

Had they ever wanted to play around with tracks afterwards?

"Oh always."

So why the absence of 12" extended remixes and the like?

"No... that's like a vicious circle that can go on and on and on. I think lately we've learned that we're having a lot of fun and we're getting really good results from the really spontaneous approach to writing and recording. You know in your heart that a month after you've finished the record you'll want to change something -- that's never gonna change, you're always gonna want to do that no matter how many times you think you've picked something up."

"So it has to really be a representation of a period of time and then you move on from there. Maybe that attitude has helped our longevity."

The Roll The Bones tour saw Rush improvising a lot more during the set; perhaps a way of exorcising any ghosts of doubt about now-complete tracks? Especially surprising was that the improvisation was on new songs -- when it would seem more appropriate to play around with older material (to make it fresher or more fun to play live).



"This (improvisation) is a very new thing for us, we've never done it before. It's always been a rule with us that we'd represent the songs quite faithfully. That's a good point (about playing with the older songs), but I don't think there's a desire to do it with the old stuff so much as the new. Only because the new stuff is fresh and you can expand on it. The older songs... we never really considered that, and it's a good thing because I think they remind people of a period of time and it's better off that way."

'Bravado' (the stand out track on RTB for me) is among the material to get a major on-stage facelift.

"It changes nightly too, which is great for us because it allows us to stretch out a bit and have a little bit of fun. It also adds a little bit of surprise because there isn't a set cue for anything. For 'Where's My Thing' for instance, that whole beginning we just drift along and suddenly it comes in."

What music does Alex listen to at home ?

"I don't really listen to any specific music, I like a lot of different things. I like a lot of the bands that have been coming out of the American west coast -- out of Seattle -- lately, like Pearl Jam and Soundgarden. I really like Primus a lot; they're really good players and very different. I also listen to Nat King Cole, and Eric Johnson and Steve Morse are among the guitar players I like. So it's really a mix of a lot of things."

The variety in musical tastes within the band really comes as no surprise, since Rush have never had very obvious influences -- even two Rush LP's don't necessarily sound similar.

Alex: "I think from time to time we've been influenced by trends in music or the style of a particular band, but we've never really tried to sound like any other band."

Another question I was asked to ask (credit where it's due) involved the decision not to use the recorded gospel choir on 'Prime Mover', which unearthed a very obvious Lifeson opinion on what Rush should sound like.

"Well we used them a little bit, it's just mixed quite low. It was an experiment that I never felt very good about. We wanted to try it and we did, but it didn't really turn out. I think with 'Power Windows' trying a real orchestra on a couple of spots was an interesting approach, but on 'Hold Your Fire' I personally didn't like the idea of using real strings again, I didn't think it had a place in Rush music."

"It was the same with the gospel choir; they came in and did it and I sat there and didn't like it at all. It was something we had to decide later, we wanted to try it -- and we did -- but it's just not us. You try things, you learn from them and you move on from there. There are a lot of things about that period in Rush that looking back in retrospect I don't feel good about but I think we -- and I -- have learned from it and I think I'm a better guitar player from the lessons I learned from those two records in particular. I think I'm a better organiser now than I was back then, and we also learned that the most important thing about this band is the three piece core of bass, drums and guitar -- not even the keyboards that we work with. That's really where the heart and soul of this band is."

I noted that Geddy, for the first time in years, actually gets to play bass throughout the current live set -- was this something that would continue ?

"Yeah, I hope so. I'm really looking forward to the next record; I think we'll take an even more direct approach -- at least that's what I'd aim for."

Citing the example of Crowded House, who I've seen umpteen times on their recent U.K. tours -- and never the same set twice -- I wondered if, given the opportunity (technicalities obviously aside), Alex would like to vary the Rush set every night. The answer came as a bit of surprise from the guy I figured was the loosest or most 'impetuous' in the band.

"Not particularly. The show's the show, and each tour has a particular flavour and character, and I like that about us. I don't think Crowded House -- as good as they may be -- play big arenas and that stuff, and when you're touring a show, that's exactly what it is -- whether it's a play or a musical or a rock band or whatever. If we were playing smaller halls... take the guys in Primus for instance; they like to change their set from night to night, but they're an opening act. They want to play just to keep on top form and they want to do some of the songs that they don't get to play in a half-hour set. When they headline they're on for one and a half hours, so it's important to keep playing that stuff, as it was for us when we opened up; we did exactly the same thing -- we had a fairly steady set but would substitute different songs."

How to obtain a mesmerising answer from a seemingly innocuous question, part 1: Why had Alex changed his name from Zivojinovic to Lifeson, and was he related to the Yugoslav tennis player ?

"It (Lifeson) is just an English translation -- it's just easier. No, we're not related, I actually asked him. It's a Yugoslavian name, and they -- well the Surbians anyway -- have a thing called a 'slama' (?), which is like a patron saint, and if you have the same one as someone else then you're related if you have the same last name and if it falls on the same day. It's because if your family is split this is something that's always passed on from generation to generation. I bumped into him at a tennis tournament in Toronto and I asked him about that and he said no, it was on a different day so we're not related."

Glad to get that one over with ! (and I still don't understand the answer, though I've quoted it as accurately as possible). Over the years there have been a number of rumours surrounding the possibility of Rush scoring film music -- and apparently a number of offers have been made. How realistic a possibility is it that they'll ever do a film soundtrack ?

"Very realistic. I'm working on it now as a matter of fact. I met some people in Los Angeles when I was there, and in Toronto, and I just let them know that I'd like to do something like that."

"Personally or with Rush ?

"Me personally -- I don't think Neil's interested at all. I think Geddy's interested in it, but I think I'd rather do it on my own; it would be fun to work with either other musicians or just on my own for something like that. That's not to say I don't enjoy working with Ged, but it's nice to get away from the regular thing and I have a studio at home and it would be ideal for me."

A slight faux pas here. I wondered whether it would be a major project from a Barry Norman/box office point of view but Alex initially misinterpreted.

"For me it would be major yes ! No, these are mostly small films. There's a couple of scripts... they don't knock me out but I'm just gonna keep waiting until something comes up. Often you get offers to do two or three songs for a film -- maybe the theme song and a couple of other things -- and they'll sort of shop it around and get a bunch of different people to do stuff for it. And then there's one film that they wanted us to do the whole soundtrack for but I think they wanted the whole band to do that and as I said, Neil doesn't have an interest in it.

"Certainly it's something I'd like to do, and I'd like to do more production for sure. I like time off, but after a few weeks I'm itching to do something and this next break I'm planning on doing a fair bit of work if I can."

Out of all the members of Rush, Alex has been the most musically productive outside the band (Gowan, Greenway, Platinum Blonde, etc). Had he done anything else lately ?

"I actually did another thing with Leona (Boyd, as featured in Guitar Player's Canadian Guitar Summit flexi disc) on her most recent record, but we've been working a lot lately so I haven't really had an opportunity."

So no more 'Smoke On The Water's then ?

"I was never really crazy about that song !"

Finally I asked Alex if he'd ever play 'Different Strings' for me (I was hoping it'd be a birthday gift at the second Wembley show). He laughed.

"Oh God, how does it go ? That was one of those songs that goes on a record and is just a production piece. We used to do songs like that that we knew we'd never play live, and we'd often get other musicians in to play on them."

Yeah, but wasn't 'Witch Hunt' a production piece that had it's day on stage ?

"Yeah, but that's because technology caught up and we thought it would be interesting to do all three pieces of 'Fear'. Actually I always enjoyed playing that...er those, songs !"

...And that was about it. With a shake of the hand Alex shuffled off and I made my way out, pausing to swap a few words with Andrew MacNaughtan, watch the crew taking down the last remnants of the stage and acknowledge the few autograph hunters vainly waiting by the tour bus. These sights made it very easy to identify 'the show' as Alex called it, and the machine that constitutes Rush on the road. As much as I like to watch from a distance and remain a faceless admirer, it was none-the-less a pleasure to see step inside and see the workings as opposed to just hearing the clock ticking. And if Neil Peart ever reads that nonsensical metaphor then my chances of interviewing the final member of the band are completely fucked...

Steve Adams.

Its A Cracker (Geddit?)

Most fans of Rush will now be aware that Geddy Lee uses a wal bass guitar.

They are generally considered by musicians and critics alike to be among the finest in the world and they are made literally on the door-step of my home of High Wycombe, Bucks. The company trades under the name of Electric Wood and is located in a small industrial estate within a mile of my home.

The guitars are named after the company's co-founder Ian Waller - known to all as Wal. Sadly, Ian Waller died some years ago from a heart attack. However, the company has continued to flourish under the guidance of partner and co-founder Pete Stevens.

It was during the band's recent U.K. tour that I approached Pete Stevens who graciously allowed me to visit the firm and interview him.

Upon my arrival Pete welcomed me and gave me a brief tour of the factory. It's quite a modest set up, basically consisting of a machine shop, assembly area and small demo/reception room.

We entered this demo room and prepared to start the interview. However, I immediately recognised a guitar given pride of place on its own stand in the centre of the room. Pete explained that this guitar was an exact replica of the one Geddy was using on the Roll The Bones tour. Now, I'm not a guitarist myself, but I could certainly appreciate the workmanship and detail that had gone into its construction. The satin-like finish was superb and really complimented the reddish colour of the wood. I was also very surprised indeed on how heavy the guitar was to pick up and handle. A truly beautiful instrument.

There were also other guitars stored there, all neatly racked in one corner. The walls of this room were decorated with photo's, cuttings and pictures of the galaxy or rock stars who use the guitars. I eventually found Geddy's photo just inside the door in the top left hand corner! An endorsement from some of the biggest names in music.

Pete was very friendly and easy-going which helped me to calm my nerves as I prepared to ask him some questions. By now I guess he realised that he wasn't exactly dealing with a rock journalist!

I wanted to get a general idea on the company and not ask too many questions solely on Geddy. I hope readers can bear with me on this.

I started by asking Pete about the beginnings of the company.

Gary Cross: When and where was the company formed?

Pete Stevens: It was formed in London off Oxford Street in 1978.

GC: That was by Ian Waller and yourself?

PS: Yeah, and a guy called John Perry who was a bass player at the time.

GC: He was formerly with Caravan, wasn't he?

PS: Yes, that's right.

GC: Presumably John moved on to do other things then?

PS: Well he wasn't actively involved. He was just like an ambassador and really we built the first bass for him, which we have actually got up there on the rack as it happens (points to rack of guitars in corner). It's that second one in from the end there, that little short one. So that was the first bass we ever built.

GC: Was that how the company started, through that one guitar?

PS: Well, it goes back to when I was working at Farmyard rehearsal studios over at Little Chalfont (a village in Bucks.) and John Perry was playing there. The place was owned by a guy called Trevor Morais who's now drumming with Howard Jones but at that time they were with a group called Quantum Jump.

GC: Right, I recall the name.

PS: John played bass and Trevor drums. I was actually over there doing some building work, turning old barns into rehearsal studio's and things like that. Wal was an old mate of Trevor's back from the sixties. Trevor came from Liverpool, Wal from Manchester and so they knew each other. Anyway, Wal came over and was giving us a hand and somehow John wanted a bass made. Wal was quite into electronics and I was fairly handy at woodwork and so we all kind of got together.

GC: And things sort of evolved from there?

PS: Yeah, that's right.

GC: So Wal sadly died of a heart-attack? What age was he?

PS: Yes. He was 43.

GC: You had no qualms about carrying on with the company?

PS: Umm, well obviously I did initially, you know. But by then we had got quite a good little business going. We certainly weren't ever looking to get rich out of it but primarily I enjoyed being in the music business. At that time there were a couple of debts that still had to be paid (laughs) but then Wal effectively was just involved in the electronics side of it and that was his sort of thing. I suppose he was Mr electric and I was Mr Wood. So we carried on and were still ticking away.

GC: How many people do you employ now?

