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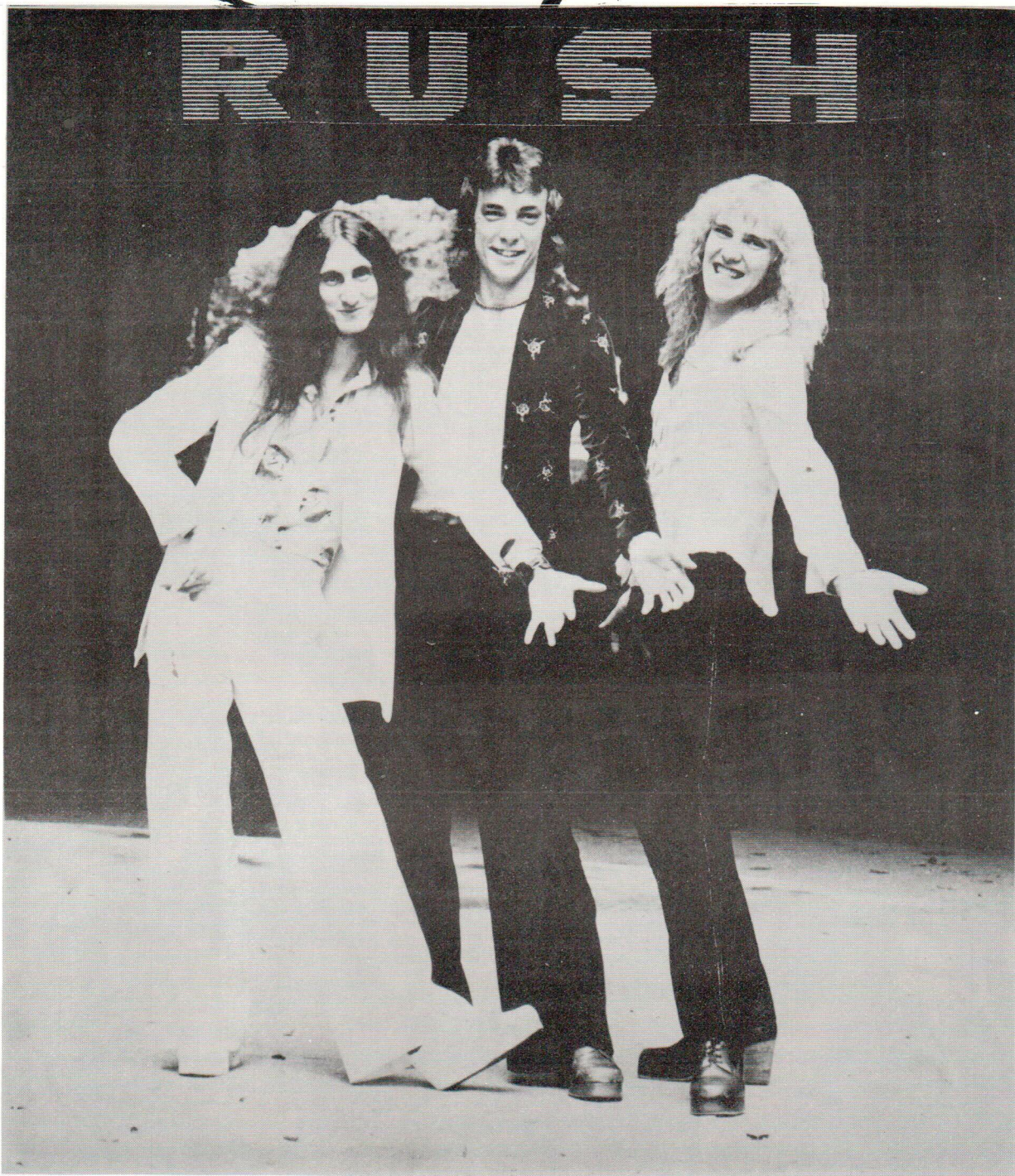
JULY/AUGUST 1989

Vol. 9-A \$3.00 USA
\$4.00 CAN

Recreation

FOR ALL PERFORMERS AND PORTRAYERS

tm



R U S H

MOVING PICTURES

A RUSH NEWSREEL

Byline: Neil Peart

... DATELINE: NEW YORK CITY, MAY 9, 1980.

In the midst of a crowded and chaotic backstage scene, following the second of our four nights at the Palladium, a few quiet words of agreement became the unlikely conception of this album. Prior to this, it had been our announced intention to record and release a second live album, but an unlooked-for charge of ambition and enthusiasm caused a last-minute resolution to throw caution out the window! (onto 42nd St.), and dive headlong into the making of a studio elpee instead. The reasons for this are difficult to put to paper, being somewhat instinctive, but all of us had been feeling very positive, and our Research and Development Dept. (sound check jams) had been very spirited and interesting, so it was felt that the creative hiatus provided by a live album was not really necessary at present, and it would be more timely and more satisfying to embark on the adventure of a new studio album. Right!

... DATELINE: LONDON, JUNE 4, 1980.

