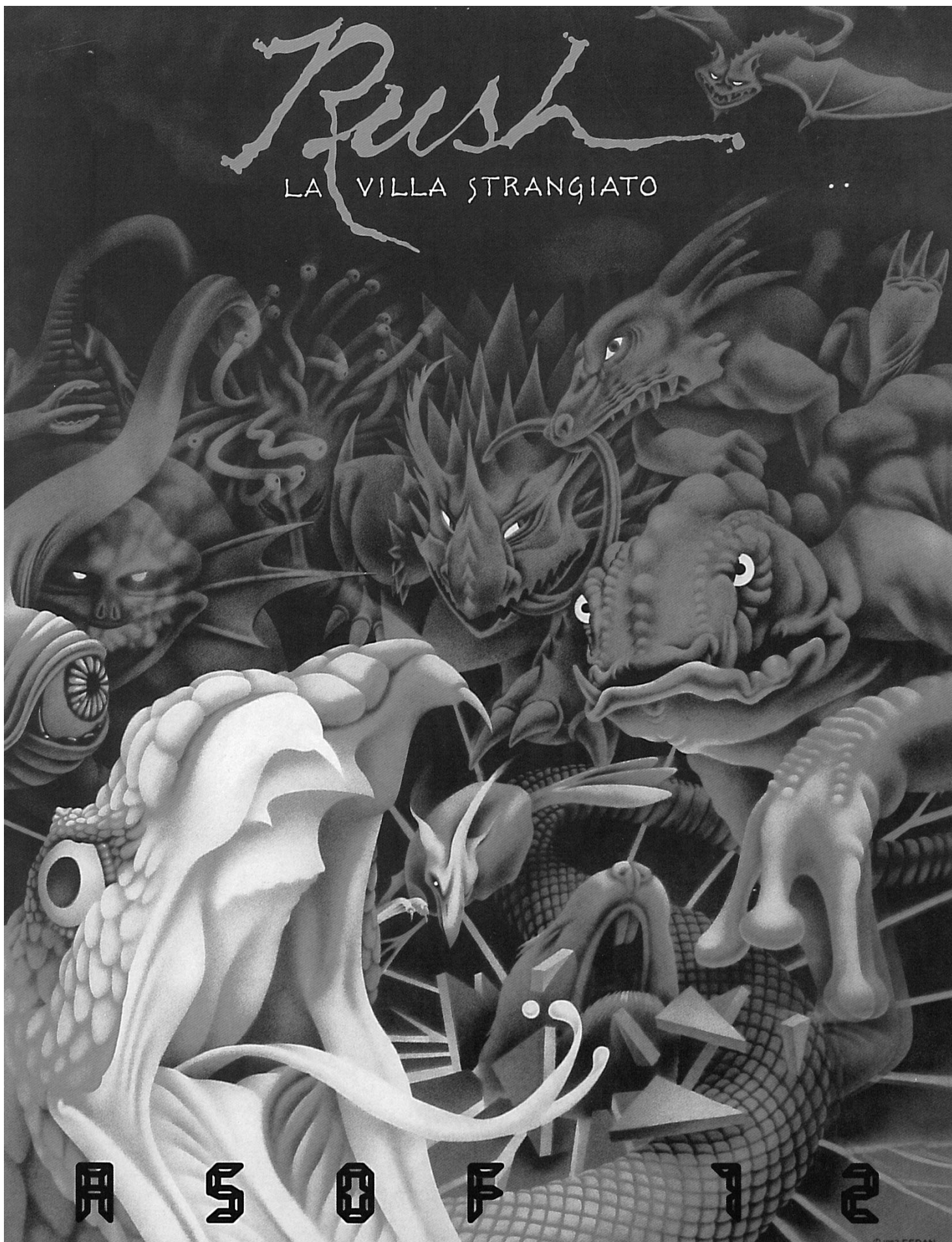


Rush

LA VILLA STRANGIATO



R S O F 1 2

the FOUNTAIN

Steve Streeter

THE CALM BEFORE THE STORM

"I recorded some fun stuff with other people. (a song called **"Passion"**) Just for fun. I recorded with Alex Lifeson of Rush. That was for the solo album he's working on."

Sebastian Bach of Skid Row.

Alas, we probably will not hear that particular song on Alex's new solo album **"Victor."** What we will hear is some heavy stuff...perhaps the heaviest Lerxst in **YEARS!** Victor will be a Anthem/Atlantic release with the release date being January 9th. (The original release date was October 24th, then November 7th. Sheesh! Make up your mind!) Recorded at Alex's home studio and mixed at McClear studio in Toronto, Victor features 2 instrumentals. Word has it that it's "really heavy, dark and aggressive." The main lineup is: Alex on guitars, bass and keyboards, Bill Bell on bass and Blake Manning on drums. Featured musicians include Les Claypool of 'Primus' on bass, Edwin from 'I Mother Earth' and Lisa D'Albello (a local Toronto singer who kind of sounds like Geddy!) both on vocals. There will be two singles released; one to AOR (**"Promise"**) and one to Metal (**"Don't Care"**) for radio consumption. Start calling your local radio stations now and request these two tracks **ASAP!!!** We must flood the stations with calls and faxes, got it? Alex has been making scattered appearances at his club **"The Orbit Room"** in Toronto with the house band **"The Dexters."** A **"Live at The Orbit Room"** CD is also said to be in the works! **ASOF** will keep you posted on this and when released will try to get copies to sell, as it will be a local Toronto release! On July 4th, he headlined another Toronto club called **"RPM's"** with Rik Emmett opening. Alex showcased some of his upcoming solo material at this show. Back in March, Lifeson was experiencing a bit of a conflict with Atlantic because he wanted to use different vocalists (some male, some female) on each track. Whereas Atlantic requested that he select only one vocalist for the lp in case a tour happens...interestingly, we shall see what unfolds in January.

A **"Burning for Buddy II"** is slated also for release in the coming months. So we have a pair of Rush solo

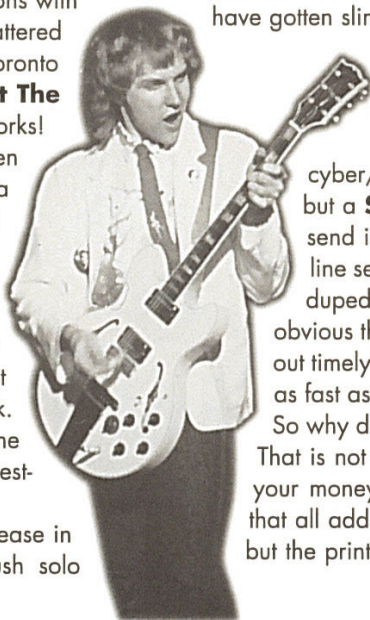
projects to chew on while we wait ever so patiently for the next Rush album. The 1995 Buddy Rich Memorial Scholarship Concert will be held again in New York on November 19. We don't know if Neil will be attending this year. At the 1994 show he said he would be back to play his full rig.

Speaking of **NEW** Rush...Rush began work on the new lp on Monday October 2nd, with Peter Collins producing. Word has it, Peter wants to record Neil's drums totally in the states. Planned release date - April 1996. A world tour to follow. The word from Anthem is that everything is going great with writing and Rush appears to be ahead of schedule and having a great time writing this album.

"Metal Blade Records" will soon be releasing a CD titled **"Guitars That Ruled the World"** with Alex on it. It is temporarily on hold. The actual title will be **"Guitars That Ruled the World II."** This will be the second volume. The first CD of that name is available now, but without Alex.

You may notice a slight decrease in pages in **ASOF** this issue. Well, that along with a publication time-table which is off course at least 4-5 issues by now (were really sorry 'bout that!) is a sign of the times for small press publications of our kind. The interest is there, but it is a **VERY** small niche. Quite frankly, we have gotten slim-pickens on the article front. Getting submissions from fans is like pulling wisdom teeth. Without an increase in input from **YOU**, **ASOF** fades away.

We still get many plugs across the cyber/web highway, but for the most part there is but a **SMALL** percentage of folks who will actually send in money and or participate. I guess with on-line services they figure it's free (ha! You have been duped!) so why bother with the printed media. It's obvious that **ASOF** and **ALL** other fanzines cannot get out timely information, (i.e. tour dates, release dates...) as fast as it can be obtained via on-line. That is a fact. So why don't we start a **ASOF** web page? No thanks. That is not our niche. There is a lot of **HYPE** (we want your money) surrounding the cyber-space world. Hype that all adds up to one big foil ball. It is a fun resource, but the printed page, the book, the magazine is where I



want to read about things, not on a CRT screen. Nor do I want to have to format text and print it out. That will not do. How many hours do you need to be on-line before you discover that it is one big **YAWN**. Sorry folks, but I'm as computer literate as most and the CyberSteve stands for my ART and Graphics, not chatting money away. Maybe in a few years things will get better. I'm sure it will. We appreciate all the plugs that we **DO** get on-line and hope that you will continue to help in this way.