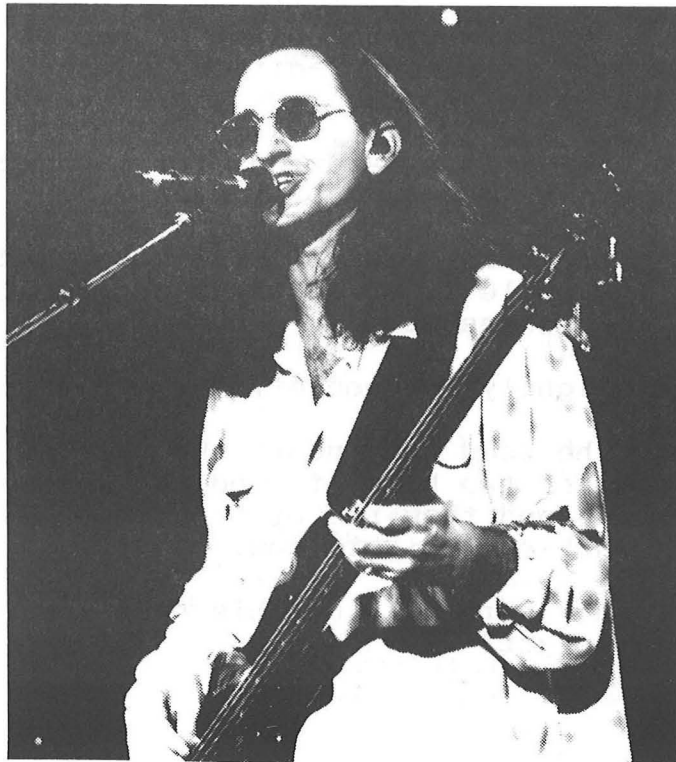
PS: Three.

GC: Are all the guitars custom built?

PS: No. We have a regular range of instruments that we've designed. Obviously, we are always looking for improvements or ideas from bass players. Which is why I like dealing direct with bass players because I don't learn too much about making basses from shop-keepers or distributors. We've got a regular range of guys who come to us because they like our sound of the way we operate as a small company.

GC: Do you have customers from the Wycombe area at all?

PS: Oh yeah, one or two lads. I suppose most of our business is export though. We make about three or four instruments a week. I suppose most of those go off to far-distant lands. We sell a lot of instruments to America, Europe and Japan.



GC: Do musicians in general come here to the factory?

PS: Oh yeah, sure.

GC: So presumably Geddy's been here?

PS: Yeah, he was here quite recently in fact to check out a few bits and pieces.

GC: You first met him in 1985 during the making of Power Windows?

PS: Yes, that's right. I went up to Sarm Studios where they were recording.

GC: How was he introduced to the guitar?

PS: Peter Collins, who was producing the Power Windows album, actually had one of our basses. Although he is not a bass player as such, he likes the sound of it and the way it records, and so any album that he engineers or produces then he discreetly takes it out of the box and sticks it on a stand. If the bass player is into it then you know he likes them to use it and that's really how Geddy came to check it out.

GC: So you built him a guitar? Did he specify anything at all?

PS: Well no. He played that bass belonging to Peter Collins and he wanted it to sound as similar to that as possible. But he wanted it with a black polyester finish.

GC: He did specify that colour? Did he give a reason?

PS: Yes. I think he had always had black basses at that time. So I think he didn't want to break tradition on that. So we put him a bass together and we've gone on from there really.

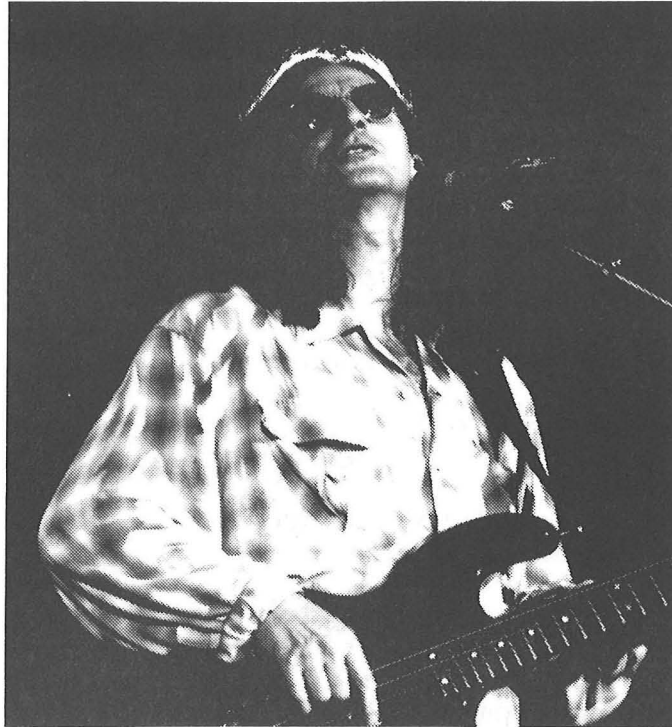
GC: I can see you use various hardwoods for manufacturing the guitars, what timber is Geddy's guitar made of?

PS: His latest one (points to guitar) the core (body) is mahogany, its got a bird's eye maple front and back and then it's sprayed with translucent red polyester.

GC: It gives it a slightly mottled effect.

PS: Yes, obviously the wood underneath the lacquer always varies. Basically you never get two bits of wood the same. It seems to be a little bit deeper toned than the other one. He seems to be playing it pretty much exclusively now.

GC: Yes, that's right, certainly on this tour anyway. And the other Wal basses he's got?



PS: They are both the regular standard four-string. The black one that he bought originally and then Skip (Gildersleeve), who was his roadie at the time, felt a bit more comfortable with a back-up, just in case he broke a string or something like that on stage. Obviously changing from a Steinberger to a Wal was a major undertaking. So we gave him another black bass or black body with a clear maple neck to use purely in a back-up situation.

GC: He has also got a five-string Wal.

PS: Yes, he's got a five-string which he produced a couple of tracks recording-wise with.

GC: But not for performing?

PS: No, it's hard to change from a four-string to a five-string.

GC: Performance wise?

PS: Yeah, because the brain just tends to, you know, kind of lock into playing a four-string bass.

GC: Are you familiar at all with the music of Geddy Lee and Rush?

PS: Umm, well obviously since he's been playing it we've listened to him and got a few of the albums.

GC: What, he has recorded with the Wal?

PS: Yeah. I can't say that I was familiar with him before he started using our bass, but then that's true of a lot of bands really, no disrespect. But sure, I've certainly got into it since then and I really like his bass playing.

GC: Yeah, you can appreciate his style?

PS: I know Geddy as being more of a kind of tenor player than being a bass player. But no, very clean technique and a very good musician.

GC: Have you seen the band at all live?

PS: Oh yeah. I saw the Wembley shows on the Hold Your Fire tour.

GC He's very busy on stage and as a three-piece they have to cover a lot of ground.

PS: They have a great sound for a three-piece band. A very good sound. I was very impressed.

GC: The band have a reputation for taking their music very seriously. What's Geddy like to deal with as a customer?

PS: He's the perfect customer. He has never quibbed about our prices or anything we've done for him.

GC: You've found Geddy to be very amiable?

PS: Yeah, he's a lovely guy. The times that I've met him, a very modest guy. He finds it hard to understand why he's voted best bass player when he has favourite bass players of his own, you know? He was absolutely amazed by the amount of fan letters that he got when he changed from Rickenbacker to Steinberger and then even more letters when he changed from Steinberger to Wal. But he definitely underestimates his popularity.

GC: Yes, very unassuming.

PS: That's right. But very dedicated to what he does. The band do sort of deserve the success that they've got as they work very hard and put on a good show.

GC: Have you achieved any major design achievements in the construction of the guitar? I read something about a triple-neck!

PS: That wasn't a major achievement, it was just a one-off custom-built instrument for a bass player who was playing with Rick Wakeman some time ago.

GC: When Rick was on his own, after he had left Yes?

PS: Yeah. It was a local lad called Roger Newell, you may have heard of him? After that band broke up, Chris Squire from Yes actually had that triple-neck for quite some time. He actually played with it on this last Yes tour.

GC: The recent tour?

PS: Yeah. The bass is actually owned by the Hard Rock cafe in New York and it was brought out of retirement for the Yes tour.

GC: I did actually catch the show at Wembley.

PS: Did you? They used it in the encore apparently.

GC: Ah right (to be honest I can't remember seeing it!). Rick was a local guy wasn't he? At that time anyway.

PS: Yeah sure, Gerrards Cross. He lives on the Isle of Man now.

GC: Would you like to expand the company at all, or are you happy with how it is at present?

PS: Well, we're happy making basses but it's hard these days obviously to cover all your costs.

GC: Presumably the recession has affected you?

PS: Yeah. It did have quite an effect on us. But then we've become quite busy again at the moment. But these things always go in peaks and troughs.

GC: Who are your other customers? I note a lot of famous faces on the wall.

PS: I'm sure we've got a lot of ambassadors as we call them although we don't actually do any endorsement deals with anybody. If people like our basses then hopefully they spread the word.

GC: You don't feel the need to market or promote the guitars?

PS: Well, it's one of those situations where if you spend a lot of money advertising then it's a lot of basses you have to make to pay for that advertising. Fortunately, we've been around quite a while and word-of-mouth seems to be working pretty well at the moment. Exposure from people like Geddy, Paul McCartney, Mick Karn, Percy Jones.

GC: Well I know Geddy's been quoted as saying it's the best sounding bass he's ever had.

PS: Well that's nice!

At this point I finished the interview and handed Pete copies of 'Spirit' along with the R.T.B. tour programme. Before I left, Pete told me that Geddy had phoned on the morning of the Glasgow show. Pete had arranged to go to Wembley on Friday and Saturday to check Geddy's equipment and make a few fine adjustments. I told Pete to try and see at least one of the shows!

I would like to express my sincere thanks to Pete Stevens for taking the time out to see me. A very interesting and enjoyable experience for me and hopefully for readers too!

GARY CROSS, High Wycombe, Bucks

Rolling Stone Interviews

June 26, 1980

"Rush's heavy-metal message hits the radio"
Chicago

"I can't stand it," says Geddy Lee, lead singer, bassist and keyboardist for Rush, before a show in Chicago's 11,000-seat International Amphitheatre, "when you listen to someone from the record company telling someone else how intelligent you are in front of you: 'But really, they're an *intelligent* band.'"

Lee is reacting to questions prompted by *Permanent Waves*, the band's latest album (and its fifth gold one). After years of notoriety as heavy-metal conceptualizers, Rush abandoned the sidelong opuses they'd been known for in favour of shorter, accessible songs for *Waves*. "It was time to come out of the fog for a while," says Lee, "and put down something concrete."

What they ended up saying was pretty startling. "The Spirit of Radio" (which, as a single, just missed the Top Forty) and "Natural Science" carve up the record industry as a pack of charlatans; "Freewill" takes on Yes and other guru-rock mythologizers; and "Different Strings" slaps back at much of the critical abuse the band has taken over the years. Here's a dinosaur heavy-metal band, sounding like New Wave philosophers.

"It's a bit angry," admits lyricist-drummer Neil Peart about *Waves*. "But it's not focused at anyone in particular. 'Stop bullshitting' is the message. I think there's a big difference, though, between Rush and the Clash, because we're not saying that those things suck, just that they're being done poorly."

Rush was formed by Lee and a high-school buddy, guitarist Alex Lifeson, in the late Sixties as a hard-rock band of the Led Zeppelin school. Their first album was privately released in Canada on Moon Records in 1974 but did so well in the US Midwest as an import that Chicago-based Mercury Records signed the Zep soundalikes. Peart replaced Rush's original drummer for the group's first stateside tour and gradually turned them in a more cerebral direction, one that incorporated philosophy and science fiction. The full-blown concept album *2112*, released in 1976, marked the band's evolution into spokesmen for a lost generation of Seventies rockers, influenced by groups as disparate as the Who, Cream, Procol Harum and King Crimson. Touring incessantly, Rush captured a surprising

chunk of the concert-going audience.

The band is aware of the contempt music-industry insiders and critics have for them, but their success has made the slings and arrows a lot easier to bear. "We've always played as well as we can," Lee explains. "In the early days people started liking us even though we didn't consider ourselves good musicians. With every album, we get a little better. When we wrote *Hemispheres* [their next to last LP], we couldn't properly play it because it was overambitious. Part of the difficulty in recording it was learning how to play it. *Permanent Waves* benefited so much because for the last two years we tried experimenting with other instruments, other ways of looking at what we do."

The banner hanging from the balcony at stage left in Chicago's International Amphitheatre reads CHICAGO FREAKS LOVE RUSH.

Rush fans roar their approval as the first crashing, sustained chords of "2112" open the show. For over two hours, the group blasts out crowd pleasers from their eight albums, using background visuals for several numbers, most spectacularly for the long space opera "Cygnus," a science-fiction tale that took two albums to work out. However, the audience cheers loudest when Rush plays several numbers from *Permanent Waves*.

"The Spirit of Radio," the leadoff song on *Waves*, has probably gotten more airplay than Rush's entire catalogue put together, and it's brought them a whole new audience. But the 40,000-plus die-hards who packed into the former Chicago slaughterhouse over four nights to cheer their heroes needed no convincing. "We give the audience the same credit we give ourselves," says Peart about the nature of the band's appeal. "If an idea sounds good to us — it's exciting and makes us think — theoretically it should have that effect on other people."

