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WOW!
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WHO!
MARC
BOLAN!**

RUSH!

Interview, pics
and poster!

**TOMMY
BOLIN!**

a six-page tribute

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INSIDE**



GIANT COLOUR POSTER
FEATURING
RUSH and
SCORPIONS

**RUNAWAYS!
DIAMONDHEAD!**

NEW WORLD

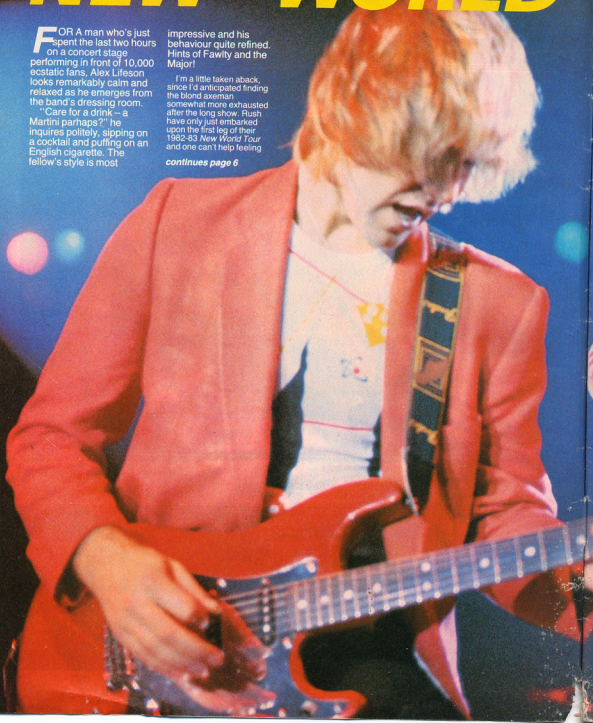
FOR A man who's just spent the last two hours on a concert stage performing in front of 10,000 ecstatic fans, Alex Lifeson looks remarkably calm and relaxed as he emerges from the band's dressing room.

"Care for a drink — a Martini perhaps?" he inquires politely, sipping on a cocktail and puffing on an English cigarette. The fellow's style is most

impressive and his behaviour quite refined. Hints of Fawcety and the Major!

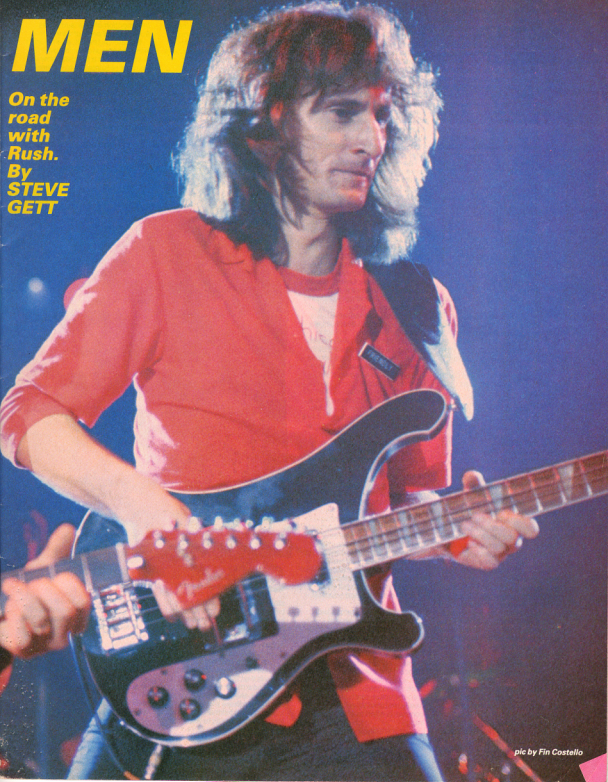
I'm a little taken aback, since I'd anticipated finding the blond axeman somewhat more exhausted after the long show. Rush have only just embarked upon the first leg of their 1982-83 *New World Tour* and one can't help feeling

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MEN

On the
road
with
Rush.
By
STEVE
GETT



pic by Fin Costello

from previous page

that it won't be long before Alex and the rest of the band start to feel the strain of on-the-road life.

