

MAY/JUNE 1989

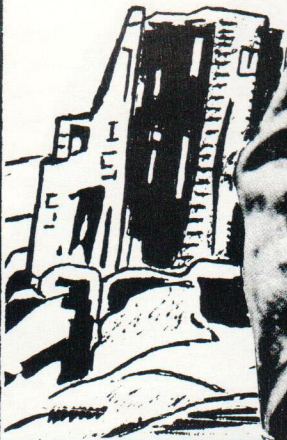
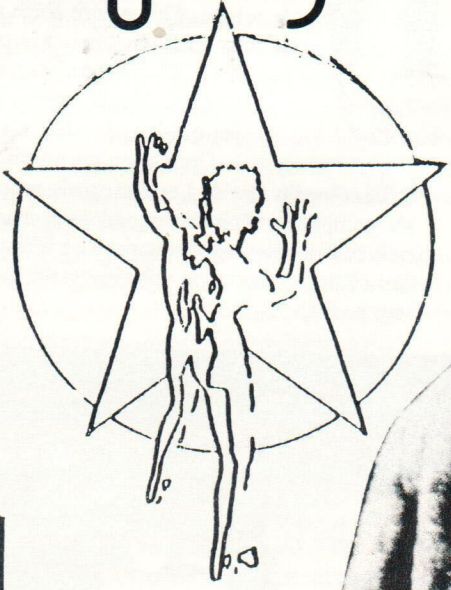
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T H E

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FOR ALL PERFORMERS AND PORTRAYERS

RUSH



ATLANTIC ?

Permanent Waves: A quantum leap forward-

New record company: Atlantic
Records-----

Geddy Lee on Rockline: 1989-----

Aging Gracefully

After years spent scrambling to the top, Rush are not sure which path to follow next. Maybe they'll just enjoy the view.

Rush, the little bar band that could, still thinks it can after 14 years of rocking arenas.

Trends continue to come and go, but the Toronto trio are hardly likely to go out of fashion, for they've never been *in* fashion—even in England, where for years they have been consistent winners (individually *and* collectively) in music press polls.

How many other acts have gone directly to world-touring without ever trying either to write a hit or to cultivate an image?

We're talking confidence here. This month Rush are releasing their third audio concert (on CD, cassette and double album), AND their second feature-length video concert.

Once again the unmistakable voice of bassist Geddy Lee, the consistent percussive complexity of Neil Peart, and the characteristically brilliant playing of guitarist Alex Lifeson confirms Rush's place as the only giant in the Canadian rock jungle.



Life in the mature lane
(from left): Neil Peart,
Alex Lifeson and
Geddy Lee.

FN COSTELLO

Rush are hugely alone. Virtually all of their competitors have capitulated. For similar proficiency you'll have to check out the condescending cats in fusion jazz. For a similar sense of adventure, you might look to Robert Plant, who inspired the group when he was with Led Zeppelin.

They started out by making five albums in 2½ years. The Rush ambition was first hinted at in a progressive-metal mini-epic called "By-Tor & The Snow Dog" on the second album *Fly By Night*, which also introduced the inventive percussion and lyrics of Neil Peart (replacing original drummer John Rutsey).

The breakthrough fourth album *2112*, was a downright Wagnerian concept that made obvious their intention to be taken seriously. "Attention all planets of the Solar Federation ... We have assumed control ..."

And the fifth, the first live double, showed them to be at the head of their class. To move on they would have to establish their own school.

One year later, in September of 1977, came the first of their great albums, *A Farewell To Kings*. This was not just the next Rush album, this was the album by the *next* Rush. In one mighty, artistic stroke, it separated them from their peers. They were leaders. They would continue to have followers (more than one million at Rush concerts in the next nine months alone) but they would never again have imitators.

For if the guts of Rush were no longer metallic, the team still could not yet digest pop. Their spacey trip was purely post-psychedelic; their progress no longer owed anything to 'progressive' music.

After a more playful sequel called *Hemispheres*, though, the turn of the decade brought a dramatic shift in the direction of simplicity. One song on *Permanent Waves* was almost entirely in 4/4 time.

Moving Pictures was leaner still. Neil thinks of it as "the *Who's* Next of our career." The longest track, an 11-minute song called "The Camera Eye," was built around four insistent notes. Aside from "Tom Sawyer," the writing was uncommonly straightforward, though no less vivid. ("Living in a fisheye lens / Caught in the camera eye / I have no heart to lie / I can't pretend a stranger / Is a long-awaited friend.")

Signals and *Grace Under Pressure* continued their move away from arty far-out fantasy towards artistic here-and-now reality. They were mostly starker settings of darker visions.

Nonetheless, it was *Power Windows* (1985) that gave them back their hope. Its last song begins: "So many things I think about / When I look far away / Things I know, things I wonder / Things I'd like to say / The more we think we know about / The greater the unknown / We suspend our disbelief / And we are not alone."

"I'm agnostic," said Neil at the time, "but curi-

ous, and romantic enough to want it to be true."

Hold Your Fire was hailed as the strongest album of their career, the set of songs most likely to be imitated. But Rush won't even imitate themselves.

As Geddy sang (in Neil's words), "The things that we're concealing / Will never let us grow / Time will do its healing / You've got to let it go."

Which is exactly what Rush have done.

Alex, Geddy and Neil are part way through the longest break of their careers. They have made no promises, not even to each other. They have no plans ever again to do another concert. Or not to. They haven't even decided when they are going to make a decision.

What they are doing is asking themselves hard questions about what they are doing.

"You start thinking that because you've been doing something for a long time, you should feel guilty that you've been doing it for so long," says Geddy. "Plus people come up to you all the time and say, Don't you want to do something different? And you go, well, sort of, yeah. But what do you do? I'm not a caterpillar that can just turn into a butterfly. You can't just snap your fingers and say, I'll change.

"The reason for this break," explains Geddy, "is one of those little awareness-moments where you realize you're burning out on being ambitious, that you're burning out on the treadmill of accomplishment.

