

E d i t o r i a l

Hi and welcome to the latest Spirit Of Rush. The good news is that Rush have finished writing and are just about to begin recording, so we can now look forward to a new album some time next year.

The convention back in September was a great success even though the numbers were down on previous years. Everyone who came along had a good time and were totally blown away by our tribute band Force 10. They will be co-headlining at next years convention on Saturday 31st August (tickets will be available in January) with none other than The Spirit Of Rush, a 3 piece tribute band who are playing a headline gig on Friday 9th November at the Mean Fiddler (old LA2) in London - see leaflet enclosed with this issue for more details. Come along if you can, you will not be disappointed.

Better still, why not make it a weekend to remember by staying in town to catch the magnificent TransAtlantic the following night Saturday 10th November at the Astoria, just along the road. Their new album Bridge Across Forever is simply breathtaking, buy it now! I for one cannot wait to hear them perform it live.

Mike Portnoy is not only busy touring with TransAtlantic, but that other band he's in have a new album coming out in January - as well as starting a European tour here at the end of that month. Check out the inside back cover for the full Monty. See you at the two (only two) U.K.shows as well then.

As mentioned earlier, next year's convention will take place once again at the Limelight in Crewe on Saturday 31st August. We are going to have a two tier ticket system next year for those who want

to come for the whole days entertainment and for those who can only make the bands in the evening due to work commitments, travel problems etc, we shall have a reduced price ticket. More details next issue. Ray is once again doing extensive building work on the club and we should be able to house the entire convention downstairs to make it a much more intimate occasion for us all to enjoy. OOOHHH!

Next issue will be out in mid January before the Dream Theater shows at the end of the month. If you have a re-subscription form enclosed with this issue please try and send it back before Christmas.

Finally I would just like to thank the guys from Force 10, all of Ray's staff at the Limelight, everyone who got up for the karaoke and last but not least, Total Rock's Badger for making the 2001 con great.

Mick

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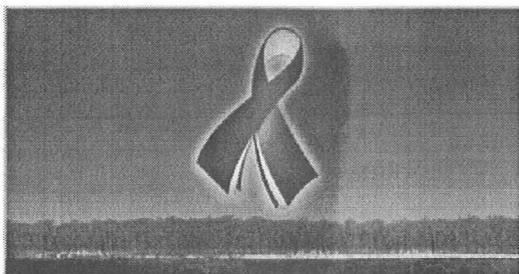
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LATEST MESSAGE FROM
GEDDY



Hello to all,
It has been a while since I communicated with you all via this site so I thought it was time to drop in and deliver an update of sorts.

First, let me send out my most heartfelt sympathies to any of those persons that may have been involved with or had friends or family involved in any way with the attacks of Sept. 11. in Manhattan, Washington and Pennsylvania. We in Canada, along with the rest of the world, watched in horror as these gut-wrenching events unfolded before our very eyes, and we share the same revulsion that was felt by all civilized human beings as these unspeakable acts were perpetrated on so many innocent men, women and children.

These crimes were committed in the U.S.A. and the U.S.A. has paid an inconceivably mighty price, but the entire free world feels and shares in this horrendous violation. I sincerely hope that we, as an international partnership, can proceed in a way that finds justice and strengthens, our security and peace of mind without stooping to the level of racism and hate-mongering that seems to have inspired this senseless violence. Some particle of good must come of all of this, and perhaps now we must force ourselves to take a long, deep look into the kind of culture that gave birth to these actions and to somehow try to discover the reasons that drive people to such extreme hatred. We need these answers in order to better prepare ourselves for the future and to help us build bridges of understanding that might lead the world down a different path.

Finally, I don't think enough good things can be said about the many incredibly courageous public servants that have risked, and in some cases, given their lives in the hope of saving as many people as possible. They will be forever

remembered as true heroes. I believe that as difficult as it will be, the American public must now use this example of bravery as inspiration, and in some way find the determination and fortitude necessary to overcome their grief, and to rise up from this terrible moment.

In light of this tragedy, any talk relating to the workings of a rock band seem incredibly trivial. None the less I know that those of you that have been very supportive of MFH, are intensely interested in the current state affairs of RUSH and so perhaps this will seem, in some small way, like a welcome diversion. So here goes....

At present Alex, Neil and I, are just about approaching the end of our rather long and intensive writing sessions and have moved into the realm of album production. We've taken a different approach this time round and have enlisted the aid of long time friend and engineer Paul Northfield to assist us with recording and production responsibilities and to help move us along!

We have been working in an environment that allows us to keep some of the more spontaneous moments that occur during writing and blend them with a more rehearsed and typical style of production. It has been a little experimental, and highly creative but it took a while for us to get to the point where we felt what we were producing was fresh enough and of the quality that we demand of ourselves. After all, it has been about 5 plus years since our last writing session together and much has happened during that time both personally and professionally. So, in a way, we have had to get to know each other again and to re-learn how best to communicate musically with each other.

Now I believe we are at the point where we are starting to feel pretty darn good about how we have spent the last 8 months, and what we have created. So... as we embark on this next phase of recording, I am hopeful that things will continue to go well and before too long we will have a finished collection of songs to release.

I would also like to thank the many people that took the time to send me their good thoughts via this website on my birthday last July. Even though I look forward less and less to that day each year (the number is just getting too

R U S H N E W S

damn big!) I do appreciate the sentiment.

And so in the words of Slim Pickens in Blazing Saddles... I'd say you've had about enough! (I know, I know!! I've used that quote before but it's still pretty good!)

Best Wishes and thanks for your continued interest and appreciation of MFH!

Geddy

RUSH IN STUDIO WITH PRODUCER NORTHFIELD

After spending the spring and summer in pre-production, Rush entered the studio in mid-August to begin recording their next album. Rush took with them a collection of demos, and a new producer, Paul Northfield.

Although Northfield is producing Rush for the first time, he has worked with the band for twenty years, engineering albums such as Exit... Stage Left and Signals, and co-producing 1998's Different Stages.

As of mid-September, Rush have still not settled on a title for the new project, nor have they set a release date. "With luck on our side," Geddy Lee has said, "we hope to release something early in 2002."

Anthem recently dispelled a rumor about the new project, stating that 'Humans' is not the working title of the new album.

This news report will be updated as reliable information becomes available. This is based on a published report in Monday's edition of the Vancouver Province.

Monica Davidson

CHRONICLES DVD

The Chronicles video collection which was released in the early 90's has just been released in North America on the DVD format. It contains two extra songs not included on the video - The Enemy Within and Afterimage. Along with the never before released officially, promo of Tom Sawyer. The original video contained a live version of this song of course. Worth buying for the improved sound and picture quality as well. It is a

region 1 release only at the moment and NOT a region free disc. No news on if / when it will be available on the European region 2 format.

Euphoria

Euphoria is the brainchild of Toronto based guitarist/composer Ken Ramm. It's not a band so much as his conceptual project.

Geddy Lee is an old friend of Ken's from Toronto (they are tennis partners) and that's how he got involved on the first project. Geddy is not on the new CD.

You can get info and sound samples on Beautiful My Child (the new Euphoria CD), as well as all of our releases by visiting us at

www.sixdegreesrecords.com

Six Degrees Records

The Orbit Room Presents.....

SOUL IN THE CITY 2
Capitol Event Theatre
2492 Yonge St.

Fri. Nov. 9

"put on your wig woman, we're going out to shake and fingerpop!"

It's the 7th Anniversary of The Orbit Room, so don't miss Soul in the City 2 at the Capitol Event Theatre, featuring the best in classic Toronto R&B. The Dexters, Alex Lifeson, Domenic Troiano, George Olliver, Planet Earth, The Chosen Few Horns and Rob Bowman are all back, with some new faces added.

This year's show also stars Vivienne Williams, and the LMT Connection (Wed. night band at the Orbit Room) on the show, as well as some special surprise guests! (we can't talk about it right now).

The opening acts go on at 8pm, and showtime is 10pm. Tickets are \$40. For tickets call Ticketmaster at 416-870-8000, or go to their website at www.ticketmaster.ca.

Ken Hoffman
Counterparts Web Master
(www.rushweb.net)

ALEX SWITCHES GEAR

Alex Lifeson is now using, and promoting Hughes and Kettner amplifiers. Hughes and Kettner are German made, and have quite an impressive listing of artists who use their sound equipment.

Visit
<http://www.hughes-and-kettner.com/startseite/start.htm>, and click on the artists link.