The worst possible scenerio for **ASOF** is to go to a 8-12



A Show of Fans
5411 E. State St.
Suite 309
Rockford, IL
61108

A RUSH FANZINE
FOR & BY RUSH FANS

page count. This is something we do not want to do, but until contributions pick up (articles, artwork, etc..) this is what will probably will happen. Now we have some **GOOD** news!!!

!!! CONFIRMED !!! **ASOF INTERVIEWS ALEX NEXT ISSUE!**

You heard it right! Alex speaks to **ASOF** next issue. By then we will all have digested "Victor" and will be itching for Rush information and questions about Alex's solo project. The plan is to make **ASOF #13** a smaller issue in order to print it up by January! This will be a **ASOF** world record...we think we can do it!! So enjoy this issue and we're **SURE** you will **ALL** be awaiting **ASOF #13** with baited breath. Hopefully this interview will boost **ASOF's** readership and an **imminent** Geddy & Neil interview will occur upon Rush's new release!!

Tables will turn.



"Something breaks the silence."

ASOF FANS IN ACTION! **(Go Get 'em!!)**

Here's a copy of the letter we sent to Entertainment Weekly about the poor review of the Buddy Rich tribute album:

Michele Romero and Ethan H. Smith,

In response to your "Thanks for the Melodies" review of the new wave of tribute records, we are disgusted by your review of the "Burning for Buddy" (Atlantic) album produced by the great and honorable Neil Peart.



RUSH



First of all, do you realize who Buddy Rich was? Not to insult your intelligence, he was a drummer. This was an album created for drummers to experience the masterful works by one of the most influential drummers of all time. Therefore, your "...and the chaff" complaint about a drum solo in every song is nothing short of unfounded.

By the way, Michele Romero and Ethan H. Smith, how long have you been performing jazz drummers? You both must have been drumming your whole lives to make the ignorant statement about drum licks even "Peart and friends couldn't screw up too badly." (By the way, anyone who uses "Peart" and "screwed up" in the same sentence doesn't have a chance of a rewarding afterlife.)

We are being sarcastic since every comment by you two experts slighted what we feel is a great work produced by the greatest drummer to ever walk the earth. However, we do not expect anyone to take your review seriously after they read that a song by Wynonna of all people "kicks ass."

We welcome a response, in fact we would appreciate it. And next time, listen to the album before you review it.

Peart,

David Bailey and Kevin Lisowe
 Co-owners Kailey Percussion, Inc.
 3400 N. Maryland Ave., Box 723
 Milwaukee, WI 53211

We don't **really** own any Percussion center. We used it to give our point more power and authority. We did not want to come across as a couple of insignificant college kids who's opinion means nothing to the world. Anyway we hope you enjoyed it.

Kevin Lisowe and David Bailey
 Co-owners of Rushland USA



the Oracle

By Eric Ross
Chanhassen, MN

Everything is Ubiquitous

I remain suspiciously sane in this world of convoluted chaos and corruption. Coiled copper conduits conduct crashing chords. The pulse of life through twisted and braided branching pipes. The blood in my veins belongs to me. I'm flowing inward, outward, forward and onward. Electrons fire. Vacuum tubes glow and hum. Screens burn with the images of life. Liberty at last! A mouse trapped in the Internet maze? Amazed at flying free without a Safety Net. Intellectual acrobatics. A freedom that smells a little like cheese.

The silver sun melts my mind into a mercury pool of midtown dreams. A vortex slowly rotates at the center. Growing gradually until no two points are traveling in the same direction, this tidal pool is alive with departure and destination. Huge green clouds boil in the distant ultraviolet sky. Lightning flashes rip from one brain-fold steam ball to the next. Blinded by this flash of desire I leap into the rushing void. Brilliant spokes connecting folks. A low hum turns my bones to dust. I'm washed away into the next terminal node.

Symphonic syllables simmer and sweat. The bell tolls for thee. Time is up, down and now. The race has begun. The kettle boils with a screeching steam blast. The frenzy feeds on bits and bytes. The roaring surf, audience applauding my electron entrance. Ear drums folding into torroidal wafers. Oceanic plankton swirls before my eyes as a compressed universe of stars. Black holes invade, marching on through like frozen furnaces petrifying and inhaling great swirls of space.. Centipede centurions laughing as they gobble up entire solar systems for a snack. Even Rocinante cannot save me now. I see with platinum eyes the orangine skies. It burns away the cold light of Lucifer. Sweet oxygen molecules bounce off of my face like ping-pong balls.

Connectivity defines and defies my uniqueness. Karma clues. Floating pyramids from the oracle's gentle hand. "Take this brother, may it serve you well." Mini-orbs of floating visions. Anagram antennae. Message sent, message received. Tear down the walls of ignorance and watch the shame bleed and ooze from the rubble. A broken toe on an overlooked stone. A pixel on the memory map of awareness. Time stands still. Pause.

BIG AL CRAVES A SANDWICH

Photons ricochet from mirror to sky. Lake to eye. Pumpernickel and Rye. Crusty organic soil. Dirt, fungus, bacteria in their lonely tidal pools. Towering redwoods in unbroken fields of velvet green. Are they taking up all the light? Revolt! Spin, dance, roll, tumble, leap and again I fly. Nuclear rainbow surgical strike. I'm back for the epic hunt.

Where to? My terminal or yours? Pressure pad. Getting sloppy. Floppy tower and tracker ball. Pipes break and the ocean fills the room. Hi-fi R-F-I. One-hundred megahertz buzz. Video static. Whales, dolphins, and sharks glide by like majestic chrome robots. Real but not real. Steel but not steel. Mad machinery. Riveting! Random roaring returns like the lions on the Serengeti. Terminal velocity. Crash and burn. Zoom and turn. Slap leather and bark flame. The windshield towards the fly. You know how that rabbit feels. Thunderous mushroom cloud. Red alert.

Rumble with the rhythm. Glutton of sympathy. I am the beggar, I am the chooser. I am the plasmatron cruiser. Fingers tapping like rain-drops from leaden skies. Chinese water drop torture on the brain. The ticking-tapping clock. Click clack like talking tongues. The rattling of stones in my heart. Thistle thorns rattle in a dusty cage. If you can take it, I can take it! Room to orbit. Dancing in the poison gas.

Slippery shadows. Jet stream of consciousness. I've seen it and I could not look away. Energized and kinetic. Nuts and bolts. Marbles, stones and bones. Telephone drones. Electric clones. Mother of all machines. Hello? I was fired as a hired hand. Sketched out in a rubber band. The circus man danced in the white light of language. That's Entertainment! There is nothing like uniqueness.

DIRK'S DILEMMA

The Net's killed the quill. Feathers on the floor remind me of this violently changing world. Nickel knives carve lives into the handle of a caffeine crutch. Mental pillars in this psychodrama. Spiders created the web. Have I been trapped? Am I dead? This sci-fi lullaby has me coming down fast. The star man and brain boy look into the future. That's nice. What are they straining to see? The logodome? Megadon? A cyber pleasure-dome in every home? Me and the tube make a really nice pair. The space bar bridges alternate worlds.

The wide angle Mutar snaps the scene. The home-boys page in monochrome green. As if to say the blood's too red for painting fingered masterpieces. Photons flood the room. X-wing or Dr. Doom? Mom says "Go to your room!"

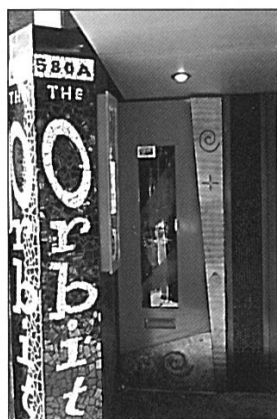
When I get out, I'll see you where
RUSH still rules!!