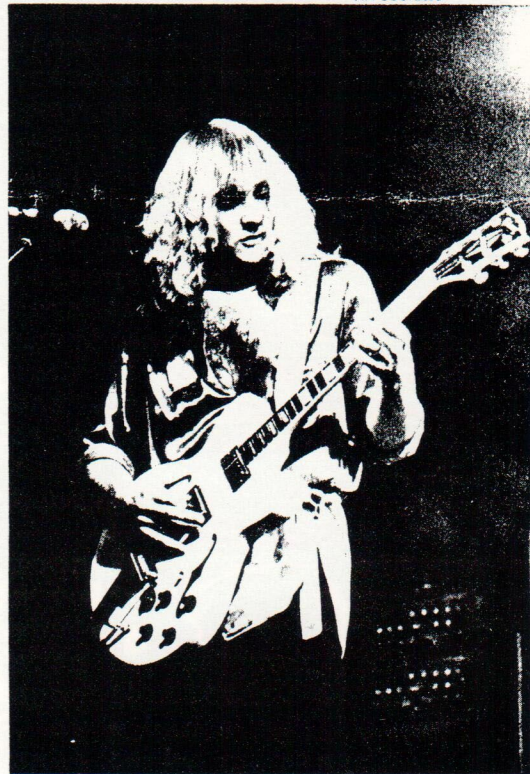
"You work very hard writing. You work very hard recording. You take a token break to assume the role of husband and father and person-involved-in-other-things. You tantalize yourself with interests in art and architecture and baseball and whatnot. And then you leave...

"You're living one life and visiting another and trying to train yourself to assimilate instantly—you get home and you try to meld yourself into that person that you left.... So we're finally taking time to fully live a settled life."

He is playing tennis with Alex and baseball with other friends. He's reading various histories and exploring divers' geographies. Recently he bought a cottage and is "looking for things to put in it. It's been designated as My Project by my benevolent wife, who is busy with her own career (she co-owns a Toronto-based clothing design company called Zapata), and has decorated many a home in her day, but has passed on the torch to me ... and I'm not too shabby either."

But hobbies aren't forever, it seems. After a

FIN COSTELLO



Brilliant, busy guitarist: Alex Lifeson.

by WILDER PENFIELD III



FIN COSTELLO



ANDREW MACNAUGHTAN

Top: the power and the passion of Neil Peart's drumming.
Above: Alex Lifeson is no less of a driving force.

while, "the game you play with yourself is how long can you stay away from working before you go nuts?"

Neil is nuts about bicycling.

An organized bicycle tour of China got him going. Since then he and a group of friends have cycled the Alps from Munich to Venice, the Pyrenees from Barcelona to Bordeaux and, this past year, the Rockies from Calgary to Vancouver.

He hopes that by the time you read this he will have brought his bicycle back from a trip to Western Africa.

"It's faster than walking, but still slow enough that you're intimately connected to your surroundings," he says. "And people are much more friendly to cyclists than to either pedestrians or motorists—a cyclist is obviously a harmless eccentric."

He is also working intensely on writing. He has always been responsible for Rush lyrics; now he is concentrating on prose. Especially travel writing. "For me it's perfect. It's like Rush's music. There's nothing that doesn't fit into travel writing."

And no, he hasn't given up his addiction to reading, but now, he says, "I find I want to re-read every good book I ever read for enjoyment—to see how it was done."

He has no book writing plans for himself yet. The learning is satisfaction enough. "It's like starting drumming over. At the beginning, improvement and progression come so rapidly, whereas after 20-odd years of drumming, I've reached the point of such small return that I know I'm at my potential. Without false humility or unworthy pride, I can say that I'm as good as I can be.

"And that's a difficult thing to face."

But as a friend recently wrote him, "Crisis is both danger and opportunity."

And fortunately, he doesn't feel he has stopped growing as a musician, which is how he uses his peaking skills as a drummer. "Your palette of colors may be full—that's the drumming part—but how you apply those colors, of course, that's the painting. And painting the arrangement together with the other guys, that part has lost none of its shine."

Geddy agrees. "Part of the reason that we are a trio," he says, "is because when we were younger we wanted to be busy. And strut our stuff. Not have to be subservient to another instrument.

"We were a technical band. We were musicians putting vehicles together for our musicianship. I think our approach is very different now. We're songwriters now, we're craftsmen—composers and orchestrators and arrangers."

Geddy isn't looking to Neil just for attractive syllables to mouth, he wants to be singing something he can stand behind. "I have to feel comfortable with what he's saying."

Rush defines itself by the choices it makes moment by moment, song by song. "It's hard for us to see the big picture," says Geddy. "We really don't know what we're going to do before we do it."

Some songs suit them all instantly. "Others need more discussion, more exploration."

After all, accepting a new lyric often means committing to singing it hundreds of times.

Musically there is a shared sense of purpose. "As much as we like to get heady or pseudo-intellectual," says Geddy, "the reason we play in a band is because we like to play rock. We like to play hard rock. I think that's the one thing you'd get the three of us to agree on: we don't want to be wimpy.

"So I guess whenever we feel like we're getting too mature, something in us rebels and wants to kick some butt!"

Sound like the formula for a perfect three-way marriage?

"The analogy is tempting," says Neil, "but the difference is that the nucleus of Rush is the work." Not the people.

"And while the work is binding, we're outside of it. So that takes a little pressure off the interpersonal part of it."

For example, "If someone suggests a different direction, you're at least willing to be open about it, because it doesn't threaten you as a person."

Geddy defines what they share as a sense of stability in the worth of what they are doing together.

"We're fortunate," says Neil, "that the essence of what we want to do happens to be engendered by our being rock fans."

They don't think they have a duty to the world. They do think they have a responsibility to their fans. But that responsibility does

Lee: "We don't want to be wimpy."



ANDREW MACNAUGHTAN

not include perpetuating themselves. Or leading anybody anywhere.

Nonetheless, they have some of the most fervent post-teen followers in the rock world. The previous live video showed thousands of air-drummers doing unison reproductions of Neil's most complex foundation patterns and unison lip-sync on his most complex lyrics.

A particular challenge for Geddy was learning to relate to the audience personally. "We're such a formal band—so damn structured. I've taken a more casual approach to talking to an audience over the last couple of years."

But it came hard. "I'm generally a quiet person off-stage—unless I'm with my closest friends—and being at one with 15,000 people made me uncomfortable. I didn't like the Hitlerian schtick so many bands use, demanding that you Have A Good Time. And I didn't have a lot to say."

But he has learned to give people the impression that he is being himself.

Fully occupied behind his drum kit, Neil doesn't have that problem, so he finds another: "the tendency to fall apart" when recording live, knowing that "every little inaccuracy, you don't just commit it into the ether of a live show, you commit it onto the firm iron oxide of rolling tape"—and onto your inner consciousness, where it causes pain.

But he feels it's important. A live album tends to "cement an era" and gives the band time and encouragement for new exploration. "It has always marked a change for us, though not of conscious design"

Geddy dreaded going from mixing the album to mixing the video.

"But you know? I really enjoyed it. We were doing it to picture, and I never get to see us. There are effects and magical moments I'd never known were happening."

When he's on stage he has to think about the performance moment by moment. "For me the hardest thing to get right is to sing in key over the din of the hall and the crowd and the PA. So I'm concentrating on the monitors.

