

a show of faith

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A Rush Fanzine For and By Rush Fans

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Test For Echo: Set for Release - Late August

Pete Dexter Interview: A Dexter Update

Easy Rider - The Search For The Midnight Sun

Animation: A Tribute to Rush

100% RUSH



**TEST
FOR
ECHO**

the FOUNTAIN

Steve Streeter

TEST FOR ECHO

Test for Echo, the long-awaited **NEW** Rush album was completed on Thursday, April 25, 1996. Look for a release date around the end of August. After recording in Bearsville, NY, Rush returned to McClear Pathe Post Production Studios in Toronto to spend a month wrapping up **Echo**. Final mixing was done by Andy Wallace who recently completed the new **Rage Against the Machine**. Peter Collins and Rush handled the production. Taking over the massive 2139 sq. ft. studio, Rush turned McClear One into a luxury living room, complete with TVs, sofas, stereos, and everything to create a self-contained comfortable setting. In at 11 am and wrapping it up at 11 pm every day was the schedule, with two hour dinner breaks, sometimes ending up at the The Orbit Room for a private "relax" time. Rush finished **Echo** right on schedule. Just like clockwork. Alex commented on Andy's mixing method, stating that he looks nothing like someone who would be into Rush. Wallace, much older than Rush, mixed the entire album listening to the tracks like a whisper. He would turn the volume WAY down to get the most subtle

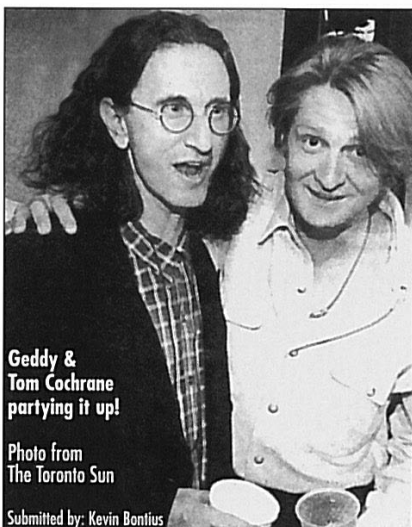
McCLEAR Pathe



McCLEAR Place I - pictured just days after Rush wrapped up **Test For Echo**.
Photo by Mandy Streeter.

do we need to know. Now let's HEAR it. All three are extremely happy with the new one and are looking forward to taking the summer off, while Anthem plans the tour for the fall. On the walls of McClear hung many Rush awards. When Rush "moved" into McClear, the red carpet was rolled out. All of McClear One was sealed off. In fact the glass from the mixing boards to the studio floor was covered with paper, although we hear a peephole was made by Rush to see in the control room! Neil had his "practice kit" set up with pads and such, while we can only assume Alex & Ged had an array of stuff as well. On a sidenote, Alex mixed Victor **HIMSELF** (apparently he is a **wicked quick** learner!) at McClear Two. Denis Tougas assisted him in the project.

Alex was very excited to let us know that keyboards took less than a day and they are only there for texture and background. That was one of his first comments about the album. He was **VERY** happy about that. That means **HEAVY** guitar! We can expect an even further return to the original three-piece unit stripped down, before the added keyboards started to play a heavier hand in Rush's material. This change has made Rush very happy. My "**explosion**" prophecy is coming to pass! In fact, Friday, the day after completion of



Geddy & Tom Cochrane partying it up!

Photo from The Toronto Sun

Submitted by: Kevin Bontius

and **EXACT** mix possible. The idea being; you can pick up sounds and notes much better with a trained ear at low volumes. Fascinating indeed! The mood during the final stages was very relaxed and productive. How does it sound we asked? "**GREAT!!**" That's all we heard . . . GREAT, with an ear to ear grin of course! What more

Echo, Alex drove around town, window rolled down, with a big smile and said he was a happy, happy man. *Happy, happy, joy, joy. Happy, happy, joy, joy* was his mood. Just like a new-born baby! Neil finished his percussion parts also in record time, just under two days in Bearsville, NY – while Alex & Ged recorded locally in Toronto. Of course you have all seen the new DW kit Neil has donned. The June issue of *Modern Drummer* features a small article as well as a great picture. **ONLY** one bass drum, with the graphic reminding me somewhat of the digital man Signals type posterization look. Very cool. Very Neil. It has a very futuristic look. What a beautiful kit. With all of his recent work on *Burning for Buddy* (Volume Two will be out later this year) and his re-training that took place last year, Neil's style has approached a "swing" feel. In fact, Alex and Ged had to adjust their whole method of playing in order to groove with Neil. Gone, is much of the flash. Neil has gotten back to basics and changed once again. Wonder if he'll still be doing the ol' tossing of the sticks. I kind of think so . . . but who knows! Alex said Neil's playing is better than ever. Neil getting **BETTER? Now that's exciting.** Can't wait for the tour, eh?

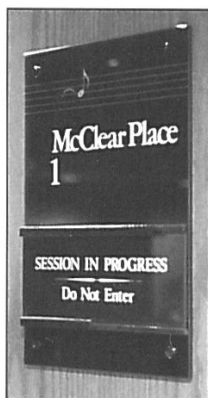
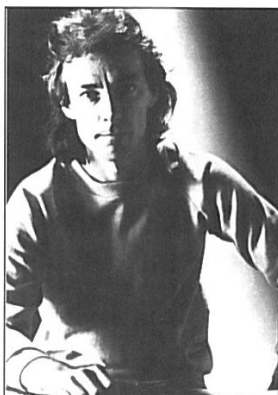
Neil has also been working on an educational video for **DCI**. **Burning for Buddy II** will feature more tracks from the 1994 big band sessions. See page 26 for more details on the upcoming **DCI** projects!

After completion of **Echo**, Geddy went to Portland for some wrap up stuff and related business.

Neil definately does **NOT** want to tour in the summer, so even with an early finish, we'll have to wait until October or so for the **Echo Tour** to start. It is in the planning stages now. We are still working furiously on our **Bring Rush to Rockford** petition drive and it is going well. We have the major rock radio station behind us as well as help from the largest music store in town. In fact, **WXXR**, our local station, wants Rush to play two nights. Anything can happen. The drive is going well. Alex remembers playing Rockford. In addition to opening for KISS way back in 1976, Rush headlined with Cheap Trick opening in 78-79. With Trick being right here in town, we would love to see that happen again. Our fingers are crossed, Rush is aware of it and the signatures are racking up. We'll keep you posted.

Test For Echo will have 11-12 tracks (we *think*) including one instrumental! What **Echo** MEANS is just a very short wait away. We will reveal as much as we possibly can in this issue.

On Tuesday, April 30, Alex became



"Big Al Dexter" and attended the **BIG** Official Dexter CD release party which was quite the party indeed. I believe three TV stations were there. Two major ones. Alex played two of the sets with **The Dexters** whaling away on a Gibson with a whammy bar. Seeing Big Al do such classics as White Rabbit, Not Fade Away, and Peter Gunn is enough to melt you down to the floor! **Unbelievable!** The Dexters were in such fine form that Tim Notter, The Orbit Room co-owner, noted that they were **hot** and had wished they recorded the show! The CD-ROM presentation was done by Lou Dexter and went very well. It was a buzz of a night. Alex claimed at one point that yes, he did all the CD-ROM programming . . . ah-hem . . . well, he then proceeded to throw his hands up in that comical way we all know and love. What a comedian! By the way, if you have not ordered your Hip to the Tip Dexters CD yet, do it **NOW!** And who knows, like we did, you may turn into a Dexter fan as well. *It is all part of the big Rush extended family.* See page 8 for our Dexter update in this issue for more information. We had the pleasant opportunity to speak with Peter Dexter, who also plays on **Victor!** Bass player extraordinaire!

We now have updated tour flyers (hand out flyers, in store, etc...) available. Please give us a ring on the **RUSHLINE - 815-398-1250** or drop us a line and we'll send you a master that you can copy and pass out. We need **ASOF** representatives in each regional area to head up flyer distribution. If you think you might want to help, call us and we'll see how **WE** can help get you going.

From **DW** Drums comes the following:

Neil switches to **DW** drums...

Drum Workshop is pleased to have Neil Peart on the roster. He switched over in December and received his studio kit in early January.

The sizes are as follows:

7x10, 8x12, 9x13, 12x15, 13x15, 16x16, 16x18, 16x22, 6x14 Edge series Snare, 5.5"x13" Craviotto Solid Maple Shell (used on the majority of the new album) The drums are all in a Custom Lacquer finish Deep Red Sparkle with Brass Hardware.

No Vibrafibing.

No Slingerland snare.

No kidding!

Thanks for your interest and support of Neil and DW.

Sincerely, **DW**



NEXT ISSUE:

ASOF Interviews Terry "BROON" Brown! Nuff said.

You may contact **ASOF** (CyberSteve and/or Mr. Steve) by EMail at CAINLINE@AOL.com for positive, rational discourse and of course any Rush related items, articles or matters that may be on your mind.

A RUSH EDUCATION

Dan Domberg



Rockford, Illinois

A Rush Education never fully realized just how much I learned by listening to Rush until I went to college. All around me were highly educated people reiterating many things I had already heard. But before I begin telling you about my education at Rush University, let me tell you how I was introduced to, and my history with, Rush.

It was a sunny day sometime in 1985 (I remember because it was the year that the Bears won the Superbowl). My mother, my brother and I were visiting my Uncle Mark. Mark, who is known for his fondness of hard rock, was playing one of many vinyl albums that he possessed when we got into a discussion regarding whom he thought was the best band of all time (mind you that I was only twelve at the time). The conversation led us through many artists such as **Queen**, **Thin Lizzy**, **Sammy Hagar** and eventually to **Rush**. My Uncle had an old recording of Rush that he made when they aired a concert from the **Permanent Waves Tour** on the radio in 1980. He let me take it home to give it a listen, but unfortunately for me, I let it sit in a drawer for two years. When I eventually got around to listening to it, I enjoyed it quite a bit. I was particularly enthralled by **La Villa Strangiato**. In fact, **Hemispheres** was the first Rush cassette that I bought. I listened to that album until the sound was so bad that I had to buy another. I can remember getting into an argument with a friend of mine one day. He argued that **Hemispheres** wasn't Rush's best album, and though I hadn't heard any other albums by Rush, I fought vehemently for its honor. Being stubborn and ignorant, the argument went nowhere. The one good thing to come of it was that it perked my interest enough to search out and listen to the other albums that Rush made. Another friend of mine lent me **Moving Pictures** and like most people, I loved **Tom Sawyer** (although now I think **Red Barchetta** is the greatest song of all time). Like most Rush fanatics, the more I heard, the more I wanted to hear. The next year was spent discovering Rush's early years up to **Moving Pictures**. I listened to everything that I could, including renting the **Exit . . . Stage Left** video about a dozen times. Rush began to consume my life as I collected everything that I could about them. I was, however, about to undergo another revelation. After discussing Rush with a friend of mine during class one day, he lent me his **Grace Under Pressure** video. For the first time, I heard post **Moving Pictures** Rush. I couldn't believe it! I couldn't believe that the band I knew so well had such a diverse streak in them. I loved it! I loved the newer music as much as the older stuff (and now even more than the older stuff). The next couple of years was spent learning and experiencing the power of their music. The first album that I remember being released was **Presto**. I went right to the store to buy it the day it came out and have done that for the last two albums as well. That's it. That's my history with Rush. Of course my memories are filled with many

discussions, arguments and fantasies that would fill a volume of text, but enough for now. Let's move on to what Rush has taught me over the years.

My first realization that Rush was a thinking man's rock band came in 1989, my senior year of high school. I was in my English class when we happened upon a poem called **Kubla Kahn**. Immediately my mind echoed: "...decreed by Kubla Kahn." As I read the poem, I realized that the song **Xanadu** was based on this story. Naturally, it was the most interested in poetry that I have ever been. When I moved on to college, I never imagined that so many Rush themes would be present in the class room. In my first semester, I was scheduled to take a mythology class. About half way through the semester we covered Apollo and Dionysus, the gods of emotion and reason. I found myself not so much listening to the lecture as I was singing the song in my head. In my planetary science class, I learned that "the music of the spheres" was referring to planetary orbitals. Physics and Chemistry classes constantly repeated the conservation laws: "You can't get something for nothing." The only two things I can remember from French class are: *Quelle heure et il?* (What time is it?) & *Plus ca change plus cest la meme chose.* (We all know what that means). **Tai Shan** and **Territories** taught me about culture and politics. **The Trees** puts a refreshing twist on the plight to fight oppression (a major theme in American History) and **The Manhattan Project** summed up the nuclear age very well. **The Body Electric** exposed me to binary numbers before I ever took a computer programming class and **Bastille Day** taught me something about European history that I might never have learned otherwise. Quite possibly the most important lesson taught by a Rush song, however, is the theme of **Entre Nous**. I have seen dozens of people lose their own identity in relationships because they took on the identity of their loved one and lost the ability to think on their own. **Entre Nous** taught me that even though there is the relationship (the "we") there should also be separate components of that relationship (the "me" and the "you"). This philosophy has enabled me to enjoy happy and healthy relationships with the people that I love.

I think that you can see that my experiences with Rush, although relatively short lived in comparison to some, have been full of fun and education. Besides the academic benefits of their music, they have also shaped my musical interests and their devotion to their music has even inspired me to learn how to play the drums. The benefits I have attained from their music cannot be quantitatively measured, but suffice it to say that it will be a very sad day for me when this trio no longer makes music (bite your tongue Daniel).

Anxiously awaiting the next album.



ASK BIG AL



**WRITE TO:
ASK BIG AL
ASOF**

5411 E. State St.,
Suite 309
Rockford, IL 61108



Here is installment one of Ask Big Al. We hope you will all send in your questions (please limit it to 3-5 and we'll pick the best ones). In haste to get this first batch of questions to Big Al, we did not include the fans names who sent them in! Sheesh! Sorry 'bout that! Call us airheads – whatever – we will not let this happen again. We will include your name and city & state for use in print and so Alex knows who he's talking to! Keep those questions coming! And now without further ado it's on to the questions.

- 1) *On stage, are you using any effects processors, or are you going strictly amp? I've been using a Digitech RP-1 and find it beneficial. How do you feel about these neat little "toys" today?*

I've always used effects in my stage sound, from a Cry Baby Wah Wah in the early days, to the piles of stuff I use now. The dimension and depth created by these effects can be beneficial to a live sound. However, I prefer to record directly in the studio unless there is something specifically I want to do with a particular sound.

