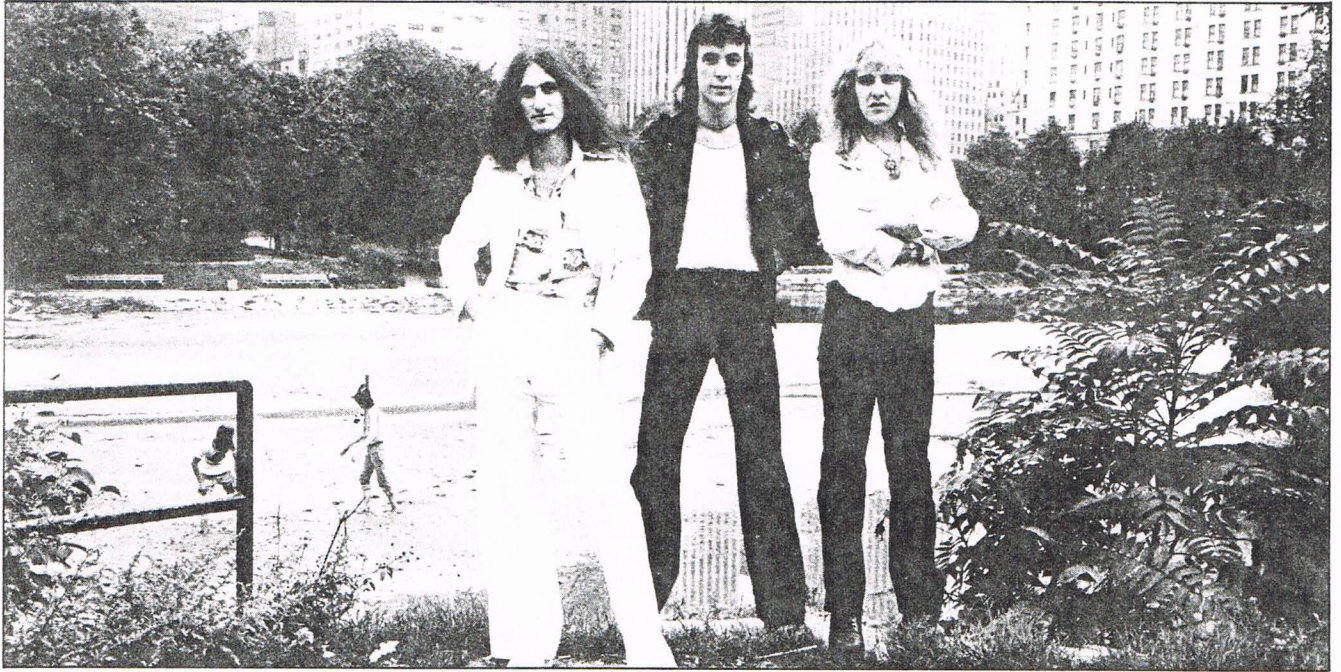


Rush Goes Into Future Shock

'Music Will Not Exist In 2112'

by Dan Nooger



Rush: ZZ Top refused to let them encore after they stole the show in Cleveland.

The year is 2112, and all art, all science, all literature, all thought are controlled by the computers of the Solar Federation. The lives of every person living beneath the sign of the Red Sun are ruled by priests of the Temples of Syrinx, where the computers are housed in settings recalling the opulence of an Oriental pasha's harem. One day a nameless Everyman who's known nothing but grey walls and a nine-to-five life, finds a guitar (such things are extinct in 2112) and rediscovers the lost art of music. When he brings his antique axe to the temple he is beaten up and banished by the priests, his guitar smashed. And that night he has a dream about a planet where things aren't quite the same. Maybe it's real, maybe not; nobody's saying.

Sound like a Star Trek retread or a Ziggy Stardust reject? Well, call me helium! *2112* (on Mercury) is neither of the above but the sidelong title track of the newest album by Rush, Canada's heavy metal answer to Kiss and Zeppelin. In addition to the usual three-man three-chord rock

highlighted on their first three albums, *2112* features some significant mellotron meanderings and amazingly eccentric lyrics. Pretty deep stuff for an ex-bar band whose prosody has never been much more ambitious than "You're making me crazy the way you roll them eyes" and "Time to boogie, time to get down."

"*2112* is based on a progression of some elements of society today, but projected 150 years into the future," claims drummer Neil Peart, who scripted the epic. "It's a cycle of songs about the rediscovery of music."

The real question—of how to control and humanize an increasingly uncontrollable and proliferating technology when moral values of that attempted humanization are rapidly disintegrating—is left unanswered by *2112*. Likewise, the dilemma of who becomes the master programmer of such absolute power remains unresolved. But Peart does hold out some hope for the future. "The temples aren't destroyed, but things do, uh, change."

EXTRATERRESTRIALS IN ONTARIO: Canada has produced origi-

nals like Neil Young and Joni Mitchell, who define their own musical expressions; heavy-duty rock by such as BTO and the Stampede; teen-angst by Montreal's Dudes; and the straight pop sounds of Anne Murray and Terry Jacks. But until Rush stormed out of the frozen wastelands of Ontario, heavy-metal rock was a more or less exclusively Anglo-American preoccupation. Bassist-singer Geddy Lee and guitarist Alex Lifeson formed Rush as a high-school venture in the tail-end of the Sixties. They acknowledged as their models Cream, Jeff Beck, Led Zeppelin and Grand Funk as they thrashed out the hits and the blues.

"When we were growing up," Geddy recalls, "the big bands were Zeppelin and Beck. We used to do a lot of Zeppelin material before we started writing our own stuff and I used to have to scream to hit the high notes. Now it's all pretty natural." If Geddy's voice was any higher and raspier, his audience would consist exclusively of dogs and extraterrestrials. He screams and howls like a man with his joint caught in a thumbscrew, while he heroically