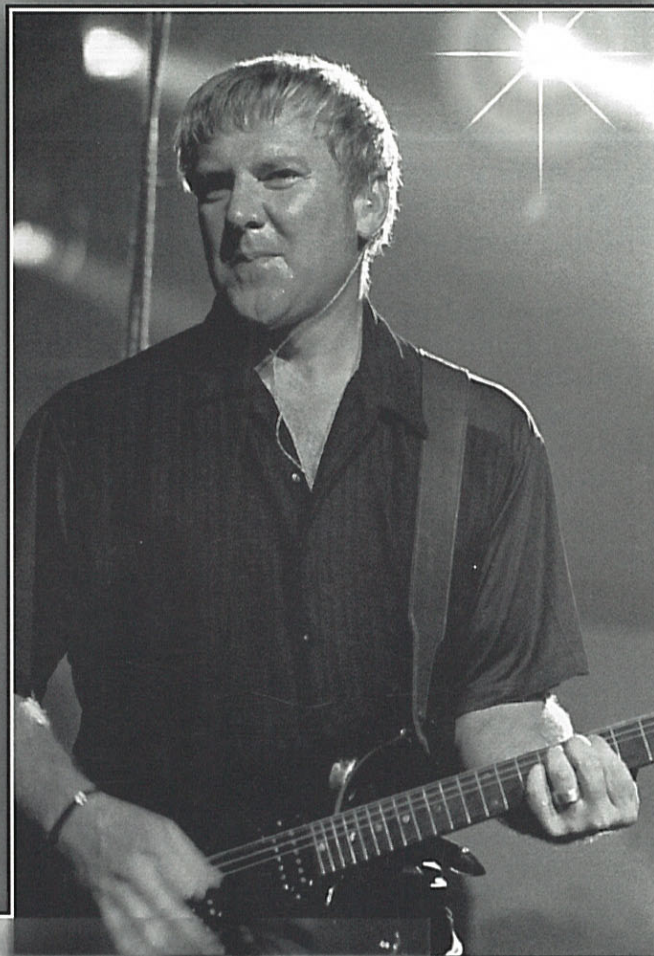
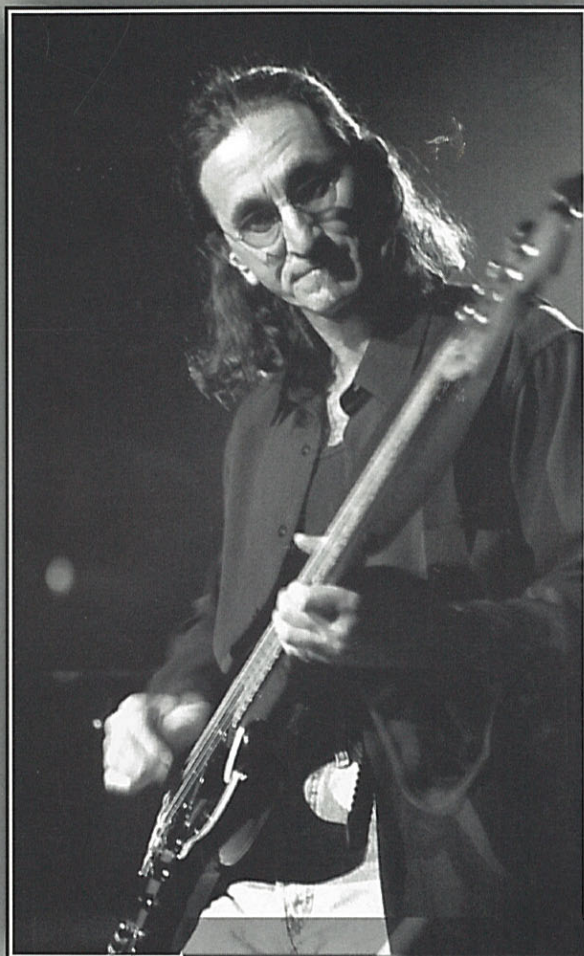


a show of fans

Number **16**
WINTER 1997

A Rush Fanzine For and By Rush Fans

\$5.00



YOUR REACTION
test for echo

R U S H
The Return of Hermes?

WWW.ASOF.COM
A web site with a difference

ASOF SPEAKS WITH
“HERNS”

BACK TO THE BARS

**blind
DATE**

the FOUNTAIN

Steve Streeter

The Two Week Rush Blitz

4,600 miles later, we sit – crashed like two boneless masses – recovering from what was (and IS) in our opinion, the greatest Rush tour to date. Mandy & I set out to Dayton. Eating up every last day of vacation time that I have been saving up, we departed with the knowledge that I wouldn't be losing a paycheck. Got to keep those priorities in line. Armed with a load of ASOF issues, many flyers, and some merchandise, we rolled into Dayton pretty seamlessly. Without any directions, we just about drove right to the venue like a magnet. Must be that Rush attraction. You can smell Rush miles away! (Eeewwwww! I don't wanna smell 'em!) Ever get that feeling? Kind of like what Mandy always says, "the cold season has it's good points...it usually means there

is a Rush tour on the way!"

Parking the car, we were immediately greeted by fellow fans and subscribers alike. Very heartwarming indeed. While Mandy chatted with the many friends, I set out to pass out flyers. The sound of Neil's sonic drum blast echoed through the Nutter Center doors and many fans had their ears plastered against them listening. Whoa! Red Sector A! That's a surprise. I walked over to the bus and semi dugout, while passing out flyers at a frantic pace. Met a fan named Russ. An old timer, in Rush terms. We rapped about the old days and Russ told me he had his Caress of Steel t-shirt framed due to it's near disintegration! Now that's a nice piece of Rush



Photo submitted by Paul Goodall

Front cover photos by Ellen Moore, Charlotte, NC

history! What's that? Someone down among the buses looking for US? Hummmmm....could that be Alex, Ged, or Neil? Naw. Couldn't be.

Let the show begin! Starting out like the Counterparts Tour, back is the 2001 intro, complete with the nut & bolt film leading into Dreamline. De ja vu! Alex, Ged, & Neil look great! Very much in shape and synch. Without an opening act, the excitement and anticipation was at a fever pitch. Rush was cooking. It was so nice to see the three stooges again! Rush appeared to be truly having fun once again after the longest break between albums in their long and productive career. Geddy was jumping all over the place and Alex was doing his classic "runway" moves. I saw JJ (Alex's guitar tech) spraying some sort of stuff down on the rug in a line where Alex prances back and forth. Stick'em perhaps? Anyway, Alex was in top form, belting out solos and riffs like there was no tomorrow. Very high impact and loud. Behold the retrained Neill! What a shocker watching Neil switch his stick handling throughout

Photo by Steve Streeter, Milwaukee, WI, 1996



the show. Yet his flair still intact with stick throw and twirl after twirl.

Splendid song line-up combining old and new. The T4E material sounded fabulous starting off with Driven. Geddy's extra bass solo shined as the song's highlight along with Alex's blistering solo. Neat back drop footage as well of a rollerblader all decked out racing down a road.

By far the surprise of the first set was 2112 complete. Just when you thought they would be on to another song, they kept going with the 1976 epic and brought everyone to a peak of magic.

The set list changed night to night with the swapping of Time & Motion and Resist, however, BOTH were played at the beginning of the tour! Hopefully you all got to see BOTH! We heard no complaints from even the most critical fans on the set list.

The Mystery Science Theater lunchbox is back. Right next to several interesting kitchen appliances, including a classic old refrigerator (which when first opened by Alex revealed cold drinks and cheeseballs!) A couple of magnets graced the frige as well...I think I saw Betty Boop! Hmmm...that frige needs another magnet. By the time the St. Louis show rolled around we presented Rush with a new magnet to adorn the frige. **Revenge of the Creature** it was (a cool repro of the original poster). It was put



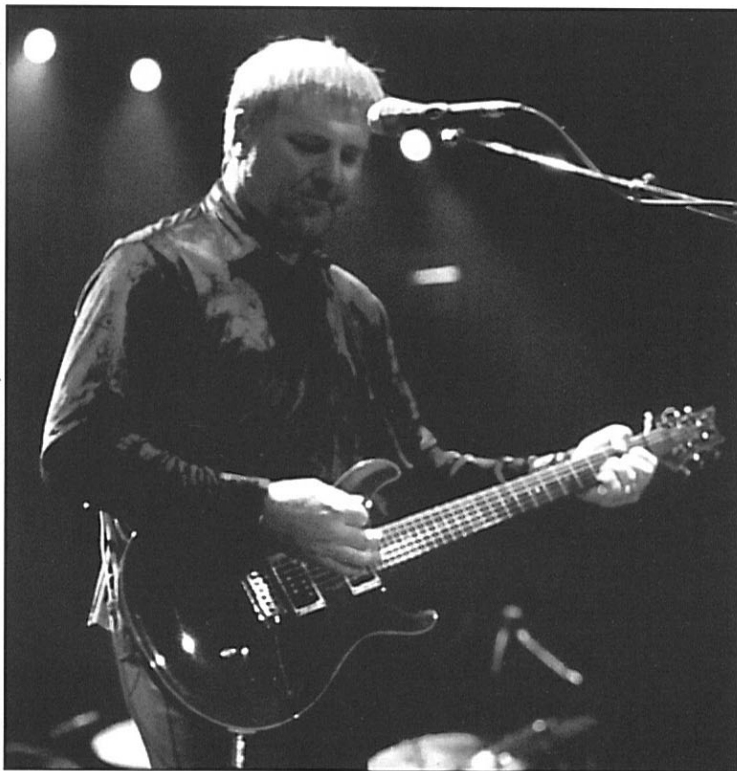
Photo by Steve Streeter, Milwaukee, WI, 1996

up immediately. It's always nice to add to the set even in small ways such as this. Very fun, indeed! Also seen "gracing" the stage were the life-size cut-outs of Pamela Anderson (on Alex's side) and the Three Stooges (on Ged's side). It was quite an array of "stuff" sharing the stage with our three heroes.

Just like Counterparts, Alex would often introduce the band in typical silly fashion. One of the funniest intros was when he introduced Neil as Alex Lifeson; Ged as Alex Lifeson; and himself as Alex Lifeson - what a ham! Ged would often refer to their break between sets as "a Geritol break," which was incredibly funny. Although on Halloween the break was, "time to get a blood transfusion". They certainly didn't look like they needed a rest. Rush displayed more energy than I've ever seen. It was quite obvious that they ALL were having a blast which only makes you believe that there are indeed many tours to come! A nice thought indeed. So put away those "last tour" doom & gloom whines and focus on the present and the positive, eh?

Along with the three buses, Neil brought along a trailer with his motorcycle! He would often (weather permitting) cycle from show to show with his buddy Brutus - who also had his cycle

Photo by Steve Streeter, Milwaukee, WI, 1996



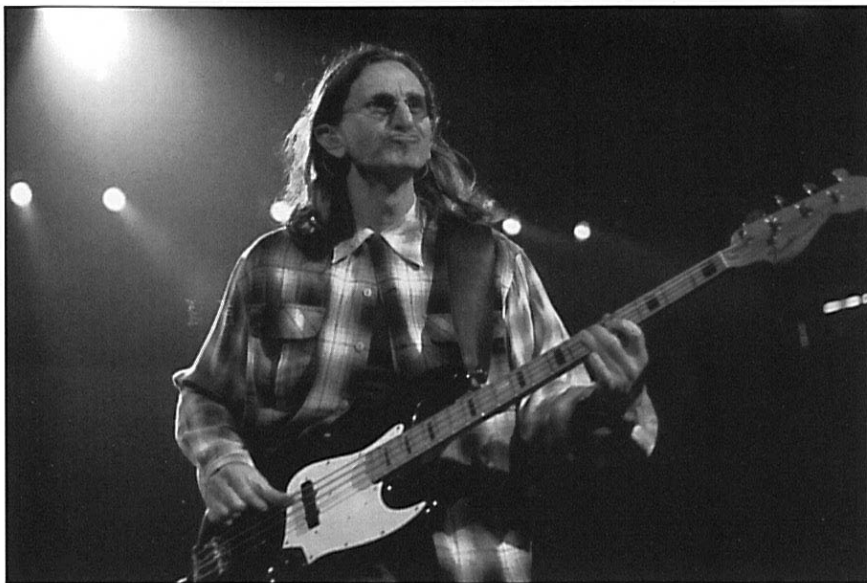


Photo by Steve Streeter, Milwaukee, WI, 1996

aboard (see Cycle Canada Magazine and Neil's great story of his travels with Brutus!) We often saw Brutus tinkering around with the bikes in back of the arenas.

The You-never-know-who-you're-going-to-meet department.

As we were preparing to enter the Minneapolis Target Center show with Eric Ross and his brother, Martin, we were walking along a skyway from the parking garage to the arena and someone calls out, "Steve?" several times. I turn and a large man with a German accent inquires as to whether I'm "the Steve Streeter?" My mind jumps back several years, making an immediate connection. "Ralf, Ralf Uebel?" Yes, it is! Long time subscriber and mega Rush fan from Germany. He's over to see a handful of shows! It's connections like this that make you feel so good about being a Rush fan. The fan connection is a wonderful vibe. We felt it every night. In Chicago I must have passed out 300 flyers and spoken to each person I handed one to. This is not an easy thing to do, but the reception was great. Sure, most probably won't subscribe...BUT, who knows where that flyer might end up. MAYBE in the hands of a fan who has been looking for a fan magazine for years. And we heard that from quite a number of fans. "I've been looking for you!!!" Oh really? We heard from many **ASOF** subscribers that passed out flyers as well and *we thank you very much*. Your efforts are REALLY paying off.

The Rockford Petition – Fans in ACTION!

Over a year ago we decided to start a "Bring Rush to Rockford" petition. The idea came from a local fan/friend Mike Arbisi, who had tried a similar kind of petition in 1991. Unfortunately, Rush wasn't able to schedule it then. But Mike's determination and efforts sparked **ASOF** to try it again. This time Mike thought, "Together WE could do it!" I had my doubts, but being the eternal optimist, I said, "Let's go for it!"

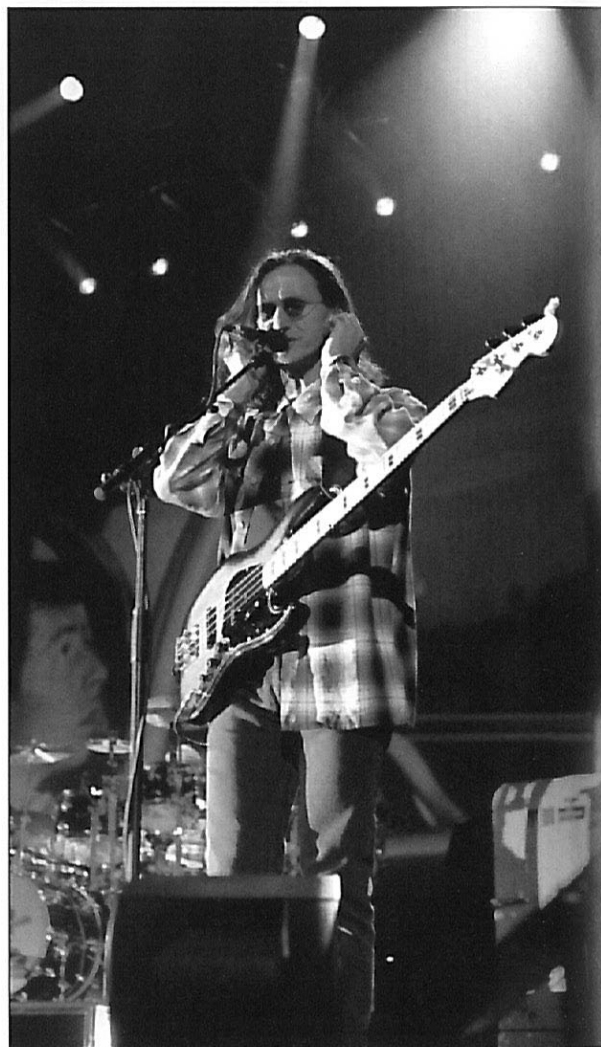
Forms were made up, radio stations called and the grass root effort began. With the tireless work of Mike, Kevin McAllister and Dan Domberg (big thank yous to everyone who helped as well) the race was on. This was no digital petition - this was the REAL thing - the old fashioned way. Real signatures and partial addresses were required. We had flyers ALL over town and they were starting to fill up! We were working with the local rock radio station in town in the beginning until they wanted to get all the glory and some political weirdness happened. Never understood that, especially when they have no competition in town. Oh well....they WERE nice enough to give us some

exposure, but eventually decided to bow out. We were on our own. Again, I had serious doubts.

The filled out sheets came pouring in. Month after month this went on and we never gave up. We notified SRO/Anthem about our petition and we were given the deadline to "get 'em in." We decided that they ought to be hand delivered right to them, so we went up to Toronto with our 3,000 + signatures (quite a stack for a medium size town!!) and plopped them down. "Here they are. Can you show this to Rush?" Absolutely.

A few weeks passed and by now the first leg of the tour had been plotted out and tickets were on sale. Owwww - no Rockford. Well, we thought perhaps we'd have a chance during the second leg. It wasn't but a few days later that I received a call at work in the wee a.m. hours saying, "Congratulations!" WHAT??? **WE DID IT!!!** Rush had scheduled in Rockford. Our petition worked. This was the first petition to actually work in a long time. Needless to say, the local rock station was speechless and mentioned us after much silence and gave us complete credit. We did it on our own. The fans alone brought Rush to Rockford. For all who signed the petition, you should be very proud. YOU helped make a difference. And we did it all by

Photo by Steve Streeter, Milwaukee, WI, 1996



a show of fans
A RUSH FANZINE FOR AND BY RUSH FANS

**RUSH TO PLAY THE ROCKFORD METRO CENTER IN 1996
LET'S MAKE IT HAPPEN!**

We are an international RUSH fan club NOW located in Rockford and we think it's about time RUSH came BACK to Rockford! We're starting this petition and need to get as many signatures as possible. ASOF will make sure that RUSH and RUSH's manager get the list of signatures put right smack dab in front of them! SO LETS GET TO IT! We can make it happen. RUSH will come if an interest is shown. Help spread the word to get RUSH to come to Rockford in support of their NEW album to be released in June/July 1996!!

Bring the Canadian Power Trio to Rockford!

**RUSH
TO PLAY
ROCKFORD
IN
1996!**

A SHOW OF FANS • 5411 E. STATE ST. SUITE 309, ROCKFORD, IL 61108
TEST FOR ECHO DUE OUT END OF AUGUST. CALL THE RUSHLINE FOR INFORMATION: 398 1250

signed petitions would get more attention and HOPEFULLY they will have those to go along with a database print out. Good luck to both petitions! We wish you all the best. Really.

On another note concerning the Rockford show, we were given the opportunity to purchase 100 tickets in advance to resell to the fans. "What a wonderful thing!," we thought. But alas, it did not come without it's share of headaches. We assumed that by purchasing in advance we would get the very best of seat choices, especially since we were reselling (at face value) to the hardcore fans. We also assumed that we would get the tickets if not before they went on sale, then definately the day they went on sale. You know what they say about assuming. After some tense phone calls we managed to get some good seats but none too soon. It was damn close. Too damn close. We think the problem was with the Metro Centre itself. But we will place no blame. We only wish to convey to all those who purchased tickets from us that we did the best we could. We had never attempted such an undertaking and did not know what to expect from the venue or management. If there is a next time that we handle a large quantity of tickets, we will have more time to prepare and we will have all the bugs worked out. We had hoped this would be something we could do on a grander scale to try (at least in a small way) to combat the scam of ticket agencies that we all seem to encounter at one time or another. We shall see. Let us know your thoughts on this matter. In the mean time, we sincerely hope that all who purchased tickets through us were satisfied. We did the best we could at the time.

Our last show was in Milwaukee, where I was allowed to shoot the band in the "pit" area for the magazine. As you can see throughout the issue there are a few keepers! It was a lot of fun. Much different from Roll The Bones, when Geddy looked down at me and motioned "calm down...." — well, I just couldn't help myself. The excitement was **STILL** there... I just displayed a little more emotional control.

It was so nice meeting many of you on the road and we hope to see you all again this spring/summer! I must say that this was the finest tour overall (song selection, energy level) I have seen. How old did you say these guys were? **Naw!**

pounding the street day in and day out. Interestingly, as soon as the cyber-world caught wind of this, a European and South American petition popped up.

Hummmm....did we start something? **Yes sir.** We most certainly did. We wish the folks in Europe and SA the best of luck. It can be done. We have put up a link on **ASOF HQ** web site for those who are interested.

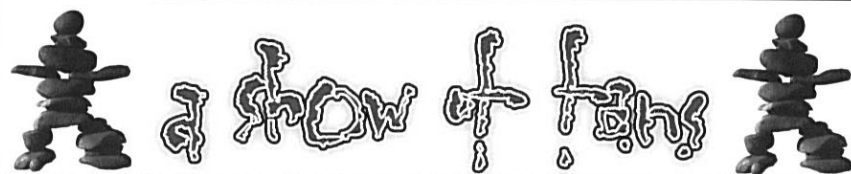
Somehow I think **ACTUAL**

MIDDLETOWN Dreaming A Working Man...

