

Spirit of Rush

October — '94

Issue No. 28



R.FOX '94

SPIRIT_{of} RUSH

EDITORIAL

Hello and welcome to the latest issue of 'Spirit'. Not much to report this time I'm afraid, the 'Buddy Rich' tribute album which Neil has been working on should be in the shops about now. The band are reported to still be on vacation and have not gotten back together to work on new material just yet.

Alex appeared once again at the (now) annual 'Kumbaya' festival in Toronto on September 4th. It's all done in aid of Aids charities, and boasts a whole host of Canadian celebs. It's doing the rounds on video and is well worth a peek!

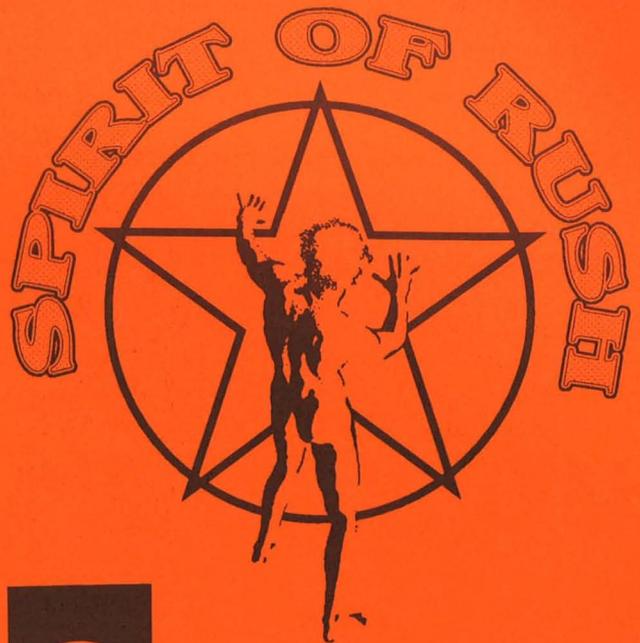
Both the gold ultra disc albums 'Moving Pictures' and '2112' can be obtained from 'Rocklands Music Services LTD'. The price I was given is £22.99 each. I'm not sure if this includes P&P or not, ring them on 0883-345507 to check. Don't forget to ask for their address, and tell them that 'Spirit Of Rush' put you in touch.

The North American fanzine 'A Show Of Fans' has moved. Check them out at their new address - 5411 East State Street, Suite 309, Rockford. IL.61108 U.S.A. Issue No: 11 is just out and it's better than ever. At only \$5.00 a pop you won't find better value anywhere.

The superb 'Dream Theater' have just released their excellent new album 'Awake'. Come on people give this band a try. You will NOT be disappointed.

Long over due thanks to Janet Balmer for all her hard work. It's very much appreciated.

Joke Department: We think Neil Peart must have written the lyrics to 'What Do You Want From Me' which appears on the Floyds current album 'The Division Bell'. If you've not heard this song yet, why not?.



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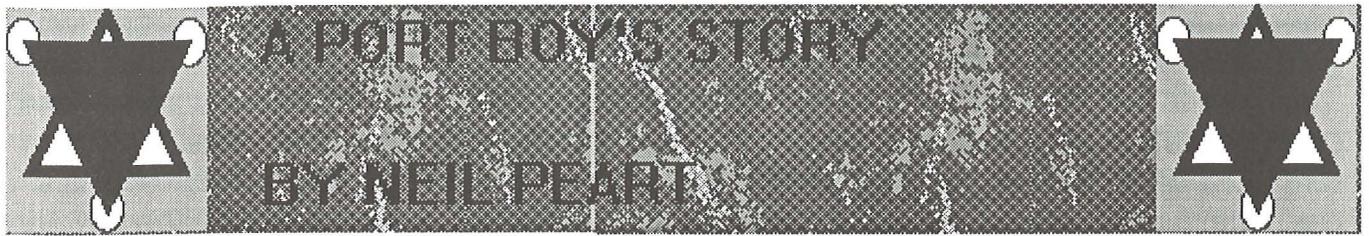
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SUBSCRIPTIONS

IF YOUR SUBSCRIPTION IS DUE FOR RENEWEL, PLEASE DO IT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

SUBSCRIPTIONS



[Taken from the St. Catherine's Standard - June 24/25, 1994]

Neil Peart is the drummer and lyricist for Rush, Canada's most successful rock band, who have sold more than 30 million records worldwide, and have performed throughout North America, Europe, and Japan. Neil grew up in St. Catherine's, and lived in the area until 1984. These days, when not touring with Rush (or on his bicycle), Neil divides his time between Toronto and the Laurentians area of Quebec, with his wife Jacqueline and daughter Selena.

MY STORY begins in 1952, on the family farm near Hagersville. Mom tells me they used to wrap me in swaddling clothes and lay me in a manger, but don't get me wrong -- this was no Christmas story. They just wanted me out of the way while they did the milking. But the dimly lit barn, redolent of straw and manure, was an early imprint, and to this day a dairy farm always smells like home to me. Wherever I may travel, from Switzerland to Senegal, my deepest memories are triggered by ... cow dung.

Still, after a couple of years I became restless with country life, and convinced my parents to move to the big city -- St. Catherine's. My father became parts manager at Dalziel Equipment, the International Harvester dealer on St. Paul Street West (gone now, but I worked there too in later years, right before I joined Rush). Our little family settled briefly into an apartment on the east side, then into a rented duplex on Violet Street, in the Martindale area.

A year later, the stork brought my brother Danny, and sister Judy a year after that. They were nice enough siblings, but I really wanted to be an only child -- I never liked to share.

We only lived on Violet Street until I was four, so my memories are few, but I do remember tumbling off my tricycle and falling headfirst into the corrugated metal pit around the basement window, crashing through the glass to hang upside-down, staring at my mother as she stood, drop-jawed, at the wringer washer. Miraculously, I wasn't injured -- although in retrospect, I may have suffered a little brain damage. It would explain some of my behavior in later years. But it didn't discourage my early taste for pedal-power, or adventure travel, for 30 years later I would find myself cycling through China, many countries in Europe and West Africa, and around much of North America.

In 1956, we moved to a brand-new split-level on Dalhousie Avenue -- then Queen Street, before the imperialist forces of St. Catherine's invaded Port Dalhousie, in

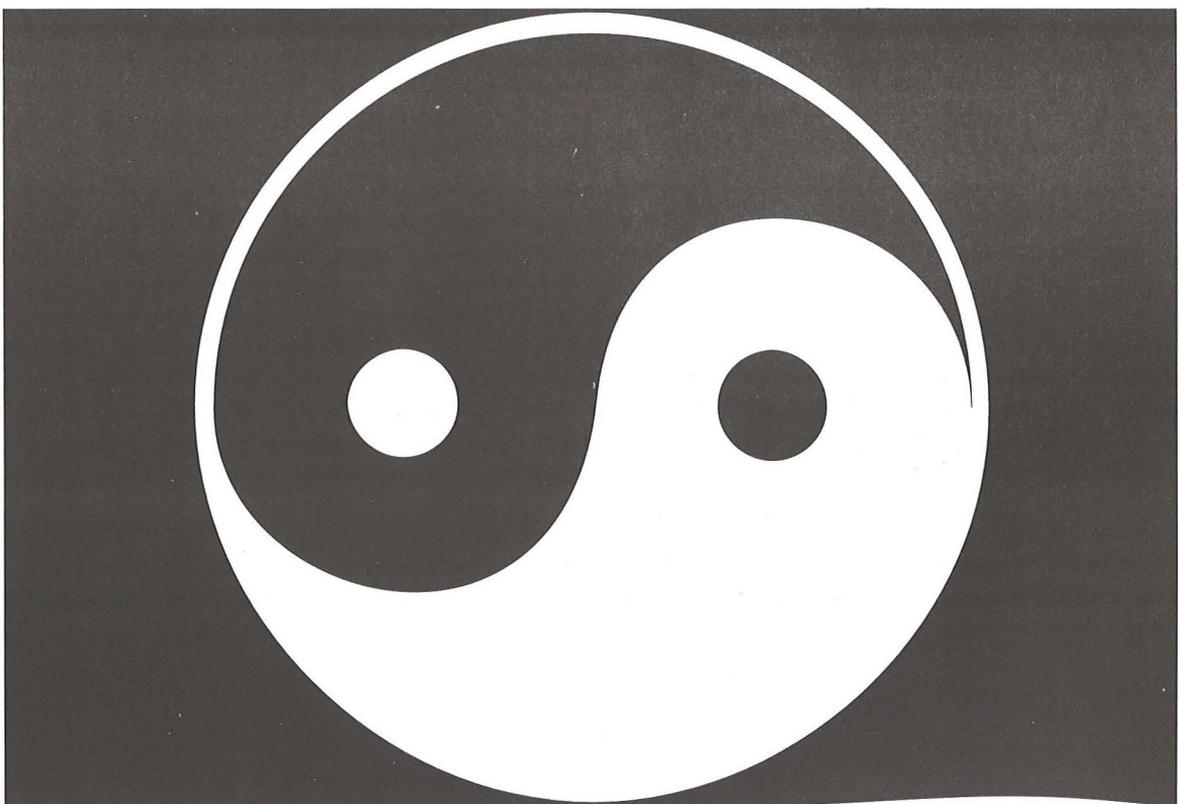
1961, and amalgamated it (like Saddam Hussein amalgamated Kuwait, it seems to me).

Our new subdivision had until recently been an orchard, and four pear trees remained at the end of our yard (over the years we ate so many pears off those trees that I have never been able to eat them since). Just behind us was Middleton's cornfield, which occupied the middle of the block, and in late summer it became a cool green labyrinth, perfect for hide-and-seek in the long twilight hours.

My Dad built us a swing set and a sandbox, and with those pear trees to climb and the cornfield to run through, our backyard was nearly perfect. We needed a pool and a trampoline, and maybe a roller coaster. But life was pretty good.

In those days, we didn't know about day-care centres or nursery schools, but Grandma Peart lived in a house on Bayview -- right across the cornfield -- and often looked after us, especially when Mom started working at Lincoln Hosiery. Grandma played hymns on the pedal organ, baked amazing pies and buns, taught me all about birds from her little colored books (I have them now), made quilts with her friends from the United Church Ladies Auxiliary, and wore her hair tucked in flat waves under a net.

She was a classic Puritan grandmother: wiry and iron-hard, a stern disciplinarian -- her chosen instrument was the wooden spoon, applied to my backside with enough force to break more than a few of them -- but I also remember a million acts of kindness. And if she believed the injunction against sparing the rod, she could still "spoil the child" in other ways, and we also knew her innate softness, her pure gentleness of heart.



I remember staying at her house when I was small, and at bedtime she would emerge from the bathroom totally transformed: leaving behind the severe cotton dress, the hard black shoes, and the strict hairnet, she tiptoed into the dark room on bare feet, wearing a long white nightgown, her hair down in a rope of grey braid. She seemed so frail and girlish as we knelt beside the big wooden bed to say our prayers: "Now I lay me down to sleep..."

I STARTED kindergarten at MacArthur School, and the first time the fire alarm went off, I ran out of there and didn't stop running until I got home. I had much to learn about life.

From grades 1 to 5 I attended Gracefield School, at the other end of Port Dalhousie, which was still surrounded by fields in those far-off days, and a copse of trees which we poetically called "Littlewoods." Once I fell out of one of those trees, landing on a broken branch and tearing a gash in my inner arm, big enough that I could see the white bone.

An older boy from down the street, Bryan Burke, had the presence-of-mind to rip off his T-shirt, wrap it around my arm and get me home, so after Mom got me to the hospital and had it stitched up, the only permanent damage to my future drumming limb was a long, ragged scar. Thanks, Bryan, wherever you are.

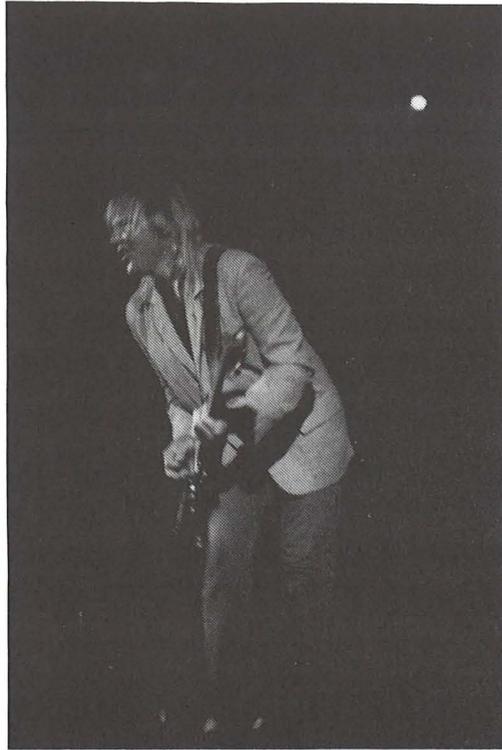
Port Dalhousie in the late '50s was a magical time and place, perfect for boyhood. Quiet streets for ball hockey, the lake for swimming, skating on Martindale Pond, the library to feed my growing appetite for reading, and hordes of other "baby boomer" kids around to share it all.

We measured our lives not by the seasons, but by the ancient festivals -- children are natural pagans. Winter was Christmas, spring was Easter, and autumn was the magic of Halloween: dressing up as Zorro, or a pirate, or a hobo, and wandering the cold, dark streets in search of flickering pumpkins at doorways where people would fill our bags with loot.

Whispered words were passed among the ghosts and goblins, and we learned which houses were giving out fudge or candy apple (no fear of needles or poison in those days -- before people became so crazy. I blame the water).

Summer, of course, was a long pagan festival all its own. I would get together with a friend like Doug Putman, or my brother Danny, and we would hike or ride our bikes to Paradise Valley, out by Ninth Street, or farther, to Rockway and Ball's Falls. Somehow nothing was more attractive than "the woods" -- a bit of leafy forest, a stretch of running water, maybe a shallow cave in the rocks of the escarpment. This was Romance and Adventure.

Sometimes we would ride to the railway crossing at Third Street, and just sit in the culvert all day, listening for trains and running out to watch them go by. Perhaps that sounds as exciting as watching grass grow, but for those apocalyptic seconds when we stood by the track and felt that power speeded by so close, so loud, and so



mighty that the earth shook and the wind roared, it raised more adrenalin than any Nintendo game.

We could explore along the wilder parts of the lakeshore, maybe sneak into old man Colesy's orchard to pilfer some fruit (risking his fabled pepper gun), or just spend our days "messing around" down by the old canal, or over by the lighthouse on the "Michigan side."

We would often see old mad Helen walking fast across the bridges, a blade of nose, protruding teeth, and a thatch of grey hair racing ahead of her old overcoat and blocky shoes. Helen was always muttering to herself as she stalked along, and adolescent boys, hiding under the bridges to listen, could imagine as much profanity in her gibberish as we did in the lyrics to Louie Louie. But in reality, only our minds were dirty.

And no wonder -- we lived in a dirty world. Like all that generation of Port kids, I learned to swim in Lake Ontario, at Mrs. Stewart's classes, and not only was that water cold on dark days, but what a cesspool we were swimming in -- algae and dead fish washing along the shore in reeking piles, dotted with "Port Dalhousie whitefish" (used condoms). Aside from the cold water and the stench, we sometimes endured eye, ear, and throat infections, and indeed, this was only a year or two before the scary signs began to go up: "No Swimming -- Polluted Water."