It is never too late to change plans, but not so with arrangements! Thus we went ahead with the live tapings we had planned, recording our five shows at the Hammersmith Odeon, as well as dates from Glasgow, Manchester, and Newcastle. Then we would record some shows in this upcoming tour, and put together a live set that would represent a wider scope of our concerts, musically, temporally, and geographically. This is no bad thing, and should prove to be a good move, unless we change our minds again, in which case we could combine three tours, or four, or ...

... DATELINE: TORONTO, JULY 28, 1980.

An intense thunderstorm raged outside all day long, while indoors a storm of a different kind was brewing. In the studios of Phase One, two complete sets of equipment crammed the room, and two complete bands filled the air with a Wagnerian tumult, as Max Webster and ourselves united to record a song for their album, called *Battlestar*. This could only be a very unique and enjoyable experience, attempting something on such a scale as this, and I think the result will testify to its success. This day also afforded Pye Dubois (Max's lyricist) the opportunity to present us with a song of his, humbly suggesting that it might be suitable for us, if we were interested. Having been long-time admirers of Pye's work, we were indeed interested, and it eventually became *Tom Sawyer*, and it is interesting that an identifiable Max influence crept into the music, by way of Pye's lyrical input.

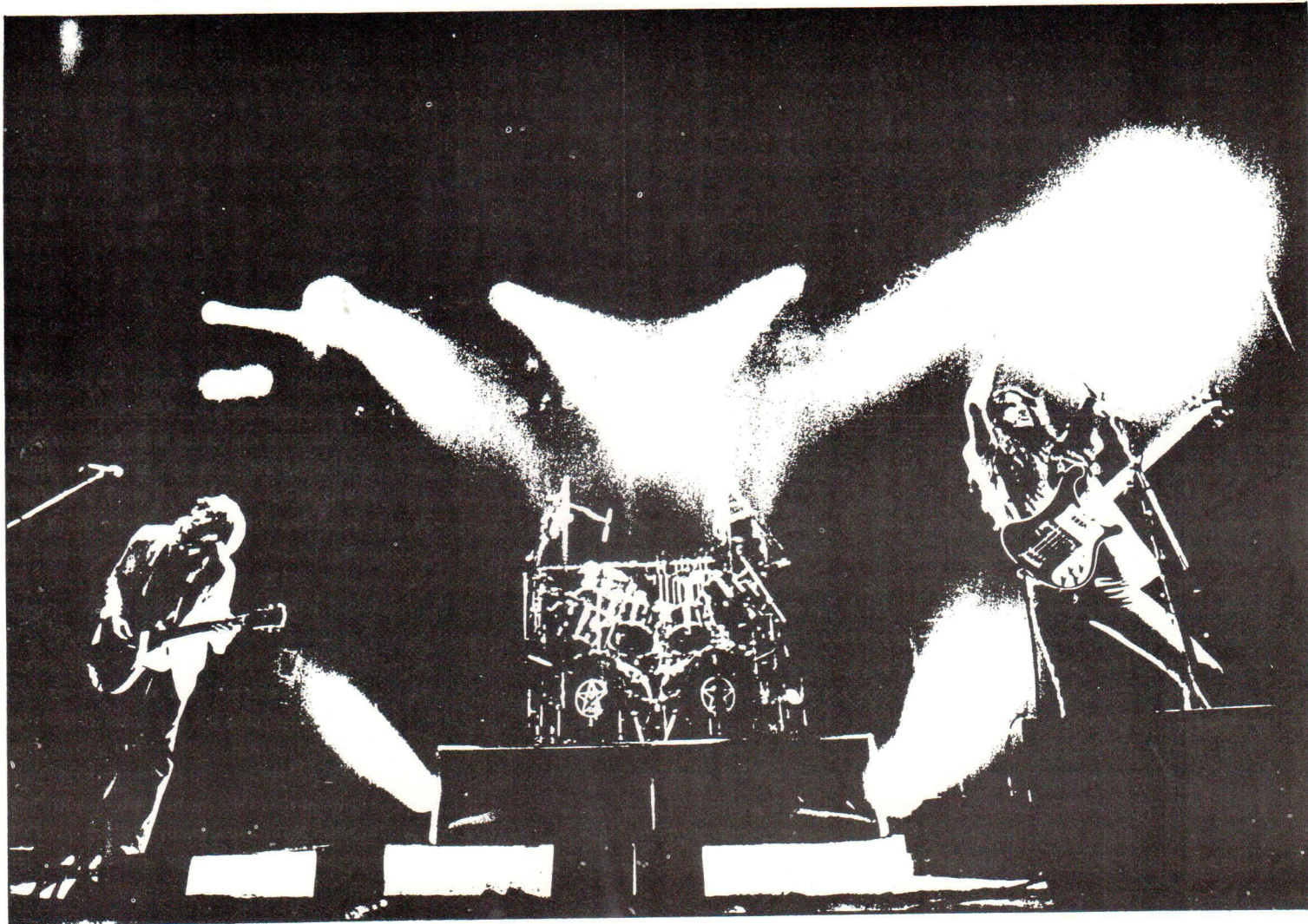
... DATELINE: STONY LAKE, ONTARIO, AUGUST, 1980.