This summer has been tough for me. Yes, waiting for Test For Echo has been tough, but being suddenly unemployed and expecting a baby made it even tougher. I had a few job prospects, but only one solid offer. With resources dwindling, I decided to take the one offer I did get - working in a rock quarry. A real working man's job, alright. It paid the bills. It was a lot of hard, physical labor! After only two weeks into it, my back hurt, and my mind was numb from the monotonous tasks (although listening to Rush tapes helped). I felt like quitting, but a voice inside me said, "Stick It Out, hang in there, Mark." I had to wait for the better job offer but first I needed endurance, first I had to last! But how long was this Marathon going to be? After another week, I looked up into the beautiful blue dome (while I stood working in the desolate, scorching rock pit) and asked the Prime Mover, "What did I do to deserve this fate?! I need a better job, one with a future!..." I knew the answer and I didn't really believe in fate. I was here because I had chosen to be here, I thought. I was waiting for that Roll of the Bones - that call from one of the many places I had applied. Strangely, by odd circumstance, I got an offer the next day (a Friday) and they wanted me to start ASAP Monday, if possible. "Yes, I'll be there," I said!

Now, did the Prime Mover Himself actually intentionally interfere with human events (me)? I don't think we're puppets on strings, but I was happy and thankful for my new and better job. I'm still there, mind you. And baby Grace came out just fine, thank my wife. But before you dismiss the events as pure coincidence let me tell you my job description - I'm an apprentice cabinetmaker. My specialty is Counterparts, er, Countertops, excuse me! Talk about Chronicles of our lives!

Still dreaming (they can never take your dreams away!)
Mark Wick & Family, Fond du Lac, WI



A RUSH FANZINE FOR AND BY RUSH FANS

**TOGETHER WE ARE A GENIUS.
HALLO-O-O-O-O!**

I had an idea to create a banner specifically for Rockford. Who can forget those old Rush shows where banners seemed to fly EVERYWHERE! (the late 70's is when I remember it best - along with the Frisbees!!) I suggested doing a "banner contest" in Rockford, but could find no support from the "picky" management here in town. Ah well, that's THEIR loss! But it was local fan Dan Domberg who ought to get the top credit for the banner. It was his investment that took my design and made it a reality. Next issue we'll show you what it now looks like, with it all signed by Rush and the crew! Yep, it's a mess! Thanks Dan! And Thank you Rush for mentioning us TWICE on stage in Rockford. **ASOF Staff**



Greetings from CYBERSPACE

by Chad Hutchinson "Ghost"

ASOF HQ Web Manager

Well, as you may or may not know, **A Show of Fans** now has entered the realm of Cyberspace. Just before the last issue, Steve launched the A Show of Fans Headquarters, or **ASOF HQ** on the Internet. Since that time, he posted an "opening" for a Web Manager on the page. Well, I've been a subscriber to **ASOF** for several years now, have every issue, and enjoy web publishing so... To make a long story short, I responded to the ad and after some discussion with Mandy, Steve chose me for the job. And I must say, I am not sorry that I took the position. I've since met Steve and Mandy and they are wonderful people and are the truest of Rush fans. I flew out to see the Rockford show back in October and just had a great time with them, and of course a few other Rush-heads (Ken, Kevin, Marcus, Paul, Frank, John, and Chris — Hi boys).

Besides working on the **ASOF HQ**, I work full-time as a quality engineer in Bethlehem, PA and go to school part-time for my MBA. I'm also the PR person for a new progressive band from the Philadelphia area called finneus gauge. Remember that name!! I went to school at the University of Delaware (ChEG '93) where I began using the name "Ghost" on the 'net. I've been a Rush fan since about 1981 when MTV started up and actually played Rush and Triumph videos. I soon after had Moving Pictures and away I went. I don't have any brothers or sisters that could have taken me to see a show so my first tour was Hold Your Fire in 1987 (the first tour after I turned sixteen). I haven't missed a release date or a tour since.

Anyway, back to the **ASOF HQ**. I officially came on board the **ASOF** CyberStaff on September 10, 1996. Date sound familiar? Yep, the same day Test for Echo was released.

Since that time, Steve and I have talked about revamping the site and adding features and expanding the site. Some of the sections I've implemented so far are "Today in Rush History," "The Test for Echo Lyric Totem," "Rush Album Discography," "Test for Echo Scrapbook," and expanded "CyberFriends of ASOF" (jumpstation) and "Test for Echo Tour Dates" sections. I've also redesigned the front page of the site and added some Java script to spice it up and make it more compact. Besides a few server difficulties, everything has run quite smoothly to date.

The site also includes sections on Official Rush Merchandise, Rush Lithographs, Neil's DCI Instructional Videos ("A Work in Progress"), Positive Feedback, and others. We also house the official sites for The Dexters, Animation, and the Orbit Room. So check 'em out!

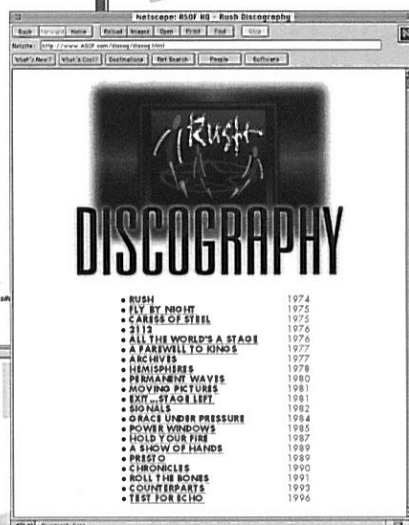
Simply because it's the Internet, we plan on expanding and developing the **ASOF HQ** site continuously while keeping to the idea that it's "A Web Site For and By Rush Fans" and maintaining a positive light on the best band in the universe. Some of the future plans are to add audio clips, construct a videography section, more pictures, and album notes for each release. We will also keep to the credo that everything we develop and post will be done in a respectful and ethical manner (i.e. no bootlegs). No Rush information will be released without the consent of SRO/Anthem with whom Steve and Mandy are in constant contact.

If you have any ideas or material for the site, please feel free to let us know. Either call the Rushline at (815) 398-1250 or E-mail me (qghost@ptd.net) or Steve (sstreet@netfxcorp.com). We appreciate the input of the Rush fan base and you know who you are! Oh, you also may recognize the name "Ghost" from my personal web site, **Ghostland** (<http://www.webcom.com/qghost/>). It's a progressive rock site with a vast jumpstation, up-to-date features on selected artists, a Pick of the Week section, and listings of progressive music sources, sites, and radio shows. I also maintain the official web sites for echolyn, finneus gauge, and Progression magazine.

Well, thanks for your continued support of A Show of Fans and please log-on and check out **ASOF HQ**.

The **NEW** address is <http://www.asof.com/> (formerly <http://www.cain-co.com/asof/>).

Bookmark it and we'll see ya online as well as in print!



The Discography Page is just one of Chad's fine additions to **ASOF HQ**. We're always growing!

Some Say I Take Rush too Seriously, Well . . .

**Brian K. Smith
Tyngsboro, MA**

*All of us get lost in the darkness
Dreamers learn to steer by the stars
All of us do time in the gutter
Dreamers turn to look at the cars
Turn around and turn around and turn around . . .
The Pass from Presto, 1990*

When I was twelve years old, a new record was released that (pardon the clichè), changed my life. The record was *Moving Pictures* by Rush. At the time I had just begun a career as one of the two least popular people in the town where I lived, Westford, Massachusetts. Westford is the kind of ass-backwards town where being yourself has very serious consequences, not playing sports, wearing the wrong clothes, or in fact, doing anything different and out of the norm will literally get you beaten up. My best friend Guy and I were disliked and ridiculed by fellow students and teachers alike. I began the long downward spiral into a constant feeling of melancholy that would later become a bonafide battle with depression. Guy and I were just beginning to get very serious about music, and early Yes, Peter Gabriel's Genesis, and King Crimson were our heros, as well as other "progressive rock" acts. We actually (believe it or not) recieved *Moving Pictures* through the mail by accident!! At first listen, it was glaringly obvious that Rush were musicians without equal. A subsequent reading of the lyrics was almost upsetting. We could not believe that these "famous" musicians were championing the cause of the individual. In a world of Van Halens and AC/DCs, this band actually gave a shit. Just the fact that they were well established enough to have forgotten the horror of outcast and alienation, yet continued to remember and have something to say about it, showed their sincerity. Soon, our only goal was to possess their entire catalog of albums. Their fond regard for individualism permeated every album! (as it continues to do) The fact that this band, who didn't even know us, yet cared about our situation, was shocking. Before the whirlwind of discovery could end, Signals arrived like the

proverbial "ton of bricks," bringing with it a host of new songs that expressed the feelings of the loner in a dark, frankly, upsetting way that proved that Rush had been there, and still cared. Just after the release of *Power Windows*, my situation took a serious turn for the worse. My depression became more of a problem when I moved, to yet another school system where I would be regarded as a freak and an outcast, and away from Guy. Rush became my touchstone. Regular bouts with thoughts of suicide were put off by frequent visits to my Rush collection, (now HUGE), and infrequent phone conversations with Guy. Eventually, Guy and I ceased to communicate. We were both very busy, and long distance phone bills were not my parents idea of a good plan. About this time, I fell in with a new group of "friends." They were very much into the new "speed metal" of early Metallica and such. Unfortunately, Rush was heavily frowned upon by this crowd, and as I fought to hold onto a "group" of friends, something I was totally unfamiliar with, I lost touch with Rush. At first, the fact that I was, for the first time in my life, being someone other than myself was upsetting, but it slowly traded off against the fact that I was accepted.

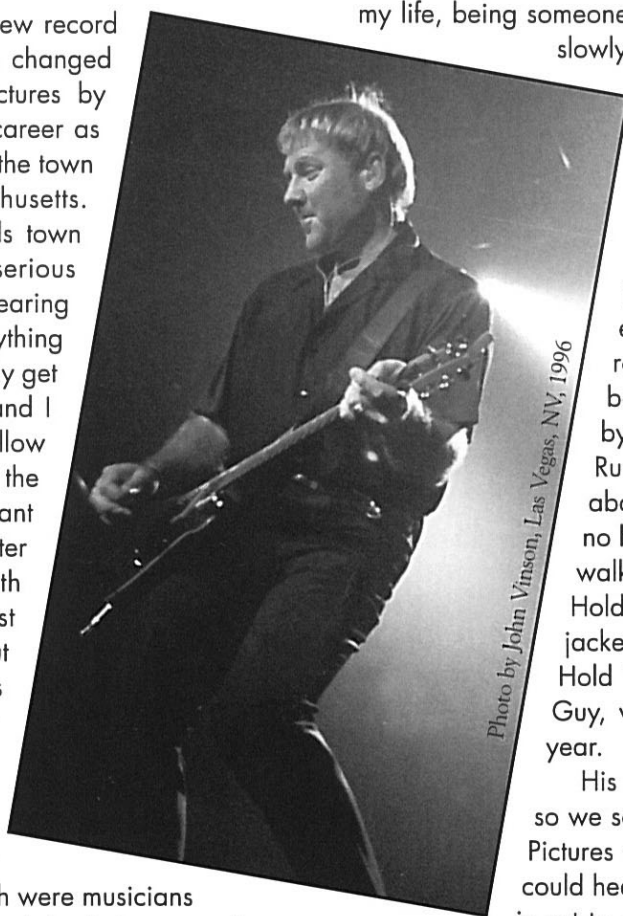
After a year and a half of this, a trip to a local record store in 1987 would change things. Another new Rush album, *Hold Your Fire*, had just been released, and would do the same job *Moving Pictures* had done 6 years earlier. As I pulled the record from the rack, all the emotions came flooding back. My "friends" were extremely upset by that fact I had an interest in a new Rush album, after voicing stong opinions about me "selling out" told me we would no longer be hanging out. So after the long walk home from the record store clutching *Hold Your Fire*, I threw away my denim jacket festooned with heavy metal pins, put *Hold Your Fire* on the turntable, and called Guy, who I hadn't spoken to in well over a year.

His town hadn't gotten *Hold Your Fire* yet, so we sat and talked back the years to *Moving Pictures* with the stereo up loud enough so he could hear it over the phone. The point of all this is not to put the weight of my lifes' problems on

the shoulders of Geddy, Alex, and Neil, but to offer a sincere and heartfelt "thank you" to three men who unwittingly became the best friends of two people they never met, who in all likelihood, they will never meet, who desperately needed their friendship, and clung to it.

In this age of "alternative" music, Rush are to me, to borrow a line from Ricky Powell's "Confessions of a Rush Fan" article in SPIN Magazine several years ago, the icon of alternative. Thanks to them, it gives me great pleasure to know every day, that when I'm gray, I'll still be gray my way.

Thanks guys.



TURN THE PAGE

by Jerry 'Broon Jr.' Brown

Jacksonville, Florida



How many times have you been to the local bookstore or newsstand, to gaze through all the music related magazines, just to catch a glimpse of something (*anything!*) about 'Rush'? When you see Alex, Neil or Geddy posed for a full cover feature, excitement and exhilaration kicks in! You grab the copy in the best condition and hang on to it for dear life! It's like the feeling you get, when you first open your mailbox and see that white envelope staring you in the face, with **A SHOW OF FANS** stamped on the top lefthand corner! You know it's gonna be *great* no matter what! Anything from full blown interviews with the band, reviews about a concert or latest album, or even to hear other fans points of view or Rush related experiences! I *love* finding a magazine with a Rush article in it, just to increase my knowledge of the band.

I keep all the magazines with full cover Rush features, sealed in polyethylene bags with acidfree backing boards (As if they were a valuable comic book.) There are literally tons of magazines that contain Rush articles, but the ones with cover features, I keep intact and neatly archived in chronological order. Some are *rare* finds, some are not so rare. Ranging all the way back to the January 1975 issue of **Canadian Composer** with Rush cover, up to the present day magazines. Such obscurities as the January 1983 issue of **Sounds Fan Library** with all 48 pages dedicated to Rush, as well as **Performance** magazine with all 23 pages about Rush, or the **Rush Fan Mag** contained on the inside of the April 3rd, 1989 issue of **Metal Hammer**. How about the Jan/Feb 1994 issue of **Car Stereo Review** with Alex's Mercedes-Benz on the entire cover (an easy one to miss!). Let's not forget to mention the the newspaper type magazines such as **Sounds** and early editions of **Music Express**.

If you found the April 1988 issue of **Guitar World** and it had George Lynch on the cover and your fellow Rush collector said he or she found it sporting Geddy and Alex? Don't fret. That was a publishing experiment, to find out who their readers were more interested in buying and which cover would appeal to the reader more.

Rush have fully graced the covers (once or maybe multiple times) of such notable periodicals as **Canadian Musician**,

Circus, **Record World**, **Cashbox**, **Record Review**, **Kerrang**, **International Musician And Recording World**, **Music U.K.**, **Guitar For The Practicing Musician**, **Keyboard**, **Song Hits**, **Music Technology**, **Bass Player**, **Network**, **Raw**, **East Coast Rocker**, **Guitar School**, **Cheap Thrills**, **Sound Attitude**, **Bass & Drums**, **M.E.A.T.**, **Break Out**, **SI Magazine**, **Heavy Oder Was!?**, **The Music Paper**, **Professional Sound**, **Rhythm**, **Stage**, **Zildjian Times**, **Metronome**, **Guitar** and **Scene**. As well as a ton of others we're not even aware of, let alone the foreign and local city type magazines. Who really knows how many times they've graced the cover of magazines!?

But wait! What about **Rolling Stone**? No band is *popular* unless they've been on the cover of 'Rolling Stone'? (*Ugh, should I even bring this up again?*) I'll just let Alex explain, from an excerpt taken from **Guitar**, November 1996.

The boys in the band - who Lifeson has dubbed, "the indestructible brotherhood" - aren't fazed in the least that they've never once made the cover of **Rolling Stone**, even though they're one of the best-selling bands of all time. "You know what? I don't know if I'd ever want to be on the cover of **Rolling Stone**, to tell the truth. They have this thing against us. I have a sense that they go out of their way to ignore us, so at least they're making some kind of effort. We've been around for 22 years with the same lineup; we haven't broken up and then re-grouped. A lot of bands have cited us as influences, and that's great. That's what really means something to me that I've passed something on. I've been a teacher in some way, and that's really much more gratifying. So I couldn't give a shit if we're ever on the cover of **Rolling Stone**. Just the fact that we haven't been is really cool, so I hope that doesn't get wrecked now."

Rather than playing the role of Omniscient Expert, I'd like to ask **ASOF** readers, "What's your take on magazine collecting?" The enrichment of my collection is always about Rush and their music, and those flea market/record convention finds are always worth more for their sentimental worth, than any investment potential. There are still a *lot* of magazines with full cover Rush features that I've been searching for, and this particular category of *anyone's* collection will never be complete. But, if we literally had them *all*, it would take the fun out of the search!

Even the magazines that are 'Rush related' and not necessarily about the band, are significant treasures. The November 1973 issue of **Road and Track** containing the article by R.S. Foster, 'A Nice Morning Drive', which was the inspiration for the song **Red Barchetta**. The January 1993 issue of **Parachutist** magazine that has the article about the 'Rush:Roll The Bones Skydiving Team.' The April 3rd 1995 edition of **Macleans** magazine with Neil's article 'Into Africa' (*a prelude to his new book, Masked Rider: Cycling in West Africa*). The April 1996 issue of **Cycle Canada** featuring Neil's story, 'Chasing Some Midnight Rays'. Or how about *this* rare and obscure find, the early edition of **OMNI** magazine with the story, 'Synthesizer Revolution', written by Neil (one of his *first* writings outside the band).

I would like to end this, with those mags containing actual recordings for our listening pleasure! Yes, those cool 'Flexi-discs'! Neil's 'Pieces of Eight', from the May 1987 **Modern Drummer** (for whom he is also a member of the Advisory Board) and Alex on 'Beyond Borders', with Ed Bickert, Liona Boyd and Rik Emmett from the July 1987 **Guitar Player**.



Records in review

Rush rock sound crisp and strong

By Bill Provick

The rush one gets from Rush has already caused a small rush to record stores in Toronto.

With the right kind of promotion, that rush may soon become a stampede.

Rush is the name of a dynamic new rock trio from Toronto.

Rush (Moon Records MN 100) is the name of the group's debut album.

Rush is also what one gets from this music.

For the uninitiated, a rush—in street terms—is a somewhat catch-all phrase used to describe a sudden and dramatic surge of exhilaration.

As a young and enthusiastic rock group, Rush are strong on immediate acceleration but weak on the top end, but they do possess a driving, crisp sound.

The album opens with Finding My Way — instant Who-like crackling energy screaming from the speakers.

Suddenly one realizes that here is one still Canadian group charged with life.

Rush are definitely brash and unseasoned around the edges but the hard core potential — the willingness to let the notes fall where they may and stand proud—is exciting.

The only real drawback is that the energy needs a bit more channeling and the arrangements need a touch more refining.

Still, Alex Lifeson's lead guitar work in Here Again is outstanding.

Bass guitarist Geddy Lee's voice is slightly too shrill in tunes like Need Some Love and Take A Friend yet it works amazingly well in the group created context of piercing, slithering rock.

John Rutsey on drums completes this talented trio.



Pay no attention to the man behind the curtain!

Interview by Steve Streeter
Transcribed by Mandy Streeter

Howard "HERNS" Ungerlieder is a name that most Rush fans should be familiar with. He's been with Rush since the beginning. HERNs is the man who conducts the spectacular lights and effects that you've come to love over the years. If you ever have peered back or forward depending on where you're sitting to the mixing board you'll see a man in black you will swear is conducting an orchestra. Well he is. Howard is a friend to many Rush fans.

So often we take the production/lights for granted. But it is immediately apparent that Howard is a very unique and special talent. Simply put: he's one of the very best in the business! We'll be talking to Howard again in the near future. So if you have any specific questions, please send them in.

Steve: I want to start by finding out in a nutshell, how you got started with Rush. Was that your first gig?

Howard: No, it wasn't. It was actually my fifth. I started in 1970 working for a talent agency called American Talent International, located in New York City. I was an agent there for two years, a booking agent. I was booking all these bands and working out their contracts. I actually started delivering coffees for that company in 1970 and worked my way up through the mail room to talent scout status, an agent. So that's how I started. The first tour I did was Savoy Brown, in '71. I went from there to Bad Finger for awhile. I did the Rod Stewart "Ooo La La Tour" to the Fleetwood Mac "Bare Trees Tour"...

S: You weren't doing lighting at the time....

H: No, the capacity I was in during that time period was in the contractual end, making sure the bands got paid, looking after the acts I represented, and also tour managing them. I wasn't tour managing Fleetwood Mac although I was Savoy Brown. I was the American tour manager for Bad Finger. I did a lot of work with, it was actually a package tour, with Savoy Brown, Fleetwood Mac and Deep Purple. I did some work with Deep Purple on the MachineHead tour.

S: What a show! Interesting...

H: Yeah, then in 1974 I did some special effects with The Who for "Tommy" when they did a lot of outdoor shows. I did the choreographed search lights.

S: Did you? Was that some of the first lighting experience you had?

H: Actually Savoy Brown I was doing lighting on as well. I've always done lighting. I studied it in school and university. I took theatre arts and drama.

S: How did Rush come about?

H: Well, I was doing Brian Auger's Oblivion Express. I don't

know if you know who Brian Auger was. He's a jazz organ player. He and an old partner of his, named Julie Driscoll wrote a

song called "Season of the Witch" which became very famous. He's a really amazing player. I did a tour with him and he had people like Bobby McIntosh, who was the drummer for The Average White Band. He had Steve Feroni playing with him, another amazing drummer. He had Jack Mills, Barry Dean on guitar. Some really good musicians. He was doing a lot of dates with people like Herbie Hancock. We'd come in and jam with them. He was really into jazz quite a bit. I did a bunch of touring with him and at the end of that tour the agency phoned me up and said they had just signed Rush and wanted me to go to Toronto.