"There are so many different elements to our music," adds Lee. "One element is heavy metal: It's raw, it's energetic, it's loud and it's bone-crushing at times. There's people, I'm sure, who come to hear us just for our lyrics, and some who come for Alex's guitar playing or my bass playing or Neil's percussive abilities. It's difficult to say one reason it's righter. All you can say is who you'd rather play for."

John Swenson

May 15, 1980

“Rush’s heavy-metal sludge”

Rush at The Forum, Los Angeles, March 10th, 1980

In one way, Rush is a lot like Shaun Cassidy, Teddy Pendergrass and Super Vixens: its audience is made up almost entirely of one sex. In Rush’s case, it’s nearly all males — or more precisely, judging from this crowd, nearly all sixteen-year-old males with long hair, faint mustaches and adrenalin to burn.

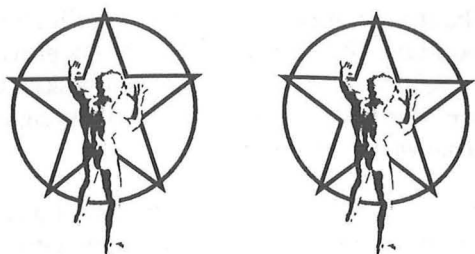
This audience is the kind that has stuck with Rush for six years, steadily increasing the Canadian trio’s box-office potency. This audience also reacts more feverishly to its old favourites than to anything from *Permanent Waves*, the current Rush album, which took an immediate leap into the Top Ten.

Rush, of course, knows all about this audience. At the Forum concert, the band emphasized its old material, introducing each song and noting which album it came from. Even “The Spirit of Radio,” the song responsible for garnering most of the FM airplay that has made *Permanent Waves* so successful, was given a graceless, hurried performance and an unimportant position near the middle of the set.

Rush’s patented sledgehammer epics, such as “Hemispheres,” “2112” and “Passage to Bangkok,” try to mesh mystical, literary lyrics with elaborate rock & roll suites but they only succeed in turning everything into heavy-metal sludge. There were a few exceptions, though, most notably “Free Will,” the punchiest, most straight-forward rocker on *Permanent Waves*. Also, it’s hard not to be somewhat impressed by the fact that only three musicians can create such a massive, leaden sound.

For the record, those three are drummer Neil Peart, who writes all the band’s lyrics and takes fewer solos than might be expected; guitarist Alex Lifeson, whose mile-a-minute buzzing is more numbing than exciting; and bassist, keyboardist and singer Geddy Lee, whose amazingly high-pitched wailing often sounds like Mr. Bill singing heavy metal. If only Mr. Sluggo had been on hand to give these guys a couple of good whacks...

Steve Pond



May 28, 1981

“Rush: power from the people”

Ignored by critics and radio,
this hard-rock trio went straight to the fans

Montreal

There are two schools of thought on the Canadian power trio Rush — for and against. Tonight, at the massive Montreal Forum, Rush are playing to yet another sold-out house and the lines are clearly drawn.

Taking the affirmative position are 14,000 French-Canadian fans, many of them wearing Rush T-shirts and scruffy denim jackets with the band’s logo stitched across the back. They are vigorously pumping the sweaty, smoky air with their fists and yelling themselves hoarse as guitarist Alex Lifeson, drummer Neil Peart, and bassist-singer Geddy Lee roar through a two-hour set packed with tracks from nine of the group’s ten Mercury albums — including their latest best seller, *Moving Pictures*. When Lee announces that the band is recording the show for an upcoming live album, the cheering and applause seem to shake the Forum to its foundation. And by the end of the lengthy encore, “La Villa Strangiato,” the audience looks almost as exhausted as the musicians.

But one fan’s meat is another man’s poison. In the next morning’s *Montreal Gazette*, reviewer John Griffin roasted the group mercilessly: singer Geddy Lee — whose banshee wail could pass the Memorex test — “sounds like a guinea pig with an amphetamine habit”; axeman Alex Lifeson, a master of high-volume licks, “is ordinary at best”; and Neil Peart’s heady philosophical lyrics are summarily dismissed as “cosmic.” Griffin signs off with one last slap, describing Rush as “one of the most tedious rock bands working the arena circuit today.” The fans at that concert must have found it hard to believe this guy was at the same show.

“Yeah, I saw that review,” Geddy Lee sneers in disgust. In the thirteen years since he and high-school buddy Lifeson — whose blond, angelic features make him look like Botticelli’s idea of a rock star — founded Rush, Lee has seen a lot more like it. Sitting in the back seat of Neil Peart’s black Mercedes, which the drummer is racing across the Quebec-Ontario border on the way to that night’s gig in Ottawa, Lee shrugs his shoulders. “I saw the headline [RUSH: POMP-ROCK TRIO HOT ON TEDIUM] and threw it away,” he continues in a near whisper, a marked contrast to his bloodcurdling singing. “I didn’t have to read it to know what it said. Hey, the reviews we got in Toronto [their hometown] last week were the first favourable ones

we'd ever gotten there." Bad reviews have been a way of life for Rush since Lee and Lifeson, both twenty-seven, and Peart, 28, first started touring America in 1974, hot on the heels of their Led Zep-alike debut, *Rush*. Now, despite the longstanding scorn of many critics, as well as radio station program directors who deemed the group's brand of progressive aggro-rock unfit for airplay, Rush are finally enjoying the fruits of seven years' labour on the road. Last year's *Permanent Waves* cracked the Top Five and even sired the band's first major hit single, "The Spirit of Radio."

But the big payoff is *Moving Pictures*, which peaked at Number Three barely a month after its release, aced out of the top spot only by REO Speedwagon's *Hi Infidelity* and Styx's *Paradise Theatre*. Already gold and certain to go platinum, the album has also set off a chain reaction: older albums like *2112* and the live *All The World's a Stage* have gone platinum in its wake. Rush has now sold more than 10 million records worldwide.

Compared to earlier Rush epics like *2112*, *A Farewell to Kings* and *Hemispheres*, with their twenty-minute concept pieces and serpentine rhythm changes, both *Permanent Waves* and *Moving Pictures* are paragons of heavy-metal commerciality. Five of *Moving Pictures*' seven songs clock in at under five minutes; the rougher edges have been shaved off Lee's voice; and on one number, "Vital Signs," the band even takes a shot at a Police-style reggae shuffle.

"The difference," Lee explains, "is in the organization of the music. We learned a lot about composition and arrangement in making *Hemispheres*. *Permanent Waves* and *Moving Pictures* are the result of application, of saying, 'Okay, we know we can do this and we learned all this. Now let's see if we can make a song out of it that'll really have a lot happening in it.' It's not just that the songs are four minutes long so they can get on the radio. It's the quality of those four minutes."

But the real secret of Rush's success is that they simply eliminated the middlemen. When FM radio stations ignored them, the band took their cause directly to the people, touring America with a vengeance and often playing as many as 200 concerts a year.

"At our heaviest," figures Lee, "we were touring seven months of the year and recording two months. We'd have maybe a total of a month off — and never at one time. It was hard, but we felt we had to do that because we weren't getting exposure any other way. Besides, we enjoyed playing, and what better way to learn your craft — to refine what you're doing — than to *do* it?"

As musicians, Lee and Lifeson have done all their growing up in the public. They first met in ninth grade and soon became veterans of the local basement-band scene. Together with a friend of Alex's, drummer John Rutsey, they cut their teeth at high-school parties and church dances with a repertoire heavy on Cream, Hendrix and Led Zeppelin covers. In the early Seventies, the drinking age in Ontario was lowered from twenty-one to eighteen, enabling Rush to hit the more lucrative bar and club circuit in and around Toronto. "That was really the point where we became professional," says Lifeson, "in the sense that we were all dedicated to doing that and only that."

Dedication, of course, was not enough to make it in Canada. "It was ridiculous," Lee grins, recalling some of the problems Rush ran into. "We played a pub night at a local college, and they kept telling us, 'Don't play too loud, we can't hear the beer orders.'" At one gig in Oakville, Ontario, they were fired after only half a set when neighbours complained about the noise. The band's awesome volume (Lee first developed his Robert Plant-like screech simply so he could be heard over the instruments) and their heavy-metal leanings won them few friends outside the province. "All the years we were playing bars and schools, we never left Ontario," Lee says. "We couldn't even get a club tour of western Canada. All of our prehistory took place in Ontario. We couldn't get gigs anywhere else."

They couldn't get a record deal, either. The band's manager, Ray Danniels — who got his start booking school dances for Rush when he was sixteen — released their self-titled debut album in 1974 on the group's own Moon label after it had been turned down twice by every major record company in Canada. Later that year, though, the album began getting considerable airplay in Midwest heavy-metal capitals like Cleveland and Detroit, and Mercury Records signed Rush in the US.

Rush's first American tour almost ended before it began when John Rutsey quit after a falling out with Lee and Lifeson. Neil Peart, another Toronto native who had previously tried his luck as a drummer in England, stepped in at the eleventh hour, and Rush hit the touring trail with the enthusiasm of kids given the run of a candy store.

"The strategy was, 'There's a gig. We'll go play it,'" says Lee. "If you look at our routing plans for those first four years, it was totally nonsensical. One time we went from Gainesville, Florida, straight up to Allentown, Pennsylvania."

"We went everywhere we could," says Danniels. "I was always more concerned with the cities we

hadn't played than the ones we had. My philosophy was, if you can drive to it, do it. It was the drive-till-you-die philosophy."

And Rush did just that. Lifeson remembers renting a car in Toronto on the pretense of driving it up north for a few gigs. Instead, the band took it to the States for several weeks of shows opening for Kiss and Aerosmith. "We brought the car back with 11,000 miles on it. It didn't have any hubcaps left, the radio was smashed, the mirror was gone. It was ruined. They were quite surprised."

The pressures of constant touring, overwhelmingly negative reviews and no airplay, and the unspectacular sales of their third LP, *Caress of Steel*, had taken their toll. "No one could believe it was going so badly," says Lee. "Then we realized how stupid we were. Because of all these people putting pressure on us, we were looking at ourselves through their eyes. >From then on, we knew exactly what our direction was going to be, and we were determined to have success strictly on our own terms."

Rush have had their way ever since, although at no small cost. They tour with more than \$600,000 worth of stage, sound and lighting gear in a caravan of four trucks, two buses and a camper. Lifeson says last year's *Permanent Waves* tour was the first time the band came off the road with a profit. More recently, Rush had to foot the bill for the cover art for *Moving Pictures* — estimated by designer Hugh Syme at \$9500 — because, according to Ray Danniels, their record company refused to pay the full cost.

"We are not excessive," insists Neil Peart. "If something has our name on it, we try to make it as good as we can. We always think of the ideal Rush fan. When I'm writing lyrics or when I'm playing onstage, this ideal fan is watching every move I

make to see if I make a mistake or if something is not as good as it should be. You just can't escape that judgement."

As Peart pulls his Mercedes behind the Ottawa Civic Center, where a sea of denim and Rush insignias is forming almost three hours before the doors will open, Geddy Lee tried to find a few kind words for rock critics.

"You'd have to be a fool to ignore constructive criticism," he says. "We've changed things in our music that were pointed out to us some years ago, things about feel or a tendency to sometimes sound forced. But a lot of critics believe they are the resident experts and they make the decision on what's valid and what isn't. I think that's horseshit."

So, apparently, do the fans, who have made Rush and fellow heavy-metal whipping boys REO Speedwagon, Styx and AC/DC the rules of the charts. And, as Ray Danniels points out, "when it came to concert reviews, critics almost always made the mistake of also criticizing the audience. If an eighteen-year-old reads a review that says, 'Rush were puke, they were shit, they were garbage, they have no talent' and ends with something like, 'The audiences were foolish enough to buy it,' that person thinks, 'Yeah? Well, fuck you.' And that's what's saved us in most cases."

"We know we're doing well when we can sit back and say, 'That's a good record; the audience applauds for it, they like it,'" concludes Lee as he heads for the arena's dressing room. "To make records people enjoy and that we enjoy playing — that's our measure of success."

— David Fricke

Thanks to Meg Jahnke for the transcription.



SLIPPERY JOBS

A SHORT (ISH) STORY BY A. JENNESS. PART ONE.

At Heathrow airport two roadies conferred:

P.A. - Check
Instruments - Check
Giant inflatable rabbits - Check
Lunch - Check
Right, that's it then, anything else?
I could've sworn we're missing something.
Such as?
I dunno, it's just this feeling that we've forgotten something important.
Ah, well we have got it all, even down to the crates of underwear.
What crates of underwear?
Oh well, you know Geddy said that if no-one threw any we were to drop it onto the stage just to make him feel better.
Been watching too many Tom Jones videos if you ask me!
Yes but boxer shorts?