"You're also thinking about what you're playing on bass, foot-pedal moves, what song is coming up next so you can be in position to change switches to set up the next song on cue...

"At your peak you've got full peripheral awareness. You're all lit up. The stage is pumping and you're connected to everything going on. It's a high."

Does this sound like a man who might throw it all over for more art galleries and baseball games?

He feels even more positively about studio recording.

"Albums are really time-capsules for us. We go in



with very little and work very intensely and come out with this finished thing. Who you are and what you're going through is very much a part of the record."

They have to have faith that no matter how an album turns out, it will prove one day to have been a necessary step on their way to wherever they're going.

"You experimented. You learned from it, and then let it go. You move on. Letting go is the tough part. It's probably the toughest part of life. But on

Peart in concert; a live album tends to "cement an era."

FIN COSTELLO/WORDS AND FACES



Geddy Lee in younger days; all Rush wanted to do was strut their stuff.

you go."

On to the next thing.
Whatever that is.

Wilder Penfield III, who has been writing about music for 20 years, is a columnist for the Toronto Sun.

Geddy Lee

2-6-89

Rockline



A Transcription of a U.S. radio phone-in interview with Geddy and Alex

Bob Richards: The triumvirate of Geddy Lee, Alex Lifeson and Neil Peart has given us one of the most potent and powerful trio's in the annals of Rock 'n Roll. And now Rush has released another live album, their third; featuring the band at the peak of their powers in concert. It's a pleasure for Rockline to welcome from Rush Geddy Lee. Geddy, good evening and welcome.

Ged: Good evening nice to be back.

Bob: Nice to have you back again. And also with you tonight, making his first appearance is Alex Lifeson. Alex, welcome to the program.

Alex: Thank you.

Bob: First question I want to ask you two gentlemen tonight. Now the band has been around for so long now, and such a rich history. How do you go about choosing what you perform live? There's so much to pick from!

Ged: Well, it's a difficult decision. You know we have so many albums and everytime we write a new album it's another 50 to 60 minutes of music that we have to try and squeeze some of it into our shows, so, inevitably it's a very difficult decision to try to keep the ones we enjoy playing the most and then remember also the ones that seem to be perenial favorites.

Bob: You must have faced an almost even greater challenge in

trying to figure out what was going on "A Show Of Hands" the double live record.

Ged: Yeah, it was really tough. But, we knew that we didn't want to repeat many things that were from the last couple of live albums. So that gave us three of four records to work from. You know, sort of post Moving Pictures. And with the exception of Closer To The Heart, it all is pretty recent material.

Bob: Now I understand you have a full lenth concert video forthcoming, and that has an entirely different song configuration. How did that happen?

Ged: Do you want to answer that one Lerxst?

Alex: I don't know anything about it. Oh! Really?! When is it coming out? Is it in color?

(Laughter)

Ged: Well, I better explain it then. The whole decision making behind that was, you know, the album is a complication of many different shows from different parts of the world. And obviously with a one night performance you just can't pick and choose which songs you like and which are your favorite songs. You sort of have to present a complete show, beginning, middle and end; cus it's a one night's recording. And so basically we tried to do a condensed version of the show.

1st call: When fans of Rush are introduced to your music their is a wave of emotion that causes the listener to kind of become obsessed with the music, they began to find themselves musically centered with Rush, never wanting to listen to anything

else. There seems to be sort of a cult following of fans that are always at record stores first, never missing a show, etc. My question is this. How do you as a group respond to such an overwhelming chemistry which you have with your fans?

Ged: Well, Alex (laughs) what do you say?

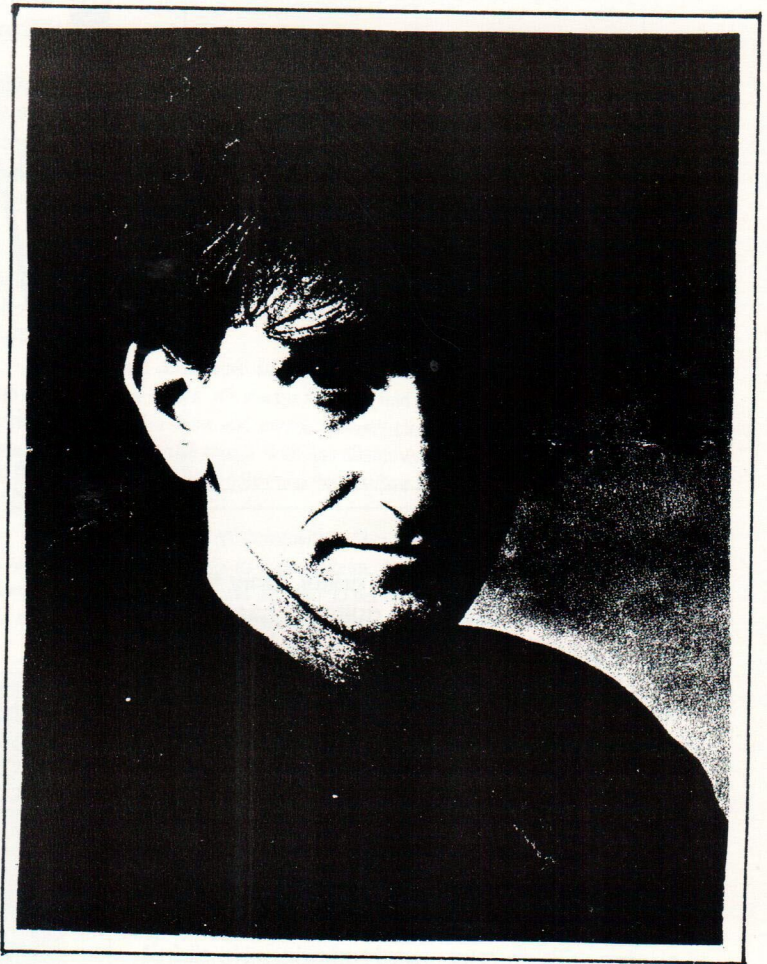
Alex: I don't know but that was a great question.

Ged: I think that's a tough one to answer. Whenever you're approached by fans in an over-enthusiastic way, you're sorta taken back and a little embarrassed and you just try to deal with it in a sort of reasonable and polite fashion. And, I think when you're actually in a band you try to concentrate more on the work at hand and what you're doing, than the kind of response that it's getting from the audience, although you appreciate it and it is very important to you, that kind of feedback you get from the fans, especially when it's good. But I think you have to try and keep it in perspective and remember that the ongoing work is the important thing.

2nd call: How do you guys feel towards not getting as much press as other rock groups did?

Alex: It's never really concerned us that much. We've had our share of press over the years. We're not the type of band that perhaps is visually...sensational. To put it mildly. We don't fall into the same category as a lot of other bands like, say, Bon Jovi or something like that. We've always been more concerned with the music rather than the image of the band. Thankfully! And it doesn't really concern us that much either way I guess with press.

