

THE

Sept 1988

Vol 3 - A

\$3.00

USA

Drummer

FOR ALL PERFORMERS AND PORTRAYERS

— Creating The
— Drum Part

— Electric
— Ladyland



Creating The Drum Part

by Neil Peart

When you first begin to dabble in odd times, or even learn to flow well in 4/4 or 6/8, counting will teach you the "program." As you become more fluent in different rhythmic foundations, you will be able to recall these "hardwired programs," you set into the right "cadence," or to let you pick up the "odd" beats at different times. I've written about this before, so I won't give you much emphasis now, but you learn to subdivide the time signatures into their even-and-odd components, or to multiply them to make a series of odd bars add up to one long, even one. This is a trick I have used many times, playing 4/4 over 7/8, 5/4, or 6/8, and just holding the rhythm chugging along until all bar lines add up again, and I can take off somewhere else!

There is another thing, too—a wordless mental "language" that I use to understand and remember parts. Certain phrases even have a kind of 'picture' symbol; not notation, or the physical move, but an inner image of the rhythmic twist. So in that sense, I don't hear the upcoming phrase in my mind so much as see it. This, by its very nature, is unfortunately not communicable to others. I guess that's why we have written music!

But let's get into the really deep waters of this question. All of the above will set you up for comfortable improvising, but what if you want to arrange a drum part, one that you will stand forever as a definite way of playing a song? (I know, I know...dream on!) Starting from

ground zero, you have a blank slate—a new song—and a drum part to create for it. So you play detective, look for clues, put two and two together—and come up with seven. (Always a good answer!)

But the clues. Perhaps the songwriter will play you a rough tape. On it, there will be some indication of the 'tempo', whether it's from a drum machine or in the inherent "lilt" to the music as it's played. Then there will be 'dynamic' hints: how the song builds, where you might want to make the strongest statement, where you can be subtle and supportive, and where you might add some rhythmic interest. What does the song need? Where are the vocal parts, the instrumental parts, the choruses, the bridges? These are all the building blocks, not only of the song, but also of 'your' part in it.

So your mind starts to sift possibilities: perhaps a big backbeat on the 3 for the verses, maybe a quarter-note bass drum with 16ths on the hi-hat for the chorus. And those bridges: Let's try a driving 2 and 4 on snare, with a quarter-note ride, to build



`into' the chorus, and then plane out under the vocals. And I think we could do some clever stuff in that intro to the instrumental: Bring it down and play `across' the time, with lots of those "ghost notes" that Rod Morgenstein is always talking about.

Listen to the song another couple of times, mentally going over your "map" of the musical terrain and trying to cement the arrangement details in your head. Again, people use different ways to accomplish this, and `all' are good. It doesn't matter if you write out some notation (or use some kind of "shorthand" that many drummers do), or if you're able to rough it out in your head just from memory. In this case, if it works, it's right! Is the song dark and introverted, or is it light and airy? Do you want to be able to dance to it, or is it "just for ears"? Does your band's common stylistic ground run to samba, ska, swing, or speed metal? What sorts of fills are appropriate, and where are they appropriate? And if your playing speed metal, can you induce some ideas from the ska, samba, or swing that might make it more interesting? This is where the fun starts.

Inevitably, it's going to be rough the first few times, especially if you and the rest of the band are all trying to learn the song at once. If you can do some experimenting with it at home, even if it's just on magazines to your Walkman, more to the good. But if your diving right into it, again there are two approaches. Some people start as simply as possible. Then if they feel compelled to add to that minimalistic approach they will. Other people start the opposite way--trying everything they can possibly think of in the first few run-

throughs, then gradually eliminating the ideas that don't work. There's much to be said for this approach. In the first case, you'll have problems with the rest of the band less, and you may come up with a good, conservative piece and for the second instance, however, you may be likely to stumble into something different and unexpected and if you have the luxury of working by yourself, it's someone else's expense.