As they walked away someone muttered:

I just know we've left something behind.....

* * * * *

Meanwhile, along a busy stretch of the motorway, three forlorn figures could be seen wandering aimlessly along in the general direction of London.

Oh woe, alas and alack, we are undone, moaned Neil.
We are? Alex quickly checked his trousers.
Oh good grief, huffed Geddy, he's a Greek tragedy now.
Too much Euripides agreed Alex.

Neil held the back of his hand to his head in dramatic gesture.

Lo, we are abandoned by the gods, we are pawns in the eternal game.
Oh shut up, said Geddy, you're getting on my nerves!

Alex ignored the general bickering and looked round.

Well we're definitely lost he commented, as streams of speeding cars flared by.
How could they have forgotten us? Wailed Neil, we're the lynch pin of the whole operation, the big cog, the ultimate musical experience.
You mean...
Yes! Mega-stars said Geddy with a toss of his luxuriant locks.
How come if we're such big stars we got left behind by everyone? Questioned Alex.
That's besides the point, returned Geddy.
It is?
The important thing to remember is that we are incredibly rich, famous and talented, Geddy continued with a glare in Alex's direction, so someone is bound to recognise us and help. All we have to do is figure out where we are.
England? Alex suggested.
Oh brilliant!
Just a suggestion.
Why don't you go and play with the traffic!
No, no cried Neil suddenly breaking out of his melancholic reverie, let not cruel fate divide us.
Shut up! Groaned Alex.
He's right though, Geddy sat on the grass verge and looked thoughtful, all this is getting us no-where, what we need is some concerted action.
What we need is a miracle, moaned Neil, tending his garments.
What we need is a map, said Alex.

* * * * *



Far away in a distant grubby suburb of Birmingham, there was the sound of breaking glass which echoed in the inky stillness of the night, an alarm ringing, running feet and someone out of breath exclaiming:

Keep close! I told you we should never have used a pair of tights to cover our faces!

* * * * *

I don't think this is going to work, said Neil
You don't? Alex sighed, well does this mean I can roll my trouser leg down now?
Oh come on, don't give up now, we're just getting started, said Geddy.

The three of them were standing on the hard shoulder of the motorway desperately trying to attract the attention of passing motorists. Each one had their trouser legs rolled up to reveal varying degrees of hairy nakedness from sock to knee and were posed like can-can dancers by the roadside in as wanton a fashion as Mother Nature would allow three grown men to be.

I wouldn't mind but we've been doing this for the last hour, moaned Alex, and not one person has even stopped to yell abuse at us.
Keep going, just keep going! Yelled Geddy, frantically wiggling his lower limbs in a lurid manner with a fixed and desperate grin of a femme fatale on his face.
Neil minced provocatively up and down, trying to imitate 'Village People' with his baseball cap turned round.

At that very moment a car which had been hurtling frantically along the road slowed down and indicated to pull in. The passenger, Lenny 'The Fingers' Smith turned to his comrade and driver Pete 'Mad Axe' Williams and yelled:

'Ere, wot are you doin'?
Using my head you fool, that's what! The Police are looking for two men in a car right?
Dur...
Right then peasant, if I pick up these three hitch-hikers that'll make?
Dur...
Five! Honestly sometimes I wonder why I bother.
Righto boss.
Thank you, then at the next service station we nick another car and bingo!
Eh?
Home and dry straight to Heathrow, next stop sunny Rio. Me ma says the sun'll bring me out in chives
You mean hives, dolt! Anyway lets pick these morons up and dump 'em later.

Meanwhile:

There was the squeal of brakes and a thud followed by an 'ouch' of agony. Geddy tut-tutted.

Neil, I've told you, throwing yourself in front of cars won't work. They're ruthless with hitch-hikers these English, wouldn't know a rock musician if he bounced in front of them.

He just did, said Alex picking up their rather battered and dazed drummer.

Oh this just isn't going to work!

I am going to get someone to pick me up if I have to stay here all night.

I should rephrase that if I were you, Alex advised, don't they arrest you for that sort of thing here?

Well you know what I mean, he snapped back, we've got to get home somehow.

Oh if only our money wasn't in our luggage, Neil held his head in distress. Cruel, cruel fate to mock us thus. Don't start that again.

Just then the car pulled in.

A rescue! A rescue! Shrieked Geddy jumping excitedly up and down.

Do calm down, Neil dusted down his baseball cap and prepared to meet the natives.

Look people! Geddy continued.

Remarkable, said Alex drily and raising an eyebrow, what does he think we are?

Ignore him, it's his artistic temperament, Neil murmured.

The villains strode over and if moustache twirling and cackles of laughter had been an event they would have won an Olympic medal.

Need a lift? They enquired.

Yes, oh yes, enthused Geddy.

Please, some decorum, groaned Neil.

We're stranded, explained Alex grabbing Geddy tenderly by the throat, and we need a lift as far as Heathrow.

Heathrow eh? Funny, we're travelling that way ourselves.

Hop on board if you don't mind travelling fast.

The faster the better, they agreed, making a run for the car.

Bags I get a window seat! Called Geddy.



RUSH-JOURNEY
START

TO XANADU
 ARTWORK - ROBERT DUNN
 FEATURE SQUARES - COLIN MCCHESENEY/ROBERT DUNN
 DEDICATED TO RUSH!!

5 AS A WORKING MAN YOU MUST DO OVERTIME!
 MISS A TURN

8 RIVENDELL

12
 TIME STANDS STILL
 13
 MISS A TURN

34 WHERE'S MY THING?
 ?
 MISS A TURN LOOKING FOR IT!

A FORCE TO GALE BLOWS YOU BACK 3 PAGES

TOM SAWYER TAKES YOU ON TO 35

ROLL THE BONES AND HAVE ANOTHER GO

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
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63 BANG-KOK

68 JACOBS LADDER TAKES YOU DOWN TO 93

Robert Dunn and Colin McChesney

You come to a bridge. You can either go:

- 40 Beneath
- 41 Between
- 42 Behind

RIVER ALPH

59 YOU GET CAUGHT IN A FIGHT BETWEEN BY-TOR AND THE SNOW-DOG!
 MISS A TURN!!

75 CAVES OF ICE
 THE PASS

80 YOU FIND THE FOUNTAIN OF LAMNETH ITS POWER TAKES YOU ON 3 PAGES

YOU ARE HIT BY CHAIN LIGHTNING MISS A TURN!

48 YOU FEEL THERE'S SOMETHING CALLING YOU - RETURN TO RIVENDELL

53 LAKE-SIDE PARK MISS A TURN SPENDING YOUR SILVER

86 YOU FIND A RED BARCHETTA - DRIVE ON 3

96 YOUR CHARACTER DEVELOPS FREE-WILL AND GOES BACK TO LAKE-SIDE PARK!

A PASSAGE TO BANGKOK (63)

100 XANADU

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RUSH-JOURNEY
START

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100
XANADU



As they say in all good adventure stories, in no time at all (and for the sake of brevity) they had arrived at the Service Station which for the sake of plot was unnamed. The smoke from the tyres quickly dispersed and they peeled themselves off the back seat where G-Force had pinned them. They pulled their faces back into some semblance of order from the interesting sculptured effect they had assumed and disentangled their shaking limbs from each others.

Are we there yet? Drooled Geddy weakly whilst attempting to regain control of his facial muscles. Alex and Neil dribbled in the affirmative.
Well, that didn't take long, said Mad Axe Williams.

They nodded dumbly and staggered out of the car which immediately gave a tired groan and collapsed on its chassis.

Right, explained Mad Axe with much grinning and elbow nudging of his companion, we're going to wait here for.. er..for a mate to bring us his car. Why don't you pop inside and get something to eat and we'll meet you back here in, say half an hour.
What a good idea, said Alex, whose stomach was beginning to think his throat had been cut.
Oh Ged, English food, groaned Neil.
Oh shut up! Said Geddy.

* * * * *

They endured the horrors of service station cuisine with stoic fortitude, exhausting themselves ripping off the odd fingernail whilst trying to open the little U.H.T. cartons of milk that accompanied the brown liquid masquerading as tea. They didn't dare try the coffee. Worn out with explaining to everyone that they were in fact Canadian and not American, they ambled back to their rescuers via the toilets. Geddy disappointed to fulfil nature's ready call while Alex and Neil wandered on ahead. On meeting their dubious comrades they found them in a state of agitation.

Quick, move it! Growled Lenny.

But...began Alex.

Sorry gentlemen, we've no time, the Pol...er, the cars on limited loan, we've got to go now, added Mad Axe.

What about Geddy?

Who?

Oh really, began Neil.

Look we haven't got time to hang around, snarled Lenny.

I think you'll find he's already gone, he...er got a lift with someone, scotched Mad Axe.

Gone?

Are you coming or not?

I don't think...

Right, bye!

As the dust settled.....

They've gone, cried Alex, now what?

Prayer, said Neil lamely.

Look, over there, Alex pointed to a large camper van pulling out of its parking space, quick, let's see if we can get a lift with them.

They ran over and banged on the drivers door.

Other side buffoon, cried Neil, they drive on the left over here.

At the right door they hammered frantically.

Um, good rhythm, murmured Neil absently, perhaps in my next solo I could...

Not now Neil, not now, yelled Alex.

A female face appeared at the window.

Keep your wig on, what's the problem? She enquired in husky tones.

They gazed up into the heavily painted and energetically coiffured hairstyle of a middle-aged lady, laden with gold jewellery and wearing enough perfume to stun an enraged bull elephant a mile away. Her bosom had not been so much covered as draped briefly in some diaphanous material.

Hello me ducks, she laughed throatily, ooh I just love it when men throw themselves at me!
Can you give us a lift? Begged Alex, panting heavily, we're trying to get to Canada.
I would've thought a plane would've been more useful, she laughed again.
Yes well, to London, Heathrow then, added Neil.
Hop in the back then, don't mind the girls, they're just friendly.

As they reached for the door handle to climb in, Alex paused and said to Neil,

Girls? Friendly?
Just get in, said Neil grimly, I don't know how much more of this I can take.

As they trundled off into the mingled streams of traffic they looked back and saw a lone figure which ran out of the gents shouting:

Wait for me!
Oh, oh, murmured Alex, that's bugged it!

The Police car coyly peeping out from behind the telephone kiosks coughed into life.

* * * * *

Next time, we find out if Geddy ever gets to leave the service station, what the hell the Police have got to do with all this and ultimately, what happens to the other two young(?) Men of Willowdale in the rear of the van with those young ladies!



From Brainwaves To Tidal Waves: The Story Behind Rush's Album Covers A Creem Magazine Close-Up

Because I live in Toronto (and happen to love loud rock 'n' roll), I was asked to write a feature on Rush for this Special Edition (of course, the fact that I also happen to be a Contributing Editor to CREEM might also have something to do with it).

It seemed an easy enough assignment; after all, I'd been following Rush's career ever since I saw them opening for the New York Dolls on October 27, 1973 at the late, lamented Victory Burlesque Theatre on Spadina Avenue. Since then I'd watched them proceed from the then unheard-of feat of performing three nights in a row at Massey Hall to playing three nights in a row at Maple Leaf Gardens- and being able to give away one of the night's proceeds to charity.

So I dug out my Rush collection to see if I could say anything new about their records that hadn't been said before when I suddenly realized that I was looking at a whole aspect of Rush that had been virtually ignored by writers over the past decade: their album covers.

And because Rush's album covers are every bit an integral part of the band is its music, I decided to take advantage of my geographical location by calling up Hugh Syme.

Rush fans will instantly recognize his name. In addition to playing piano and synthesizers on three of the band's albums, Hugh has been the man responsible for an of Rush's album covers since 1975.

And although he was under the gun of a weekend-long deadline, Hugh agreed to take time out from his busy schedule to discuss his work with the band.

Q: How did you get involved with Rush in the first place?

A: I was working with the Ian Th??, at the time and, having always been intrigued by album cover graphics as a vehicle for selling albums—and because of my background in art having been, you know, forever - I basically requested to do one of Ian's albums. I've always been into painting and drawing and Anthem Records [Rush's Canadian label] - basically, it can be said that Anthem is Rush - saw my album graphics and wanted me to do something for them.

Q: What was the first album you did for Rush?

A: The first one I did was Caress Of Steel.

Q: The illustrations are yours, right?

A: Yes, they are.

Q: Were they done specifically for the album?