Ged: I think those things are there if you want to chase them, and I think a lot of times we just, you know, rather not.



Bob: On the other hand, it's not like you've been ignored by the print media either, you've gotten your fair share.

3rd Call: Geddy I was wondering if you've ever considered using a fretless bass? And Alex I was wondering if you are going to sell or exhibit any of your paintings?

Ged: Well, which question shall we deal with first Lerrxst?

Alex: Well I'm doing a painting of a fretless bass, that I was hoping Ged was going to play...(laughter)..My painting, unfortunately I don't do quite as much as I should; cos I'm really a novice and an amateur but...

Ged: But he's a genius.

Alex: When we're in the studio, that's the ideal time for me, during basic tracks where I have a lot of free time, and you're in a really creative mode, and that's really the only time I do any of the paintings. But so far they only gone out as gifts.

RUSH enters the ring again for live album number three — a testament to a band that's in rocking trim for the '90s

THE WEIGH-IN

ARTICLE BY KEITH SHARP •

MUSIC EXPRESS #132 '89

Alex Lifeson is facing a crisis. Only five days to go and the Rush guitarist has to shed seven pounds to cash in on a bet he's made with a friend. The consequence of losing is too embarrassing for Lifeson to contemplate.

"We bet each other that we could lose 20 pounds in 10 weeks, the loser buying the winner a suit of his choice," explains Lifeson.

"But that's not all. The loser has to pose in a skimpy Speedo swim suit and pay for the winner to place the offending photo in the magazine or newspaper of the winner's choice with an appropriate caption. He didn't show up for our tennis match last night so I think I'm in good shape."

Shaping up for the bet and the release of the latest Rush double live release, *A Show Of Hands*, has become a priority for Lifeson.

"I put on weight really easy and I was getting really depressed about the excess poundage and the more upset I got the more I went to the fridge for something to eat," Lifeson confesses. "I don't want to be big and bloated, but the older you get the tougher it is to lose."

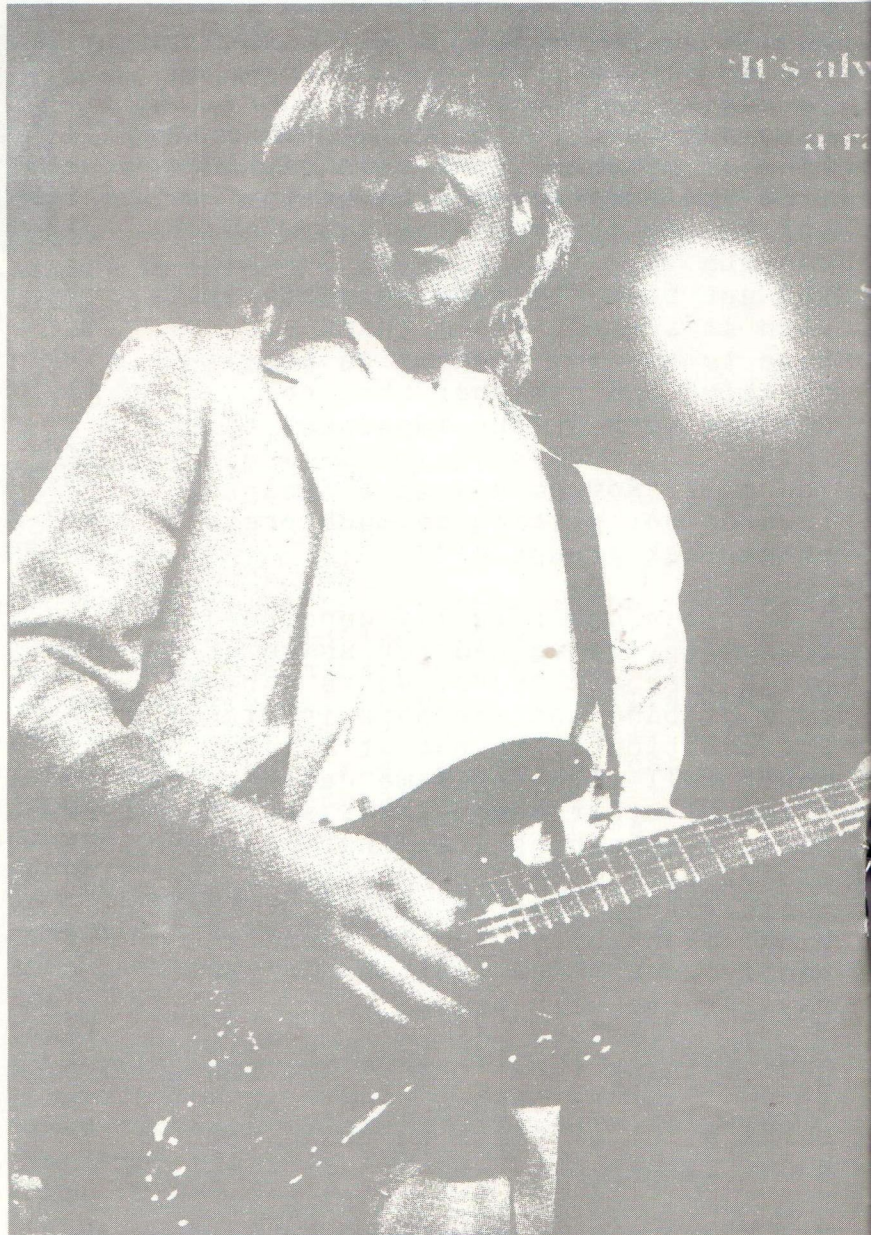
"Being on the road doesn't help either; any diet just goes out the window. Sure you run around for two hours and sweat a lot but you don't really lose much weight. And then you go back to the dressing room and gobble down three tables full of food."

"Being off the road is even worse. You spend a lot of time at home watching TV. And that's when you start reaching for the pizzas and the cases of coke. You can't win. So you have to discipline yourself at some point."

Lifeson's staging his battle with the bulge by working out regularly in the gym with former Rush drummer John Rutsey, who provides a competitive element. The horrific thought of posing in that Speedo has provided additional incentive for the blond-maned guitarist to trim 13 pounds off his sturdy frame.

To gauge the results, Lifeson only has to look at the 60-minute concert video which has been shot to accompany the album release. Shot during the band's '87-'88 *Hold Your Fire* tour, the multi-media package reflects the band's technical development as a live act over the past 18 years. While this is the third live Rush album (*All The World's A Stage* and *Exit Stage Left* being the first two), it was almost the last Rush album period!