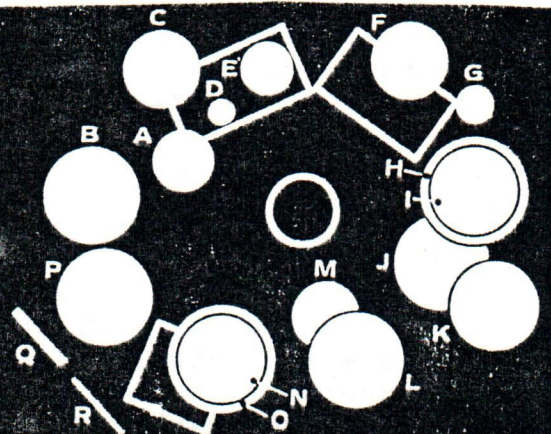
But there are still many options open to you. Much will depend upon your own temperament as a player. What sort of situation makes you most comfortable? Do you like to have your part worked out as much as possible, so your only concern when you play or record is getting it right? Some wise editor once advised an agonizing writer: "Don't get it right, get it down!" There's something in that for musicians as well, though perhaps not what the literary advisor meant. If you find you fly best "by the seat of your pants"--again if it works it's right. Go wild.

I have told the story before I was a big Keith Moon fan as a beginning drummer. All I wanted to do was get in a band that would play some Who songs so I could wail like he did. But when I finally found a band that actually wanted to play songs, I discovered to my chagrin that I didn't like playing like Keith Moon. It was too chaotic, and things just weren't placed rationally. I wanted to play in a more careful, deliberate way--to think about what I played where, and not just let it happen. I am driven by a strong organizational, perfectionist demon. Again, that's a personal thing, and I sure don't think I'm

necessarily right. It's just the way I am. So I'll continue along in that vein for a while --as that's what comes naturally--and talk about organizing a song.

My personal approach is fairly linear. I'll often start simply at the beginning of the song and gradually build it--if not dynamically, then in terms of activity. A simple roll around the toms in chorus might double up in chorus two, and then by chorus three

become a rip-roaring, two bar, triplet feel flurry of 64th notes. Or a gentle backbeat in verse one can develop through a Latin feel on the ride cymbal in verse two, and be echoed by a doubletime full-throttle "race to the finish" during the rideout. Then there are accents, pushes, high-hat chokes, sudden pauses, feel shifts, stacco punctuations, downbeats on the toms instead of the snare, leaving the downbeat out or emphasizing the

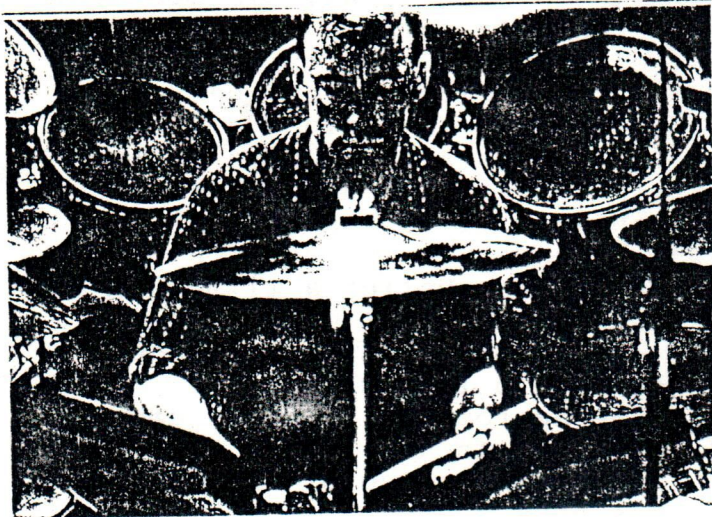


Neil Peart's Set-Up

- A 13" New Beat Hi Hats
- B 20" Medium Crash
- C 16" Medium Thin Crash
- D Single Crotales
- E 10" Splash
- F 16" Medium Thin Crash
- G 8" Splash
- H 22" Ping Ride
- I 18" Medium Thin Crash (on top)
- J 20" Swish
- K 18" Pang
- L 20" Medium Crash
- M 13" New Beat Hi Hats
- N 18" Medium Thin Crash (on top)
- O 22" Ping Ride
- P 19" K China Boy
- Q 26" Turkish Gong
- R 1-Octave Crotales Low

upbeats on the ride pattern. There's also something I hear Manu Katche doing with Peter Gabriel and Robbie Robertson; insinuating the rhythm--playing all around the beat without actually playing it, but it's absolutely there. This gets more complicated, but also more fun, and is very satisfying when you pull it off (not only for yourself, but for the song, the other musicians, and hopefully, the audience).