TALES FROM THE Orbit ROOM

After many years of devoting time and energy listening and studying the music of Rush, I decided to visit the great city of Toronto! With Rush on a brief hiatus, and Alex working on the final mix of the new disc, I took advantage of the warm summer air and headed to the Great White North. The trip would be my first visit to Toronto, and to Canada. In fact, this would be my first vacation to any foreign country (time to brush up on the Canadian National Anthem-OHI Canada). Initially I was going to make the trip in early March of 1995, but funds were running low. July would be the next target date, however, money again was a problem. Finally, with the calendar clear to take a long and relaxing vacation, August proved to accommodate me. With little time to spare I tried to gauge the best route to travel by automobile. Since I live in Indiana, I figured the most direct route to take would be to drive through Michigan and cross the Windsor Bridge to Canada. Using map measurements, the estimated mileage was 500 miles! (8 hours of open road! Wow!) Well, before I knew it, 6:00am, August 5th had arrived. My girlfriend and I departed from Crown Point with food, luggage, and assorted Rush tapes. After about 4 hours of driving it was time to stop and refuel. Next stop, the Canadian border. After crossing over to Canada and declaring our goods and reason for entering the country, we stopped and exchanged our money. The exchange rate is approximately 35%. I exchanged \$150.00 and received \$195.00 Canadian money. What a bargain! Well, time to get back on the road. At this point, the trip started to grind on us a bit. This was due in part that we could only drive 40 miles per hour on what appeared to be a 2 lane highway, and we had to travel at this speed for a long time. I was surprised to see a great wealth of farm land on the outskirts of Toronto. With Milton and Mississauga on the horizon, Toronto was just a hop, skip, and jump away! Lisa and I started to get excited! I couldn't believe I would soon be in Toronto.

We arrived at our hotel in Milton and headed to a local pizza place. After ordering we asked how far away we were from Toronto

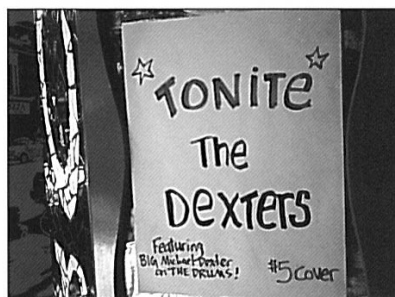


and the owners replied "about half an hour." We then proceeded to ask if they knew where College was located. The owner was nice enough to let us make a long distance call to the restaurant to find out more information. The manager told us that the Dexters were playing, but Alex would not be attending due to the fact that he was currently working on his new solo album. We decided that we would venture out into the rainy Saturday night to visit our first Rush landmark.

After driving around lost for about an hour we got nervous, as we

were driving through some scary parts of town, and I was not sure where we were heading. We finally made our way to the downtown area. We discovered that College becomes Carlton street after travelling it for a distance.

As we gazed upon our new surroundings, we spotted the Orbit Room sign. We parked the car at a grocery store lot and headed to the lounge on foot. After climbing the dimly lit staircase, we found ourselves surrounded by psychedelic decor reminiscent of the 1960's. The Dexters were in the middle of their first set and the lounge was nearly packed in. We ordered a couple of beers and scoped out the place. I did not see anything linking Alex Lifeson to this place. Wait! Hold on a minute! In the back corner, near the front window, was medium size photograph of Alex playing a Fender Stratocaster during the Hemispheres tour. We chatted with the hired help for a bit. We needed to find out the legal drinking limit and how long the lounge was open. One staff member stated that Alex usually showed up on Thursday nights to jam with Dexters. As fate would have it, Alex was present the Thursday before we arrived! We hung out at the "Room" for a few hours and continued to check out the cool artwork incorporated into the walls and ceiling (Alex's work?). The Dexters continued to play various selections from the 50's, 60's and now they were blazing through some classic rock. This included the "James Gang" and other great 70's acts. I was waiting to hear Fly By Night or some-



thing, but there were no singers who sang in that style or range! The Dexters sounded great.

Midway through the trip We hooked up with a Rush fan by the name of Rob. Rob lives in Rexdale and drove to Scarborough to meet us at the Travel Lodge hotel.

Rob gave us a tour of Toronto which included Maple Leaf Gardens, Old City Hall (Which is found on the front cover of the "Moving Pictures Album"), Massey Hall, and it was hard to make out, but we drove in the vicinity of the "A Farewell To Kings" condominiums. We visited "Sam The Record Man's" music store, Sam had the honor of Awarding Rush their first gold album in 1977. At this point we had been walking around Toronto for about 8 hours, and we all decided to indulge in some ice cream. While we ate, Rob and I discussed Rush, and Rush related events, and I handed Rob a "A Show Of Fans" flyer. Rob verbalized his approval and told me he would send some money to start his subscription (Go Rob!). Rob told us that we should try and book a tour at Anthem Records, although time did not allow us to do so. "Lake Side Park" was another missed landmark.

Friday snuck up on us quickly and we were trying to plan our last 2 days in the great city. We visited the CN Tower and a place called Casa Loma. I ran into a guy wearing a Rush baseball hat. Naturally I proceeded to talk to him. His name is Brian and he was from Cleveland. I gave him a "A Show Of Fans" flyer, which was conveniently located in my back seat. He stated that he was looking all over for something like this in Toronto. Brian said he would definitely join the fanzine.

Lisa and I decided to visit the "Orbit Room" one more time and find out if Alex would be joining the Dexters aboard the Yankee Lady II. The "Lady" was to set sail on Sunday and embark on a 3 hour cruise which was to include Alex and his family! Wow!, was I

Continued on next page...

excited. Unfortunately, according to Tim Notter, co-owner of the "Orbit Room", Alex was locked away in a local Toronto studio finishing up the solo disc. Tim and I talked for awhile and Tim mentioned that he has known Alex for about 25 years and he stated that Alex was a great guy (We've had that feeling for years). I also had a chance to speak with the drummer of the Dexters and he too was a polite fellow. Tim stated that he would sign on with the fanzine and keep us posted of "Orbit Room" events. He mentioned that he would have Alex autograph a copy of the new disc and send it to me. This was great news, despite the fact that I did not get to meet Alex. This was to be our last conversation, for we had to get underway and head back to Indiana. We decided to take the New York route home and as we passed through Hamilton, Ontario, thoughts of Neil passed through my mind. I would like to personally thank the "Orbit Room" staff and to Alex, Geddy, and Neil for creating great music over the last twenty years! Thanks!!

Rush Fan For Life,
 Jeff Hamilton, 241 Walnut Lane, Crown Point, IN 46307-3731
 P.S. Drop me a line if you would like correspond with me or hook up on the next Rush tour.