"We promised we wouldn't make another one after this one," the Fernie, B.C. native reveals. "After we mixed the album in June,



everyone was tired and disillusioned about the future. Fortunately, we just got together a couple of weeks ago to discuss schedules and what we wanted to do in the future. Neil (Peart) has been working on some lyrics, I've been messing around at home in my studio, and so had Geddy (Lee), so the wheels started to turn again. Next thing you know, we're booking studio time in January for a new album which should be out this fall. The discussions we've had have been very positive. Ultimately, the six-month break we've taken has made everyone optimistic, which is a great relief."

The genesis for *A Show Of Hands* was the trio's desire to close off a chapter in their discography and also fulfill a record company obligation.

"It either had to be a 'greatest hits' or a live album," Lifeson explains, "and since we had been taping dates during the *Grace Under Pressure*, *Power Windows* and *Hold Your Fire* tours, we had a good cross-section of different shows and different stages of playing to choose from.

"Our treatment of the songs is different and we've also included *Closer To The Heart* again even though it was on our previous live album. This time it's a little more drawn out, there's a different feel to it."

Considering that some of the shows were taped in Los Angeles and some during the British tour segment, Lifeson says it's interesting to note the subtle differences between the performances.

"We taped three shows in L.A. and every one of them sounded different, even though it was the same hall and the mics were left in the same place each night. We used different equipment in England and those shows sounded totally different. That's what makes live albums so interesting. No single performance is ever quite the same."

According to Lifeson, one of the underlying reasons for recording *A Show Of Hands* was to cut a live album which is a little grittier than *Exit Stage Left*, which the band feels was too clean-sounding and not truly representative of their live performance.

"In retrospect, I don't think we were happy with *Exit*, it seems too clean for a live album. It's always tough to find a balance between a raging live show and something that's closer to a more controlled ambient studio sound. With this album we wanted to find a middle ground between that and the first live album, which was a lot rawer.

"I think we found that mid-point with *A Show Of Hands*," Lifeson observes. "I think it's an honest album. A lot of the live albums you hear are 50 per cent live and 50 per cent repair jobs in the studio. Fortunately, we didn't have to worry about that. We

spent weeks going through material, picking the songs and the best parts, getting all the right stuff. To me, it sounds like a live album, it's got that atmosphere to it."

What the new album indicates to Lifeson and his two cohorts is the amazing technical progress Rush has made over the past three or four albums, and even more amazing, how successful they've been in bringing their audience along with them. What was once construed as a high-power heavy metal unit is now capable of some of the most sophisticated sounds on vinyl.

"The funny thing is, we always used to hold back in the studio," Lifeson says. "Then we started working with Peter Collins on the last two albums. He encouraged us to become freer in our expression and not to worry about playing the songs live. We put our toe in the water with *Power Windows* and took the first full step with *Hold Your Fire*. We learned with *Power Windows* that you don't have to be restrictive. With today's technology, you can reproduce anything live. All you need is some deft footwork and the right timing."

Aware that Rush is in danger of getting too sophisticated, Lifeson indicates the next studio album could go in a totally different direction.

"The next step may be to strip it right down and become more of a core three-piece. A little bit more showing off the musicianship, while playing down the keyboards and the sampling. The trick is to always be pushing forward and experimenting with new ideas. When we did *Time Stands Still* with Aimee Mann (of Til Tuesday), some people said, 'They've lost it; they're getting old.' Now *2112*, that was an album! But that's 12 years old; you can't stay there and stagnate. You have to move on and try new things. That's what makes it exciting."

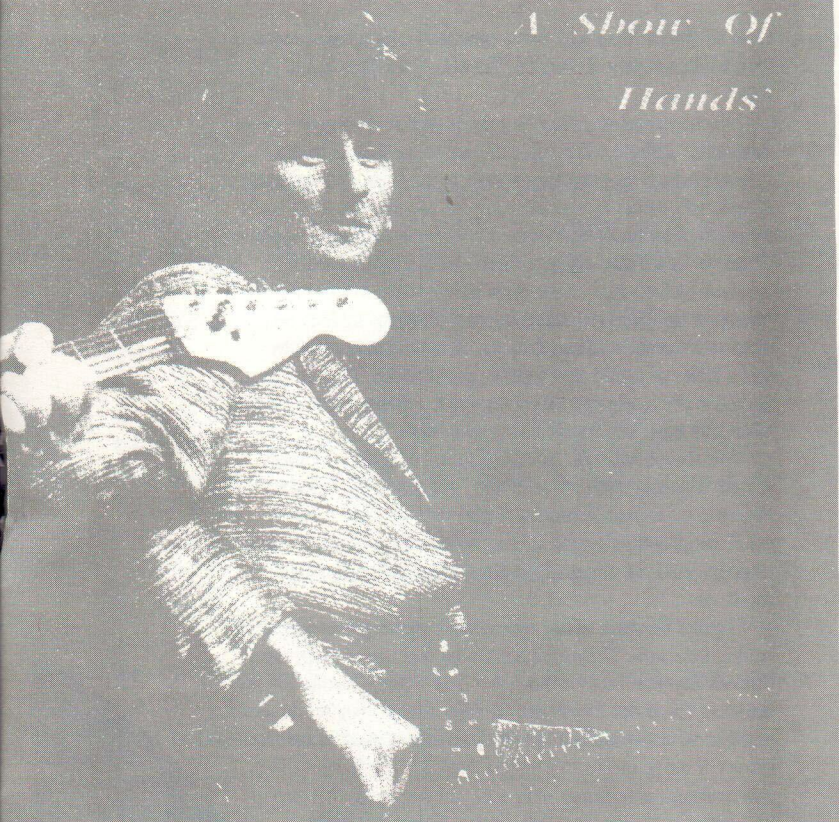
Lifeson is proud of Rush's accomplishments. He notes that they've successfully changed with the times, become melodic and softer at appropriate moments but are also capable of being as heavy as they've ever been. "The difference now is that we've learned to control those dynamics."

The Rush fret merchant feels the 60-minute concert video will emphasize the band's ability to display all facets of its arsenal and prove that Rush is still a relevant force heading into the '90s.

"We shot the film in Birmingham over three nights, the first night for test shots and the final two for the live footage," Lifeson explains. "A lot of the live album was recorded during those dates so it was easier to mix. About half of the clips are from other shows and there are a couple of extra songs featured that aren't on the album."

The experience was a necessary evil for a band which abhors videos at the best of times and steadfastly refuses to compromise for the sake of artistic licence.

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ging live show and something that's
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udio sound. I think we found that
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*A Show Of
Hands*



PHIL REGENDANZ

"There's always the video director who'll say, 'Hey Neil, just take your tom tom and walk about with it in the mist. Neil's reply is, 'Yeah, right, I'll see you around.'"