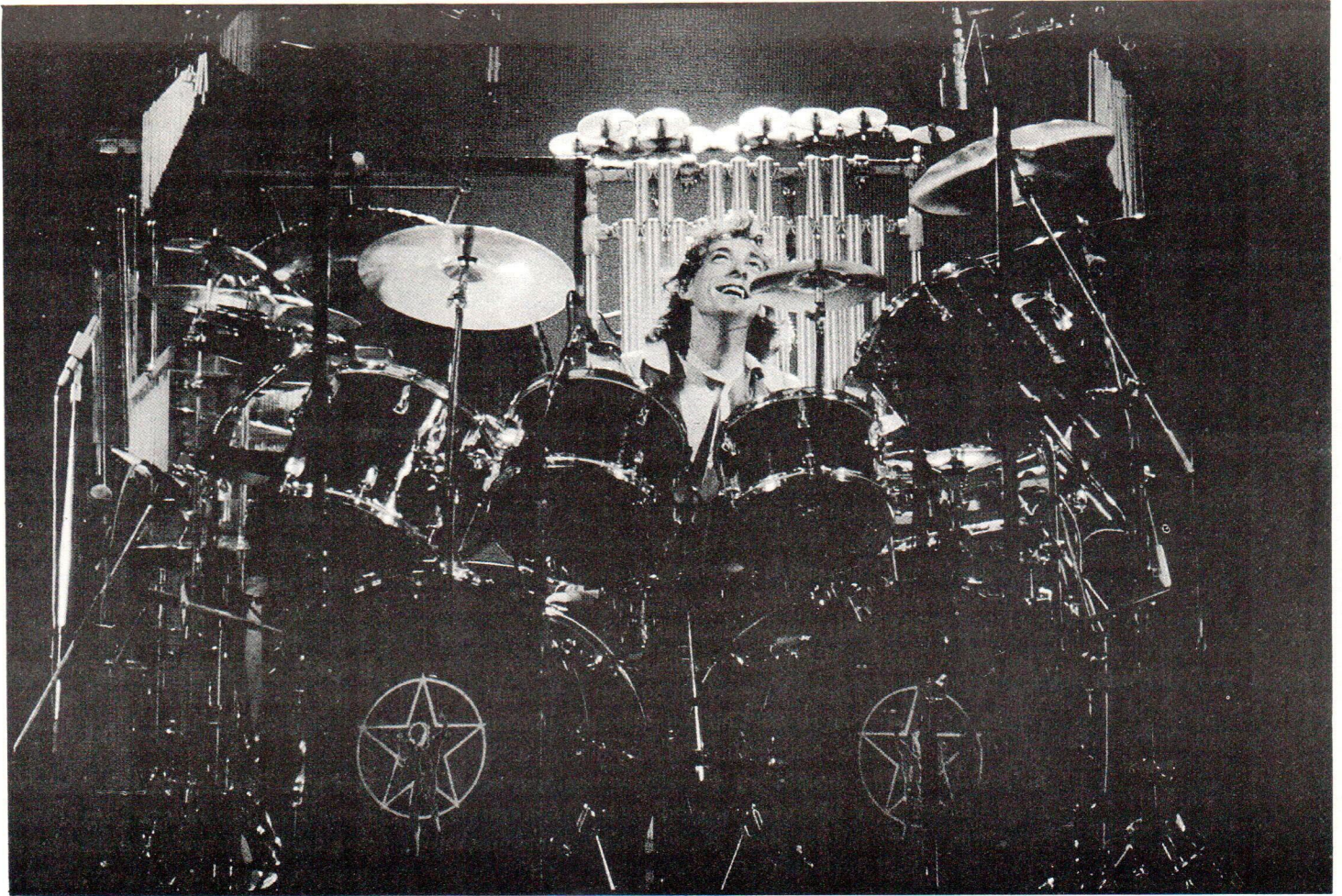
The address and time of year will probably best describe the setting, as the creative work begins in earnest. For those interested in Alex's adventures in aviation, it may be reported that a large pile of wreckage, and a rather sizeable hole in the top of a truck, bear witness to his prowess in the field of radio-controlled airplanes. (There's a man outstanding in - Never mind!) Happily, he was somewhat more fortunate in his dealings with the genuine article, (and on many an afternoon) could be seen buzzing and strafing the house.

These exciting distractions aside, we were banished to the barn, and began the process of assembling ideas, both musical and lyrical. *The Camera Eye* was the first to be written, soon followed by *Tom Sawyer*, *Red Barchetta*, *YYZ*, and *Limelight*. Things were taking shape.

It is interesting sometimes to retrace the sources of some of the musical ideas; for instance, the instrumental section of *Tom Sawyer* grew from a little melody that Geddy had been using to set up his synthesizers at sound checks, then was forgotten until we were searching for a part in that song, when it emerged as a very strong theme. *YYZ* is the identity code used by Toronto International Airport, and the intro is taken from the Morse code which is sent out by the beacon there. It is always a happy day when *YYZ* appears on our luggage tags!