He agreed: "It's great at the moment because we haven't played for a while and so it's good to actually be back on tour. But it does eventually take its toll. After three months you begin feeling run-down and can end up doing shows that you don't really enjoy. Sometimes you find yourself sitting in a dressing room before going on stage and all you really want to do is sleep or go and vegetate in front of the TV!"

Rush's return to the road is of course due to the release of their new album "Signals", their first since last year's "Exit... Stage Left" double live package. To these ears the latest platter is one of their finest to date, although I must confess that prior to hearing it my interest in Rush had waned. I'd always been a keen follower of the band up until "Moving Pictures" but sadly I found that record extremely hard to get into. "Signals" revitalised my interest in the Canadian trio and after a few spins I eagerly awaited seeing them on stage again. I was fortunate enough to team up with the group in Omaha, Nebraska to catch one of the early dates of the tour. . . .

OMAHA lies deep in the mid-west of America and Rush had arrived in the city at four in the morning having travelled overnight from their gig in Des Moines, Iowa.

By the time I reached the Omaha Civic Centre auditorium early in the afternoon the road crew were busy preparing for the evening's concert while the band caught up on a little sleep back at the hotel. A massive lighting rig was being assembled and it was plain to see that Rush would be putting on a highly spectacular visual display. But then, don't they always?

Eventually messrs Peart, Lee and Lifeson arrived for a soundcheck and listening to them run through a few new tunes was enough to convince me that we'd be in for a treat. Happily I wasn't to be proven wrong for I can safely say that I've never witnessed the band in better form - don't miss them when they tour Britain next spring.

The evening kicked off with a rousing set from Rory Gallagher, whom (ironically) Rush had supported on one of their early American outings. The Irish axeman went down well with the fans and provided an excellent warm-up for the headliners.

Shortly after nine o'clock, the

Rush show got underway and they opened with a vibrant "Spirit Of Radio". This was followed by "Tom Sawyer" and "Free Will" before Geddy Lee announced that the new record was in the stores and that most of it would be aired tonight.

He did not lie, and aside from "Losing It" the trio performed the entire album. Best of the new bunch were "The Weapon", "Chemistry" and "Subdivisions" which featured clever celluloid accompaniment. Rush are now employing a lot more films during their gigs, all of which seem to work to good effect.

The rest of the concert comprised material from "Moving Pictures" as well as the odd tune from "Permanent Waves", together with "The Trees" and "Closer To The Heart". Old tunes are confined to a medley at the end of the set that features "2112", "Xanadu", "Villa Strangiato" and "In The Mood".

All four are edited versions but run into each other extremely well. Finally proceedings are brought to a halt with "XYZ", the sole encore piece. Overall it's an extremely entertaining show that flows smoothly without leading to tedium at any point.

"This set is paced well," declares guitarist Lifeson as we chat after the show. "In fact I think it's the best set we've ever done. It's a bit early to say, since we've only been out for a couple of weeks, but the pacing is very 'up' and it doesn't seem to let down at any point."

I agree with Alex but at the same time I can envisage that a lot of Rush fans might be a little disappointed that there isn't more older material. How does he feel about this?

"Well, I can sympathise with people who want to hear us do more old stuff but there is a limit to what you can actually play during a two-hour set. Now we want to play a lot more of the newer material from "Permanent Waves" on and it feels good doing the fresher tunes."

"To me things are moving along much better now than some of the older, longer pieces aren't there anymore. Also the show itself has a totally different feel to it. The band has a different appearance, the sound has taken a step forward, everything is much fresher and to tell you the truth I feel really good - almost re-born."