A: Yes, they were. They were pencil drawings, even though they don't look like it on the album, They printed them in a sort of pseudo-sepia tone. I had vignetted with an airbrush the blue area around the illustrations, which was later reinterpreted by the film strippers who were making the jackets in Chicago at the time. They took it upon themselves to cut a hard-edged mask around it. The lettering was cast, and chrome plated.

Q: On the inside cover of 2112 is the first appearance of what has become a logo of sorts for the band.

A: Initially, that logo didn't begin as an identity factor for the band, it just got adopted. We didn't consider it a mascot overall icon of representation for the band at the time.

What I did do with that particular cover was read their lyrics, and understand that there is a good force and a bad force: the good force was music, creativity, and freedom of expression – and the bad force was anything that was contrary to that.

The man is the hero of the story. That he is nude is just a classic tradition ... the pureness of his person and creativity without the trappings of other elements such as clothing. The red star is the evil red star of the Federation, which was one of Neil's symbols. We basically based that cover around the red star and that hero.

Now, that hero and that kind of attitude about freedom of expression and the band having that kind of feeling ... at the time, it never really occurred to me, to be honest with you, that they would adopt it quite so seriously as a logo. Because it's appeared just about everywhere, thereafter.

Q: All The World's A Stage is a pretty straightforward cover, except that the original pressings of the album came with a triple gatefold jacket.

A: Yes, well, that was during the hiatus of outrageous packaging. As I said, AGI in Chicago did all of Rush's printing then, up until about four years ago. Albums like Ooh La La by the Faces, and Physical Graffiti - all of that was going on then, so we thought we'd go for a six panel jacket.

Q: By comparison, A Farewell To Kings is fairly

complex.

A: Yeah, the sky and the foreground are not in the same place. The buildings and the sky are from Toronto, and the foreground was a demolished warehouse in Buffalo.

I would've loved a cathedral in the same condition, or something more worthy of the pathos you were intended to feel for an old building being in that state.

We also began a series of puns with that album, in that the King is a puppet King. There have been a lot of criticisms of the Throne over the past couple of decades as being a heritage that we really can't disregard, but certainly don't take as seriously as we used to.

Q: The next album to be released was the Archives anthology.

A: Well, that's basically a sore point with the marketing aspect of the management. They had the name of the package in mind as Archives, and I had every intention of making a look as much a part of the archives as possible—as opposed to being a rock 'n' roll cover. It's almost a library piece. It's changed a little bit: it was sort of repackaged again two years ago. For all the cover being very sedate—albeit a little boring and uneventful—it involved a special cover treatment which was actually more expensive than most covers.

Q: How do you feel about Hemispheres?

A: Not as well as I feel about most of them.

The band told me, "Go ahead, we'll see it when we get back," because they were in Wales for the whole album and all my conversations with them were over the telephone. They didn't see it until it got out. Technically, it's an abomination.

Once again, it's an effort in the progressive area of punning. They talk about Apollo and Dionysius in the lyrics, so I figured that Apollo would be the severe, Magritte business man, and that Dionysius would, again, be the reinstitution of a figure.

Q: Permanent Waves is one of the all-time classic rock 'n' roll covers. How did it come about?

A: Permanent Waves is the result of a conversation which I had with Neil out at his home in the country. We spoke all evening about Rush growing up, and how we were going to do these EKG readings of each member as they were recording. We were going to tape their temples and chests and have real heartbeats of them while they were playing. So Permanent Waves was going to be a technical statement, and we were going to treat that with red and gold foil, and do a nice study in design— as opposed to a photographic thing.

I walked out and, in the doorway, said "Wait! Let's try something with Donna Reed, with her permanent Toni hairdo, and have her walking out of a tidal wave situation.

Neil gave me this blank look and said, "Get out of here."

The following day, he asked me to consider doing just that because he'd discussed it with the band, and they'd all thought it was more likely for a cover than the serious approach.

Q: Were there many problems to overcome?

A: We shot the newspaper with the headline "Dewey Defeats Truman," which now looks like "(Arabic)-Daily-(Arabic)," because we got a threat from the legal people at the Chicago Tribune, who are still embarrassed about their over-anxious printing of that headline.

Q: I noticed that the "Y" in "Dewey" has been changed to an "T" in the headline.

A: That's because anything that pertains to that headline, according to the Chicago Tribune, is an embarrassment, and is subject to litigation if we were to print up any facet of it.

To boot, Coca-Cola asked that we strip out their billboard way off in the background because it was too close to a cotton-clad mons pubis.

Q: Who's the smiling gent leaning next to the crosswalk sign?

A: None of your business!

Q: OK, let's move on to Moving Pictures, which is—

A: A pun, a pure pun.

It became pertinent to me later that the Queen's Park building in Toronto where it was shot had all the right elements: three arches, three pillars per arch; there are three members of Rush, and all of that.

Q: Who decided on what paintings would be carried?

A: That's was the band's decision. I asked that the witch be in there, only because of the song "Witch Hunt," which I played on.

The one painting had to be of Joan Of Arc as far as I was concerned— which ended up being a bit of a nightmare because I couldn't find any archival pictures or paintings which were suitable. So I ended up getting some burlap, and a pine post, two sticks and a bottle of scotch.

Deborah Samuel, the photographer who I used on that session, got wrapped up in burlap so she could make her cameo appearance. We just lit lighter fluid in pie plates in the foreground. It was basically a

half hour session because we had no other alternative but to do it ourselves.

Q: Exit ... Stage Left is probably your most ambitious cover to date, what with it reprising all your previous covers.

A: It was shot in a condemned theatre here in Toronto, which shall remain nameless. We decided to go with the girl pulling the curtain back on the front instead of the back. It was originally intended to be the other way around, so when I flipped the photograph over, I had to write "RUSH" on the equipment box in the foreground, and I had to strip out the information on the Stage Door and write in the word "EXIT," because the album was called Exit ... Stage Left.

Q: Is the stage shot actually from a Rush concert?

A: Buffalo shot, yeah. We went out to get that, too. We really wanted the band-. Believe it or not, we went to about 15 shows, trying to get the band saying "Thank you, good night," and at the same time, and walking towards the camera.

Q: Couldn't get it, though?

A: Couldn't get it.

Q: Well. I guess that just leaves the dog and the fire hydrant.

A: Well, I was given the word "Signals." It was such a broad concept that it was baffling for all of us. We really had trouble with that one, and I decided that, with such a phenomenally important word with the kind of potency it potentially had, to go with something really dumb, really inane. But something which would still tie in with songs such as "Chemistry," and the subdivision aspect of the fire hydrants, lawns, and neighbourhood dogs.

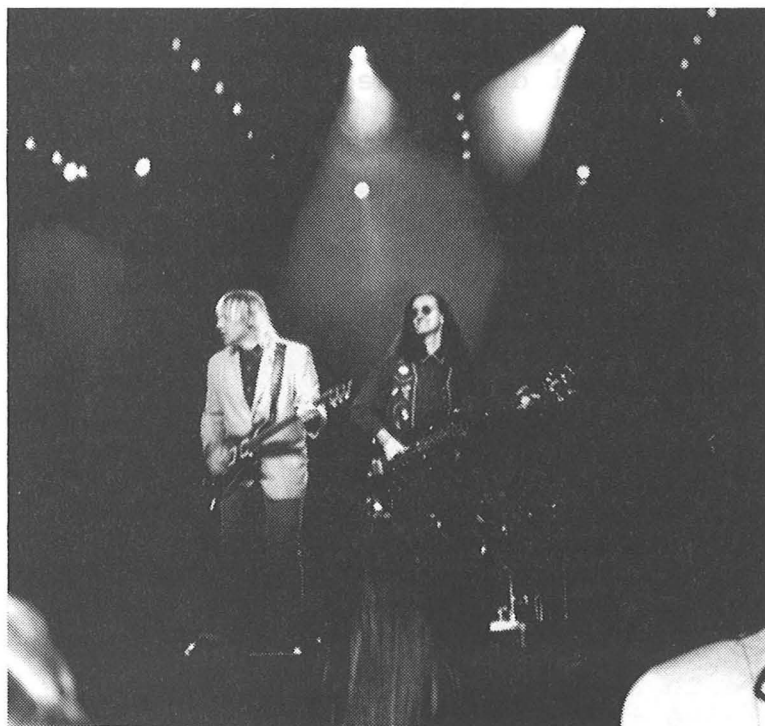
Q: I can't see Neil going for it, somehow.

A: That one almost got vetoed. Two of the three band members liked it at first, but I was taking a chance with it because it was so inane. But It seems to be interpreted as an integral part of the package.

The back cover's a little subtle, perhaps over-indulgent. Again, it's been fodder for some of those quizzes you hear on the radio.

It hasn't been totally ignored...

by Jeffrey Morgan



QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

If you have a question, or there is something about the band you would like to know but cannot find an answer, drop us a line with your query/problem and we'll endeavour to answer it for you. If we are unable to do so, perhaps another reader can!

Q: Is there more than one version of the U.S. Dreamline promo CD, as I have heard rumours of an alternative to the original which is catalogue number PRCD 4120-2? - Paul Lawrence (Derby)

A: No. But a difference I have come across on this is a copy of the disc that is just silver (reflective like a mirror) and not coated black. Also the Rush is missing from the top of the disc, but that is all. So technically it is slightly a different version.

Q: Whose voice is it doing the rap(?) in the middle of Roll The Bones? Also, who says "that's nice" at the end of Chain Lightning on Presto? - Andy Walsh (Luton)

A: I thought these things were common knowledge now? Anyway, that nice voice on Chain Lightning is Alex's slowed down. The rap, which has now been well documented, is of course Geddy's.

Q: I heard the band included some different songs on the end of the tour. What were they? - Todd Walker (Bath)

A: Well, at a few of the European shows, after the U.K. dates, a snippet of Cygnus X-1 was added to the very end of the encore. On the final leg of the tour in the U.S. they dropped The Pass and Subdivisions and replaced them with The Trees, Vital Signs and apparently an amazing version of The Analog Kid!

Q: Could you give me a list of all the bootlegs available on CD? - David Price (B'ham)

A: As far as I am aware they are the following: Fly In The Night, Rushian Roulette, Spirit of St. Louis, La Villa Strangiato, Red Stars Of The Solar Federation, Red Barchetta, Live Under Pressure, Enemies Within, Currently In Vogue, Temple Of Syrinx, The Fly, Chicago 11/91 (has no title) and Over The Europe. The last two of which are 2cd sets. There may well be others by now, not included in the above list, and there are rumours of others becoming available. If anyone has any details please let us know. We'll try to keep you informed.

Q: During the recent shows, at the end of Where's My Thing? as it fades out, something is said. What is it? - Paul Turner (Hants)

A: I'm sure all Monty Python fans have picked up on this one! What is said is: "Nobody expects the Spanish Inquisition." A sketch from their Matching Tie And Handkerchief album!

Q: Have the songs Oracle: The Dream from 2112 and Chemistry from Signals ever been played live? - Steven Bailey (Reading)

A: Well Oracle: The Dream has never been played live at all. It is the albums so-called 'production piece.' Chemistry was in fact played at shows on the Signals tour of 82/83, but was missing from the set when they arrived in the U.K. For more detailed information on what songs have and have not been played live, check out the "The Songs Remain The Same?" articles a few issue's back.

Q: Are there any tour programmes that are different because of where they were touring? For example the earlier tours, is the Canadian copy of a certain tour different from the U.S. or U.K. equivalent? - M. Ashworth (London)

A: The first ever tour programme was the 1977 U.K. '2112' tour. Since then there are different versions of the 'Kings' and 'Hemispheres' programmes, though there are not really any major differences. Since then they have been the same the world over for each subsequent tour. The only exception to this is a reported Japanese copy of the Grace Under Pressure programme.



KEEP ROLLING ALONG

Readers Reviews of the Shows

LIVING IN REAL TIME: - A personal account of four shows during the U.K. leg of the 'Roll The Bones' tour....

Okay, I know the title sounds a little grand! and yes I did borrow it from the line in 'Between The Wheels', but to me it sums up perfectly my experiences during one of the best weeks of my life, in which I was fortunate enough to see four shows - I'm still kicking myself believe it or not for somehow not managing to get to all six, but I mustn't be greedy!.

I had been looking forward to Rush coming over again since 1988 on the 'Hold Your Fire' tour, which was by all accounts so very nearly the last ever chance of seeing Alex, Neil and Geddy in a concert environment - luckily for all of us die hard devotees of Rush music this turned out to be not the case, and two albums on, we in the U.K. were presented with the chance of seeing them again. I had always promised myself that I would make every effort to go to multiple shows this time around, as this tour may well be the last for the U.K.. So, with the help of 'Spirit Of Rush', I was able to get what turned out to be superb tickets for my chosen nights.