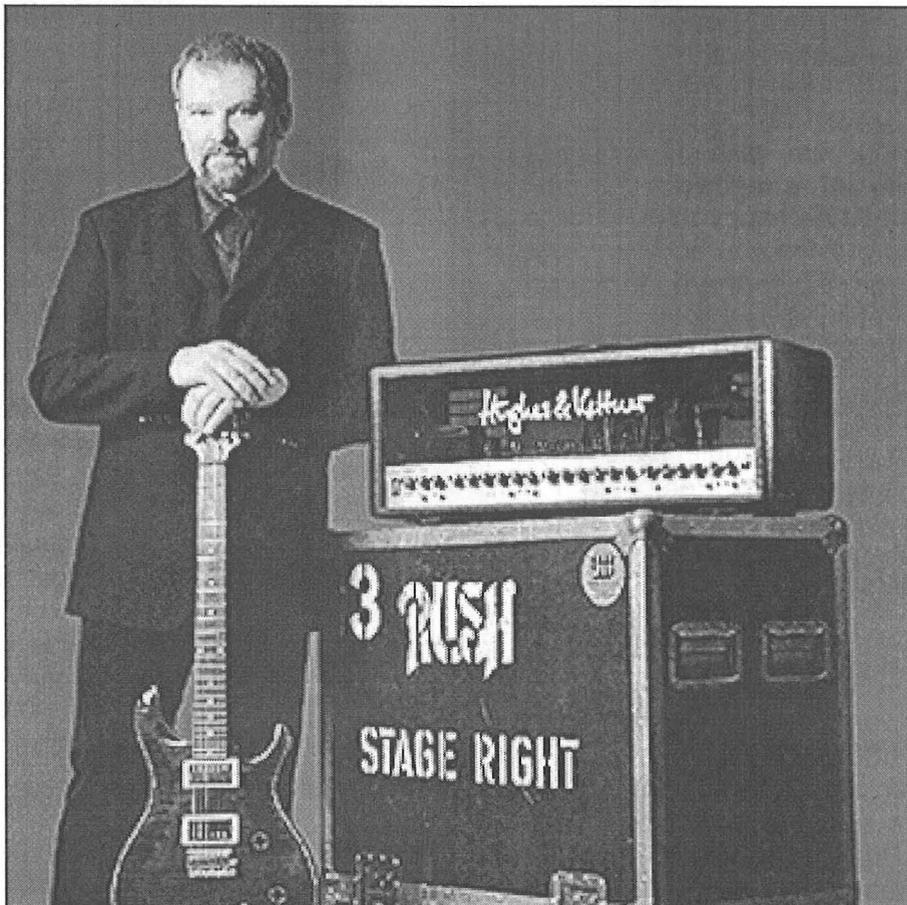
Ken Hoffman
Counterparts Web Master
(www.rushweb.net)

RUSH TRIVIA

The following is an excerpt from a recent interview with Ron Sexsmith!

Q: When you were a young musician starting out, were you always headed in the singer/songwriter direction? Or did you also explore the more standard rock'n'roll path of other young boys, where you played Loverboy and Rush covers and used a much larger amplifier with more distortion?

Ron :I never played Loverboy covers, but I did have a "rock band" in highschool. We modelled ourselves after the Who and the Kinks though. I used to play bass in a band though, that had me singing songs by Van Halen and even Rush.....



Signals

Dear Mick et al at SOR Many thanx for your hard work on Saturday. Sorry for the Van Halen but that's through drinking all day. Thanx to MC Jock and the very kind audience for letting me murder Limelight etc. Thanx to Grog and Nick cu all next year. Kind regards,

ROBIN777
e-mail

<http://www.ebay.co.uk>

Don't know if any of you have seen this site, but it is excellent for selling and buying anything. Check out the Rush page - some great bargains.

Regards to you all.

KEVIN HENRY
Sheffield

Hi Mick,

This is Graham, drummer with Force 10. I spoke with Damian yesterday about next year and we are happy to play once again. (SAT 31st AUGUST 2002) I think we are still getting over the rather overwhelming reaction. We are currently working on getting some dates together and will let you have those just as soon as we can. I'd be happy to do a follow up chat/interview to provide you and your readers with some background to the band as part of your post convention review if this is possible. **(SEE LATER THIS ISSUE FOR OUR CHAT WITH GRAHAM - MICK.)**

On behalf of Force 10 I want to thank you, your organising team and the people that showed up at Crewe, for a great day. Personally I don't think I will ever forget the reaction to 2112 and all those people jumping up and down, truly inspiring. Regards

GRAHAM
e-mail

Firstly, thanks very much to Michael Kerr for the (Driven) lift to Crewe. Nice one.

I thoroughly enjoyed the Convention - my 'Force 10' were brilliant. Will it be 'Force 10' and 'Spirit of Rush' next year? Also I think August 31st was mentioned for next year's convention.....

I managed to kill two Rush songs in the karaoke, ably assisted by Kevin Owen. The lyrics were a bit small - that's my excuse! I

Signals

couldn't believe it when I won, not one, but two, prizes in the raffle.

I thought the numbers were down from last year - hopefully the new album and tour will create more interest next year. I woke up the next morning with 'Not My Favourite Headache' - pardon the pun.

Special mention goes to the following: Michael (North Berwick), Graeme (Bedlington), Brian (Durham), Steve, Deb Lloyd and Rob (Warrington), Mark - thanks for the t-shirt - (Oldham), Chris and Jez (Notts), Kevin (Penzance), Dave (Rochdale), Ray (New York), Paul, Babs, Moz, Katie and the gang (Wigan), Christine and friends (North Seaton).

Check out Geddy's website - about the terrible tragedy that happened in New York. A very well written and thoughtful piece **(in this very issue - Mick)** See everyone next year. Cheers.

JOHN GILCHRIST
Choppington, Northumberland

Dear Mick and Guys,

Firstly I want to say THANK YOU for another brilliant day. This is my fourth Convention and it just gets better, so keep up the great work! I also live in the hope of winning something from the raffle...maybe next year!!

The jamming session was brilliant and has made me even more determined to learn the guitar (everything was going ok til I got to the chords -damn...).

The band 'Force 10' were immense. Hopefully you will be able to book them for next year?? Also a list of their gigs would be really helpful 'cos we don't get any Rush tribute bands in Glasgow. We gotta travel!! No complaining there though, when I get to hear bands like Force 10 and YYZ.

Hi to everyone I met this year - see ya next year. Also to Kevin - any chance of getting Craig's "starman" t-shirt? My email address is carole.r.brown@uk.royalsun.com

Finally, could you put my fears to rest? I've had news that the boys are in the studio producing a new album (good) and then I heard that they are splitting up (bad). Any new info? **(Writing complete, album Spring next year, no split! - Mick)**

CAROLE BROWN
Glasgow

Dear Spirit,

I guess that's the Convention over with this year.... I'd just like to say that on the morning of the Convention, my mate Richard phoned to say he could not go due to being very ill. I therefore had a spare ticket and thought that I might have to go on my own and try and get a refund on the spare. I then phoned my mate Alex, a fellow Max Webster/Kim Mitchell fan, at very short notice and asked him if he would like to go. He did. Cheers Alex - a day we won't forget.

When we finally arrived (7 hrs late) after another upset - this time breaking down on the M1 and having to be towed back home by the RAC - we set off again in my wife's car (thanks Denise!) - but with a top speed of 40mph through Derbyshire. Anyway, after a long drive we entered the Limelight at about 6.50pm and were asked right away to sign the visitor's book (?). We headed straight for the record and CD stalls etc, (even before a much needed pint). What a disappointment, only the one stall? Also the minority of merchandise on sale seemed like a repeat of last year's anyway....

When chatting to other fellow Rush fans who had arrived around 1.00pm I was told that there had only been two stalls all day. I was even more disappointed (thinking that if we had arrived earlier there were hardly any CDs etc. to be had anyway).

We managed to down a good few pints and so the highlights of the evening were: 1) the raffle (didn't win this time, again), 2) the brilliant tribute band 'Force 10', what a show - including a rare audience participation in 'The Sphere' - but what was the singer doing with that mike stand? (never seen Geddy do this...) Anyway, still a good show.

When returning to the Annex bar later we were only to be told it was closed. Why did it close early?

Anyway, that's all for now. I just hope everything turns out better next time. Until then we look forward to the forthcoming Rush album and maybe a tour. Many thanx.

MARK V. LILLY
Doncaster

P.S. We never found out which 8 Rush tracks are hidden on Neil's 'Pieces of Eight'. Please tell us.....



GEDDY LEE interview with MMR

Part 2

MMR:

I would like to touch on politics. As a Canadian citizen I am kinda curious to know what you think of the mess that's just transpired in the American political system?

Geddy Lee:

You realize I'm a guest here, in your country (laughs).

MMR:

You are free to say anything you like sir. I heard that in Canada - though I don't know if it's correct or not - that the whole process of election is one month - campaign and everything.

Geddy Lee:

Nah. It's about six weeks really before they actually announce it. The Prime Minister is teasing you for about two weeks before it.

MMR:

That's beautiful! Six weeks and it's over. I mean, for us it's two years - primaries etc. The money!