PERHAPS PEOPLE are more used to such things now, but to a 10-year-old boy in 1962, this was an inscrutable mystery. How could this happen? How could people let this happen? Everyone said it was because of the factories in Hamilton, and the pulp mills in Thorold, but of course the worst problem was fecal coliform -- human sewage -- just as it is today.

In any case, it wasn't the water in Port Dalhousie that nearly killed me -- it was other kids. One time, at about the same age, I was swimming 'way out over my head, trying to reach a raft which was anchored a couple of hundred yards offshore. The bigger guys used to swim out there, and I'd done it once before, but I was not a strong swimmer, and shivering added to the exertion. Choppy waves broke in my face, and I choked a couple of times. When I finally made it to the raft, I was gasping for breath and my arms were heavy.

A bunch of the neighborhood bullies were playing there, wrestling and throwing each other into the water, and they thought it would be a good joke not to let me on. Exhausted and desperate, I paddled from side to side of the raft, but they would only taunt me, laugh, and push me away. I started to swim back to shore, while they lost interest and turned away again, back to their rough play.

I couldn't do it. About halfway I ran out of strength, and in a panic realized that I was going to drown. I couldn't move my arms and legs any more, and I felt myself sinking -- even had my brief life flash before my eyes. I suppose I must have called out, for the next thing I know I was waking up on the beach. It seemed I'd been pulled from the water by two other kids from school -- Kit Jarvis and Margaret Clare (and yes, I remember the names of some of the young brutes on that raft too, and since I've never again been comfortable away from shore, even though I've become a strong swimmer, I can tell you that those guys are doomed forever by bad karma and voodoo curses). On the positive side, I owe Kit and Margaret a lot -- in fact, everything -- and I've never forgotten what they did.

Nor have I forgotten the simple joys of childhood: riding in the back seat of Dad's red '55 Buick hardtop, squirming against Danny and Judy, all of us excited to be on the way to a drive-in movie (always pretending to be asleep when we got home, so Dad would carry us to our beds).

OR THE RAREST luxury -- going out for dinner at the Niagara Frontier House, a diner on Ontario Street which was modest enough, but seemed like the Ritz to me. Red-upholstered booths, lights glinting on wood, Formica, and stainless steel, the Hamilton Beach milkshake machine, the tray of pies on the counter, and the chrome juke-box beside each booth, with those metal pages you could flip through to read the songs. Although the highest luxury of all was being allowed to choose from a menu, I always ordered the same thing: a hot hamburg sandwich and a chocolate milkshake.

Simple joys, and simple sorrows, yet felt as deeply as they will ever be. And sometimes they are both evoked just by remembering an old car. One time we drove out Lakeshore Road and up the lane to Mr. Houtby's farm, and Dad got out to talk to him. Next morning, I started my first summer job. In retrospect, I have to

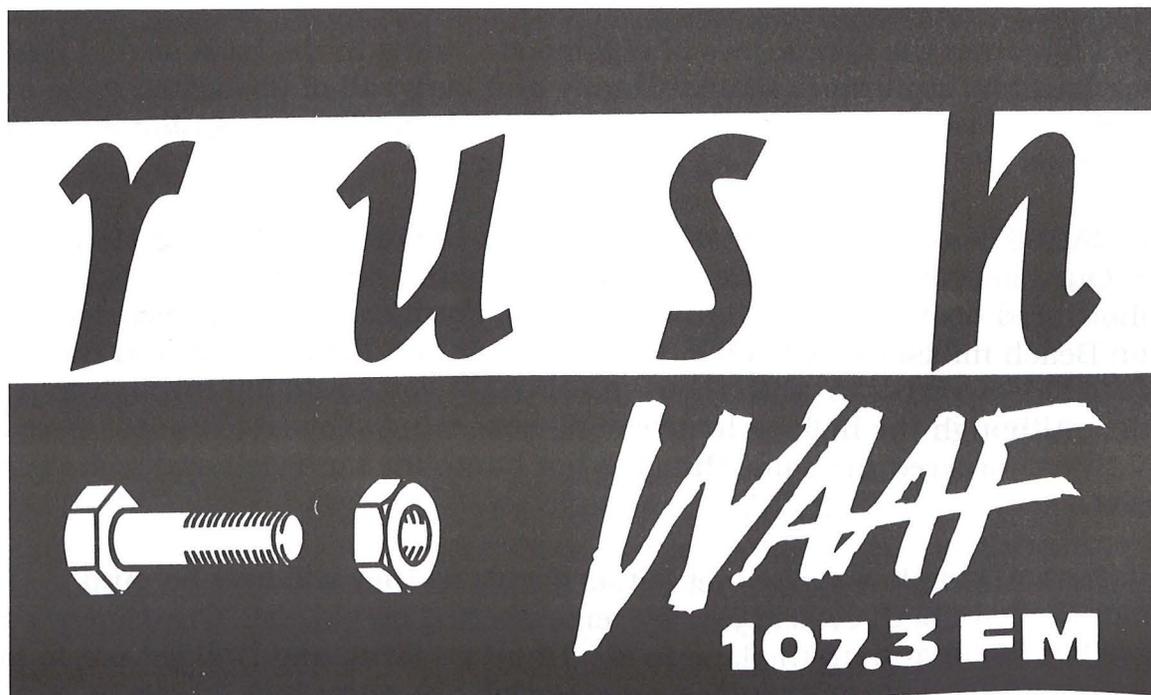
wonder if Mr. Houtby had some grudge against my Dad's farm equipment business, for I found myself sent out to weed a potato field -- by hand -- and after three days of crawling through the dirt on my hands and knees under the baking sun, I received the princely sum of ... three dollars. My faith in the work ethic was shaken, I can tell you, but it was later restored -- first by a Globe & Mail route, then by a little set of red-sparkle drums. . . .

IN EARLY adolescence, my hormones attached themselves to music. Mom and Dad gave me a transistor radio, and I used to lay in bed at night with it turned down low and pressed to my ear, tuned to pop stations in Toronto, Hamilton, Welland, or Buffalo. I still remember the first song that galvanized me: Chains, a simple pop tune by one of those girl groups, with close harmonies syncopated over a driving shuffle. No great classic or anything, but as I listened to that song on my transistor, suddenly I understood. This changed everything.

Rhythm especially seemed to affect me, in a physical way, and soon I was tapping all the time -- on tables, knees, and with a pair of chopsticks on baby sister Nancy's playpen.

At first Mom and Dad probably thought I had some kind of nervous affliction, but they decided to try occupational therapy -- for my thirteenth birthday, they got me drum lessons. This changed everything even more.

Every Saturday morning, I took the bus uptown, and climbed the stairs to the Peninsula Conservatory of Music, above St. Paul Street. My teacher was Don George -- someone else to whom I owe a lot. Don started me off so well: he emphasized the basics of technique (the famous 26 rudiments) and sight reading, but also showed me the flashier stuff, and was always enthusiastic and supportive.



Coincidentally, Kit Jarvis also studied drums with Don, and Don once told me that out of all his students, only Kit and I would ever be drummers. For me, that was heavy encouragement indeed, and he was fortunately not wrong -- I wonder if Kit still plays? Last I heard he moved to Ottawa or something. But of course, that was almost 30 years ago.

I was totally obsessed with drumming and no one ever had to encourage me to practice -- to the contrary: I had to be encouraged to stop! By this time we lived on Gertrude Street, and the Kyle family next door was very tolerant and pleasant about the racket pouring out of my bedroom window every afternoon after school.

My drumming debut took place at St. John's Anglican Church Hall in Port Dalhousie, during a school Christmas pageant (no, not as the little drummer boy). Four of us mimed to the Stones' Get Off My Cloud, only since we were supposed to be the Royal Bakers in the play, we changed it to Get Off My Pizza. Clever.

My next drumming appearance was at the Lakeport High School variety show. With Don Brunt on piano and Don Tees on sax, we were the Eternal Triangle, and we practiced nights at the school. (Don Brunt would drive us home in his Dad's '65 Pontiac, usually with a detour out to Middle Road, where he could get it up to a hundred).

For the variety show we played a couple of songs, including one original which was titled LSD Forever (as if we had any idea -- the only drug we knew anything about was Export A!). My first public drum solo was a success, and I will never forget how I glowed with the praise from the other kids in the show including, I've always remembered, Paul Kennedy, who has done well for himself on CBC Radio). To a kid who had never been good in sports, and had never felt like "one of the gang," this was the first time I had ever known "peer appreciation." I confess I liked it.

IN MY EARLY teens I also achieved every Port kid's dream: a summer job at Lakeside Park. In those days, it was still a thriving and exciting whirl of r' les, games, music, and lights. So many ghosts haunt that vanished midway; so many memories bring it back for me. I ran the Bubble Game -- calling out "Catch a bubble; prize every time!" all day -- and sometimes the Ball Toss game. When it wasn't busy I would sit at the back door and watch the kids on the trampolines, and Mr. Cudney wasn't amused. I got fired. (Early on I had trouble with the concept of "responsibility," but I'm better now.)

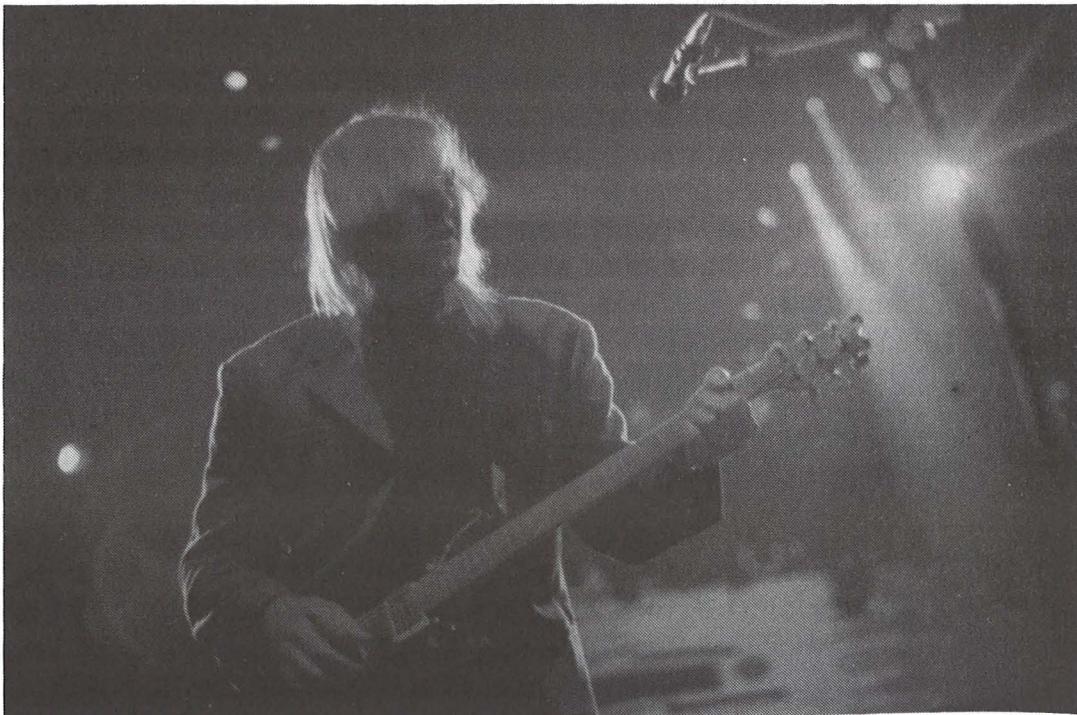
And then there were all the bands. Guitars and Hammond organs by then, and five-piece groups with names like Mumblin' Sumpthin', The Majority, J. R. Flood, and Hush.

We practiced in basement rec rooms and garages, living for that weekend gig at the church hall, the high school, the roller rink, and, later, so many late night drives in Econoline vans, sitting on the amps all the way home from towns like Mitchell, Seaforth, Elmira, and even as far as Timmins, as we "toured" the high schools of southern Ontario.

THEN THERE were the Tuesday night jam sessions at the Niagara Theatre Centre (our very own slice of Bohemia). Impromptu groups were formed among members of various local bands -- whoever turned up with some gear, basically -- and we played variations on the blues, folk songs, and meandering rock fantasies. This was great training for young musicians, and we got paid for it too -- \$10 dollars each -- which was helpful because none of us made any money from our bands. (Any fees from those weekend gigs went to pay rental of public address systems, loan payments, or new drumsticks.) But the experience of playing all that weird music with all those weird people was, of course, priceless.

When I think back to my early musical influences, naturally I was inspired by many famous drummers, like Gene Krupa or Keith Moon, but closer to home, strangely enough I think of a series of guitar players -- local guys I was lucky enough to work with who were such total musicians that they forever marked my vision of how this music thing ought to be done. Players like Bob Kozak, Terry Walsh, Paul Dickinson, and Brian Collins (The Standard's own) taught me to recognize quality and excellence in music, and set an example of total commitment and hard work to achieve these things. I still follow the road they showed me, though I'm glad to say the pay has improved. . . .

SO WHAT was it like to grow up in St. Catherine's in those days? Well, as some of these stories will attest, it was a wonderful place to be a boy. I have since written that mood into songs like The Analog Kid and Lakeside Park. For a teenager, however, especially a rebellious and self-consciously different teenager, St. Catherine's in those days was not so nice. I have written about that mood in songs like Subdivisions.



The Lakeport years were tough. No, I couldn't say it was hell -- I had a few friends, and even a few teachers who could make English or history interesting enough to distract me from thinking about drums, drawing pictures of drums, and playing drums on my desk.

One science teacher and self-important martinet (he used to roam the hallways in a quest to eliminate the evil of untucked shirt-tails), was once disturbed by my tapping in class (as more than a few people were, including fellow students -- a girl named Donna once threw a book at me). When I told him that I really couldn't help it, that it just "happened," he told me I must be "some kind of retard" and sentenced me to a detention in which I had to drum on the desk for an hour. Some punishment. I had fun; he had to leave the room.

In those high school hallways of the mid-sixties, the conformity was stifling. Everyone dressed the same, in a uniform-of-choice -- Sta-Prest slacks, penny loafers, and V-neck vests over Oxford shirts -- and at Lakeport High, the jocks and frat boys were king.

To be both a jock and in a fraternity was the ideal -- to be neither, unthinkable. Even by 1967, in our whole school there were only about three guys who dared to have long hair (below the ears, that is), and in the hallways we endured constant verbal abuse: "Is that a girl?" "Hey sweetheart!" "Let's give it a haircut!" and other intelligent remarks. Outside it was worse -- bullying threats and even beatings. All because we were "freaks."

Later, when I was out of school and playing full time with J. R. Flood, I went to band practice at Paul Dickinson's house every day, and had to take the bus over to Western Hill.

There were some charming characters on that bus, I can tell you -- greasy-haired thugs with football pad shoulders and shoe-size IQs -- and how I used to hate that ordeal. Of course, by then I was roaming around with a frizzy perm, long black cape, and purple shoes -- but I wasn't hurting anybody. I was just different, and they didn't like it.

One time I went into the Three Star Restaurant, across from the former courthouse, and they refused to serve me because I had long hair (again, below the ears). Being naive and idealistic, I couldn't believe what I was hearing, and I stood up and made a scene, called the Nazis, went and complained to the police and everything. Rebel without a clue.