- 2) *A "What If" question. If you were not doing Rush, what do you think you would be doing. I would guess either a pilot or a comedian.*

An accountant or a train conductor.

- 3) *You and Ged go **WAAAAAY** back. Can you give us any insight as to what got you two together? And as you grew up, when did you realize that you really had something very special and unique?*

Ged and I both loved playing music, and loved it more when we did it together. As for growing up, we haven't had a chance to do that yet.

- 4) *Ever entertain the thought of space flight (i.e. space shuttle)? Did you recently get a new rank in your flying hobby (or should I say side job??)*

I was offered a position on the last shuttle flight as the Washer Technician. He's the guy who goes out into space and washes and waxes the spacecraft before re-entry. Unfortunately, I had a dentist appointment that day and couldn't make it.

- 5) *If I am to understand it correctly, cartoons, namely classic Warner Brothers Tunes, were the raw skeleton for pieces of La Villa. Are you a cartoon fan and what are some of your favorites?*

Not really. As the song developed, we decided to flavour certain sections after some cartoon ideas.

Ren and Stimpy, especially **The Black Hole** and **Space Madness** episodes.

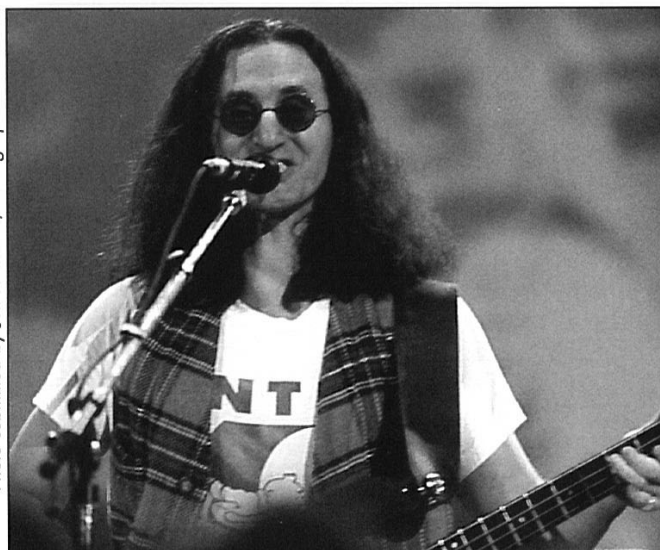


Photo submitted by Jeff Hamilton, Photographer unknown.

the Oracle

By Eric Ross
Chanhassen, MN

Pocket Change *Lost Marbles*

Walking along the rocky shore, with the sound of the ocean crashing to my left, and the coins in my pocket jangling with each step I took. The rocks were covered with a slippery green moss so care was taken to place each footstep. It was a beautiful dusk with the sun nearly setting over the ocean, giving a soft orange glow to the mountains rising to the east. The rhythmic pounding of the surf echoed in the cries of the seagulls. A time of contemplation. A time of transition from the old to the new. I took in a deep breath feeling the salty sweetness of the ocean mist in my lungs.

I turned to look at that big orange-red star, the sun. It was at that moment when I thought I heard the sound of a thousand bells ringing. Crystal clear, haunting and mysterious as if in a dream. It was impossible to know where the sound came from, even though I turned in every direction searching for the source of that enchanting sound. It was then that I notice myself standing at the foot of a massive marble staircase encircling the mountain. My heart pounded with anticipation.

The setting sun seemed motionless, perched just above the oceans horizon, as I climbed the steps. It's colors became more brilliant and filled much of the sky as I rose higher into the cool evening. The marble used in the steps was a pure white with streaks of blue and green throughout. They were apparently carefully cut and assembled by gifted hands. There were no seams or cracks to be found anywhere. The top of each step was worn as smooth as glass as if this path had been traveled many times before. I wondered who had made this journey before me and what it was they had discovered at the mountains crest. I thought about my life and considered how it might be affected by these steps, and how my presence would add to the history of this mountain. The sweat on my forehead was cooled by a gentle breeze as I rose higher with each step.

At the top of the three-thousand spiraling stairs, I paused

to catch my breath. Here I found a larger square slab of the same perfect marble trimmed in gold. In the center of the slab was a beautiful golden fountain filled with shimmering clear water. It seemed to sing with a strange ethereal sound. It splashed a wondrous song that seemed to respond to my nearness to it. Although I could still hear the bells, they were softer and further away than before and the surf continued with it's rumbling rhythm. Behind me were more mountains off into the distance. These mountains were higher and larger than this one and were capped with snow. The snow had an orange-pink tint from the setting sun. Beyond was the midnight blue blackness of the universe beyond. This faded into the brilliant reds and oranges of the sunset as I turned to look to the west. The sun still hovered above the horizon as if time was standing still.

Guardian Angel

Transfixed, I found myself staring at the sun. It seemed more brilliant than before and was growing in size. All around it, a corona of exploding colors began to shoot out in all directions. Reds, yellows, blues and greens were filling the sky. I was mesmerized as if in a dream. My eyes burned and watered, but it was not possible to look away. I tried to close my eyes, but the vision was as bright as ever. Suddenly, the orb of the sun now filling half of the sky, began to bulge at the center. With the bulge the color brightened into a blinding white light. Within the light, a face appeared. Although it was a face that I've never seen before, it was somehow comfortably familiar. His flashing eyes were those of age and wisdom. The floating hair and beard streamed in all directions with the flying colors of the sun. As I waited for him to speak, I excitedly imagined that this was my opportunity to learn the answers to all of the Big Questions. What is the meaning of life? What is my purpose in it? How will I know truth?

Finally the gaze of the wise angel was upon me, seemingly open to my inquiry. Hesitantly, I asked, "Should my life be guided by pure emotion or pure reason?" The wise sun's eyes widened and began to glow with a faint blue-green color. The color of the ocean, giver of life. The color of sky mixed with the green of the forest. The pounding of the surf grew louder more frequent and the mountain began to vibrate and resonate with each crashing wave. Suddenly, from behind the sun the image of a very intense Father Pratt at his cherry red set of drums rose to the vision's apex. He seemed oblivious to all the flashing lights and streaming hair of the sun. By this time, the surf's pounding rhythm morphed into Neil's syncopated backbeat. In an impossibly loud, but low pitched voice, the sun answered, "Neither extreme will

guide you alone. Each in balanced moderation is required." I was pleased with this answer, but I became more aware of my pounding heart as more questions flooded my brain.

With this privileged audience, I risked another question, "How will I find my purpose in life?" Once again, the wise old sun's eyes intensified in it's deep green blue hue. I felt my heart nearly leap from my chest as the image of the elegant Prince Dirk moved into the lower right of the sky from behind the beard of the orange-red sun. The thumping of my heart fell into rhythm with the drums. Before long, my entire body felt the deep bass of Geddy, playing a melodic foundation. I was nearly elevated from the platform as the sun spoke his answer, "Give love to all you meet. The love will be found in your creative expressions. Your creativity will bring you purpose and joy."

Both pleased and perplexed, I was not sure to make of the sun's generosity. My eyes continued to burn and my knees were growing weak. I thought that I could collapse at any moment, but was compelled to submit one last question, "How will I know truth?" Before I could finish, King Lerxt, strings singing beneath his hand appeared at the lower left. The chorus of seagulls was replaced by the power of Alex's guitar. Chords building as high as the mountain, notes falling like rain. In his thundering voice, the sun answered, "To yourself be true. The truth will set you free."

Awakening

The brilliance of the sun's eyes were by this time nearly unbearable. As the three musicians played around the wise orb, a blue-green plasma of the same color as the sun's eyes formed a large triangle.

At each corner of the triangle, focused intensely on their musical expression were the members of Rush. Connected by the magical force of creation, their song became much larger than their individual selves. Perhaps this was the intention of the solar oracle's presentation. Unfortunately, the burning of my eyes began to spread to the rest of my face and beyond. I was faced with a dilemma. Continue to quiz the wise one and risk losing my sight? Be grateful for my gifts thus far and return down the mountain to my former life? I chose the latter, but first I needed to cool my face in the fountain's pure and magical water.

I plunged my head deep into the water. The water was the most clean and refreshing liquid that I could ever imagine. I climbed completely into the fountain. Lying on my back, I submerged myself entirely into the clean coolness. It was silent and peaceful. No longer did my eyes burn from the cosmic plasma. No longer did my body feel crushed from the musical percussion. No longer could I hear the wise one's voice, or hear the empowering music. This silence alarmed me.

In a sudden gasp for air, I sat up. Looking around, all I could see were the rocks that earlier I was walking along. I was sitting in a small tidal pool nestled in a pocket between several large boulders. Looking up, I could see the last of the blood red sky as the sun nearly dropped below the horizon. I could see the tops of the rocks where my fall had removed some of the slippery blue-green algae. I felt changed. As I slowly climbed out of the water, I wondered if it was all just a dream. But, it seemed so real. Were those lessons given to me by the great creator? Or, were they merely the hallucinations of an imaginative, but unconscious mind?

Finally reaching the top of the rocks, I was once again aware of the sound of the pounding surf and the singing cry of gulls. The air was crisp and my footsteps crunched as I took care to test each step carefully on dry parts of the boulder tops. I could hear my heartbeat and thoughts echoed in the evening air. Perhaps I really am very lucky to be alive. My vision reminded me to be grateful for the wondrous world I live in. Perhaps to pocket the changes in one's life is to embrace the true nature of the universe. In a gesture of thanks and good wishes, I reached into my pocket, removed a coin and threw it into the water.



Photo submitted by Jeff Hamilton, Photographer unknown.

PETE DEXTER OF *the* **Dexters** AN UPDATE

Once the **ASOF** subscribers got wind of The Dexters CD-ROM word began to filter into AOL and the Internet. According to Pete, "Sales have been going great! We've gotten a few orders from Germany and Japan. There are a couple of foreign territories that want to license it. Saudi Arabia, for one. Which is odd - I always thought music was illegal there!"

Pete said that the fella he spoke with says there are ways around that. Do we even want to know what those might be? Probably not. Suffice it to say, sales are brisk, and the album has been going over quite well all around the world.

Steve: "Did you videotape the majority of the clips in the CD-ROM? At one point it looks like you actually turned the camera to yourself."

Pete: "Yeah, it was all spur of the moment stuff..." (chuckle)

Steve: "So you were the narrator for the most part."

Pete: "For the tour around the Orbit Room, I was. We just did it off the cuff. I tried to be quiet, but with Big Al improvising all this great material, it was hard not to jump in and yuk it up a bit."

Steve: "I think you broke it during the smoke detector segment. That's got to be one of my favorite ones!"

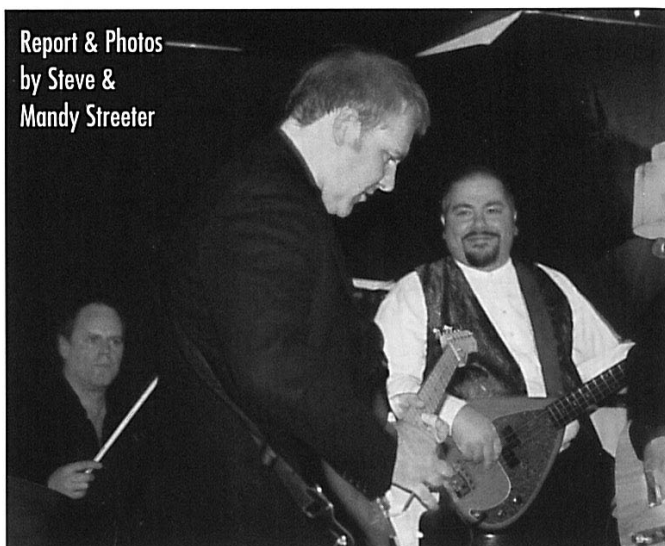
Pete: "Yeah exactly, that's my favorite one on there also!"

Steve: "And the two cards on the ceiling..."

Pete: "Well, we had a magician come in who was working on a movie in town, a Whoopi Goldberg movie, Whit Hayden was his name. *This guy was awesome!* He hung around quite a bit. He was in town for two months and was there every weekend. Those are his cards that are still up there. He had this trick, I won't go into the whole thing, but it was where he pulled out a card and made you write your name on it, then he put it back in the deck and kept shuffling. No matter what card he turned up it was yours. So he went through that whole routine first and then he spreads the deck across the table, you know how magicians or dealers in Vegas do, and he looks for your card and can't find it. Then he reaches in his coat pocket and hands you his wallet, which is all sealed up, and you open that and there's another sealed compartment and you take the envelope out which is hermetically sealed and inside it's your card! Then he puts it back in the deck, that's awesome enough, but he puts it back in the deck and gets an elastic and overlaps each corner so the deck can't come apart and he throws the deck up to the ceiling and your card sticks to the ceiling and the rest of the deck comes down. That's it.

Steve: "That's funny! That's the story behind the cards on the ceiling. (and you heard it here FIRST!) I knew there had to be something more to it." (much laughter)

Report & Photos
by Steve &
Mandy Streeter



Pete: "And you know what, he'd always draw crowds when he did that, but this was over a year ago and the cards are still up on the ceiling. None of them have fallen. So we're leaving them there for when he comes back." (laughter)

Steve: "Anybody returned the urinal handle?" (Little does Pete know, but **WE** have it . . . soon to be put in a Rush items auction!!)

Pete: (much laughter) "Not yet! We actually had to edit down the office sequence. That was the longest thing on there."

Steve: "Oh, that was hilarious! It didn't look like Alex wanted to stop."

Pete: "Well he was so **on** that day. He showed up at eleven and I turned the camera on and we just went. Everything coming out of his mouth that day was hilarious. We had a good time doing it."

Steve: "It looks like it. Looks like a lot of fun. I really like the way it turned out. Did you have some local group in town do up the graphics on it?"

Pete: "Yeah, Paul Grossi from **DatArc Systems** produced and designed the CD-ROM portion and **Stanford Design** also did some graphics. They're real good guys and really talented. I can't say enough about them. They really worked hard on it. They're going to be redoing the Mac/PC version as well."

Steve: "They did a really good job. It's quite nice. It runs smooth and is user friendly."

Pete: "Yeah, and the whole thing is entertaining. It's all tied in to the Orbit Room, the Dexters, and Al."

Steve: "Now people that have already purchased this to get the autographed version, will they have to order another one if they want it for Mac?"

Pete: "Yeah, I don't know how that's going to work."

Steve: "It's almost like an upgrade and that makes it tricky, it's no longer just a music only thing. I'm sure a lot of people will be interested in that as there are a lot of Mac users, myself included."