DATELINE - 12TH APRIL 1982

After an uneventful coach journey to Stratford-Upon-Avon, I was met by my Mum, who was luckily aware of my desire to get to the NEC as soon as I could, as this was an important part of my schedule, whereby I could listen to the soundcheck, and generally soak up the atmosphere. We had a superb lunch and after some discussion it was decided that they would drive me to the venue and pick me up at the end of the evening.

We arrived at the NEC at app. 15:45 to find lots of other people already there; we discovered that there was an angling exhibition on at the same time and that accounted for the majority of visitors, though I spotted several Rush fans too. I couldn't help thinking that Alex might consider fishing as his next sport!! anyway, after taking a couple of photographs I returned the camera to the car and said "cheerio" to Mum and Dad as I made my way to the hall.

I had anticipated seeing Edwin Shirley trucks as being the sole means of moving the gear from place to place, so I was surprised to see seven artics from a company called Transam Trucking Ltd parked up in an adjoining carpark, Rush had always used Edwin Shirley in the past - I don't know the reasons for the change except that it was part of the general 're-vamping' and fresh direction that the band had taken over the last two years.

The weather was very blustery, but remained rain free and at approximately

16:50 those of us who had chosen to wait outside the entrance heard what we had been waiting for, the soundcheck - the songs they played remained the same for the other two soundchecks I was to hear and were as follows: 'Roll The Bones', 'Dreamline', 'Bravado', 'Force Ten'(most of) and 'The Pass'(most of).

During each song, various instruments and vocals would drop in and out of the mix, but the general sound was unmistakable and made all of us standing outside smile! I met a guy who had also come along on his own outside, from Stoke-On-Trent and we chatted on completion of the soundcheck, until 18:00 when the doors opened and we went our separate ways - this was to be one of many meetings I had with extremely friendly people from all over the country.

I reckon I was about the 20th person in through our entrance which made getting to the merchandise stand very easy indeed - and also meant that I didn't have to stand there like a lemon waiting to get served, which nearly always happens. I managed to spend a fair amount of money, but generally the prices were, so I was told later, on par with bands of a similar stature (Rush were the last 'Name' band I saw in 1988 you see!). I certainly didn't object to paying the money as I know that Rush merchandise is always of the highest quality.

Armed with my T-shirts, posters and programme, I went in search of my seat. I had thought that my seats were on the floor level and not at the sides or back and I was right!, as I made my way to sit down I passed the lighting desk and recognised Jim Johnson (Alex's guitar tech) looking extremely cool and relaxed!. My eyes were then drawn to the stage where the Primus gear was ready and waiting, dominated centre stage by an enormous drumkit.

After sitting down I started to observe other things too such as the enormous "U" shaped P.A. speakers suspended high above the first few rows and the smaller circular versions 3/4 way down the hall, the lighting rig suspended halfway down the hall, the massive amount of drapes that were concealing the stage area and the sheer anticipated size of the stage and on-stage lighting.

I was keen to scan through my programme as it held new and unseen (in the main) photos of the guys - the 'biog' by Neil called Row the Boats, I had read before as it had been transcribed in a recent edition of "Spirit of Rush" so I was familiar with its content - the photos were stunning as ever and I found myself almost laughing out loud when reading Alex's equipment listing 'short story' - I also decided that I would be just like Neil if I had to talk about my drums, as his is always so serious, but always interesting.

I noticed too that the shot of Alex (taken in his study?) had in the background several photos of him superimposed with some of the luminaries mentioned in the aforementioned short story - I was later to observe that some of these were sitting on top of his amplifier cabinets!

Anyway as 7:30 approached, the hall was filling up (but at that time had a long way to go before being described as "full" as I guess that a lot of people decided to give PRIMUS a miss (their loss !)

I really enjoyed PRIMUS - I must admit to thinking "what IS this ??!!!!" but was soon won over by some superb playing and to say the say the least, vocals! I would say that the audience reaction was rather lukewarm, though they got an extra cheer when Les the bass player thumped out part of an intro to Cygnus X-1 !



Their sound was tight and punchy - Ler the guitarist was using a Paul Reed Smith guitar similar to Alex and Herb the drummer was using an unusual kit made up of (I think) two twenty inch bass drums, and assorted toms by a company called Pork Pie Percussion - as a drummer this is not a name I was terribly familiar with though I had heard of them before - his kit also included 3 low pitch see-thru Tama Octobans (or similar) and much use of a right hand side remote hi-hat - the things we drummers notice !! Still I was to enjoy them each time I saw them even if they did chop their set around each time !

I met and chatted to Mick and Roland who were sitting next to me and had driven up from London after PRIMUS had finished and I was able to get a little more info than I already knew about the band from Mick, as I had only ever heard of them before after reading a review of an American date from this tour as they had been supporting RUSH for some of the time during the American dates - Mick was obviously a big fan!

As PRIMUS exited from the stage, the house lights came on and the crew moved in to remove their gear. I was surprised that there was a gap of app. 5 minutes before yet more drapes dropped down to conceal things as what was the PRIMUS backdrop could be swung aside - I thought initially that it was just an oversight, but as it happened at each subsequent show too, I could only assume that certain pieces of equipment had to be tended which actually were in front of or directly underneath the drapes - I guess I'll never know the real reason! Any, the change over appeared to go like clock work (RUSH shows ALWAYS do) and at app. 20:15 the house lights dimmed and we were set....

The atmosphere was electric (to quote Neil!), of course everyone on the floor level got on their feet as an enormous cheer went up as first Neil, then Alex followed by Geddy walked onto the stage. The intro was unfamiliar as it was not what we had been accustomed to over recent years, but it was linked to a film using characters first seen in 1989 on 'A Show Of Hands', this worked really well and merged smoothly into 'Force Ten'. I was aware of

the set list from the American dates as again 'Spirit' had already contained info from the readers in the States - the only real difference being whether 'Ghost Of A Chance' would be included (it was). I have listed the full set list at the end, so I will concentrate on picking out the special moments from particular songs, not meaning to detract at all from those that do not get a mention! 'Freewill' saw Alex and Neil blowing kisses to each other! - I thought right away that Alex looked SO cool with his hair still shoulder length.

'Time Stand Still' saw Neil wearing his 'click-track' head-set so that they could be in sync with the back projection (this was FAULTLESS) - cameo appearance by Aimee Mann too during the choruses with Alex assuming the role of keyboard player during the same section.

We had the first five songs before Geddy spoke - he got an almighty cheer, especially when he confirmed that the set was indeed two hours long! Next up was the first song from 'Roll The Bones', 'Dreamline' which went down a storm, especially with the 'white noise' sequence panning from one end of the arena to the other and back. This was followed by 'Bravado' which included Alex in magnificent form and very effective use of the "varillities" concluding with an extended outro, which really worked well. I nearly forgot that this song saw the guys actually jamming on stage, this really is unheard of for Rush, it came prior to the guitar solo and really built it up; I heard Ged say a week or so later in a radio interview that this was something they were really enjoying doing as it was different every night.

'Roll The Bones' was next, and again Neil 'syncing in' with his head set, as we had another immaculate rear projection which included the 'Rap' section which saw Neil providing the rhythmic pulse and (I think) Ged handling the sampled keyboards - Alex just goofed around. I was impressed with Alex's backing vocals throughout the show; I think this is an area which should be explored more seriously myself (I bet Alex doesn't!).

'Show don't Tell' sounded superb live and was followed by 'The Big Money' which saw Alex tapping Neil's drums and cowbells at the end. 'Ghost Of A Chance' was next, Alex disappeared off stage during this one, I think to try to get nearer to some of the audience at the side of the stage - this must have been a little disconcerting for Geddy if he noticed, the lights in this were tremendous again. 'Subdivisions' followed with Alex putting on a particularly LOW voice for his part, this version was shorted by a verse, but fortunately still contained the killer solo at the end.

A true highlight was next in 'The Pass' introduced by Ged as "one of our favourites", it was immaculately played and accompanied by a superb video, I think this song will be in the live set until the end of all tours. The instrumental 'Where's My Thing?' came next, and most people, me for certain were preparing themselves for the drum solo. The song worked brilliantly live; much better than 'YYZ' in my opinion and was accompanied by some brilliant lasers. I think that most of us thought that Neil's moment was coming when he played the extended snare drum roll which is a part of the original, but no. the song was played to its conclusion and then harking back to 'ALL The World's A Stage' Neil got his very own introduction from Ged, I guess one of the reasons is that he now starts his solo using electronic pads (rear kit), this was really effective as the pounding intro beats again used the four way P.A. speakers and reverberated around the arena. As most people who know me know, this man is my all time hero and I stood in awe of his skill and dexterity - rhythms played on the pads with his sticks, whilst keeping a snare beat with his left foot and the normal kick drum 4/4 beat with his right foot. The K.A.T. midi

Marimba was again featured strongly, and he included much more cross-handed playing too when he got onto the acoustic drums, Neil produced the customary faultless solo - words cannot do it justice, you have to hear it to believe it.

'Closer To The Heart' and 2/3 of the revived 'Xanadu' followed, segueing into 'Superconductor' which goes through something of a re-birth live; this song saw the appearance of the rabbits out of top hats either side of the stage next into 'Tom Sawyer' and the rabbits jumped around to the pulsing beat. The audience were going mad as Geddy now said goodnight but I knew that we still had the medley to come.

The highlights here were magnificent lasers in 'La Villa', 'Anthem' sounding awesome with Neil doing his brief 'windmill' guitar bit at the start, and the superb final chunk of 'The Spirit Of Radio' to round things off. So the end of my first show, I was so pleased I had 3 more to see.

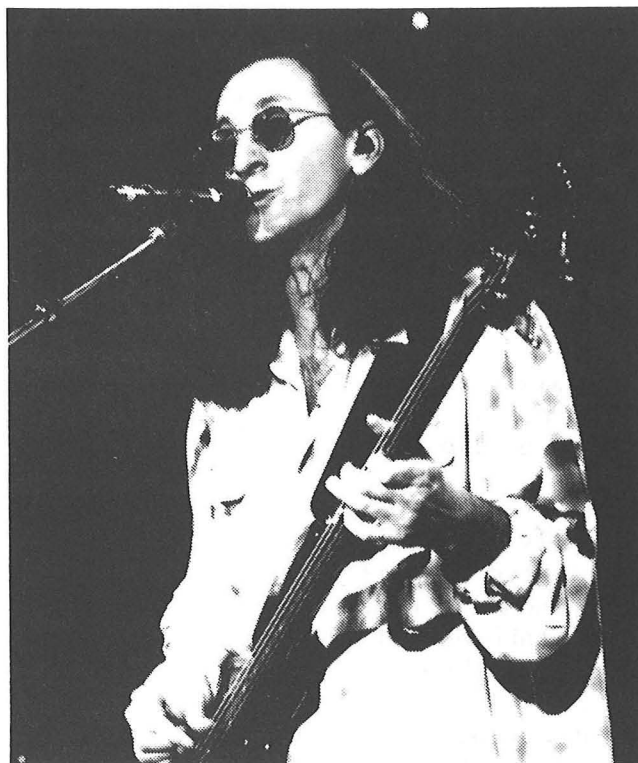
DATELINE - APRIL 13TH 1992 - BIRMINGHAM NEC

We arrived a little later today, as my Dad was working and had the car, (we got there at 18:45). As I have gone into a lot of detail for the first show, I will just list off my observations from this second night - the performances by Primus and Rush were even better as was the overall sound; maybe yesterday was just my position in the hall?.

Today's seats were also improved, 11 rows from the front, and virtually smack in the middle! Herb, Primus's drummer played the bulk of their amended set with a plastic cycle helmet on - I wonder if Neil knew! Les (bassist) was wearing a Hemispheres T-shirt from '79.

The gap before the drapes came down prior to Rush was still evident - it must have been due to having to get certain pieces of equipment moved which was too far forward. Alex was wearing a Primus T-shirt! I noticed it is Neil who provides the synth 'stabs' during 'Roll The Bones' - I suspected this when I'd heard the album version a couple of times, he uses a small trigger mounted between his 12" and 13" toms.





Geddy continued to wear his skin tight 'leggings' (he wore them for all 4 shows) lucky his legs could carry it off! - I must have seen it the previous night, but I certainly saw it tonight; how the wings of the stage opened up during 'Xanadu' a good effect for this song. Alex continued to look Mr. Cool, I spent more time tonight watching him goofing around than I did watching Neil (unusual for me). Alex had to change his guitar during '2112', he swapped his sunburst finish PRS for his beautiful blue one.