And consider how narrow our world was, growing up in the suburbs of Port Dalhousie. Until I was in my teens I didn't know a single black person, or an Asian, or even an American. I didn't know what it meant to be Jewish, and I didn't think I knew any of them either. The Catholics were different somehow, with the Star Of The Sea Church, and I wondered why the kids were kept in a "separate school," but it didn't seem to mean much -- we all played together in the streets. A half-Chinese family lived across from us, but my Mom had warned us never to tease their

kids with remarks like (she whispered) "chinky chinky Chinaman." We had never thought of anything like that, but she must have heard other kids teasing them and wanted to be sure her children wouldn't. Well done, Ma! But really, I never knew about racism or homophobia or anything antagonistic like that -- there was simply no one to fasten it on, because nearly everyone was the same. Or pretended to be . . .

Like the town of Gopher Prairie in Sinclair Lewis's *Main Street*, people in St. Catherine's in those days were nearly all decent, kind, and friendly -- as long as you filled your part of the "social contract" by fitting in; as long as you weren't willfully different.

Non-conformity seemed to be taken as some kind of personal reproach by those bitter conformists, and they would close ranks against you, and shun the "mutant."

IN ANY CASE, my childhood in Port Dalhousie was a good one, and all those later experiences certainly "built character." My life, then and now, might be summed up by Nietzsche's motto: "That which does not kill me makes me stronger."

So I'm strong. As a rule, though, I'm not very nostalgic, and seldom even think about the past, but now that I take this occasion to look back on my early life, I am amazed at how many names and faces come surging up. Old friends and neighbors, of course, but more important: so many people who have made a mark on my life. Schoolteachers, drum teachers, life savers, guitar players, grandmothers, and even Mom and Dad.

And in a world which is supposed to be so desperate for heroes, maybe it's time we stopped looking so far away. Surely we have learned by now not to hitch our wagons to a "star," not to bow to celebrity. We find no superhumans among actors, athletes, artists, or the aristocracy, as the media are so constantly revealing that our so-called heroes, from Prince Charles to Michael Jackson, are in reality, as old Fred Nietzsche put it, "human -- all too human."

AND MAYBE the role models that we really need are to be found all around us, right in our own neighborhoods. Not some remote model of perfection which exists only as a fantasy, but everyday people who actually show us, by example, a way to behave that we can see is good, and sometimes even people who can show us what it is to be excellent.

And if we ever get the idea that people from faraway places are all thugs, villains, or lunatics, we can stop to realize that we have those all around us too -- right here at home. But I have found, in all the neighborhoods of the world, that the heroes still outnumber the villains.

Editor's note:

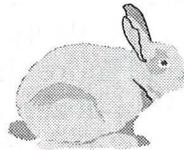
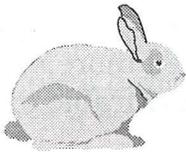
Neil was playing drums in 1974 for what turned out to be the last incarnation of Hush (a popular Niagara band with me and Paul Luciani on bass guitar and Gary

Luciani on vocals) when the phone call came: would Neil be interested in auditioning for Rush, whose drummer had just quit? (As I recall, someone connected with the band was from St. Catherine's and remembered Neil from his J. R. Flood days.)

Neil actually had to think it over. He was working full time at his Dad's business, and had recently returned disappointed after trying to "make it" as a drummer in England. At the time, Hush members saw Rush as merely a Led Zeppelin clone band -- 'You're making a big mistake, Neil,' one of us sagely opined at a band meeting.

Of course, the rest is musical history. I like to think Neil served as the catalyst in what has obviously become a tremendous musical and personal partnership with Geddy Lee and Alex Lifeson. Neil -- and the group -- has continued to grow lyrically and musically through the decades. Neil, it sure wasn't a mistake.

-- Brian Collins, Spectrum editor



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SOME RUSH: 20 YEARS TO HALL OF FAME

They'll be inducted during Juno Awards show tonight

When Rush is inducted into the Juno Hall of Fame tonight, it won't be the first time the trio of Geddy Lee, Alex Lifeson and Neil Peart has been honored by the Juno Awards, which air at 8 p.m. on CBC.

In fact, the year Peart joined the band, 1974, Rush was named most promising group of the year. In the 20 years since, not only has Rush proven that being named the Junos' most promising group isn't always the kiss of death, it has received four other Junos, recorded 19 albums, sold more than 30 million albums, performed more than 500 shows to six million fans in a dozen countries and become the most durable and successful group in Canadian history. But Rush in the Hall of Fame?

For all the firepower it unloads in its concert tours, Rush has always tended to keep its accomplishments quietly to itself. It has always affiliated itself with its fans, not the music business. It has always aligned its musical ideals with those of its early idols and also the new acts that continue to embrace that idealism and shake new life into rock 'n' roll.

Rush in the Hall of Fame? A highly unlikely forecast to anyone who remembers the band's first single, Not Fade Away, released almost 25 years ago, or the trio's first, pre-Peart album, which was a crude approximation of Led Zeppelin and Humble Pie sludge. Or if they could have read Neil Peart's mind on the night in 1974 he turned 22 years old, drumming in the opening act for Sha Na Na.

"Touring was the answer for us," he says during a phone call from New York, a stop on Rush's 987th tour. "We'd never think of saying no to any offer that came along and would end up bouncing all over the country. One reason we continue to tour, despite it becoming more difficult, and, frankly, less enjoyable, is that it's still the right thing to do - to stay vital and put yourself to the ultimate test each night".

Winning awards, any award, was the furthest thing from Rush's thinking. It still is. Neil's call wasn't prompted by the Juno honor but his concern that fans might feel snubbed by the band's inability to fit Vancouver into its tour to promote the LP, Counterparts. Such conscientiousness has been its own reward, and possibly is at the heart of the group's induction into the Hall of Fame, where its name will join that of Leonard Cohen, Gordon Lightfoot, Oscar Peterson, Joni Mitchell, Glenn Gould, Neil Young and others.

Even now the band is searching to improve as musicians and honor its past in more personally meaningful ways. Neil, who constantly is polishing and subtly refining his phrasing as a drummer, also has, after 25 years, taken up brushes. Meanwhile, the band is recording the current tour for release as a 20th anniversary retrospective. Both examples are clues as to what drives Rush after all these years and how it has managed to survive - intact, scandal-free and healthy.

When Rush started, it was just another heavy-metal band from Toronto and a particularly unappealing one at that, what with its second-hand guitar riffs and Geddy Lee's squealing voice. However, the trio had a manager, Ray Daniels, that believed in it and, by the time Peart took over the drumming duties for the second album, it had galvanized itself into action by the desire to emulate its heroes, which at the time ranged from the jagged, dark power of King Crimson to the orchestral splendor of Barclay James Harvest.

One of the myths that has endured about Rush's success is that Daniels and the band did it all by themselves. If radio wouldn't play a Rush record, if the music press hated the band, Rush would tour with anyone who wanted it, would play for who counted most, the people. This happened. Rush became the archetypal people's band of the 1970s, but Peart refused to gild the myth. "There was always word of mouth going around for the band, and we always got college airplay, which helped us to build an audience," he points out. Still, "as much as the industry pretends they can control any band's career, the fact is that it starts in the garage and ends in the garage, and that's what I love about rock 'n' roll. That's where the ideas come from and the attitude. That's what happened with Nirvana and Pearl Jam. Duke Ellington's famous quote is that there are only two kinds of music - good and bad," Neil notes, touching on the theme of dualities that inspired the songs on Counterparts. "I'd extend that to say there is honest music and dishonest music. When I hear a band that is honest - no matter what it is - I'll always cut them some slack. We had The Melvins open for us. I loved everything about them but their music."

In the interests of mastering their instruments and the recording studio, Rush relied upon a work ethic that would have ruined any other band while its lofty artistic ambitions produced several unwieldy and not very listenable albums until the time came, around 1980 and the release of the Permanent Waves LP, that Rush had fashioned its own identity, its own sound and its own ethos.

As Rush progressed, it incorporated contemporary ideas into records that were becoming more direct, melodic and warmer. As lyricist, Neil was broadening the band's musical personality through his own expanding interests in journalism, fiction, cycling and travel. It developed one of the most efficient and admired production crews on the road and avidly sought out new, emerging bands as opening act, treating them with respect. But by the late '80s, Rush found itself more alone than ever.

"That was a time of bad writing and playing and drum programs and industry-directed music," Peart recalls. "One of the reasons I'm excited by a lot of the bands

I'm hearing in the '90s is that they have good lyrics and they're good players. The band Live impresses me, and the drummer for Pearl Jam is so fluid and rhythmic."

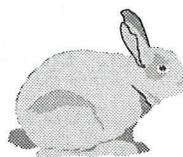
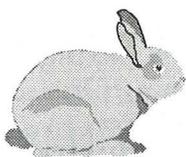
Thus invigorated, Rush summoned 20 years' experience and combined it with an urge to get back to the stripped-down sound of the new bands it was hearing - which it also had inspired. The feat of Counterparts is that it is the trio's most mature production while simultaneously making Rush sound young and ready for another 20 years. Peart is quicker to acknowledge that the idealism that fires these bands still drives Rush in 1994. Perhaps this is why, more than the awards that have started to take up space at Anthem Records (Rush's label, set up in the late '70s by Daniels), Neil is proudest of the numerous new bands, notably Primus, that cite Rush as an influence, not only for its musicianship but its integrity.

For Lee, Lifeson and Peart there could be no greater affirmation. "Affirmation is the word," Neil agrees. "In the dark days of the '80s we felt alone - the last band out there holding to what we believed to breathe the honesty and power of rock 'n' roll and the rebellion. Now, in the '90s, to hear these bands come along who believe as we do is totally affirming. And, in case anyone gets the wrong idea, the awards are nice, too. It feels very good," Peart says, tickled that last year Rush became the first recipient of the Harvard National Lampoon's Group of the Millennium award.

"Without being too flip about it, being inducted into the Hall of Fame is a case of us reaching a state of maturity and confidence in ourselves that we can accept the recognition. The award that was really satisfying, personally, was the Toronto Arts Award, not only because the council broke tradition by giving us the award but because the award has the word 'art' in it. When I do get awards - from Modern Drummer magazine, from my peers - I understand that, because that's what I do. It comes back to one of my old themes," Peart continues. "It's the division between dreams and fantasies. To me, dreams are attainable while fantasies are unrealistic. So any goal Rush set for itself was based on an attainable dream."

When Rush opened for Sha Na Na in 1974, becoming a respected, influential drummer was Neil Peart's distant dream. Entering the Juno Hall of Fame wasn't even a remote fantasy. The irony is that the practicality, integrity (and a seldomly acknowledged gentle humor) with which Rush has guided itself has converged with the timely recognition of both the industry and the musicians the group has influenced. Rush in the Hall of Fame? More fantastic things have happened.

Tom Harrison
Province Showcase (Vancouver)
March 20 1994





RUSHING AHEAD

Are they hip yet? After 20 years, rock's eggheads discover love and sex.

by Brett Milano (The Worcester Phoenix)

The song is called "Animate," and it sounds for all the world like a model of cutting-edge, alternative metal. Lyrically, it's a Jung-inspired dialogue between the singer and his anima, or the female within - great post-modern concept, right? And musically, it's the sort of thing that Stone Temple Pilots or Blind Melon would kill for: big, crashing guitar chords; earnest and convincing vocal, nice blend of '70s arena tricks and modern pop twists. Just the sort of song to give a band Alternative Nation credentials for life.

Only one problem: "Animate" is not a new song by a hip-and-happening, MTV-approved band. It's the lead-off track from Rush's *Counterparts*, the Canadian trio's 16th studio album after 20 years together, and still sporting the near-original line-up of singer/bassist/keyboardist Geddy Lee, guitarist Alex Lifeson, and drummer/lyricist Neil Peart (who replaced John Rutsey after the band's first album). Now that a substantial portion of alternative rock is turning into a rehash of the '70s, sometimes it takes a bunch of smart warhorses to show how it's done. The band make their semi-annual visit to the Centrum this weekend for shows on Friday and Saturday.

So is Rush finally getting hip after all these years? "I'm sure we are for some people, but there's also lots of people who will never consider us hip - so I'm sure we're safe from that accusation," laughs Lee by phone from a soundcheck in Orlando, Florida last week. "I keep hearing about younger bands that are quoting us and supposedly sounding like us, but I can't say I've really heard one that sounds like us yet."

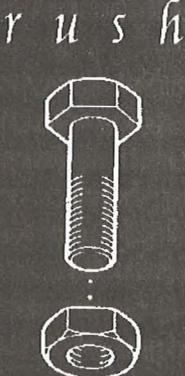
Then again, Rush doesn't operate like a lot of veteran bands. For one thing, they're letting their 20th anniversary slip by with little fanfare - not making it the hook for the current tour. Instead of doing a retrospective, greatest-hits show this weekend, they'll be focusing as usual on the last few albums, saving the oldies for encores. (Lee says they've re-learned a few old tunes they haven't played in a long while, but doesn't want to reveal which). He also promises "more of an audiovisual element" than before, with new projections, film, and lighting designed by the band and its associates.

Even the best '70s bands seem to exist these days by pulling the same strings they pulled 20 years ago - whether by proving they can still come off like young punks (Aerosmith have that market cornered), by doing sequels of 20-year-old albums (stand up, Meat Loaf), or by playing mostly old material (as Pink Floyd will undoubtedly do on their coming tour). Rush are one of the few '70s bands who keep moving ahead: they've never gone more than two years without a new studio album, and the newer stuff invariably out-classes the old.

"The most important thing for us is to keep writing - not to do the usual thing and say, 'I'll see you guys in 10 years after we've done our solo projects'," Lee says, "You can only go so long without needing to write something, and I'll start getting pretty itchy after a year goes by."

Like most of their albums, Counterparts was largely written in the studio with the clock running. Rush didn't have any songs finished until the sessions began.

"Something will always come out when the three of us get together - it may not be any damn good, but something comes out. I think we're pretty confident that we can put a record together in almost any circumstances, but it helps if you've got a good producer and a lot of ideas flying around. This time we were fine-tuning things until the very last minute, and Neil would still be working on words while we were recording."



r u s h

COUNTERPARTS
after show party

**FREE ADMISSION
WITH YOUR RUSH
CONCERT TICKET STUB**

Saturday, April 23rd, 1994
\$1 Beers, Drinks & Shots until 11:00pm
\$2 Miller Bottles all night long

paradise rocks
(OVER).....

Non-singing drummer Neil Peart continues to provide all of the lyrics, and he's been responsible for the weighty concepts that have gotten Rush pegged as an egghead band (they got official egghead status last year, when Harvard named them "Band of the Millennium"). Peart's gotten more down-to-earth in recent years, but he still builds the albums around unifying themes - power struggles on 1986's *Power Windows*, aggression on 1988's *Hold Your Fire*, the nature of God on *Presto*, and chance and gambling on 1992's *Roll The Bones*. For *Counterparts*, he approached the theme of interpersonal (or in the case of "Animate," inner-personal) relationships, which allows for a handful of songs about love and sex - the two most common subjects in pop music but practically the only subjects that Rush had never written about.