People so often seem to forget that an audience doesn't have to understand the music to enjoy



it. How many of millions of who loved Pink Floyd's song "Money" and bought the 'Dark Side Of The Moon' album knew --of cared--that it was in 7/4? Peter Gabriel's "Solsbury Hill" again was in seven, and is one of the cleverest maskings of odd time--and just happened to be a big hit for him. The time signature just didn't matter --the musicians used skill and musicality to make it feel good, and that's what the audience responded to. That's what "accessibility" is really all about: communicating the thing properly. That's your ultimate responsibility, and your ultimate blame. Sure, there are no black-and-white absolutes in music, (or almost none), but it sometimes doesn't

"click" with people because it just wasn't put together right. The listeners might not be able articulate the flaw, and neither may the musicians. But it doesn't reach the



people you would have expected to like it, the song just doesn't connect. So it's up to us to make all the connections.



Caress of Steel

UNDER THE SHADOW

☞ This album represents the time when Rush became a little too confident with the acceptance of their music and basically cut an album that in that space in time was mildly off the wall so to speak. I'm not saying this album was not a good one, but the general record buying demographic based class didn't accept this album as easily as the first two LP's. Rush has grown to learn that the public's opinion is completely irrelevant and that Rush would never adapt to their expectations. Rush plays for themselves in hope that some people will enjoy their work. CARESS OF STEEL starts a long line of original stylistic albums that are not based on the people, but on the most important critics of all; the band.

Rising talent becomes very visible even on the premiere track, "Bastille Day." Rush is starting to mold their own style into a mountain of talented, moving music. Caress of Steel is also the first album for the most part based on fantasy oriented epic songs. Most critics saw Rush committing music business suicide because the album wasn't under the ordinary format as other LP's during that time. Rush, however proved the critics wrong as their marathon-length tunes sailed into 1981 with "The Camera Eye" on Moving Pictures.

The second song entitled "I Think I'm Going Bald" is what I think a satirical look at becoming responsible, wiser, adults. It shows the lighter side of Rush in 1975.

The first extremely long song is rightfully entitled "The Necromancer" (sounds familiar,

huh.) Anyway before I get into any more details I'd like to get something straight. We, the staff, have gotten many comments asking why we named our magazine after a diabolical, almost dementedly satanic title. Well, if you look carefully at the lyrics of the song, it is clearly an analogous story of Rush as a band compared to a fairy tale situation. We wanted a title that pretty much summed up the essence of Rush. What better a title than a song that describes the entire procession of the band into the music world. "The Necromancer" is one of my favorite Rush songs probably because of the way the song soars in so many directions in twelve and a half minutes. It seems as if "the three men of Willowdale" (Willowdale, Ontario) went a little too far, and as a result the ensuing tour in 1975 was referred to as the "Down the Tubes Tour"

"Lakeside Park" is a trip down memory lane for Neil as he reminisces of his long and almost forgotten childhood. The amusement park must have been a place that Neil held in high regard as a child.

"The Fountain of Lamneth" is probably the most moody piece on this album and it is also the longest (19:59). Neil was obviously revolutionizing the band as a whole with this song. Neil's presence is awesome on this song especially with the short but sweet "Didacts and

and Naipets'. This starts a major transition in the flow of the song.

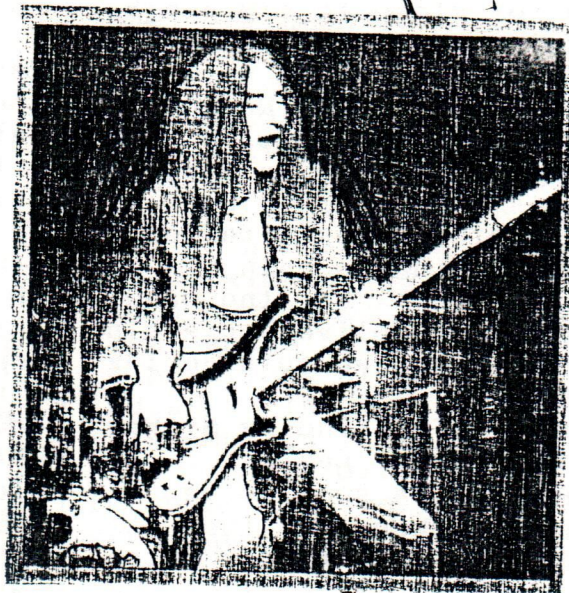
Why this album in simplest terms "flopped" I really cannot comprehend. This album shows growing maturity as a band musically and lyrically. Don't listen to the critics is what I get from their reviews of this album.