As I said earlier, this show was superb if not better than the previous night. The set remained the same in content, I was listening out for the extended passages more tonight, they were there too. I was amazed at how quickly the crew got on stage to dismantle the gear, but I guess they had a long drive ahead of them - what a team!.

I had a break until my next show (at Wembley) whilst the band headed North to Scotland - at least I could give my ears a rest for the next show.

DATELINE APRIL 17TH - WEMBLEY ARENA

I took my 'Spirit Of Rush' cards today to hand out, but there seemed to be more people offering them to me, so I decided to keep mine, maybe for tomorrow. Whilst waiting at the backstage area (outside) the fence, we observed that the BBC were there to record tonight's show, for future broadcast on the Friday Rock Show I'd heard Tommy Vance say that they would be a few weeks earlier.

My patience was rewarded at approx 16:00 when a (German) plated Mercedes estate arrived at the hall with one Mr. Peart as passenger; I managed to get a photo as Neil stepped out of the car. About 15 minutes later a limo arrived carrying Alex and Geddy - we got a wave from Alex as I snapped again.

The soundcheck was virtually the same to the one I'd heard at the NEC, same songs but perhaps a little shorter. My seat was brilliant, 7 rows from the

front and bang smack in the middle. The sound system was just as at the NEC, ie. with the extra circular speaker sets toward the end of the hall. Primus went down better tonight, maybe more people had heard them at previous shows.

My show observations were as follows:-

Alex blowing kisses to the audience stage-right - one of Alex's pictures came adrift during Limelight, J.J. came on and put ot back, but Alex had to make further adjustments later on.

There were some problems with bass pedals/synths and some vocals today I thought as regards Ged, but it didn't really effect things too much. Alex had a great shirt on tonight; a skeleton with a golf club taking a swing.

A mistake during '2112' as they all completely lost eachother, I don't know who if anyone was actually to blame, but it was a major foul up, I remember thinking I don't know if the BBC will transmit that part of the show. Further to the above point I thought that at times Neil's concentration was drifting, this may have been a mistake as Neil can mislead with his facial expressions because he's normally so 'locked in'.

So, another immaculate show, except for the little problem during the encore. I look forward to hearing what I presume will be the highlights on Radio 1. The sound was excellent tonight, with Alex's guitar cutting through like a knife.

DATELINE - APRIL 18TH 1992 WEMBLEY ARENA

Tonights observations as follows:-

Superb seat again tonight, almost identical to last night.

Primus played a superb set tonight and got a well deserved reaction. Alex's pictures were gone altogether, but I noticed that he had a set of mini golf clubs on a little stand - I'm not sure if this had been there on previous shows, but it was there now.

Alex had severe problems during the start of 'Dreamline' he had no sound! after fiddling with his radio transmitter he was back on line with no problems Neil just had to play a few more rim shots - Alex's reaction was typical, no hint of anger, just more amusement for him which manifested itself in his facial expressions, though I think J.J. got a funny look.

Alex had to change his guitar again in 'Roll The Bones' I presume due to tuning problems - he threw his pick into the audience at the end of the show but it didn't fly very well!. Geddy was flying tonight, infact all three guys put on the best show out of the four that I saw, a fitting end to the U.K. leg of the tour.

Everything was in it's place tonight, save for a couple of technical problems. It is hard to say that one show is better than another as ALL Rush shows operate to extremeely high tolerances - if I were Neil, Alex or Geddy, I think I would have gone off stage feeling that this one was almost perfect, I can't say fairer than that.

Special thanks must go to the following:- My wife for being so understanding Rob and Lynda for putting me up on April 11th, for my Mum and Dad for providing transport, National Express, British Rail and London Underground for providing

the rest of my travel modes, all of the people I met for being so friendly, 'Spirit Of Rush' for providing me with superb tickets, 'Primus' for providing in my opinion 30 minutes per show of enjoyment and last of all to Rush plus the crew for the most magnificent production I have ever seen - long may they continue.....

ALAN MUIRDEN (BASINGSTOKE)

AHOY - ROTTERDAM 3RD MAY 1992

This was going to be the first (not the last) time I was to see Rush outside of old blighty - different country, new people and strong beer. I was not to be disappointed on all accounts.

I arrived at the AHOY Arena around five o'clock to get a ticket for tonights show, no problem, straight to the box office and with my money exchanged, my entry into the show was guaranteed. Standing outside the arena Rush were doing their soundcheck; as 'Dreamline', 'Bravado' and 'Roll The Bones' were being played I sat outside in the sunshine watching the fans slowly arrive for to-nights gig.

Standing in the queue waiting to get into the arena I talked with many fans Dutch, German and French, and it was great to hear what Rush meant to them.



Security was tight as we all poured into the arena. Around eight o'clock Primus hit the stage, they came across well with the Dutch fans, half an hour later they were off. The good thing about AHOY is that the bars are inside the arena, not like Wembley where you have to show your ticket if you want to get a drink.

35 rows from the front of the stage and the lights start to dim; the buzz of adrenalin was pumping around the arena now and a LOUD roar goes up as the film rolls and we are straight into 'Force Ten' with Neil beating the drums into a pulp, Geddy rumbling along on the bass and Alex letting rip on the guitar. Next up is 'Limelight' followed by 'Freewill' and 'Distant Early Warning', with the Dutch fans giving these songs a huge response. Clocks ticking and 'Time Stand Still' sets the heart beating faster.

Into the new songs from 'RTB' and 'Dreamline' is up and running and kicking like a wild mule (we are only imortal for a limited time) - love it!. 'Bravado' sounds better live with Alex's guitar talking. 'Roll The BOnes' is done with perfection even if Alex is on his back during the 'chat'.

'The Pass' presents itself with lasers and lights moving in moods, a classic Rush song. Not really satisfied with my seating, I start to make my way to the front, not easy, but I end up with a better view. 'Where's My Thing?' is a refreshing change from 'YYZ' as the 'Rhythm Method' with Neil giving it everything comes to an end.

Lighters all around the AHOY as Alex on the acoustic guitar plays the opening for 'Closer To The Heart'. Magical moments as the Dutch fans sing along with Geddy, this song never gets old.

The lighting and sound so far have been good, but got better as 'Xanadu' fills the arena, with lasers cutting into the darkness. The stage is awash with lights as 'Superconductor' cuts in; I agreed with Chris Green and Dave Lack (Spirit 18) that 'Xanadu' should be played in full or not at all.

One, two, three, four who's that knocking at the door! 'Tom Sawyer' with the bunnies in the wings, Alex and Geddy stroll about the stage as Neil keeps the beat. Then the lights go up as Geddy, Alex and Neil leave the stage; stamping of feet and clapping of hands bring the trio back and straight into 'Spirit Of Radio'. The band are enjoying tonight as much as we are.

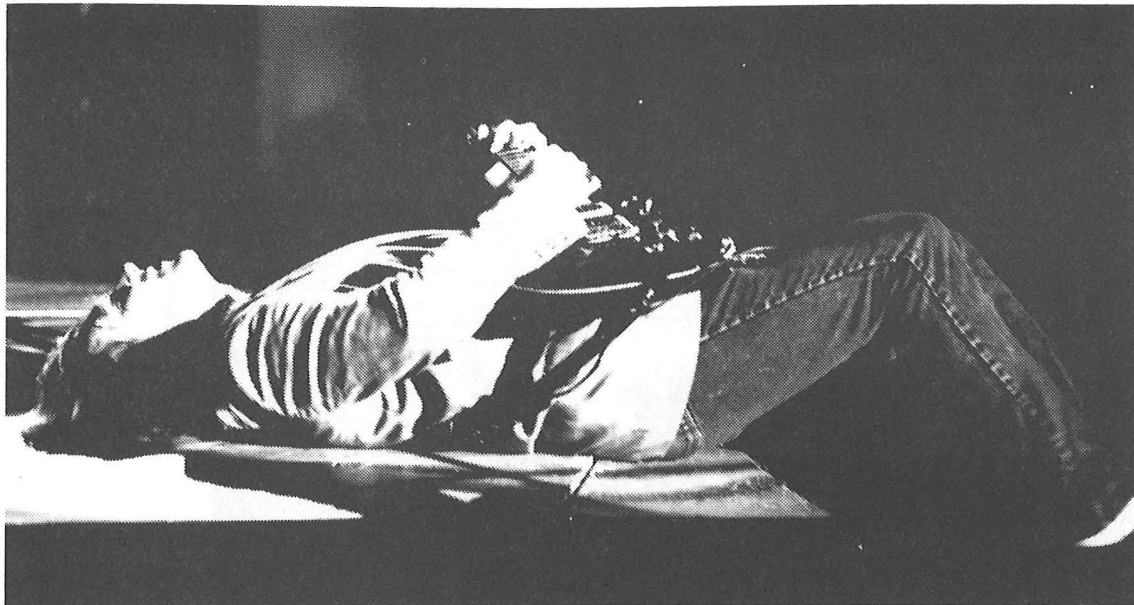
The medley is here 'Finding My Way' and Neil doing his "windmill" 'Anthem', 'La Villa', 'Red Barchetta' follow, then the Dutch fans go wild as bars of 'Cygnus X1' are played; and then it's all over, but what a show. Flowers are thrown onto the stage as our trio says thankyou and their gone.

Fifteen years as a fan of Rush and this show will stick in my mind as one of the best. Can't wait for the next tour.

P.S. A big thankyou to Dave and Hans and to Kristan and John and all the Dutch fans.....

JOHN BYRNE (LONDON)

You've probably all heard them, I got my jibes from work, who're Rush anyway?



Rush... are they stil around? Oh you mean Ian Rush ha ha ha... all the slings and arrows, but I HAD to tell them.

Remembering fondly the 'Hold Your Fire' 88 tour and expectant for the thrill of the 'RTB' tour, I set off with my wife and my mate John for shows in Sheffield and Birmingham and of course we wern't to be disappointed.

At the NEC the atmosphere was absolutely electric (despite Primus). Alex's stage surf supremo was as always superb, Ged was in great voice and what a mover! and of course Neil the professor of the pirouetting pommelsome pedestal of percussion was outstanding; his solo was simply the best. It was good to see the boys clearly enjoying themselves, their antics were funny and their musicianship faultless, I don't care what anyone says nobody comes close to these three.

In particular I thought the music which accompanied the cartooned opening of 'Show Don't Tell' was hilarious (who picked that?), and I was absolutely knocked out by the giant rabbits dancing to 'Tom Sawyer', but 'Superconductor' made my show - everything but the kitchen sink was thrown into this number, I'd have come for this alone. The complete show was magnificent; even my wife, (not known as a Rush fan) enjoyed it.

The fans I met and talked to at the shows were very friendly and good humoured, everyone seemed to know these rare gatherings are special.

Rush seem to be regarded by many as a Canadian secret - not worth investigation, I would argue with them - after all it's their loss. (and I don't think Geddy Lee looks like Dorothy Burke out of Neighbours - well not much!). Please don't leave it another four years before coming back guys....

DAVID COLEMAN (N. IRELAND)



JOHN MYUNG

JOHN PETRUCCI

JAMES LaBRIE

KEVIN MOORE

MIKE PORTNOY

DREAM THEATER



DREAM THEATER

James LaBrie - vocals
John Myung - bass
John Petrucci - guitar
Kevin Moore - keyboards
Mike Portnoy - drums

It has become rather redundant to hail the vibrant originality of every other band to release an album - nobody believes a word of it any more, the claim's been heard so many times and true so few. It's therefore rather difficult to muster the enthusiasm to make such a claim when it is justified - but what else can you possibly say about a band which can combine elements of such diverse bands as Metallica and Yes, in the same song no less, and make it all work?

DREAM THEATER's originality is not a calculated, cynical pose, rather it is the product of the open-mindedness of this east coast-based five piece, a willingness to consider anything as a viable element in their wide-ranging forays through the realms of rock and roll. The band's reverence for America's adventurous Dregs, Kansas, Zappa and for England's progressive rockers of the seventies becomes clear with undertones of Genesis, King Crimson, Gentle Giant and Pink Floyd - to name but a few ! - all evident within the far-reaching boundaries of Dream Theater's music ; but this is not a band trading on memories instead they are as firmly contemporary and as innovative as any pioneering act you'd care to name. Dream Theater belong alongside the few who are accepted and acknowledged for pushing the boundaries - Queensryche, Metallica, Rush and Kings X.