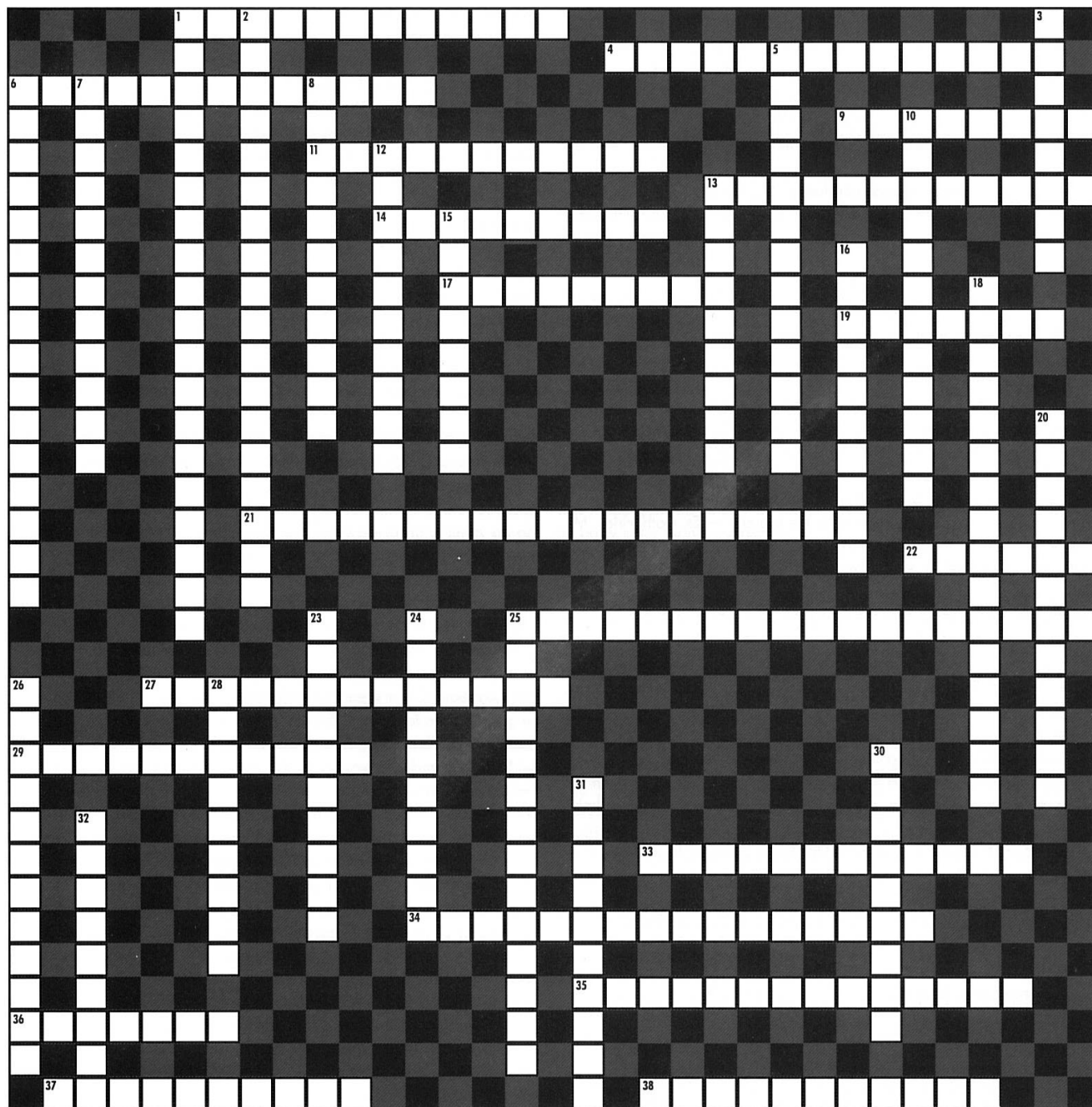
Across

1. "...drawn like moths we drift into the city"
4. "...package the illusion of persona..."
6. "...things that I once dreamed of have become reality..."
9. "...we twist the world and ride the wind..."
11. "...there's no end to what they'll take..."
13. "...too many hands on my time..."
14. "...hey baby it's a quarter to eight..."
17. "...the spaces in between leave room for you and I to grow..."
19. "...no hero in your tragedy..."
21. "...who can face the knowledge that the truth is not the truth..."
22. "...for I will dine on honeydew..."
25. "...all the gifts of life are held within our walls..."
27. "...capture my thoughts and carry them away..."
29. "...he's got to make his own mistakes and learn to mend the mess he makes..."
33. "...still we saw the magic was fading every year..."
34. "...it's really just a question of your honesty..."
35. "...I don't believe in destiny or the guiding hand of fate..."
36. "...my counterpart - my foolish heart..."
37. "...for my father and my brother it's too late but I must help my mother stand up straight..."
38. "...it's that old time religion it's the kingdom they would rule..."

Down

1. "...waiting for the winds of change to sweep the clouds away..."
2. "...Tobes of Hades lit by flickering torchlight..."
3. "...a planet of playthings we dance on the strings of powers we cannot perceive..."
5. "...try as they might they cannot steal your dreams..."
6. "...you can be the captain and I will draw the chart..."
7. "...tires spitting gravel I commit my weekly crime..."
8. "...all their lives were shattered in a nightmare of brutality..."
10. "...fate is just the weight of circumstances..."
12. "...you get so used to deception you make yourself a nervous wreck..."
13. "...always hopeful, yet discontent..."
15. "...and they wonder why the maples can't be happy in their shade..."
16. "...I remember the shouts of joy skiing fast through the woods..."
18. "...the end was begun it would hit everyone when the chain reaction was done..."
20. "...you can twist perceptions reality won't budge..."
23. "...the balance can sometimes fail strong emotion can tip the scale..."
24. "...start a new chapter find what I'm after..."
25. "...I let my past go too fast..."
26. "...well I've had enough living on the road..."
28. "...I wish that it might come to pass not fade like all my dreams..."
30. "...I can't pretend a stranger is a long-awaited friend..."
31. "...always seem to be wondering why there's nothing going down here..."
32. "...we travel on the road to adventure..."

RUSH CROSSWORD PUZZLE #2



A PORT BOY'S STORY

[Taken from the St. Catharines 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. Catharines, 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.

In the first of two parts written exclusively for The Standard, Neil offers some of his recollections of growing up in Port Dalhousie during the '50s and '60s.

By Neil Peart
Special to The Standard

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. Catharines. 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. Catharines 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 hamburger 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. . . .

[A frizzy-haired aspiring drummer in a flowing black cape? Take a trip through the flower-power '60s in staid St. Catharines as Neil Peart continues his memories of growing up in Port Dalhousie, in the Spectrum section of tomorrow's Standard.]

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 rides, 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. Catharines 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. Catharines 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. Catharines 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:

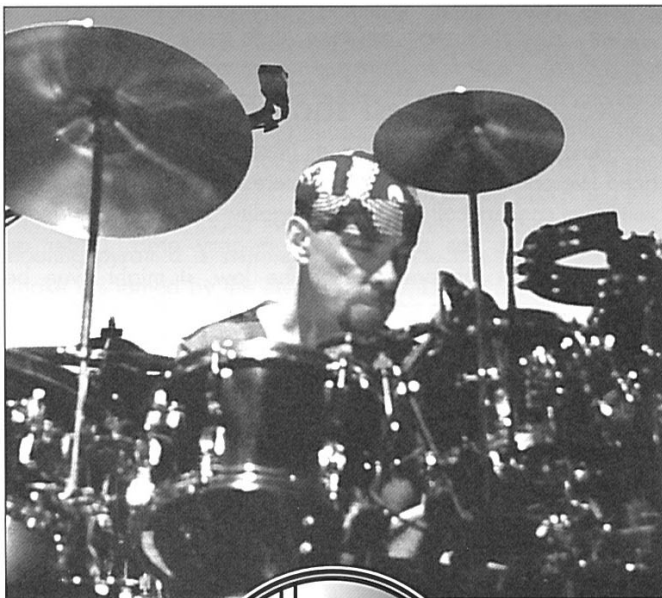
Neil was playing drums in 1974 for what turned out to be the last incarnation of Hush (a popular Niagara band with me and Paul Luciani on bass guitar and Gary Luciani on vocals) when the phone call came: would Neil be interested in auditioning for Rush, whose drummer had just quit? (As I recall, someone connected with the band was from St. Catharines 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

This article originally appeared in the St. Catharines Standard on June 24 and 25, 1994.

1. Publicity shot of Neil at his kit, from the Roll the Bones tour. Caption: "Neil Peart performs live with Rush during the 1992 Roll the Bones tour."
2. Family portrait: Neil, Nancy, Judy, and Danny. Caption: "Peart and his siblings in St. Catharines, around 1965"
3. Class portrait from school. Caption: "Neil Peart (second from left, bottom row) in his Grade Two class in Port Dalhousie, circa 1959."
4. Family picture: Neil in his Cub Scout uniform. Caption: "Neil does his 'Akela' salute before heading off to a Cub Scout father and son banquet with his dad, Glen."
5. Family picture: Neil with his drumkit in his bedroom. (The walls have the standard Antique Car motif wall paper that seem a fixture of any boy's room at the time.) Caption: "Neil Peart practices in his Port Dalhousie home when he was about 15. He had just added a floor tom and two cymbals (and pajamas?) to his first set of drums."
6. Publicity photo of the trio. Caption: "Rush, Canada's most successful rock band — Geddy Lee, left, Neil Peart and Alex Lifeson."
7. Family picture. Caption: "Neil, at 14, paints a fence tom."



You can choose not to decide, you still have a ready guide in some celestial voice. If you choose from phantom fears and kindness that can kill, I will choose a path that's clear - I will choose Free Will.

Grand Designs

By Jerry "Broon Jr." Brown
Jacksonville, FL

Sophisticated graphics, sonic excellence and typical CD pressings of 2500 or more. The sheer amount of Rush music available on bootleg is astonishing. Indeed, since the mid-eighties, virtually every concert performance by Alex, Geddy and Neil is available on a bootleg or tape – if you know where to look.

So much style without substance

The illegality of bootlegs is, of course, part of their appeal. It's music someone doesn't want you to hear or didn't want you to take home from the concert, thus making you covet it all the more. To adherents, bootlegs can offer insights into Rush beyond their official releases, in the same way an early draft of a famous novel can illuminate the author's craft. They are an important part of Rush history because they document thousands of significant moments that occur outside the aegis of the record labels.