"It's true, those subjects seemed really trite to us in our early days," Lee says. "We were always thinking, 'The people we hang out with are not hung up on these subjects, so why should we be?'; and the idea of doing love songs seemed a bit banal. This time there was a great desire to attack those subjects in an atypical manner. After 20 years you have to start saying, 'I wonder if I can really tackle this subject?' Maybe that's what all the people we couldn't stand 20 years ago were trying to do."

Can Lee always make sense of the lyrics that Peart gives him to sing? "No, not always. He never tells us what anything's about, he'll just hand us a lyric and either we like it or we don't. And that's where the process of conversation begins. Sometimes the thread of what he's getting at isn't clear to other people. I think I have a pretty good track record, though. A lot of times he'll use me as a sounding board to see if the ideas are going to get across. Sometimes he'll hand me something I love, and my interpretation might have nothing to do with his, but that doesn't matter to me.

"Even when Neil wrote about love and relationships on this album, he approached it like Mr. Spock would on *Star Trek* - 'Hmm, let me do some r & d on the subject.' He was still doing a lot of reading and exploring a lot of philosophy. I think it shows people a side of him they haven't seen before, and they can still appreciate that a lot of it is open to great interpretation."

Musically, there have also been some changes made. A lot of people still associate Rush with 15-minute songs and science-fiction epics, but they haven't done either since the '70s. With the *Permanent Waves* album in 1979, they stripped things down and brought in a slight new-wave influence. Some listeners even mistook the single "New World Man" for a Police record. The '80s found them adopting a high-tech approach, notably on the *Hold Your Fire* and *Power Windows* albums, on which Lifeson's guitar took a back seat to computerised layers of keyboards, sequencers and synthesizers. The real quantum leap happened with 1989's *Presto* album, which brought in some superb pop hooks, a textured, back-to-guitars sound, and even vocal harmonies (for the first time on a Rush record). *Counterparts* continues along those lines, turning the guitars up further and phasing out the synthesizers altogether.

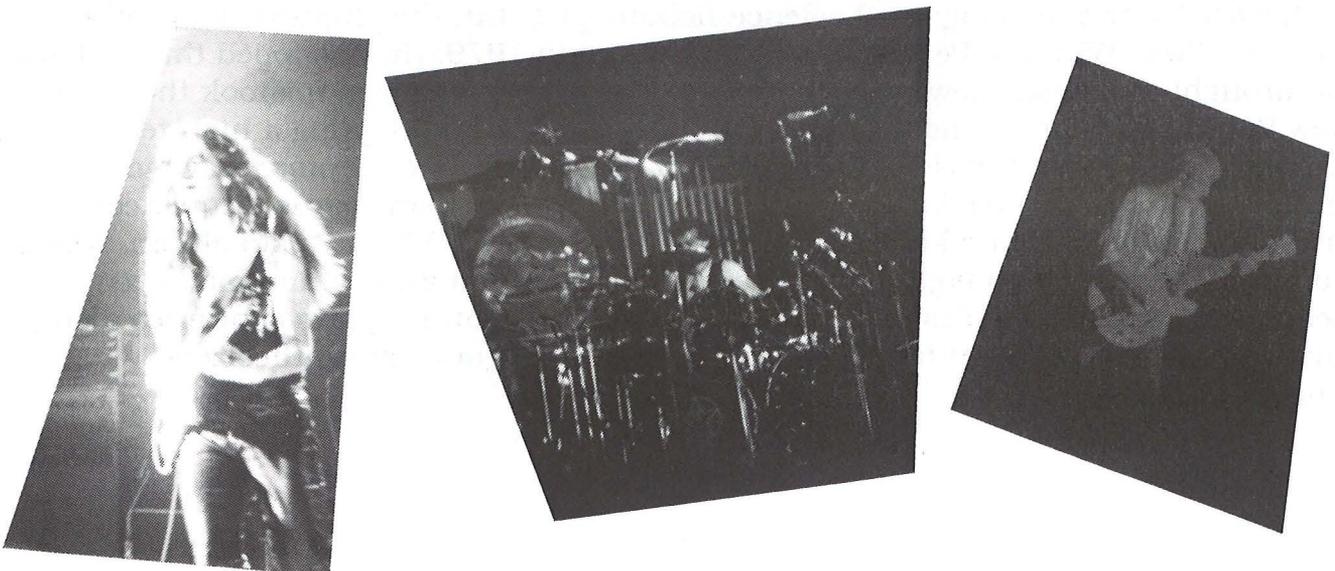
"We got sick of the digitized sound around the time of Presto, and whatever we planted then came to fruition on the new album," Lee says, "I also started getting into the simpler, more soulful aspects of songwriting, and that's where the harmonies came from. We couldn't have used them before, with the density of the music we were pursuing. I've been listening to more American rock music than ever lately, which may have something to do with where we've gone - then again, I've also been listening to Billie Holliday, and I'm sure you can't hear that in Rush. But oddly enough, I think Neil's current interest in opera has given him more respect for what I do as a singer, and influenced him to keep things simpler."

Since there have been nothing but short songs on the last batch of Rush albums, can they see making another stab at an epic-length piece? "That's possible, though it seems to me like a gargantuan objective to put everything we want into a four-or-five minute song. Those long, self-indulgent pieces are absolutely the easiest thing for us to do, and that's the stupid thing about us as a band - that we don't do what comes easiest. 'Double Agent' on the new album really threatened to go in that direction. That could easily have been a 15-minute piece if we hadn't held ourselves back."

Just because the new music is simpler, Lee says, that doesn't make it easier to perform. "If you're playing uptempo or intense music on stage, the whole thing can be dictated by the feel, so you can cruise along on that. The new stuff is a bit different rhythmically, so you have to approach it with a more relaxed attitude, and let the songwriting dictate the groove."

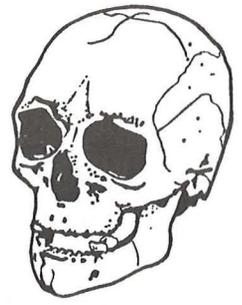
The band have resisted the urge to make things easier by bringing extra musicians on the road, and, despite their polished sound on stage, they're not using tapes either.

"We do have an incredible amount of keyboard equipment on stage though, and we're triggering a lot of it with our feet. A lot of it is incredibly complicated to deliver technically. We've got three people on stage, which means that six limbs are always occupied doing different things. But hopefully people won't be seeing us do everything; they'll just be saying, 'Hey, that sounds just like the record.'"





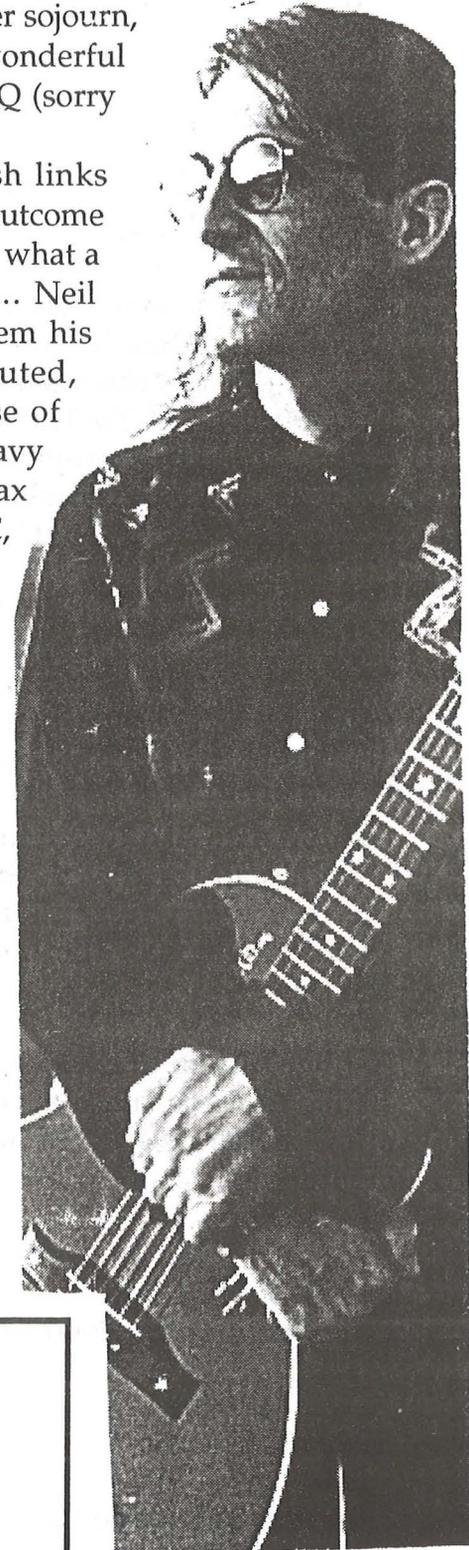
RUSH TRIVIA



Despite the overwhelming inclination to take a long overdue summer sojourn, the meanderings continue this issue, courtesy again of the ever wonderful *National Midnight Star* and my faithful link into the etherworld, TAQ (sorry about the mis-spelling last time Andy).

But first: a last despairing look over the shoulder at the Rush links conversation started moons ago. If only I'd realised the potential outcome of my flippancy. If only I'd foreseen what a horrendous impact, nay what a sorry state, the topic could reduce one of our faithful readers to... Neil Aylott of Thetford, Norfolk, is beyond help. Any efforts to redeem his mental stability will surely be academic. Via the most convoluted, nonsensical family tree – completed with coloured pens for ease of legibility – he has managed to link the members of Rush to every heavy metal/hard rock band that has ever existed; from the obvious (Max Webster) to the sublime (Coney Hatch, Meat Loaf, Saxon, AC/DC, Motörhead – need I go on ?). Even Bonnie Tyler, Mike Oldfield, REM and Sisters Of Mercy turned up on the bizarre chart that devastated my psyche and taken some considerable time to overcome via extended therapy sessions. No offence, and you obviously know your heavy metal Neil, but get some treatment yourself; just because Alex Lifeson played with Brian May & co on "Smoke On The Water" doesn't mean Rush are connected to the fucking Tygers Of Pan Tang.

Right. Back to the NMS business in hand. Once again since it's summer and I'm hardly in the mood for more than a couple of hundred words before going out to play, this issue's trivia is short & sweet and concerns the names by which Alex introduced himself and his cohorts during the Counterparts tour. These are all the ones I came across while poring over the pages of the NMS, though no doubt there are more. And I'm sure you'll agree this has got to be one of the saddest listings ever to appear on these pages. We'll be back to the days of those dodgy Christmas word and drawing games before we know where we are.



Alex

Fabulous Fabio
Scotty McBurns
Liam Grandy
Mario Lemieux*

Geddy

Steven Seagal
Geddy McLee
Don Watts
Mean Joe Green*
Tommy Faye Baaker (?)
Patrick Roy#

Neil

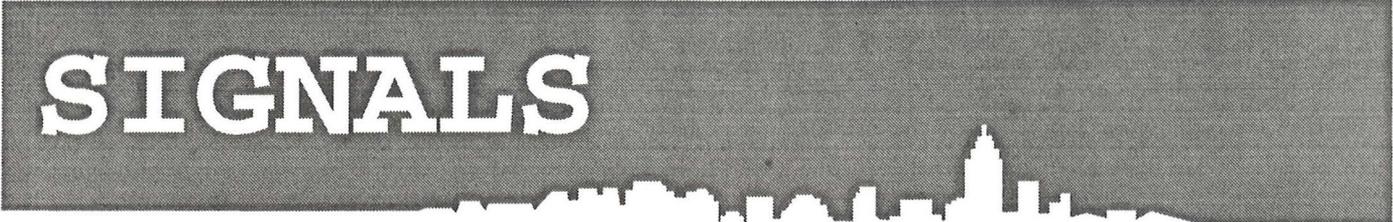
Karen Carpenter
Neil McPeart
John Rutsey
Mr Rogers*
Arnold Schwarzenegger
Steve Shutt#
Chuck Woollery

* – all Pittsburgh Pirates baseball players

– Montréal Canadiens hockey players

▲ Rush lookalike time again. Geddy Lee with an acoustic guitar ? No. As all Country Music lovers will know, this is none other than Jimmie Dale Gilmore. Eek.

SIGNALS



Dear SOR,

I was delighted to read from your editorial that Rush have completed a video promo for "Nobody's Hero".

As you will undoubtedly know, promo CD singles for "Nobody's Hero" and "Double Agent" have already been released (both of which I am fortunate to own). I would in no way dispute the validity of choosing these two as potential singles but what about "Animate", "Cut To The Chase" and "Between Sun And Moon?" For me these are three of the finest tracks from Counterparts, and in my opinion the three most likely to achieve commercial success and promote the album to the largest possible audience. New and old.

I have no doubt that the band have increasing control over their affairs and complete control artistically, but it would be interesting to learn what influence they have over the record company and what is released. I am sure that the band have their favourite tracks just like us, and I am sure that "Animate" and "Cut to The Chase" are two of them. Why else would they play them live?

I would also like to see more live stuff released. Bootlegs from the Counterparts tour have already surfaced, dubious in quality as they are. Again this must be down to the record company claiming that there is little demand for live material. If this is so, then why can the bootleggers release ten different CDs of the same tour? And sell them?

If a live album and video should have been released then it should have been for the Bones tour - a more spectacular event there has never been!!! Any comments from other readers would be interesting.

**JEFF KEENAN
ST HELENS**

P.S. Keep up the good work.

Hello all at SOR,

Just received issue 26, and I ask myself 'Where have I been? Why have I not been getting this brill publication from Issue 1'? Ah well, that is history as they say. Although I am a late-comer to SOR I am not a late-comer to RUSH as I was lucky enough to hear "Bastille Day" at a local disco, yes I did say disco. Members of SOR

in the West Lancs area may remember a "heavy rock" disco called "Peepers" run by Blackburn Council; it was in this dark, dank, fluorescent painted place with its hippy-trippy ambience that I heard for the first time the group that was to become my lifetime favourite. Other musicians come and go and I may have a brief but intense dalliance with them, but at the end of the day I always return to "the sponge" (I take it everybody did see that very brief interview with Geddy on ITV the other week?). To return to the plot, I heard and fell in love with "Bastille Day" but 'who were these guys'? I was surrounded by pubescent, pimply youths, air-guitaring like mad but still no wiser. It wasn't till my big brother came home from Uni with AFTK that it all started to click into place. I very quickly got the back catalogue and have been hooked ever since.

However, a mortgage and two kids don't leave much spare cash for the niceties of life, but I have managed to keep my collection up-to-date - but haven't seen them since the "Moving Pictures" tour, so I am desperate for some UK dates! I am very envious of anyone who jets off to see them in the US or Canada (it is my ambition to see them in Toronto) and I am also envious of people with vast record collections but again there is so much stuff knocking about

A couple of questions for you now: Are there any good books on Rush? I have the Visions by Bill Banasiewicz but it was published in 1988, so, is there a more up-to-date one? Second question is: When there are many copies of the same track available eg "Closer To The Heart" are all the versions the same ie: the 7", 12" - Are they the same as the album version? (not counting live versions obviously) The reason I ask this question is that I also have a liking for Simply Red (ok so its a bit different from Rush but my music tastes are nothing if not eclectic!!) and there are lots of different versions of the same track available eg. "Thrill Me" has 13 different versions of it (I kid you not!).

Keep up the good work!