Back then I guess everyone was up in the

Zeppelin saga. Oh by the way, Rush sold more records than Led Zeppelin ever did. Not that I don't like them, I love them, but you have to agree; Rush is still driving hard and going strong.

--Brian Siskind

RUSH



CARESS OF STEEL

ELECTRIC LADYLAND

In the
studio
-1974

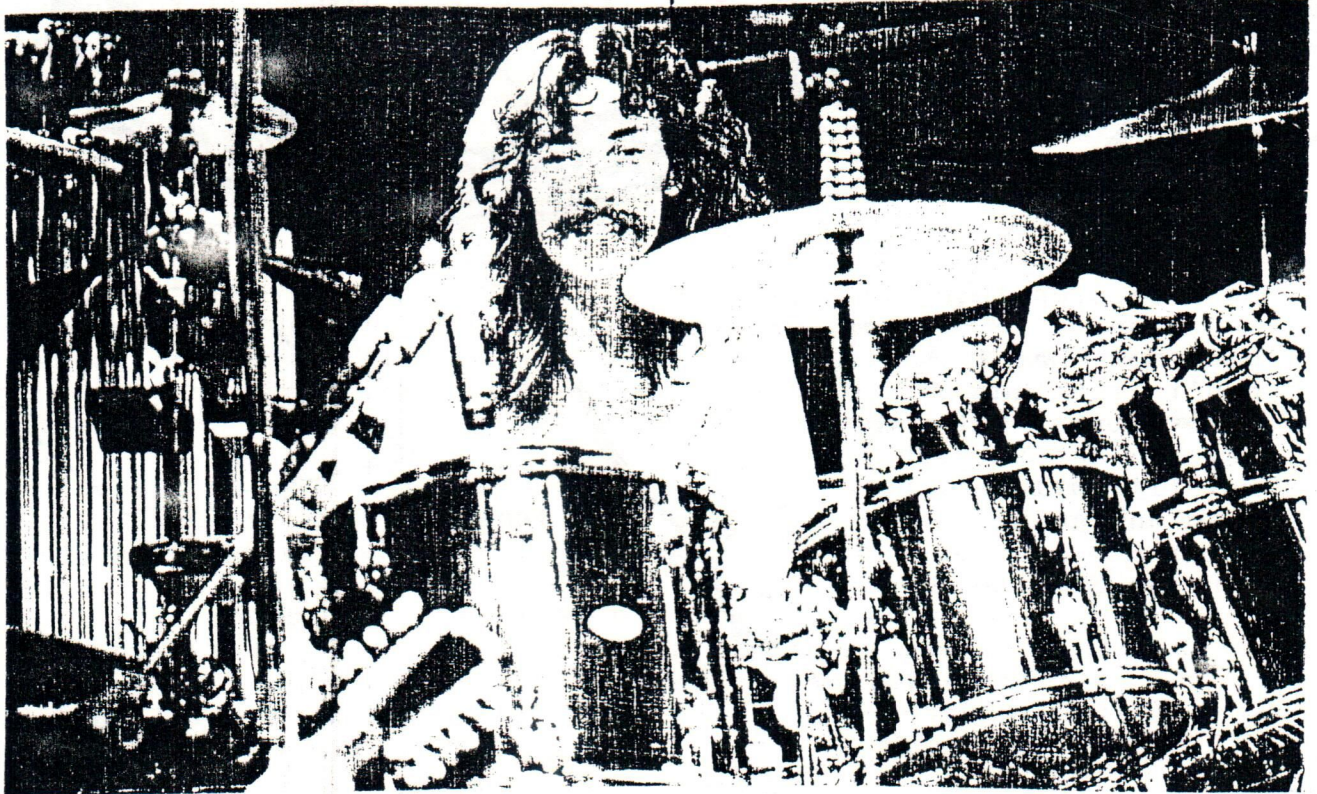
At the time this set was recorded, Neil had been a part of Rush for close to six months. It doesn't show at all and Neil plays every song twice as well as the long lost John Rutsey. Obviously Neil has made an adjustment into Rush an easy one and he has never turned back.

This recording was a radio broadcast trying to gain a little awareness for the band. Geddy as usual delivers piercing vocals and gives an outstanding performance.