So much stuff without style

To Anthem and Atlantic of course, bootlegs represent something else – an invasion of privacy, a threat to the financial viability of legitimate releases and possibly a subversion of Rush's reputation and legacy. Their enduring popularity, for instance, is at least partly attributable to their high artistic standards – every (official) record is a gem. Yet who can blame the Neil Peart fan who wants to hear his first live performance with Rush on August 14, 1974 at the Civic Arena in Pittsburgh, PA??, or the fan who wants to hear songs left off the early albums, such as 'Bad Boy' and 'Fancy Dancer?' Even the least curious Rush fan is likely to enjoy a tape of their December 5, 1974 performance at Electric Ladyland Studios in New York City. These are only a few of the moments the best of the bootlegs preserve.

It's hard to recognize the real thing

These days, most high quality bootleg CDs are manufactured in Italy – for one good reason – it's legal there. In 1989 the floodgates opened. A new French label, X Rekords, released 'Red Stars of the Solar Federation,' taken from the FM broadcast recording of 'Superstars in Concert' of the band's show in Montreal on March 27, 1981. From this point on, new labels have appeared in Italy, Germany, France, Australia and Luxembourg at a rate of five to ten a year.

It comes along once in awhile

The increasing numbers of contemporary concert bootlegs coincides with the widespread availability of portable DAT

machines. Soon bootlegs labels were routinely sending representatives armed with DAT machines to the opening nights of major tours, like Rush's Counterparts sojourn in 1994, to record the performance and express mail the results home. But the effect has also been to transform the bootleg business from a small collector-based community intent on producing interesting, offbeat rarities into, well, a business. For instance, the big Italian labels are releasing concert CDs, even within two weeks of the performance.

Like a rare and precious metal

Rush concerts have been covertly taped by audience members for as long as there have been portable tape recorders. And despite the security measures taken by the recording studio and record labels, unreleased studio material also circulates freely in the bootleg world. No recordings of this type are more famous than the recordings of the unreleased studio albums. For Rush fans, it's like the discovery of the holy grail.

Shapes and Forms

I consider myself a typical tape trader. Like many other traders, I find interview tapes to be a valuable addition to my collection. Certainly the music will always be my mainstay, but to really understand Rush it's very important to hear them speak in an interview situation. Through face-to-face communication with an interviewer asking the right question we can learn far more about the power trio than they would ever reveal to us in a song. How else do you find out what those songs really mean?

Against the norms

Having some interview tapes mixed in with your unauthorized live concert tapes adds an interesting legal dimension to your live concert collection. The legality of owning audience taped concerts has always been a gray area. Under an extremely strict interpretation of the law, it might even be construed that owning and collecting audience concert tapes is illegal. But what about those interview tapes in your collection? They don't represent any sort of "product" and were created strictly for promotion, therefore they are perfectly legal in my estimation. Distributing taped interviews is probably even less of a legal issue than if you made photocopies of magazine articles and distributed them.

Against the run of the mill

As for distributing taped interviews, who is going to care? Of course, I suppose some entity such as a syndicated radio program could claim to "own" the content of the interview, but I don't see that as being a big issue. Rush probably **WANT** you to have the interview tapes. When the FBI agent comes to your house to confiscate your tape collection, they'll have to leave the interview tapes behind! Fortunately, I've never heard of the FBI bothering with tape collectors at all.



THE HEMISPHERES

Michael Menconi

Oak Lawn, IL

More Than Meets the Ear

Although Rush has an impressive catalog of songs for all of us to enjoy, their album covers have meaningful designs that contribute to what that particular album represents. No doubt most of us realize this when we really absorb the album covers that go along with those 9, 10, or 11 Rush songs. Hugh Syme, who was first called in to design *Caress of Steel*, has proven his worth to the Rush concept. He has created some of the most interesting and beautiful covers I have ever had the pleasure to hang on my wall with pride. Except for my friend Mike Kilby, most of my friends look at me funny when they see massive Rush posters all over my walls. Well, I think Rush covers are as much a part of their success as their crew, their engineers, or themselves. When someone asks me who my favorite artist is, I say proudly, "Hugh Syme, of course." After considering all of Rush' covers, I picked some of my favorites to write about.

Starting with *Caress*, although the B-Man says in *Visions* that the jacket color was botched in production, it still is as mysterious as the album itself. The philosopher-looking robed man atop the mountain is an ominous figure in the focal point of the picture. His left arm is crossed in front of him almost protecting him from the turbulent cloud that surrounds him. The dust below the floating pyramid is swirling and adds to the windy scene. A snake sits tamed by the man's right arm, giving him a characteristic of power even though he seems out of control. The cover seems to represent the imagery of songs like *The Necromancer* and *The Fountain of Lamneth* very well, although this probably was not his intention.

Hemispheres is another outstanding cover. The two men seem to symbolize the struggle between heart and mind. The naked man being the heart, full of feeling and more abstract than the man in the suit. The man in the suit represents the mind, much more logical and realistic. The two hemispheres of the brain is another analogy which relates well to the cover. The right hemisphere being more attuned to creativity, versus the left side which is more mathematic. The whole cover, though simplistic looking, is quite insightful of the music on that album.

My personal favorite cover is *Grace Under Pressure*. Unlike *Hemispheres*, it is complex in nature. I have stared at it and wondered about all it says and all it is. I would love to have the chance to talk to Hugh Syme about what the cover means to me, and what his intentions were. Beyond it being my favorite cover, it is also one of my favorite pieces of artwork. It stands up to names like Monet, Dali, and Picasso. Its thunderous and stormy sky of pressure hanging over the euphoric and relaxing pool of grace just picks at the onlookers mind. The vivid blue hue was the perfect color to depict the scene. Blue can be bold and dangerous, yet when lightened, can have a very soft quality. The whole scene is complex and hard to describe to someone with words, it just has to be experienced. Mr. Syme, this one should be hung in The Art Institute of Chicago for all to see!

Power Windows gives us another scene to ponder. The young boy looks straight at us which ties us to the picture immediately. We see the window on the right which is partly open, or is the boy opening it with the remote? If so, it is indeed a power window. However, the TV's sit behind the boy and they are power windows of a different sort. Electrically powered, but is that all? TV has power in that it controls, influences, and informs people more than any other media we know today. And of course, the boy looks through one of the TV's with binoculars out at us, why? I don't know but I like it.

The previous are just some of my favorites, but no doubt that each Rush album has its own identity and the cover adds as much to that as the music. Hugh Syme has created another aspect of Rush that the fans respect and wonder about as we await a new Rush release. I remember what my friend Mike (who gets 100% credit for getting me into Rush) said once, "how can you resist buying an album called 'Fly By Night' with a huge owl on the cover?" Rush album covers are just another reason proving how committed they are to being serious about each and everything they put out. So, next time you look at a Rush album, keep in mind that there is much more than meets the ear.



FEEDBACK

Send letters of comment to:

ASOF ~ F e e d b a c k
5411 E. State St., Suite 309, Rockford, IL 61108

Right to the heart of the matter...

An Open letter to Rush:

I really hope you read this. You guys have to know how incredible your fans think you are. I'm a mom with a 20 year old son who **HAS** to be your biggest fan.

James is a kid with "learning disabilities" who takes all his frustration out on his drums. He's played since he was three, a set of "Muppet drums - Jim Henson" was his first. This kid has 14 of your cassettes and now is buying the CD's (some we even have two of 'cuz he won't share). Up to five hours a day I've listened to this kid play along with those tapes. The best concert I've ever been to was yours at Alpine valley, but we've seen you at the Rosemont in Chicago too.

You guys helped get this kid through high school-when he couldn't cut it in regular classes, they gave him credit for going to the middle school and teaching drums to younger kids. He now has five students through the music store up-town and one of them is a "learning-deficiency disorder" kid who's dad heard about James.

Oh, enough. Honest, your band has pulled us through some rough times by keeping James "playing along" instead of running with the wrong crowd.

Thanks! Teri Ratzlaff, Byron, IL

Dear Steve and Mandy:

I just received my first issue of **ASOF**, and I must say that it is very professional! Only after stumbling across the address to **ASOF** did I know that things like this existed! As an illustrator with a bit of graphic design experience, I can tell that a lot of time goes into putting something this tightly coordinated together. Once I had read the "Feedback" section of **ASOF**, I thought I'd try to send a poster I did for "La Villa Strangiato" to your fanzine.

One of the best things about this poster was that I got the opportunity to illustrate a Rush song and get credit for it in a class I had in art school! The image came from the "Monsters" section of "La Villa," where the loud bass and drums reminded me of the feeling you get when you've taken a wrong turn, ending up somewhere you don't want to be! "La Villa Strangiato" was a great challenge to try to illustrate, because there are so many sections of the song to choose from, and to me it has always been a definitive Rush classic. I hope this poster will give some real Rush fans some enjoyment, since most people that see it have no idea what "La Villa Strangiato" is! Keep up the good work, and I hope to be reading more issues of **ASOF** in the future!