On the other end of those tags, though, it becomes increasingly apparent to us just how valuable touring is, primarily in our development as individual musicians, which in turn directs the progression of our music. Sometimes in the dark days of a mid-tour depression, brought on by fatigue, homesickness, and hence frustration, the stresses of touring would seem to outweigh the benefits, but when we reach the 'Final Exams' of writing and recording, the evidence of change and improvement is very rewarding.





NEIL PEART

I am still releasing my hostilities on Tama drums, all with wooden shells, and the inner side 'Vibra-Fibed'. The bass drums are 24", the toms are 6, 8, 10, 12" concert, and 12, 13, 15, and 18" closed toms. I am still using my 'old faithful' wood-shell snare, a 5 1/2 x 14 Slingerland, and have recently made a switch to wooden timbales, and retired my tympani and gong in favour of a pair of Tama 'gong bass drums', which are open ended bass drums on a stand, utilising oversize heads to give a very deep, resonant sound.

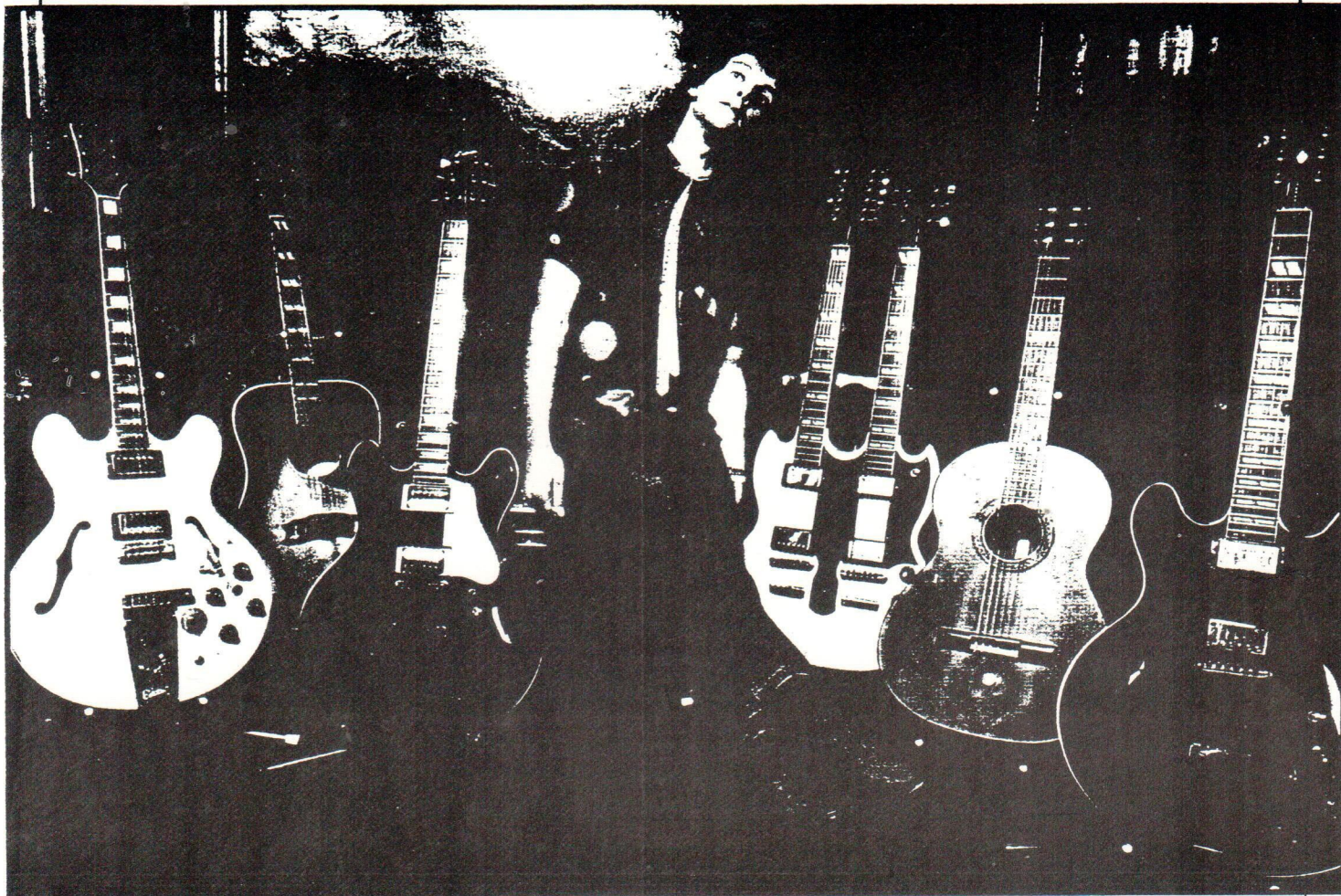
My cymbals are Avedis Zildjians, with the exception of one genuine Chinese China type. The Zildjians are 8" and 10" splash, 13" High-Hats, two 16", and one each 18" and 20" crash cymbals, a 22" ride, an 18" Pang, and a 20" China type.