Rush certainly seem to be undergoing a good deal of changes and Lifeson's current image emphasises this fact. When the band first came to Britain in '77 the guitarist cut the quintessential HM guitar hero stance. However these days his hair is very short (almost short back and sides!) and on stage he favours jacket, shirt and tie - hardly metallic! Was it a conscious effort to change his image?

"I don't really know. My hair

grows very, very fast so every two months I look different anyway. I just felt like cutting it and in fact I like it a lot shorter. You can only wear satin pants and boots for so long and so nowadays I just dress depending upon the mood I'm in."

Both Alex and drummer Neil Peart have short-cropped barnets and it's only Geddy who has retained his flowing locks.

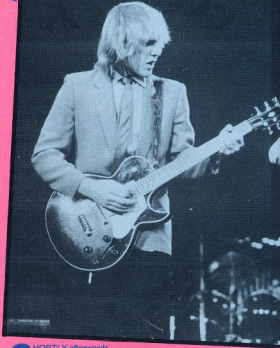
"Ah he's stuck in the sixties anyway," laughs Alex. "I'm only joking."

Kerrang! Did you feel that it was becoming tougher to sustain the attention of your audiences from a visual point of view?

Geddy: "A little bit, yeah. I don't like to be trapped behind my keyboards but a lot of the new material requires me to be there. On the last tour I was able to spend 80% of the time running around but now it's much less. So I think you have to be conscious of the fact that the band is a little static and therefore try to make the visuals a bit more happening."

"You can get used to being liked. . ."

pic by Eric Corbitt



SHORTLY afterwards, Geddy himself enters the room. Although he may take the role of frontman on

stage at other times he seems to be a much quieter character and in conversation talks in fairly hushed tones. Our discussion commences with my asking him about the band's strong use of films in their current live shows.

"The basic reason that we've got into using them more and more is that there are a lot of times now that the band is trapped behind gear and sometimes there's not a whole load of action from us. So it helps to add more visuals to keep the people interested."

Do you envisage you'd be playing as much keyboards as you are when you first started?

"Not really. When I initially started playing them I just wanted to use the occasional string line but the thing is that I like writing on keyboards and I feel it gives us somewhere interesting to go to - it's helping us mould our sound into something different than it was before. And I think it's a real bonus. It's one hell of a challenge for me and to tell the truth I do get very excited about using keyboards."

Do you consider yourself a proficient player?

"No, I'm still very much in the dabbling stage. Put me beside any real keyboard player and it's a joking matter. And I don't really pretend that I can play. I can write solo lines and melodies and play basic chord patterns which is really all I need. I certainly don't have any illusions about being a Keith Emerson or anything like that."

Have you found yourself writing a lot on keyboards?

"Even more, yeah. But even before I played keyboards I still wrote more on guitar than bass,

Rush's music has sometimes been referred to as 'thinking man's HM' and has always been far more complex than most hard rock bands produce. Does the idea of being commercial ever come into your mind when you're writing?

"As much as we write for ourselves, it's a natural instinct to want to please people but to go beyond that I don't think we're very conscious of it. 'New World Man' (the current single) wouldn't have been on the record if we didn't have four minutes space available. We tend to have pretty strict ideas on how long an album should be and I think that's an important thing to remember."

dealing with quality which is again down to value for money."

So you were actually left with four minutes to fill on 'Signals'?

"Yeah, but at the same time after we finished recording we actually had to cut the album a little quieter than most rock LP's are cut so we could have probably left it out. What it really boiled down to I think was that we'd worked so hard at getting all these slick sounds that we were all in the mood to put something down that was real spontaneous. In the end the whole song took one day to write and record. It was a relief to put something together like that."

Backtracking a little, what made you decide to put another live album out?

"I guess there were a whole lot of reasons. One was that we felt our live sound had changed so much that we figured we needed to update it on record. I mean 'All The Worlds A Stage' was a whole lot different. But doing a live LP is also a great device to get a sort of hiatus between albums and we really wanted that. We wanted to have a longer gap between albums so that we could do some writing on our own."