David Fedan, Morgantown, WV

[Editor note: Thank you, David! Beautiful work! Oh that the rest of you could see the original, in color. We have reproduced it to the best of our ability. I hope we have done it justice.]

If you've ever wondered what Terry Brown has been up to in the past few years, Jocelyn Perreault, one of our Counterparts in Montreal, Quebec sends us these tidbits:

I don't know if you know of Montreal's band **Voivod** (who opened for Rush in Canada on the Presto tour). The band made "heavy trash metal" music for their first three records (very similar to Venom). Their last two records, including their 1991 release "Angel Rat" was produced by Terry Brown. It seems that Terry was not interested in producing the Voivod album but upon insistence by Rush, he did. The result is good, but the album is very bizarre. Some songs are good and some are strange but many songs have a Rush structure and a Rush sound.

Voivod's latest, "**The Outer Limits**" (1993) was not produced by Terry, but is very good. It's one of my favorites. I advise you to buy it. It's very different from what you hear on the radio. The members of the band say their music is in advance of 10 years! It's a very cosmic ambience. You have to listen to it a couple times before you like it. The song Jack Luminous, a 17-minute song reminds me of some Rush songs and you can find Rush influences during that song.

Also, in 1993, Terry produced a Toronto band that is not very known in Quebec (or America). The band is **Psycho Circus**. Unfortunately, I haven't heard the album but it seems to be good. It's on Anthem records. It is their first album and it's Ray Danniels who discovered them. He liked their music so much that he asked Terry to produce it. I suppose that's good because when a "super-producer" decides to produce your first album when nobody knows you, you have to be good! That's all!

ELECTRIC FRIENDS & RUSH!!!

For the last four years now I've been online with my Macintosh computer and modem dialing into the Internet (Information Highway) which enables me to communicate thru e-mail, or real time text-talk with users from around the globe. I learned about this 'cb simulation' called IRC, "International Rally Chat" where the user can enter a channel and type talk with other people with instant response.

Upon my discovery, lo and behold, as I was scrolling thru the list of channels, there it was "P/G!", and instantly I knew that there's a place online that I'll be spending a few hours (four hours a day or more...) chatting with people around the world about Rush. Well, as the years have gone by these people that log into "P/G!" have become Electric Friends that I care about and have brought me closer to the heart in friendship just because of a band called Rush.

Within this information highway, there is a Daily Digest that helps us Rush fanatics obtain information about upcoming Rush

albums, touring, get together parties before shows, and everything you can imagine that is associated with the band. This digest is called "The National Midnight Star" and is organized by Jimmy Lang, a.k.a. RUSH, from San Diego, CA.

So, with all this great information available to me and my Electric Friends, we're able to get together for Rush shows in different states (Excellent!!) making memories, and the show that will always live within me is Pittsburgh, PA.

There I was in Pittsburgh Arena, ****FRONT ROW****, at my 7th Counterparts show of the tour with my Electric Friends and THE GODS... What more can anyone ask for??? Autographs and telling them Thank-you one day, maybe. Jamming to each note of Alex's guitar riffs, playing the air drums with The Professor, and being sensitized by Geddy's beautiful voice and masterful bass guitar work...I just couldn't believe it!! There's Geddy Lee standing 7 feet in front of me, over there on the other side of the stage, Alex, dancing like a nut or walking with his hands up in the air as if he were doing an Egyptian dance of some sort, and then being able to make eye contact with Neil.

At times, when Alex had the chance, he walked over to our side of the stage while my friends and I bowed to him, screaming, "We're not worthy! or You're a god! or I love you!...etc...etc..." I thought I was gonna have heart failure and need to be RUSHED to the nearest hospital.

The way Geddy flew into the air landing perfectly on beat at the end on a song, or Alex giving every piece of his soul playing 'Bravado' with the extended jam at the end, and Neil, words can't even penetrate description...

All I could do while singing "Analog Kid," was point at Geddy while he was singing "You move me, you moooovveee meee!!", I could see him smiling at me, then I'd point back at myself with expression.

The Voice of Silence

P.S. For those interested in e-mailing me, chatting about Rush or whatever ... Tvos@Umcc.Ais.org is my Internet e-mail address. To subscribe to The National Midnight Star, send e-mail to: rush-request@syrix.umd.edu

David A. Warner, Garden City, MI



"We've been so busy over the years that you come home after a tour or recording and kick back and veg out.. But after a lengthy summer of just hanging around, I thought that I had to do something. I have a recording studio at home. Bill Bell, a guitarist who works with Tom Cochrane and a lot of other local people, is helping out. We met at the first Kumbaya and played together and really got along quite well and thought that we'd get together. We had fun on Guitars That Ruled the World compilation CD, and just continued writing. I've been doing it since the end of October; I get up in the morning, grab a coffee and go down and I'm there 'til about 7:00 p.m., when I come out all bleary-eyed and shaking!"

Alex – Canadian Musician – June, 1995

Hello Steve, Mandy, and Rush Fans worldwide!

I've been meaning to sit down and write for some time, but it always seemed that I couldn't get my thoughts in order and turn in something worthy to print. I hope that streak has ENDED. [Editor note: We do too!] I've exorcised the demons of laziness and promised I would turn in something for the new issue. So here it goes...

Where are they? What have they been up to? Are they calling it quits? What about some new music? Why must we wait so long in between records?

If you're like me, you've asked yourself those questions a hundred times over the last year. As to the last question, I can only say that the longer wait times and shorter tours have become the norm for Rush. We'll all have to grin and bear it because the alternative is unthinkable.

Where are they? Well, as of the this writing, the band is assembled in a studio somewhere writing for the next record.

What have they been up to? Life, basically. Vacationing, cycling, boating, opening a club, getting reacquainted with family and friends... The joys of life outside of Rush. Also, during the extended break Neil had time to put out Volume 1 of Burning for Buddy and Alex has done a solo project entitled Victor that should hit the stores January 9th. Victor, which has been described as a no holds barred guitar beast should hold us all over till March or April for the new Rush album.

In other news: Neil Peart Goes **Back To Basics!**?

That's right Rush heads! It appears the Professor is unhappy with some minute aspects of his playing and is determined to correct them. So I guess you can say school is in for the Prof. I suppose you're never at a point where you can't improve but perhaps they come in smaller, less impressive increments.

What effect this, or the King Lerxst project will have on the future sound of Rush remains to be heard. Hopefully, Alex will hit the studio with the guys and just be in a "go for the jugular" mood and will flex his guitar muscles. This is not to say that Counterparts lacked spirit and spit. Quite the contrary, Counterparts was the first record in some time that his prowess has really shown through. He's back up in the mix and I hope they will continue in that vein.

The waiting begins again! (It's a vicious cycle!) This time the wait is minor. Hell, it's just around the corner and I'm all pumped up again. I guess that's one of the most amazing things about being a Rush fan. After twenty-plus years, and many, many records, I still get excited by New Rush Records. I still wait, holding the pause button on my cassette deck for the d.j. to play the new single. I pick up the album the day it's released. I try to be the first in line when tickets go on sale. In fact everything in my life is radically different from what it used to be ... *except* Rush! They truly have been the one amazing constant in my life. And for that I'm forever grateful.

So until next time, sports fans... Tune it in, crank it up, they're taking us on another journey.

Your friend in Saddle Brook,
Jeff Cavuto



[The following article originally appeared in Cultural Notes No. 34, a publication of the Libertarian Alliance, London, England and was penned by Kevin McFarlane, 1994. We have truncated some of the lyrical passages (obviously you all know them by heart) to save on space, but for the most part left everything intact. – Editors]



MOVING PICTURES: AN EXCURSION INTO THE WORLD of THE Rock Group Rush

"I don't know how we got this [serious] image. Maybe we wore too many robes in the 70s ... We really don't take ourselves seriously as people. We take what we do seriously."

(Geddy Lee in conversation, 1991)

Many years ago, in 1974, on an edition of the **Old Grey Whistle Test**, I heard a song called "Finding My Way" by an obscure group of Canadian musicians. I did not hear them again for another five years, until a West Indian reggae fan provided me with a more complete introduction via their fifth studio album, **A Farewell to Kings**. These Canadian musicians were not reggae artists, however, but a progressive heavy rock group, not afraid to experiment with any musical form nor express their thoughts on a diverse range of intellectual topics. Collectively, they go by the name of "Rush." After hearing **AFTK** in 1979 I truly had "found my way." Since then I have purchased every original album as soon as it's appeared.