S: Oh interesting...okay..

H: They sent me up to the office, although they didn't tell the band I was coming... Ha, ha, ha... or Ray Danniels!

S: Oh really?....

H: So I just sort of showed up and said, "Listen, I'm the tour manager for Rush." And I just came in and did everything.

S: And that was in...

H: That was in August of '74.

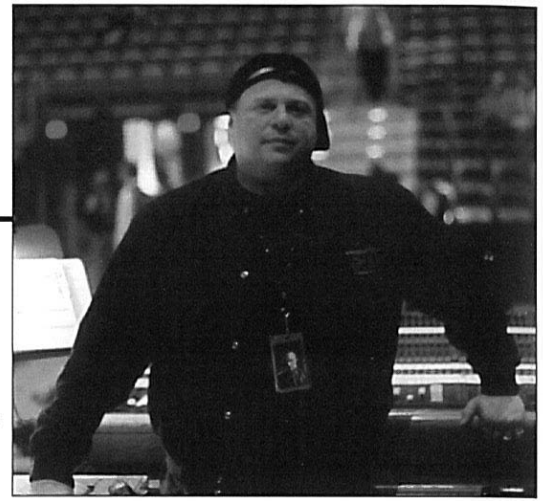
S: On the brink of their first tour...

H: That was their first tour. I was actually the one who put them on the road and took them out.

S: Okay, wow..

H: They had just signed a recording contract. So we went out there opening for Uriah Heep.

S: Right, which I heard they were one of the loudest bands



H: Oh, they were pretty amazing. I used to be their agent so,...

S: Oh, were you really?

H: Oh yeah, it was really fun. Knowing the bands from being their agent before and now working with them on the road, I knew a lot of the people, so it was really easy to get out there. And because of the people I knew, it really helped the band quite a bit. I knew all the promoters, from being an agent, and they always treated Rush really well.

S: So from that tour, and in subsequent years, were you developing different techniques with Rush and other bands...?

H: As far as lighting goes?

S: Yeah.

H: Well, I'm innovative. What I like to do is, I'm one of the few people who use atmosphere as a drawing board. I like using atmosphere, like smoke or air to create imagery. I was one of the last people, I really held out for years, from using automated lighting. When automated lighting first came out I refused to use it because I wanted to explore as much as I could possibly do with theatrical lighting. So by exploring the theatrical lighting and not succumbing to the moving lights right away it made it a lot more interesting down the road when I did venture into the moving lights. Because then that opened up a whole new world for me after I basically exhausted every possibility that I could think of with conventional and theatrical lighting.

S: What tour did you start using the moving lights then? Was it 2112 or Farewell To Kings maybe?

H: No, way after that. It wasn't until 1988. We didn't use moving lights until, I think, Hold Your Fire.

S: Okay, then it must be the illusion of moving lights I recall from previous tours.

H: Oh yeah, well I created that with cross-fading lighting. I used to have systems that were upwards of five or six hundred lights. There were a lot of lights. And I would design them so that when you cross-faded them it would create movement, but it was an illusion. I had people thinking I was using lasers before I even had them on stage.

S: Well, you had me fooled. I swear I saw lights moving around in the early shows.

H: What you were witnessing was chases, multiple chases going on. I've always taxed circuitry in how to use lighting. I was the first person to actually put an aircraft landing light in a can. That was in 1973 when I stumbled across a friend of mine named Tim Pace, who was a lighting designer down in Washington D.C. He's still there actually, doing a lot of video and club work. We went to an auction and picked up these things called marine beacon lights which really are aircraft landing lights. They're a very tight beam and put out a throw for a quarter of a mile but when you're using them on stage from 20-30 feet it never really opens up. It becomes really nice and thin like a pencil beam. They're low voltage, and cheap and they look great. So around '73 we put one inside of a can to see how it would work and it was just phenomenal. So we used them on a few of the Rush dates when Rush was doing some headline shows in '77 and after that everybody else wanted them and it became public domain. Tried to claim the rights to it but

everybody was using it. At that point in time I used to think that aircraft landing lights ran in series cause it was low voltage and they were in groups of eight. Now they're in groups of four. But back then they were in groups of eight and when you put a fader up, all eight lights would come up at the same time. So what I said was, man, it would be really great if I didn't have to use these as groups of eight but I could work it out so I could put them up individually, so I could get ten groups of eight, right, and bring them up as eighty individual lights. So I called up See Factor and said, 'Let's work this out so we can do it'. What we came up with was that we had to put a transformer on each light and then I had a custom board designed to matrix out combinations of these so you could pick and choose whatever you want.

S: Wow.

H: So that when you were seeing eighty aircraft lights chasing, you're not seeing ten groups of eight, you're seeing eighty individual beams coming down from all different chase patterns that I can assign into these custom boards.

S: That sounds like the illusion of a laser.

H: Not only a laser, but a moving light. I came up with a lot of innovative circuitry and custom boards. Rush has always had, I've always had customized consoles doing really bizarre things. I've never used the conventional system, ever.

S: Right, you had mentioned a story to me previously that I'd like you to relate about Ted Nugent...

H: Oh yeah, when Rush was playing...

S: Were they opening for Nugent?

H: It was like a co-headline, but, yeah, they were more of a special guest than a headliner. Michigan was always their really stronghold. It was in Detroit. Rush had played there with Kiss, opened for them. They did the whole Kiss tour. A lot of their popularity came from that tour. That was '74-'75. Right after Uriah Heep we went into that. Rush also toured with Aerosmith. The tour manager for Aerosmith was kind of a miserable guy. He wouldn't give Rush sound checks and when it came time for lighting he only let me use three faders of lights. Just a miserable guy and we did a whole Aerosmith tour like this. With as well as Rush can play, we never really got to use any of the production because of this road manager guy being really uptight. Well, when we went to work with Ted it was really great. His brother John Nugent was tour managing at the time, and he was a nice guy, but on this one show in Detroit, all the sudden, for some reason, I think it was the same management company, this guy from Aerosmith came in, the guy who was miserable, came in for this leg of the tour. John Nugent was still out there but being Ted's brother he was driving the car with Ted. They had a rental Lincoln at the time. So anyway, I had a friend that worked at the Michigan Palace as a rigger and he was also a rigger for Cobo Hall and I found out that this tour manager was going to be there and I knew that Rush was not going to get any production and it was a really important show because Rush were getting really huge in popularity in that part of the world. So I designed this little light show with a huge white scrim and a bunch of beam projectors and, oh, just all this special effect lighting. I had my friend fly it to the ceiling so it just looked like it was just part of the rigging hanging from ceiling of the

building, right? And he spaced it out for me so that when he brought it in it would cover all of Ted's production and you wouldn't see anything. Ted had a lot of ground support system at the time and genie towers and stuff like that. So of course, that afternoon the tour manager came up to me and told me that I wasn't allowed to use anything but these three faders, just like I expected. I said to him, "Well, you know, I think I'd rather just use spotlights, I won't use anything...." And in order to pull this off my lighting board had to be buried under the stage where no one could see it, so I'd have to run the lights from the side of the stage. We didn't have a long enough cord to get it out further and we didn't want people knowing about it so I just sort of snuck it in there. When Rush came up on stage right before Ted, all the stuff dropped in, you know, and basically looked like a huge production. Everything was pre-focused and we just did the best we could. We rolled down our white carpet and this scrim came in and the band started playing and about into the second or third song I feel I'm being choked. I turn around and it's Ted - strangling me! Like, "Why are you doing this?!" Pretty crazy, but it was alright. (Laughter)

S: So he let you do it, huh?

H: Yeah, yeah, well he wasn't happy at the time but, you know, after that he was alright.

S: (Laughter) That's funny. Are there any other outstanding stories with other bands?

H: Oh, there's tons of stories. On the road with Kiss was amazing. We had a pretty good time with those guys. They were always great.

S: Well, Kiss they were big fans of Rush as far as I know back then...

H: Oh it was great! They were very friendly. Everybody used to tell us horror stories about Kiss, like these guys were miserable, you can't get along. I'll tell you right now, they were great to work with. They were friendly. We had sound checks every day. It was just very, very good.

S: It was a good thing for Rush, too...

H: Oh yeah, it always was. You know we did some shows with Blue Oyster Cult. We were playing with everyone back then. I mean, we played with Sha Na Na back then. It was amazing.

S: Right. Did you go on the Grace Under Pressure tour?

H: I did every tour, except for Roll The Bones.

S: And it was noticeable. You were missed on Bones.

H: Well, thank you. (Laughs)

S: A lot of people mentioned it, it came up quite a bit.

H: Well the unfortunate thing about that was that I designed the show for Roll The Bones and I hired the lighting director for it because I thought he was a nice guy. Well, he is a nice guy, but what happened here is he changed my design.

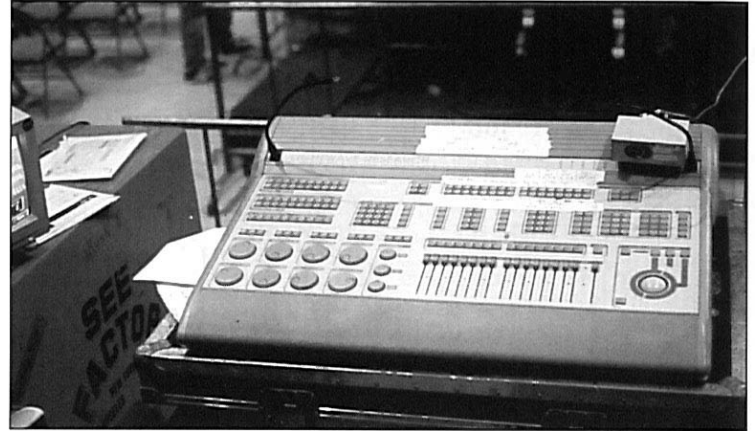
S: Oooooo...

H: Not the structure, the instruments. Right? And never discussed it with me. He took it upon his own cognizance to change it. Well, he changed it and it wasn't quite right. So anyway, I had hired him and he changed the system and I didn't really know what was going on and what was not going on. Things really weren't happening.

S: It was apparent to us and a lot of the fans that there was

a problem with the lights. I remember the early shows on the tour that we saw seemed very rusty and didn't seem to have the impact.

H: Well the problem that happened there was the fact that when Rush took a pretty long break I took on the Queensryche Empire tour. That tour was supposed to be over right before Rush started but they had that huge hit, "Silent Lucidity". So that tour was extended to sixteen months and they sold almost four million records. I couldn't just walk off the tour. That wouldn't be right. I'm trying to keep some integrity here. It was a very strange situation. I wanted to finish Queensryche and I knew that if I could design Rush and have somebody run it....I didn't think it would be as poor as what people said it was. But some people said it was great. So I guess it's to the eye of the beholder.



S: Jumping around a little bit, what brought on the pyrotechnics during Counterparts?

H: Well, a long time ago, Rush used to use pyrotechnics quite a bit.

S: I believe....

H: 2112

S: The first tour I saw was Kings...

H: Yeah, Farewell To Kings as well, but 2112 we also used it.

S: Yep, flashpots.

H: Flashpots, yeah. And then one day we had a really serious accident happen that sort of curtailed the use of pyro again for a long, long time. So I never really brought it up. But down the road I mentioned it and my partner Doug, at the time, he's actually my partner now, we're always talking about doing something. He said how about pyro with Rush? I said, 'Aw, it's a sore subject because of this unfortunate thing that happened years ago but we'll give it a shot and mention it to them'. And Neil sort of really loves pyro and he said, 'Yeah, that would be pretty cool!'. Everybody was really suprised. Ged said, 'Yeah, let's give it a shot'. The music really called out for it.

S: Oh yeah, Double Agent was perfect.

H: Yeah, so...See, I like using effects, not because you have them, but to make them integrated with what's going on.

S: Fits the music.

H: Exactly. A lot of people just use it to use it. I don't do that. I like the element of surprise. I like the dramatics, you know, I'd like to use it more. Like the theatrical effect.

S: Yeah, it was a fun effect. I felt the heat!

H: (Laughter) Exactly! So that was great. It worked out well. I wanted to give the audience something different. Like bringing back the lasers on this tour. I wanted to do that.

S: People were missing those again...

H: That's right. People that come to see Rush know. It may be gone on one tour but it'll be back on another but who knows? There's always something else that will be there.

S: Yeah, it's part of the show. This past tour you used those big light balls during Natural Science. That was your invention?

H: Yeah, Geddy really wanted them originally for Half The World and wanted them to be like the Earth. Geddy's original idea was to have the Earth splitting in half but the more we looked at it, the bigger they had to be cause when you're playing in arenas you have to see what they are. If they're too small, you won't make out that it's the Earth. If you have this huge ball, then it becomes an obstruction that sits over the audience looming all night long and you have to put it in some kind of a shroud so no one sees what it is and then have it pull out....It became quite the conversation piece. I thought maybe it would be better to use the Yin and the Yang on the screen. Geddy's brother did the video. We were going to use his video there, so I thought maybe it would be a happy medium to try to lose that effect. Then we were talking more about it and there was an effect years ago called the porcupine you used to see in dance clubs. Geddy and I went to a club and saw it and it was like an upside down version of the ball and I said it'd be nice to have some of those on stage. But they're disco effects and they fall to pieces and you don't want to travel around with them. So we sort of resurrected that effect with the balls based on that and turned them around.

S: It was an appropriate song I thought too.

H: Yeah, cause Ged then said, 'Let's use it in Natural Science, that'll be great'. I thought it would work and they sure do.

S: Oh yeah, I think that was one of my favorite parts of the show.

H: It was sort of subtle.

S: Oh, absolutely. Did you have any input over the dreaded rabbits?

H: Oh, we all have input. How we design the show is like, Geddy has a lot of ideas for the films and I have a lot of ideas for the stage and lighting and also the films. And we sit down with Norm Stango and have brainstorming sessions. Everybody puts their two cents in and we come up with what we do.

S: So Ged's really into it?

H: Oh yeah!

S: Alex and Neil as well?

H: Um, Ged's more hands on. Alex and Neil have input but Ged's the one who actually physically goes down to the work areas where we work, the video house, Spin Productions, where we have our meetings...

S: How do you prepare when you're designing a show?

H: Everyone is different. One way I design is lyrically. So I like to read the lyrics...

S: So you really need to study the music.

H: You have to, to get into it really heavily. Once the studio stuff is done and they have their basic rough mixes, they give me

a copy of that and I get to listen to that months before they come out with it. Then I spend months creating what I think will be great. When I design the system I keep a lot of things in mind. I want the people in the back of the audience who can't see the band very well to be able to see other things. So I design the special effects for them. While the people up front...

S: That don't see it, up front usually.

H: That's right, that don't see that, will see other things that I put in there that I design for them. Then I design in a 270 degree, like, I want the show to look as great from the side as it does from the front. So I have to keep that in consideration as well. And I want it to look modern and unlike other people who are on the road. I create my design based on that.

S: You're always trying to put some unique spin on it.

H: Yep. Then I do the circuitry so that it's highly unusual. So that when I do tricky things, like in Natural Science, with the lights chasing and things no one has ever seen before.

S: Well, you're like a conductor. It's obvious. Well, I never paid attention to the lights really when I was younger but I think every Rush fan now realizes it's so intense. It's one of the best aspects of a Rush show.

H: Well, the thing is, I have a really great band to work with. If it wasn't for the band there'd be no show, so it's one of those things where I'm fortunate enough to work with a band like that. Or Queensryche.

S: I did see a Queensryche show in Milwaukee. Some of the things were reminiscent of Rush, but then again, that's your benchmark.

H: That's right. Well, the thing is, I really have complete creative freedom with Rush as far as lighting goes. No ones really saying to me, 'You can't do this, you must use these colors'. I know when Peter Gabriel's on the road he's strict. You can only use certain colors...

S: But you have complete creative freedom.

H: Sure. And I like using saturated color. I like using technicolor. I want someone to come to a show a go, 'Wow, look at these colors!'

S: Someone brought up actually, here in Rockford, and it was something that I didn't notice at first, but during the reggae break in 'Spirit of Radio', you flood it with the Jamaican flag colors.

H: Yes, I did. (Smiling) So someone actually noticed that huh? (Laughter)

S: Yes, this was from someone who was at their first Rush show and I heard that and thought, 'Yeah, right!'

H: That's pretty funny. I thought I was the only one who caught that. (More laughter)

S: That's really neat. I'm sure there's other things if I think about it. Sometimes we'll spend a show really looking at, studying the lights. But yeah, that was picked up.

H: Well, that was like the tour that we did when the lyrics were 'you see black and white but I see red, not blue'. Well, if you watched the show when I did that one, it was exactly what he sang.

S: Absolutely, that was wonderful.

H: Well, that makes me happy cause that means that people are actually watching which is great.

S: Oh, definately! That's become something Rush fans look at as well as the band.

H: I thought it was a little humorous. You know, keep a little humor in it.

S: Yep, uh huh. So are you preparing for the next leg of the tour?

H: Yeah, it comes up in April so we're preparing for that.

S: Anything new in store?

H: I don't know. You'll have to see. It's outdoors so...

S: That makes a difference. Do you have to adjust to that?

H: Well, a lot of the buildings are smaller, like the stages aren't as big. So we have to see the size of the stage so we can make sure we can fit the system in there.

S: So you may have to adjust from show to show.

H: Oh, definately! We always do anyway. There's always something you have to adjust. You have to be flexible. And we're very flexible, so that's good.

S: Excellent! Oh! Were you at the Phoenix Club show?

H: Of course I was.

S: Of course you were.

H: I was doing lights.(Laughs)

S: Dumb question!

H: Why wouldn't I be there?

S: Of course you were there.

H: Did anyone see that?

S: Well, we knew a couple people that were there.

H: It was a great show actually.

S: You obviously had to bring in a shoestring of lights.

H: We used fifteen cyber lights, a dozen par 64's with color changers on them, and 24 aircraft landing lights with color changers. That was it.

S: That must have been weird.

H: And no spotlights.

S: Must've been weird.

H: It was. It was great. It was fun. Everybody loved it. The band loved it.

S: That's good to hear.

And so wrapped up our first formal talk with Howard. We had many other questions to ask which we will get to in the future issues of **ASOF**. Thanks for your time Howard!



Focus Point Limbo

Dateline: October
26, 1996
Place: Rockford
Metro Center

by Mike Arbisi

Limbo best describes the state of mind I found myself in when Rush finally graced the stage of my hometown Metro Center. Over a year of hardwork and dedication had been put into the petition drive by myself and others – and now, finally, RUSH were here!!

This was the first Rush concert where I was on the floor. I was so fortunate. Fate happened to be on my side that night and I found myself in seat one of the seventh row. What an incredible view! To see up close all the energy Geddy put into his performance was exhilarating. And those faces Alex made! It's an entirely different world from the floor. Neil's drums never looked better.

My "Evening with Rush" started around 4pm. Neil had just arrived and signed a few autographs for some die-hard fans, who, like me, were there to absorb every last moment. When Neil was asked by a fan to sign a shirt, he politely replied, "Nope." We all had a good laugh over that one. Thanks Neil, for being so generous with those items you DID sign!

Alex & Geddy arrived around 4:30 pm via mini-van. The windows were tinted making it almost impossible to see inside. Alex, however, was pressed up against the window and waved to us. It was quite a thrill to see Alex up close like that. We all cheered them on as they drove by and into the backstage garage. During my anxious wait for the show I scouted the area several times. Looking through some (power) windows of the arena I was able to see that we were all in store for one massive light show! My heart began to pound with excitement as I recalled past light

shows at Rush concerts. I had no idea what I was in for!

The sun set, the wind blew high and cold, and a huge gathering of Rush friends were ready for the show of their lives! We could hardly wait until the doors would open and we'd be that much closer to witnessing the greatest concert Rockford would ever know!

As I RUSHED into the building my first order of business was to see the stage. I was shocked to see it was completely uncovered and set up! This was a new sight for me, and a first for Rush too! It was awesome to view the whole set-up like that. I tried to take it all in folks, believe me!

Steve and Mandy were seated several chairs down from me and I had a special request that needed attention. Knowing that Geddy is a huge baseball fan and a collector (as I am), I wanted to give him an autographed copy of "Holy Cow!", written and signed by Hary Caray. I wrote Geddy a separate letter explaining that he and Rush have given me so much over the years, this was my way of giving something back. Once that mission was completed, we made our way back to our seats.

The show was about to begin! As I stood there waiting for the lights to go down I still could not believe that Rush were about to play in my hometown. So *much* hard work and dedication had gone into bringing the band here. Finally, the lights faded, the crowd roared, and history was being made! It was the best Rush production ever in every way. I was elated through the entire show and there were many surprises!

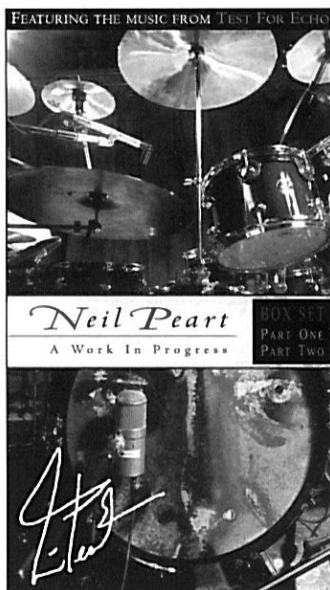
My Mission had been completed. At long last, the band of my youth and manhood had played my hometown, and I, along with several others, had the personal satisfaction of knowing that we were responsible for bringing Rush to Rockford!