ANON

Dear all,

I'm writing because I'm fed up to the backteeth with the lack of media coverage of Rush we get here in the UK. Maybe because the media thinks there's no demand! Well I for one would like to let them know there is a demand.

So come on you lazy sods! Get off your arses and write, phone, tell the media, tell MTV, TELL national radio, TELL local radio... then perhaps they'll show us they're not against Rush but are willing to play Rush as long as there's a large enough audience to appreciate it.

I don't want Rush pushed into everyones faces but I don't want Rush just to be 'our little secret'. You know the kind of thing - "Yeah, I'm into Rush", and the instant reply is, "Who?"



So stop complaining that they don't play here often enough. Remember what Halifax (Nova Scotia) did on the H.Y.F. tour. They took action and raised a petition to draw attention to the fact and lo and behold Rush opened the tour there! (is that right Spirit?)

So come on guys (and girls), put pen to paper! I have! So could you!

**LEE BOUL
GWENT**

Dear Mick,

Thanks for the latest issue. I can't believe it's been almost three years since I first subscribed. The first thing I turn to when an issue arrives, is the letters page and I have been closely following the 'other bands' debate. My own view, for what it's worth, is that the whole issue centres around the frustration people feel at having no outlets for this sort of music.

I distinctly recall you yourself saying it was frustration that spurred you to begin 'The Spirit' in the first place. I'm also sure that there are many people who tracked down Dream Theater's first album after reading about it in this magazine. The amount of Dream Theater-related material sent in to you by readers must also have been a major factor in starting up 'Images And Words.'

The absence of decent radio airplay, causes many people to buy music without hearing anything first; it sometimes works, but it sometimes proves to be a complete waste of money.

So, as far as 'TSOR' goes, it seems that a healthy balance is required. What must never be forgotten is that this magazine is by Rush fans for Rush fans. Having said that, it is a FANzine and needs to continue it's policy of adapting to the demands of the subscribers, or at least getting them in the open for others to comment on.

For my part, although 'Brave' by Marillion is my Album of the year so far, I have been very impressed by the debut CD by an American band by the name of Enchant. 'A Blueprint Of The World' is full of thoughtful, intelligent progressive music. The story goes that they bombarded the recording studio with Rush tapes during the making of the Album. If I also tell you that the singer, Ted Leonard, wears a Kansas T-shirt on the sleeve photograph, then you can begin to realise the sort of music they play. Drummer Paul Craddick is in the Neil Peart mode and certainly knows his way around a drum kit.

Having said all that, perhaps a solution to the debate is to locate passages of music or lyrics by bands that appear to be influenced by Rush and comment on them. It's about the music of another band, but it is still relevant to Rush and their music. It's worth a thought at least.

Anyway, enough about that. If there is a gathering being planned, I'm up for it!

Best Wishes

**DAVE LACK
ROMFORD**

P.S. A pink cover? I was almost blushing as I read it on the train to work!

To all at 'Spirit',

Mick knows we have had griping aplenty on these pages before now, and so it upsets me that I feel the need to rap about the band in a derogatory fashion. However, it is reasonable to assume that as Rush fans we all reserve the right to an opinion on the band - and that we do not adopt a blinkered mentality by worshipping every note they play.

It is both fascinating and a little disheartening to realise that 'The Spirit Of Rush' was born out of the frustration of a lack of Rush concerts on these shores - and here we are again. To still be mulling over the same issues that brought much resentment in the past, begs us to ask: is anybody listening?

I will admit to despair sometimes when I discover that the album is delayed or the album is not fully promoted or there will be no tour in support of and despite our inordinate affection for the music of Rush, my wife and I have often been fraught with anger when the band omit the UK on a world tour! Single releases do not

interest us a great deal (how many genuine incentives are there?), so whilst the argument rages as to whether Rush should sell a lot of singles or remain an enigma to the masses - I don't mind as long as they maintain a high standard of self-belief and personal integrity. Nevertheless, I do feel strongly on two counts regarding touring:

1) To my mind, it is unacceptable that Europe is avoided on any touring schedule. Especially as they felt comfortable enough to extend the 'Roll The Bones' tour in America - only to complain afterwards.

2) The other bone of contention is the set list. The ultimate bone-roller, this one. It amazes me that a band that prides itself on its most recent works should rely so heavily on older material. 'Permanent Waves', 'Moving Pictures' and 'Signals' are all excellent albums - and all over ten years old. And as for CTTH! To continually sponge from this era at the expense of newer songs, actively goes against the stock and trade of a band that defies description; refuses to meet industry standards. Rush fans expect originality and inventiveness, and I'm afraid the almost standardised approach to set lists is tedious. I find it hard to believe that the songs in question provide any kind of satisfaction - as they almost exclusively crib from the album blueprint, time after time. Perhaps Rush should seriously ask themselves: what is the most appropriate way to represent our entire back catalogue in two hours? Now, there's a bone of rolling contention.

Having said all I have, I appreciate this will sound like a scratched record (when I should have replaced it with a CD) - and perhaps that is my point.

Moving swiftly along..... 'Spirit 27' proved to be of the usual high standard, and I particularly enjoyed the one-2-one interview. As in the past, this exclusive chat proved more satisfying than some of the rollercoaster-jobs by the professional media. As a positive contribution I'd like to submit my thoughts on 'Middletown Dreams':

Having bought 'A Show Of Hands' prior to 'Power Windows', this was one of three new tracks for my listening pleasure. I remember 'Grand Designs' becoming an immediate favourite with its buoyant verse and sparkling chorus - the flourishing end being very impressive too. I would guess it might have taken almost a year for 'Dreams' to become a perennial fave, and more for its lyrical content. It is arguable that the timing was more crucial than any single element of the song itself. 'Middletown Dreams' provided my run-away teenage fantasies with the desire to see them through. The clear illustration of a wider world, full of exciting places and interesting people, was brought to the fore. My pent-up ambition found a release, none so obvious as:

He'd be climbing on that bus
Just him and his guitar
To blaze across the heavens
Like a brilliant shooting star

The overwhelming drama of real life appeared so inspiring - captured neatly by thoughtful, provocative words. Moreso than 'The Camera Eye' or 'The Analog Kid'.

The apparent misgivings I could sense in adults around me were shaped here - the lack of desire or commitment to something outside the norm. My peers all accepting the drudgery of their confining environment - all hoping for, yet not finding a beacon to lead them from the dullness. It is inner city and greater suburbia.

'Middletown Dreams' is indeed a fine musical statement in its own right, but there is no doubt that the various lyrical implications are both frightening and elevating - and therefore why it is an absolute fave track.

As suggested by PJ Bannon, it might be a poignant time to settle the issue on 'worthy of inclusion.' A poll of some description would seem to be the fairest decision-maker, but I fear that the outcome may have been hinted at in your own letter. Rush fans have such varying tastes that it might not be plausible to feature 'related' artists. Who decides if King's X or Dream Theater are more relevant than Aimee Mann or Tori Amos? And what form does a feature take when the championing of Dream Theater has spawned its own fanzine? Same too of King's X and Queensrÿche.

I would not object to limited space featuring other artists as I feel they all deserve a chance - surely the main objective of such a piece? Are we brave enough to categorise Rush, though, by suggesting Metallica (metal?) should be included over Tears For Fears (pop?)..... what criteria?

**M HUCKNALL
NOTTS**

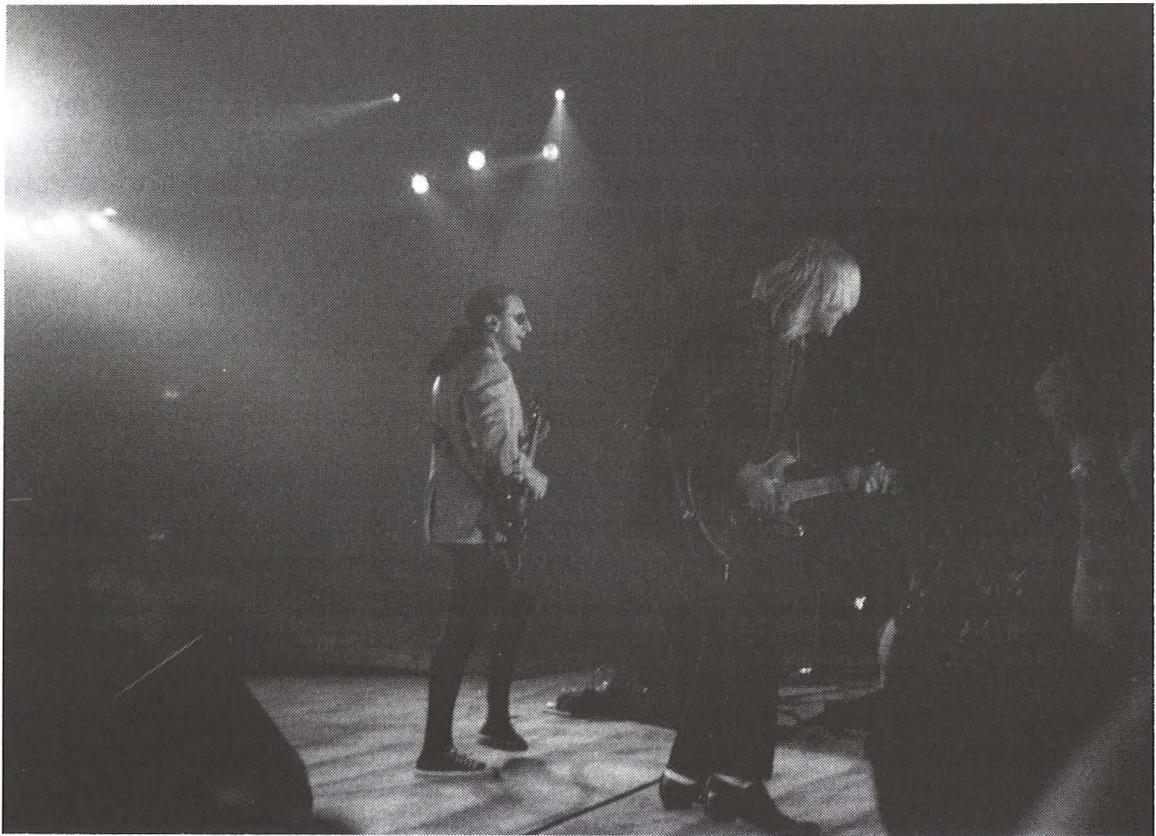
P.S. Trivia Update: I can recall seeing a picture of Alex from the 'HYF' tour used to advertise 'Maxime Gold' guitar strings. Must have been around 1990 - though, I don't think he has ever used them to my knowledge.

Different Strings.

As the battle rages on in the pages of Spirit as to whether other artists should be featured in a Rush fanzine, I offer my humble opinion. Surely the best thing about our beloved Rush is the fact that they have never tied themselves down to any one style or sound. They have constantly evolved, no two albums have sounded the same, they have taken influences on board and integrated them into that mysterious Rush melange. Surely, then, we as Rush fans should change and develop - listen to new things, take them on board, widening our tastes and experiences in the process.

Spirit has already introduced a lot of you to Dream Theater: a fine band indeed. I'd like to introduce you to two more - in the hope that you, like me, can enjoy some Rush influenced different strings.

Just before I do that, I'd like to reply to PJ Bannon's letter in the last issue. Aimee Mann surely is entitled to be featured in Spirit, simply because she is the star of "Time Stand Still". Similarly, Rush fans may be interested in Rupert Hine's solo



album, or Anne Dudley's orchestral arrangements for other bands. The key here is not to restrict ourselves. Rush wouldn't, so why should we?

The first band I'd like to tell you about is **Jadis**, a four piece progressive rock outfit from Hampshire. The band has been battling against record company apathy now for 16 years, remaining a secret to all but the most clued up until recently. In 1992, Jadis gave up on the major labels, putting out their debut album "More Than Meets The Eye" on Giant Electric Pea records. This was followed early this year by their second full length platter, "Across The Water".

Jadis have often been dismissed as Marillion clones, a comparison way off the mark. Although "Brave" era comparisons with Marillion are justified in the realms of production, Jadis take the time signature chaos of Rush circa Hemispheres, inject a healthy dose of late Seventies Yes, then fly away on a sound all of their own. Jadis' ace in the hole is vocalist/guitarist Gary Chandler, who sounds unlike any singer I've ever heard, and creates some really beautiful melodies on his sweat-soaked axe.

Debut album "More Than Meets The Eye" was a perfect album: superbly produced and featuring the quartet's best songs to date. The album has catapulted the band into the album charts in Germany and Holland, where they appear to tour constantly. "Across The Water" is a grower - it takes at least 10 plays to even become familiar. The investment of your time will be rewarded, however: songs like "In Isolation" and "The World On Your Side" are ambitious, clever and melodic.

"Across The Water" should be available from any Our Price (its in their Top 200 as I write), but both albums can be ordered from the Jadis information service. Write for more info to:

PO Box 21, Bishops Watham, Hampshire, SO32 1XD

The second band you might wish to check out is **Sausage**. Their debut album, "Riddles Are Abound Tonight" is available now on Interscope Records. Those of you who enjoyed Primus on the Bones tour may be interested to know that Sausage is the original line-up of Primus: mad cheese cake vocalist and bass god Les Claypool, guitarist Todd Huth and virtuoso drummer Jay Lane.

Sausage are a purer Primus. Whereas the current Primus line-up are happy to experiment with weirdness, Sausage stick firmly to the groove which swamps this album like a tidal wave (groan). The musicianship is awesome, Claypool sounds even more like Mickey Mouse than usual, and the song titles are suitably bizarre ("Caution Should Be Used While Driving A Motor Vehicle Or Operating Machinery", "Girls For Single Men"). An album for musos and Rush-heads.

Should you shell out on these items, I hope you are rewarded. Finally, in a shameless piece of plugging, you might like to read Anthem - a fanzine covering every possible style of music. It'll be kicking off again in September. For details, contact 23 Blades Street, Lancaster, LA1 1TT.

THE ANALOG KID

Dear Mick,

I have been prompted to write to you by the last issue of Spirit which was possibly the finest edition I have read so far. The interview with Alex was very interesting, whilst Dave Lythgoe's diary review of his and his brother's States-side trip really brought to life their experiences for people like me who have not been fortunate enough to see the present tour. The reviews gave a real flavour of being at those gigs.

I particularly enjoyed the long interview with Neil, which once again showed what an accomplished musician and thoughtful person he is. These are perhaps two of the qualities that have maintained my interest in Rush over the years. Having been a fan since I was 11 years old, just after 'Farewell' came out, I have found that I too have been able to grow with each album release, and find new depths in, and appreciate more, the older ones. To me Rush's music contains elements of all the things I enjoy in music in general: like early rock 'n' roll it contains energy and fun; like the best singer/songwriters it contains intelligent lyrics; like much classical music it displays grandeur and depth, but also an awareness of its own space; like reggae (or any good music) it embraces feeling. Alex, Geddy and Neil display musicianship and craft. But perhaps it is in its power though, like Led Zeppelin, that many people find its attraction, and this leads it being lumped together with other 'heavy' rock acts. I too love this, and am a big fan of Zep, but also, as with them, most people who don't know the music well (and many that do) they miss the

point. Rush's music is all of the above and more. I don't have a problem with other Spirit subscribers listening to other similar bands, it's their free choice, but to me Rush is unique. I don't particularly like many of the other bands mentioned in association with Rush in Spirit. Rush is why I buy it, and for these reasons I believe this ought to remain exclusively a Rush fanzine.