"For us, videos are a hassle. We get through them by making each other laugh. I sense they are becoming less and less important. Hopefully, there won't be a need to make a video for every song in the future."

Considering that Rush views *A Show Of Hands* as the closing of a chapter, one has to wonder how many chapters are left in the Rush encyclopedia. Lifeson has no definitive answer, but says their longevity has been based on their ability to work together at appropriate times but to also distance themselves from the band and absorb themselves with outside projects — in Lifeson's case, producing Toronto band Clean Slate and guesting on other artists' projects.

"Personally, I'm always excited about the creative process of recording a new album, but the touring aspect is always tough to get mentally psyched for. Consequently, we think less about the future and tend to think more day to day. Like right now I'm totally turned off the band until we start recording again on January 20th. But come January 19th, I'll tune myself into it and slide back into that Rush groove. It's when you try to slide back into that groove and nothing happens — that's when you know you have a problem."

In analyzing the creative process which produces a Rush album, Lifeson explains that the dynamic interplay between the three members has changed somewhat over the years.

"It's always difficult, but sometimes it's harder than others," he allows. "With *Power Windows*, we recorded all our jams at the soundcheck. We had a lot of material we could pull ideas from and we took about 60 per cent of the final tracks from those tapes.

"With *Hold Your Fire*, we did the same thing, but only took five per cent from the tapes. Most of those tracks came from sitting down and physically working out the ideas. It's always a challenge to come up with something new and different. At the same time, we've learned to write in blocks — do simple sketches of mood and melody — and develop it into as complex a piece as we want. As we learn more and more with each album, we become more efficient and creative.

"We used to compose on acoustic guitar all the way up until *Permanent Waves*. Then we started to use more technology. Now we set up the eight-track home studio decks and a vocal mic, work the parts out more fully on demo cassettes and have almost everything worked out before we go into the studio."

Lifeson admits that Rush has enjoyed more than its share of good fortune in surviving almost two decades in the music business and says he empathizes with any new band trying to crack it today. He suggests the odds are stacked against new outfits and blames video as a prime culprit.

"When Rush started out, we played any chance we could get to learn our chops. Quite often, we were first on a three or four-act concert bill. But those shows don't exist anymore. Video has efficiently killed that.

"Rather than providing tour support, record companies now have videos. Which means that all their legwork is done for them; they get lazy and don't hustle the product like they used to. As a result, the young bands get killed. They don't get the experience to become better musicians. That's why people are freaking out over




Guns N' Roses. They look like a band that's that's been around for a while and played every bar there is — and they sound like it too.

"Another problem is having records produced by non-musicians," Lifeson continues, warming to the subject matter. "These guys are programming sounds to the point of making them intentionally messy to simulate someone playing live. As a result, the seeds of creativity don't have anywhere to be planted anymore. When we first started doing it, there was that fertile ground."

Rush has survived all the usual pitfalls to attain rock music's version of the Good Housekeeping seal of approval. They've never over-commercialized themselves, have always stood by sound ethics of quality and superior performance. They deliver a first-class effort, whether live or on vinyl, and only release product when they have a definitive statement to make.

"We always feel there is a certain level of quality we must achieve to justify releasing an album," acknowledges Lifeson. "We're good enough musicians to play live and there's that whole peripheral picture of lighting and presentation which we're noted for. And our albums have always retained certain high standards.

"I guess the mark of our endurance is the long-time support of our hardcore fans. These are people who don't go to many other concerts anymore because they can't deal with the hassle. But they come out for us and they're our harshest critics. They're not afraid to tell us what they dislike and that's important to us because we know our music means so much to them. It's that loyalty which differentiates our audience from a lot of other bands. It's nice to know they're always there when we need them." 



Ged: To me!

Alex: Yeah. To Ged actually. He's the owner of a couple.

Ged: Yes and they are fine paintings. Especially 'Sitting on a Cactus' is one of my favorites. As far as the fretless question. I have used a fretless in the past, but unfortunately it's not the easiest instrument for me to play so I don't have a lot of confidence using it on stage or on a record. But I play around with one at home.

4th call: To what extent did existential writer Ayn Rand play, like as an influence on the bands music? And how did it manifest itself in the early music in comparison to, the stuff that you've done in recent years?

Ged: Well I think you have to go back to, I guess, Neil's formative years. I think she was a big influence on

him at some point in his life, and he read the things and felt some sympathy and empathy towards what she was talking about. Could relate to them. And at different stages in our career and in our lives I think we've all read Ayn Rand's work and what she had to say; and I think we've taken out of it what we can but I don't think you could call it an overwhelming effect in our lives to this point now. I think it's one of those things that effects you at different stages. As you grow you get interested in different authors and you have more to learn from a different variety of people, and I think that she was somebody that influenced myself at a certain stage, but, you know, one of many people I think, when I look back now.

5th call: Hold Your Fire was the biggest production album you've released to date. Even you Alex, you've taken a front seat at the keyboards on top of your guitar taurus pedal responsibilities. Do you think that Rush, as a band, has become as bust as it wants to be on stage, or do you intend for your next album to go deeper into post-production?

Ged: Well that's a tough question to answer, being at such an early stage of writing. But I can't imagine us getting any busier on stage than we already are. Quite the contrary, I like to, myself, be able to loosen up just a bit so I can have a little more time to play bass, which I enjoy playing a lot, and I sometimes feel a little confined behind the keyboards. So I am a little torn between the love to play bass and the desire to have all the wonderful sounds that the keyboards can provide.

6th call: My two questions are: first one is, I've unfortunately heard of a rumoured break-up of you guys. I sure hope that's not true. And please comment on that. And have you guys ever considered doing any movie soundtracks? You guys seem to have a lot of good lyrics, and seems like a movie soundtrack would be good for you all.

Alex: Break up? Nobody told me about a break up. Oh! Great, now I don't have a job. Fantastic! Excellent! Well I guess I'll just go.

Ged: I forgot to tell you Lerxst, before we camr here.

Alex: I don't think we're going to break up, for at least a couple of weeks. At least.

Ged: And if we do we're not going to tell anybody.

Alex: As far as movie soundtracks. I think both of us would love to get involved in something like that. It's I think, a much freer kind of composing than what we're doing right now. And you have an image that you're looking at that you're writing to. So it could be quite exciting.

Ged: Yeah, I think we'd like to do that at some point. And we have had opportunities, but, unfortunately its never really worked out with our schedules, and I guess we're just waiting for the amount of time and the right script, and the right person to ask us.

7th call: My first question is: After you disband, heaven forbid, will you release those promo's and video's that you shot back in 75, 77, 78, Fly By Night, you know those songs?