NEVER GIVE UP ON YOUR DREAMS,
THEY JUST MAY COME TRUE!!!!



A TRUE MASTER – A WORK IN PROGRESS

by Dan Domberg



It's amazing the effect that a musical instrument can have on you. For me, the drums hold a place in my soul that is unequalled by anything except family and friends. A feeling of pride and confidence washes over me, when I sit down to play, and sparks an excitement that is similar to the joy that a new parent gets when looking at a newborn. As you can see, whereas most people have a love affair with their car, or a boat, I have a love affair with the drums.

It hasn't always been this way though. About five years ago, I taught myself to drum on my uncle's old Pearl drumkit. The dusty red drums and dull brown oxidized cymbals would call to me when I would listen to my favorite music, but I ignored it for many years. Finally, one man's creativity and virtuosity propelled my interest enough to overcome my doubts and fears. His name is Neil Peart. The complex rhythms and intricate fills that he creates in Rush's music amazed my senses. How could one person be making all of that sound? I had never heard anything like it. So, the summer after my freshman year in college, I borrowed my uncle's kit and took the first steps of a never-ending journey. Since then, I have explored many different styles and genres of rock drumming, but I've never had any formal training. I've tried to learn from everyone I have ever heard play. This is particularly true of Mr. Peart, because I thought that if I could be one-tenth as good as he is, then I would have achieved something great. So, imagine my delight when I learned that my favorite tutor was releasing almost four hours of instructional videos! I couldn't wait until they arrived.

To say that the production of these videos was masterful would be an understatement. The sound and video quality, the content, organization and direction were all first rate, a credit to Neil and to DCI. Tape one contains a brief summary of Neil's musical past, a description of his drumkit and performances of various songs off *Test for Echo*. After each performance, he then goes through and explains why he made the drum part the way he did. Also in tape one, Neil contrasts his old approach to drumming with his new approach. Tape two continues with the exhibition and explanation of songs from *T4E*. It then takes a brief respite to show us Neil's warm-up routine and then returns to finish up the demonstrations of songs. Peppered throughout both of the videos are commentaries by Neil about various philosophies that he believes in, and there are also a few surprises along the way. There are many excellent action shots of Neil with frequent slow motion replays and picture in picture displays to reveal the illusive bass drum parts. Neil's narration is as

fluent and confident as any orator I have ever heard, and his instruction on creating a good drum part for a song is second to none. All in all, these videos were very entertaining, and for the drummer in me, very educational and inspirational.

To me, one of the more interesting topics on the video is how Freddie Grueber altered Neil's views about drumming. Essentially, Freddy taught Neil that there are no straight lines in nature. Think about it; nothing that is naturally occurring is a straight line. Straightness is a human quality. Naturally, drummers tend to think that striking a drum is a straight line motion (at least I did). What Freddy did was open Neil's eyes to circular drumming motions. Freddy teaches that circular drumming motions are more natural, and if something is more natural, it improves the quality and "feel" of the motion. He also taught him to not fight the stick if it wants to rebound from the drum and to let it fall if it wants to fall. He urged Neil to raise his snare drum higher so that he was playing to the drum head, not through it. Neil obliged until he realized that the drum was as high as his belly button. The belly button, Neil explains, is the physical center of the body and the spiritual center in many religious beliefs. Neil found himself working in a circular fashion above the drum rather than in a linear motion through the drum. All of these changes, including going back to traditional grip, helped improve the "feel" and freshness of his drumming.

One very interesting aspect of this circular motion idea (at least for me) is that it shares similarities with a martial art that I study. Aikido is a Japanese martial art that uses circular motions and the body's center (or Ki) for defense and for personal development. I always felt that there was some sort of association between martial arts and drumming but I assumed that it was only the physical agility and reflex coordination that were similar. I now realize that the same principles used in Aikido are also applicable to drumming. So, by practicing either art, the other art is benefiting as well. This revelation has elevated my enthusiasm for drumming to new heights. Without the video, I may have never realized it.

Another quality that Neil possesses that is a common theme in Aikido is the absence of ego. Neil has, in the past, been called "The Professor"; but after viewing these videos, I don't think he wants to be known as that anymore. He considers himself to be more of a graduate student, someone who can teach, but is still learning. I think that this is the best attitude that he could project, because it shows his modesty and his desire to continuously improve himself. In my opinion, Neil possesses the knowledge, experience, enthusiasm, and "the feel" necessary to be considered among the best drummers of all time. Neil would probably disagree, but any true master would. Ultimately, it is up to the artists' peers to decide this; and after viewing these videos, I have decided!

Finally, I think that drummers and Rush fans alike will be thrilled with these videos. The drummer will be pleased with the instruction and demonstrations, and the Rush fan will be enthralled by the illustrations and narration. These videos are educational, entertaining and enlightening; and yes Mr. Peart, they were well worth my time.



Dear Steve and Mandy,

Aloha! ! ! Yes, there are Rush fans in the middle of the Pacific Ocean. Thank you for responding quickly in sending the issues of ASOF. I am impressed by their quality and the passion for Rush that inspires them.

My best friend, Mike, and I have yearly celebrated the two shows Rush played from the Grace Under Pressure Tour in Honolulu on November 24-25, 1984. As far as we were concerned, those shows marked moments of transcendence that we call, "the 72 Hour Day." When Rush came to town, we were prepared. We rented an apartment/hotel for two nights and invited all who loved Rush and Moosehead beer. We played games, drank beer, and lived Rush! A highpoint occurred about three hours before the first show when we read from the old album jackets, and Mike and John gave us a skit under bedsheets in the guise of Spirits of Rush. They baptized all willing in beer and song. At the concert, I was fortunate enough to have seventh row stage center seats and I will never forget that experience. Many of the friends at that event have moved away or lost interest in Rush, but Mike and I continue to hold the fire and now our wives support and join us in the vision.

Recently, via NMS, we discovered another serious Rush fan here in Hawaii, who lives ten minutes away! Our families will probably get together soon to have a barbecue and explore Test For Echo. The Net can assist in making connections if we're not slaves to it. (By the way, I feel very positive about Test For Echo. My early fascinations are Driven, Totem, Dog Years, Resist, and Carve Away the Stone).

I am glad to finally learn about ASOF (The Working Man release made me aware of ASOF!). It offers a different forum for communicating about what unifies and fascinates us so much—the Music of Rush. I look forward to future issues and contributing.

Rush On,
Claude McDowell, Psy.D
Honolulu, HI

R U S H The Return of Hermes?

By Claude McDowell, Psy.D.
Honolulu, Hawaii

As a clinical psychologist, I have often thought that the Music of the rock band Rush is like a Rorschach Inkblot Test—What-You-See-Is-What-You-Get. "WYSIWYG" qualities of both experiences allow translucence in boundaries between observer and observed; audience and band...

A genuine co-conspiracy emerges.

My conspiracy today asks a simple question: "What is that amazing sound RUSHing by my ears"?

Well, maybe not so simple.

Alex, Geddy, and Neil—of course.

Music? Certainly. But how can Music affect so many so deeply?

A recent article in **Discover*** magazine interestingly entitled, "Music of the Hemispheres" presented some credible research on the effects of music on people. Mitch Waterman, a psychologist in England, suggested music stimulates and fulfills essential and primitive biological roles: "Our brains are very, very good at internalizing the consistencies of structure. Whenever those consistencies are tweaked, we like it. It's almost as if we use music

as a resource to make us feel. It helps keep our brains going properly." Research by psychologist Frances Rauscher at University of California, Irvine* suggested that listening to any complex music piece enhances abstract problem solving skills. The net effect of music on us is that our brains are aroused to a state of heightened readiness, allowing greater ability to deal with our environment.

However, we, the audience, also have a net effect on the music. Waterman found that each person responds actively and uniquely to music: "People can feel envy, or guilt, or shame, or disappointment simply because when we interact with music, we aren't just sitting there and listening." Individuals carry to music, like to Inkblots, all the complexity and idiosyncrasy of their own lives and personalities. Music truly is a whole brain experience.

Observing the passion and depth that Rush inspires in others ("The Oracle," ASOF #14) and in my own relationships led me to recognize many significant archetypal qualities in the Music of Rush. Jung** presented the archetypes as timeless agents of psychological operation arising from the collective unconscious common to us all. The archetypes are closely related to biological instinctual behavior. Jung found manifest expressions of the archetypes in the myths and religions of this planet. He identified activated archetypes, by two crucial cues: 1) Numinosity—that larger than life feeling/quality sometimes described as magical or spiritual; 2) Synchronicity - meaningful coincidences that defy causation.

Again, I am struck in how the Music of Rush displays these two cues to myself and others. The release of **Counterparts** celebrated my own "reaching for the alien shore" when in February 1994, I flew to San Francisco to see the band again after a 10 year hiatus. This time, however, I (an African American) was with my "alien" fiancée (Claudia of Germany). It was all very funny, and amazing, and sacred, but of course, THAT'S JUST US! On March 19, 1994, we returned to San Francisco and were married and danced to *The Speed of Love* at our reception. A synchronicity of intense meaning that I submit, dear reader, suggests to me that our "RUSHing sound" conjures none other than an archetypal image of the great mediator, Hermes, making movement in our time. Delusion? Possibly. However, Rush seems to reflect Hermes in three primary forms I call: the Myth, the Man, and the Metal.

THE MYTH

*"Let the truth of Love be lighted
Let the love of Truth shine clear"*

Greek mythology gave shape to Hermes as Messenger of the gods.

Winged shoes and cap, the FTD florist logo might pop into mind! "Versatility and mutability are Hermes most prominent characteristics."*** Versatility and mutability are prominent characteristics in Rush as well, underlined in their commitment to evolve the music and the band. One only need witness the breadth of *Rivendell* and *Panacea* to *Hemispheres* and *Between the Wheels* to appreciate Alex, Geddy, and Neil's versatility. Mutability or Change has often been a focus of the band

(*Circumstances, Tom Sawyer, Vital Signs, Chemistry, Digital Man, New World Man*). "While Hermes is regarded as one of the earliest and most primitive gods of the Greeks...he must be recognized as an archetype devoted to mediating between, and unifying the opposites."*** This description strikingly captures the myth of Cygnus.

Hermes to Cygnus? Maybe the names were changed to protect the innocent.

THE MAN

"He knows changes aren't permanent- But change is"

Hermes manifested in Egypt as Hermes Trimegistus; Thrice-great, as a philosopher, priest, and king. Not surprisingly, Rush has intensely addressed each of these roles (*Closer to the Heart, 2112, A Farewell to Kings*) finding them potent in promise and despair. Thrice-great was also a magician. The **Working Man** tribute release was fine evidence of the abilities of our thrice-great chaps. A lot of the songs required five or six musical contributors!

Hermetic philosophy seeks to open links between heaven and earth.*** The Emerald Tablet (credited to Hermes) offers the first practical procedures for attaining such a daunting task. "As above, so below," emerged from the Emerald Tablet and echos throughout esoterica East and West. Hermes saw (Hu)Man as the miracle from which attainment is completed.*** *Natural Science* and *Presto* illuminate a comparable vision where tidal pools reflect human society and the Common Man is comprised of star dust and ocean water. The two musical pieces also give form to the "science/art" practice of Hermetics known as alchemy which uses metallurgy as a metaphor of self transformation.

THE METAL

"Like a rare and precious metal

*Beneath a ton of rock It takes some time
and trouble to separate from the stock"*

Lead and Gold. Yin and Yang. Moe, Larry, and Curly. All are counterparts. Jung assisted us to understand self transformation as an alchemical process reconciling the feminine and masculine parts of our psyche. Animate portrays a man, his anima, and the alchemical processes necessary for reconciliation, polarization, sensitization, criticism, civility, compensation, animation, complication, and then elevation. *Between Sun and Moon* is the inner space where the opposites join—a fine

place. The *Double Agent* is a hero similar to Von Eschenbach's Grail hero, Parzival, who makes the third choice, the choice between darkness and light, and wins the Grail.

Jung was more vague in the laboratory operations of alchemy. Rush, on the other hand, has demonstrated—in plain sight for 22 years—"Led" turning into gold, platinum and other various metals. Heavy metal music is rarified when Rush plays. It is no mere coincidence that Rush wore the Mercury label earlier in their careers. Of all metal bands, Rush most likely garners comparison to the liquid metal quicksilver—an essential ingredient for discovering alchemy's fabled Philosopher's Stone.

THE MONUMENT

And now we have **Test For Echo**. An experience of numinosity unfolds as we realize that the name Hermes appears to have originated in the word for "stone heap."*** In prehistoric customs of Crete and other Greek regions, *herma* or *hermaion* were created with upright stones surrounded by smaller stones. Hermaion were monuments that served as landmarks for wayfarers. Indeed, Test For Echo's Rockman marks a definitive moment for the Men of Willowdale: Completion of the Fourth Cycle and no U-turns! For us fans, the herma can mark a time to deeply reflect on our own journeys with Rush and recognize our ready Guide. Who knows? If you listen carefully you may hear the furious flutter of winged cap and sandals and a whisper:

*"Carve away the stone, Sisyphus.
Carve away the stone."*

Footnotes.

* Shreeve, J. (1996). Music of the hemispheres. *Discover*, 17 (10), 90-100.

**Jung, C. G. (1960). *On the nature of the psyche*. NY: Princeton Press.

*** *Gnosis: A journal of the western inner traditions*. (1996), 40. San Francisco: Lumen foundation.





Alex Neil & Co. Photos by Mark Bernard, Rockford, IL, 1996



YOUR comments on . . . *Test for echo*

I am seized with amazement once again by our favorite Canadian Power Trio's perpetual habit of transcending themselves. Will there ever be a limit to their extraordinary capabilities? *Test For Echo* exemplifies why they so aptly have been dubbed: Musicians of the Millennium! For over twenty years now they have continued to grow beyond our wildest expectations. Thanks guys!

As usual, Neil has touched upon some of my recent ruminations, and Geddy's vocals are the best they have ever been. Without being derogatory towards any past Rush endeavors, here are some other early thoughts for consideration: *Test for Echo* is the best title track/released song since *New World Man*. *Limbo* is the best instrumental since *YYZ*. The album cover is the best since *Grace Under Pressure* (maybe *Roll the Bones*). And finally, Alex has harmoniously blended an aggressive heavy raw edge feeling with a subtle complex melodic inspirational style. If I may have the audacity to proclaim King Lerxst the King of Dichotomy! *Test For Echo* is unbelievable!

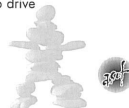
With that said, I have prepared an extremely sardonic top ten list:

Top Ten Reasons Why *Test For Echo* Will Sell Over 50 Million Copies

10. Officially endorsed by TV show "Cops"
9. Lyrics of "Virtuality" are politically correct

8. Officially endorsed by TV show "America's Most Wanted"
7. Cover doubles for planet Hoth/Empire Strikes Back promotional poster
6. Officially endorsed by TV show "Hard Copy"
5. "Half the World" will love it
4. Deadheads will think tie dyed CD is cool
3. "Totem" caters to Christians, Buddhists, Muslims, Hindus, Vikings, Pagans, . . .
2. Because it's finally Rush's turn to drive
1. Best band portraits since . . .

Andy Penacho
The Analog Kid
Tempe, AZ



Firstly, I'd like to thank Steve and Mandy for putting out such a quality fanzine. I really appreciate the time and effort you guys put into it. Keep up the good work!

Okay, some brief and boring info about myself. I'm a writer and illustrator, and have been a HUGE Rush fan since 1982. *Signals* was my first record. There were some people I knew who didn't care for the lesser amounts of guitar on that album, but that didn't matter to me. I love *Signals*, and it still ranks high on my list of favorite rock albums. However, I can't really say I have a favorite Rush album. I love them all for different reasons. Even the early stuff has a certain charm. Too bad *Caress of Steel* wasn't well received. I think it kicks ass. I appreciate the fact that the trio is CONSTANTLY trying to come up with new angles on their music. This attitude definitely inspires me as an artist to push the envelope. One thing Geddy said will probably stick with me for life: "You have to be willing to fail in public if you really want to

achieve any kind of growth as an artist." VERY TRUE INDEED.

Which brings me to *Echo*. Now that Rush has gone through their keyboard stage and was heading back to mostly guitar-bass-drums, I was really curious to see how they would approach that. *Counterparts*, I think, had the sound that Alex was trying to go after - a more up-front, in-your-face guitar sound. The really amazing thing about that record was the IMMENSE variety of guitar textures on it. Okay, we all know that on each album, the songs usually sound pretty different from one another. But to me, this record probably has the most variety I've ever heard within a Rush album. Listen to each song really closely, compare them, and you'll see what I mean. One fantastic record. *Echo*, the next phase, is even more brilliant. One friend of mine commented that *Echo* seems to have "a really emotional feel about it, even more so than some of their previous albums." I agree. Songs like *Resist*

and *Totem* make that very clear. And *Limbo* - whoa!! *Limbo* has a wonderful, schizo-like quality to it. Stylistically, it goes through so many changes it makes you woozy. Great, great tune. *Driven* describes me to a T, lyrically and musically. Every song on this record is a gem. Even though it's really hard for me to pick a favorite, I think it's a toss-up between *Test For Echo* and *Driven*. *Echo* is, in my humble opinion, the best record since *Moving Pictures*. I think that says a lot. On a scale of 1 to 10, **ECHO IS A 15!!**

Lastly, the concert on December 15. FANTASTIC!! The new songs were well received. It was cool to

hear 2112 played in its entirety. Surely the best Christmas present I could get. The sound was awesome, and it was cool to hear a mostly guitar-oriented set. Don't get me wrong, I love the keyboard stuff too, but it was nice to see something different. One really funny thing - during the intermission, one of the songs played over the PA was a track off of *Victor*!! It was Don't Care. I laughed my ass off when I heard this. I wonder, did anyone ELSE notice?! (Oh yes! It was another wonderful selection of intermission tunes brought to you by Neil himself! Yes, Neil once again made the intermission tape, as he has been doing for years. - Eds.)

Time for me to go. I'm looking forward to seeing Rush again at Madison Square Garden, as well as the live album.

Best wishes,
Saul Trabal <strabal@vm.com>
New York City



Photo by Steve Streeter

On Neil's cycling adventures . . .

Quick Review

Neil's article in the April 1996 issue of *Cycle Canada* was wonderful. [see **ASOF #14** for details] I like Rush and motorcycles very much, so this was quite a pleasant surprise. *Cycle Canada's* back issue staff was very courteous and I hope everyone who is interested can still buy a copy. The whole magazine is a new perspective on motorcycling to me as an American fan, for it is strictly Canadian in content, even the advertising. It makes me wonder what other interesting vehicles Neil owns. We've got to ask him if he ever did pick up a real Red Barchetta. Hmmm....

Mark Wick, Fond Du Lac, WI



BENEATH & BETWEEN BAS S

Hello everyone and welcome to the first installment of **Beneath, Between and Behind...the bass**, a column for Rush fans who are also musicians. The focus is to pass along information or secrets of playing Rush music, performances, getting started in music, anything that other musicians and Rush fans might enjoy.

I would like to debut the column by telling of my start in playing music and becoming a Rush fanatic.

Every day I want to call up the members of REO Speedwagon and thank them for putting out such a crappy album in 1980. At age 12, my then favorite band, had just released an album so cheezy (Hi infidelity) you needed to have a box of Triscuits with you just to listen to it! At 12, I didn't want to listen to songs about love or girls so I had to search for another band to spend my money on (although at that age who has money?) A few months later a friend introduced me to Rush's music by way of **2112** creating such excitement and enthusiasm about music that I had to have more than an album or two. I somehow had to be part of it, but how?

I remember being knocked out by Geddy's bass lines, not that Alex or Neil didn't stand out, but Geddy's parts were so active, constantly moving, and extremely nontraditional (unlike a string of eighth notes on the same three notes the entire song ala ZZ Top, Van Halen). At that point I knew I wanted to play bass and after two years of incessant pestering, my mother conceded and bought me a Peavey T-20 bass and small practice amp for Christmas. At 14, my mission now in life was to learn music, and more importantly, Rush music! I purchased the **Rush Complete** music book and began to learn songs while taking lessons reading music. For hours and hours I would lock myself in my room trying to learn Rush's music, (and in the process, drive everyone crazy by playing **Tom Sawyer** over and over) and figuring out whatever other parts I could.

In 1986 I had saved enough money to buy a new Rickenbacker 4003 bass, because after all, if I was to play Rush music I had to have the right tools, and, if it was good enough for Geddy it was certainly good enough for me. It was the best \$750 I ever spent. 1986 also held another major milestone, I saw my first Rush concert, the **Power Windows Tour** in St. Louis. I remember just standing there not being able to move the entire time. I just stood there motionless with my mouth open in awe. My dream of the seeing the "Boys" in person had come true. It was spectacle of unimaginable thought.

In 1987 I met a drummer and guitarist who loved Rush as much as I did and we set out to do what else, form a Rush cover band of course. We practiced night and day, summer and winter in the garage of the guitarist. The first 4 or 5 months of practice the songs sounded so bad we may have violated some local ordinance about playing Rush songs very excruciatingly bad! But, we kept at it and after 9 or 10 months things didn't sound too bad. We were surprised at how well the songs were coming together. The songs at

that time were: **In the Mood, Tom Sawyer, Spirit of Radio, Limelight, New World Man, Enemy Within, YYY, Freewill, La Villa Strangiato, Red Barchetta, Time Stand Still, and Vital Signs**. We did fiddle with almost every other song in the **Rush Complete** music book (better known as the bible) but we also knew our limits and kept only the best ones for public performances.