The evidence is clearly audible on the band's brave, stridently unique Atco debut 'IMAGES & WORDS', produced by David Prater (Firehouse). 'Learning to Live', the self-described "quintessential Dream Theater epic" covers everything from metal to jazz in its twelve minutes and serves as the ideal primer for the uninitiated, opening the door to styles ranging from the metallic ('Pull Me Under,' 'Under A Glass Moon'), to the melodic ('Another Day,' 'Surrounded') and the epic ('Metropolis,' 'Take The Time').

The road leading to this point in Dream Theater's career has been long and arduous, marked by frustrations and disappointments, but the band is all the stronger for it. The lyrics for 'Take The Time' take a somewhat autobiographical look back, and it's perhaps no coincidence that the lyrical themes on most of the album revolve around loss and sorrow and the development of strength and character that can result from addressing such issues rather than running from them.

The band was first put together by Mike Portnoy, John Petrucci and John Myung while all were studying at the Berklee College Of Music, subsequently drafting in old school friend Kevin Moore. The first demo was hailed by the press but both the name (Majesty) and the singer had to go back to the drawing board. After an exhaustive year-long effort another singer was finally recruited. A new record deal seemed like the ideal situation for a band which certainly didn't fit conveniently into any neat little boxes, but the band's euphoria was short-lived; the label's excitement was not translated into action, and what's more the singer had to go, again.

It took well over a year for the band to extricate themselves from their deal, and during that time over two hundred singers were evaluated. A period of intense frustration followed as the band even contemplated an all-instrumental future, but recognized the limitations inherent in such an approach, and continued their search. "We were very picky," concedes Portnoy, "because the four of us set such high standards for each other, we didn't want to sell ourselves short on the fifth member. Since the inception of the band we'd been looking for a vocalist who was on our level both mentally and musically." Canadian James LaBrie frontman for Winter Rose and formerly the man who replaced Carl Dixon in Coney Hatch, nearly didn't land the gig - Dream Theater was already working with the man they thought was their new singer when LaBrie's tape arrived. The rest, as they say, is history.

With a song count of only eight, "Images And Words" encompasses nearly one hour's worth of music. Indeed, it's so eventful and externally fascinating that it will be one of the shortest sixty minutes you'll ever spend listening to music. The tag of 'progressive metal' will be supplied by many and drummer Portnoy is not about to disown it, but points out that there's a lot more to Dream Theater than such a label might imply.

"We're not a throwback," he insists. We've incorporated all the elements of modern metal into what we do. Although, we did grow up listening to Rush, Genesis, Yes and The Dregs, we're not going to deny that our sound is reminiscent of those bands, but we also listened to bands like Black Sabbath, Iron Maiden and Metallica and today's music is potentially just as influential on what we do."

The band is not apologetic about all the traditional rules that have been broken in putting together "Images And Words." Sticking to the rules of song structure and length is one good way of being just like everybody else and Portnoy is insistent that Dream Theater's tunes - all of them written in a rehearsal situation, with the players working spontaneously off each other's ideas and themes, are only as long as they have to be.

"We start a song and wherever it goes, we go. We never set out to write an involved ten minute song, but sometimes it takes that long to fully get an idea across and if you listen to our tunes I don't think you'll find any dead weight in them. Why should we limit our ideas to being expressed in four minutes?"

Be warned, they already have a twenty minute piece ready for the next album.....

DREAM THEATER - "IMAGES AND WORDS"

RELEASED 22ND JUNE 1992

NEXT ISSUE - MIKE PORTNOY INTERVIEW.

A SHOW OF FANS

Many of you, no doubt, are still wondering what has happened to your copies of ASOF. Well, as we have previously informed you in recent issue's of 'Spirit', Asof publisher/editor Steve Streeter has fallen on hard times at the moment, and is having trouble, because of a lack of funds, in getting issue's sent over. But don't worry they will get here.

Anyone who has sent cheques or postal orders, either to me or to 30 Crutchley Road, Catford, don't worry, your money is safe. You will either get your copies sent to you when we receive them, or if you wish your money to be returned, drop Mick a line at the editorial address and he will oblige. No questions asked!

Also, as of issue No.5, the cost of each issue will be £1:50 including postage. Anyone who has subscribed already to issue 5 and beyond will benefit, as you will not be charged the extra!

Well, as you will have read elsewhere in this issue, I am off to Hong Kong for 6 months of rest and relaxation(!), so anyone who has any queries, wants to obtain copies of ASOF, or wishes to have their money returned, please write to Mick at the editorial address. But please be gentle with him, as he and his good lady Lesley have just had there first child, Jamie. Congratulations you two! Oh the joys of parenthood!



PERMANENT TRADES

WANTED: Things for use in 'SPIRIT.' Articles, artwork, reviews, letters, ideas etc. We still need your contributions to keep the mag going. So have a go! To 'SPIRIT' 23 GARDEN CLOSE, CHINBROOK ROAD, GROVE PARK, LONDON SE12 9TG.

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SCANDINAVIAN: Rush pen-pals wanted. A 100% response guaranteed. Write to: ALAN HAMILTON, 12 ROEBANK ROAD, BEITH, Ayrshire KA15 2DX, SCOTLAND.

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NOW AVAILABLE: Full colour glossy photo's from the Roll The Bones tour. Taken at the NEC Arena, B'ham 12th April 1992. The following sets of 6 prints are available - 2 each of Geddy, Neil & Alex in each set - in the following sizes: 7x5 - 6 prints inc P&P £10.50 9x6 - 6 prints inc P&P £13.50 12x8 - 6 prints inc P&P £19.50 15x10 6 prints inc P&P £33.50 (photo's are same in each set only size changes). Allow 10-14 for delivery. Cheque etc. payable to MIKE SMITH, send to 3 FALFIELD CLOSE, ROWLEY REGIS WARLEY WEST MIDLANDS B65 9SN. Please state size you require and don't forget your address!

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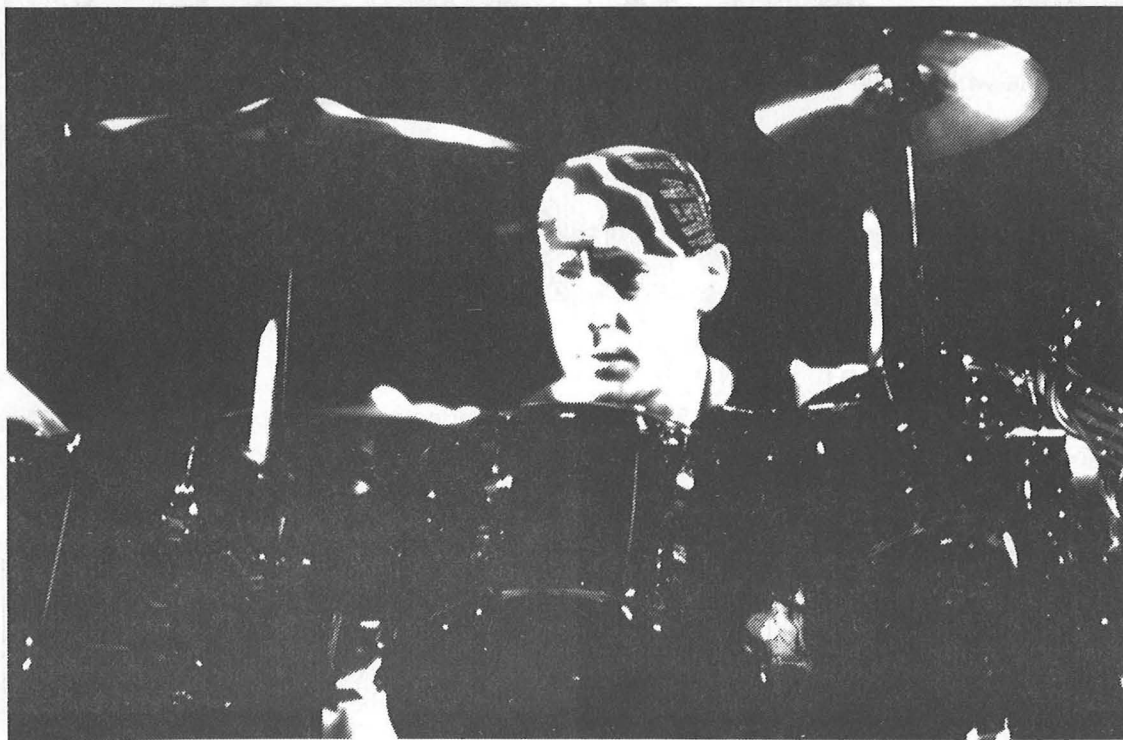
There will be no auction this time around, and not for the next couple of issue's. This is because I am going to be away for some months, so.....!

Hopefully, when I return, I will be able to offer you a large selection of items that I will have acquired while I have been away. So, look out for next year.

Also, obviously, I will not be doing the tapes for this period of time, so please people, do not request lists or tape orders as they will be returned unfulfilled. Many thanks.

P.S. If you wish to advertise in the next couple of issue's, send the details to the editorial address. See below.

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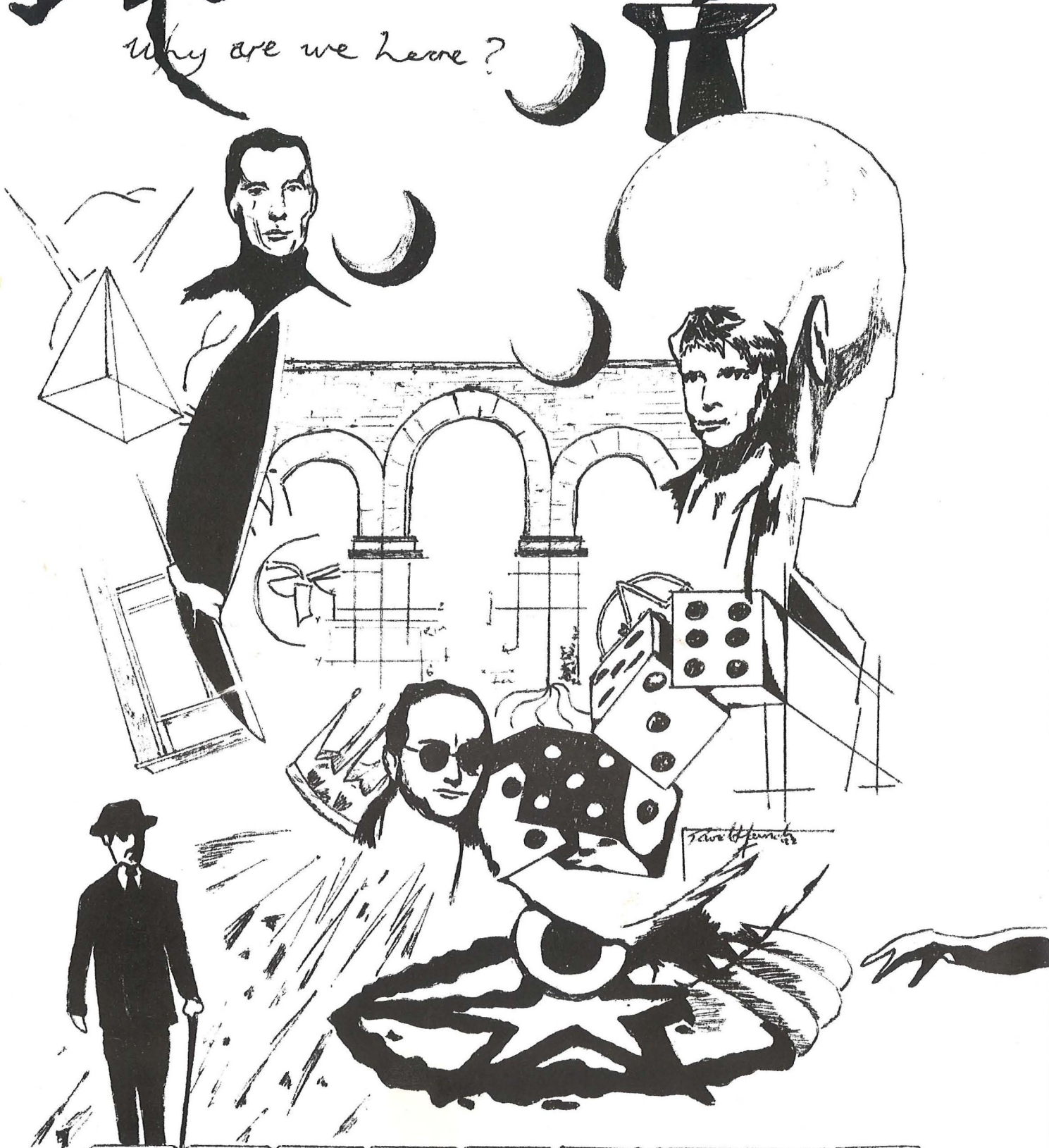
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Rush

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