Keep up the good work, and long may Rush and Spirit continue.

**MARTIN CASEY
KETTERING**

I was interested to note the suggestion in the last issue of 'Spirit' concerning the subject of a 'gathering'. As a long-time subscriber, this is not the first time such a question has arose.

It was with this in mind that I recently attended the Second International Pink Floyd Fan Convention, held in my home town of High Wycombe. This proved to be an excellent event and is worth relating to fellow readers. The daytime activities were centred around a large record/memorabilia fair. In addition, a small, enclosed stage area had been created; this afforded a viewing area for screening rare Floyd videos. There was also a Pink Floyd quiz (it got difficult after the first round!), raffle and refreshments.

However, the real bonus, certainly in my eyes, was the appearance of Ron Geesin. Geesin had collaborated with the Floyd early in their career and was responsible for the orchestration on the title track of their Atom Heart Mother album. During a 40 minute set he played an array of musical instruments and read some poetry. Whilst some of his material was rather abstract, it was always interesting.

The climax of the convention was an evening concert at the adjacent Swan Theatre by Adelaide band The Feel, performing the Australian Pink Floyd Show. this was an excellent audio-visual show that faithfully covered the Floyds long history. This was a very enjoyable event; well organised and, more importantly, well attended.

I do not feel that any Rush gathering needs to be quite so ambitious. The important thing at this stage is getting something established and then making sure it is supported. In essence, if Mick, or anybody else take the time to organise something, it's important that YOU make an effort to attend.

The Floyd, and indeed Zeppelin conventions now appear to be annual events; there is no reason why a Rush convention should not be afforded similar status. I'm sure other readers have their own ideas - let's hear them!

**GARY CROSS
BUCKS**

Hi to all at the "Spirit",

I am not sure if I have asked you this before so be patient with me, firstly are there any recommended books about Rush? I have Visions by the B-man but that only goes up to HYF so I was looking for others that perhaps are more recent and in more depth. Can you help?*

Secondly, do you lot ever meet up at all, have regional meetings with like-minded people? It is just a thought, you could have regional co-ordinators and occasionally have get-togethers or does that sound incredibly sad? Are you at this very moment screaming "get a life you dumb bitch". If so I apologise for being a DB but I am a bit of a Rush junkie.#

Keep up the good work, I long to see Rush live in this country very soon. All the best to all involved with "Spirit" (you lucky people!!). Enjoy life.

**JANE COUGHLIN
DARWEN**

Eds note:

** Nothing has been published since 'Visions'. The 'B'-man was working on a follow-up a while ago. Any news on it anyone? (Ray?). There are two earlier books. 'Rush' by Brian Harrigan and 'Success Under Pressure' by Steve Gett. I think they are both out of print now though.*

See last issue's letters page and Gary Cross's one this issue. Who would be up for getting such an event together?

Dear Editor,

The good work does keep getting better. After a run of Spirits where it seemed as if every radio interviewer asked the same questions, an absolutely fantastic couple of issues. I don't know about the rest of the readers but I find the in-depth interviews with Neil Peart quite fascinating. In fact it is a major issue in renewing my subscriptions. Please, please, please keep looking out for any new stuff that you can include.

A debate seems to be brewing about whether to feature new bands or keep it solely Rush. Well, I'm all for broadening my horizons. The majority should consist of 'Rushian' items but I don't see a problem with a few pages of promotion for new bands like Dream Theater or Rush support bands. They could never be better than Rush themselves so there isn't too much to worry about. I think the people who consider this a unique tribute to Rush and exclude every other band should ask themselves one question: How did they discover Rush? It may have been off their own backs or a fluke attendance, but I should imagine that most people's contact with Rush owes itself either to a reviewer pleading that it be bought, or by a friend passing on a tape that, "I think you ought to hear". Perhaps by inviting these bands

in, they can return the favour by spreading the word. Perhaps then they could have a hit single.

Okay, Rush don't need a hit single, but Britain deserves Rush. If the record company built up some anticipation by announcing that a single would be released in the next few months (and by hyping it up in Spirit et al) and then everyone bought a few copies each I'm sure we could make it. How about that for a 21st celebration? A commemorative release of 'Nobody's Hero' backed with 'Xanadu', 'The Pass' and 'Bravado'. That way marketing would be able to pat itself on the back for once. And a No.1 here, would obligate Rush to turn up in Britain for a few dates (the real point of the exercise).

'Counterparts' has softened it's edges through familiarity. As is often the case, it starts off being very stiff and awkward, like a stranger in a crowd, but loosens up admirably. I love it. A fantastic album. Rather reminiscent of 'Presto' in its subjects. An energetic track comparing inner energy with outer space ('Chain Lightning' or 'Between Sun & Moon'); an acoustic, folksy song ('Presto' or 'Nobody's Hero'); a call to arms in the fight of life ('Available Light' or 'Everyday Glory'); - but I'm really only being pedantic.

Virtually anyone can write a hit single, a few can write a hit album, but I can only think of one band who keep getting better. Seeing how the Rolling Stones and Pink Floyd are stumbling into 'retirement' with \$50 million tours, Rush will be around forever.

You asked for a review of 'Middletown Dreams'. Hmm. A beautiful song with attention to detail that really wins me over. The keyboard bit as the madonna starts still sounds fresh today, Andy Richards leaving his mark? Peart's refined precision, a few lines describe a life, by catching the tidemarks that he gives we can fill in the rest for ourselves. A revision of 'Losing It', we learn that it isn't too late. By the way, when he mentions stout, does he mean fat or Guinness?

Sorry it's so short. Although I feel the song personally, it's my own interpretation that I don't want to force on anyone else. How can you explain why something moves you? You can describe some of it but there will always be some immeasurable quality that is either there or not. I can't 'feel' for someone else. They have to feel it, otherwise no amount of words will win them over.

Last thing. Although I'm interested in the USA/Canada tour reports, how do you guys get over there? You must be making more than I thought with the subscriptions (joke). I'd love to see them in the US of A but money is the stumbling block, even before I count the cost. Anyway, sniff, it's nice to hear that, sniff, they are having a good tour over there, sniff, boo hoo.

Thanks for all the hard work.

**IAN TOMKINS
MEDWAY**

Dear Editor and Staff,

Firstly may I thank you for your efforts in producing "Spirit of Rush". The fanzine has certainly provided a good insight into the band's history and both current and future events. In fact if it wasn't for your list of US and Canadian tour dates my wife and I would never have made it to Maple Leaf Gardens on the 7th of May this year!

Since I first became aware of your existence in 1992 (just before the doors at Wembley arena opened for one of the "Bones" concerts when some kind soul thrust one of your little red cards into my grubby mit!), I have been meaning to drop you a line, and recent events spurred me into action.

Anyway, first a brief history of my discovery of this outstanding trio:

1979 - Aged 13 - a friend lent me a poor recording of Hemispheres

1979 - Two days later - mesmerized (hypnotised even!) by a strange and wondrous thing called "La Villa Strangiato", the guitar work of Mr Lifeson having significant impact on me.

1979 - Two months later - seek out and find all other Rush, vinyls, cassettes, video footageanything!

This led to the following -

1980 - Purchased Strat copy! later purchased customised Strat and the biggest Marshall amp I could find.

1980 - 1994 - Mainly wished I could play the guitar like Alex Lifeson! (and annoyed the neighbours!)

On a more serious note, my taste in music has remained unchanged and I can quite honestly say that I listen to very little else except you know who. I first saw the band in 1981 and since then I have tried to get to all the N.E.C and Wembley shows, (claim to fame - I can be briefly..very briefly!... seen on the Show of Hands video at the end of Tom Sawyer!).

In a recent issue of "Spirit" at the beginning of the year you kindly listed US tour dates and without further ado I contacted Ticket Master in Toronto to book seats for the show listed for the 8th of May. However it came to light that the one and only show in TO was in fact on the 7th of May not the 8th. Like a berk I had already booked the only flight we could get on the 7th, cutting it a bit fine to say the least!

Anyway, we got there in good time, knackered, but we were there that's all that counts! Our seats weren't the best, high and to the right, meaning that we had a virtually non-existent view of the screen, but no matter - the show was brilliant!

I certainly envy Janet Balmer and co. sitting 12 rows from the front, however I should point out that it was in fact a furry white rabbit that hit A.L in the side of the head and not a T-shirt! Despite being in the middle of bridging his way through Limelight, (I strongly believe that this is one of Lifeson's own most cherished solo's .. so much feeling and emotion goes into this when performed live anyway I digress!) A.L kept a cool head as usual!

My view concurs with Janet in that "Prelude" was one of the best highlights of the show. I say "one of the best highlights" because there were so many! It was certainly nice to see the return of the SG double neck, though surprisingly during the latter stages of the Xanadu intro and first chorus, A.L. disappointingly refrained from using the twelve string which is a shame I was always so impressed when he switched from one to t'other .. nevermind it may well have been a problem with the guitar.

Anyway, despite any minor technical hitches it was an exciting and unforgettable occasion and one which I will remember and treasure for all time. I only hope that Rush continue to thrive and that all the many fans out there, just like thee and me, will have the opportunity to see the band on British soil in the near future. Of course if the guys want to be party poopers and avoid their throng of British fans one could always bugger off to Canada and see them there! (Go on treat yourselves! but one word of warning Janet is right those C.N. Tower lifts are bad news!)

**PHIL CLARKE
CHELTENHAM**

P.S. There are two Hard Rock Cafes in Toronto, one in central Downtown and the other in the Skydome, however all I could find in the way of memorabilia was one gold disc for Presto in the Downtown cafeI was surprised at the poor showing! ...any ideas why this might be?



13 Years And 3,000 Miles

RUSH COUNTERPARTS TOUR - TORONTO 7TH MAY 1994 - MAPLE LEAF GARDENS

1)

The stuff of dreams, the chance to see RUSH live in their hometown - not only that, but on the last night of the tour as well. Also to get to see at least the places I'd read about and heard about for years and to be able to feel an immediate affinity for a place I'd never visited before in my life.

The decision to go for the trip was late and time for getting the plans together was short but I think that only fueled the feelings of excitement. As soon as we stepped off the plane in Toronto the sensation was incredible and what unfolded over the next week was better than I could have imagined.

Even on that first night there were the little airport tags with YYZ on them and the taxi journey into town to get excited about. Driving towards Toronto on the highway was an adventure in itself - I'll never forget that first glimpse of the CN tower rising in the distance. Towering above the skyline in the clear evening light - the sun just starting to set giving the city a magical glow as we entered it.

We were staying right in the heart of downtown Toronto and exploring the streets and shops, bustling and cosmopolitan, was very enjoyable. A head full of memories - visiting the Anthem office and getting the chance to step inside and gaze at the gold discs on the wall, standing outside Massey Hall and sensing the years gone by, standing on the steps of the old City Hall and taking our own moving pictures, browsing in Sam's record store and spying the giant signed Chronicles poster on the wall, spotting familiar names - Willowdale, Danforth And Pape, Carlton St - on the metro, just soaking in the 'up' city atmosphere. GREAT STUFF.

2)

As if all that is not enough, it just gets better. The afternoon of the gig and I'm hanging around Maple Leaf Gardens meeting friends old and new and trying in vain as usual to catch a word or scrawl from the boyz. Ah well, it was a great afternoon trading Rush stories and annoying their personal assistant Sean, 'Can we meet the band?' 'No!' (SOME CHANCE).

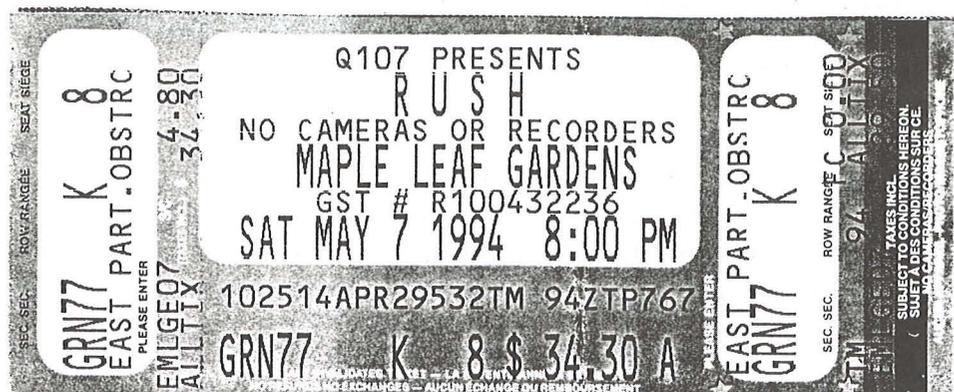
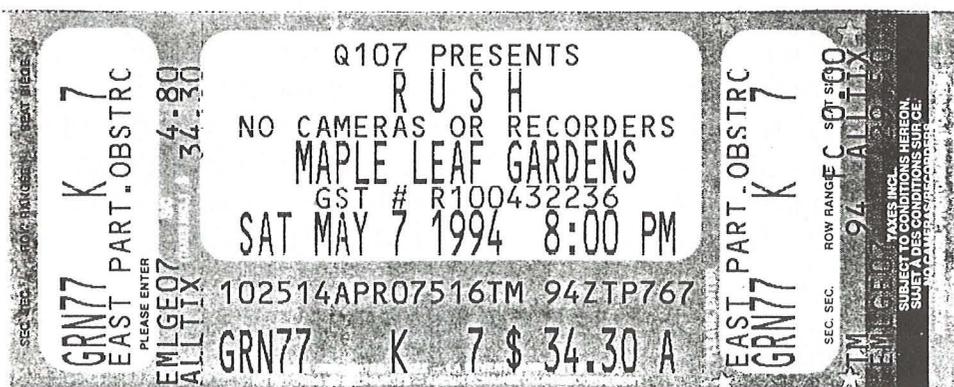
Late afternoon, inside the front door they were already setting up the merchandise stalls while in the hall the band were still soundchecking. The massive roar of DOUBLE AGENT echoed around the corridors - a tantalizing taste of what lay ahead. Shivers down my spine! An hour before showtime, in Boosters bar and the place is packed with wall-to-wall Rush freaks. 'You guys came from Scotland? - you're crazy'.

Someone has thoughtfully rigged the jukebox and its solid you-know-who. 'Bangkok - live version'. I'm either in heaven or Toronto. We spill out into the rainy evening as one - the pavement alive with shouting touts and smiling fans and the anticipation is incredible.

It's Saturday night at THE GARDENS. Where would you rather be? Nowhere else tonight than right where I am. The home-town crowd, the expectant darkness - senses sharpened, a moment still trying to take it all in. The roar of the crowd, the crackle of excitement, the charged anticipation - it consumes you, it's tangible. High up at the windows beside the roof there are people looking down. Someone says they've spotted Alex. At least we know they've turned up.

As the 2001 drones fade and the band become visible, the moment is immense, that thrilling intimacy of seeing them again. The prospect of over 2 hours in their company. Songs that have become much more than songs - more like old friends. The thrill of the COUNTERPARTS material coming to life in front of you and taking on a new dimension. The films, the lights, the atmosphere, the little twists and turns in each song all adding to the excitement - I'm there in awe and admiration.