During this time I had asked my music teacher to teach me more difficult Rush songs. Although he wanted me to continue with jazz, I told him I was tired of playing it and would much rather study Geddy's style. Well, I think I bit off more than I could chew because he told me my final (I was taking college credit) was to play along to **Natural Science** in its entirety! Consequently, I did pass the final, but as anyone knows who's played the song before, I needed reconstructive surgery on my fretting hand. In all seriousness though it did make me appreciate the "Boys" even further.

The band was eventually named **Freewill** and word got out that we weren't too bad. We started playing at parties and get togethers and sometimes we'd just show up with our stuff and start playing without being invited.

The big day came in late September 1988 when we rented the community center in our home town of Chatham, IL for \$200, hired a sound man for \$100, and bought \$50 in snacks and soda. We passed out fliers and told everyone we knew. Out of 33 songs, 11 were Rush covers. The other songs we did were much easier to put together and play ie., Sharp Dressed Man, Give Me 3 Steps, Surrender, You Really Got Me, Purple Haze, etc.

I think 30 or so people showed up and at \$2 each it's not too hard to see we lost a whole lotta money. But we didn't care as it gave us a chance to do what we enjoyed doing the most and in front of our friends! A writer for the local college newspaper was there and in his review he wrote, "...Not only does this band copy any Rush song to a tee, but every song they do sounds like Rush. They could make Old Blue Eyes sound like Rush. The guitar, the bass and especially the drums are all present in force. It takes a lot of devotion to reproduce the strange rhythms that typify Rush music. This band showed real dedication, practice, and plenty of talent."

Freewill played several more parties after that but as time wore on we began to find other interests and friends. We felt as a group we had reached the highest plateau of our musical ability. For the past two years we had studied Rush's music, style, theory and performances, including seeing them 3 times in one week on the **HYF** tour. Attitudes began to develop and create a strain on the relationships. The band broke up in late '88 or early '89 and even though we all still idolize Rush and keep in touch, we have not performed together since. We joined other bands and moved on to other friends. But one thing still stands; Rush's style is a constant force in influencing how I approach every song I play today and in no other band that I've been involved with since then has there been so much focus and desire to recreate and emulate a sound.

I would like to thank Geddy for teaching me the biggest lesson in music...playing bass doesn't have to be boring!

I think I'll try to find a phone number for REO now.

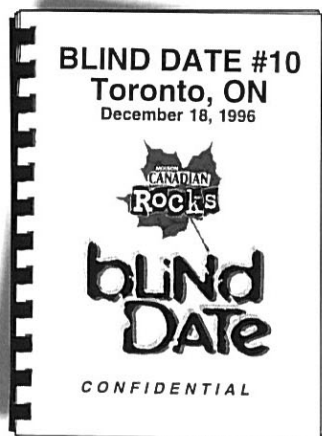
Other musicians or groups interested in passing along their experiences or secrets can mail them to Steve and Mandy at **ASOF**.

Individuals interested in seeing clips of Freewill's 1988 performance can send a blank video cassette to: Doug Antonacci, Freewill Video, 2560 S. Whittier Ave. Springfield, IL 62704

blind DATE

The
Toronto
Star

December 19, 1996



Guitarist Alex Lifeson, drummer Neil Peart and singer/bassist/keyboardist Geddy Lee offered tight, note-perfect deliveries of such songs as "Subdivisions," "Roll The Bones" and "Nobody's Hero," transferring their big, stadium sound surprisingly well to the club venue. Little wonder, since The Phoenix was stacked with more speakers and hi-tech soundboards than are traditionally seen at this club.

Similarly strong was the lighting, which was bright and frequently dramatic. The band put it all to good use on many of the songs showcased from the new album, *Test For Echo*, including "Driven," "Half The World" and "Virtuality."

As expected, while the crowd provided a polite enough response for the new material, it was older, classic Rush tunes that generated the biggest and brightest spark of the evening. Nine songs into the concert, the trio offered a terrific take on "Closer To The Heart." From there, the show truly took off.

Old favorites give fans the classic Rush

By Ira Band - Special to The Star

Well, the long-awaited Rush concert, rumored to be held in December, actually did take place here last night.

Now, before you Rush fans develop heart failure, please be aware the show did not take place at Maple Leaf Gardens or SkyDome's skybowl, two venues the band could certainly fill.

Instead, the trio appeared at the 900-capacity Phoenix Concert Theatre, an odd choice for a band that has probably been Canada's most consistently popular and successful rock export of the last 20-plus years.

Yet, this wasn't just another Rush show. Rather, it was the 10th installment of the Molson Canadian Rocks Blind Date Tour, a cross-country marketing campaign bringing hundreds of lucky contest winners into relatively intimate contact with bands that typically play in cavernous hockey arenas or baseball stadiums. So far this year, Toronto winners have been in the company of such acts as Metallica and The Sex Pistols.

But what kind of "blind date" can it be when so many in the crowd seem to know who's going to appear?

One of the oddest moments of Rush's performance last night was the general lack of enthusiasm and excitement from the crowd when the Toronto band first stepped onstage. Where was the surprise, the thrill?

"Oh, everyone here knew it was going to be Rush," said one non-plussed patron after the band had finished its second song, the appropriately titled "Big Money."

Oh, really? Aren't these Blind Date shows supposed to be more top-secret than federal budgets? "I think it was just a lucky guess on the part of some people," said one Molson spokesperson, when advised of the highly accurate gossip going on well before the show.

Whatever. If the audience wasn't particularly aroused during the first few songs, a more spirited feeling evolved over the course of the evening.

Credit the band for this turnaround. Often hit and miss in concert, (*what?! Take off! ~ Eds.*) Rush was, for the most part, in fine form for much of the night. (*when aren't they!!! ~ Eds.*)

"Hello Canadians!" welcomed Lee after the band whipped through *Dreamline* and *The Big Money*. "It's lovely to see you here. How are you doing? It's nice to be in such intimate surroundings for a change. I can see each and every one of you."

Photo by John Vinson, Las Vegas, NV, 1996



The Incredibly Strange Indonesian Cassettes That Stopped Living and Became Mixed Up Zombies

by Jerry 'Broon Jr.' Brown

Jacksonville, Florida

Back on May 3rd, I set sail for the Northern Arabian Gulf (also known as the Persian Gulf). This particular cruise, like the many others I've made, lasted approximately six months. I arrived back in Jacksonville, Florida on November 1st.

With the release of *Test For Echo* in September, and the tour to kick off in October, I was very worried about missing out! My wife Linda did everything she could to keep me updated, by sending me all the information she could gather, as well as the CD itself on the release date, I MOTHER EARTH's new album *Scenery And Fish* with an appearance by Alex (Rush and Ray Danniels are thanked in the liner notes) and *Working Man* the tribute album.

I had also been in constant contact with another Rush source CAMP RUSHEAD Tim Thompson from Rochester, MN. He did a super job of keeping me well informed of all the Rush happenings back in North America, as well as the tour dates as they became available. I owe him a world of GRATITUDE and THANKS!

As always, when I'm in other Territories, I'm the only crew member onboard that takes off on a major Witch Hunt... I mean Rush hunt. This particular time I was able to search the middle eastern countries of Egypt, Djibouti, Bahrain, Qatar and Oman. I found some out of the ordinary posters and most notably, Indonesian cassettes, which are totally different than any cassettes from the rest of the world. With such titles as 'The Best Of Rush', 'The Very Best Of Rush', 'The Best Collection Of Rush', 'Greatest Hits Of Rush', 'Rush Rock Concert' etc. As well as the normal album releases, with extra added songs on each tape. These particular items are the focus of this issues ARCHIVES, because of their uniqueness and rarity.

The label and makers are not that of Mercury, Atlantic, Anthem or Vertigo. These cassettes are by such labels as Billboard (magazine), Ego, Musicbox, Thames, Thomsun and Yess. The cases are plastic boxes resembling that of a video case (only smaller) and in a variety of pastel colors. Some have stickers indicating, Purely Made in Indonesian, Heatproof Safety Pack or Especially Designed to Protect Against Heat. Suitable for tropical

hot countries. Each tape comes with a complete lyrics booklet as well as cover art and graphics that are very unique and different.

Unlike the music stores in the U.S., when you go into most of the stores in the middle east, you have a full days work ahead of you. Nobody speaks or understands English. I had to use their currency and understand their exchange rate very well. None of the merchandise is in any kind of order. I mean literally everything is thrown together and you are walking on top of the merchandise. Most of the music shops had no shelves. The truck pulls up, dumps everything on the floor, and you search and sift your way through piles and mounds of cassettes and CD's. I didn't even think about slipping one or two in the ole pocket. Their punishment for shoplifting is a chopped off hand!

All the bands we're familiar with are mixed in with all the Arabic music of their countries. Rush isn't popular in the least and the most I'd get for even trying to say the word 'Rush' was a blank stare. If I got a female salesperson (that is, if she wasn't totally covered in garments) I would have to hang it up all together. It was forbidden to even look them in the eyes. In the search for Rush memorabilia in these conservative countries, you'll find yourself having to adjust to their laws, religions and fanatical beliefs (as well as the intense heat and flies).

After the merchandise was purchased (very cheaply, I might add), it all had to be cleaned. Most of the stores are without doors, only curtains, and all the items are exposed to the elements of desert sand, dust and dirt. Even after we were well on our way back to North America, the process of sneaking all the Rush memorabilia thru the Customs port of entry inspection, before entering the U.S., is another story in itself. Just call me 'Gangster of the Boat'.

Every time I make a long deployment, I make it a point to purchase memorabilia and scout for at least one other hardcore Rush fan and collector, besides myself. This time I chose Tim Thompson. Last cruise, when I completely circumnavigated South America, it was Monica R. Davidson from Seattle, WA (another long time friend and fan). I wish I

could do this for everybody I know, but it would be way too difficult. There is very little storage space onboard ship and buying the items themselves can become very difficult. I hope all my close friends and pen-pals understand. Maybe you're next?!

It's great to be home and back in the swing of things, writing my column for ASOF, corresponding, trading, touring and everything else coming our way! Florida in December, I will be at the West Palm Beach show on the 8th and the Orlando show on the 9th! I hope to see some of you there, or when the tour returns in the spring and I'm Driven to a fool's paradise!

THE BIG MONEY

Rush

Big money goes around the world
Big money underground
Big money got the mountains
Big money makes no sound
Big money wanna move the scenes
Big money for the prize
Big money the weight of my world
Big money won the prize

Sometimes pushing people around
Sometimes pulling on the rope
Sometimes pushing all the butt
Sometimes pulling on the cloth
It's the power and the glory, it's worry paradise
Does it another story on a someone like that

Big money got you around the world
Big money change the cruise
Big money will find the way
Big money let proves
Big money make a new rich
Big money stretch new deals
Big money make the life you have
Big money spare me the wheels

Sometimes when we had a good Jews
Sometimes talking cash amount
Sometimes leading you new
Stairway blocking all the ground
It has all gallery richer
Each deal will make good
It's a pull on the yellow pigeon
Gonna make you played a fool

from Billboard's "The Best Collection of Rush"
An official Far East cassette tape.



The Rush Backstage Club has plenty of **Test For Echo** merchandise for sale. A mere \$12.00 gets you going with some merchandise and newsletters which mostly come out around tour time! We also have heard that the RBSC will be on the web soon. Check out **ASOF HQ** for further information. Write them at: **Rush Backstage Club**, 2250 E. Tropicana Ave., #19-228, Las Vegas, NV 89119. Tell 'em **ASOF** sent ya!

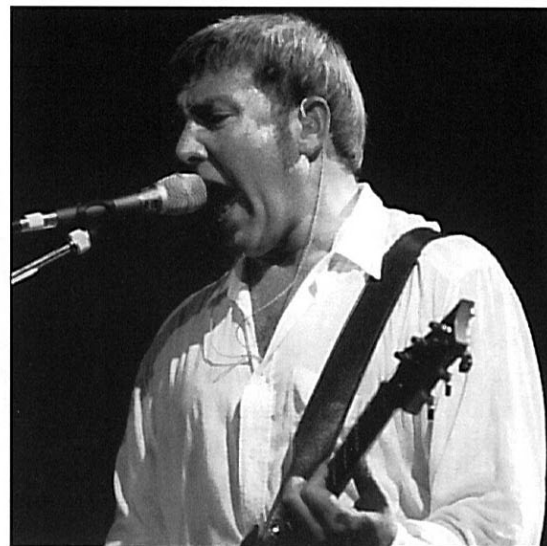


Photo by Mark Bernard, Rockford, IL, 1996

ASOF t-shirts are currently being displayed on www.ASOF.com - **ASOF HQ**. We're going to be producing one nice shirt, so if you're interested in purchasing one, drop us a line so we know how many to produce. The **ASOF** logo and perhaps the "Starstone" as seen on **ASOF** #15 back cover will be the featured graphic elements.

as
of
HQ

Drawing by Mark Irwin

JUST THE FACTS

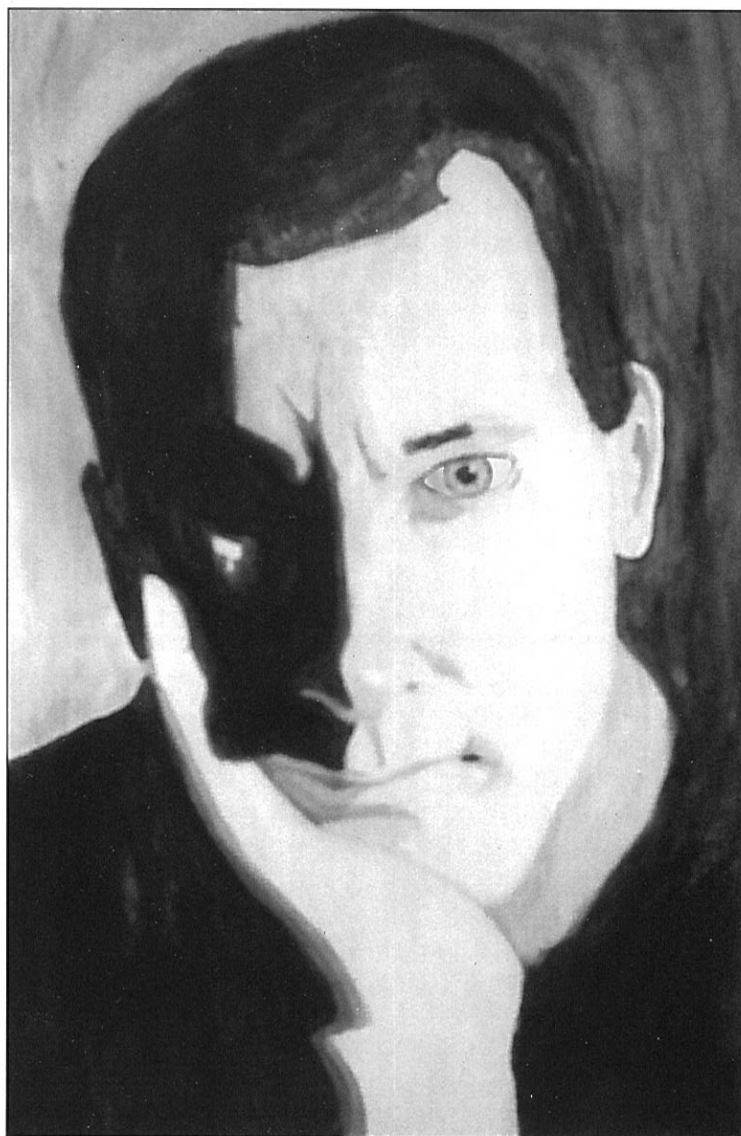
Brian Connolly, the lead singer of the 1970's "glam rock" band Sweet passed away on Monday, February 10. Sweet opened for Rush on the final leg of the "Kings" tour. Below are all the dates. Note the significance of the final show!

5/10/78	Niagra Falls, NY	Convention Center	Sweet
5/11/78	Fort Wayne, IN	Memorial Coliseum	Sweet
5/12/78	Cincinnati, OH	Riverfront Coliseum	Sweet
5/13/78	Nashville, TN	Municipal Auditorium	Sweet
5/16/78	Denver, CO	McNichols Arena	Sweet
5/17/78	Salt Lake City, UT	Salt Palace Center	Sweet
5/18/78	Boise, ID	Pavilion	Sweet
5/27/78	Waterloo, IL	McElroy Auditorium	Sweet

Grand opening of the Alpine Valley Music Theatre on the last Kings gig. Over 21,000 people attended, grossing a total of \$180,000.

5/28/78 East Troy, WI Alpine Valley Uriah Heep/Sweet

Thanks Jerry Brown for this last minute addition. In case you're wondering, Sweet had one big hit in the states called "Ballroom Blitz."



An Ounce of Perception. A Pound of Obscure

by
Shaun M. Sullivan

For years, Rush has been misunderstood by people who never listen to them. You know what these people are like. Their opinion of Rush is based on a vague perception of the band that has little basis in reality. In effect, a cloud of mis-perceptions has been stirred up around these people (by pop music critics, who should know better), and they are unable — or perhaps unwilling — to see through it, to the truth that lies beyond. For them, an ounce of perception is truly tantamount to a pound of obscure.

1. Perception: "Rush isn't as popular as you think."

Reality: Over the past twenty-two years, Rush has released sixteen studio albums, three live albums, and two collections (Archives and Chronicles.) They have sold approximately thirty-five million records in the United States alone. Every album in the catalog has been certified either Gold (500,000 records sold), Platinum (1,000,000 records sold), or Multi-Platinum (2P=2,000,000 records sold, 3P=three million records sold, etc.) by Billboard magazine. And since 1980, Rush has scored nine top ten albums on Billboard's Top 200 album chart.

Album Title	Release Date	Certification	Chart Peak
Rush	1974	G	#105
Fly By Night	1975	P	#113
Caress of Steel	1975	G	#148
2112	1976	3P	#61
All the World's A Stage	1976	P	#40
A Farewell to Kings	1977	P	#33
Archives	1978	P	#121
Hemispheres	1978	P	#47
Permanent Waves	1980	P	#4
Moving Pictures	1981	4P	#3
Exit...Stage Left	1981	P	#10
Signals	1982	P	#10
Grace Under Pressure	1984	Up	#10
Power Windows	1985	Up	#10
Hold Your Fire	1987	G	#13
A Show of Hands	1989	G	#21
Chronicles	1989	2P	#51
Presto	1989	G	#16
Roll the Bones	1991	G	#3
Counterparts	1993	G	#2
Test for Echo*	1996	G	#5

(*Test for Echo was #5 on Sunday, September 22, 1996. It may have charted even higher in its first week of release.)

As far as concert ticket sales go, Rush is one of the most consistently successful touring bands in history, selling out 13 - 15,000 seat arenas tour after tour for nearly two decades. In his review of the Test for Echo tour, Boston Globe writer Paul Robicheau noted Rush's remarkable longevity: "The more things change, the more they stay the same for Rush. Yet the Canadian rock trio keeps moving within its idiosyncratic, yet successful reign over the arenas for two decades. "

And yet some people still say to me, "you're the only person we know who likes Rush"(the implication being that Rush is not popular). Okay, then I just imagined those other 18,000 people at the packed

Fleet Center show in Boston, MA on November 9th. Give me a break.

2. Perception: "They never do anything different."

Reality: It all depends on how you define "different." People who make statements like this are usually referring to a sonic difference, as opposed to a compositional or musical difference. They contend that bands who have tried to circumvent their own compositional and technical limitations, by using orchestras and other less conventional instruments to change their sound, represent the height of song writing/recording creativity. I disagree. Just because something sounds different, doesn't necessarily mean that it is different. And yet fans and pop music critics have perceived this sonic difference to be a mark of greater compositional sophistication. This is hardly the case, as the recent Beatle Anthology CDs have shown. Take for example, "Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band." Sonically, it's creative and influential in its presentation, but musically it's just a simple pop song (albeit a great one) masquerading as something that it's not — a more advanced composition. This is a prime example of how perception can mask reality. Because let's face it, a pop song played with French horns or a string section is still a pop song.

Even though it may feature classical instruments in its arrangements, it doesn't even come close to achieving the complexity and sophistication inherent in jazz, fusion, and classical compositions. In the final analysis, no matter how it is expressed or presented, the very nature and design of even the best pop music precludes the possibility of further, more sophisticated musical development.

Sure, a lot of pop/rock bands have recorded songs that sound sophisticated and advanced, but are they really sophisticated musically? I don't think so.

In a musical sense, Rush simply has more to offer compositionally (and lyrically) than any pop/rock band. Unfortunately, some of their most creative and sophisticated compositions (songs like "Mission" and "Prime Mover") have been dismissed by "pop" critics who probably never listened to them in the first place. These critics have "tin ears" — they are only capable of recognizing melody if it is played using varied instruments and exotic sounds. A song like "Prime Mover" that has four or five different bass melodies (not to mention guitar and keyboard melodies) doesn't register or make an impression. It would if they'd bother to listen to the song once or twice. What can I say they just don't LISTEN!!

This type of junk food intellect invariably spills over into their analysis of Neil's lyrics which they label "pretentious", and "abstruse." I think these people are just incapable of complex thought. What's so pretentious about a song like "Virtuality" that takes a cynical, and ironic view of the Net, and the people who surf it? Are the concepts of metaphor and irony so hard to grasp? Apparently so because these are the same people who praise Alanis Morissette to high heaven, for a song like "Ironie." Well, let me tell you something, there's not one goddamned irony in that song. Someone needs to hold a seminar on "The Effective Uses of Irony", and attendance, for Ms. Morissette and more than a few critics, should be mandatory. But I digress.