TOLKIEN AND RAND

Rush started out as a conventional heavy rock band in the late Sixties, influenced by the likes of Cream, The Who, Jimi Hendrix, Jeff Beck and The Rolling Stones, all of whom they covered in their repertoire of songs. Also included was Elvis Presley. One of the songs they covered was "Jailhouse Rock"—in Yugoslavian! (The Rush lead guitarist, Alex Lifeson, is of Yugoslavian origin.) In the early seventies Led Zeppelin joined their list of influences. After going through several rearrangements of personnel the lineup which eventually emerged was Alex Lifeson (the only current member of the band who was there from the beginning), Geddy Lee (bass guitar and lead vocals) and John Rutsey (drums). Their first album is the eponymously titled **Rush** (1974), which is clearly influenced by Led Zeppelin. Geddy Lee's vocals have frequently been compared with those of Robert Plant, the lead singer of Led Zeppelin, although, in fact, he

sounds quite different to me.

In mid-1974, after the release of their first album, John Rutsey left the band due to musical differences and poor health, and was replaced by Neil Peart. It was with the release of **Fly By Night** in 1975 that the definitive Rush style started to emerge. Peart's major contribution was not only his highly accomplished and distinctive percussion skills but his intelligent lyrics. Since 1975 Peart has remained the band's principal lyricist, with Lee and Lifeson making only occasional contributions. Peart's position was more-or-less established by default because Lee and Lifeson weren't much interested in writing lyrics, whereas Peart was an avid reader. Peart's lyrics on the early Rush albums display two major influences: J.R.R. Tolkien and individualism. In this, they followed Led Zeppelin, whose debt to Tolkien can be heard in such outstanding songs as "Ramble On" from Led Zeppelin 2 and "Battle of Evermore" from Led Zeppelin 4.

In the case of Rush, Tolkien's influences can be heard on songs like "Rivendell" and "By-Tor and The Snow Dog" from **Fly By Night**, and "The Necromancer" and "The Fountain of Lamneth" from **Caress of Steel** (1975). Here is a passage from part three of "The Necromancer," entitled "Return of the Prince:"

Enter the champion, Prince By-Tor appears
To battle for freedom, from chains of long years
The spell has been broken—the dark
lands are bright
The Wraith of the Necromancer soars away
in the night ...

And the opening to the hauntingly beautiful ballad, "Rivendell," from **Fly By Night**:

Sunlight dances through the leaves
Soft winds stir the sighing trees
Lying in the warm grass
Feel the sun upon your face
Elven songs and endless nights
Sweet wine and soft relaxing lights
Time will never touch you
Here in this enchanted place

"Rivendell" is the name of the legendary retreat of the Elves in Tolkien's epic fantasy, *The Lord of the Rings*.

Rush's individualism manifested itself initially through the works of Ayn Rand, and the most explicit Rand-influenced songs are "Anthem," from **Fly By Night**, "2112," the title track, from **2112** and "Something For Nothing," also from **2112**.

Prior to joining Rush, Peart spent some time in the UK doing odd jobs in between trying to fulfill his musical ambitions as a drummer. He recalls:

"When I came back from there, I was disillusioned

**"HUMANITARIANS
ARE JUST THE
SAME AS
DICTATORS"**

basically about the music 'business.' I decided I would be a semi-pro musician for my own entertainment, would play music that I liked to play, and wouldn't count on it to make my living. I did other jobs and worked at other things, so I wouldn't have to compromise what I have to do as a drummer."

[from Bill Banasiewicz, **Visions: The Official Biography**
Omnibus Press, London 1988, p. 15.]

Sound familiar? While in England Peart found a copy of Ayn Rand's **The Fountainhead** on a London tube (Rand's books often seem to be discovered in places like tube trains for some reason). Peart's recollection reads like a statement by Howard Roark, the uncompromising architect hero of **The Fountainhead**.

The first Rand-influenced song is the opening track, "Anthem," from **Fly By Night**. It opens like this:

Know your place in life
Is where you want to be
Don't let them tell you
That you owe it all to me
Keep on looking forward No use in looking round
Hold your head above the crowd And they won't
bring you down."

The ideas in Rand's short novel, **Anthem**, form the basis for what is probably Rush's most controversial album, **2112** (1976). Rush's version of the story concerns a future world run by a religious dictatorship — the Priests of The Temples of Syrinx. They control everybody's life and all art and expression through a massive system of computers:

We've taken care of everything
The words you read
The songs you sing
The pictures that give pleasure To your eye
One for all and all for one
Work together Common sons
Never need to wonder How or why
We are the priests Of the Temples of Syrinx
Our great computers Fill the hallowed halls
We are the priests Of the Temples of Syrinx
All the gifts of life Are held within our walls

The hero of the story rediscovers a guitar, teaches himself to play it, and gradually learns that he can create music. He presents his discovery to the priests, hoping that they will recognize its goodness. Instead they destroy his guitar, telling him that "we have no need of ancient ways" and that the masses have no use for such a toy. After several days of despair the hero decides that he can no longer continue to live under the rule of the priests and takes his own life.

2112 was a very important album for Rush at the time because their previous album had been poorly received by both critics and public alike. As a consequence they had been put under severe pressure by their record company and others to come up with something more commercial. Rush responded by doing what they wanted to do, regardless of what anyone else

thought. The concept behind **2112** seemed to sum up everything that the band considered as their own philosophy in regard to how they would fashion their music.

2112 was also significant in being the first work which clearly revealed their philosophical/political outlook. Since this was pro-individualist, and therefore implicitly pro-capitalist, it was eventually to stir up trouble in such quarters as the pages of the New Musical Express. Matters were not helped when Peart remarked soon after the release of **2112** that "humanitarians are just the same as dictators" (quoted in Brian Harrigan, Rush, Omnibus Press, London, 1982, p. 19).

The most notorious incident in this country, though, took place in the late Seventies, when NME writer, Miles, denounced the band as a bunch of Nazi fascists and issued warnings against the desirability of them playing in public. Miles's prognosis was particularly ironic given that Geddy Lee's parents were Nazi concentration camp survivors (Lee is Jewish) and his father later died from the lasting effects. On the subject of concentration camps, Rush were eventually to pen the searing "Red Sector A" from their 1984 album **Grace Under Pressure**. Though the lyrics were written by Neil Peart, Lee's singing sounds as though he has a deep personal affinity for the subject matter, and clearly he did.

2112 also spawned the infamous Rush logo, the "starman," which was to appear for many years on Rush memorabilia. It depicts a naked man leaning backwards in front of a star inscribed in a circle. It is easy to see how a logo such as this could lead to denunciations of the band as fascists by superficial observers. The logo actually stands for the individual rebelling against the Red Star of the Solar Federation (the Solar Federation being the federation of planets ruled over by the Priests of the Temples of Syrinx).

INSPIRED PRO-CAPITALIST LYRICS

2112 was significant as marking the end of the first phase in Rush's career. Up until then they had relied almost exclusively on guitars, bass, drums and vocals. With 1977's **A Farewell to Kings** their array of instruments suddenly multiplied to include six and twelve string electric guitar, six and twelve string acoustic guitar, classical guitar, bass pedal synthesizer (Alex Lifeson); twelve string electric guitar, bass pedal synthesizer, and Mini Moog keyboards (Geddy Lee); drums, orchestra bells, temple blocks, cowbells, wind chimes, bell tree, triangle and vibra-slap (Neil Peart). Such an assembly was all the more remarkable given that there were only three musicians to play all this stuff and, unlike some similar "musical" groups, such as Genesis, they do not use additional musicians when they perform live. In general, Rush tend to write their songs in such a way that they can reproduce them live without having to bring in extra musicians. With the increasing sophistication of computerized musical accessories it is easier to do that now than it was in 1977 when **AFTK** came out. Lee uses programmable synthesizers but he does actually play the keyboards as well.

Like many of their albums, **AFTK** boasts a particularly

striking album cover. It depicts a puppet king sitting on his throne amongst the rubble of what was his former castle. In the background we see a chimney stack and office blocks, signs of the emerging order of reason and capitalism.

Since **AFTK** was the first Rush album I listened to I have a special fondness for it. Interestingly, it contains a song, "Cinderella Man," with inspired pro-capitalistic lyrics written by Geddy Lee, though it reads as if it were written by Peart. But the highlight of the album is undoubtedly the song, "Xanadu," with lyrics inspired by Samuel Taylor Coleridge's poem, "Kubla Khan." Geddy Lee once said, in conversation about 14 years ago, that, more than any other song, "Xanadu" summed up musically what Rush were about. The album, as a whole, is an awesome blend of sophistication and power.