To start off, "Finding My Way" fades in. "Best I Can", introduced as "a song to be released in February", then follows. This song really puts Neil in the spotlight. The supportive audience, who at the

most contained about 25 people, really enjoys the show as it seques into "In The Mood". Little did Rush know that this song would soon be a concert anthem in years to come. Anthem is next, which brings out the political side of Rush. As the show continues, Rush makes an excellent show out of "Need Some Love", "Fly By Night", and the Zeppelin-inspired "Here Again". A song off of Beatles Six called "Bad Boy" then follows. "Mr. Alex Lifeson on the electric guitar" ends off

this song with a climactic two minute guitar solo. Then, as usual, the show is topped off with "Working Man". continued--



EXCURSIONS

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

The trouble with the Maples
(And they're quite convinced
they're right)
They say the Oaks are just too
lofty
And they grab up all the light
But the Oaks can't help their
Feelings if they like the way
They're made
And they wonder why the Maples
Can't be happy in their shade?

There is trouble in the Forest
And the creatures all have fled
As the Maples scream 'Oppression!
And the Oaks just shake their
heads

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

Lyrics by Neil Peart



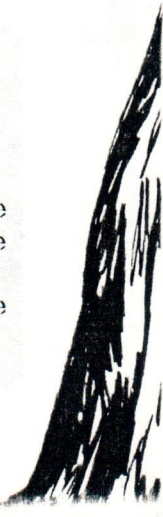
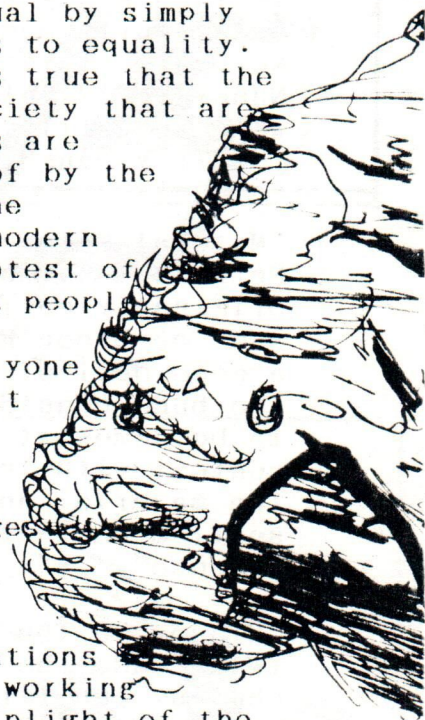
This month's 'Excursions' concentrates on the 1978 release "The Trees". This song, written by Neil, is a song about society and the degree of its inequality. First of all, the 'trees' represent different people of all persuasions. The Maples are the equivalent of the middle and lower classes of society and the Oaks signify the upper class of today's world. The Oaks are a higher class of society. The Oaks

are satisfied with the way they are and they can't understand why the Maples don't like being the way they are and having their position in society. The Maples are oppressed and object to having their light taken away simply because their status. The Maples form a union in order to obtain the things that they deserve. They claimed that the Oaks (or higher class) were too greedy. The Oak oppression was ended by making all the trees equal by simply reducing the Oaks to equality.

It certainly is true that the people in our society that are the working class are taken advantage of by the rich owners of the corporations of modern industry. The protest of this song is that people have to have differences. If everyone kept equal than it reduces their personal individuality.

One of the biggest issues being discussed in the Democratic and Republican conventions is the every-day working American and the plight of the working man and the inequalities in our society. Jesse Jackson discussed how the rich people are the only getting a respectable education and it is getting harder and harder for the middle class American to afford and achieve an education.

So the final question is raised; should the Oaks have more and block the sun from the Maples? Why can't the Maples be happy in their shade? Whatever question applies to you must be answered within yourself.