Rush has always exercised good taste when incorporating different sounds, instruments, influences, and techniques into their

ambitious compositions. Note the following examples:

1. **Test for Echo** - features a Godin Acousti-Caster, which is a sort of hybrid acoustic/electric guitar. Both the electric guitar and bass are tuned down a step to D standard tuning. Geddy actually tuned down to the D for five songs on *Test for Echo*. In terms of drums and percussion, you may notice a familiar, or perhaps not so familiar, drum figure in the second half of the verses which comes from the Buddy Rich tune "Mercy, Mercy, Mercy."

2. **Half the World** - Alex used a ten string mandola to complement the nice acoustic/electric mix on the track.

3. **Resist** - Neil plays a hammer dulcimer.

4. **Limbo** - features jazz textured percussion, and audio clips from "The Monster Mash." "What ever happened to my Transylvania Twist?" I love that. (That's true! Even the chains and dungeon sounds can be heard on Bobby "Borris" Pickett & The Crypt-Kickers version of the Monster Mash!! - Eds.)

5. **Driven** - In the middle part, Geddy has three separate bass lines overdubbed, a rhythm, bass, and harmony part. How many times have you heard a bass arrangement like that? Great stuff!

6. **Nobody's Hero** - orchestra

7. **Cold Fire** - This song has a definite country feel to it, especially in the deeply-chorused, arpeggiated guitar figures in the verse. Neil plays a tambourine in the verses.

8. **Leave That Thing Alone** - The drum part is built around R&B bass/drum interplay. Then in the second verse, Neil goes into a Nigerian beat, like something you'd hear on a King Sunny Ade record. In the middle section of the song, he goes into a quasi jazz pattern. The main guitar theme and solo both have an almost Celtic flavor to them. And, for the majority of the song, Geddy plays a bass melody over a funky guitar part, instead of the other way around.

9. **Roll the Bones** - This song features a rap, in which Neil employs effective use of word play, end rhyme, and internal rhyme.

10. **Where's My Thing?** - In the middle section of this instrumental, a strong jazz influence is evident.

11. **Heresy** - Neil plays an African drum pattern that he apparently heard one night while lying on a rooftop in Togo. For the chorus parts, Alex uses Nashville tuning on one of his acoustics to achieve a Byrds-like, 12-string effect.

12. **Available Light** - piano

13. **Chain Lightning** - On the guitar solo, it sounds as if Alex is running the tape backwards.

14. **Superconductor** - In the middle of the song, Neil plays a West African pop beat. Producer Rupert Hine can also be heard singing back-up vocals.

15. **Second Nature** - strings

16. **Lock and Key** - strings; 5 string bass.

17. **Tai Shan** - An oriental, far eastern guitar tonalities and melodies.

18. **Time Stand Still** - Aimee Mann on vocals.

19. **The Big Money** - Alex has his guitar tuned up to an F#

20. **Manhattan Project** - strings

21. **Marathon** - twenty-five piece choir.

22. **Territories** - Neil plays a Nigerian dance beat, while Alex uses lefthand finger-pulls and an HD-1000 Harmonics/Delay to achieve a far eastern tone on the guitar. Later in the song, Neil adds bongos to the orchestration.

23. **Mystic Rhythms** - Neil used African and Indian drums to create the drum sound for this song.

24. **Losing It** - This song features an electric violin solo by Ben Mink.

25. **Countdown** - The audio recordings of the Space Shuttle launch in April 1982 are interspersed throughout the song.

26. **New World Man** - A reggae influence is evident in the guitar figures. Specifically, moving from palm-muted notes to sharply attacked chords is a fairly common device heard in reggae.

27. **Closer to the Heart** - Alex plays the opening on an acoustic 12 string, utilizing a technique known as "oblique motion", which is when one or more tones (in this case two) remain constant while the other tone moves around.

28. **The Enemy Within** - Once again a reggae influence is apparent in the guitar figures, particularly in the ride out section, where Alex is playing sharply accentuated up-strokes on the B. G. and A bar chords.

29. **Vital Signs & Digital Man** - There is a definite "ska" influence evident in these songs.

30. **The Trees, A Farewell to Kings, Broon's Bane** - Alex has described these parts as "moments [that] are not strictly traditional classical, but have the character of classical (guitar)."

31. **La Villa Strangiato** - This song features the flamenco guitar section, "Buenos Noches, Mein Froindes."

Clearly, Rush has explored different sounds and styles and expressed these diverse influences through the power rock trio format. In a sense, they have been experimenting with different permutations of this format, with each record placing emphasis on different areas of orchestration. In the November '91 issue of **Guitar Player** magazine, Geddy draws an interesting analogy when discussing Rush's longevity and ever-evolving sound. "Look at Alfred Hitchcock. He had a long career, made about 80 films. Some were real popular, others not, but he kept going. He had enough confidence in his ability to know that he was not going to disappear overnight. He saw it as a long-term thing, which allowed him to experiment. Whether or not a project was accepted by the masses, he always had a core following. It's a weird analogy, but it's always made sense to me."

It makes sense to me, too. Rush has never been smug or complacent. They have always tried to change and improve, and consequently their sound and style has evolved over the years. Musicians magazines have been following this remarkable evolution since the beginning.

In the current issue (#34) of **Guitar** magazine, Wolf Marshall prefaces his interview with Alex Lifeson with the following summary of the bands ever-evolving style.

"Rush never stands still. Just as the Canadian power trio was first achieving recognition some twenty years ago with a hard-edged, Zep-inspired approach, they veered off into uncharted waters with a trilogy of groundbreaking concept albums which merged their solid British blues sensibilities with grandiose progressive/art rock aspirations. Just as audiences were getting comfortable with that side of Rush, they changed course in the early 80s into the area of tightly structured, singable radio-friendly tunes which garnered a huge AOR crossover following. In the 1980s, they added keyboards and synthesizers to their sound and immediately became hard rock's foremost textural band. The point is, Rush is constantly evolving. Today, with their gyros set for a return to the crushing power trio context of their halycon days, they are both a

beloved classic hard rock band with over two decades of history behind them, and a living, breathing, growing entity..."

It should also be mentioned that Rush's 80s, textural sound on the albums **Signals**, **Grace Under Pressure**, **Power Windows**, and **Hold Your Fire** was classified by some writers as "fusion." In the April 1988 edition of **Guitar World**, writers John Swenson and Matt Resnicoff had this to say about Rush's sophisticated, textural style during the period of 1982 - 1987.

"...with Moving Pictures, Rush began playing more complex arrangements as the individual players adjusted to the sophisticated musical climate of post-fusion rock, where ideas that would have been classified as jazz in the past are now routinely assimilated into rock arrangements. Rush sounds like nothing so much as a fusion group on *Grace Under Pressure*, *Power Windows*, and now *Hold Your Fire*."

Geddy Lee and Alex Lifeson had the following to say about this assessment of their then current sound.

"I don't know," Lee said. "I guess it's closer to fusion than anything else that's around. We just don't seem to fit into any category anymore."

"It's certainly closer to that," Lifeson added, "than Bon Jovi or Cinderella."

"I think it's more melodic," Lee continues. "I was listening to the opening act on the tour [Michael Schenker], which is sort of like a metal band, and I was thinking how far we've come from that. Just in comparing soundchecks."

"You hear all these melodies and all these vast array of notes that we're playing now and compare it to the harmonically limited style of metal; that's when I feel like we don't fit into that category anymore, that's when I feel more closely aligned to something like fusion. If not so much the immediate sound of it, then the attitude, a search for notes. That's the most exciting prospect of being in this band, the compositional challenge."

In the end, people who dismiss Rush with the comment, "they never do anything different", are largely unfamiliar with their music and, unable, or perhaps unwilling, to re-examine their own misguided perception of what Rush is all about. It makes me wonder, "what's wrong with these people?!" "Why are they so narrow-minded?" I suspect that there's a certain amount of territoriality and insecurity at work here that prevents people from being more open-minded about Rush. This is unfortunate. And it is ultimately their loss.

There's certainly a very compelling case to be made for being open-minded, and in the past I have always tried to keep an open mind towards music, despite what my previous perceptions of a particular artist or band might have been. For example, I have a friend who's a huge Elvis fan. I had certainly heard of Elvis (who hasn't) and I was relatively familiar with his hit songs, but I had never really listened to his music, never really considered the depth and nuances of his talent. So, last January ('96), over the course of three nights I listened (with pleasure) to 15 Elvis CDs. Although I didn't like everything I heard, I did develop a new respect for the man and his talent. It's true, his lyrics leave a lot to be desired and his songs are simple (compositionally speaking), but his vocals are astounding. I have to admit, I had never really recognized or appreciated his prodigious vocal talent before. So, out of this experience, I not only developed a new found respect for Elvis, I also discovered some great music that I do listen to and enjoy from time to time.

If Rush has been misunderstood by people who never listen to

them, then this misunderstanding is the result of a hastily-formed perception of Rush that has never been re-examined with an open mind. It's true that our perceptions give us a unique view of the world and a sense of individuality that is sacred. But sometimes perception has to be tempered with reality. Like the Zen masters used to say, "Believe what is, not what you think." If "an ounce of perception is tantamount to a pound of obscure", then it follows that "an ounce of reality is tantamount to a pound of understanding."



Photo by Ellen Moore

"Instead of coming on like sad, rumbling dinosaurs, the members of Rush let their music roar. The genre could be dismissed as dated, but what can't be dismissed is that singer-bassist Geddy Lee, guitarist Alex Lifeson and drummer Neil Peart are virtuosos. These three guys have their chops down and know how to slam it up to the nosebleed section."

"And no matter how much the new stuff sounded like the old stuff, nothing quite stacked up to the atmospheric reprise of part of the '2112' album. As green laser-beams cut across the arena and thousands of arms punched the air, it was easy to remember the days when a young band named Rush inspired thousands of teen-agers to zone out under the glow of the black-light lamp."

St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Saturday, November 2, 1996



An Open Letter to the People That Be.....

By John Levine

To Steve & Mandy . . .

I've been a fan of the band for some seventeen years now and was ecstatic with the long awaited release of *Test for Echo*; after all it had been 3 long years! For clarification purposes, I would consider myself above and beyond a die hard Rush fan - which is precisely what this letter is all about.

The one question that continues to puzzle me is this: What is it about this band that stirs such emotion and passion among a very high percentage of their fans? I'm not talking about "being a big fan" or "I have all of their albums." I am referring to the very real emotional bond that exists between the band and an unusually large cross section of fans who, quite literally, make the band a part of their everyday life - or to a further extreme, they make the band an extension of their family. Am I the only one who has noticed this?

To the fans . . .

There is the prevalence of a definite inner affection that the band can trigger in some of their fans. I've seen it not only in myself, but in friends, other readers and writers of this fanzine and multitudes of concert-goers. The question is the same - How do they stir these intense passions? The obvious answers are that their lyrics, presentation of the music, professionalism, drive for perfection, clean lifestyle, humorous stage interaction and personal dedication to their extremely high group and individual goals all contribute to the answer of this question. This is a very different feeling than the hysterical teeny bopper Beatle fans of the sixties, the "old lady" following of such personalities as Streisand and Manilow (who can mouth every mundane lyric at those shows), the anger driven aggressiveness of heavy metal fans or the mislead misfits known as "Deadheads." I've read where Neil, Geddy and Alex are at a loss to explain the dedication and fanaticism of these "Super Die Hards." After all, it's only a band, right?

It is only now, after seventeen years, that I am starting to understand the forces that trigger these responses to the band. On December 14th, at the Nassau Coliseum on Long Island, I had the opportunity (thanks to Joe and J.P. at WBAB and Ralph at WRCN!) to go backstage and meet Geddy and Alex. Now understand this: I am not one of those stereo-

typical "backstage fans" and have never been a celebrity gawker (I've worked in professional sports and radio for several years now and have seen many inflated egos). I'm basically a regular guy who works and has a wife and three year old daughter.

I found out that day that Geddy and Alex routinely make plans to meet their fans after every show. As Rob Rosen (Atlantic Records rep/PR guy) said, "They genuinely want to meet and talk to their fans." Well, when he brought the band backstage a nervous silence fell among the 20-30 people who have waited a long time for this opportunity. As they made their way around the clubhouse of the Coliseum, I could see the true admiration those lucky enough to meet them expressed when Geddy and Alex came their way. They came across as extremely sincere, friendly, regular people. They spoke with each group for a few minutes, took pictures and signed autographs. Class acts all the way. Comedic side bar: My friend who was with me, who is 32 years old, when introduced to the band, greeted them with a "Nice to meet you MISTER Lee and MISTER Lifeson." They got a kick out of the formality.

After the meeting I asked him, "What's with the MISTER thing they are only 10 years older than us?" His answer: "I didn't know what to say! After seventeen years of constantly listening to them, I just wanted to show my respect." Then it hit me, the anchor of this "relationship," like any marriage, is mutual respect. That's the key - if there is one. Are they really just a band?

To the band . . .

A sincere and heartfelt thank you for your persistence, refusal to compromise your musical beliefs and offering us a musical choice that elevates from the norm (I couldn't...resist). Thank you for your continued commitment to your fans. We know and feel the personal sacrifice you make in order to produce a new album and the physical and mental pressures of sustaining that album with an exhaustive tour - even though you have nothing to prove anymore. But know this, the unparalleled

anticipation of your fans awaiting a new album, the countdown of days awaiting the day when you come to town or the sheer joy of playing your music at home is deep rooted and not easily explained. In the *Test for Echo* tour book you ask: "Is anybody out there?" We are most definitely out here and will continue to give you our devotion until the day comes when you decide "That's enough!!!"

Are you really just a band? I don't think so.....

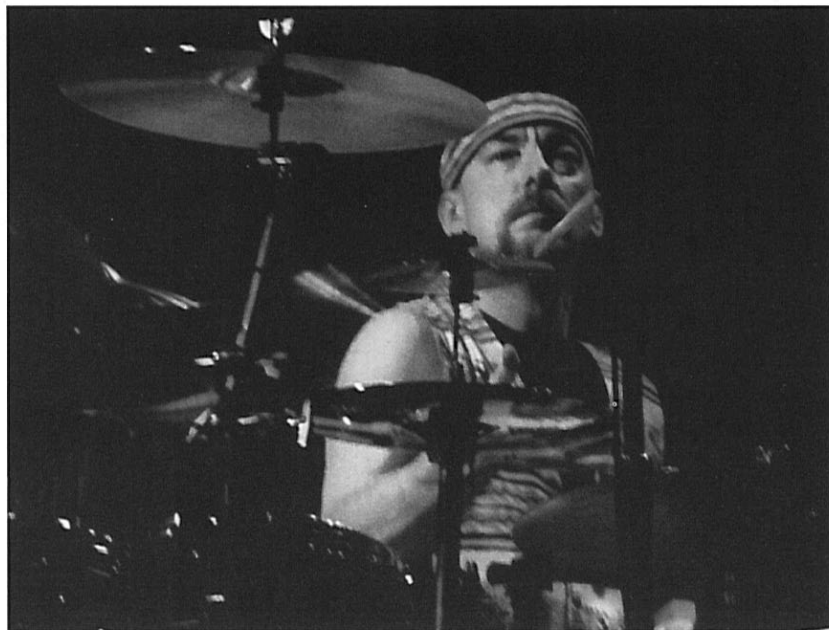


Photo by Ellen Moore, Charlotte, NC



FEEDBACK

Send letters of comment to:

ASOF — FEEDBACK

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

Right to the heart of the matter...

I am writing to you because I found your address in the "Working Man" CD.

I am a Basque Rush-maniac. I am from a country which is located between France and Spain and which is called Euskal Herria (the Basque Country) with it's own language, culture and so on.

In this small but great country, Rush has got a great number of fans who believe that Rush is the best group in the whole galaxy and we also think it is the one and only band which is imaginative and talented in the world of music. Alex, Geddy, and Neil's fans manage to buy Rush stuff here for the music market is not properly organized.

I know that within short there will be a new Rush CD available and we are all dying to listen to it.

I hope that Rush will be coming to perform in my country either to Bilbao, San Sebastian, and Pamplona which are the most important cities in the Basque Country. It would be a beautiful dream come true.

Peio Ibarloza Idoeta

[Thanks! Response has been very good to Steve's piece in the "Working Man" Tribute album. Magna Carta has done a great job and put out a very worth while collection. Truly a "tribute" to the best band in the universe. Not an easy task to assemble such a project. Throughout the whole process, problems and all, in the end, every one involved ought to be damn proud!! It is yet uncertain if Rush will tour Europe, let alone anywhere else in the world outside of North America, but keep your fingers crossed. You may have to travel - but don't give up. A European Tour is always possible. - Eds.]



Dear Mandy & Steve,

Thanks for hooking me up with the best publication I've ever had the pleasure to read. I've been bouncing off the walls and driving my wife crazy since T4E came out. I've been letting all the radio stations out here know about ASOF. Rock 105.3 in San Diego and KLOS 95.5 in L.A. have both read your address and phone number on the air after playing Rush! Heard the boys on Rockline, I wish SOMEBODY would have asked them what they think is the reason for their relative lack of critical acclaim.

About T4E: I think it's the band's best album since Power Windows, and I LOVED all the albums in between. Geddy's voice sounds incredible, especially on Resist and Totem. Driven is incredible as well. There's nothing but perfect, beautiful,

powerful, intelligent tracks on this album. Rush rules!

My life probably wouldn't be as great without the influence of a certain Canadian trio. They most definately help fuel my creativity! Anyway . . . until By-Tor defeats the Snow Dog, or the Marathon ends . . .

Mark Irwin, La Jolla, CA

[Thanks so much for the radio plugs. We appreciate your initiative in getting **ASOF** more exposure. Can you believe the **ASOF** plug that was given out on Rockline? Needless to say, we had no idea they were going to give out our phone number. Not two seconds after the number was given out, the phone began to ring - non-stop for virtually 24 hours. We'll see how many end up subscribing. That is the critical factor. Everybody wants something for nothing! We all know that's not possible, right? We're pretty sure the number had to come from Alex or Ged, as I do not believe the folks at "Rockline" were aware of **ASOF**. It was nice that we were mentioned. It kind of made us feel more "sanctioned." As if we NEEDED any more indicators! Yeah well, so we're modest. ~ Ed.]



Dear Steve & Mandy,

Congratulations on having your words printed on the "Working Man" jacket - it will certainly help you get more readers.

I've just got hold of the album and I enjoy listening to it. I guess there's no use to talk about "Test For Echo" - a GREAT piece of the Rush sound. However, I've just finished writing an article for a new academic magazine (about Rush, of course) praising the album to the skies. But for the fans, and all the other **ASOF** readers, it just doesn't need praising - you just KNOW it's great, that's all. [Oh yes we DO!! - Eds.]

I've succeeded in putting T4E as a power play on this weeks play list in my radio show. That means that song is being played many, many times and many times to come over the following weeks. I regard it as a personal success. Of course, in my own shows I play many more Rush songs than the title track. My personal favorite is Limbo.

If you could put in an ad for all Rush tribute bands, or any other good bands to send me demos, I'll gladly play them on the air if they're worth it. I know the bands from America may not be so much interested in promotion here, but I know **ASOF** has many readers here in Europe too.

Rush be with you,

Iwona Michalowska

You can mail them to:

Iwona Michalowska

Studenckie Radio

Politechniki Poznanskiej

"AFERA"

61-142 Poznan, ul. Sw. Rocha 11a
Poland

[I think it would be wonderful to get some exposure in Poland. I hope that some of you musicians out there will drop Iwona a tape and a letter. So get to it, eh? - Eds.]

Hi fellow Rush fans!

I just picked up the Rush tribute cd, *Working Man*, and was thrilled to find out about **ASOF**. I knew you were out there somewhere, I just didn't know how to find you until NOW! It's so wonderful to contact someone who can fully understand and appreciate a true fan's devotion to this absolutely remarkable group. My husband and step-children are also Rush fans but I think they view my enthusiasm as being a little extreme.

I admit that I am a late-comer to the scene. I was never that familiar with Rush as our local radio stations didn't play them that much. (And still don't.) I also must confess that I spent much of the 80's listening to some pretty sappy music. But all that changed in 1991 when I saw Rush in concert for the first time at Madison Square Garden in NYC. I went on a lark. I hadn't gone to any concerts in years and Rush just happened to be free. My real reason at that point for picking Rush over any other group? I liked their NAME! Well, the Lord works in mysterious ways. I was absolutely blown away at their performance that night and there's been no turning back.

I can't imagine my life now without their music. So many things have happened to me, both good and bad, over the past five years – all symbolized by the Rush songs that were particularly significant to me at the time. In 1992 I attended the Rush/Primus show at Nassau Coliseum on Long Island, NY and it was the most incredible performance I have ever seen or heard. I remember standing there with tears running down my face, singing along with the rest of the audience as Rush played "The Pass," a particular favorite of mine that still speaks to me whenever I find myself facing difficult times. I wish the band could know how much their music has touched my heart. But I imagine I'm not the only one who feels this way.

My only regret is that I was "out to lunch" during the band's early years and missed so many concerts. I can't even find any early videos. The record stores tell me they aren't being made anymore. Can you guys help me out? [Your best bet would be to check out Goldmine Magazine and also check the Tidal Pool this issue for Brenda Almond's offer. - Eds.]