Geddy Lee:

Think what they could do with that money (MMR "over a billion dollars"), that you spend on selling your leaders to the country. It is really promotional money if you want to boil it down to the barest bones of truth; taking billions to promote two people to your people, pitting one against the other. If you could come up with a system that could limit that. admittedly, it's a big country America, there are a lot more people in America than Canada, so it does take more time to get the message across. The thing is, the fact is, much of that money could be used for things, needed things - in the infrastructure and for the people of the country. So you know, is it really so necessary to have as long a process? In Canada we have, I think, a British system basically, but then again America is quite a different country to Canada so I wouldn't be so naive to compare the two systems and to say one system would work for the other. What struck me most profoundly whilst watching the Bush v Gore thing, two things actually: one - no-one really wants either of these guys really (everyone laughs and claps) and that's why you are in this situation. You have two blokes nobody really wants to vote for. and secondly, whilst they were counting ballots, we in Canada had a whole election come and go. Yeah, in Canada the whole thing - whilst they were counting here. I think something could be done to speed up the process.

MMR:

Would you ever consider running for office?

Geddy Lee:

(laughs) I don't know. They don't vote for rock'n'rollers in the political world.

MMR:

We've had actors in America (GED "a wrestler!") why not a rock star? And yeah, a wrestler too. Who knows? To change subject, I was curious about the early days of Rush and road stories. There was one book I was glancing through that told a story about you guys. That in the early days you guys would hop into a station wagon or van from Toronto and literally go hundreds of miles to do a gig and go back home afterwards. I don't know if this was when you were still in high school or just afterwards, but as I say, I was reading a story and I don't know if it's true. and as we have the authority here, I thought I could straighten it out. Apparently you guys hopped in a van and drove ten hours to get to a gig. . . . to get so far. to find out it was ten hours in the other direction.

Geddy Lee:

Well, it's close. It was a station wagon and we were leaving, I believe, Chicago. Maybe. Anyway, we were supposed to be going to Cleveland and, you know (puts on accent) we were having a good time in the vehicle and it was a little smoky in the vehicle (MMR: "Cleveland's got a lot of that going on") . . . Oh, I don't know what it was, fumes of some sort. . . . and Alex and I were in the back seat writing a song called "Making Memories" which ended up on our Fly By Night album so we were having a good old time and we noticed signs for Memphis, I think, and we were like (Bill/Ted type voice) "is that right maaaann? Are we going the right way?" So we realized that we were not going the right way. We sort of panicked, cause in those days, you know, it was our first proper tour. . . . and not to show up for a gig, was as big a faux pas as you could make, so we quickly turned around, driving like maniacs and we did finally make it to Cleveland.

MMR:

Who was driving?

Geddy Lee:

I think there were various drivers, I mean, we were shifting. However, Howard, our tour manager at the time was, I think, mostly driving..... as we were kinda writing (laughs).

MMR:

Partying in the back seat.

URNS TO QUESTIONS FROM AUDIENCE.

AL (New Jersey):

I read an interview in Kerrang magazine about Counterparts time, that Alex gave at the time Chronicles came out, where Polygram tried to release solo material that you had from the mid eighties. Does this stuff exist?

Geddy Lee:

I wouldn't believe anything Alex ever said (laughs). I don't know where that came from but it's absolutely not true.

JOE (Philly):

I was wondering, every day when driving to work I listen to Rush and the like, what do you listen to when driving to work or around the house?

Geddy Lee:

Lately I've been listening to Bjork an awful lot. I just love her music, she is such a compelling artist. I listen to Radiohead, oh, I listen to Billie Holiday a lot - if that's not a terrible thing to confess to. I think she's an awesome blues and jazz singer and I find when I want to really relax I can't listen to a lot of rock cause my mind starts working, you know. I start analysing production, this, that and the other. If I can go out of context completely, like smoky jazz or say trip hop/bass and drum type records then it takes me back to a completely.....more simple involvement with music.

MMR:

When some of the younger bands I really like, say Offspring, Green Day.... fresh rocking, hard rocking bands that help to keep the spirit of rock alive..... when I go to their shows I notice they only play, give or take, about an hour. Yet when you see one of the so-called veteran bands, be it Rush, Stones, Petty or Allman Brothers, it's two and a half to three hour shows. It's an interesting statement of our times that veterans put on longer shows. The younger punks are showered and out of the building by that time.

Geddy Lee:

Well us veterans have more material for one, and two, they like the sound of their voices more (laughs). I think there is a particular work ethic too. What with the sometimes outrageous ticket prices, I think some artists feel you have to give people their money's worth. I know it should be quality over quantity but I think you can have both. I think that's part of it.

MMR:

The stage show for Rush has always been wonderful, although music is the basic thing. But the extra icing on the..... like..... the NASA footage, the movies for Hemispheres, the psychedelic car for Red Barchetta and the inflatable bunnies which came out of the hat.

Geddy Lee:

Those poor bunnies, where are they now? Where do they go in the off season?

MMR:

They reappeared on a tour, in which, if I remember correctly, one bunny shot the other, with the bullet going across the video screen behind?

Geddy Lee:

Yeah, I know people were really upset with us (laughs). We had the bunnies for a couple of tours and it was such a fun thing to add to the shows, but we didn't want to get rid of them. But then you can't keep running the same old gags at them. It gets tiresome (MMR "Oh no, it's the bunnies again")....yeah, Here they come with the bunnies! (sarcastic laugh).

MMR:

Is it difficult to come out with new tricks?

Geddy Lee:

Geddy Lee:

Yeah. But it is also a lot of fun. We decided to take this dark approach to the bunnies, you know, see if we could stage the first bunny assassination!

Force 10

Following Force 10's excellent showing at this year's convention back in September I arranged with their drummer Graham to do an interview for Spirit. It turned out to be very interesting indeed.

MICK

Tell our readers how you came to be involved with a Rush tribute band, Graham?

GRAHAM

that we were very pleased to be a part of. I've been a Rush fan for a long time. Prior to my emigration to Canada I got together with some musician friends to do a couple of gigs as kind of a send off - the gigs went down well and I guess that planted a seed. Before returning from Canada I spoke to Damian about doing the Rush tribute thing again - but this time more than 2 gigs. Once I arrived back, we started looking around for other like-minded musicians.

MICK

How long have you been together now?

GRAHAM

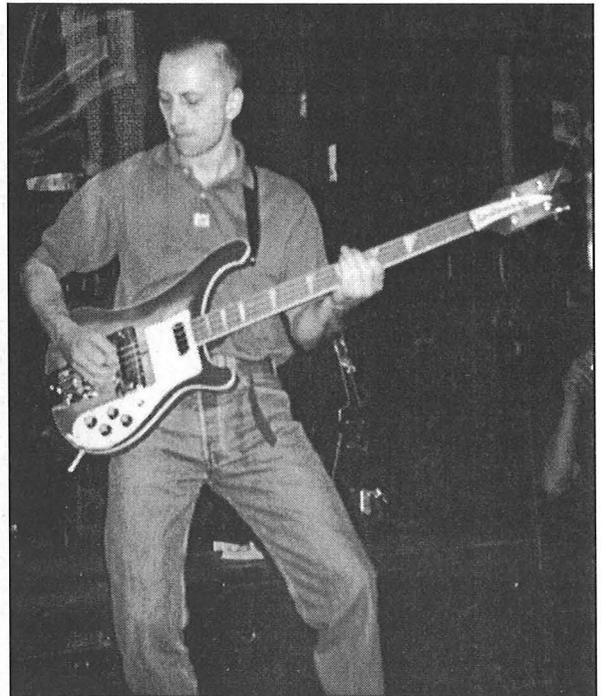
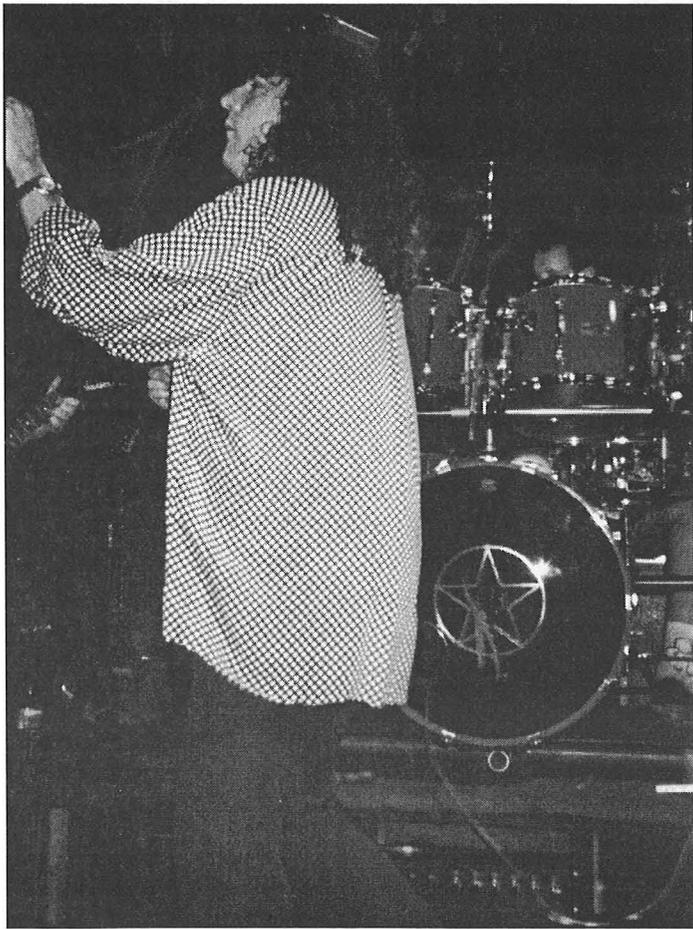
We got together in about July this year. Tom (guitar) and Mark (bass and keyboards) were already working together in a band. Damian knew both of them and after much arm twisting on our part they agreed give it a go. We all knew there was a lot of work involved. Added to that was the pressure of being ready for the convention. That pressure came from Damian!! I think he may have told a few porkies to get the gig. Anyway, although it was only July and the convention was in September we started learning songs and putting a set list together. As I'm sure your readers will appreciate, trying to put a set together is never easy and its impossible to please everyone. Agreeing a set list was probably the hardest part. (YOU BOYS DID A GREAT JOB THOUGH).