Pete: "Well, for the pc user there would be no need for it, but for someone on Mac, I'm sure we'll work out something. Maybe on an exchange basis - I'm not sure."

Steve: "All the guests were great, funny. It was a nice touch."

Pete: "Did you like Graham Greene?" (laughs)

Steve: Yeah, we got a big chuckle out of that one.

Pete: "He went on to say, 'Nah, they're really great, come on down and see them!'"

Steve: "But you cut it off before that to get the big laugh..."

Pete: "Yeah, some controversy, you know."

Steve: "Great! I'm gonna do a shift here . . . You played on three tracks on Victor. Did you do your tracks separately or did you just jam in the studio? How did you lay them down?"

Pete: "Well, I still haven't met the drummer..."

Steve: "Really?!?"

Pete: (laughs) "Yeah, it was just me and Alex. Alex started off, I believe, just doing machine stuff, then he brought the players in one by one. Bill Bell was there a lot with him. He was there that day too for a little bit. Then he just started replacing tracks as he went along. He had earmarked certain tracks for certain players. I think it was Les Claypool, Alex and me that did all the bass work."

Steve: "Yeah, and I'm not aware of Alex previously ever playing bass on a recording."

Pete: "I don't know if he ever has but I'll tell you, he sure had fun doing it! (laughs) **He did!** He would come into the club and his fingers would be aching. I'm sure he was excited laying down bass tracks because it was something new. When you accomplish something that's new it makes you feel good. He had a ball! Like I said, I remember him coming into the club with sore fingers, but with a smile."

Steve: "A smile of accomplishment . . . Well, it all turned out great. I think it still gets occasional airplay here. I guess it did pretty well."

Pete: "Sure a lot of fun doing it."

Steve: "How long did it take? A couple of weeks?"

Pete: "No, I was in there for one day."

Steve: "One day!"

Pete: "We did a couple of tunes, had dinner, hung around a bit...I was actually just going to do two, but after dinner Al said, 'Hey, you wanna give this a shot?' Sure...we did it really quick, twenty minutes, then we chatted for a few more hours and that was it. We had a blast! Al's a real

creative guy."

Steve: "Now are you from Toronto?"

Pete: "Yeah."

Steve: "I must ask the obligatory question ... What are your impressions of Geddy Lee then, as an accomplished bass player yourself?"

Pete: "Oh, Geddy's great! He set a standard for that kind of playing. He's recognized around the world as one of the best. He's sure won enough awards. I've been up for **Bass Player of the Year** a few years and Geddy's always taken it. (laughter)

Steve: "Oh really! Well, I guess you can't feel too bad. Let's see, you're still cranking away with the Dexters, what three or four nights a week?"



Pete: "We used to do Thursday, Friday, Saturday. It's down to Friday/Saturday. Everybody has gotten so busy. It's been a little hard on everyone so for awhile we're doing Fridays and Saturdays. The Orbit Room is our therapy, really. Everybody looks forward to going there every weekend. The CD Launch should be a good evening."

Steve: "So that is the official launch of the cd..."

Pete: "Two months after release, yeah...(chuckle)"

Steve: "So we've been getting a sneak preview, jumpstart then..."

Pete: "Absolutely!"

Steve: "That's great! Well, the feedback has been really good from

everything I've heard. I don't know if it's been trickling down to you, but the feedback has been very warm and positive."

Pete: "Yes, some of it has been trickling back and it's great to hear it. Everybody has taken it in the spirit that it is and it's really great to see. When you're a fan of a group sometimes it's hard to accept something that's not..."

Steve: "And it is very different and yet, as a Rush fan who appreciates good music, that's what it is all about. Of course, I have other reasons too....I personally **love** the whole cd! You have to get Secret Agent Man in there."

Pete: "Well, it kind of is in Peter Gunn isn't it? That's one thing about the Dexters,

we've been playing a lot of those songs for a long time. We manage to put a different twist on them most of the time so you never know what to expect."

Steve: "You could go off on a tangent..."

Pete: "Yeah, that Secret Agent thing Bernie just started playing one night. The really good stuff sticks and stays around for awhile. There's a different twist on the songs all the time because we like to keep it fresh."

Steve: "Well, it's wonderful. I'm glad to have finally seen the CD-ROM portion of it too. The clips are just fabulously funny!"

Pete: "They are. It's entertaining. The thing I like about ours is that it's fun. All the guards are down..."

Steve: "There's a lot of goofy mug

ENHANCED CD/CD-ROM COMPATIBILITY

A Technical Explanation

By Peter Cardinali

For the very condensed explanation, the mastering format – the method of combining the audio and data tracks – that was chosen for The Dexters enhanced CD is called Pre-Gap (or “Hidden Track” or “Track 0”) and it has an 80% compatibility rate with CD-Rom drives out on the market today, which is pretty good. Any incompatibility problems that a small number of people may experience have nothing to do with the kind of PC you are running, or the programming end of the CD-Rom, or the operating system (Windows 3.1x or Win95) you are using. It has solely to do with the firmware of the CD-Rom drive. The most incompatible are certain NEC drives, and unfortunately there are a lot of them out there.

The only alternatives to Pre-Gap are: Track 1 (or Mixed Mode) which is 100% compatible with computers, but not with audio. It could damage or blow up your speakers when played in your home or car audio CD player. Also you always have to manually skip to track two because the data is on track one, which makes it impossible to use in a multi player or carousel. It would be like playing “Musical Russian Roulette.” Not good. Finally, there is CD Plus (or CD Extra) which is very clumsy to install and only about 15% compatible right now. As you can see, Pre-Gap is clearly the way to go for the time being. Keep in mind that Pre-Gap is the format of choice for most Enhanced titles released today. So that means if The Dexters CD doesn't run on your drive, neither will The Rolling Stones “Stripped,” and so on. Since most of the new titles are being released as Pre-Gap for now, the best solution, if your drive is incompatible, is to get a newer type of drive installed that is compatible with the format. If you plan on buying more Enhanced CD-Rom titles, you're going to need one. Most of the newer drives are compatible now, however you should check the drive out by trying to run a Pre-Gap title such as ours. If it runs ours, it'll run them all and vice-versa. While you're at it, it would be a good idea to try and get a drive that is also CD Plus (CD Extra) compatible. You can tell if your drive is compatible or not by these indicators. If it says “No disc in Drive ?,” or if only the music tracks appear with no sight of a setup program or other data, then your drive is incompatible. If you see the “Alma” logo appear at anytime while booting, or if you see The Dexters icon, or a setup program, then that means you are definitely compatible.

shots on there...we just love it. A very well done CD-ROM!”

“We are really looking forward to coming up to The Orbit Room for the cd launch.”

Pete: “Well, Alex will be there, he'll be playing. [And **BOY** . . . did Big Al PLAY!!! – Editors.] Probably some other guests as well. Dominic Troiano who was in **The James Gang, The Guess Who & Bush** . . . He's at the club a lot and he'll probably be there that night. Actually, he inspired a lot of up & coming guitar players, including Alex when he was growing up. He had a local group called **The Mandala**, in the late sixties. That's when Alex and the Boys were cutting their teeth playing at **The Gasworks** downtown.”

Steve: “Oh, that's great to know! They were playing clubs like the Orbit Room, eh?”

Pete: “Oh yes, except it was more scaled down and a little more rowdy!”

Steve: “Really! Did you see any of those shows back then?”

Pete: “Not really, I was busy working too! We were with the same agency (Concept 376 with Vic Wilson) actually. I didn't know Alex back then.”

Steve: “But you went and checked them out . . . What was the scene like?”

Pete: “Well, back then we all played in typical beer-hall-type bars. It was your

typical bar, loud, went till one in the morning . . . usually with lousy tiny dressing rooms in the basement next to the furnace where your guests & band members would congregate between sets. **The Gasworks** is a really well known place. In fact it's referred to in **Wayne's World**. Michael Myers is Canadian and the club in Illinois, in the film, is called **The Gasworks** – that's what he's referring to, the Toronto club.”

Steve: “That's incredible! Well Pete, we appreciate talking to you, thanks for sharing those tidbits with us. There're priceless!”

Many Thanks to Pete Dexter for answering some of our questions.

To all our readers: we strongly encourage you to order **The Dexters “HIP TO THE TIP”** audio/CD-ROM. If you aren't computer capable yet, it's still a heck of a CD to listen to. And if you've got a friend with a pc, then you've got it made! Check it out before they're gone!

Call Alma Records at: 416-494-2562 or fax your order to 416-494-2030. What have you been waiting for??? Be a **Hip** person and get The Dexters, part of our **extended** Rush family.



Left: Big Al & Pete “Death” Dexter

Below: Lou Dexter on the B-3. Hey Lou...do you have a motor on that leg?



FOCUS POINT

Mike Arbisi ♥ Rockford, IL

MISSION

Hello RUSH fans! It's time once again to play yet another "Brain Game" and get all you avid fans thinking! But first, Q&A time . . . It's High Tech time folks!

Q. "What are the differences between a **PRS** and a **Les Paul** guitar?"

A. Several! PRS have buttons that not only turn, but you can push AND pull! They have a different feel, look, sound — they even **SMELL** different! I haven't had the chance to bite into one yet, perhaps Alex could invite me to dinner some night?

Q. "What effects should be used for certain songs?"

A. For albums from 74 – 76, a Marshall Amp with any delay(analog) and a volume/wah pedal.

For albums from 77 – 81, the above mentioned plus the following pedals – Chorus, Distortion, Flange.

From 81 – 84, any combination of the above mentioned.

From 84 – Present – any "Rack Mount" or "Floor" multi-effects processor will do!

Anyway, time to get down to business.....

"Hold your fire, keep it burning bright Hold the flame 'till the dream ignites A spirit with a vision Is a dream With a Mission."

The song is of course, Mission, off of **Hold Your Fire**.

What is your Mission in life? Are you happy where you're at? Is your job really what you want to be doing, or is there something else? Before you read further do me a favor – listen to "Mission". Hear what it's saying for the first time!!

Now then, how do you feel? A bit motivated maybe? That's what happens to me every time I listen to that song. It's driven me

to want to be a success in my life. My main goal is to be a professional musician. Not to make millions and have a fan base such as RUSH does, but a realistic dream. One in which I could be happy in what I'm doing and be able to make a living on my earnings.

I'm not saying "Quit your job and go for it!" I'm saying what the first verse of the song clearly dictates – Don't give up! Life is too short to be miserable! At times we have to **ROLL THE BONES** – be it through an act of Bravado or through Second Nature, we have to live a good life!!

It's true, we don't get Something For Nothing. Do you think RUSH were handed success?!? They earned it through hard work, sacrifice, and dedication. In other words – They didn't give up! And when the powers that be got tough, RUSH didn't give in. Look at **2112** for goodness sake! It was "make it or break it" time – and of course we all know how it turned out!

We all need to have realistic dreams or goals in life. Always strive for something better. A good friend of mine has a lot of wisdom and there are two things he has said that have stuck with me:

1. If you have nothing to lose by trying, and everything to gain IF **SUCCESSFUL**, then by all means, **TRY!**
2. Talent gets you to the top, character keeps you there.

No wonder RUSH continues to be at the top!!
Until next time . . .

RUSH ON AND HOLD YOUR FIRE!!!



Photo submitted by Jeff Hamilton, Photographer unknown.





The Dawning of Critical Appreciation for RUSH *Hearing in Retrospect*

By Shaun M. Sullivan

.....

The great French writer Marcel Proust once said that "when we have understood, we hear in retrospect." This aphorism has always appealed to me because it suggests that all the wisdom and clarity of thought that comes with the passage of time is often times revealed to us in a flash of comprehension. It is a phenomenon that is usually called, a revelation or an epiphany.

For the past twenty-two years, fans have been waiting for music critics to experience such a revelation that would forever change the way they think and write about RUSH. In researching the changing critical attitudes toward RUSH, I've noticed that, while recent reviews hardly suggest that the critics have experienced an epiphany, they do indicate a growing trend toward a more favorable, more thoughtful assessment of RUSH. It's curious, however, that only in retrospect are the critics able to see — **and hear!** — the brilliance and the integrity of rock's **finest** power trio.

When considering RUSH, I realize that not everyone finds their type of music appealing. But a music critic is beholden to look beyond his/her own biases and assess the technical merits of RUSH (or any band) in a fair, objective manner. This has seldom been the case.

In **ASOF #12**, Kevin Lisowe and David Bailey shared with us the letter they wrote to Entertainment Weekly concerning the appallingly poor review of Neil Peart's Buddy Rich tribute album **Burning for Buddy**. They point out how critics Michelle Romero and Ethan H. Smith dismissed the album with facetious remarks that demonstrated their unfamiliarity with the album and the genre (big band jazz). They present an "opinion" that is **clearly** untenable.

Kevin and David's message to the *very-biased* Romero and Smith was simple and direct: "...next time, listen to the album before you review it" It occurs to me that this statement is not only an admonition to irresponsible critics, but also a recurring theme throughout most of the critical reviews of RUSH. And until recently, this type of fallacious criticism of RUSH has been all too typical. *But why has this been the case?*

In his "**Scissors, Paper, Stone**" essay (from the **Presto** tour book) Neil Peart makes an insightful comment about life and music by saying that "...we don't just reflect life, we respond to it. We filter things through our own lenses, and respond according to our temperaments and moods. As the Zen farmer says, 'That's why they make different colored neckties.' That's why they make different-sounding music too." It's hard to quantify the reasons why the same piece of music can have no effect on one person, yet move and exhilarate another. Perhaps, as Neil

suggests, the determining factor lies in the listener and how he/she responds to the music based on their own experiences, temperaments, and moods. The point is critics don't necessarily have to love RUSH, but they should at least respect and appreciate them.

Respect and appreciation of an artist always begins with the recognition of certain exceptional talents and skills that the artist has demonstrated in his work. The music of RUSH features more than a few extraordinary characteristics which critics (and nonlisteners) have begun to recognize: Lee, Lifeson, and Peart are phenomenal musicians — the word virtuoso comes to mind; their music is complex and innovative; the lyrics are thoughtful and extremely well-written.

And yet, for some reason, the critics are unable — or unwilling — to make all the connections and admit that RUSH is one of the most talented bands to come around in a long time. Whenever I encounter this mental reticence, I'm always reminded of a passage from Marcel Proust's *Remembrance of Things Past*. In it, he says that "we are very slow to recognize in the peculiar physiognomy of a new writer the model which is labeled 'great talent' in our museum of general ideas. Simply because that physiognomy is new and strange, we can find no resemblance to what we are accustomed to call talent. We say rather originality, charm, delicacy, strength; and then one day we realize that it is precisely all this that adds up to talent."