On a final note, I just want to say that I think *Test For Echo* is, from start to finish, the band's best album EVER. This is such an understatement, but these guys are some musicians!! I only stop listening to the cd long enough to turn on my radio for concert info. Well, I could go on and on but I'll spare you all for now. Thanks you Neil, Geddy, and Alex for bringing so much beauty into the world.

Yours truly,

Linda Rich, Dingmans Ferry, PA



Geddy, Alex, Neil, and RUSH fans,

Hello. I was at the November 6 ('96) show in Philadelphia. All I can say is, incredible! I was a little late for the beginning of the show because of traffic, but as soon as I entered the building, I could hear the crowd cheering and Geddy speaking to the crowd then the first song played. I nervously tried to quickly get to my seat, which was in the rear of the building, as I could hear Half the World playing in the arena. I pushed aside a black

curtain at section 205 to view the stage inside. I stood for a minute, and watched. Geddy was on the right side of the stage, just off to the right of his keyboard, playing his bass, like an engineer perspicaciously playing each note and chord in the perfect place at the perfect time. Alex was off to the left side of the stage. Alex looked great, jumping around, left to right, front to rear, he was truly having a good time playing his music. His guitar sounded great, playing those chords that only Alex can play, and making it sound like only Alex can. And there was Neil in the middle of the stage in front of a huge screen that lit up with lights and pictures. Hitting the drums like no other person can, or ever, will do. Like a conductor in the middle of euphoria, *tat boom, boom boom tat, tat boom boom, tat.*

After finally making it to my seat in the nosebleed section, without falling down and breaking my neck, I stood in awe. I could not believe that I was here in the same room with the band that made such a big impact in my life since 1982 when I was 12 years old and heard RUSH for the first time. Every song they played felt like medicine to me, making me feel better. I looked at my brother with thumbs up as they played 2112 in whole. Subdivisions took me back to high school walking through the halls with my head phones on, trying to impress the girls. I looked on with disbelief as they played Natural Science, one of my personal favorites that sounded better than the album, (that song jammed!) Resist was another one that I really, really enjoyed. Every song was played great and to perfection. I was impressed when Geddy sang those high notes like he did back on *Caress of Steel*, and *A Farewell to Kings*. I only wish that all of Cygnus X-1 was played.

I would like to tell Geddy, Alex and Neil, Bravo! RUSH and their music has helped me through good times and bad times in my life, thank you. Keep up the good work, and I'll see you on the next tour.

Vince Uher, Scranton, PA, E-mail: Five60@aol.com



It's now been 3 years since **COUNTERPARTS**. Many, many times I went to the music store, just in case there *could be* something new from **RUSH**. First I waited for a new live or anniversary album, but there was nothing to come they told me. Thank God there was **ASOF** my only source of information!! Very early we learned about a new RUSH to come. First it was scheduled (so people told me) for spring, then early summer 1996. Oh, that was my problem: the time began when I went even more often to the music store to nerve the salespeople there. They don't know anything!!!! So waiting *forever* continued. A friend of mine began asking me constantly when the new RUSH would come, I was nerved! Then, great news from **ASOF**: The title will be **TEST FOR ECHO** scheduled for August 1996. Well, you know, I nearly went to the music store every day in August. The lady there asked her big computer and told me something about Friday. Well, on Friday - what a disappointment, there was no new RUSH, just nothing!!! Another guy told me something about Monday or Tuesday, You see, it was unnerving, I nearly couldn't wait anymore. It was the next Friday the 6th of September, when I went to the music store for

the thousandth time and — there, I couldn't believe my eyes, there she was, in a light of blue and white and **TEST FOR ECHO** well, I bought it, drove home (*driven to the edge*) like a maniac, went to my neighbor with his \$30,000 stereo system (he was no **RUSH** fan) and ...we put the CD in the player and then **WHAT A SHOW, VERTIGO, VIDEO, VERTIGO, TEST FOR ECHO...WOW! ! !** I tell you guys, the long, long waiting is over at last, and.....It was worth it!!!! For me, it's another huge step forward for RUSH, a perfect CD. One more thing I must tell you: My neighbor - with his \$30,000 stereo system - he's become a RUSH fan.

Tilman (Doc) Weyand, GERMANY



ASOF,

I am a longtime hardcore fan. It is hard to imagine that after this many records and this many years, I would still get this excited and be this impressed with a new record! I play bass, or at least I used to, in semi-progressive rock bands in the St. Louis, Mo. area. I am now married with three children and have little time for playing music. But each time a new release is issued, I dig out my 4001 and learn it, nearly note for note, until my wife threatens divorce. My sons are named Brian, Geddy and Alex, so you can understand that she does have some tolerance, but I can't help but abuse it. I am new to the Net, and am just stumbling around. I have enjoyed this site immensely, thanks for posting your work!

MRay2112@aol.com



Dear ASOF,

I am a third grade teacher in Florida. I have always admired the artwork of Rush. Their album covers are incredible. I have found the way to use one of them in my classroom. Enclosed is a photo of a bulletin board for my class, straight from the "A Show of Hands" album. It is one of my favorites. What next? Who knows, maybe the "Fly By Night" album cover. Thank you.

Marino Nardelli, Melbourne, FL

A Positive Influence RUSH IN THE CLASSROOM!

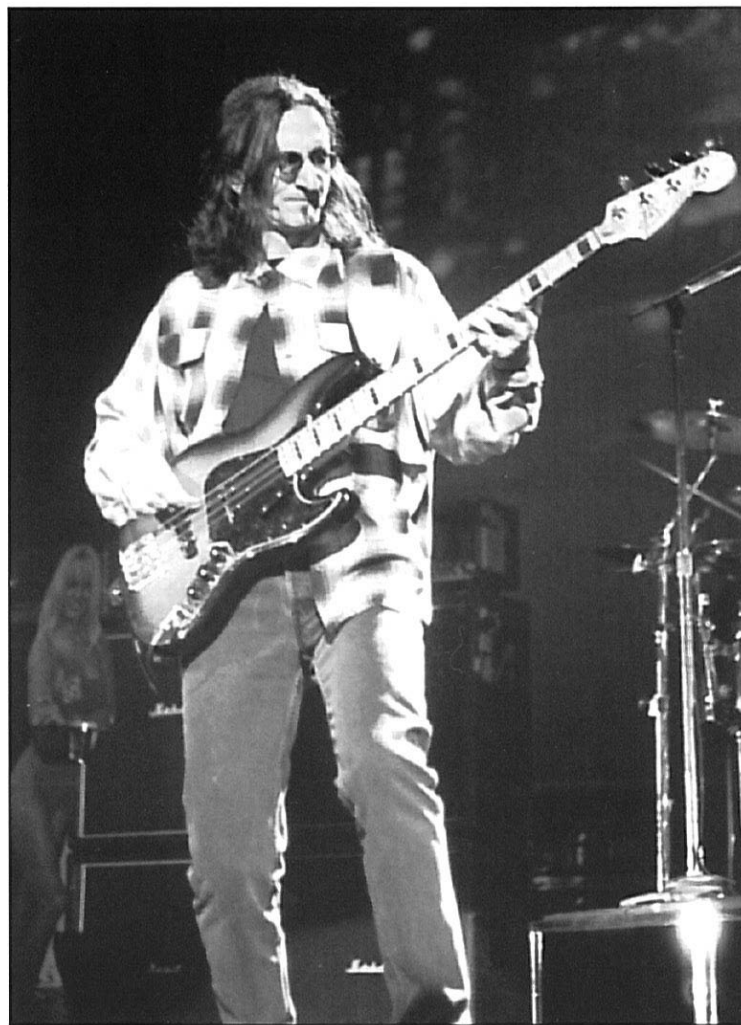


Photo by Steve Streeter, Milwaukee, WI, 1996



**RUSH win the
SuperBowl of Rock in
Philadelphia while the
Packers cream the Pats!**

WYSP, a Philadelphia Rock station held a "Superbowl of Rock" on Super Bowl Sunday. There were 36 bands when it all started. Rush came out on top beating out Led Zep by 59%! Now that's what I call a touchdown!

Available April 1st - "Fence the Clear", the second album from TILES. Sixty minutes of progressive hard rock painstakingly mixed by **Mr. Terry "Broon" Brown**. To order, please send check or money order for \$15 payable to Standing Pavement Entertainment, P.O. Box 75, Trenton, MI 48183. Postage is included. Canadian orders please add \$1 - overseas add \$2. Mention **ASOF** and save \$1. Call or write for more information: (313) 676-8504, tiles@rust.net, <http://www.rust.net/~tiles>



Artists Against Racism

Supported By Neil Peart
by Melinda Beutler

Artists Against Racism (**AAR**) is a Canadian organization, supported by Neil Peart. **AAR**'s goal is to end racism through education. Locally in Toronto and worldwide, **AAR** distributes posters and videos to schools and other organizations. They also do radio and television PSA's. They have many artists, besides Neil, who donate time and funds, and serve as role models for youth. Their slogan is, "Different people with different faces, from different places, but we are all one people." **AAR**'s president and founder, Lisa Cherniak, describes how Neil got involved.

"He (Neil) knew Mendelson Joe, the painter of our poster, and also the first Canadian to have an international record deal. (You may recall that Geddy played on a Mendelson Joe album several years ago. ~Eds.) Joe asked him to sign on, and Neil said yes, because he trusted Joe was doing a project that was useful. He knew Joe, not me, so that helped to gain his trust. Another reason was, so many white supremacist incidents were happening here, with youth being recruited. Reports of this were on TV every night, and Neil was one of the conscientious people who wanted to do something about it. He's donated funds, signed T-shirts and cassettes, and done radio PSA's for Peaceride, and **AAR**."

References to Mendelson Joe can be found toward the end of "The Masked Rider," Neil's book, and also in the Counterparts tourbook. M. Joe is the one who described the picture of Neil in Africa as looking like, "A retired hockey player visiting another planet."

AAR's website, www.vrx.net/aar, has lots of information about the organization, including some nice PSA's that Neil did for them. You can also follow the link to the **AAR** homepage from the **ASOF** homepage, under Friends of **ASOF**. Other artists involved with **AAR** include Dan Ackroyd, The Barenaked Ladies, Celine Dion, Graham Greene, and many others, the website has a complete list. I have become involved as a volunteer as well, and there's a wish list included of things that **AAR** needs. Perhaps we'll even see a Rush benefit concert for **AAR** someday!

There's a lot of Neil Peart autographed merchandise for sale. Email Lisa Cherniak at harmony@interlog.com for item availability or send her mail at **AAR**, Box 54511, Toronto, ON, Canada, M5M 4N5.

Finally, a quote from Neil himself, "I congratulate the artists involved for donating their time and work to fight for ideals and change."

These are the items available for sale by **AAR**:

A Multi-Autographed **AAR** T-shirt, Autographed by: Neil Peart, Michelle Wright, Sarah Polley, Raffi, Spirit of the West, Sue Medley, Marc Jordan, The Jeff Healey Band, Jimmy Rankin (The Rankin Family), Ian Thomas, and many more.
\$300.00 CDN/\$250.00 US

AUTOGRAPHED: photos, books, CDs; (first please email us to see if we have the artist you want for each product, and to reserve it) Neil Peart AVAILABLE!!!
\$90.00 CDN/\$60.00 US

S,L,or XL T-shirt 100% heavy cotton shirts. The **front** of the t-shirt includes the full-colour poster art work by renowned Canadian artist, Mendelson Joe. The **back** of the t-shirt features the names of the artists listed on it.

\$22.00 CDN/\$18.00 US

All purchases are "gifts for donations" and tax deductible!



1995 Movie - **The Grave** with Michael Anthony Hall. In this comical film noir a pair of petty thieves break out of prison to go in search of a treasure supposedly stashed in a millionaire's grave. Double-crossed by their greedy friends and a mystery woman, the would-be graverobbers find themselves in far deeper straits than imagined.
1981-1987 Videolog.

The Rush connection ~ Throughout the movie, Michael Anthony Hall is wearing the 10/1/92 Special Edition black Starman T-shirt, as seen for sale through **ASOF** (medium **only**, still available).

Guitars That Rule The World Vol. 2, Smell the Fuzz. Featuring Alex Lifeson is available now. It is on the Metal Blade label and can be found in most major music stores under "compilations." The item number is #50589. The Metal Blade Hotline is: (805) 522-7548.

"Strip and Go Naked" from Victor is the cut they use. Nothing new!

A Rush cover can be heard on Yngwie Malmsteen's new album, Inspiration (1996) out on Foundations Records (US). The ninth track is a rendition of Anthem. Check it out.

On Dream Theater's "Fan Club" disc, (not sure if you can buy this outright...it was distributed to fan club members) there is a cover of Tears! Talk about an interesting song to cover. Wow! We'll have to talk to Mike Portnoy about this one, eh?!

Make way for the Hasbro's **MAXFORCE 2112**! This is a whole line of futuristic nerf guns that shoot Nerf darts with suction cups. We were hoping to receive a press release and pictures from Hasbro, but unfortunately, our deadline reached critical mass. Yes, this line of Nerf toys was inspired by the album 2112. They wanted a futuristic sounding name and apparently there are some Rush fans at Hasbro! Neat, eh? We'll have complete coverage next issue! We will post a **MAXFORCE 2112** section on www.ASOF.com as soon as Hasbro sends us *da stuff*! Many thanks to Hasbro for their cooperation.

Have a tidbit for "Tips to the Hip?" What are you waiting for – send it in for everyone to see.



Lerxst Notes



Dennis Strenk, Jr.

Hi everyone! Welcome back to Lerxst Notes. We've got plenty to discuss this time out so let's get right to it.

As we all know, over the course of the last 22 years Rush has evolved musically. They have incorporated new ideas and techniques into their style, kept what has worked, and continued to experiment. They take chances. They aren't afraid to try new things. That's one of the reasons we like them, right?

Test For Echo is no exception. They have incorporated lots of ideas found in current rock music. The aggressive guitar sound is part of that. Also the fact that Alex uses hardly any effects was probably influenced by current music. One other change is that Alex detunes his guitar for several songs. This means taking a guitar with standard tuning and tuning it flat for, in this case, a whole step. This is called an alternate tuning, and is found all over the place these days. But alternate tunings are quite rare in Rush music. I know **Stick It Out** was in "dropped D" tuning, which means tuning down the low E string to D and leaving the other strings the same (the very first note of the song is that low D). Tuning down gives a heavier sound, which is quite evident on **Test For Echo**. But as always, Alex still sounds like Alex. There are certain chords and techniques that are common in Rush music. They are part of that unique Lerxst sound. Those things are still there, but are mixed together with

these new things. I'll get into some of the Alex techniques and Alex chords in a later column.


OK, so we know some of the songs are tuned down. What does that mean for us watching them live? Well, here are some things to look for. As I mentioned, **Stick It Out** is in "dropped D" tuning. Remember the Les Paul Alex used for that song, and only that song, on the last tour? The alternate tuning was probably why. Just before this album Alex got a new Les Paul Custom. He used it for most of the album. I'm guessing this will probably be the guitar of choice for the new material that's tuned down. In addition, Alex will be bringing along several other guitars he hasn't toured with for awhile. Hopefully, we'll get to see his Stratocasters again (he just got a '63 reissue from Fender) and his trusty Telecaster. I really want to see his '77 white Gibson ES-355. That was his main guitar in the late 70's and early 80's. If he does bring it along, check out the truss rod cover (it's that triangle-shaped piece right at the end of the fretboard, just before the headstock). If you are close enough, and you'll probably need binoculars as well, take a look. "Alex Lifeson" is engraved in it. Of course, the Paul Reed Smith guitars will be in attendance. A newcomer this time could be the Godin guitar. These are mentioned in the "technical help" section of the **T4E** liner notes. Alex has several of these which are hybrid electric-acoustics. Look for these during **Totem** and **Half the World**. As far as acoustic guitars are concerned, on the album Alex used three different acoustics, as well as the 10-string mandola on **Half the World**. On tour, I'm not sure. I'd love to see the Ovation guitar again, but we'll just have to wait and see.

That's it for right now. Until next time, enjoy the tour, and let the **RUSH-IAN REVOLUTION** begin!



DO NOT MISS THIS ONE!

the Dexters

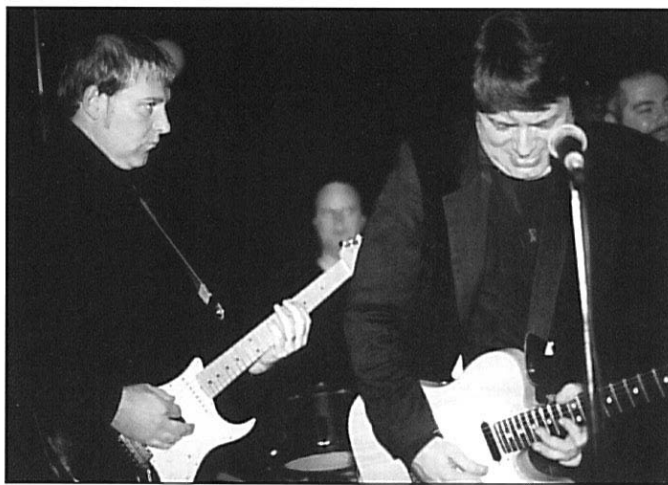
2nd Anniversary AT 

An INCREDIBLE performance by an INCREDIBLE band!

The song list:

Chicken Shack
Who Was Making Love
Ode To Billy Joe
Born Under A Bad Sign
It's All Right
Fever
All Along The Watch Tower
Spooky
I Want You (She's So Heavy)
The Horse
For What It's Worth
White Rabbit
Funk 49
Oh What A Feeling
Night Train

This is the official limited release of The Dexters 2nd Anniversary Party. You'll FEEL like you're at the Orbit. This is an unmixed tape, yet incredible quality for a live recording. Hear Mike Dexter keep that steady backbeat on the legendary Dexter kit. Be amazed at Pete Dexter playing that steady teardrop bass. Drop a jaw (or two) with Bernie Dexter's incredible (and we MEAN incredible) solos and vocals! Catch the wave with Lou Dexter and his mighty B-3 organ!



(You'll lose your breath!!) Hear Bill Bell play Big Al Dexter's guitar with Al's shot glass! (Empty of course!) And crank it up for some blistering "whole lotta guitar" with Big Al himself, who, by the way, had his very own amp set to eleven that night!

This will be a limited run of 200 tapes on a first come first serve basis. These are original transfers from the original digital master as

recorded by Pete Traynor.

Don't delay in ordering this tape! You won't be disappointed!! We have set aside one copy for every one who sent emails over the past few weeks expressing interest in this tape. Let me know if you need more than one copy. Thank you very much.

Ordering Information:

\$15.00 each postage paid for North American orders.

International (anywhere outside of North America) orders please add \$5.00 for air mail shipping. Please allow 4 weeks for shipping.

Domestic Checks or Money Orders payable to: A Show Of Fans in **US FUNDS ONLY**.

Send all orders to:

A Show Of Fans

5411 E. State Street, Suite 309

Rockford, IL 61108

Stay Hip! (to the tip.)

WORKING MAN Tribute Album

A Review

By Chad Hutchinson

In continuing their "series" of progressive tribute albums, the Magna Carta label released one dedicated to Rush in August of 1996. But unlike the Yes, Genesis, Pink Floyd, and Jethro Tull tribute albums which exclusively featured many new up-and-coming prog acts like Enchant, Cairo, and Magellan, Mike Varney and Peter Morticelli brought in several members of the hard rock/metal community. This album however was the brainchild of Dream Theater drummer-extrordinaire Mike Portnoy who initiated the project in 1995 with bassist Billy Sheehan of Mr. Big and guitarist Brendt Allman of Shadow Gallery. The album was mixed by none other than Terry Brown.

The album as a whole is Rush in Judas Priest's clothing. These artists have taken their favorite Rush tunes, most from the Stage II (1977-1981), and metalized them. That's not necessarily a bad thing (well, maybe in some cases it is). There are many strong tracks on the CD, but also a few stinkers. But we'll get to that.

The disc begins with "Working Man." This version is very admirable as it features Portnoy on the skins and Sheehan on bass. The main riff lends itself nicely to Jake E. Lee's (Ozzy Osbourne) metal guitar playing. Sebastian Bach (look out for that bottle!) supplies the vocals and does a pretty good job. Like most of the songs, the guitar solos are all completely different from Alex's. One of the best moments of the songs is how it flawlessly segues into "By-Tor and the Snow Dog." The line-up stays the same, but with Dream Theater's James LaBrie taking over the vocals duties. James, what happened to the "Sign of Eth"? Oh well, I guess the bit "Anthem" at the end makes up for it. Rating (both songs as a whole): 8.

Next is "The Analog Kid," featuring Jack Russell (vocals) and Michael Romeo (guitar) of Great White. Wait! Keep reading. This is actually a super rendition of this hidden classic from the Signals LP. He does sing it in a much lower voice than Geddy, but it works and works well. The playing on the track again is superb. This is one of my favorites on the album. Rating: 9.5.

"The Trees" features Brendt Allman stepping out of his previous rhythm guitar role to handle all the guitar work. He also employs fellow bandmates Mike Baker (vocals), Chris Ingles (piano), and Gary Wehrkamp (keyboards) for support. Allman, Portnoy, and Sheehan lock up nicely on this track and add just a touch of their own flare at the end of the instrumental break including a nice "Ding!" (private joke). Anyway, another very good version. Rating: 7.5

Enter: Steve Morse (Dixie Dregs, Deep Purple). I was very excited to hear that this tribute album would include Steve Morse...and on "La Villa Strangiato" yet!