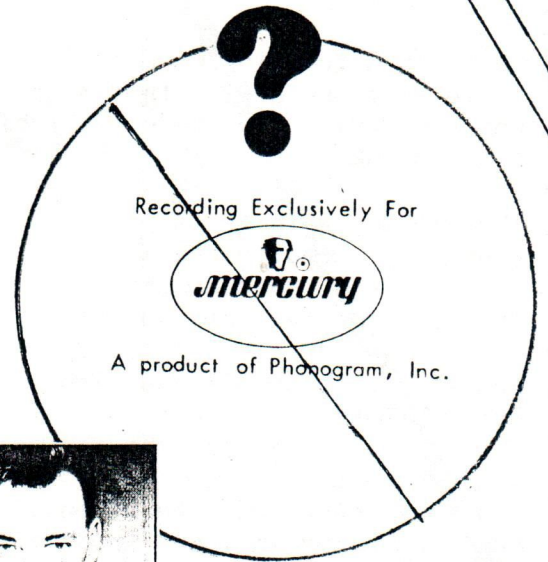
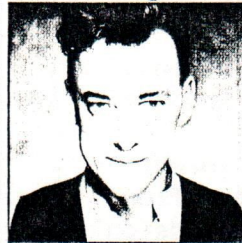
Did you know . . .

Geddy is not his real name...his his real name is Gary. Geddy came from his mother...when his mother said Gary she pronounced it Geddy because she had a heavy Yiddish accent.

Oracle: The Dream - has never been performed live.

In 1968 Lindy Young joined Rush as a fourth member and a keyboard player. His sister, Nancy would later become Geddy's wife and still is today.

---Trey Daughtry Richmond, VA

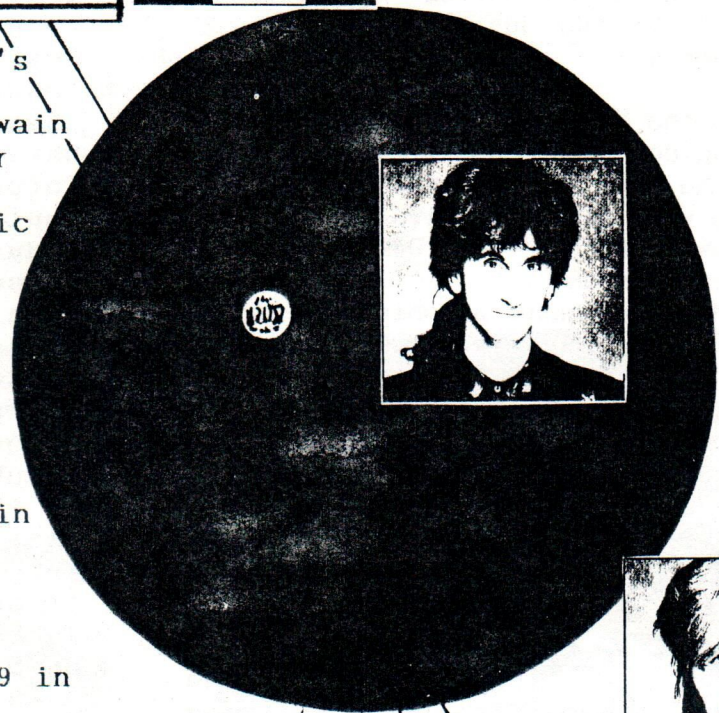


"Natural Science" from Rush's Permanent Waves album was originally entitled "Sir Gawain And The Green Knight". After a good deal of deliberation the band considered the topic to be somewhat out of context with the rest of the material and finally settled on "Natural Science".

"Closer To The Heart" twice made the Billboard charts. The first time was in 1977, where it peaked at number 76; the second was the live version from the 1981 release Exit...Stage Left. It peaked at number 69 in 1981.



There is a high possibility that Polygram/Mercury records are going to drop Rush. There has been no definite decision as of yet. We think they are going to wait and see how well the new live album sells before they make any decisions. All we can do is wait...until October.



Electric Ladyland--
continued--

Again Neil makes his presence clearly heard, and all the changes he made are undoubtedly for the better. This set displays a very important time for Rush as a band; the acceptance of the legendary Neil Peart on the drumkit instead of John Rutsey.

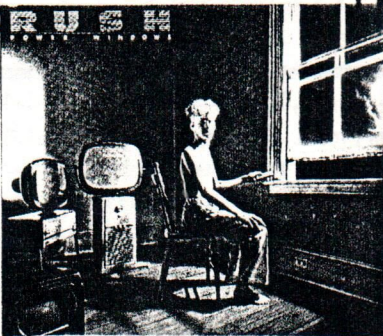
If you would like a copy of this show for yourself please send \$6.00 to: Rush On Stage, 314 Acadia Ave., Winston-Salem, NC 27127. Make checks payable to Eric Merola.