Although Proust is talking about a writer here, I think that his remarkable insight into the nature of artists and talent applies **equally** well to musicians. The fact that RUSH is not exactly a new band suggests that such a Proustian revelation is just beginning to dawn on recalcitrant critics. (It's been twenty-two years and the critics are just beginning to wake up!)

While I can understand a critic's reluctance to lavish praise on a new band that hasn't been around long enough to demonstrate the depth and nuances of its talent, I cannot understand why critics have withheld fair and accurate criticism of a band that has — over the course of twenty-two

years! — recorded some of the most ambitious, creative, inspirational, literate, and downright exciting music ever heard. Even if the critics arrogantly — and wrongly — discount the integrity or the technical mastery displayed in the music, they need only review a few vital statistics to see that RUSH warrants thoughtful and conscientious consideration for other reasons.

Consider, if you will, a career that spans twenty-two years with **no end in sight**; fifteen studio albums and three live albums released to date, (all of which have gone gold, and most multi-platinum like 2112 and Moving Pictures) not to mention the 16th studio album which is now completed!; over 30 million records sold; and thousands of sold-out concerts in at least 7 different countries. Few bands can boast of such achievements, and no other band commands the loyalty of fans and the respect of professional musicians the way RUSH does.

Still, whenever I attempt to discuss RUSH with a critic or non-listener, I'm greeted with a patronizing smile or a condescending silence, the implications of which are clear: 'That music is irrelevant and not worth taking seriously, and it's just not possible that RUSH warrants any kind of thoughtful consideration and respect.' Then the words of another great writer come to mind... "Yes we know, it's nothing new. It's just a waste of time... Forget about your silly whim. It doesn't fit the plan."

And that, I believe, is one of the most compelling reasons why critics have ignored — or at least downplayed — RUSH: their music, by nature, defies easy categorization — it doesn't fit the plan. In the Presto tour book, Neil talks about the philosophy behind the music saying that "Rush is not so much like a mirror, but a satellite dish moving down the road, soaking up different styles, methods, and designs." Indeed, one doesn't have to listen too intently to RUSH in order to discern many different styles of music like rock, jazz, classical, fusion, ska, reggae etc. that are blended together in a creative, natural way to form a truly unique and dynamic sound.

But the critics, in their unwillingness to give RUSH thoughtful consideration, have simply assumed that all RUSH songs sound the same (someone who isn't familiar with Bach would probably say that the Brandenburg Concertos 1, 2, & 3 sound remarkably similar too), and they've based their "opinions" of RUSH on the vague, out-dated perception that RUSH is a pretentious, progressive rock band known only for its epic length songs and self-indulgent concept albums. The albums in question, **Caress of Steel**, **2112**, **A Farewell to Kings**, and **Hemispheres** represent a short, but intense period of musical development in the band's history, and any attempt to characterize the band's musical and lyrical content should **not** be limited to these albums. Yet it's funny how the critics seize upon this short four year period in RUSH's twenty-two year career as a **convenient** label for the band's music. I find this characterization of RUSH woefully outdated and

inaccurate, to say the least. Besides, there is some phenomenal music on those four albums!

Unfortunately, it is doubtful that most critics have ever even heard it. Popular music critics have a remarkable affinity for placing the so-called "classic bands" beyond reproach, while always keeping a "refined" ear to the ground, lest they should miss out on "the latest thing" — Nirvana, Mariah Carey, Wynonna, etc. In this scenario, if RUSH albums have not been ignored completely, then they have been treated — or mistreated — with scarcely a cursory glance. As a result, inaccuracies — and absurdities — abound in the capsule reviews of RUSH albums to be found in various editions of the infamous Rolling Stone Record Guide. (Not surprisingly, they are too numerous to document here, so I've selected some of the more outrageous reviews that I think epitomize the careless, mindless nature of the critics and their inexplicably hostile attitude toward RUSH.) For some years, Rolling Stone has generally been acknowledged as the industry standard in music criticism. I strongly suspect that the "opinion", that RUSH is not worthy of thoughtful consideration, probably originated in — or was at least corroborated by — Rolling Stone.

In the 1979 edition of the **Rolling Stone Record Guide**, editors Dave Marsh and John Swenson give **A Farewell to Kings** and **All the World's A Stage** a "***" which in their **irrational** rating system means "worthless...record(s) that need never (or should never) have been created. Reserved for the most bathetic bathwater." The credibility of this "statement" is at once called into question due to the fact that the most commonly accepted denotation of "bathetic" is (sentimental). Interesting choice of words. I never would've characterized either record as "sentimental", and I doubt Mr. Marsh would've either if he'd bothered to look up the definition. I guess diction is not **his** forte.

In the rational universe, **All the World's A Stage** was released in 1976, and it is undoubtedly one of the best live performances **ever** committed to tape. Recorded over three nights in Toronto's venerable Massey Hall, the album features a tight, powerful performance by Lee, Lifeson, and Peart who soar through complex album tracks with flawless, spirited playing. It is a landmark achievement for a band that had only been playing together for scarcely two years! And it is clearly deserving of the same kind of praise that is routinely accorded to The Who's **Live at Leeds** and Led Zeppelin's **The Song Remains the Same**.

With **A Farewell to Kings** (1977), RUSH continued to demonstrate their mastery of blending aggressive, innovative instrumentation with thoughtful, well-versed lyrics.

Alex Lifeson's use of acoustic and classical guitar on songs like "A Farewell to Kings", "Closer to the Heart", and "Cinderella Man" (which is based loosely on Frank Capra's classic film **Mr. Deeds Goes to Town**) is particularly outstanding.

But the most striking track on the album is a song called

"Xanadu." In it, references to Samuel Taylor Coleridge's poem **Kubla Khan** are complemented by a wonderfully atmospheric sound and ambitious arrangements that evoke in the listener all the drama and emotion of a classical music tone poem. But maybe Marsh and Swenson are right; maybe it never should've been recorded. (The fact that **A Farewell to Kings** has sold well over one million copies suggests that I'm not the **only** one who disagrees with them.)

This mindless pretense they call "criticism" continues with a ludicrous review of **Fly By Night**. As rated by Marsh and Swenson, **Fly By Night** falls into the "one-star" category which is reserved for "records in which even technical competence is at question, or which are remarkably ill-conceived." Well, since it's hard to imagine any RUSH album as being ill-conceived, I'll disregard that statement. Furthermore, their insinuation that **Fly By Night** is musically incompetent is absurd and groundless. (And incidentally, I've never heard any critic — *until now* — question Lee, Lifeson, and Peart's technical proficiency as musicians.) The truth is that the playing on **Fly By Night** is excellent and far better than the shaky musicianship evident on so many "classic" pop rock albums that, for some strange reason, have been spared the perspicacious critical faculties of Marsh and his staff. Not to mention the fact that the song writing on **Fly By Night** is first-rate. There's **not** a bad song on that album.

2112 and **Hemispheres** are also hastily judged. Marsh and Swenson accord both of these albums a dismal "two star" rating, which implies that the albums are "artistically insubstantial, though not truly wretched." Harsh words about two albums that are generally regarded as two of the most outstanding progressive-rock albums. **Hemispheres** (1978) demonstrates very clearly that even back then Lee, Lifeson, and Peart were musicians of unsurpassed technical skill. (Consider the instrumental "La Villa Strangiato.") And **2112** is a substantial, artistic triumph that broadened the horizons of conceptually-based progressive rock.

Marsh and Swenson conclude their reviews of RUSH albums with a brief assessment of the band as a whole. Nowhere it is more evident than in these few lines that Marsh and company have simply missed the point. According to them, "...this Canadian power trio, which boasts a vocalist who sounds like a cross between Donald Duck and Robert Plant, reached it's pinnacle of success the day it was discovered by Circus magazine and turned into fanzine wall-decoration material. Rush is to the late Seventies what Grand Funk was to the early Seventies — the power boogie band for the **16 Magazine** graduating class." This is so derisive and **unprincipled** that it does not warrant any rational consideration whatsoever. To demonstrate the preposterous nature of Marsh's comment, let me employ the use of an analogy. Consider Bob Dylan. Though I'm largely unfamiliar with his music, I have already decided (based on what little I've heard) that I don't like him, and in my mind a sub-

conscious bias against him exists. Then, someone comes along and asks me to write a brief assessment of the man and his music. Now, if I adhered to the Marsh and Swenson school of music criticism, my review of Dylan might read something like this: "This whining, incoherent, nasally-voiced folk singer is at best a transient, 60s pop-philosopher who has been largely irrelevant for the past twenty-five years. In his rambling compositions, he has demonstrated that 'sharps' and 'flats' on the vocal scale are truly alien concepts."

This is a terribly unfair review, based on a quick, arbitrary impression of Dylan, that doesn't even begin to consider Dylan's phenomenal talent as a song writer and poet. In their assessment of RUSH, Marsh and Swenson have taken the same unscrupulous, perfunctory approach, and they totally miss the point. Like many critics of the day, they denigrate RUSH without even beginning to consider them.

In 1992, the third edition of the previously titled **Rolling Stone Record Guide** was published as the **Rolling Stone Album Guide**. Edited by Anthony DeCurtis, James Henke, and Holly George-Warren (and supported by a staff of four reviewers), this guide elevates the aforementioned ratings of RUSH albums from 'dismal' to 'fair.' Slow progress, but progress nonetheless. And while their overall attitude toward the band has not changed much, they do admit that Lee, Lifeson, and Peart have "developed some fearsome chops on their instruments..." No kidding. These professional critics are so perceptive.

Finally, in 1995, The New [and improved!] **Rolling Stone Encyclopedia of Rock & Roll** was published, and it features the best review of RUSH ever printed by Rolling Stone. The editors acknowledge RUSH's **tremendous** commercial success, (*in record and concert ticket sales*) and they respectfully point out that "Rush has . . . won respect as an inventive thinking-man's hard-rock band. Virtuoso instrumentalists, the three regularly place high in musicians' magazines readers' polls." When you compare this review of RUSH with Dave Marsh's 1979 write up of the band, it's evident that the critics have finally started to reflect upon the spirit of RUSH in a grander sense.

This thoughtful and more considerate approach to RUSH is most evident in the brand new **All Music Guide to Rock** (edited by Michael Erlewine, Vladimir Bogdanov, and Chris Woodstra). The guide employs a "five-star" rating system, and I was pleased to discover that many RUSH albums are rated very highly. **Moving Pictures** (5 stars); **2112**, **Permanent Waves**, **Exit...Stage Left**, **Signals**, and **Presto** (all receive 4 stars each).

While this is encouraging, the editors still miss the mark on more than one review. For instance, in their review of **Hold Your Fire** (1987; 3 stars), they claim that the "clinical production keeps this album from really catching fire." (Are they trying to be clever?) Songs like "Force Ten", "Time Stand Still", "Prime Mover", "Lock and Key", "Mission", and "Turn the Page" are outstanding in terms of arrangement, song

writing, performance, and production. If **Hold Your Fire** isn't a five-star album, I don't know what is.

A similarly misguided approach is taken in the review of **Power Windows** (1985; 3 stars). This is another superb album from RUSH, and I can only recommend that the critics listen to it again. "The Big Money", "Manhattan Project", and "Marathon" are particularly brilliant.

Grace Under Pressure (1984) is rated even lower (2 stars). The editors describe it as "sterile techno-crap." The sonics (overall production sound of the band and instruments) on this album are far different from **Signals** and distant further still from **Moving Pictures**. But underneath the unique production sound of Pressure all the familiar hallmarks of RUSH innovation, craftsmanship, and style are well intact. I think that critical praise for this album will come, but perhaps more slowly.

I should also mention that the traditional critical sin of "not listening to the album before you review it," is apparent in the review of **Counterparts**. In it the writer claims that the song "Nobody's Hero" is the band's statement on AIDS. **This is not true.** The song is about heroes, and what our society and culture has come to identify as heroes. Neil Peart creates lyrical portraits of two people who have died (one, coincidentally from AIDS), and he laments that fact that each one, despite the tragedy of their death, is considered by society to be "nobody's hero." I think he finds this to be a sad commentary on a society that routinely labels actors and athletes as heroes.

Musically speaking, songs like "Animate", "Between Sun and Moon", "Nobody's Hero", "Leave That Thing Alone", "Alien Shore", and "Everyday Glory" make **Counterparts** one of the strongest RUSH albums in recent years. This is corroborated by several enthusiastic reviews appearing in various musicians' magazines, and local newspapers.

In the February 1994 edition of **Guitar magazine**, critics hail **Counterparts** for being "as strong as 1991's **Roll the Bones** album while continuing to modernize the band's sound with rhythmic, melodic, and textural variation." Another favorable review of the album appeared in the October 19th edition of The Boston Globe. Critic Steve Morse praised the album for its "jarringly virtuosic, socially-conscious batch of songs that should heighten a respect cemented in 1991 with the disc **Roll the Bones**, followed by a sold-out Worcester Centrum show." (There were actually two sold-out shows on the **Roll the Bones** tour in the New England

area: one at the Worcester Centrum in Worcester, MA; and the second at the Providence Civic Center in Rhode Island. The Counterparts Tour saw three sold-out New England dates: two consecutive nights at the Worcester Centrum; and a third show a month or so later at the Providence Civic Center. I'm happy to say that I was in attendance at all three!)

In the March 4, 1994 issue of **Goldmine**, the critic (whose name escapes me at the moment) has the following to say about **Counterparts**.

"Counterparts blends dreamscapes and philosophical poetry in an exploration of yin/yang, necessary opposites, apparent contradictions which hold the world together in tension and resolution. Following this theme, Geddy Lee's distinctive tenor soars through Neil Peart's ruminations about heroism, sex, competition/cooperation, and exhortations about existential perseverance. As usual, Peart's lyrics favor staccato images, short phrases pregnant with oblique meaning or carrying a sparse narrative that brims full of aphoristic truth. Musically speaking, Rush has stripped off some of the lush production for a rougher edge that emphasizes the trio form, although any "roughness" has to do with sonic illusion, since it's hard to imagine much more polished musicians than these three. Alex Lifeson's guitar playing is lean and tough, crunching chords or following the melody tightly, only occasionally stepping out to rip through a succinct solo which is always the picture of musical perfection, taking the song to the brink before pulling back. Such energy, subjecting ego to the song, is no doubt why Lifeson has been one of the more underrated guitarists for years . . . Lee and Peart are no slouches either. Lee's punchy bass style is extremely melodic, acting as a bass voice in a classical sense rather than playing an oom-pah dance-band role. Moving in and around it all are Peart's kinetic, ever-creative drum parts . . . Counterparts is artful concept music, spotlessly played and exquisitely produced."