He does a fine job of interpreting the classical guitar intro and just blazes his way through the rest of the song. Morse lends his trademark style to the song beautifully while still maintaining the fact that it's a Rush tune. (He's good at this! Check out his version of Led Zeppelin's "Kashmir" with the Dixie Dregs on Bring 'Em Back Alive.) Portnoy, being the Neil Peart admirer that he is, does A+ plus work throughout. Same can be said for Billy Sheehan. Excellent. Rating: 9.

Next up is "Mission," one of two post-Moving Pictures songs. From what I understand, Eric Martin (Mr. Big) asked if he could be apart of the project because he is a huge fan of "Mission" and was very anxious to

do a version it. Well, even though I don't particularly like his work with Mr. Big, he does a decent job here. Much of the reason is due to his backing band. Multi-instrumentalist Robert Berry (3, GTR) does a fantastic job of recreating the sound and feel of this Rush classic. I would have like to have heard Berry interpret a Rush song like he did with Genesis' "Watcher of the Skies." Rating: 7.

Well, here's our stinker, "Anthem." The first few bars are promising, but the landslide begins as George Lynch (Dokken) decides to do a Tooth and Nail guitar solo over the main riff. I expected more from him hearing his former work and knowing what a meticulous axeman he is. The real killer is the vocalist choice, Mark Slaughter (Slaughter). Remember "Fly to the Angels"? Oof. Well, it doesn't get any better. His negative-testicle singing is just horrendous, though he can hit the "wrought" line. Stu Hamm supplies the bass. Big deal.

Rating: 2.

"Jacob's Ladder" brings back the core of Portnoy, Sheehan and Allman and Sebastian Bach on vocals. Whew. An added bonus is John Petrucci's (guitar, Dream Theater) one performance on the CD. Petrucci rips his way through this mostly-instrumental track with the greatest of ease and adds some spice to it as well. One humorous line is Bach's singing "the clouds are potted." I know he's singing "the clouds are parted" in a metal style, but it just strikes me as funny. Bravo. Rating: 7.5.

Fates Warning makes an appearance on "Closer to the Heart," the only track on the disc done by an actual established band. This is a very true version and could have used a little tinkering, but a commendable job nonetheless. The 15 or so seconds of "2112 Overture" at the end is a nice touch. Keep going guys! Rating: 7.

"Natural Science" is a mixed bag. The music is great, the vocals leave much to be desired. Devin Townsend (vocals), formerly with Steve Vai, decides to add some death metal, er, accents (shall we?) to the song. Sorry, doesn't work and really hurts the song. Rating: 6.

James Murphy of Testament remains onboard with Stu Hamm for "YYZ." Hamm redeems himself a bit on this track, except when he's supposed to showcase during the bass breaks! This is a smoking treatment of "YYZ" though and Deen Castronovo (Ozzy Osbourne) should be commended for a job-well-done on the drums. Rating: 8.

Steve Morse returns, this time with James LaBrie, on "Red Barchetta." This is possibly the best track on the disc. Sean Malone (bass) and Sean Reinhart (drums) of Cynic join the ensemble for this very powerful rendition. Not much else to say here. You gotta hear it...LOUD.

Rating: 9.5.

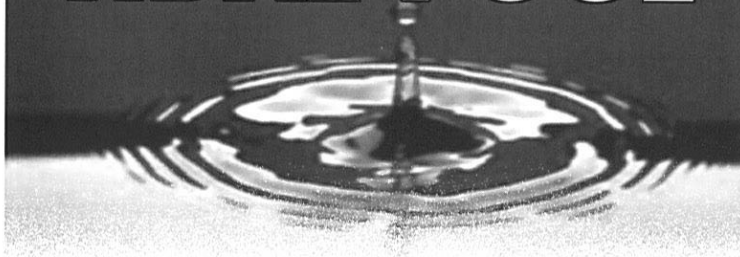
The final song on the album is "Freewill." It features a cool keyboard intro by Trent Gardner of Magellan whom I wished had done a complete song on here. Prog metal newcomers, Gregoor van der Loo (vocals) and Marcel Coenen (guitar) of Lemur Voice join the fold with Cairo drummer Jeff Brockman and Shadow Gallery bass player Carl Cadden-James. The band does a great job of performing the song, from the bass solo to the guitar break (not an easy one) to the "Each of us..." vocal section. They end the song in a unique way too...completely unexpected, but a nice change. Rating: 7.5.

Personally, I would have liked to have seen more interpretation instead of cover songs with a lot of showcasing, but overall I like this album. If you're in a Rush mood, but want to experience the music from a slightly different angle, throw **Working Man** into the ol' CD player and crank it up. I may not be a fan of a few of the artists on this album, but I do admire them for one thing, they're Rush fans. Overall rating: 7.5.

For a complete track-by-track listing of the artists on the album, check out:
<http://ghostland.com/rush/tribute.html>.

NOTE: As you know, this album got some resistance from the Rush camp (see interview with Geddy from the last issue of **ASOF**). The original title for the album was Working Man: A Show of Bands. If you notice, there is no mention of "A Show of Bands" on the packaging nor the name "Rush." Also, our own Steve Sireter has a nice ode to Rush and their fans inside the booklet!! An unedited version, almost twice in length, can be found on www.ASOF.com.

TIDAL POOL



FOR THOSE WHO ARE LOOKING... I saw that someone needs a copy of Exit...Stage Left, the video. I have the laser disc and a stereo VCR. I would be willing to make copies for anyone who would be willing to pay for a tape and postage, no profit. Or I'll even trade for Rush stuff, until or unless they re-release it. I realize it is very hard to find. I spent almost two years searching for mine, then I paid a grand price for it. Thank you!
Brenda Almond, RR01, Box 140-E, Hampton, FL 32044-9713.
[Ed. note ~ Thank you, Brenda, for your generous offer. I'm sure you'll get some takers on that.]

WANTED: Looking for Rush "Through the Camera Eye" on laser disc. I have four discs, Camera Eye is the only one I need. Willing to pay good money for a laser disc or a good video recording. Willing to trade copies. I have, on disc, ESL, P/G, ASOH, and Chronicles. Rod Bailey, 604-589-9356 or write me at: 10024 - 136A Street, Surrey, British Columbia, Canada V3T 4E9.

WANTED: 2112 Tour book (in any condition) and **RUSH** LP on the **Moon** label. Cash and trade available. Contact Steve Streeter @ 815-398-1250 anytime.

TRADE audio/video Rush (and other bands), big lists, small lists or no list, write me if interested. Also Guitar Tablature, lots of Rush tab (and other bands). If you play, or want to, please write: Joel 'Rush' Plitt, 3073 N. Maple, Rialto, CA 92377-3716.

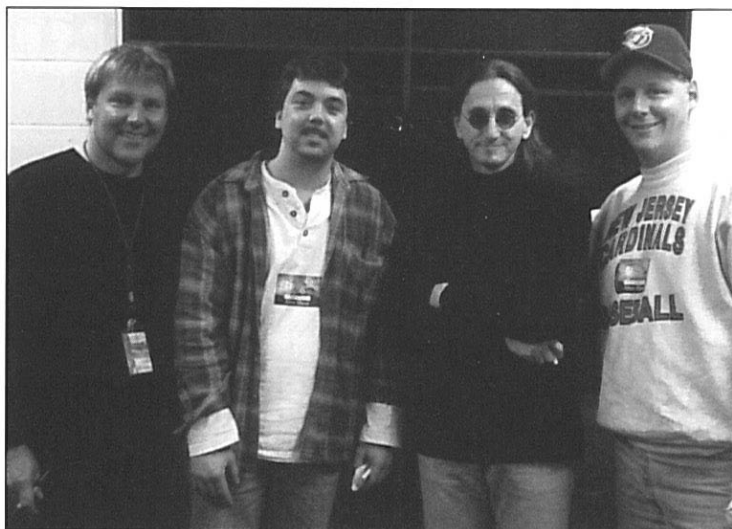
ARTIST WANTS TO TRADE: Image comic-book art for any kind of Rush memorabilia. These pages are the original art from printed Image comics. Let me know what you would like to trade and what you might be looking for. Mark Irwin, 866 Mola Vista Way, Solana Beach, CA 92075 - (619) 794-8157.

WANTED: Advertisers for A Show Of Fans Headquarters web site. **ASOF HQ** is hosted for free in hopes that we can round up a handful of "banner" ads to place on the site. We want to find related companies to put up. i.e. Drum Shops, Music Stores, Objectivist sites, similar music groups...etc.... Call Steve at 815-398-1250 for further info and discussion or email me at: sstreet@netfxcorp.com.

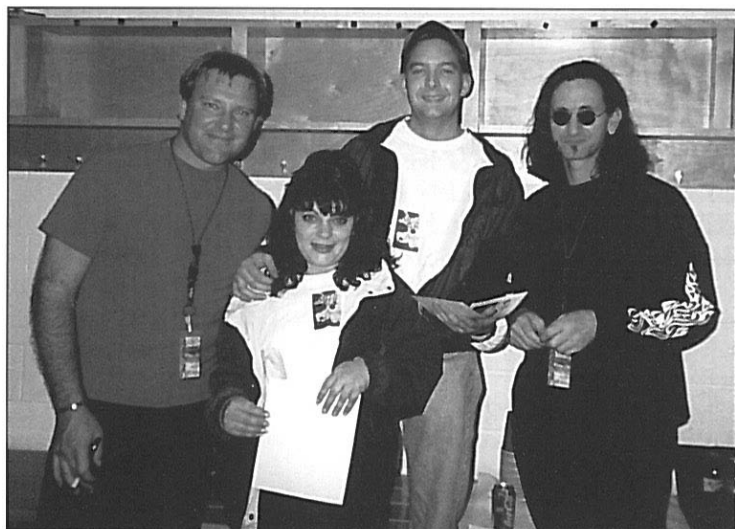
WANTED: Dig out your old Rush pictures for inclusion in **ASOF** — OR **ASOF HQ** our web site. We want to cover all phases of Rush's long career and we **KNOW** that some of you have older Rush shots. All copyrights are maintained and no copies will be made. Please specify where you want the photos (or artwork) to go. The magazine or the web site. We would prefer **NOT** to duplicate in both places. Give us a ring and let us know what you have or just send 'em in!!
Classified ads are \$2.00 and you must be an active ASOF subscriber.



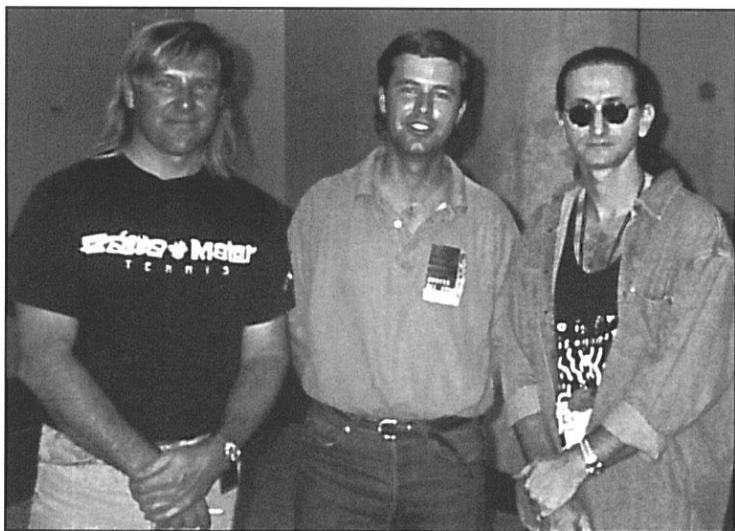
ASOF Members BRUSH WITH GREATNESS



Nassau Coliseum, Long Island, NY ~ 12/14/96 ~ Alex, buddy Ollie, Geddy, Me - John Levine.



Las Vegas, NV ~ 11/24/96 ~ Kevin Zuber and his girlfriend with Alex and Ged.



Salt Lake City, UT ~ May, 1992 ~ Ron Newman with Alex and Ged.

The Oracle will return next issue. We truly missed Eric Ross' superb column. Along with The Fountain, The Oracle has appeared in every issue of ASOF. Eric will be back in #17 with a vengeance! Right Eric?

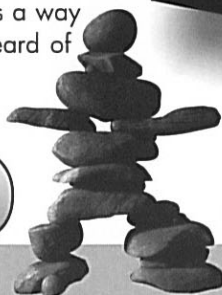
the Oracle

Along with **The Oracle**, there were a handful of submissions we WANTED to get in here. Alas, it was not to be. So next issue you can look for another fine piece by Dan Domberg, a "brush with greatness" story about Neil's **DCI** videos, many more pictures from John Vinson, and more of your **Test For Echo** letters and concert reviews. We are still waiting on Terry Brown. Expect that next issue.

A warm thank you goes out to local Rockford, IL Rush Tribute band, **2112**. We were very surprised to find such a spirited trio right in our back yard! It was also very gratifying finding out that our petition to "Bring Rush to Rockford" sparked their interest in reforming **2112**. (They had been performing three years ago before we moved to Rockford.) The show was tremendous and we certainly hope **2112** stays together and continues spreading that contagious sound to all. Watch for a write up hopefully next issue! Thanks Victor. Both Mandy and I had a blast.

You've probably noticed that the **RUSHLINE** (815-398-1250) has had the exact same intro for five (or is it six?) years. You know: "dedicated to the best band in the universe. blah - blah...." Well, it struck me how true this really is! It's no lip sync my friends. No lie. Nope. I mean it from the bottom of my heart. Listening to the vast catalog of Rush leaves you with no other conclusion. Especially today, as we seem to be in a musical lull (at least what is mass marketed). I submit that Rush is the equivalent of the Beatles in **greatness**. Rush is timeless. Rush is a way of life. I often tell non-Rush fans, "Well, you've heard of **Beatlemania**, right? I believe in **Rushmania**! It's true!" They understand.

IN THE END



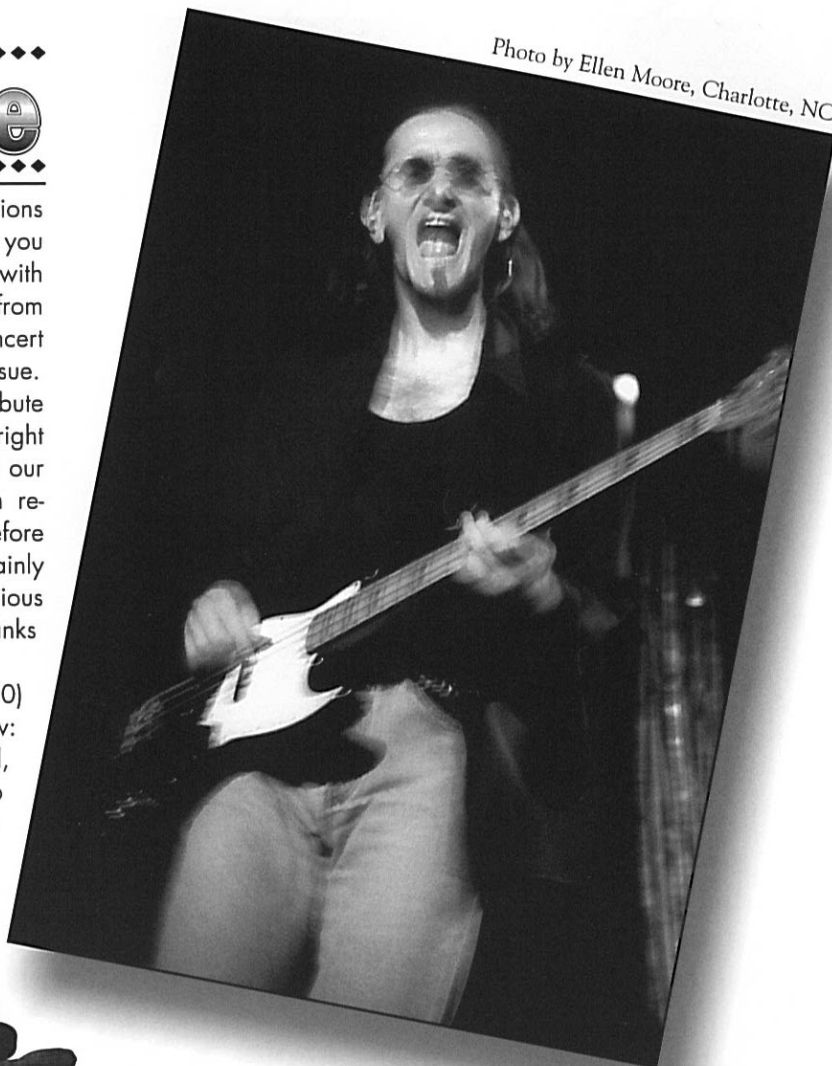
Special thanks to Alex, Geddy, Neil, Howard, Chad, SRO/Anthem, Cynthia, Pegi, and the gang, The Dexters - Bernie, Lou, Pete, and Mike and The Orbit Room, Atlantic Records (a hearty thanx to ALL), Bob Mack, Kevin & Ken Bontius, Eric Ross, Mike Arbisi, Dan Domberg, Kevin McAllister, Animation - Chester, Dan & Jay, DCI Music Video, Musicom International, 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 Justin Zivojinovich for the eleventh hour **I Mother Earth** (see back cover!) photos where Alex played with IME on Sunday, February 2 at the Warehouse in Toronto. *Thanks one & all.*

Don't forget that you can EMail **ASOF** at:
sstreet@neffxcorp.com

Your help is **VITAL** for our survival. Drop us a line for a **free** 1997 updated master copy. **Keep spreading the word.**

A Show Of Fans, Number 16, Winter 1997. **ASOF** is a non-profit Rush fanzine/network dedicated to the **BEST** band in the universe. **ASOF** is published approximately quarterly. Subscriptions are \$15.00, USA; \$20.00, Canada; \$25.00, rest of the world for four issues. Back issues (**ASOF** #1-15) are available in a very limited supply (**ASOF** #3 is **sold out**); USA, \$5.00 each; rest of the world, \$6.00 each. Donations of stamps are appreciated. **ASOF**, 5411 E. State St., Suite 309, Rockford, IL 61108.

Photo by Ellen Moore, Charlotte, NC



ASOF STAFF

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

RUSHLINE: 815-398-1250

ON THE WEB
HTTP://WWW.ASOF.COM

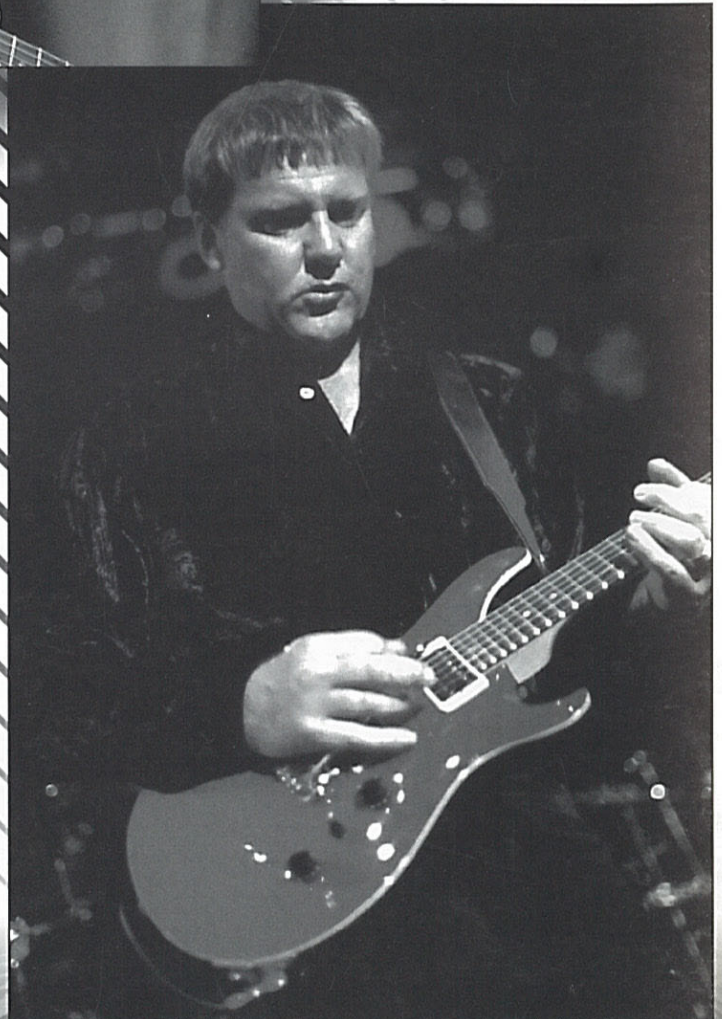
FAXLINE: 815-399-2462

LIVE VICTOR

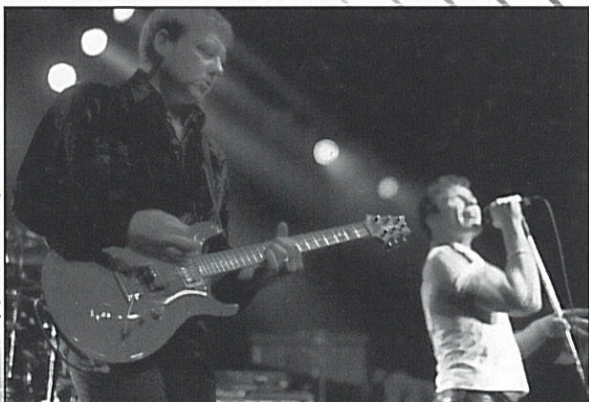
Alex with
I Mother Earth



P
R
O
M
I
S
E



Photos by Justin Zivojinovich



SIGNAL TRANSMITTED
MESSAGE RECEIVED