Ged: Boy! That's a really strange question. It's reslly hard to plan your, what's gonna happen when you're gone. Those are the things you just never think about and I think that your impression of what is, er, looking in the vaults, is probably a lot greater than what the reality is. I don't that there's that much stuff that hasn't been released. So, again it's not something that we really about a lot. So I really couldn't answer that question.

7th call: My second question is for Alex and Geddy. What were your favorite tours and why?

Alex: Favorite tour? The Power Windows tour was a really great tour.

Ged: Yes I would agree.

Alex: The pacing was right on the tour, we went to all the nice places, the tour was a good tour on its own. We came to the end of the tour and everybody still felt healthy. It was the end of the tour and everybody still felt healthy. It was the end of the tour for sure, but, we felt a lot more positive and in good spirits when we came off that tour. And a couple of the earlier tours also have left a great impression for the excitement and for those dreams that came true at ththat time. To get on the road and be playing on a big stage, lots of people playing in bands you always looked up to.

Bob: And you agree with Geddy?

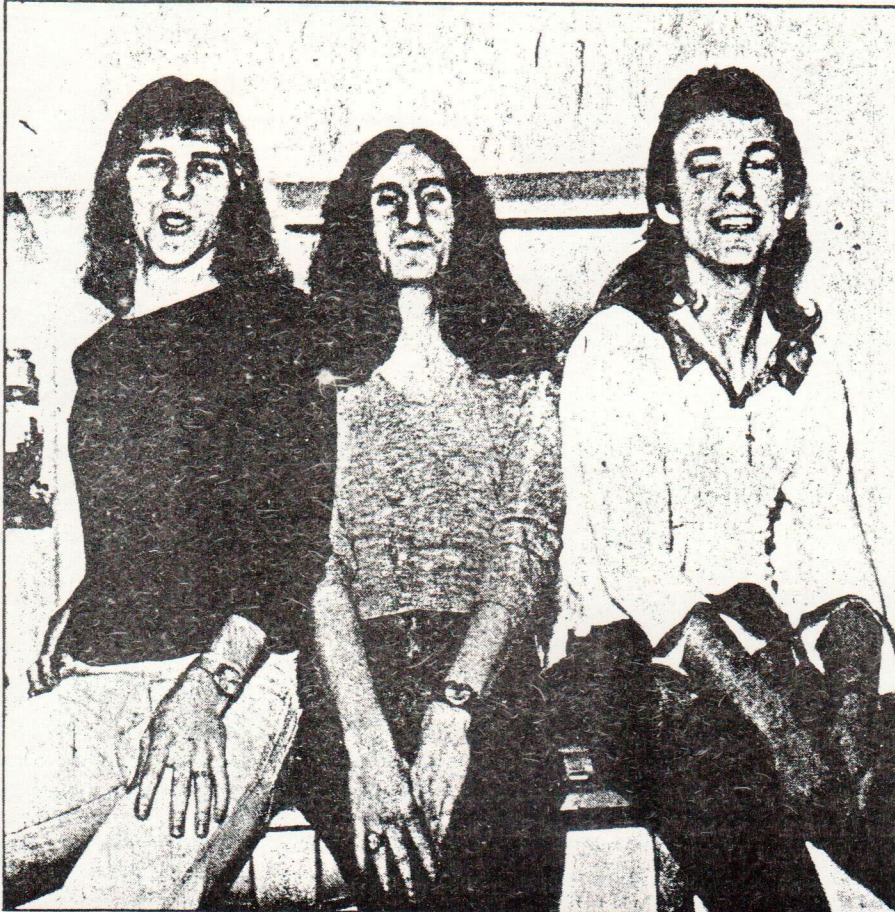
Ged: Yeah, absolutely. I think that the Power Windows tour was a particularly enjoyable one. I agree with what Alex said about that, but also in my mind I would have to say that the first tour was just so exciting, and you never though you'd get there. And at the same time you never thought you'd get there again! So I think a lot of that tour is very clear in our minds, and also the first tour that we headlined. First time we actually got to step out from the special guest spot or the opening act spot and do our own show. I think that was a very exciting time.

8th call: I'd like to say congradulations on what is, correct me if I'm wrong, Rush's first single by-line production credit - A Show Of Hands! In a previous interview Geddy, you mentioned what a learning experience it was to speak to so many different producers, when the three of you as a group were planning to work with someone, besides Terry Brown, with as far as production is concerned. What specifically in terms of ideas for the future Rush, or recording philosophies in general, did Peter Collins hane that made the three of

-Continued-

next month

RUSH



Michael N. Marks

Pebbles & Bam-Bam In Alphaville

by Rick Johnson

The first thing you notice about Rush, according to one observer, is that they're not as gross-looking as Bachman-Turner Overdrive and they have a somewhat lower thud weight than most other Canadian bands. True enough — Canuck rockers do seem to have some sort of an uglier-than-thou competition going among themselves along with a tendency to pounce on unsuspecting ears like a carnivorous dumptruck.

But Rush isn't exactly a bunch of Joni Mitchell cupcakes—either, as anyone who's caught one of their numerous appearances with Kiss or increasing number of headlining gigs can attest to.

Mistaken assumptions and bent comparisons have confounded the

band from the very beginning. "We've been compared to everybody from the New York Dolls to Led Zeppelin and Humble Pie, but all those comparisons are just superficial," asserts vocalist Geddy Lee, who along with guitarist Alex Lifeson and drummer Neil Peart make up one of the few remaining classic power trios. "Like, Robert Plant and I both have high voices so they expect us to play 'Whole Lotta Love.'"

"It's not like we're suffering from The Dreaded Led Zep Stigma," explains Neil in his best imitation of a foot-odor commercial. "We're essentially pursuing the same idea as them — playing rock & roll but saying something too." Two mints in one.

It indeed would appear that Rush, who are the number two group in Canada after the late BTO and very big as well in the northern half of this country, aren't just after terrorist audiences playing frisbee with plastic explosives and taking hostages at random. "We get frustrated when they're just out for a good time and we're not getting through," Neil complains. "Our favorite audiences are the ones that sit and listen to the song and go wild afterwards."

Seeing the band's main thrust as re-zoning the elusive progressive artisms of bands like Yes and Genesis for a three-piece formula, he doesn't think that heavy metal as a strict jungle doctrine will be staying around much longer. "It was great for a while, but no type of music can stay in that embryonic stage for long. I mean, why just do teenage my-period-is-late tunes when you can put some meaning behind it? We like to tell stories and hide things in our songs for people to figure out."