MICK

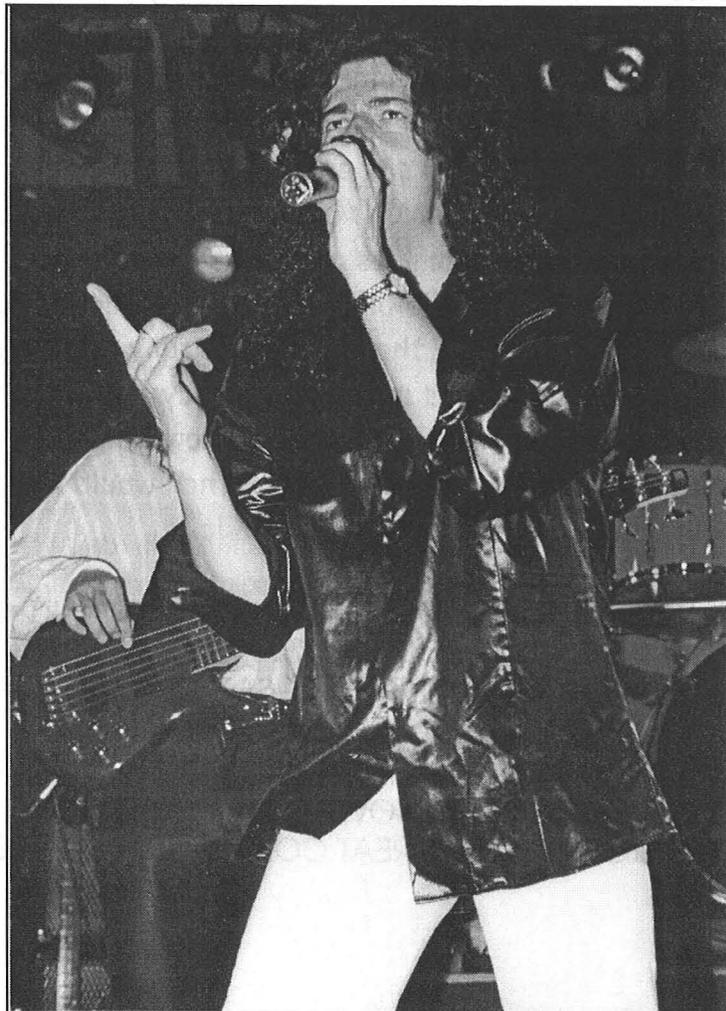
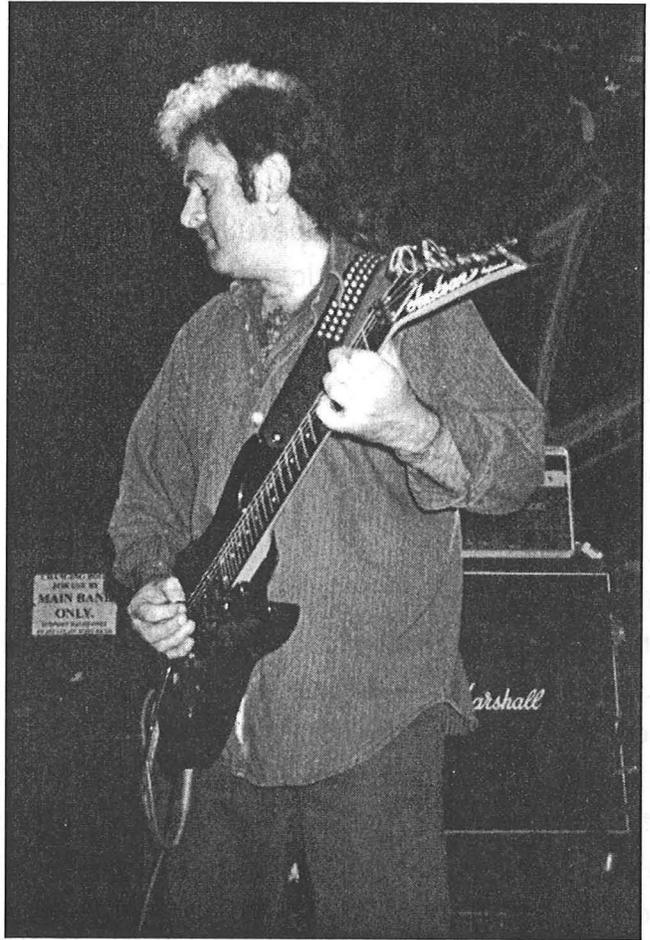
Did you play many gigs prior to this years convention?

GRAHAM

Er no.... so whatever Damian told you before about touring Europe, doing gigs three times a week..... may have been a bit exaggerated. We had a gig booked at the Limelight for a week or two before the convention but we had to pull out because Mark got sent to Ireland with work. At that point, I think the rest of us were thinking of joining him and staying til October! Our preparations for the convention went to the wire as they say. The first time we played the set in full from beginning to end without stopping for any cock-ups, was the convention. I think the adrenaline and fear carried us through, I hope. (NOBODY NOTICED, EVERYONE THERE THOUGHT YOU PLAYED A BLINDER).







MICK

Have you and the other band members been Rush fans for long?

GRAHAM

We've all been Rush fans for a lot of years now. We've all grown up with the band, although they're a lot older than us I hasten to add! We are all looking forward to hearing another album, hopefully in the new year. It would be great to see them play live over here for maybe one last time. (A NEW ALBUM SHOULD BE OUT EARLY NEXT YEAR, FINGERS CROSSED A TOUR WILL FOLLOW.)

MICK

How do you go about choosing which songs to play, after all, Rush have a large back catalogue?

GRAHAM

Its been quite interesting because we all have our own favourite periods of their music. Tom being the oldest (sorry Tom), likes the earlier stuff, whereas me being the youngster in the band (who didn't know they existed prior to 1988) I prefer some of the later stuff. Seriously, choosing the songs was extremely difficult for a whole bunch of reasons. We wanted to play some of the standards - Spirit of Radio, Tom Sawyer etc. but we also wanted to do something a bit different that Rush don't play live. Between the Wheels fitted into that category, as did Jacobs Ladder. Now who's bloody idea Jacobs Ladder was I don't know. That was an absolute pig of a song to get right. (AND BOY DID YOU GET IT RIGHT - AN ABSOLUTE SHOW STOPPER!)

On top of those choices we also had to consider the technological challenges and being able to recreate their sound live. Songs like Red Sector A got the boot because of that. Finally, we also had to be aware of Damian's voice. He wasn't keen on having his nuts squeezed for half the set just because the rest of us wanted to play Anthem and Temples of Syrinx. That's the trouble with singers, they never want put their ass on the line. (I'M SURE WE COULD FIND A WILLING YOUNG LADY TO SQUEEZE HIS NUTS NEXT YEAR). So, as ever, we made some compromises and came up with a set that I hope people enjoyed listening to as much as we did playing, save for Jacobs Ladder. We are now in the process of adding more songs to the set so hopefully when people see us again we will have something new for them. I was sworn to secrecy but I can't help it...

Marathon is one of those that will definitely feature. I know I'm going to regret this but maybe your readers have some suggestions of songs they would like to hear, perhaps something that they haven't heard Rush play live in a while.

COME ON AND SEND IN YOUR SUGGESTIONS FOR WHAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO HEAR 'FORCE TEN' PLAY AT NEXT YEARS CO-HEADLING CONVENTION WITH 'THE SPIRIT OF RUSH' ONCE AGAIN AT THE LIMELIGHT IN CREWE ON SATURDAY 31ST AUGUST. MICK.

THANKS AGAIN TO GRAHAM AND THE GUYS FOR REALLY PUTTING ON A FANTASTIC SHOW AT THE CONVENTION, WHICH AS WE NOW KNOW WAS A GREAT DEAL OF HARD WORK FOR THEM ALL. HERES TO ANOTHER GREAT CONVENTION DAY NEXT YEAR WITH TWO BANDS!!!!!!