In the Percussion Department are orchestra bells, tubular bells, wind chimes, temple blocks, cowbells, triangles, bell tree, crotales, and Burma bell.

I use Remo clear dots on my snare and bass drums, Ludwig silver dots on the concert toms, and Evans Looking glass (top), and Blue Hydraulic (bottom) on the closed toms. Clear Remos are used on the timbales and gong bass drums. Ludwig pedals, Slingerland High-Hat, Tama hardware, and Pro-Mark 747 drumsticks are the final details.

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ALEX LIFESON

GUITARS

Gibson ES355, 345, SG Standard, 1175 Double-Neck, Fender Stratocaster, Ovation Classic & Adanis, for acoustic guitars, 2 Ashley sc-40 pre-amps, 1 Ashley sc-66 Stereo Parametric Equalizer.

AMPLIFIERS

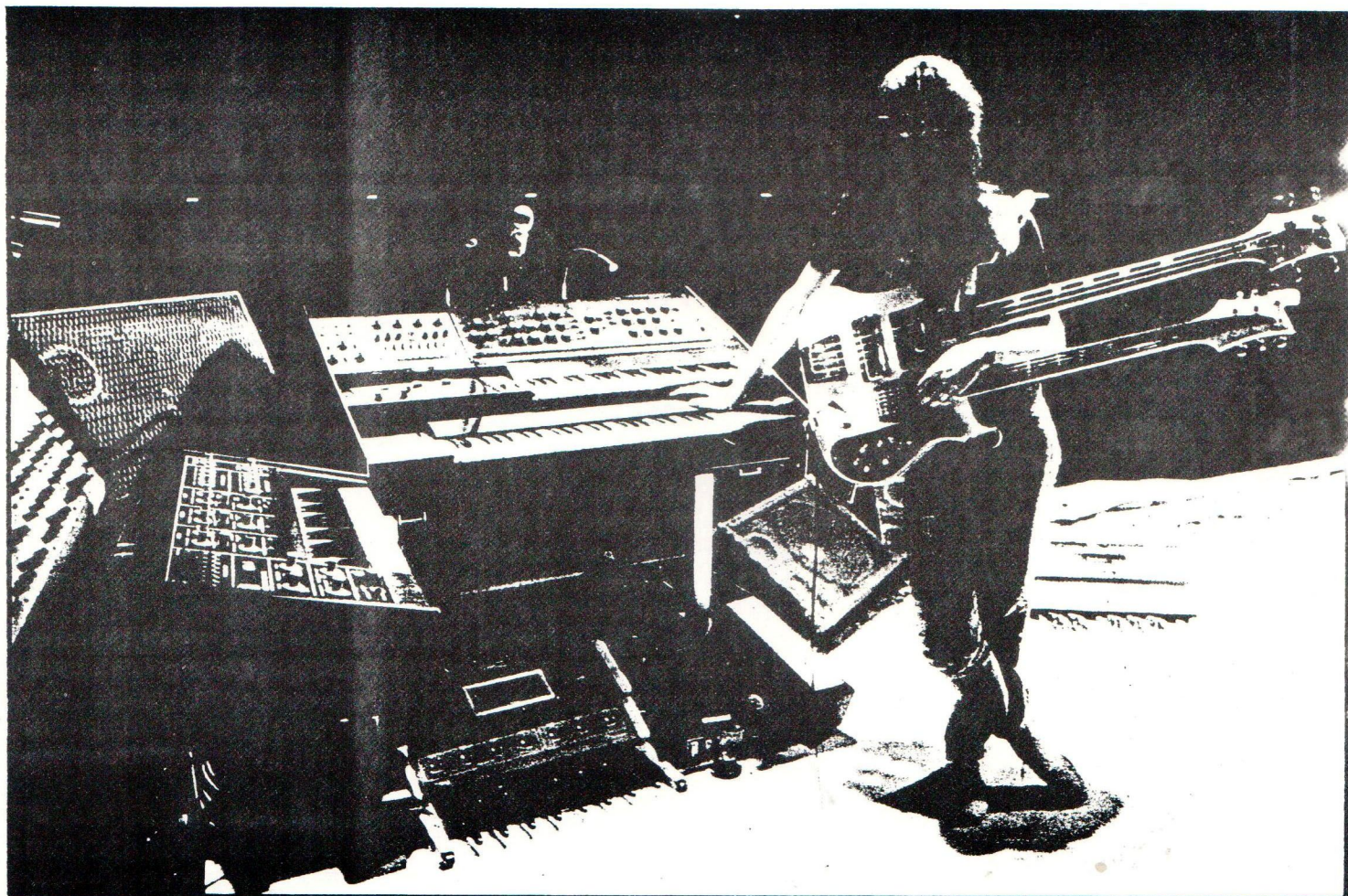
2 Marshall Combos, 2 Hiwatt 100's with 2 - 4 x 12 cabinets & 1 Leslie cabinet.