That's more like it.

Reviews like this demonstrate that with the inexorable passage of time and the advantage of retrospect critics are finally beginning to hear RUSH in a way they can truly understand, respect, appreciate, and hopefully enjoy. Maybe someday, the critics, as Proust said, will make all the connections and, in a wondrous moment of epiphany, bestow the words 'great talent' upon RUSH unequivocally and forever...



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**WE HAVE ASSUMED CONTROL . . . WE HAVE ASSUMED CONTROL
WE HAVE CONSUMED A TROLL**

Report by Steve Streater

Since moving back to the Midwest, we have had the chance (finally) to see Animation: A Tribute to Rush play several times. I am sure there will be MANY more shows to come as well! Animation delivers a pure Rush experience of utmost class and delivery. There is a homey-feel that permeates each show. A slickness, yet relaxed performance – a really **RARE** combination. I had the pleasure to pose some ever probing questions for ASOF "Hard Copy." We highly recommend you get on their mailing list (see above) so that if you're ever in the area you might be able to catch a show!

Animation is Jay Spikes - Dirk - (bass, vocals & synthesizers), Dan Van Schindel - Pratt - (drums, vocals & synthesizers), and founder Chester Lichon - Lerxst (guitar, vocals & synthesizers). Animation bring great spirit and vigor to the music of Rush. They are all fans, professionals and have their separate private & professional lives as well, which Rush themselves would be proud of. You know how Rush feels about us hard cores. Get a life, eh? Well, most of us (a vast majority) DO.

"We're in our tenth year now, we had our ninth anniversary in March," exclaims Chester, who has been playing guitar for 20 some odd years. An amazing feat, and a great amount of dedication is very evident at an Animation show.

So what is it like playing Neil's parts you ask? Dan explains, "The constant attention you have playing – there is never a dull moment. You're always thinking. It's always IN YOUR FACE."

One unique part of an Animation show is the second set, as well as parts of the first, are requests from fans at the club! Animation covers every Rush album from, Finding My Way to



Animate and six hours in between!

"People just starting yelling out stuff. And it's like...okay," says Jay.

"You're pretty much obligated to do it. We're here to entertain them. We aren't on any kind of trip like WE'RE RUSH...we know we're going to have

a good time. Now it's if we can relay that good time to the audience," comments Dan.

Yeah right. Okay, so let's hear "No One at the Bridge." So it is written, so it is done! Behold, Caress material performed in absolute **gemstone** form. Truly a highlight at an Animation show. Caress has always been a personal favorite of mine, and of many fans as well.

Chester will introduce the "radio Rush" to satisfy the more frequently heard Rush songs on the radio and those fans who enjoy that aspect of Rush, however, adding, "and there're some pretty good ones as well." No doubt about it! As Rush fans, we are genuinely spoiled to the max. We take a lot for granted with our favorite band. For the most part radio airplay has been reserved for the five or six so-called 'hit' Rush songs, while the newer material may often be slighted, as well as a plethora of old gems. That's just the nature of programmed radio. Ah well.

Dan, who holds a degree in music as well as a 25 year drumming background really only discovered Rush in 1990. Although his exposure to Rush prior to 90 was limited, he quickly caught up and seems to be pretty happy it all turned out the way it did. One of the highlights is Dan's drum solo which does not copy Peart, but honors him. It is a unique solo that combines many Peart-esque signatures within an original format. It is quite evident Dan is having a blast.

From a church choir to singing Geddy, Jay brings 22 years of singing experience to the group and pulls off Ged

like you wouldn't believe. Jay had to learn keys and pedals upon joining Animation. So what's the most difficult song to pull off? "I would say Turn the Page," Jay says, "Trying to match the syncopation between vocals and the bass line." Chester agrees. From all indication, you could not tell, Animation pulls off Turn the Page very well indeed. That happened to be the last song of the night.

Animation has a rare blend of professionalism and that of being fans. But Chester adds, "We don't take ourselves too seriously. These are bars and we're copying someone else's music. We like to go out and play hard."

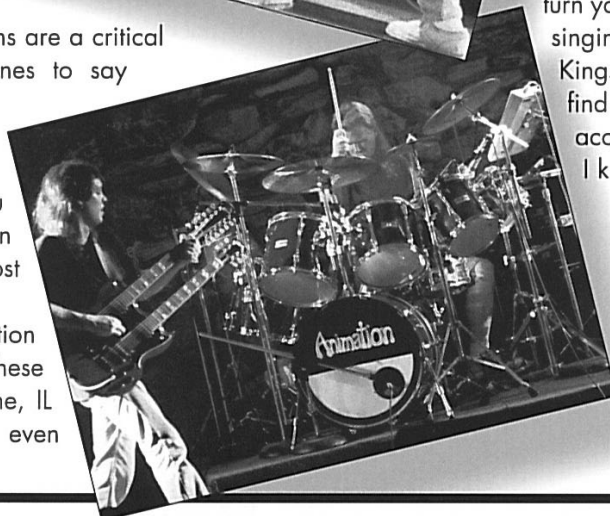
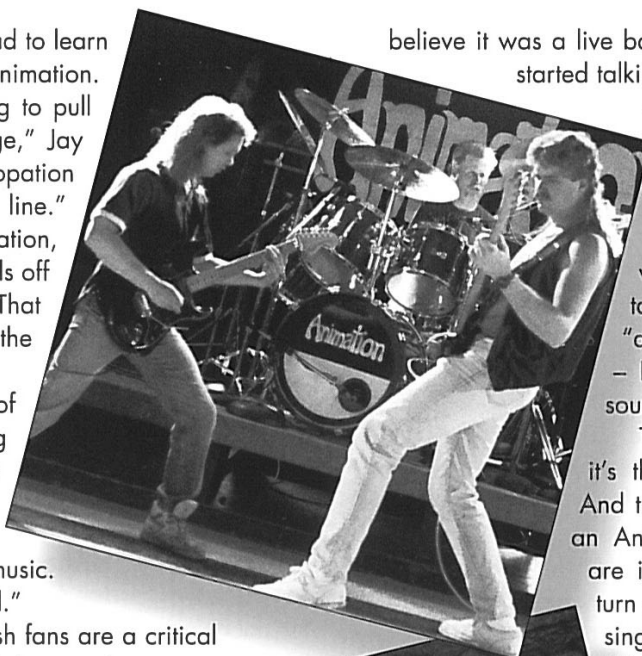
"But we also realize that Rush fans are a critical bunch. They would be the first ones to say something," adds Dan. Absolutely. Rush fans are very picky. Sometimes too picky. We're perfectionist to the core. We can't help it sometimes. You won't find many complaints at an Animation show, even among the most critical complainers.

Most unusual event at an Animation show? "Cellphone, from Palatine. These people called Colorado from Palatine, IL and the person in Colorado didn't even

believe it was a live band until we stopped playing and started talking. Now she flies in every once in awhile to see the band," remarks Chester.

"How about the story where when we first started playing? A club owner was really leery and wanted a tape. So we gave him a tape of RUSH live," reflects Dan, "and you know what the guy said? - I don't know....this really doesn't sound that good."

Typical bar owner, eh? Yeah, well, it's the **FANS** who drive Animation. And the dedication is very apparent at an Animation show. You **KNOW** you are in good company when you can turn your head either left or right, while singing along with A Farewell to Kings or No One at the Bridge and find a kindred spirit singing just as accurately. That, my friends, is cool. I know I FELT right at home.



Easy Rider Neil and friend Brutus travel North to see the midnight sun

...at one point I came across Brutus stopped in the middle of the gravel, pointing ahead to a large black shape at the roadside. "It's a bear," he said. "What do you think we should do?"

After a moment's consideration I said, "I'll ride by it really slowly, and you have the video camera ready when it starts chewing on my leg."

Neil Peart, *Mud-wrestling tour to Yellowknife*

We all knew Neil was an avid biker, but it was news to us that he was a **BIG** bike enthusiast as well. **BMW** touring motorcycle big in fact. In the April 96 issue of **Cycle Canada** Neil writes an absolutely wonderful story on a trip he and Brutus took ("dumb idea") up North to the remote parts of Canada just to see the midnight sun. The reader is treated to an amusing story that is accompanied by

photographs taken by Neil and Brutus. The story had ME rolling on the floor in laughter and tears! (Some thought I had gone mad.) Well, we *immediately* made an inquiry as to whether we could reprint the story. It is pending and is in Neil's hands now. We then went for the next best thing. We called the publisher and told him to set aside 100 copies. (I think they have more as well) To get a copy of this superb Neil piece call **514-738-9439** and ask for Douglas and tell him **ASOF** sent ya! They will graciously send your copy out right away and bill you a mere \$4.00 each. Such a deal! **PLEASE** limit your order to 1 or 2 copies so everyone gets a chance. It's all on the honor system, which is very refreshing indeed. *Call right away as supplies are very limited. First come, first served.*

Another funny aspect of the issue is that on the cover is a headline (not referring to Neil) which reads Cut to the Chase. Is that cool or what?

"Taking forever / to go nowhere / really fast."

MAKING MEMORIES

By Linda E. Brown

Jacksonville, Florida

Hello Rush fans! I'm writing on behalf of my husband Jerry, whom his Rush friends refer to as 'Broon Jr.' Mainly due to the similarity of his name and ex-Rush producer Terry 'Broon' Brown. Anyway, if you know Jerry well enough, you'll know his real occupation is that of a sailor with over 16 years in the U.S. Navy. Well, this is just one of those many times where he is presently out on the 'High Water' for six months on a guided missile fast frigate, this time in the Persian Gulf (once again). Which in his estimation, "The only thing good about the Navy, is I can find Rush memorabilia from all over the world!" Currently he is scheduled to return home in early November, hopefully before the next tour begins.

In order to keep his column going, from the 'Rush Archives,' I've decided to write, to talk a little about my counterpart and what it's like to be married to what appears to be (to me anyway) the biggest Rush fan on the face of the planet! Of course he'll probably be surprised when he gets back and reads these 'Open Secrets' in print. (He'll say, "yer trippin")

He had already been a long time fan of the band, long before we had ever gotten married, back in '82. In fact the first time I ever heard them, was when he played 'A Farewell To Kings' for me, when we were still dating. Of course, I still have fond memories of him in the high school halls with his black concert jerseys from their earlier tours in the late 70's. His favorite album to this day is still **Hemispheres!** The first time he took me to see Rush was on the Signals tour on November 30th, 1982 at the Hampton Coliseum in Virginia with opener, the late-great Rory Gallagher! From that show on, I've made it a point to see at least one or two shows per tour, my favorite so far being the 'Presto' tour (you gotta love those bunnies!) Unfortunately, in a phone interview with Chris Kay, Alex was asked if the rabbits would return from heaven? His answer, and I quote, "No, the rabbits have run off to the wilderness."

Jerry usually hits the road with concert itinerary in hand and follows the band from city to city, but one or two quality shows are about all I need. (Someone needs to stay home and pay the bills! Right Steve?) It always seems like the shows he takes me to are always the best seats in the house. Usually anywhere from front row to third row, center stage. I don't know where he comes up with these tickets every time, but he does it! I also go with him to several of the Rush Tribute Band shows. He usually takes his video camera equipment to film their entire set. So far my favorite tribute band was the now dis-banded '**Moving Pictures** - A Tribute To Rush' (Hi, Bob!)

His love for the music of Rush is far more than say your average fan, I mean he really goes to the extremes to find out every little detail he possibly can. His collection of memorabilia is like that of a museum, no wonder he calls it the '**Rush Archives!**' One entire room in our home here in Florida is **entirely** dedicated to the band. The walls are bedecked with Gold and Platinum record awards, framed color photos of Geddy, Alex and John Rutsey drinking beer with Terry Brown before opening for Kiss, the original Moon 45 and LP (just to name a few!). Some of the rare artifacts he has from the band, he doesn't even put in his huge ever growing collection list, nor does he let anyone know he has them. Too valuable, sentiment, I don't know? All I know is, some of his collectibles are 'Ultimate Artifacts!' Check out his 'Acetates' article back in **ASOF #7**. Of course we have our limitations . . . one time he got a letter from a guy who won Neil's entire drum kit thru a contest in the May 1982 issue of **Modern Drummer** magazine. He offered to sell it to Jerry, but not being a drummer himself, we just didn't have the room to display such a massive item! We're kicking ourselves in the butt to this day for that one! But, there are certain things he can't live without, if you've ever received a copy of his entire collection list, the front page reads, 'My most wanted items ever. 16 March, 1979 Municipal Auditorium, Nashville, Tennessee. Any audio, video, memorabilia, ticket stubs, etc.! Anything whatsoever from this one historic night on the **Tour Of The Hemispheres!**' I'm sure he's willing to give up just about anything for these particular items of interest, from his very first Rush concert, with opening band Molly Hatchet. He says it's the night he *sailed into destiny!*

Some of you may remember, about a year and a half ago, he decided to sell the Rush Archives, along with his 'Planet Of The Apes' collection and 'Incredible Hulk/Tales To Astonish' collection (No #1 to present) [Mr. Steve is a Hulk nut as well and boy did he **freak** over the Hulk #1. Mr. Steve was about to **smash!** Hulk rules....comic nut Editor], in an effort to raise money for school! After months of debating on what to do, he mailed fliers out to a lot of hardcore fans and was on the brink of executing one of the *biggest* Rush Auctions ever! Well, to make a long story short, he thanks me and the many other fans, who told him he was 'Losing it'. Steve and Mandy, after going with him to an 'Ozric Tentacles' concert, told him he was insane for even *thinking* about selling out! Well, he listened to all of us and the Archives was **SAVED!**

He also attends all the other events that come along, Harvard Lampoon, Buddy Rich Memorial Scholarship Concert, Laser Light Shows, etc. Anything that might have one or more of the band members involved. One of the greatest things that has become of all of this, are all the other fans, friends and followers we have shared with along the way, Steve & Mandy (the only "REAL" Rush Fanzine publishers and editors!), Chris Kay & Cheryl (Little One), Bob Catalano, Tom Gardanis & Marcia Jenkins, Samuel A. Scott, Frank Umana,

Jim, Sandra & Jordan Wright (from Scotland). That's just to name a few, the list goes on and on! The address list of all the fans he corresponds with is well over 175. The postage we spend on all the writing and trading is a small fortune in itself! And no matter who writes him, he always finds time to write them back, no matter if they've been a hardcore fan for years or just entered the Rush scene recently. There are a lot of loyal and honest fans whom have steadily corresponded and traded with him for years, which have become very close to him thru the mail. They always seem to look out for each other, in that huge trading realm that's out there! **Presto Productions** – Christopher C. Anderson, **Rush Collector** – Charles Colletti, **The Omega Concern** – Eric C. Coppinger, **Red Sector K** – Pete/Victor/Koza, **Lerxst Fans In Wonderland** – Richard J. Soto, **Rush Fanatic** – Stephen Teebagy, **Camp RushHead** – Tim Thompson, and again the list goes on!