MICK BURNETT

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 19, 1996

RUSH MAKES A FINE BLIND DATE IN TORONTO

**BY JOHN POWELL
JAM! SHOWBIZ**

No fog machines. No video screens. No fireworks screams. No laser beams. No floppy-eared bouncing Presto bunnies either. Tonight's Blind Date show at the Phoenix Concert Theatre in Toronto was a Rush fan's testimonial. Stripped of all the appealing high-tech sensory theatrics that are the band's calling cards, what lingered were three guys on a stage playing their guts out and enjoying every minute of it. Like slapping a CD on your player and slipping the headphones on, the distractions disappeared. The music and emotion coming in loud and clear.

"We're gonna play a whole bunch of absurd music for you tonight," said bass player Geddy Lee in his best English accent. And he wasn't joshin'. The 19-song set was a diverse sampling of Rush's 20 album magical mystery tour which pleased the loyal devotee as well as the enthusiastic newcomer.

Tacking a surfin' safari jam onto Big Money was a small hint of the carefree levity in store. Currently on a North American tour (to promote their new disk Test For Echo), the dates are crammed with large stadium shows. Rush, which hasn't played an intimate venue since they dumped that church basement gig approximately 27 years ago, were basking in the atmosphere. Lead guitar god and clown school graduate, Alex Lifeson, was zanier than ever, making faces at Lee behind his back, kidding with the fans and striking your typical "I am a guitar God" poses throughout the show. Lee dabbled in foreign accents and dueled Lifeson. Hell, even Neil Peart whose masterful concentration while bashing the skins couldn't be diverted even if a squad of giggling cheerleaders pranced across the stage, cracked a fleeting smile. Will miracles never cease?

The hometown boys even sprung for a cardboard cutout of Pamela Anderson Lee holding a plastic cup (for spare change?). Hint. Hint. Nudge. Nudge. Wink. Wink.

The air drums were out in full force during Red Barchetta, Animate and Subdivisions but were packed up as the audience loudly gabbed during the slower tunes Nobody's Hero and Virtuality. Roll The Bones, The Spirit Of Radio, Closer To The Heart and Tom Sawyer had the crowd singing along.

The trio onstage tonight wasn't the Rush of 1996, or even 1986 for that matter. They were once again the wild-eyed young 'un's prowling the club circuit pocketing just enough dough to buy that new amplifier. Stealing a swig from the fountain of youth, Lee was hitting those high notes again. Peart taught those drums a lesson or two but spared them the renowned solo. Lifeson strummed those strings as if the group was still opening for Max Webster or The New York Dolls.

It has been said that Rush is closer to the end of their career than the beginning. Flush the Geritol and toss the Depends. They won't be needing them quite yet, thank you very much. In Lakeside Park the grass is still green.

Rating: **RATING: FIVE OUT OF FIVE**

Geddy Lee: Yesterday and Today

The World Album Premier of "My Favorite Headache"

transcribed by Paul Stone

Introduction: Welcome to a very special hour featuring the brand new solo debut from one third of Canada's musical ambassadors to the world: Geddy Lee of Rush. Now with special guest Geddy Lee, here's your host Jeff Woods.

JW: Who hasn't got a memory of Rush? The albums: AFTK, Hemispheres, 2112, Moving Pictures just to name a few. All the world's indeed been the stage for Rush. In a career spanning for decades, Rush are among the world's respected and successful bands -- Canada's most successful band internationally too. Beyond the release of the last live Rush album Different Stages, fans of the band have not heard new music from Rush since 1996's Test For Echo. The good news: Rush do have plans to get together in the new year to write again. And in the mean time, we've got this brand new Geddy Lee album to digest. In the next hour, Rush revisited, and Geddy Lee: the solo artist

GL: The approach that I took making the record was very musical a lot of layers, and it's kind of a record that's done in the style that we used to make records in. It's the just the approach we took was you know, let's just make the best music we can and not be afraid to layer it. And if it's a little more work to get into, maybe that's a good thing in the end. When Ben Mink and I decided to go down this road at least writing together, we thought...well we'll just start slowly. He came to Toronto, we sat down in my home studio and we worked for about ten days and threw some ideas together. So we carried that on over the next kinda year and a half. I would go out to Vancouver. We'd spend a week to ten days working on other stuff. So that progressed like that going back and forth from Vancouver to Toronto for like I said about a year and a half and so. And then finally I started getting really impatient because the songs started turning out better and better and better. And I said "look we gotta make a decision on what we're doing here. Are we making a record for ourselves? Are we going to package this stuff up and send it around to other artists and maybe they'll record it?" So we decided to take five songs and send them around to a couple of people only and see if they could give us some input as to whether we should do a record or whether we should form a publishing union, that kind of thing and it was Val Azzoli who used to work for us at SRO Management here and now he's running things at Atlantic Records, who called me up right away and he said "Listen, I've been listening to the songs and I think you should go make a record. I think you've got something to say here, so go do it."

JW: Tell us about the title track "My Favourite Headache".

GL: Well that's a dark comedy, that song. It's one of the wilder tracks and it's got a great spirit and I'm very happy that that song surfaced because it's kind of unusual and there was a lot of experimenting that went on with that song rhythmically and in the way that I'm using my bass (Intro to MFH plays) It's also the first time that I tried playing electric guitar with any import on a song, so the more obnoxious stuff that you hear on the song is usually me (laughs).

JW: And what a great way for a bass player produce a solo record

GL: Yeah I figured that would be cool you know, What the Hell. I can't avoid it. It is a bass player's album. Let's start with the bass.

(My Favourite Headache plays)

JW: Geddy Lee, the title song from his debut solo album My Favourite Headache. An album essentially comprised of three main players: including Geddy Lee on bass and some guitar parts, and collaborator, guitarist Ben Mink (known by some for his work with K D Lang, known by Rock fans from his days with the Toronto band FM).

GL: Well, that's how I met Ben. He was playing in FM and they were opening a show for us at Varsity Stadium here in Toronto and we became friends really quickly. We had similar upbringings, similar backgrounds and similar absurd sense of humour that kept us buddies for years. Our biggest fear when we were making this record was "Is just going to screw our friendship up? Are we gonna stop making these inane jokes throughout the project once we get quote serious about working together?" I think it really was a serious fear we had that we were going to screw it up so we kind of promised each other that no matter what happens, we cannot let this interfere with our being buddies otherwise it's not worth it.

JW: And it all worked out evidently.

GL: It worked out great. He was happy to be involved as co-producer and co-writer and play lots of instruments and he didn't suffer the requisite ego shortcomings that demanded that we had equal billing that kind of thing, so it seemed to make sense to do it under the guise of a solo record.

JW: Filling the drum seat on this new Geddy Lee album came by way of suggestion from the producer/engineer known for his work with the Foo Fighters and Soundgarden Adam Kasper.

GL: He said "Have you thought about using Matt Cameron?" And I said "Yeah, well I hadn't gotten to his name yet." But we had just gone into that process of looking for drummers. And he said "Well I think that Matt would be great." So Ben and I pulled out all our Soundgarden records and started listening and it was like "Well yeah!". So good. He's got such great tone and dexterity, it would be great to work with him. So we contacted him and he was really enthusiastic and said "Look, I've got three weeks where I'm free and then I have to go to Europe with Pearl Jam." So Ben and I just looked at each other and said "OK" and called Adam Book the studio, "we're coming." And we went to Seattle. We spent about two weeks there. They treated us very well. It was a really nice way to start the album in earnest as an official kind of start point. So we did his drums. We only expected to get four or five songs down with him; but it was working so well, we just kept pulling other songs out and saying "well we've got this other song here, you wanna play on it?" and he'd go "yeah sure!" And before we knew, we had ten songs with him on it and they all sounded really great from a drum point of view.

JW: The "Present Tense" is one of my favourite tracks on the album. Tell me about it.

GL: I think "Present Tense" was the first song that Ben and I wrote together that put us back in touch with the whole rock side. I think we kind of entered into the project slowly and a little sheepishly so we started with more acoustic oriented things and a little quieter songs and then something happened the day we sat down. I'd been thinking about this song I think for about three nights before, you know as I was lying in I was kind of putting the chord structures together for the choruses of that song and I was really kind of fired up about it and then Ben finally came from Vancouver and we sat down and I said "I've got this idea that's been just cooking in my head for three days, let's get right at it." So when we put it together, something about it just snapped us into action and I think it was great. It was a great moment where we realized that we could go down this road where the rock that we can write together feels honest and feels legitimate.

(Present Tense plays)

JW: What does it feel like having your name for the first time on a solo record? As opposed to your name under the banner of Rush?

GL: I went for no attention in this life. I've been very fortunate and being part of Rush all these years has been just a great experience for me. So I was fairly satisfied on the ego front. You know, I've always prided myself in being part of a three-piece. I loved the idea of me being in a band. And I've never felt the need for more attention. I didn't ever really want to step outside the band and draw attention to myself so it's odd that I eventually found myself in this position, but it's a bit weird for me. You know sometimes when I'm doing interviews and things like that it's a big odd for me because I'm used to fighting the good fight for the team you know. And not to have the same kind of team was strange, but I rationalized it in this way. I love the music that Ben and I put together for this. I'm very proud of it. When I go out and promote it or talk about it, I feel like I'm doing it for the songs for the music itself so that makes me feel a bit more down-to-earth about the whole thing.