A Farewell to Kings marked the beginning of an era of musical complexity which settled into a more condensed form only after their subsequent album, **Hemispheres**. The band consider this latter album to be one of the most mentally taxing ones they have done. Geddy Lee recalls:

"We spent more time recording "La Villa Strangiato" than the entire **Fly By Night** album. It's recorded in one take, but it took 40 takes to get it right!"

[Bill Banasiewicz, **Visions**, op. cit., pp. 38-39.]

Hemispheres was also the last time that Rush were to do a concept album, in which one entire side of the record is devoted to a single story. They had done this previously with "2112" and with "The Fountain of Lamneth" from the **Caress of Steel** album.

Considering that there is only a four year gap between Rush's debut album and **Hemispheres** it is astonishing how little resemblance the latter bears to the former. The title track, "Hemispheres," is based on the clash between thoughts and emotions, between our rational ideas and our instinctive feelings. Peart develops this theme by spinning out a story in terms of Greek mythology. The various parts of "Hemispheres" are named similarly to the movements in Holst's **The Planets**. For example, "Apollo, Bringer of Wisdom," "Dionysus, Bringer of Love," and "Cygnus, Bringer of Balance" are akin to ... "Mars, the Bringer of War," "Venus, the Bringer of Peace," etc., in **The Planets**. The story of "Hemispheres" is that the two gods, Apollo and Dionysus, battle through the ages struggling to rule the fate of man. But neither god alone is able to provide harmony. In the end they appoint a new god, Cygnus, who finally unites the splintered hemispheres of heart and mind.

On **Hemispheres** Rush achieve a greater musical unity and cohesiveness than they managed on **2112**. It is more "integrated," to use a Randian phrase, though **2112** is the more important work.

The most overtly political song on **Hemispheres** is "The Trees." This concerns a struggle in the forest between the Oaks and the Maples. The Maples are unhappy about the Oaks getting more sunlight than themselves:

There is unrest in the forest

There is trouble with the trees
For the Maples want more sunlight
And the Oaks ignore their pleas

In the end a radical solution is implemented:

So the Maples formed a union
And demanded equal rights
'The Oaks are just too greedy
We will make them give us Light'
Now there's no more oak oppression
For they passed a noble law
And the trees are all kept equal
By Hatchet,
Axe,
And saw ...

"I WILL CHOOSE FREE WILL"

In Rush's first four albums constitute their "raw" phase, then **A Farewell to Kings** and **Hemispheres** constitute their Complexity transition phase.

Permanent Waves (1980) marks the start of their fully mature phase. With **Permanent Waves** Rush finally ditch the swords and sorcery imagery for more direct and contemporary themes. The change in the nature of the lyrics is matched by a corresponding change in the musical style. The songs are shorter and their complexity is packed into less space.

The title, "Permanent Waves," was coined as a dig at the British music press who were continually talking about a New Wave" this and "New Wave" that. Rush were saying that there is neither "New Wave" nor "Old Wave," there is just music. It was part of Rush's nature to continually explore different ideas, different waves. But this exploration was itself a permanent process. The opening song from **Permanent Waves** deals with the conflict between commercialism and artistic integrity. Entitled "The Spirit of Radio" it includes the following words:

All this machinery
Making modern music
Can still be open-hearted
Not so coldly charted
It's really just a question
Of your honesty

Ironically, this song was an unexpected commercial success, entering the top twenty in the UK charts. It featured on **Top of the Pops** complete with wholly inappropriate choreography by **Legs and Co.**

The song which follows "The Spirit of Radio" is "Free Will," which contains one of the most popular choruses for Rush concert-goers:

You can choose a ready guide
In some celestial voice
If you choose not to decide
You still have made a choice
You can choose from phantom fears

And kindness that can kill
I will choose a path that's clear
I will choose free will

Permanent Waves has a radical difference in feel compared to **Hemispheres**. The songs flow more. The approach is more streamlined. Lee's vocals are more laid back. **Permanent Waves** paved the way very naturally for its equally brilliant successor, **Moving Pictures** (1981), which was one of the first rock albums to be digitally mixed and mastered. Significant songs on this album are "Tom Sawyer," "Red Barchetta" and "Witch Hunt" (Part 3 of "Fear"). "Red Barchetta" is the story of a man in an imaginary sci-fi setting who rebels against a law (the "Motor Law") banning all cars. He seeks escape by illegally driving his uncle's old "Red Barchetta" in defiance of the authorities.

"Red Barchetta" and "Limelight" were the first two songs I heard from **Moving Pictures**. I heard them in succession, on the radio, before buying the record. It was like experiencing a musical wet dream.

"Witch Hunt" is unusual, in being part 3 of the Fear trilogy but actually making it to vinyl before parts 1 and 2! (Parts 1 and 2 appeared on the following two albums, **Signals** and **Grace Under Pressure**, respectively, but in reverse order.) On their 1991 album, **Roll the Bones**, there is a song called "Where's My Thing?" which is described, amusingly as part 4 of the "Gangster of Boats" trilogy.

Soon after **Moving Pictures** came **Signals** (1982), which I think is probably the weakest of the albums produced in

the mature Rush phase, though it remains a favourite for some. Its main problem is its overindulgence in synthesizers to the detriment of the guitars. Some of the songs are rather on the ordinary side but, nevertheless, this album does still boast some outstanding pieces. It's not a bad album and it still ranks way above most of the output of their competitors. But it's just a bit below par by Rush's usual standards. Part of the problem is that it came immediately after **Permanent Waves** and **Moving Pictures** which were particularly outstanding works. In fact, these two albums are Geddy Lee's favourites (something I discovered a long time after writing the preceding sentence).

"THE THINGS WE'D LIKE TO BE"

One theme which starts to emerge on **Signals** is the concern with individuals wanting to escape from the monotony of routine, or struggling to fulfill their dreams. The opening track, "Subdivisions" captures this mood very well. This song is one of my favorites. Another very moving song on the album is the ballad, "Losing It." This is another of my favourites. It is about losing one's creative and artistic powers. Here's a piece of it:



Some are born to move the world
To live their fantasies
But most of us just dream about
The things we'd like to be
Sadder still to watch it die
Than never to have known it
For you the blind who once could see
The bell tolls for thee



IN THE END



ASOF STAFF

Cover by David Fedan

Hello Rush Fans! Well, this issue has grown beyond our expectations. We were shooting for 16 pages due to lack of material when suddenly, information began to ooze from the woodwork. I'm sure you don't mind, eh?

I was the Rush pilgrim this past July and made my first trek to Canada, the Land of Rush. What a **FABULOUS** time I had! Unfortunately, Steve did not accompany me and thus it was a solo journey. Upon my arrival, however, I had the best tour guide I could have hoped for. Our Canadian Counterpart, Kevin Bontius, showed me all around the fair city of Toronto. I thought certain I'd have to resole my shoes when I got back to the States. We walked many miles. But, I got a good close look at ALL the nifty Rush landmarks - even some obscure things I would have never thought to ask about. We did the Orbit Room scene, but alas, Alex was tucked away wrapping up his album and did not grace the club that evening. It's a good thing I'm not a journalist by trade for I shirked all my **ASOF** duties and did not even bring home a menu, business card, etc. But friends, I had a **BLAST!** The Orbit Room has great atmosphere and The Dexters are fine musicians. Definitely a highlight! I'd say more, but I'm out of space. That's what I get for procrastinating. Till next time...**GO LISTEN TO SOME RUSH!!!**

Mandy Streeter

Steve & Mandy Streeter
Publishers/Editors

Mr. Steve & CyberSteve
Graphics, Computer Art & Subliminal Mind Maps

Eric Ross
The Oracle, Columnist/Assistant

Jerry "Broon Jr." Brown
RUSH Archives, Columnist

John Vinson
Photographer Extraordinaire

Michael Menconi
The Hemisphere, columnist

RUSHLINE: 815-398-1250

FAXLINE: 815-399-2462

A Show Of Fans, Number 12, Winter 1995. **ASOF** is a non-profit Rush fanzine/network dedicated to the **BEST** band in the universe. **ASOF** is published approximately quarterly. Subscriptions are \$15.00; USA, \$20.00; rest of the world for four issues. Back issues (**ASOF** #1-11) are available in a very limited supply (**ASOF** #3 are **sold out**); USA, \$5.00 each; rest of the world, \$6.00 each. Donations of stamps are appreciated. **ASOF**, 5411 E. State St., Suite 309, Rockford, IL 61108.

Alex Lifeson

VICTOR



a show of hands

A Rush Fanzine For and By Rush Fans