The gap was fairly protracted though—didn't it get a bit frustrating?

"It did a bit and I think that's part of the reason we started writing during the mixing of 'Exit Stage Left'. Once you sit down and discuss doing a live album and commit yourself that's it—you're stuck with it. I hate doing them and in some ways I'm almost sorry we did 'Exit'."

Were you conscious of going for more 'sounds' on 'Signals'?

"Definitely. It was a very conscious effort to make this album sound different than anything we've ever done. We got a little scared of being complacent and falling into rut. Recording became semi-automatic with 'Moving Pictures' and although it was a difficult album to make we could achieve that kind of sound real easy. Basically we didn't want to go in and make another 'Moving Pictures' because that kind of against everything we've ever done."

Having said that, 'A Farewell To Kings' and 'Hemispheres' were fairly closely-linked.

"Well those were all the progressions, but we achieved a sound on 'Moving Pictures' that almost bordered on being slick and that's kind of dangerous for a band like us. So we made a conscious effort not to play it safe and try to experiment in order to change our sound. It was time to inject some fresh blood."

"When you reach the stage

of being a successful band there's more and more pressure to stay the same and that is very dangerous. It leads to complacency and pretty soon you end up churning out the same bullshit album after album."

We've always been a fairly experimental band and part of the reason we'll continue to be that way is because of the fear of becoming boring old farts! If you've done something that people like it's easy to go and do it again but to me that's sick."

That suggests that you're very much against the idea of following formulas.

"Most definitely and I think we'll continue to be that way."

Does it ever become a worry as to how your fans will react to the changes?

"Oh sure. I mean you get used to people liking what you do and there is a little fear that when you do something different that everyone's gonna put the thumbs down on it. You can get used to being liked and that's kind of dangerous too. But at the same time if what you're doing is experimental but good then people will still like you."

Does it surprise you that your audience comprises a strong fraction of the hardcore denim brigade?

"No because I guess we've grown up in the school of a power trio and even though we do things that are different and experimental there's still an essence of that in our music. Even though our music may have changed there's still a lot of power to it."

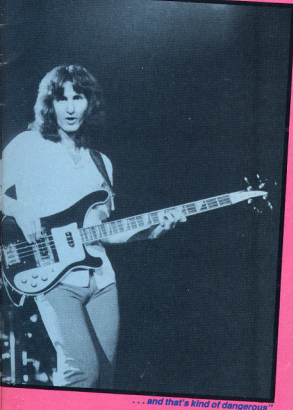
Was there ever a danger of success going to your heads?

"I think we got over that real early on in our career. On the first couple of tours we did there was a danger of us getting like that but we realised that making it wasn't going to be easy and that brought us down to earth. You see we didn't have a big smash really quickly. It was a slow thing and we had to work real hard to get where we are today."

Did you envisage just how big the band would become?

"Not really. I think every young musician can relate to this—you have this sort of dream of 'making it' but don't really know what that means. You just go for this blind goal with your eyes closed and your heart wide open and let things happen from there. You've no idea what you're going for and what it'll be like when you get there."

"I don't think any of us realised how far this would go and I don't think we like to think about it either!"



... and that's kind of dangerous"

simply because even though the bass is a good instrument to write riffs on it's very hard when you're trying to get melodies across. So I'd say that keyboards kind of took the place of my writing on guitar. I feel more comfortable with them and it gives me a different point of view because looking at 88 keys and the way the notes are laid out in front of you is a lot different to picking up a guitar. Being able to play a little bit of keyboards, bass and guitar gives me a whole range to choose from."

What specific ideas do you hold on the length of an LP?

"Well basically it's just a matter of value. Our shortest albums are about eighteen minutes a side and that's pretty good value. I couldn't see going below that—it doesn't make sense to me. But at the same time we're recording digitally now and so we do have certain considerations as to how the whole thing's going to sound when we cut it. There you're