Speaking of writing, Jerry has been actively pursuing his dream of publishing a book about Rush. So far, looking over his shoulder at his computer monitor (Geeeee, even his mouse pad and screen saver have Rush on them), this thing is going to be something no Rush fan will want to be without. He is writing about the band's history through the eyes of the Rush fans. If possible, he wants to include an entire history/tour itinerary and discography from their beginning to present. The project, he expects will take him a few years to accomplish and get on the streets, but anything of quality takes a lot of hard work and time. Time which he has little of these days, due to his deployment schedules. But, let me tell ya, when he is at home, he is literally 'Between The Wheels!' I couldn't be more proud of him, I mean this thing is really starting to take shape. Of course he can always use your support, by sending him known tour dates, venues, opening bands and out of the ordinary events that involved the band. This information is very critical for the most 'accurate' and 'complete' tour itinerary ever compiled! Our address is; 1618 Crabapple Cove Ct. N., Jacksonville, FL. 32225. Just to give you a little hint, he detests 'Rumors!'. I think he touched on this a little in his last article. So far, the itinerary alone is 35 pages long, with about double the information contained in the 'Online' tour listing. Anyone who sends him even a little tidbit of a tour date submission whether he already has it or not, he'll be listing their name in the acknowledgements.

His original idea for doing a book in the first place, transpired when he began doing a cover story for 'Goldmine' magazine. He already talked to the editors and got the **okay**. But, as time progressed, his manuscript sorta outgrew the limitations of what they could publish. But, don't count that out completely. He says if he can't get a publisher to publish his book, he'll edit what he has and submit it to 'Goldmine' anyway, so fans would still be able to read his work. That's only if things don't work out. *[And don't forget ASOF can print some as well! Perhaps a preview, eh? - Editors]*

Also, while I'm on the subject of writing, please feel

free to drop us a line anytime and let Jerry know what type of articles you would like him to write about, for future issues of **ASOF**. So far he has covered - Passes, Acetates, Lyrics, Awards, Truckers, Press kits, Buddy Rich Concert, Early Albums, Bootlegs, Internet, etc., with drawings, photo's and miscellaneous thrown in for good measure. He loves to contribute! *[We love that too!! - Editors]*

So now you're probably asking yourself, how do I put up with being married to a Rushaholic? 'You Bet Your Life,' it's **great!** Especially when I enjoy their music so much! My favorite album cover is 'Fly By Night' (Check out Jerry's guitar in **ASOF #13**) and favorite song 'The Body Electric,' you gotta love that video! To Alex, Neil and Geddy, come on over for supper some day, I'll show you what a true hardcore fan really looks like, I'm married to one!

Oh yeah...one more thing, does anyone know where I can find a 'Mystery Science Theater 3000' lunchbox, just like Geddy's on the Counterparts tour? I'd love to surprise him with it, when he returns from sea. (Eric Ross? Tim Thompson? The **MST3K ConventionCon** will be held in Minneapolis at the Convention Center on the weekend of August 30th.) We hope to see all of you on the next Rush tour! Long live Lerxst, Pratt, Dirk and **A Show Of Fans!!!**

"That's a wrap."

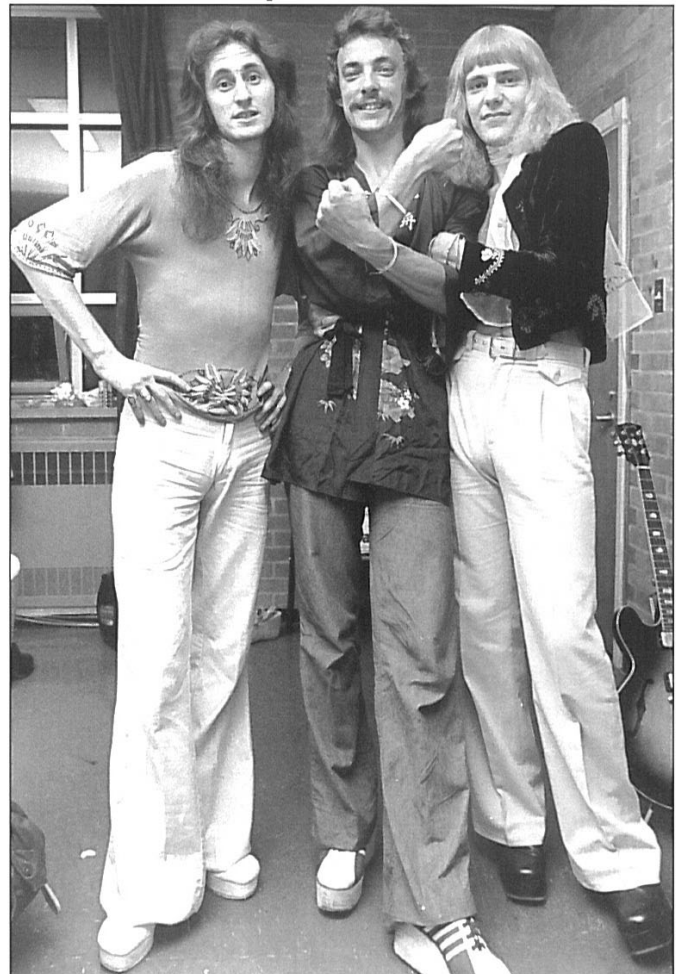


Photo submitted by Paul Goodall

Middletown Dreaming

.....
Mark Wick ♣ Fond Du Lac, WI

After having absorbed my first issue of **ASOF** (#12), I had become quite excited with all the new info, the enthusiasm, and the possibilities which sprang into my mind from all the fellow die-hard Rush fans. I always had a feeling there were many others, and I'm glad we can all finally communicate with one another in print. So I take this great opportunity to contribute something. Bear with me, this may be the first of many articles. I'm betting that my writing will get better with practice (just like Rush albums!)

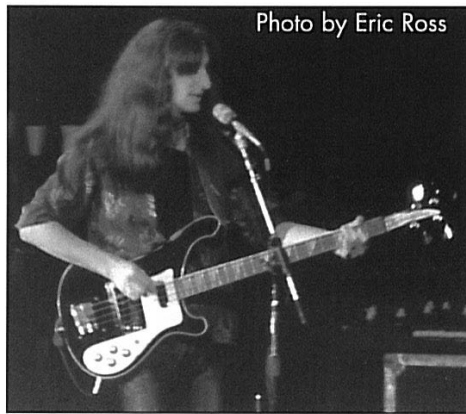
I decided to write on a subject I think all of us are constantly preoccupied with these days – the forthcoming 16th studio accomplishment of Rush! Questions continuously cross our minds – the most obvious being **when?** When will the day be, the hour, the place, in which we hear that first bite of new Rush? Most likely that chosen DJ promo "single." Ever since Rush became my favorite band (1984) I'm able to vividly recall the setting of where I heard each album's first song(s) and how energized I felt on each of those days!

The planned release date is now in August. That gives me time to tell you my predictions, the true subject of this article. Yes, you read correctly, I will attempt the impossible, predicting the unpredictable. Or are they? I have heard all three mention (in one form or another) that even **they** don't know where they'll end up until they have maybe 7 songs or so roughly done. This makes predictions challenging, but also great fun! Let's see . . . Honestly, one of my early predictions last year (it was a tough year, wasn't it?!) has already come true. We are getting 12 songs this time! *[I believe it will have 11, **not** 12 tracks - Editors]* Rush have always tried to give us "the most for the money" and by them going for that 12th song it seems to fit right in with their commendable hard-work-pays-off attitude. I also think they may feel obligated to give us a full 12-track cd since we have been **patient** in waiting for them to produce new material.

What will this album **sound** like? Well, I'm sure Neil will try some "Back to Basics" (see Modern Drummer magazine) approaches, but will we recognize them? Hopefully, he'll tell us later on. What **theme** will surface from the studio? Whatever Neil's been reading or thinking about, of course.

Perhaps it will be nostalgic – just guesses. Alex, I think, will be more focused on his role. I expect a new Rush classic to emerge from what he has created on this album. And Geddy? I wonder if he ever did finish those formal piano lessons he got into a while back? **Why?** Since Rush is unpredictable just when you think synths and keyboards are no longer of great interest, maybe we'll hear something with heavy keyboards again. Or maybe not! Is it time to change basses again? I don't think so. He had great success with that Fender and its unique amp on Counterparts. I think it will help all of them further explore that "funky" range of Rush music, such as the groove of "Roll the Bones" (title track) and "Where's My Thing." Since the Rush sound is derived from each member being open to new and various forms of music (the sponge effect), I'm sure a trained ear might be able to hear the influences in this album. A good example of this is the grungier (?!) sound of Counterparts.

Photo by Eric Ross



I hope there is another instrumental. Maybe two (okay, that's wishful thinking)! These always turn out excellent. I'm very happy Neil "forced" the other two into finishing the last instrumentals. That was quite a long wait between "YYZ" and "Where's My Thing!" Of course, maybe Neil has so many pent-up feelings there isn't room for an instrumental this time. I think we all try not to get our hopes up too high!

There is also the possibility of an epic length song someday, but not on this album. Maybe 1998. There is a weird hope of mine that we'll finally get to hear "Tough Break" one of these days. Has anybody heard it? Is it a parody song or what? This could be the subject of future articles! Getting back to 1996-X (working album title), I wonder if there will be a new "– Man" song on it. Rush trivia wizards can figure that out!

I mustn't forget one last prediction- the artwork! What will the great Hugh Syme come up with this time? He's lucky- I'm sure he gets to hear some early versions! Sometime before Counterparts, I thought it would be nice to have a beautiful **blue** (not red!) album cover counterparting the semi-subliminal **red** Hold Your Fire. It was satisfying to see that come true. This causes me to think- green hasn't been used yet, or white. Perhaps a collage of colors like "A Show of Hands." Being a graphic design major, I am looking forward to what Hugh will come up with next.

Maybe Neil will read this goofy article before he is finished with the new one and make sure none of the previous ideas are carried out! Or maybe it's already done. Maybe the album won't be titled with a semi-predictable "–s" ending such as Counterparts or maybe he'll just give up trying to outfox me and call it . . . Prediction! HA!

Constant change is here to stay!



The RUSH Fan

By Chester Lichon

Anyone who knows me knows I love to have a little fun with the written word. That means nothing to most of you because most of you don't know me. "Who the heck are you", you ask. (I can hear it.)

For the past nine years I've been involved with **Animation**, a RUSH tribute band from the Chicago area. I've been writing the bi-monthly mailer for **Animation** for nearly four years now (which helps explain the confusion about the written word in the first paragraph.) I like to have fun with the mailer too.

Would you believe I've never seen the band? Technically speaking that is. My seat doesn't face the stage. My view is from (enter.....) stage right. During the band's performances I'm occupied with Taurus Pedals and a Gibson Les Paul (or a Fender Strat.) Much too busy to relax and watch a band (if you know what I mean.)

People slip and call me Alex (sometimes) but I quickly remind them my name is Chester. "Dude, you guys sound just like RUSH." Thanks. That's the idea. That and to have a blast! So I guess we're getting it done. "Dude? Do you do this for a living or do you guys have, like, jobs and stuff?" We all have full time jobs and we just play clubs on weekends. No delusions/identity crisis here. "Dude, you're awesome." Never sure what to say to that one. Flattering, but what would you say? "Thanks," is the best I can come up with. **Enough!!** Let's move on.

I told Steve I would have a hard time making up my mind what to write about and I was right. What should I write about? Over nine years of playing bars. You'd think I would have many stories and guess what . . . I do. But pick one! I decided to begin with the one thing that we all have in common, the thing that brought us together, and see where I go from there.

There's probably not too much I can tell you about RUSH that you don't already know. That is my point. RUSH fans and what they/you are like. They KNOW RUSH!! Do you know how many RUSH fans I get to meet? What do you think they have in common with you? How does it relate to RUSH? (Does it?) I'll tell you what I notice and, like RUSH does with their music, I'll let you interpret, sort, analyze and conclude in your own way.

The obvious characteristics possessed by your average **RF** are humor, friendliness, politeness, intelligence and confidence. I know they are intelligent and confident because

they walk right up and talk to us (intelligently) as though we were old friends with a common bond. Most people I/we meet are friendly, not only to us, but to each other. Many friendships have formed and are ongoing at Animation gatherings. Humor? Of course. We share many a yuk with the average **RF**. Polite because they almost always begin with "I don't want to bother you, but . . ." Believe me, it's no bother. There was an article written (on the band) in 1994 and the writer couldn't believe how nice and devoted and knowledgeable (and on and on . . .) the fans were. Nothing but nice things to say.

Those are easy qualities to spot. They're right out on top, in front, not to be missed.

What about qualities you may not notice at a glance? Some qualities you cannot see as obvious and you must think about. What could he be talking about?

A noticeable hidden quality (let's see you figure that one out) is detail. **RF's** are usually very detailed when they speak. When describing (anything) they/you tend to be specific and articulate (beer permitting.) They want to be understood . . . completely.

Thoughtful. When they have a point to make, it's important to them and they are passionate about it.

Oh yeah. One more thing. *They like RUSH.* No, they **LOVE RUSH.**

The most common thread, however, is the passion. **RF's** are **VERY** passionate. They apply passion in serious doses throughout all they do. Take all those qualities and imagine how fired up and focused a **RF** gets when they talk about RUSH. You can see people light up when they talk about RUSH. These people relate to this band like almost no other. This music does something to people. They are all touched the same way by the music. Its complexity and its thoughtfulness and its energy. And RUSH' passion. RUSH moves people to think . . . and enjoy it.

People reflect the music. AC/DC fans are moved by AC/DC's music. You've seen avid AC/DC fans, right? They're a lot alike. Usually loud, rockin', partyin' . . . like AC/DC's music.