EFFECTS

Roland 301 Echo Unit, Advanced Audio Digital Delay, Electric Mistress, 1 Roland Chorus, 1 MXR Micro-Amp, MXR Distortion, Morley Volume Pedal, 1 ELL-BEE (L.B.) 30-7965 Model 'C' Type R (Series XL-3427) Remote Floormount Advanced Relay Effects Switching Configuration.

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It is never too late to change plans, but not so with arrangements! Thus we went ahead with the live tapings we had planned, recording our five shows at the Hammersmith Odeon, as well as dates from Glasgow, Manchester, and Newcastle. Then we would record some shows in this upcoming tour, and put together a live set that would represent a wider scope of our concerts, musically, temporally, and geographically. This is no bad thing, and should prove to be a good move, unless we change our minds again, in which case we could combine three tours, or four, or ...



GEDDY LEE

Equipment I will be using on the 'Moving Pictures' tour:

SYNTHESIZERS

Oberheim — OB-1, OB-X, and OB-8, two sets of Taurus pedals, interfaced with the OB-8, Mini-Moog, Roland Digital Sequencer, assorted effects.

BASSES AND GUITARS

Two Rickenbacker 4001's, Fender Jazz Bass, Rickenbacker 4002, double-neck Rickenbacker, incorporating 4001 with twelve-string guitar, double-neck Rickenbacker, incorporating 4001 with six-string guitar, Ovation acoustic.

AMPLIFICATION

Two BGW 750B power amps, two Ashley pre-amps, two 2 x 15 Thiele-design cabinets, fitted with EVM speakers, two v4B Ampeg cabinets, with JBL speakers, Yamaha solid state guitar amp.

VOCAL MICROPHONE

Electrovoice DS-35.

A Glimpse of **WHAT'S** beyond...

They've done it again. Since the next studio LP will be the last for a while they've gone all out and changed producers. Rupert Hine (of Fixx Fame) is now their new producer.

Rush is out of the studio and in London mixing the next studio LP to be released Jan. 1990 with a tour soon following it.

Acoda album will be planned after the release and tour of the next album. It should include such tunes as 'Sir Gawain And The Green Knight' (A tune that was originally recorded for the 1980 release Permanent Waves). Rush also recorded a mega-marathon lenthed song at about 58 minutes.

Why is Rush calling it quits for a while? Neil wants to take some time to possibly write and publish his own book. Ged and Al's kids are getting older these days and just frankly don't get enough time alone with their family. There may be some kind of solo or soundtrack work done in the process.

More Rush news to come in the next issue of "The Necromancer". Keep those letters and opinions coming!

RUSH

APRIL 5 ■ MECCA ARENA

ONLY WISCONSIN APPEARANCE



A TRANSCRIPTION
OF A U.S. RADIO
INTERVIEW WITH
GEDDY BROADCAST

JAN 89

GEDDY LEE



Int.:

Back on the '97 Rock Music paper', with this weeks cover story on Rush. With the release of 'A Show Of Hands', (the bands third double live album) bassist Geddy Lee spoke to the '97 Rock Music Paper' about the live recordings in the band's future plans. 'A Show Of Hands' video concert was recorded in just one show over in Birmingham, England, and I asked Geddy if he was surprised about the fact that so much of the album itself, (the audio portion) was also recorded in one night.

Geddy:

I don't think it's any coincidence that most of the live album came from that night, (the night after we shot the video in Birmingham). We were so relaxed because the night before when we shot the video we had ten cameras pointed at us on the stage, there was all the excitement and vibe and hype when you know there's a film crew there, and conflict of emotions performing in front of

cameras. The next night we hit the same stage, in the same building and there's nothing there, just us and the crowd. I think we were so relieved that everybody was gone that we were all in a good mood and very comfortable and relaxed, that we played very well, and I think we forgot that the audio crew was even there, so I think it worked. But we sort of had to trick ourselves, in an accidental way, to get it to happen.

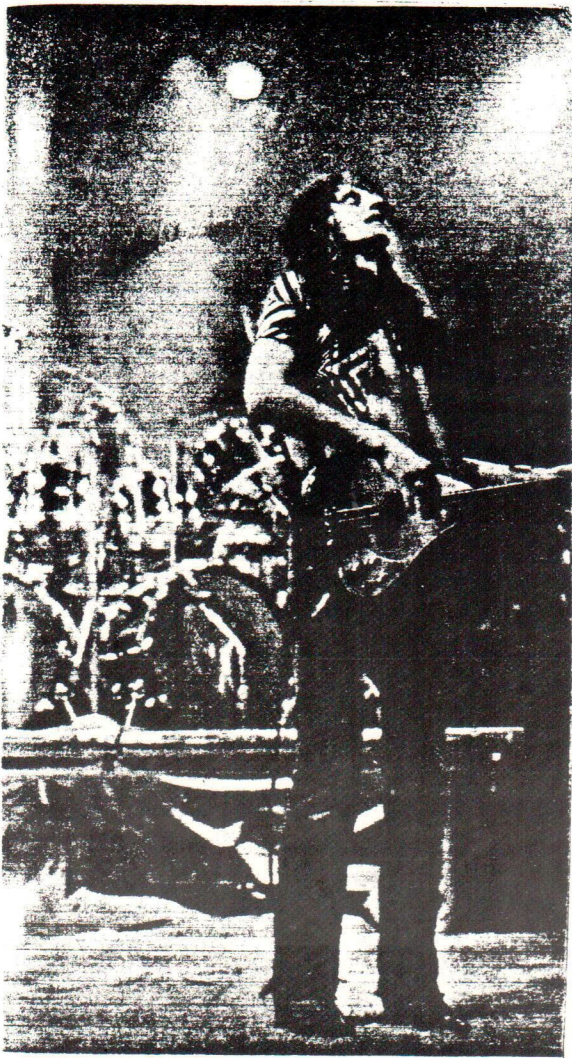
Int:

'A Show Of Hands' consists of more recent material, I asked Geddy if the band takes requests from their fans, when they put their live sets together.

Geddy:

I think that sometimes some of the older songs we bring back into the set, are based on the fact that maybe they've been asked for a hundred times by different people, we can't ignore that, it's a strong response. If you enjoy playing the songs, there's no reason

not to really. Because it makes those people happier, and you enjoy it as well, I think that's a fine thing. I don't think it ever really effects us in terms of writing, it's mostly in song selection and paying attention if somethings been done at a concert in your name, that wasn't right, or if merchandiser's have sold shoddy material and they speak back to you, it's something you act on. Things that come to your attention, that maybe the people representing you out there, representing your name are not doing the job they're supposed to, that's when you have to pay attention, and to act on it too.



Int:

T

he band has gone through so many progressions, they've developed into one of the top touring bands ever to hit the concert stage approach.



Geddy:

I

think mostly it was trial and error basically, I think that's the way I learned. I mean, you get advice in quiet ways by watching other bands that you're opening up for, we've toured with a lot of bands and it was an unspoken advice we got, with some bands we learned how not to tour, and how not to put on a show, and wrong kind of attitude to have.

But from other bands, we learned a degree of professionalism by example; by watching how they work and how well a show, all those things. I think that's the most advice you get when you're a young touring band, is the example of the bands who are headliners give you, because you're so hungry to learn you're sitting at the side of the stage every night, watching every move of the headliners, trying to learn something, trying to absorb something.

Int:

W

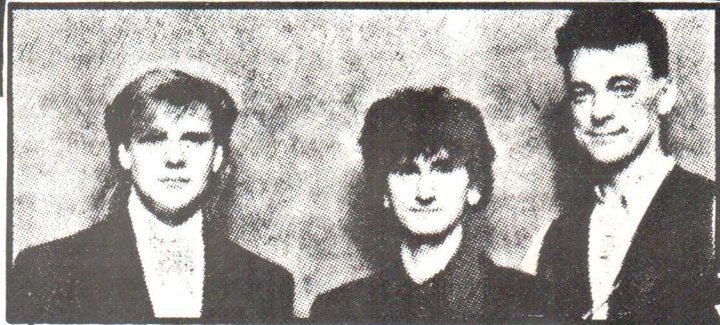
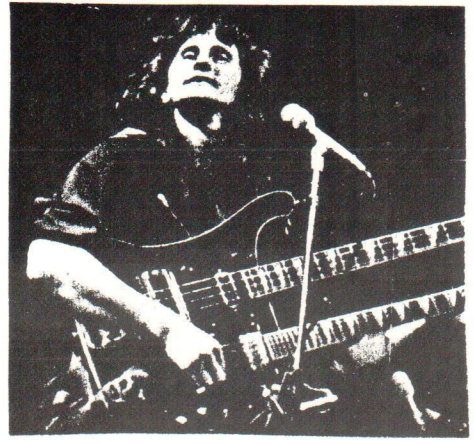
ith an average of one live record every fifth outing, I asked Geddy what the bands plans were for their next studio outing.





Ged: I can't really tell you before we start writing, we don't like to plan too far ahead. I think we have little goals, little things we would like to accomplish, but there are more technical things in terms of verse structure, chorus structure, arrangement structure, things like that. You may have an overall sense of where you want to go, but until you actually sit down and start writing, and it starts coming out, you don't know what your feelings are at the time, in order to keep it natural, and not a contrived thing, I think we prefer to let it happen. Whatever we come out with, is where we're at, at the time, so it becomes a reflection of the kind of people we are, the kind of players we are, at the moment, and I think that's very healthy for us.

Int: Thank you Geddy, good night.



RUSH
WITH
TOMMY SHAW

THE FORUM

7:30
THU
FEB

4

7:30
FRI
FEB

5

THIS
WEEK

Geddy Lee

2-6-89

Rockline



A Transcription of a U.S. radio phone-in interview with Geddy and Alex
Continued from May/June issue 1989

8th call: I'd like to say congratulations 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 was concerned. What specifically in terms of ideas for the future of Rush, or recording philosophies in general, did Peter Collins have that made the three of you make the collective decision to say "Hey, we'd like to work with him," and why was it that Peter Henderson only produced Grace Under Pressure?