Their latest project is an epic science fiction slab called 2112, which will take up an entire side of their next album, due this month. Set in the city of Megadon on another planet (Earth having been snuffed in 2062) in the cartoon light of the future, it concerns a society where everything is controlled by quasi-religious Priests who take all their orders from gigantic banks of computers called Temples. All individuality and creativity have been stamped out and everyone treadmills out their lives in a cathode palsy of day-to-day nullness.

"The Temples totally control everything — work, education, even entertainment," says Neil, who came up with the entire conceptual whoopee cushion and wrote all the lyrics. "All their music has been taken to the final limits of the average. It's total commercialism that's put out strictly for people to like."

Luckily enough for the Megadunces, a curious young punk accidentally stumbles upon the ruins of a great university one day. He starts digging around in the rubble and comes across a room of perfectly preserved artifacts he's never seen before. Books, magazines, WIN buttons, hula hoops, records, the home version of Match Game '84 — all kinds of things that don't exist in 2112. He keeps it a secret and goes back every night to sort through the cheese of the past.

Then one night he makes the fateful discovery — an electric guitar — and eventually sets out to change the world. What finally happens is a "double surprise ending" according to Neil, who declined to fill in the details but assured me it's "a real Hitchcock killer."

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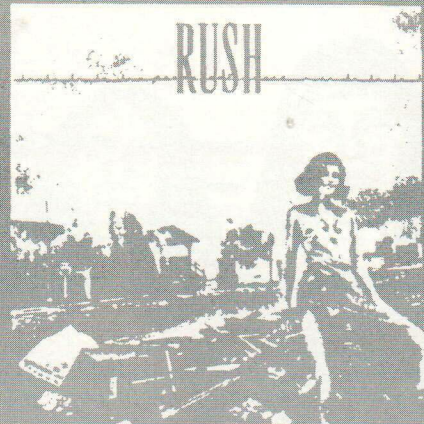
RUSH

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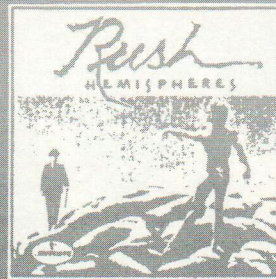
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SIDE B

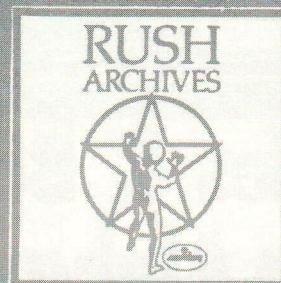
The Trees 4:46
Working Man 7:07



From Mercury's album SRM-1-4001 "Permanent Waves"



From Mercury's album SRM-1-3743 "Hemispheres"



From Mercury's album SRM-3-9200 "Archives"



33-1/3 STEREO MK-125

NOT FOR SALE

In the future, plan on seeing the Atlantic Records logo on Rush's new album to be released late this year. Polygram dropped Rush after their contract had expired. Plan on seeing them in your town late this year and early 1990.

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permanent waves

A QUANTUM LEAP FORWARDby Brian Siskind

As Rush sailed into a new decade in time, they also started an entire new decade of music. Their 1980 release, "Permanent Waves", proved to be one of their most acclaimed albums. It introduced a new direction in music that the band explored and the final compilation resulted in a rather short, yet explosive album.

This album showed the increasing seriousness that was put forth in the writing of this album. Precision once again became a priority that never was set aside. I think the goal of this album was to reach a pinnacle of perfection.

The theme of the LP seems to flow in the same direction throughout the entire course of the album. "The Spirit Of Radio" expresses their belief in the need to do away with demographics, business, and overall commerciality in the format of radio stations today. If it wasn't for music, radio would not exist. Therefore, it shouldn't be used as a warrant for destructive human greed. The music is the central element. May it stay that way.

"Freewill", is a very expressive song, written in a tone that is very direct and it never ceases to make a broad expression. Freedom of choice is the message here - nothing to search through and relate or decipher. A plain and simple approach that will at one point in time help alleviate some of the question in the decisions that face us all - every day of our lives.

It seems as if human nature is a large element in the theme based on all the feelings shown in these songs. Relationships are intimately discussed in "Entre Nous" and "Different Strings".

Feelings expressed on this album

wouldn't be as easily perceived without the incredible instrumentation that is supplied abundantly by the three most ingenious musicians as a whole. From the duel guitar/bass solos on "Freewill" to the diverse percussion patterns on "Jacob's Ladder" and "Natural Science". Hugh Syme, the band's cover artist, also makes a guest appearance by applying some of his piano musicianship on "Different Strings".

Neil was so serious on maintaining a form, lyrical theme on "Permanent Waves", that one epic song entitled "Sir Gawain and the Green Knight" was dropped from the lineup because it didn't flow with the rest of the album. As a result the album is six songs and a little over 30 minutes long. A mild disappointment - but overshadowed by basically one hell of an album. It gave Rush a new set of fans, and fed the starving dedicated fans which they had neglected to feed the previous year. It marked a sixth year of self-indulgence, critical slander, heavy scrutiny, but against all odds - a success.



MILWAUKEE ARENA · MARCH 2, '81
TOUR PASS 8

OTTO

-Continued from Jan/Feb (6-A)
Reprinted from 1977 tourbook:

Father Brown's mind drifted back to those events of scant months before. Oh, now he rued the day, that he destroyed that instrument, ground it to pieces beneath his feet, at the same time commanded its holder to 'Think about the average' in no uncertain terms.

Father Brown had thought the man's spirit unbroken. The last he had heard, he had retired to the caves beneath the Federation city, retired to while away his days away alone while the society that the Priests had created carried on, inexorably, above him, functioning perfectly, delightful in its complete uniformity.

-Continued from last month (7-A)

T E A R S -

To me, love for my greatest friend has helped me learn more about myself, as well as people in general. She has helped me gain knowledge that will help me figure out others as well as myself. Love is a very bizarre emotion. It brings joy and it brings tears. It will soothe your primal fears.

RUSH
CONTINUED

Does he see the city of Megadon as a parallel of the tedious fear-fridge of 1976? "Well, things aren't all that bad now, but it's a logical progression from some of the things that are going on. All of the best science fiction is a warning. We want to let people know what's going on so they at least have a chance to change it."

But does he really think they can change anyone? After all, the "Eve Of Destruction" school of pop propaganda sounded OK on the radio but didn't exactly alter the course of Western civilization. "Well, it's not going to change anybody's life or anything, but if you just put the germ of an idea in someone's head, then you've done your job."

Grim-globed hippies of the future or not, Rush's music is still very loudly in the present. Unlike some concept pieces that get bogged down in their own stray dogma, 2112 is still going to come under the Rush stage hammer on their next tour.

"Believe me, we'd never short-change the music for lyrics," promised Geddy. "It still rocks." And Pebbles and Bam-Bam too, no doubt. 