Folks who listen to lite rock move like lite rocks, eh?? Quiet, unassuming, "isn't-that-kinda-loud?", new-age-jazz-isn't-so-bad-after-all, kinda people.

Oldies?? Country?? Rap? Make sense? So look at RUSH fans.

Guess where I'm going with this. Do **RF's** reflect RUSH' music? Intelligent, passionate, articulate. **IS** that RUSH music or what?? They say you are a reflection of your parents. Your children of you. Well, I like to believe your friends are a reflection of **you** too. If you hang with trouble-makers you'll get in trouble and so on. That being said, and, judging by the people I meet, RUSH should be very happy and proud of the quality of people who make up their following.

I know I said I'd let you draw your own conclusion but, being a **RF** myself, I just **HAD** to give you mine. (*Passionately!!*)



FEEDBACK

Send letters of comment to:

ASOF — FEEDBACK

5411 E. State St., Suite 309, Rockford, IL 61108

Right to the heart of the matter...

Dear Steve & Mandy,

Hi! I just wanted to send a quick thank you for the latest **ASOF** issue. **GREAT** job on the interview with Lerxst. It's encouraging to know he and the other two are so down to Earth and not, as Bernie said, "rock stars."

I must ammend some of my comments made about "Victor" in my last letter. It's really funny, but "Start Today", which I really didn't like so much upon the first couple of listens has become one of my favorite tunes on the album. It really grew on me. Also, I was particularly glad about one comment Alex made about the sound. I had remarked that some of the tunes had a very "Rush-esque" sound to them. Well, not long after I wrote to you, I spoke to my best friend (one of two friends responsible for introducing me to RUSH) Jamie who said, "It doesn't sound like RUSH, it sounds like Alex."

"You're absolutely correct now that I think of it", I said. So I found it interesting (and gratifying) that Alex feels the same way about it. Actually, he'd know more about his sound than I would!

Anyway, it was so satisfying to read an interview conducted by a fan, and more importantly a fan who didn't spend 10 minutes telling Alex how great he is! That's unfortunately what happens all too often when one of them is on Rockline. Bravo, Steve. Your questions were intelligent and the answers revealing. I must say that as big a fan as I am, I still never knew that Adrian was Alex's son. I thought he was some foreign guy who was a friend of Alex. Silly me.

Lastly, as one who doesn't own, or understand, a computer, you'll never have to worry about me leaving the world of the printed page and flying (or surfing) to the net or web or whatever it's called. I played on it one night at a friend's house and thought it was kinda boring. Anyway, I'll always be here reading **ASOF!**

So until the **Explosion** this summer, stay well! I can't wait! There's definitely an excitement back in my bones which occurs every time there's a new RUSH album coming!! See ya!

Chris Springer
Los Angeles, CA



Dear Steve:

Your recent interview with Alex Lifeson (ASOF #13) was by far the most extensive, most insightful interview I have read since Victor came out. There have been several interviews with Mr. Lifeson in various musicians' magazines, but none of them was as in-depth and informative as yours.

I was particularly excited by Mr. Lifeson's comments about the new Rush album. Although he only hinted at the type of sound featured on the album, comments like "...there are some very, very strong melodies and there are some very, very strong, heavy, riffy parts.." and "There's a swing to this record and a groove to the stuff that we've written" are exciting because they reveal something of the nature of the album. I get the feeling that the new Rush album is going to be **INCREDIBLE!**!! and well worth the wait. Mr. Lifeson himself said that the new album will feature "some of the best material we've ever written." The suspense is killing me!

The fact that your interview included this type of discussion about the new album is impressive and worthy of note, especially since the national musicians' magazines have not been forthcoming with any details about it. Once again, ASOF has come through with comprehensive, up-to-date information on the latest Rush project.

Keep up the good work!

Shaun Sullivan, Clemsford, MA



On **Victor**..."What a pleasant surprise! Heavy, melodic, aggressive, clean, funky, smooth, beautiful and almost as crunchy as grape nuts. What a counterpart, huh? Some of the lyrics Alex wrote just blew us away! Kudos to all who contributed on Victor. Bill & Alex, what a combo. Nice vocals by Edwin. How about Dalbello? Wow! What a voice! She must be Geddy's younger sister. Anyway, nice going King Lerxst. 90° detour indeed!! *We're going to enjoy this for a long time to come.*

Tom and Maria McGovern, Anaheim, CA



Closer to OUR Hearts

As you may or may not know, Rush is my favorite group. I'm sure this might sound redundant to all at ASOF, but isn't it great?! Everyone I know doesn't hate Rush. Even "non-fans" think Rush is okay. In short, someone has listened to them one time or another. Even if only for a day, I feel like there is some kind of "connection" between the fans and Rush. This is obviously what motivates them to make great albums. Without our incredible dedication to one of the greatest bands in music, Rush couldn't go on, which fortunately isn't the case!!

My most unforgettable day was Wednesday, April 25, 1990. The first time I saw Rush. The Presto album is what got

me hooked. Mr. Big opened for them, but we wanted Rush! The lead singer of Mr. Big asked the fans if we were addicted to Rush and the whole place went nuts! After they finished their set, I couldn't wait for Rush. Then the lights dimmed, the "Three Stooges" intro began and once again the place went crazy; one could hardly hear the intro. Then the opening to "Force Ten" came on and I'll never forget how I felt that moment, like all of the arena felt. The excitement, fun and most of all the music. When they did "Closer to the Heart" everyone held up lighters at Geddy's intro. Once again I felt in harmony with the entire arena of fans. No hatred, no fighting, total peace. I wonder how Rush must feel when they play that song and see an "orange glow" among the seats. Flattered elation, I would guess. They must wonder how people can get so into this and the other songs as well.

I can answer that! Rush fans dedication and never ending loyalty to this great group. The fans' connection can never be broken.

Chris Pinto, Rochelle Park, NJ



Photo submitted by Jeff Hamilton, Photographer unknown.

Dear Mandy and Steve,

Please forgive the self-indulgent nature of this letter, but it is a medium by which I can express some long repressed (but never forgotten) feelings of frustration. This letter was inspired by "Positive Signals From The Past," written by Paul F. Grzes.

I was first introduced to Rush's music by a friend I went to school with in 1981. At the time I was 15 years old and

Exit...Stage Left had just recently been released. I remember hearing "Closer to the Heart" from **ESL** one morning while getting ready for school. Hearing that song for the first time was an experience I can only describe as a re-birth. Suddenly, it was like I was super-charged with LIFE! I have never to this day experienced such a dramatic transformation (for lack of description).

That night after school I went to the local record store and purchased my very first album by any group. I am grateful that it was **ESL**. During the remainder of that night I endlessly played the album over and over again. I played **ESL** until 2 am. It was a school night, but I couldn't stop listening to the album. After 5 hours of sleep, I awoke a little groggy, but filled with excitement to hear all those songs again. That night I took all the money I had in my bank account and purchased every Rush album to that date. And so began my life-long dedication and loyalty to the greatest of all bands.

At that time, I knew very little about the band itself, but their popularity around my school was quite noticeable. They were riding high not only on the success of **ESL**, but also from the momentum generated by Permanent Waves and Moving Pictures. It seemed to me that everybody I went to school with, and the friends I associated with were true Rush fans. Being so new to the band, it was comforting to have so many Rush fans around. Unfortunately, my feelings of comfort were short lived.

I can remember being lit up with anticipation at the prospect of a new Rush album. I listened to the radio constantly for any word of the new album. Then after awhile, I heard the title. Signals. A Rush of excitement raced through me. I couldn't wait for the album to be released. Finally, release day came. That morning I woke up early, raced to the record store and purchased Signals. I listened to Signals **EVERY** opportunity that was available to me. In a short time I learned every note, every chord, every drum beat and every new lyric. I adored Signals. To this day it still remains as meaningful to me as it did over 12 years ago.

Then something very unexpected was happening around me. I was getting no positive feedback from my friends on Signals. In fact, it was the exact opposite! All sorts of negative comments were made about Signals. Needless to say, I was crestfallen.

People at school would go out of their way to make derogatory remarks to me about the new album. Those remarks made me very angry, but I never let them know that their remarks were so hurtful. Aside from feeling angry and hurt, I was experiencing a new feeling. Loneliness. I was one of a handful of people I knew that appreciated the new direction that Rush were taking. The feeling of comfort that once surrounded me, was no longer in evidence. Out of this feeling of alienation, came a well of new found inspiration since I was being bombarded with all this negative emotion, I decided to reverse it and double my enthusiasm for the band. I was going to defend my enthusiasm, no matter what the cost. And that's what I did! Every day I wore a different Rush shirt

to school. This was nothing unusual, for I wore my Rush shirts all the time. But now, I adorned my shirts with a myriad of Rush buttons. Inside my locker, I filled every available space with pictures of the band. I wrote Rush - Signals anywhere and everywhere I could. I even suffered through one week of cleaning the schools lockers as a result of being caught writing on the teacher's bulletin board. It was also at this time that I started my Rush collection. Every article, picture and poster I came across, I bought. Most of my original collection still adorns my bedroom walls. My brother has the rest. I defended Rush and Signals in particular, vehemently! Although it is impossible to rate one album over another (because every Rush album is the best ever!) Signals represents a sentimental milestone for me.

If there is one point that I am trying to convey, it is the fact that, in my opinion, there are two categories of Rush fans. The first category are the fans that say they enjoy one particular musical phase of the band. I'm sure you have heard such things as, "I like the old Rush the best," or "I liked everything from Moving Pictures and back..." In my opinion, those people are not true Rush fans. They are, as most other people, mere observers of a particular audio stimulus. Then there is the second category. The **"TRUE RUSH FAN."** The fanatics. The hard cores, dye-in-the-wool to the end fans. I have been lucky enough to be associated with many true Rush fans throughout the years. My brother, Daryl Lawrence; my good friend Kevin Bontius; my cousins Robert & Mike Mason, and so on. These are examples of the people I am privileged to be associated with. We all have that feeling. It is a universal feeling, but also a very personal and private feeling. One that only each individual can really, truthfully describe. Speaking for myself, it encompasses many different emotions. Immense pride, joy, warmth, comfort and wholeness all describe my feelings about Rush. These emotions are sometimes overwhelming when I am listening to the music...it evokes tears. Tears of respect and utter adulation. It is a feeling unlike any other.

These are the fans that find it impossible to give favor to one album over another, or favor one song over another outright. These are the fans that appreciate the fact that Rush still (after all these years) choose to work harder than they need to, because certainly money is not the moving force. The "prime mover" is the fact that they still receive immense pleasure and gratification from the work they do. We, as fans, must give ourselves a reality check. Reality is that day Geddy, Alex and Neil's work will be done. It is a certainty. We, as **"TRUE RUSH FANS"** must support them unconditionally on every new direction that they choose to take. We must do our best to show them that their hard work is appreciated more than words can describe. Our thoughts are to prolong that inevitable time, when their work will cease. Let's all unite, and *stand together* for RUSH! The greatest band that will ever grace this planet.

Once again, I apologize for the self-indulgent nature of

this letter. A thank you goes out to Paul for inspiring me to write. A heartfelt thank you to Mandy and Steve for allowing me to voice my opinion, and for their relentless dedication and loyalty to the band and fans of A Show of Fans.

Sincerely, Rob Lawrence, Oshawa, Canada



Losing It

By David Plotkin, Scarsdale, NY

Words and deeds lie dormant in those without a voice. Pools of liquid fire, madness, turbulence, bursting to the fore, only to be diminished by the harshness and gluttony of inner trappings that seek permanent control over my soul.

Expressions of kindness, sympathy, constantly churning away, eating at my poor heart; it's fragile lining gradually torn to shreds without leaving a trace of it's once meaningful possessions. Thoughts lead to emotions, dreams transcend even the wildest of them. Dreams seemingly possess my fantasies, I succumb to their sweet-smelling aromas.

*"Dreams transport desires, drive you when you're down
Dreams transport the ones who need to get out of town..."*

Yet my mind is too weak to comprehend your seductive enticements. I lay blind to your intentions, misty dimensions grasp hold of my body, grasp for all that it's worth while my mind soars in endless directions until the heart sears the evanescent moisture and coolness. Suddenly I feel the hands of reason. They can only express the rightful aspects of your sweetness. All emotion and feeling are lost to this vacuous force. All that which expands within – warmth, compassion and decadence – forgotten in the face of rational thought.

*"I find no absolution, to my rational point of view
Maybe some things are instinctive, but there's one thing
you can do..."*

Hands grip once more. Gentle, consoling hands. Hands of pleasure and pain. Hand over hand. Hand over fist. Hands wishing to trace the delicacies of humanity. My senses heighten only by your touch. Hearts respond. Dreams set forth on unrelenting journeys of happiness by your presence, unable to dissipate at the hands of reason.

Constant thoughts of you from afar can no longer remain delusional. Evasiveness only hampers the mind's deceptions and creates instability from within. Conclusions spring forth from tears of realization...

"Open eyes tell no lies..."



TIDAL POOL

Classified Ads are \$2.00

ASOF — TIDAL POOL
5411 E. State St., Suite 309, Rockford, IL 61108

Art as expression . . . not as market campaign

WANTED: I am looking for a good copy or original video of Exit...Stage Left. We have a really bad copy and would like to have a better one. Thanks! Write or call: Tonya Clifford, 742 N. Ann Ave., Gallatin, TN 37066, (615) 230-6344.

"TILES" on the internet. The TILES home page is now up and running on the WWW. This is a great way to see, hear, and get introduced to the band!

Home page: <http://www.rust.net/~tiles>

TILES is currently working on their second album due out this summer. [Best of luck on the new release!! — Editors]

FOR SALE: Rare original hand-drawn artwork from the 1992 Rush comic book: "Rock 'n' Roll Comics #49." One of a kind find, entire interior, 30 pages. \$2,500 complete, or individual pages for \$100 each (\$175 title page) or best offer. Free copy of printed comic with each purchase. More rock comics art available. **RE-VISIONARY PRESS**, P.O. Box 15934, San Diego, CA 92175. (619) 462-5772.

SEARCHING for the following videos: Show Don't Tell, The Pass, Superconductor & Roll the Bones. I have many audio and video tapes to trade. Please let me know if you can help me out! Call Duane Rubinowits at (206) 781-1049

LOOKING FOR PEN PALS who would be interested in trading cd's, videos, etc. I truly look forward in hearing from you! Thomas Bristulf, Stenhuggarvägen 2, 167 54 Bromma, Stockholm, Sweden.

