

RUSH BACKSTAGE CLUB

MAY 1983

LAS VEGAS, NEVADA

ANOTHER RUSH NEWSLETTER

from Neil Peart

I would like to cover a few aspects of individual songs on *Moving Pictures* from the drummers point of view. "Tom Sawyer" is an enjoyable piece of work, mainly based on a funky backbeat rhythm in 4/4, with an instrumental section and rideout in 7/8. I'm playing full strength for the whole track, and it took about a day and a half to record. I remember collapsing afterwards with raw, red, aching hands and feet. I had been playing the bass drum so hard that my toes were all mashed together and **very** sore. Physically, this was certainly the most difficult track, and even now it takes as much energy to play properly as my solo.

On all the songs on *Moving Pictures* -- except for "Vital Signs" -- we used front heads on the bass drums. I have always preferred the increased fee and tonal dynamics of closed bass drums, but was always strongly assured that they wouldn't work in the studio. We experimented a bit on the last album with "Different Strings" and "Natural Science" and the results were very pleasing. Sometimes we placed the mike inside the drum through a small hole in the front head, as we do live. Other times we placed the mike in front of a solid front head. It just seems more expressive than the invariable "thunk" of a single-headed drum. That's just my opinion -- don't get insulted!

Notes on the Making of "Moving Pictures" Part 2: from "The Drummers Diary" by Neil Peart

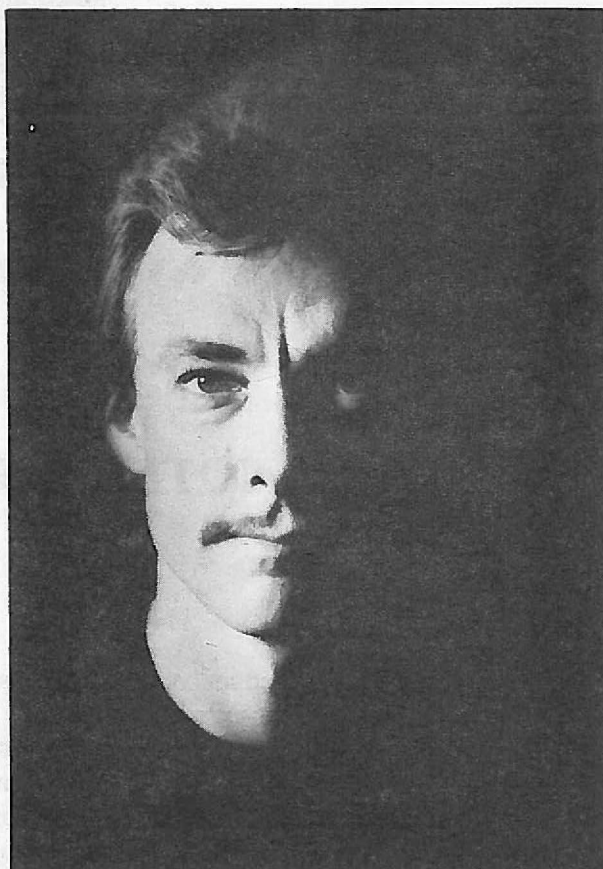
Another little electronic trick that our co-producer Terry Brown used more than once, was to reverse the phase on the drum mike. This would somehow intensify the depth of the note, giving it a round "cushiony" low end to the sound, allowing it to sort of sit below the rest of the track. There was an increase of presence, in effect, without increasing the level. I don't know why. You'd have to ask a wirehead!

The accents which punctuate the 7/8 sections in the middle and end came about in one of those strange and wonderful ways. While we were making "demos" of the newly written songs, I got a little "experimental" (lost) in the end section, and fought my way out with a series of random punches. Listening back to this "mistake", I loved it and had to learn how to do it so I could put more of them in.

"Red Barchetta" is probably a drummer's dream. The tempo is exactly right for really opening up when necessary. The dynamics allow soft subtlety on the hi-hat and wild flailing around the kit. It's challenging enough to make it enjoyable to play night after night. It was suprisingly easy to record. After one run-through to check sound, Terry suggested I change one fill, and the next take was the one! That doesn't happen very often, especially with the high standards of perfection we aim for. When it does happen it's a pleasure.

"YYZ" is something of a rhythm section "tour-de-force" for Geddy and myself, and we indulged ourselves richly! The title refers to the identity code used by the Toronto International Airport. We used the Morse Code signal emitted by the control tower as a rhythmic device for the introduction: (-.---.----..) dah dit dah dah dah dit dah dah dah dit dit, 6 Y-Y-Z. The body of the song is influenced by the side of rock jazz fusion which leans more towards rock, like Brand X, Bill Bruford, and some of the Weather Report's work.

Because of the complexity of Alex and Geddy's parts, we decided to record each instrument separately, so that everyone could concentrate solely on their own part. This is very unusual for us. We usually record the basic track as a trio, then overdub or redo parts as necessary, later on. It was interesting to be all alone in the studio, humming the song to myself while playing to nothing! Fortunately the arrangement was very organized, and I knew the song well enough to imagine the other musicians. It was not really as weird as it sounds. Actually, I quite enjoyed it! Who needs those other guys?