RUSH BOOKS

VISIONS

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- Success Under Pressure by Steve Gett----\$10.00
- Rush by Brian Harrigan-----\$10.00

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Letters

I saw your magazine at the Record Exchange and at first I couldn't believe it was devoted entirely to Rush. Two years ago I was first introduced to them and my respect for them has grown slowly but surely since then. I have all their albums, but I still know so little about them. I took a chance and went to see them at the Charlotte Coliseum last year, and their show took my breath away. Rush is the epitome of all that a rock group should be. Their music is great by itself, but their lyrics are their saving grace. Anyone can play the guitar, but it really takes style and daring to write the lyrics that have won their way to my heart.

The most interesting thing I have learned about Rush so far is that Geddy Lee used to have a comedy radio show with Rick Moranis, and I found that out just accidentally. It's good to see Rush getting the coverage they deserve.

Peter Renfro - Mt. Pleasant, NC

I am an ultimate Rush fan! It's about time someone other than myself and a couple of friends recognizes that Rush is the best group in the world!

**Eric Bradley -
Winston-Salem, NC**

I used to live in Jordan (10 minutes from Beamsville) and I went to Beamsville High with Nancy Peart. Neil lived in Beamsville until about ten

years ago (maybe 8, I really can't tell you). Obviously I've been to Lakeside Park. As a matter of fact I've given directions to several American Rush fans in recent months.

**Robert McManus -
Toronto, Ontario**

I've been a Rush fanatic and devotee for the last seven years, and it's great to know there are others out there who share in Rush's musical vision the way I do!

I didn't hear about Rush until Moving Pictures, but after buying that album about seven years ago I went on a Rush buying spree and acquired their entire musical catalog in a matter of weeks. Since then I've been lucky enough to catch them live at Greensboro twice.

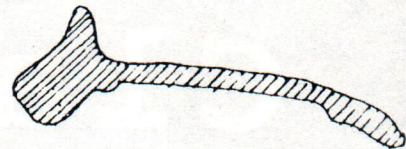
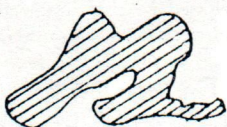
**Todd Day -
Kernersville, NC**

"Excursions" is a great idea and it might be neat if other Necromancer readers included their thoughts, or interpretations of Rush's lyrics.

**Nick Sanders -
Northport, NY**

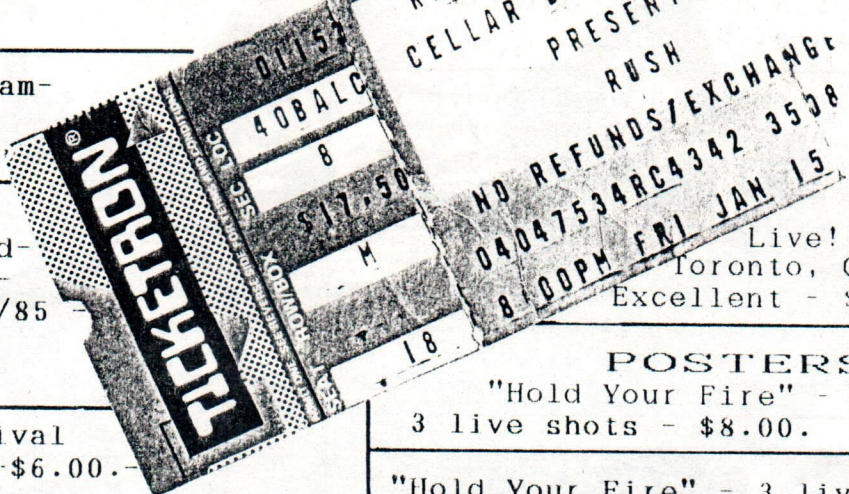
-Good idea Nick-if you have your own analysis of one of Rush's songs, or would just like to give your opinion on Rush's lyrics let us know!