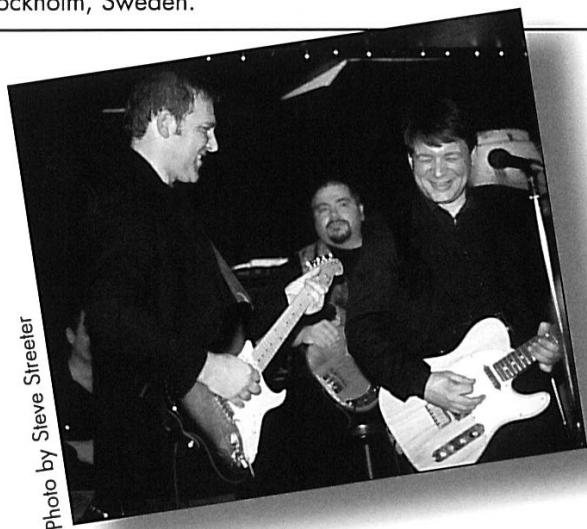


Photo by Steve Streeker

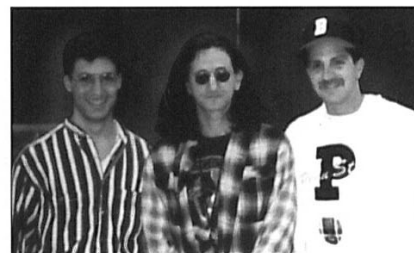
FEEDBACK *continued...*

Dear Steve & Mandy,

A few issues back I wrote about a "brush with greatness" as I described my backstage meeting with Geddy Lee on May 1, 1994. I finally got the pictures this past March 1996!

A person from the record company was suppose to develop and send out the pictures. To make a long story short, a few mix-ups caused my picture to go deep in a desk drawer until just recently. My friend spotted the picture and exclaimed, "Hey, that's my friend Evan!"

That's me on
Geddy's right and
my friend Bill
on his left.



Evan Sparages
Watertown, MA

To the makers of A Show Of Fans:

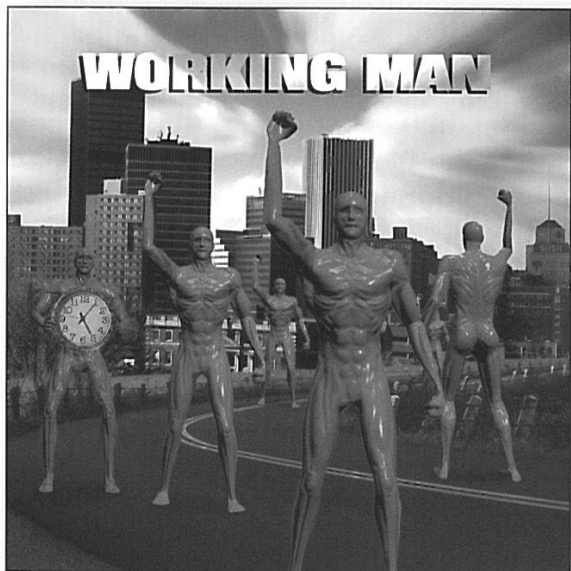
Your magazine is excellent! **Finally**, a tribute to the most intelligent **fans** in the universe! There is no other music that has given me so much pleasure, excitement, and energy than what these three geniuses have produced. Individually, they are incredible; together they're **magic!** A Rush concert is without a doubt the best experience you could have. They say men don't have multiple orgasms, but I have them every time I see these guys play. Neil's percussion inspired me to take up drumming at the ripe old age of 32. That was 10 years ago and I still love it! Except my right arm almost falls off when I follow along with Tom Sawyer!! When you try to play their music, you really appreciate just what they're doing so well. And they make it look easy (although I see now why Neil looks like he's in pain, it **DOES** hurt!)

I found the article by Jerry Brown on bootleg albums interesting. It brought to mind another type of bootlegging; concert photos. Although these are not usually done to make a profit, most arenas frown on taking pictures at a show. [This is a rule put down by the band's management. For instance, Todd Rundgren **INSISTS** on allowing photographers in. He enjoys it, as long as you don't use a flash. It all depends on the particular artist. It is their decision to make. — Editor.] Fortunately, I have a friend who has taken some pretty nice shots from past concerts. [Hey! Maybe you can have him send some pix in for **ASOF** readers to see, eh?? We would **LOVE** to print some. — Editors]

Well, like the rest of you, I look forward to the new musical challenge from our boys. As well as the unbelievable concerts that will follow. I hope to see as many of them as I can. Good day, eh?

Very sincerely yours,
Jim Stahara, Youngstown, OH





A SHOW OF BANDS

FOR THE LOVE OF RUSH . . .

TERRY "BROON" BROWN TO MIX!

"I thought you'd be pleased and excited to know that famed Rush producer, Terry Brown, will mix the tracks for the upcoming Rush Tribute, **Working Man** for Magna Carta."

"Terry Brown will lend his special talents to this record which consists primarily of songs that Terry produced with Rush originally."

"The combination of great songs, great musicians and great production should make **Working Man** a true tribute to one of the greatest bands of all time."

Peter Morticelli, Magna Carta Records

Magna Carta records out of NY will release *Working Man: A Show of Bands* on July 23. This is a tentative date. **The tracks:** Working Man, By-tor & the Snowdog, Jacob's Ladder, The Analog Kid, La Villa Strangiato, YYZ, Natural Science, Anthem, The Trees, Mission, Red Barchetta, Freewill & Closer To The Heart.

The artists: Brendt Allman (Shadow Gallery), Sebastian Bach (Skid Row), Robert Berry (3 & GTR), Jeff Brockman (Cairo), Deen Castronovo, Jake E. Lee (Ozzy), Trent Gardner (Magellan), Stuart Hamm, Fates Warning, Jens Johansen (Yngwie), George Lynch (Dokken), Eric Martin (Mr. Big), Steve Morse (Deep Purple), James Murphy (Testament), John Petrucci, Mike Portnoy, James LaBrie (Dream Theater), Sean Malone, Sean Reinert (Cynic), Michael Romeo, Jack Russell (Great White), Billy Sheehan (Mr. Big), Mark Slaughter (Slaughter), Devin Townsend (Steve Vai).

On an interesting side-note, when Eric Martin (**Big** Rush fan from Mr. Big!) learned about the project (at that time all the tracks were recorded) he wanted to do

Tips TO THE Hip

Here's a few Rush covers and musical references found recently. If anyone has additional tips, please contact **ASOF** or write Eric Ross P. O. Box 125 Chanhassen, MN 55317.

1. **Primus** YYZ intro to "John the Fisherman" from "Suck On This Live," 1990 Caroline records.
2. **Barenaked Ladies** "The Spirit of Radio" and "Tom Sawyer" references during their song "Grade 9" from the "Gordon" cd, 1992 Sire records.
3. **Groove Daddys** covers Subdivisions on the "Sunburn" disc 1995 Alert.
4. **Catherine Wheel** covers "The Spirit of Radio" on the 1996 CFNY music sampler cd.

N E I L V I D E O S !

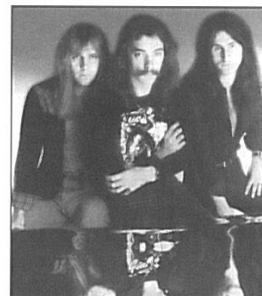
HOTNEWS from



During the week of 5/13, fresh off of Test for Echo, Neil was back in Bearsville, NY with his DW (**ECHO**) kit to video tape two instructional videos for **DCI**. **DCI** is an industry standard for instructional tapes with a reputation for high quality products for professionals. Rumors have been flying for years about Neil doing such a video, but each time it was shot down for what ever reason (perhaps this long break between albums has given Neil the time, eh?). It is now a **reality!** Not one, but **TWO** volumes with Neil focusing on the recording process of Echo (*tentative*) and **MORE**. We will have **FULL** coverage next issue of this release including some **BIG** surprises for **ASOF** readers. Release of the tapes is scheduled for mid-July. A drummer & Rush fan's dream come true!

Also, we can expect to find **TWO** Burning for Buddy videos released as well, featuring the NY Burning Sessions which you can expect to find on the shelves late June. That makes **FOUR** tapes with Neil. Talk about excitement, as if we needed any more with Echo just around the corner! The more the merrier, eh?

Mission, a song he has fond memories of as well as a personal favorite. Room was made for Mission on an already packed cd! We'll have more information for you next issue, but in the meantime you can contact Magna Carta for further information and catalog at: **Magna Carta Records**, 208 E. 51st St., Suite 1820, New York, NY 10022 or call 1-716-381-5224. Make sure you tell em' **ASOF** sent ya!



An ASOF We're Puzzled, So Puzzle US Contest!



We couldn't think of

anything for a little contest we had planned out for this issue. So as I was scratching my head a neat idea came to mind. What we want YOU to do is come up with a puzzle. It can be a cross-word, a jumble, a brain-teaser, you name it. Just make it good. We'll send out **TWO** first prizes (1 autographed Alex Lifeson Business card, 1 autographed ORIGINAL Orbit Room Menu and 1 sealed VICTOR cd) to the first two puzzles that we receive that challenge us the MOST. We are looking for challenging and **interesting** puzzles. Now get busy! We'll post the results next issue. **Deadline: Sept 3rd.**

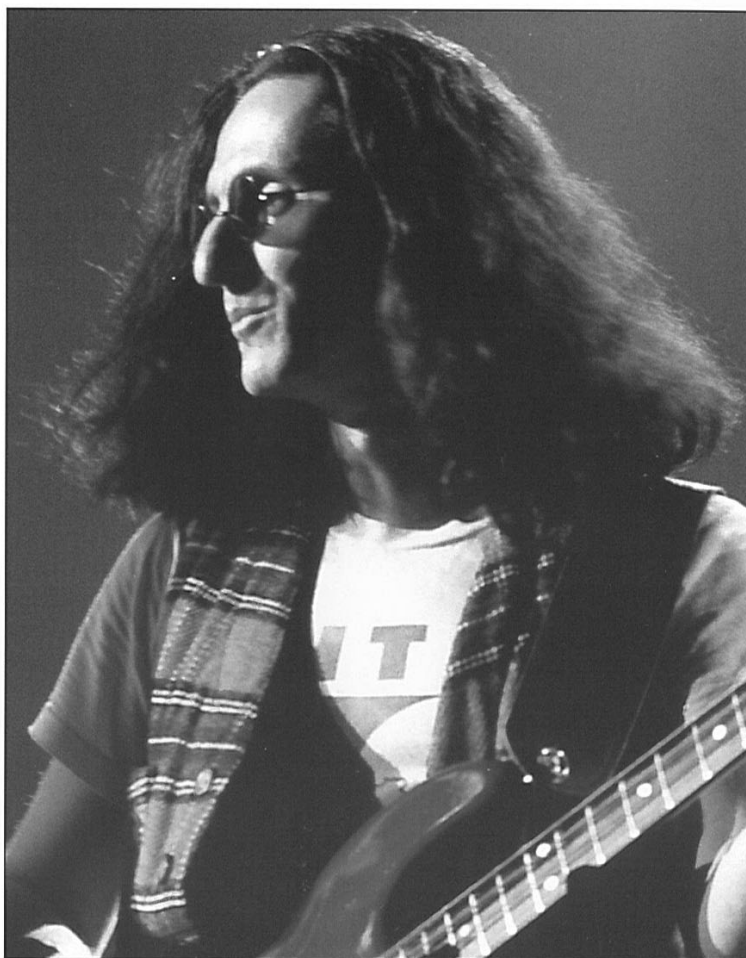
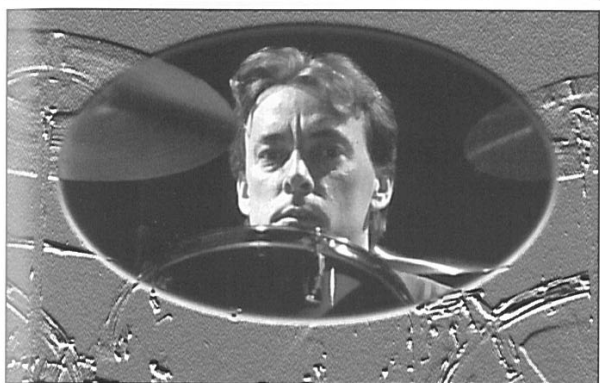
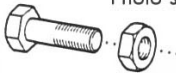


Photo submitted by Jeff Hamilton, Photographer unknown.

IN THE END



ASOF STAFF

Special thanks to Alex (**Ask Big Al** is a HIT!), **SRO/Anthem**, Stephanie, Cynthia, The Dexters and The Orbit Room, **Atlantic Records**, Bob Mack for the **Cycle Canada** magazine, Kevin & Ken Bontius, John Beazley, Eric Ross (Where did you say you were calling from?), Jeff Cavuto, Jeff Hamilton (photo lifesaver of the issue!), Mike Arbisi, Kevin McAllister, **Animation** – Chester, Dan & Jay, **WXXR**, Jerry & Linda Brown (Flagging em' down at sea!), Blanca Ortiz for her WONDERFUL cover illustration, and many, many others who contributed stamps or money and helped tremendously (you know who you are) to get this issue out! We thank you all!! A very **special** thank you to Cathy Krolkowski, who took the wonderful Big Al & The Dexters photos last issue.

Don't forget to get an original laser copy of our NEW 1996 **ASOF** flyers to hand out at shows. Your help is **VITAL** for our survival. Drop us a line for a free master copy. Thanks again!

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

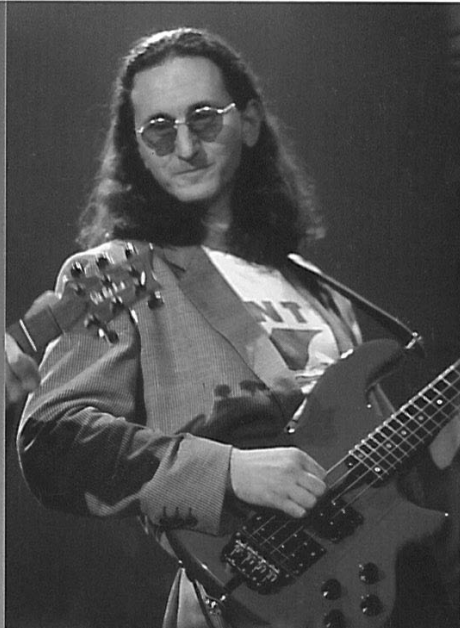
Mike Arbisi

Focus Point, Columnist

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test for ECHO



Photos submitted by Jeff Hamilton –
Photographer unknown.
Digital collage by CYBERSTEVE