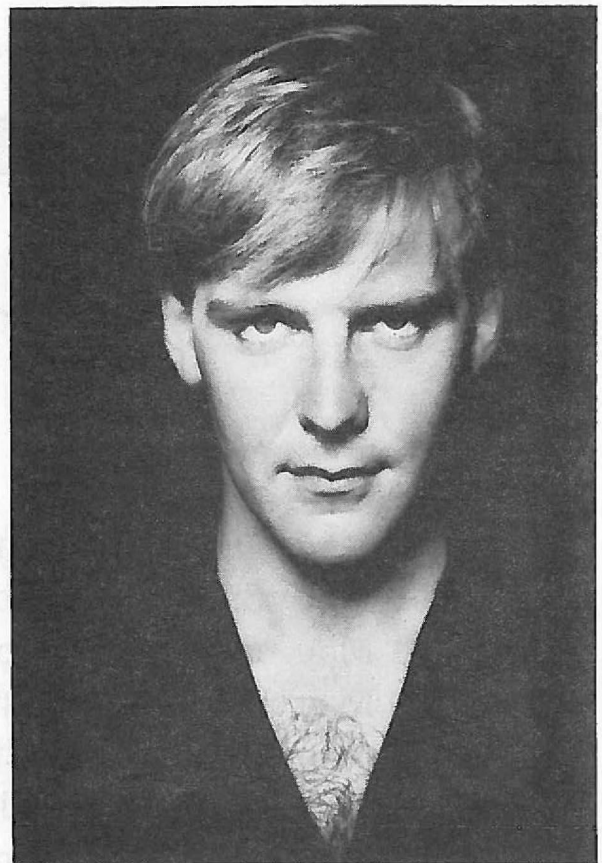
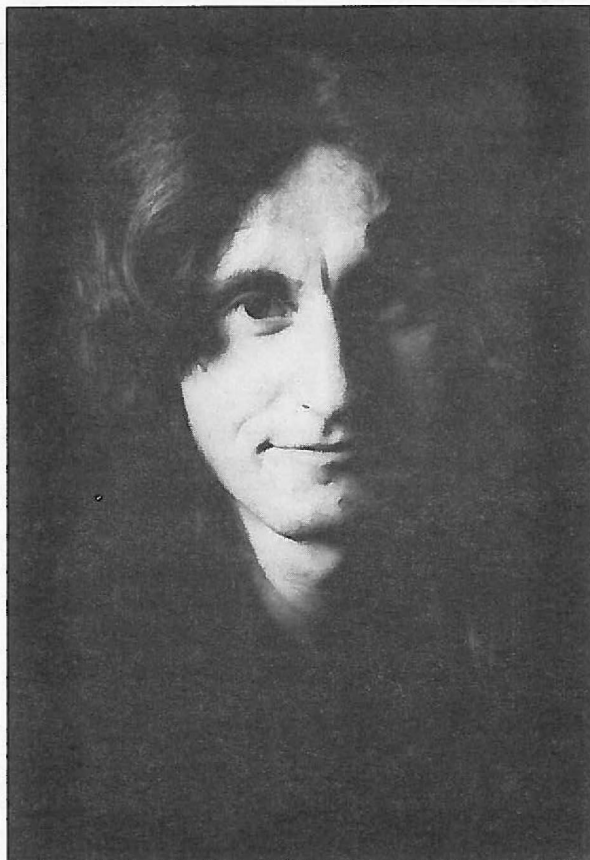
"Limelight" employs a variety of time signature rhythmic shifts around a constant pulse, combining alternating patterns of 4/4, 3/4, 6/8, and sections of 6/8 in which I play a revolving 4/4 over the top. It doesn't **sound** as complicated as all that on record, which is probably good. The double bass drum triplets which anticipate the flams off the top are inspired by something I learned from Tommy Aldridge a few years ago. I used to watch him anticipate his flams and down beats with a quick two beats on the bass drums. I simply made it into three beats.

"The Camera Eye" was the first song to be written for the album. It's not surprising that it combines so many of the circumstances and intentions under which we approached the writing. It certainly blends the clear-minded relaxation of returning from summer vacation, with the eager energy of getting back to work. The intention to streamline our arrangements, and base the changes around good grooves can also be contrasted with the length of the song, and its relative simplicity.



Although admittedly a bit of a bluffer in rudiments, I have always loved the ominous, insistent delicacy of the distant marching snare. Once again I found a place to do some dabbling on the snare drum in the introduction to "The Camera Eye". We were looking for a dramatic, soundtrack-like feel to this one. That sort of "Mission Impossible" stuff works well.

During these sessions we were experimenting with an unusual type of microphone called a "PZM", or Pressure Zone Microphone. It only picks up direct sounds -- no reverberated signals. On this track and on "Vital Signs" we used it taped onto my chest! It re-created that special "drummer's perspective", the balance and dynamics that you hear when you play. In the overall mix it's used as an overhead or ambience mike to enhance and naturalize the complete drum mix. If any of you happened to see the video that we made for "Vital Signs", you may have noticed the great lump of metal that was growing out of my chest. That was the "PZM".



In the reprise of the song introduction, beginning at the second half of the track, I used an unusual two-handed ride. My right hand played upbeat quarter notes on the bell of the ride cymbal and the downbeat on the snare. My left hand played eighth notes on the hi-hat. This allowed for interesting accent variations between my left hand and right foot, and gave a nice quality of motion to the rhythm.

Coming Next Newsletter:

Neil Peart's Answer to Satanism

RUSH ITINERARY 1983

EUROPE

May 1 & 2:	Rehearsal - Ahoy, Rotterdam
May 3:	Ahoy, Rotterdam
May 6:	Sporthalle, Stuttgart
May 7:	Festhalle, Frankfurt
May 8:	CCH, Hamburg
May 10:	Philpshalle, Dusseldorf
May 11:	Rhein-Neckar Hall, Heidelberg
May 12:	Forest National, Brussels
May 14 & 15:	N.E.C., Birmingham
May 17 & 18:	Wembley, London
May 20 & 21:	Wembley, London
May 23:	Deeside, Cardiff
May 24 & 25	Ingleston, Edinburgh

September: Possible short U.S. Tour

February 1984: Tentative U.S. Tour, to be resumed in February '84 after recording sessions.