My heart is filled with happiness and relief with their primal return to guitar/bass/drums. They are just normal people, they are fiercely private (rightly so) but when the 3 of them take a stage together what they create as a unit is anything but normal - it is truly unique and special GENIUS. No-one on earth wields their instruments quite like these guys - no-one else can consistently conjure up such musical magic - moments that thrill you, inspire you, lift you above the everyday routine. Something good and positive that means so much to so many. Words and music that display such depth of character, such vision, such freeness of spirit.



Stop rambling - what about the gig? I thought the BONES shows in '92 would take some beating but I think tonight just pipped it at the post - an evening of monstrous riffs and grooves. The set list you know already so I won't run through it all again. At a Rush gig each song is a highlight of sorts, lets face it, dull moments were rather thin on the ground. The ambient beauty of CLOSER TO THE HEART, TIME STAND STILL and THE TREES (complete with the most perfect backing film you can imagine) and BRAVADO, MYSTIC RYTHMS. The majestic pairing of PRELUDE and XANADU - musical orgasm. The power of DREAMLINE, THE ANALOG KID, LIMELIGHT, SPIRIT, BONES et al. These are moments that damn well justify your faith in music full-stop - the excitement of TOM SAWYER, YYZ, FORCE TEN , SHOW DON'T TELL. How do they do it?

But for me it was the COUNTERPARTS material that stole the show - if you thought it sounded good on record the energized drive and verve with which they played it on stage took it to another level. AXE ATTACK INDEED. Someone obviously forgot to mention that bands that have been on the go this long do not produce their finest album. WHAT WILL '95 BRING? CAN THEY BETTER COUNTERPARTS. Mr Gilray had told me a coupla nights previous that Alex had said it had been a difficult tour and that Toronto itself was not the most appealing of gigs. To these eyes they seemed relaxed and happy - the banter and humor between Alex and Ged intact. Alex especially (as usual) his band introductions, his amazing Cossack dancing, the way he picked up Neil's uncharacteristically dropped stick and played his guitar like a violin.

3)
And the bottom line is, they are better than ever. The music is stripped back and HEAVY, the playing and performance lean n' mean. As a contemporary working band they are still THE FORCE to be reckoned with (lets save the retrospectives, anniversaries and box sets for when the time is right - not for some time yet we hope).

The adventure that is following the finest hard rock band on earth just gets better and better. 4 days later and reluctantly I'm homeward bound. High above the earth and sea, TORONTO -> ABERDEEN. Until next time, roll on '95.

Footnote:

1) The day after the gig we went to the SKYDOME to see the Blue Jays meet the Brewers. A great experience in itself. At one point the giant electronic noticeboard bore the legend 'RUSH PLAYS MAPLE LEAF GARDENS LAST NIGHT TO RAVE REVIEWS'.

2) Both the TORONTO STAR and GLOBE & MAIL gave the band very favourable reviews for their home-town show.

**STEVE HURLEY
ABERDEEN**

CountDown

Cafe

Holland 2 5/92

An Interview With Teddy Lee

ANNOUNCER: This is "The Spirit Of Radio".
["Spirit" plays]

GL: I guess to me, I see it in, there are kind of distinct records that seem to be dividing lines. For me the first one probably would be "2112" - you know, you can kind of see a formative period there for us. Really, a record like "Caress Of Steel" for example, even though it was a pretty strange record... for me that record was kind of a stepping stone to "2112" and without it and the records before it, I don't think we could have done a record like "2112". And "2112" I think was the first album that established a sound of our own, so that's kind of a, I don't know, a plateau point for the band, and I would say the next period was a similar kind of experimental period leading up to "Moving Pictures" where we slowly changed from longer pieces and a lot of instrumental playing on albums like "A Farewell To Kings" and "Hemispheres". And then we kind of shifted gear and... to try to have a more concise sound, and I think "Moving Pictures" was a kind of dividing line of that sound. And then the next period is hard for me to describe because we kinda waggled up and down, and I guess it was mostly an experiment with keyboards from that point on. "Signals" was a big departure for us and I think "Power Windows" and "Hold Your Fire" were 2 records that I was very pleased with in terms of a balance of keyboards and, you know, putting keyboards and guitar kind of sharing the spotlight. So maybe "Power Windows" and "Hold Your Fire".... I look at them as almost the same type of record. And then I think there was a gradual experimentation from that, up 'til now, and "Roll The Bones" in a way seems like that kind of record where we again tried to get a simpler, more streamlined sound and kick the keyboards out into the background a little bit more and it seems like we're on that arrival point now with "Roll The Bones" - but I guess it's hard to tell until a couple of records go by and then we'll look back and see.

ANNOUNCER: Do you have any ideas what kind, what direction you'll go into in the future?

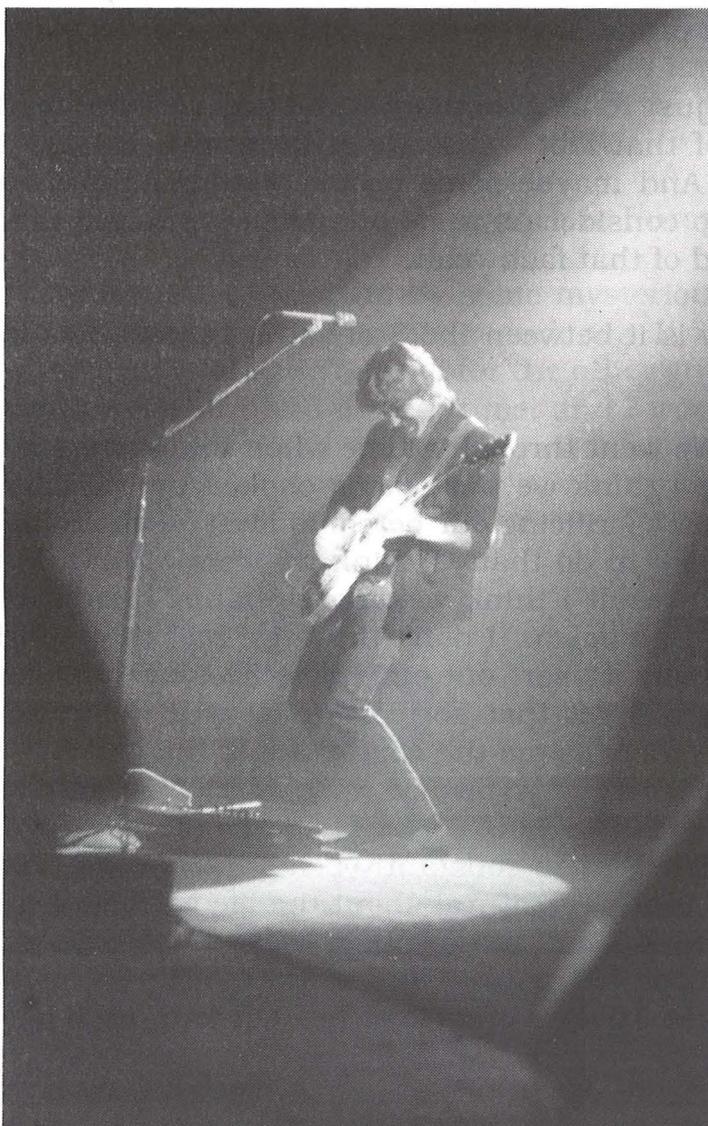
GL: Not really. And we usually don't know what we're going to do until we start to do it. We go in the studio and we start writing and we see what comes out and we don't really talk very much about it before we start doing it. And I think it keeps it

fresh that way and it makes that whole recording process and writing process a kind of a time capsule. It kind of captures our lives as musicians and also our temperament and our personalities as members, I think. It gets kind of frozen in time and I really like that. I like to look back at all the records that we've done and see those moments - like see what was going on at the time, frozen there, and I think if we wrote in stages that wouldn't happen. But the fact that it's so concentrated upon one point of time, it's like you go in and do it and come out, it like freezes the time there.

ANNOUNCER: Do you have an explanation for the fact that "Moving Pictures" is your best selling album so far?

GL: I don't know. I guess we did something that struck a chord with a lot of people. From the inside out it's really hard to explain those things. I have a hard time understanding what it is about certain songs of ours that appeal to people more than others. I guess I'm just too involved in the writing of it and too close too it but there is a certain sound and a certain, I think, confidence on that record that people respond to and I really can't explain it.

ANNOUNCER: Has it got something to do with the song "Tom Sawyer" you think, because it's very popular when you do concerts?



GL: I know in America that's very true. I'm not really sure over here if that song had the same impact. I'm not very experienced with European audiences and I can't really tell what their favourite songs are yet, but in America it's absolutely true. But in America as well, any time we play any song from that album there's an immediate recognition so there's no question, it's definitely one of those records that just keeps hanging around. People keep finding something about it that they like.

(Play "Tom Sawyer")

GL: When we start writing we write, and this is actually, over the last 4 or 5 albums we've spent longer writing and less time recording - which is interesting - but when we start writing, we'll rent a studio in the country and we'll just live together Monday to Friday and write every day and over a period of 6-8 weeks we'll gather all the songs together and in the last 2 weeks we'll just rehearse until we get all the playing smooth and then go and start recording and usually that means that we're so prepared, we have all the arrangements worked out and have done all the pre-production with the producer so that when it comes to recording it goes very fast because we know what we want to do and we just do it. I mean, there's always a little bit of improvisation and experimentation that you save but the basic rhythms and the grooves are all organised beforehand, and I think you can just concentrate on getting a good performance.

ANNOUNCER: Are you proud of what the band has reached so far?

GL: Oh yeah. To me, just to be able to exist the way we have for 18 years now with Neil, I'm very proud of that fact - that we've been able to stay together and stay current so to speak. And maybe some people wouldn't think we're current but I think a lot of people do consider us to be a current band and not just living off our past and I'm very proud of that fact, yeah.

ANNOUNCER: So how is it between the 3 of you? I mean, has it changed over the years?

GL: Yeah, it's funny. We went through a time when things were a little tense I guess 3 or 4 years ago where I think we were being choked by the band as individuals. I think we were so used to sacrificing our personal lives for the band that it just didn't feel comfortable any more to do that. I think we were all a little frustrated, a little tense about it and as a result I think we were unhappy band members and I think the music was dragging us down. I don't think we had that spark, and we started taking more and more time to sort out our home lives, we just needed to get away. And it's amazing once you get that sorted out what a difference it made and we realised it wasn't each other, it was the conditions of the band - the rules had to be changed and I think that's what happened. We took some time to go home and we realised that all our friendships were constantly being interrupted, our relationships with our wives and children were constantly being interrupted in a really unnatural way and I think we felt really unnatural about the life we were living. So we decided - 'Look let's take some time, let's get our home lives in order, so let's just change the rules.' Let's say somebody needs to be home, they're home. When we tour, we go away for 3 weeks, we take 10 days off. Gotta be. On tour, we'll never play more than

2 shows in a row without a day off because we find that makes us play like robots - not like human beings - and we've been sticking to that, and even recording. We record for 3 weeks - 10 days off to be with our families - and we've stuck to that pretty well over the last 2 tours and it's working. We all feel happy and connected to our families and like, our lives are still going on while we're here on the road, so it's a very long answer to your question but that's kind of where we're at now.

ANNOUNCER: So it was a relief for the whole band and maybe like a new start? You could have split up back then?

GL: Very easily. I really was very surprised that we didn't and I think that we were closer to splitting up then than we even wanted to admit to ourselves.

ANNOUNCER: So then, maybe, a few formalities for your fans. They always expect after a couple of albums, a live album then a new period of studio albums. How is that these days? Is that something you did on purpose in the past and you're gonna do it again?

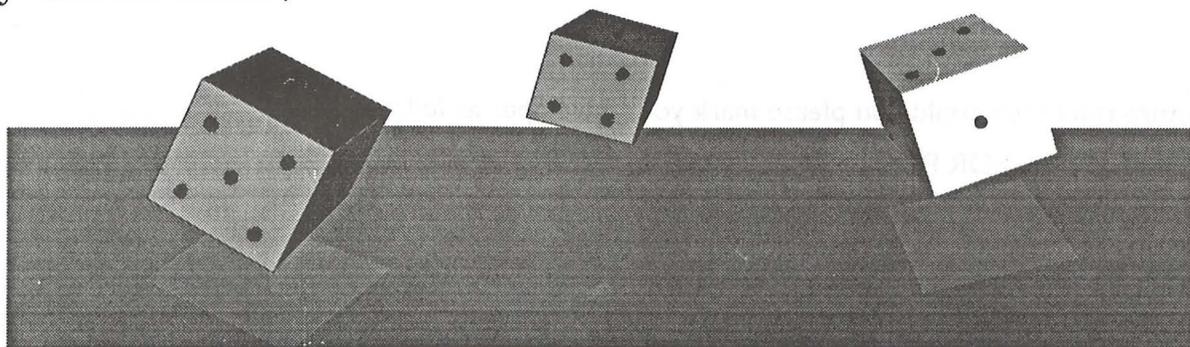
GL: I don't think it was really intentional in the past, it just kinda worked out that way. Those live albums bought us time. "A Show Of Hands" bought us - it really came at the time we were discussing earlier when we needed time. But, I feel we have 3 live albums now and I'm really not too in a hurry to do another one. I think the sound of the band is well represented in the live albums and besides there's so many bootlegs out there anyway, you know, our live shows are everywhere. So I'm not in a big hurry to do a live album. I don't know what the other guys feel about that but for myself I'd be happy not to do one for a while.

ANNOUNCER: OK. Last question. Will you come back to Europe again ever?

GL: I think so, yeah. If we don't break up by some mysterious thing. I think this tour has been the nicest European tour we've ever done. It's also the longest one we've done in quite some time and I can't speak for the other guys - I don't know how they feel about it - but for myself I had a great time, and I would love to come back here more often.

ANNOUNCER: OK, thank you.

GL: Thank you!
(Play "Roll The Bones")



Different *Strings*

Welcome to the first ever Different Strings. Each issue Andy and I will be going through the mail bag and answering any questions about guitars and other related subjects.

This issue we have a list of all the Rush music books that Andy and I know about plus a piece by Andy on Alex's use of alternate tunings.

To kick the column off I'd like to let everyone know about the plans we are making for the "Gathering". Mick, Neil and myself have tossed around some ideas and the best we've come up with is a Christmas party to take place around the middle of December.

The basic idea is to hire a reasonably sized hall or room with food, drink and live music. Neil and Mick suggested that my coverband supply the music, seeing as we are a Rush coverband and it is a gathering for Rush fans.

What we need you to do is send an SAE to myself at the address below, enclosing a letter with any other ideas that you have for the party. We would also like to know if you would mind paying 10 or 15 quid a head, this enables us to hire a decent place and have a really nice spread.

What I would like to know is; what tracks you would like us to play at the party, any song seriously considered. What I don't want to here is people asking for "I Think I'm Goin' Bald".

Also a bit of news about WTT. I won't be doing another one until I can get some decent prizes, but keep your eyes peeled anyway. The winner of WTT 3 was William Kidd, congratulations William I hope you like your CDs'.

Stewart Gilray,
Flat 1,
8 The Lindens,
Gravel Walk,
Faringdon,
Oxon,
SN7 7JW.
U.K.

For future reference could you please mark your envelopes as follows.

Party stuff - SOR Party.

Whats That Thing- WTT (and the issue number).

Different Strings - DS.