(commercial)

GL: Musically, I've never been frustrated working with Alex and Neil. Whatever ideas I am excited about, they accept and they contribute to equally. So it's been really a pretty healthy and democratic partnership over the years, so I don't have a whole closetful of songs that have been rejected by Alex and Neil that I'm waiting that I'm waiting to make my true statement with. This really came up as a matter of the hiatus that Rush was on and I had a lot of time away from music. And I needed to write. I needed to get creatively busy. I found that it was very bad for me personality-wise and on a happiness level not to express myself to go so long without a creative outlet. So, Ben's involvement was coincidental with the amount of time that we happened to find ourselves having and so that is why this record exists: as a result of me needing to work and having the happy coincidence of having my friend available to write with. Not out of any great deep-seated frustration.

JW: One of the eleven songs on the album: "Working it Perfekt".

GL: If I had to pick one song from the record as my favourite, I think I'd pick that one. To me I'm really pleased with way the whole bluesy-rock attitude of that song is married with this VERY unusual almost Russian string section that comes in the choruses. Those strings are really working it, they're really pushing the chorus. There is a lot of tension created by them and at the same time there is a kind of cinescope attitude that it brings to it and the song is about that whole torture: the kind of yin and yang of writing music or painting a picture, or just you know obsessed with trying to get it right and how easily you can fall off the mark and how success is often measured by society in very extremes and how success is necessarily about the extremes. It's about the stuff between the extremes.

(Working it Perfekt plays)

JW: New from Geddy Lee that's "Working it Perfekt" P-E-R-F-E-K-T. In the past, Geddy has commented in the past that it's hard to put the music he's made with Rush in context with the rest of the musical world. Blessing or Burden?

GL: It's a blessing really. The fact is that having success comes slowly and having the opportunity to make many records is really more important than being part of the mainstream and making your three or four wildly successful records and then feeling like there's nothing left to say. We've been fortunate that our success came in tiny, tiny increments and we learned so much about making music and we always had another hill to climb and I think it still feels like that's the case for us. You know, certainly in Canada and parts of the United States we are more associated with successful mainstream bands, but there are lots of parts of the world that we are still kind of unknown or everybody's favourite secret or whatever. I'm

thankful for that really because it's kept us interested and it's kept us from being swallowed up by the industry. So we've been lucky.

JW: Let me take you way back since we're going sort of down that road. You were in grade Eleven when you left highschool?

GL: Elevenish

JW: How confident were you then leaving to be in Rush with Alex that you were making the right decision

GL: I was supremely confident and supremely ignorant. I didn't even know what it was I was after really. You know, it's kind of like running away to join the circus for me. But I loved being in a band and it was one of the first things that I ever found in my life that I thought I was good at doing. And at that stage of your life, it's important to know that you're good at something anyway. It's the same old thing you know, fighting the good fight: leaving school and going to prove something. Even though I didn't know what it was I trying to prove or where it was I was trying to get to. It just felt like the right thing for me to do.

JW: What do you figure the odds were then for you to have done as well as you've done and maybe compare that to the odds today if you were to be in the same position?

GL: I don't know, back then a billion to one maybe I don't know? Seems when I think about those times, it's hard to believe that I'm still the same person that that kid was: trying to get out of the suburbs of Toronto. It probably feels very similar to musicians, young musicians today. I'm sure it's just as daunting to them, but they have just as much blind, ignorant belief that they can get out there and they can do it and they want to do it and they want to try it. I think that's part of the way people's psyches are made when they're young. They are not built to accept everything, to see everything, and I think if you were built to see everything at a young age, there would be too much reality for you to deal with and you wouldn't do anything. When you're older, you second-guess everything you know too much. So it's good to be naïve. Bravo to our Naivete. It forces you to go out and reach for it.

(Limelight plays)

JW: There's one from the past. "e're fourteen thousand dollars in debt. We're tired and playing this tiny place isn't helping matters." Do you remember the time and place? It was you.

GL: No I don't. Was it last week when I was talking to my wife?

JW: About 1975 at the Whiskey A Go Go in L.A. Remember the time you were playing alongside, well in Rush, playing alongside Kiss in some bigger shows, but you had a smaller club night to do that night and it was an early time of frustration obviously.

GL: I remember that because it was part of the tour where suddenly we were in L.A. and as cool as it was in those days, to be in L.A. we had been there for quite a while and all these days had fallen out and it was becoming harder and harder for us to get onto a tour and so we were kind of floating on this island of no work but we were having to stay in this expensive town and we didn't have much money so it was kind of a test of I-don't-know-what to try and keep an optimistic view in the face of no work.

(commercial)

JW: Not since the very first Rush album have you been responsible for the words. And now you're singing your words. What's that like?

GL: Well, at first it was strange territory for me. The last song I think I'd written in Rush was I think Cinderella Man (what about Different Strings?) At first a little daunting, a little embarrassed to expose some of my thoughts and feelings on paper. Working with Ben was great in that attitude and the fact that he was a good friend and if I was going to go out on the line, I was going out in front of someone who I didn't get embarrassed in front of. So he was a great sounding board for me and I think once I got the first couple out of the way, and then I had time to live with it and realize "well, these aren't so awful bad!" then I started getting into the concept of it and I really found it to become important to me, especially at that time. Once again, you've got to put it in context with having all three years away from having any kind of real creative work of any intensity. I guess I had things cooking inside me philosophically and creatively that needed to come out and I found that after a certain time, I really looked forward to putting my ideas down on paper and then taking them in the studio and trying to wrestle them with the music and try to make that into a statement of some sort and even though I found the statements not to be very heavy, and a lot of them are kind of thinking out loud, it became to me almost the most important part of the whole deal after a while. The feeling of being able to write music and get back in touch with the verbal side of myself and connect that with the melodies made it feel more complete in some way.

JW: How has making a song of solo songs with your lyrics, how has that affected your vocals?

GL: You know I think it has affected them in a not subtle way. There is something about having to structure the cadence of these words in the context of the rhythms that are coming from a place that is more connected to me. I think it affected how much room I had to open up my voice and to experiment with my voice so in some ways I think that's made these words sound a little different. It's a hard thing for me to explain you know, but basically when somebody hands you a set of lyrics, you shape them, but there's a given structure there. So I write my melodies with Neil's lyrics according to the structure I've been given and if I'm finding difficulty, of course he's more than happy to shift things around for me; but there's no flexibility like having your own words there and not feeling any ownership problems about it. So if I'm not happy about the way a melody is going, I just scrap the whole rhythmic idea of it and try a whole different rhythmic approach so there's something in the license that you have with your own lyrics that you wouldn't do with someone else's lyrics because you have respect for what they've put down that has opened me up to make these words fall a little differently I think.

JW: Just before we play it, we'll talk a bit about the song "Runaway Train".

GL: I love this song. And I'm really pleased with the way it turned out. I think it's one of the better mixes on the record. For me. This is a rock tune in the spirit of rock tunes that I grew up. There's some guitar riffing that Ben pulls off in this song. It's a song kind of addressed to circumstances in personal life that get tough. And when you start to beat yourself up and find yourself in self-defeating relationships that the only way to get yourself out of is to activate yourself in some way and get in touch with your need and your desire to live and to stop being the passive person that's allowing this to happen to you. So that is kind of what this song's about.

(Runaway Train plays)

JW: (missed the first 10 seconds, I had to turn the tape over) (asks about solo tunes compared to Rush tunes)

GL: "They're not as histrionic. I think that five minutes is plenty to accomplish that and there was a preponderance and an emphasis on melody writing and layering of melody and that became a focus for me rather than long complex bone structure which is really the area that

Rush works in. With Rush, it's more the bone structure that's complex and the changes of scene from part to part to part where this is more interwoven.

JW: Let's touch briefly on Matt. We both are fans of Soundgarden and Pearl Jam. He's recorded with both. He's solid drummer. Live, he's amazing. That all being said, it's gotta be a predicament, a precarious position for Matt to step into the chair as it were, that typically Neil Peart (he pronounced it Pert) would sit in to play the drums.

GL: Well, I mean, if he was weirded out about it, he didn't tell me. From the first day we worked together. He's a pretty confident guy. I know that there were times in his past that he probably had an association with obviously our music and some of him and his friends I think were Rush fans back in the old days, and I you know I don't think there's a drummer playing rock around that hasn't gone through the Neil Peart (he pronounced it correctly) thing. So, every once in a while he had a little smile on his face and he was really diggin it and this was a cool thing for him to do; but he really carried himself as a total professional and you know once ... he is really a great drummer I mean...

JW: He's strong isn't he? Powerful?

GL: Yeah, he's a great drummer. A very flexible drummer and it was really fun to play with somebody different for a change: someone who has a slightly different attitude in keeping the groove going. The grooves were subtly different on this record than they would be on a Rush record. I think they are less angular less acutely angular and his style just kind of slotted right in with it, so I think personally it was a good experience for him. He had a good time. I know for myself it was very refreshing to be in Seattle and to start the record off in a different way than I have in the past twenty-odd years.