-Eric



ON STAGE

<p>Electric Ladyland Studios- 12/5/74 (includes a few tracks from Fly By Night) EX+ - 45mn - \$6.00.</p>	<p>"1012" - Includes live "Vital Signs" and "Red Sector A". Also includes interviews with band 45mn - EX++ - \$7.00.</p>
<p>"A Farewell To Things" Montreal 1977 - 45mn - VG+ - \$6.00</p>	<p>Alex Lifeson interview - 1988 35mn - \$6.00. Excellent!</p>
<p>Permanent Waves - 3 nights from soundboard EX++ 90mn, 90mn, 135mn - \$6.00 (90mn), \$8.00 (135mn). 1980.</p>	<p>Live in Meadowlands, NJ - 1984 135mn - EX - \$8.00.</p>
<p>Moving Pictures - Chicago Ampitheatre, IL - 135mn - EX+ - \$8.00. 1981</p>	<p>VIDEO Promos - Tom Sawyer, Vital Signs, The Enemy Within, Distant Early Warning, Afterimage, The Body Electric, Subdivisions, Countdown, The Big Money. 55mn total - \$20.00.</p>
<p>"Rush 'n Roulette" 4th night at Chicago Ampitheatre - includes never before heard acoustic jam by Alex - soundboard - 135mn - \$12.00. 1981.</p>	
<p>New World Tour - Charlotte, NC 3/25/83 - 90mn - EX+ - \$6.00.</p>	<p>Exit...Stage Left - Concert - 60mn - \$20.00.</p>
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<p>"Live Thro- ugh Power Wind- ows" - Greens- boro, NC 4/22/85 - 120mn - EX+ - \$7.00.</p>	
<p>Pink Pop Festival 60mn Ex++-\$6.00.- 1979</p>	<p>POSTERS "Hold Your Fire" - 3 balls, 3 live shots - \$8.00.</p>
<p>"Hold Your Fire" Charlotte, NC 11/27/87 - VG - 90mn \$6.00.</p>	<p>"Hold Your Fire" - 3 live shots \$8.00.</p>
<p>"Hold Your Fire" LA Forum - 2/4/88 - EX+ - \$8.00. 135mn.</p>	<p>All recordings are first generation and are recorded on high quality, high bias tapes. For complete updated catalog write to Rush On Stage, 314 Acadia Ave., Winston-Salem, NC 27127.</p>
<p>Neil Peart Interview- "Off The Record" 60mn-\$5.00</p>	<p>checks to: Eric Merola</p>



Classifieds

The Necromancer offers classifieds to all fellow Rush fans free of charge in an ad that refrains from selling items. If you wish to place an ad that involves selling an item(s) the fee is as follows: 0-20 words - \$15.00 - every word thereafter will be 75¢ extra.

Wanted: Rush promos "Lock And Key", "Time Stand Still", and "Mystic Rhythms" on high quality tapes. Complete promo only. Will trade for Rush, Zeppelin, Floyd, and Hendrix recordings. Brian Siskind, 990 Macon Dr., Winston-Salem, NC 27106.

Help! Fellow Rush fan wants everyone's help locating Rush material. I have a considerable amount of Zep, Firm, and Rush '74 '88. Send your list to Joel Plitt, 938 E. Yale, Ontario California, 91764.

RUSH, Zeppelin, Floyd, Doors for trade. Audio/Video. Send your list to Cliff Pryor, 16503 Waycreek, Houston, Texas 77068.

RUSH, U2 wanted. Will trade for Zeppelin recordings. Your list for mine. Amar Setty 217 Staffordshire Rd., Winston-Salem, NC 27106



T-shirts, posters and more! For free catalog write to MUSICADE, 11199 Sorrento Valley Rd., Suite J-F, San Diego, CA 92121. Or call: (619)452-1525.

Wanted: Rush bootlegs (video/audio), T-shirts, posters, etc. For correspondence and/or trade, please write to: Brian B., 4800 Cayuga Dr., St. Louis, MO 63123.

ZEPPELIN FANS! ZOSO: The Led Zeppelin gathering place. Send \$3.00 for this month's issue to: Zoso Mag., 1390 Market St., Suite 2623, San Francisco, Ca., 94102 - USA.

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"Traffic Manager" The music collector's newsletter. Send \$2.00 to: "Traffic Manager", P.O. Box 1333, Lombard, IL 60148

The Necromancer is published every month of the year, and the rates are as follows:

\$3.00 - issue
\$22.50 - 1 year
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Next month:

1987 Canadian Guitar Summit:
Beyond Borders

2112: A look into the past...
or future?

"Rush 'n Roulette"

...and more!

The Necromancer
314 Acadia Ave.
Winston-Salem, NC
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checks to: Eric Merola

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