ALTERNATE TUNINGS

Alex has never been one for using weird & wonderful tunings unlike Jimmy Page, Keith Richards etc. However, he has used some alternate tunings for a desired effect or to get round every guitarists bane - horrible key signatures!

The most common alternate tuning is without doubt 'Dropped D'. This involves simply tuning the sixth string down to D, leaving the other five strings unchanged in standard tuning. Alex has used this tuning on 'Between The Wheels' and, more recently, on 'Stick It Out'.

To get around an un-guitar-friendly key you basically have two choices: either use a capo or re-tune the guitar up or down. Capos may be OK in the folk club but they are a bit dodgy for arena rock. Alex has the whole guitar tuned up a full tone to F# for 'The Big Money' so that he can play the chords in an open position. Similarly, 'Nodody's Hero' is tuned up a semi-tone to F to get around the Eb chords.

Alex's other alternate tuning is one favoured by, amongst others, Pat Metheny. This is the 'Nashville Tuning'. This involves either just changing the bottom three (E6, A5, D4) strings or completely re-stringing with different gauge strings. I don't know which set-up Alex uses, but a typical example is shown below. Alex combines the 12-string-like sound of this tuning with a regular 6-string acoustic. He used this for recording the acoustic parts on the track 'Roll The Bones'.

E	A	D	G	B	E
0.020	0.015	0.011	0.009	0.015	0.011

GITAR TABLATURE - this issues songs on offer are 'Stick It Out' and 'Double Agent'. As usual, four first class stamps please, to cover copying and p&p.

I've had one or two suggestions from people for future pieces and there is interest in Bass Tab, so if any Geddy aficionados out there are willing to try writing out a few things let me know.

Andy Piercy, 27 Nelson Street, Bury, LANCS BL9 9BL.

In answer to a question in a recent issue. We have a list of about 20 Rush music books, all the books are published by Warner Bros Music. We are pretty sure that there are more. So if and when we find them, we will list them.

Standard Notation

Hemispheres - VF0670
Permanent Waves - VF0766
Moving Pictures - VF0872
Exit.. Stage Left - VF0945
Signals - VF1011
Grace Under Pressure- VF1135
Power Windows - VF1263
Hold Your Fire - VF1424
A Shows of Hands - VF1522
Presto - VF1622
Counterparts - VF2087
Rush Complete Vol 1 - ??
Rush Complete Vol 2 - ??
The Music of Rush - GF0217

Guitar Tablature

Permanent Waves - GF0614
Moving Pictures - GF0494
Grace Under Pressure- GF0472
Presto - GF0409
Roll The Bones - GF0486
Rush Anthology - ??
Hemispheres - ??

And the lights. . . .

May 4, 1994
War Memorial Auditorium, Rochester, New York
by Brad Parmerter

On Wednesday May 4th, the day after the Albany Rush show, I hurried through a quick lunch after classes, met Dawn and was ready to leave about 1:30pm from Oneonta en route to Rochester, New York. I was hoping to arrive around 5pm to meet Howard Ungerleider, Rush's Lighting Director with whom I set up an interview with the night before. I was to meet him in the back of the War Memorial at 5 or 5:30.

'Driving like the wind' I motored my way through New York listening to a radio show that I had put together the week before, especially for this trip, which included all the songs in the set list as well as some other nice Rush treats! Grooving to this, I made it to Rochester at 5:15 and parked the car (in the same lot as in 1991, across the street from the rear entrance). I passed by the tour buses and talked to the back-door security at 5:26 (a bit later than planned). One of the crew told me that soundcheck was still going on and it might be a few minutes before Howard could come back, but there were three people inside looking for him. I was hustled back to the sidewalk with the rest of a mingling crowd and some touchy security guards. During this time I saw Neil's bicycle (with a helmet that said something to the effect of 'Bicycle Africa') loaded onto the tour bus luggage compartment (there was an Apple computer in there as well - a Macintosh I believe). I also saw the guy from Voorheesville that has turned up at the last two shows I've been at.

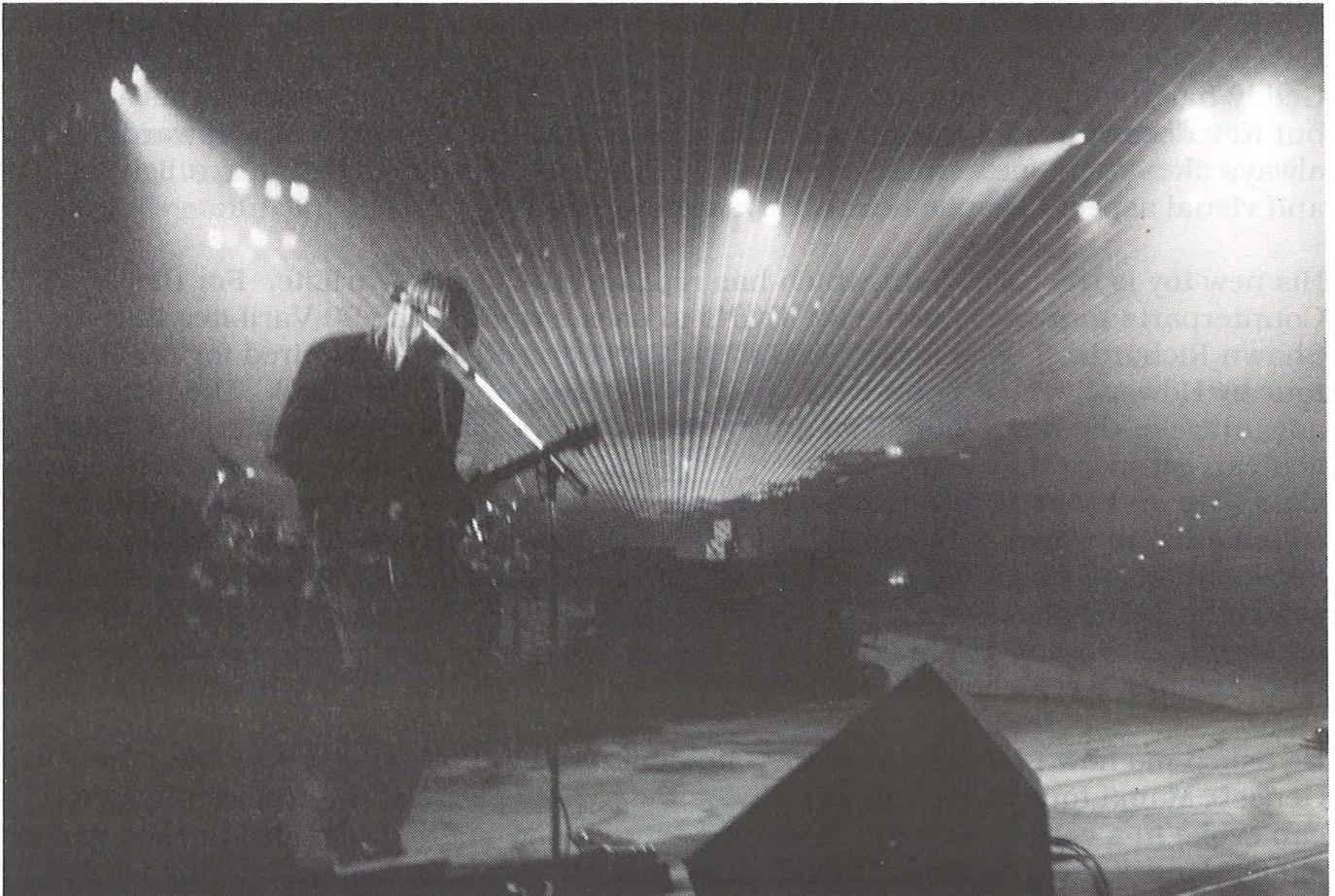
Finally after much hanging around, Howard strolled out of the back door and walked over to me. We moved over to the back of the arena and sat on some steps behind the War Memorial. It was a very peaceful setting with some trees and benches and the rush of a river below (it had a 'Natural Science' feel to it). We talked for about 30 minutes about various topics ranging from Rush to his career, to our lives. In my hurried state to announce my presence at the arena I had forgotten to grab my question sheet! He asked me if I wanted to go back and get it, but I didn't want to waste the time (and due to this I missed out some good questions that I wanted to ask him!, oh well). I brought my walkman and was planning on recording the interview, but somehow I didn't feel right about it - although I would really like to have the tape now (as I have forgotten parts of the interview), I think that not taping it was an asset as it let our chat be more open and free.

Afterward, I never had a chance to sit down and write down what we talked about, and much of the conversation was lost from my memory. I did start out the

interview writing notes down in my notebook, but as it turned less and less from an interview to a conversation I opted to put my pen down. Here's what I do remember though!:

I told him about getting front row seats in Albany and said I really enjoyed the show. He thought it had went well, with only a few, very minor problems. I asked whether the band were planning on throwing in any surprises for this show (as it was the last of the US dates) or for the next two shows (which would round up the tour), but he said that he hadn't heard anything to that effect - and he would know, since he runs the show. Howard isn't just the director of the lights, he calls every cue during the show! If a video projection is shown, he called the cue; if a spotlight is used (correctly), he called the cue; if the pyro is set off, he called the cue. He also calls the bunnies, curtains, and everything else that is involved. He is a very busy man behind the board!

The most difficult song of this tour he said was **Double Agent** as it has so many things that require precise timing (the pyro, mirrors, video screen, lights). His favorite song of the set list was **Animate**. I asked him if he ever wished they played certain songs from the past so he could use the new technology to come up with a different light design than he originally did, but he said that he really didn't think about the past like that too much.



He did say that he would like to see **Cinderella Man** live again (with persuasion by Howard, maybe Steve Streeter can get his wish and see this live again!). He also likes **2112** a lot and wouldn't mind that being tossed back in again. As far as the Counterparts tour was concerned though, he told me that they had played **Cut To The Chase** in soundcheck a few times; **The Speed Of Love** was tried and had been a candidate for the set list; **Fly By Night** was thought about and I asked him if there was ever any word about **Everyday Glory** (a personal favorite) being played live and he said that he never heard it mentioned.

He started his career as a fetch boy for a record company and was slowly promoted up the ladder and became a scout. In 1974, he was given Rush's tour to manage and was told that they were "going to be the next Led Zeppelin". Twenty years later, at age 43, he is still on the road! He enjoys the new light technology and still looks good. He is very friendly, amiable and loves what he does. He lives in Toronto and is married (no little Howard's running around though) and in his spare time he likes to race cars. He has worked for numerous bands, with such credentials as The Who (in the late 60's/early 70's), Canadian artists Kim Mitchell and (Lawrence) Gowan, Metallica in 1983 (he also did some supervising on the Guns'n'Roses/Metallica shows a few summers back), Tesla, Def Leppard, and most notably Queensryche (which he most likely will be with on tour in 1995, if Rush doesn't grab him). If he could design and direct any show though, it would be Pink Floyd.

I asked him how he designs what we see at the shows. First he gets a basic list of the songs from the band and they will come up with an order for the songs and then Howard goes to work. He primarily uses the lyrics to give him ideas for his effects. Geddy has the most input into what Howard does, and Alex adds some ideas as well, but Neil doesn't participate too much in this area of the performance. Howard always likes trying new things and he said that each show is different in a lighting and visual aspect because he is always experimenting.

His new toy is the ICON light which has replaced the ageing VariLite. For the Counterparts tour, he is using 32 ICONs to do the work of the 90 VariLites that Shawn Richardson used for the Roll the Bones Tour (Shawn was hired for the RTB tour by Howard, who was on the road with Queensryche at the time). The big advantage of the new lights (besides the fact that you don't need as many!) is that you can get more than one color from a beam! This is most notable in such songs as **Cold Fire** and **Mystic Rhythms**. They are motorized and can take many different commands, they can pan, change color, change beam size, etc. The versatility and dependability is also a big plus. I asked when he added the colored lights on the rear screen for Limelight because I didn't remember them in Worcester (earlier in the tour on March 12th), but he said they were used for that show (they have been in the set since the first week of shows actually!).

He asked me how I became interested in lights, and I told him how watching the Genesis Mama tour video first introduced me to the special effect and feeling lights can evoke in a concert setting. Watching tapes of old Rush shows also hooked me on lights. One of the questions I forgot to ask him was about the extra lighting for the Grace Under Pressure tour video and A Show Of Hands video-taping, and how he had to adjust to the increase in lights and cameras.

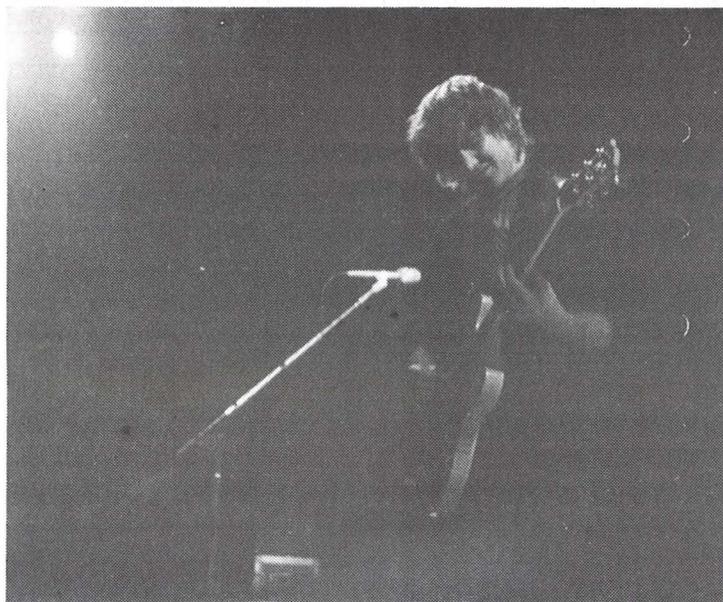
He seemed interested in the commotion that resulted when a man jumped from a bridge (into the river behind the arena) to elude the Police. It did draw quite a crowd and we watched the man swim away downstream in what looked like very cool water. another humorous moment occurred as an older man walked by and after seeing Howard's neckrope with tour passes, the man asked if he could get him a pass. He said he gets that a lot, but Rush doesn't have any backstage passes (except the occasional radio station promo).

He mentioned that he liked the reviews I gave him in Albany (of the second Worcester show and the Hartford one) and he also put the photos I gave him in front of Geddy & Alex for them to see (8x10s from March 12, 1992 in Bingmaton - Alex during Force Ten and Geddy and Alex during The Spirit Of Radio). He mentioned though that they do not really pay too much attention to that type of thing. Still, they may have seen my photos!

At around 6:30 he said that he had some stuff to take care of before the show and we walked back to the arena where I asked him whether he got nervous for shows anymore and he said he didn't. I wished him 'Good Luck' and he left. The conversation was a lot of fun and it was just that; a conversation, as if we'd known each other for a time as it turned into an easy-going discussion rather than an interview.

Howard, thank you very much for your time and friendliness! See you next tour! And while I'm at it, I'll thank all those who made the tour a blast for me! Chris Kay, Jimmy Lang, Mandy and Steve Streeter, and a quick Hi to Ray and the B-man.

Any comments, questions, concert reviews (this is only part of a long review for the show!), or trading direct correspondence to: Brad Parmerter, Box 115, Hartwick College, Oneonta, NY 13820 or email at: parmerterb@hartwick.edu.



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