JW: Was there ever a time in the process of being in the studio and writing with Ben that you needed the consultation, the advice, the sound of the voice of a Neil or of an Alex? Did you talk to the guys?

GL: I talked to Alex pretty regularly; but I made sure that I didn't go to him for those kind of things. And Neil I would contact every once in a while through letters and E-mail or stuff. I really figured "if I'm going down this road by myself, I better be a big boy and deal it on my own" even though there were times towards the end that were difficult in assuming all the responsibilities on my own I figured it was a decision I'd made and I had to kind of step up to the plate.

(commercial)

JW: Some listeners assume that given your success here you mentioned in Canada certainly and in the US that there might have been temptation on your part to live in Europe or live in L.A. or New York. Now I don't know if you have homes in other places in the world, but you are typically living in Canada are you not?

GL: Yeah, I live in Canada. I live in Toronto

JW: Has there been temptation to leave for any reason? Or what's kept you here?

GL: Well, yeah there's been a lot of temptation to leave. It's not an easy country to stay in in some ways, because of the political landscape and the onerous taxation and all that. And I've stayed because I have two children who have a good opportunity here and it's a great place to raise kids. I like the city of Toronto a lot, despite its conservative nature. It's a marvelous country and we have a great standard of living in Canada. I think there's problems and there's frustrations and sometimes I'm tempted to just say "okay, I'm headed for Europe,

see you later" and maybe someday I will leave. But right now I see my children thriving here and so I don't want to mess with that.

JW: Beyond the music, what keeps Geddy Lee's day interesting.

GL: Gee, I have more hobbies than I deserve.

JW: Start at A.

GL: Well, let's see, I love Tennis, I love of course everyone knows I'm a baseball fanatic.

JW: They played "Limelight" at ...

GL: Yeah, Shea Stadium. Yeah, they always play it at Shea. In certain ballparks...someone else told me recently that the third basemen for the Giants or something, there's always a Rush song that introduces him him too. That just gets me. I get a warm feeling when I hear that. Um...I have a lot of passions, a lot of hobbies. I love art, I love wine, I'm a big wine collector.

JW: When you say art, do you mean creating or collecting?

GL: Just appreciating and collecting in a very minor way. I wish I was a painter, but I'm not. I love to travel. My wife and I do extensive traveling around the world. We both love hiking and biking and we try to pick places around the world that we can go and do those things in and that's really important for me. I always have to have a trip somewhere planned for my wife and I to look forward too and then the rest of the year kind of revolves around that.

JW: Tour plans! Solo tour plans. Putting a band together, going on the road and doing this. Is that something you would like to do?

GL: If I could do it on a small scale and just play small shows in a few selected places I think that would be a lot of fun. I've had offers from all my fellow musicians on this project Matt, and Jeremy, and Benny of course so it's just a matter of me figuring out the logistics and timetables for everybody the fact that I have a schedule to start writing with Alex and Neil in the near future. If I can make all of that work, plus squeeze in you know a dozen shows I'll do it. If I can't make it work, I'll just say "next time".

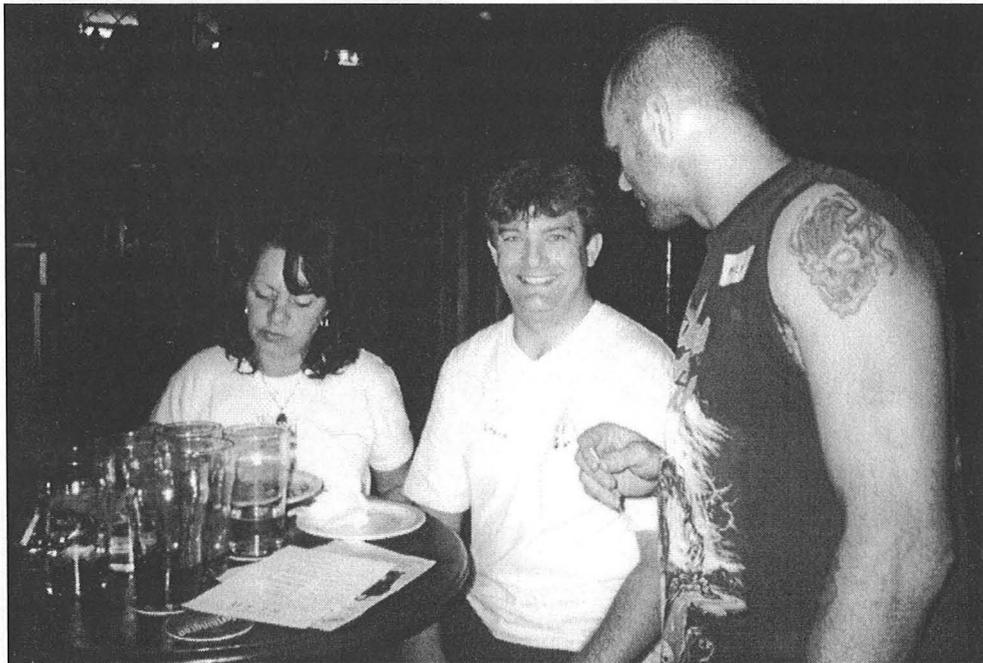
JW: So it's a "Stay tuned" thing?

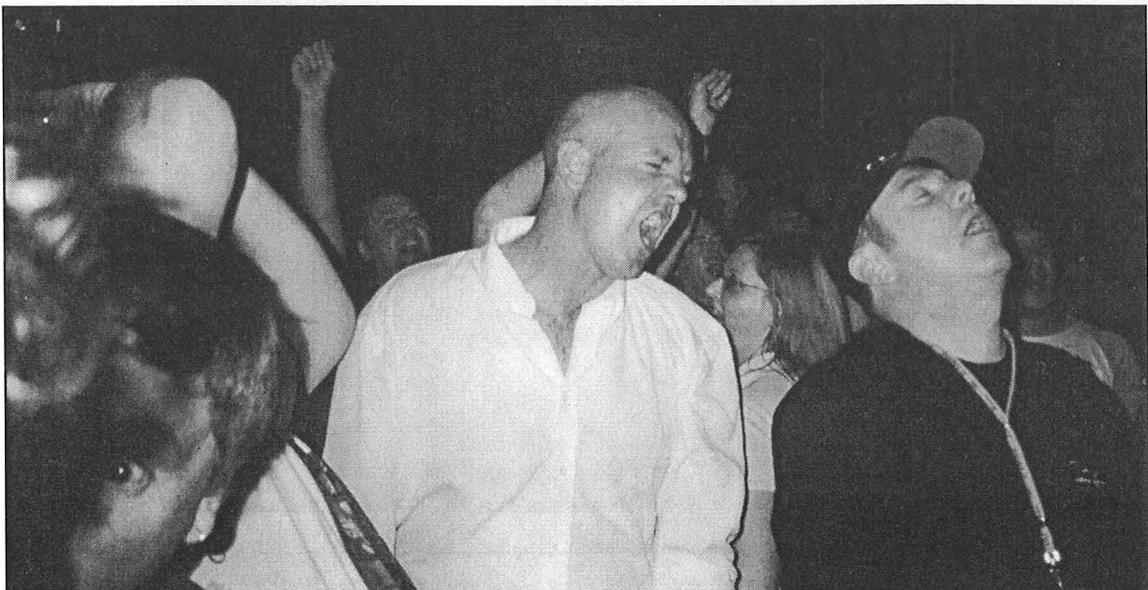
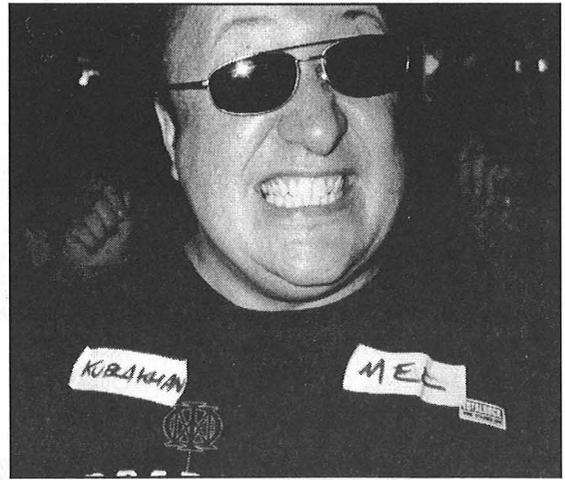
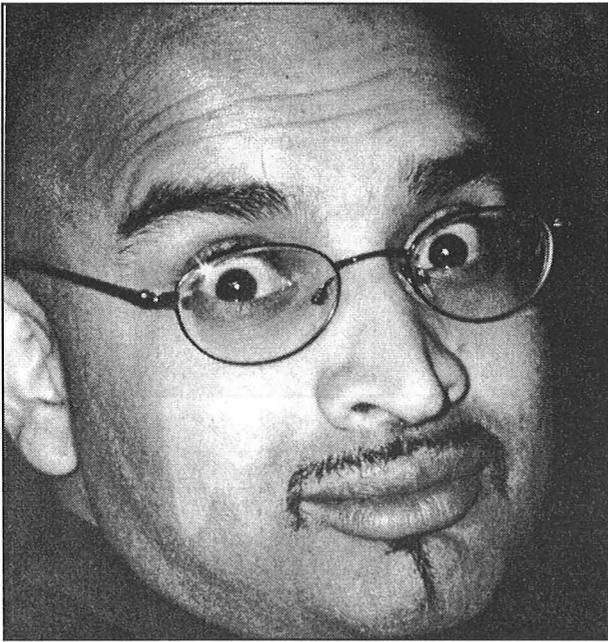
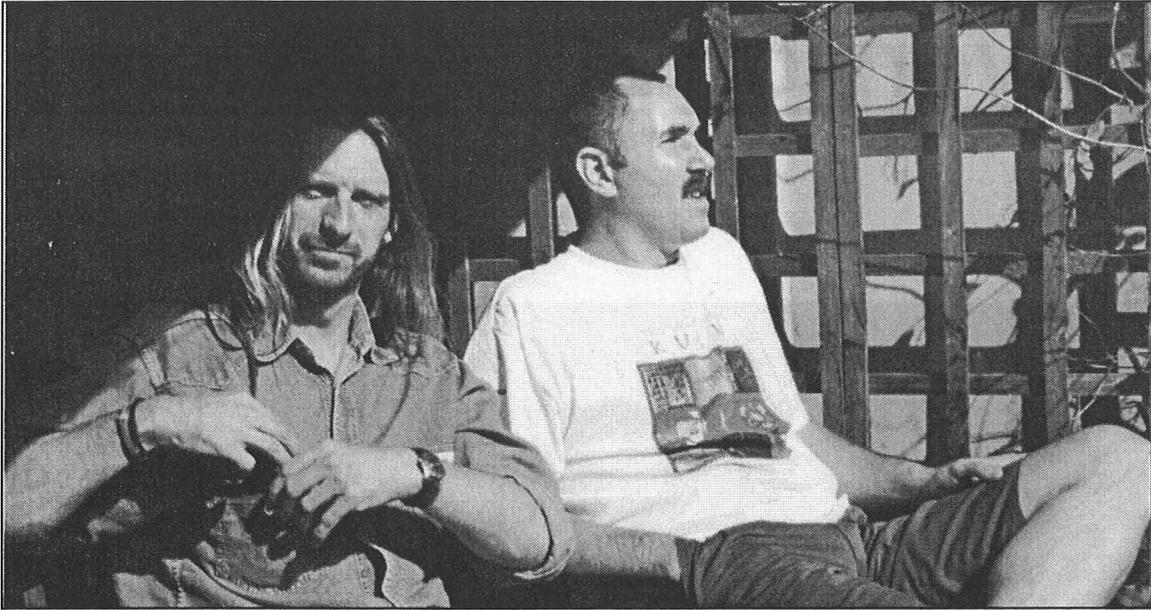
GL: Yeah it's a "Stay tuned" thing

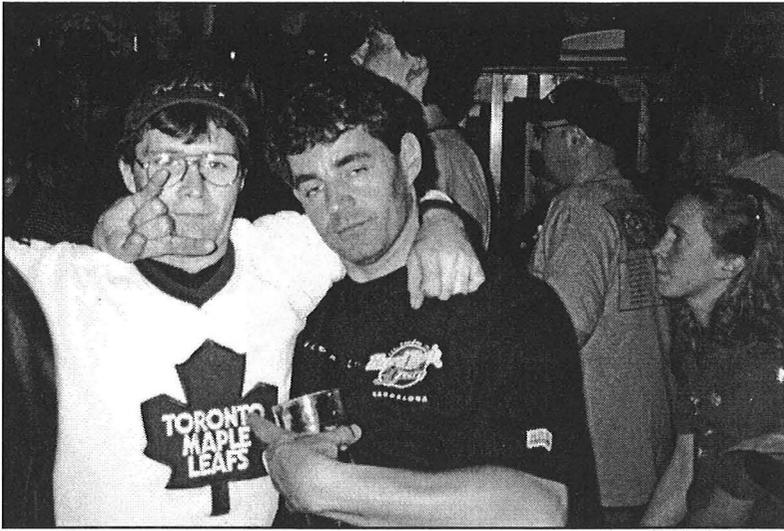
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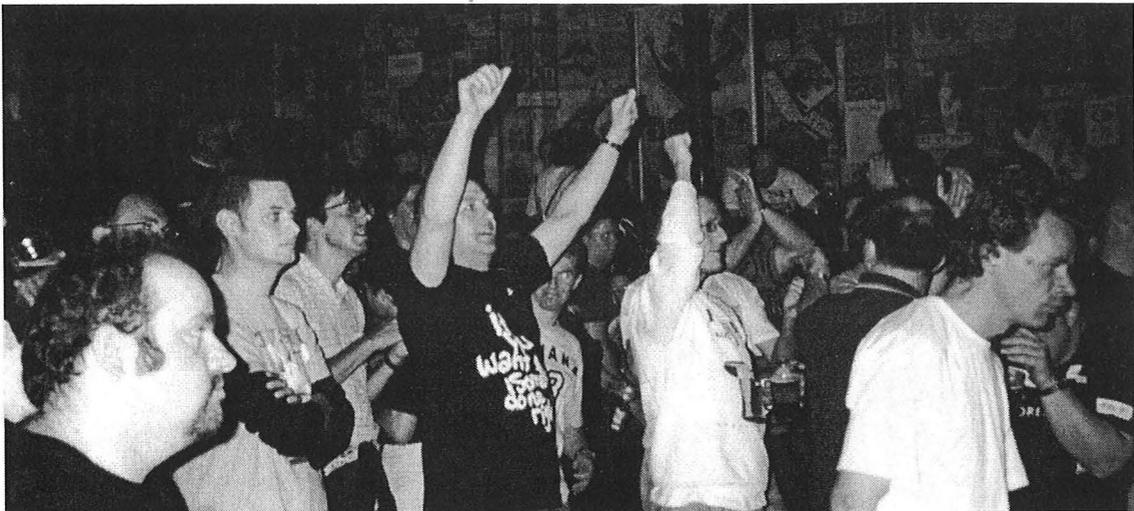
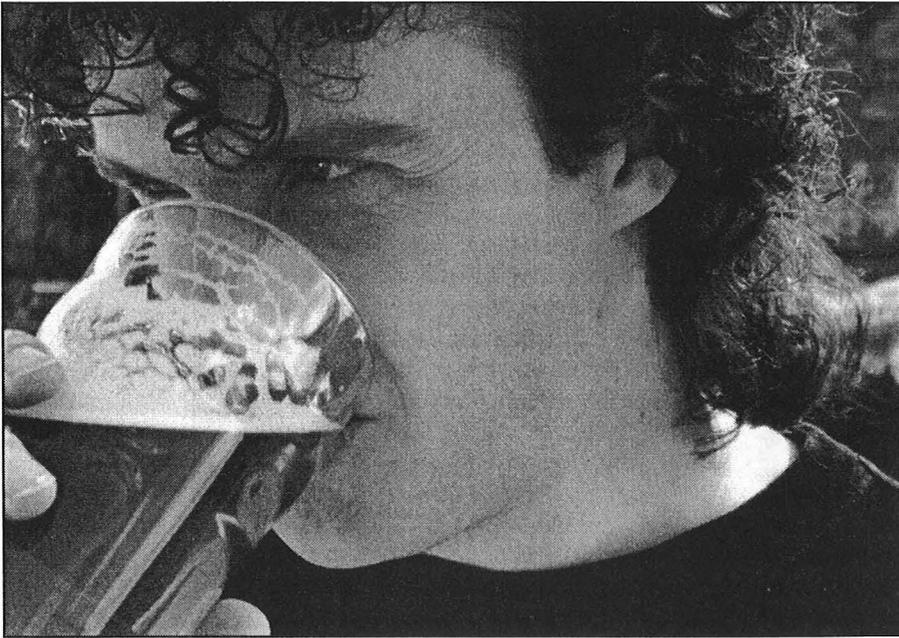


Convention 2001 Gallery









Dream Theater - Six Degrees of Inner Turbulence

Here is the latest news from Mike Portnoy:

Well, we will finish mixing this week and will master next week....

and after that, it is in the hands of Elektra....

so I suppose it is time to spill some beans!!! :)

Dream Theater - Six Degrees of Inner Turbulence

The new album will be a 2CD Set consisting of Six songs:

"The Glass Prison",

"Blind Faith",

"Misunderstood",

"The Great Debate",

"Disappear"

and the entire 2nd CD will consist of the 40-minute title track

"Six Degrees of Inner Turbulence"

Once again the album was Produced by

Mike Portnoy & John Petrucci

and Mixed by **Kevin Shirley**

An exact release date hasn't yet been confirmed,

but it is slated for **January 2002**