Ged: Yeah, I think it is actually. Thank you. Well, that's a long and involved question to answer. I think to start with Peter Collins was the kind of producer, both these questions sort of tie in together. Originally, when we started looking for a new producer, after working with Terry we decided we wanted to work with someone who didn't come out of the school of engineering, producer. We wanted to get a song producer. More of a guy who wasn't technical, but has his sort of focus on the music and song-writing, and to help us get a different perspective on that than we'd had in the past, and

our search was exhaustive for Grace Under Pressure, and we never found exactly that and we had some other people that were lined up to do the record, and at the last minute they sort of bailed out. And to make a long story short; we ended up deciding to go with an engineer, just to do that record, and that's why we chose Peter Henderson, he was a very good engineer, and all along we sort of intended only to do that, get Grace Under Pressure done and on with the look. So then we kept on looking and when we discovered Peter Collins, he just had all the pre-requisites that we looked for. He was fundamentally sound, he was very responsible, he knew a good song and he wasn't afraid to tell us when he didn't think we were at our best. And he encouraged us to try to improve our song writing and to point out those areas that he felt were weak, and I think we learned a lot in the world of arrangement and production from him.

9th Call: I noticed that you had an additional musician, Andy Richards, playing keyboards on Hold Your Fire album. Is there a possibility that the great Canadian power trio will become a four-some?

Alex: I don't think so. We've often thought about that, especially in the past around the time of A Farewell to Kings really. We decided whether it was time to get a fourth member in and do the things that we wanted to do - expand the sound the way we wanted to and add that extra dimension to it. But decided to take it upon ourselves to learn to play the other instruments, to get the other textures, while not disrupting the chemistry that we have between the three of us. So we spent all this time

trying to do it right. I don't think we're gonna get somebody else now.

10th call: Whatever happened to John Rutsey?

Alex: John's still around. I see John quite often, he gave up playing shortly after he left the band, and went into body building. He competed on an amateur level for a while, doing that for a few years, and has sort of been in and out of that, but he still works out, and I work out with him a few times a week at a local gym here, Golds here in Toronto.

Bob: There you go. And of course John, the original drummer for the band.

11th call: With your new CD live album, I was wondering if you planned to do any studio work double albums, something like that?

Ged: Well, right now we're in the process of writing the next studio album. We started about a week ago, and we should, hopefully in June, we'll start recording it, and hopefully before the year is out you'll have a new studio album.

12th call: I was wondering why you haven't played Freewill on your last few tours? The song is about not believing in a God, and I was wondering if maybe your ideas changed?

Ged: Yeah, there's a few references to albums, but it's really nothing more than just sort of a whim.

Alex: A graphics thing.

Ged: Yeah, it's like one of those graphic things. Like graphic artists like to do, you know, refer to other records, and I think it also makes the cover more interesting when you have something

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to look for.

Bob: Yeah it sure does, and it's something to hook you into there.

Alex: Did you find the secret phone number there?

Bob: Don't do that to him Alex.

Alex: Million dollars! You can win a million dollars.

13th call: Now that you've been in the music business for a while! Do you enjoy touring as much now as before? Or do you prefer recording in the studio at home, where you can be with your family.

Alex: They're two different things, touring and recording. They're both very satisfying as it was in the early days, because it was exciting and it was a new thing. But, after fifteen years it does become a bit of a grind, and you lose some of the excitement.

I don't think it's so much the playing as it is sitting in a hotel room and then sitting in a dressing room and sitting in a bus and all that. You try to make it the best you can. Geddy and I play a lot of tennis, or go to the movies, catch a show, whatever to make it more interesting, but, it has dulled a bit over the years.

Ged: But I think it is very important to add that, it is how you tour. The longer your a band together the more tours you do, the more aware you have to be of how quickly the interest can wane, the worst thing about it is if you're going to go on tour and your tired and missing your family, and all those kind of things, you don't play your best. So I think you have to balance it, so you are in a good state of mind all the time your on the road, and that if that means playing a few less dates per tour to keep you fresher, then I think it's worth it, because those performances that you give will all that much better.

Alex: Yeah, that's for sure. If you get yourself down it's very difficult to recover from that. Especially when you have an eight month tour looming ahead of you.

14th call: Three quick questions for you gentlemen tonight, you don't mind right? First of all, Alex, have you been posing in any speedo swimwear lately?

Alex: No, I won that bet.

Bob: Let's stop. Let's fill everybody in. You made a bet, and part of the bet was if you didn't lose 20 lbs in a certain amount of time, that you would have to pose in a speedo, and then it would be published in a major periodical. But he lost weight so...

Alex: So I lost 187 lbs.

Ged: And I must say Alex. You look marvellous. You really do.

Alex: That's only one leg. (laughter)

14th call: My next questions kind of roll together I guess. First of all, do we have a new producer lined up for the new album? Second and third, if you care to comment on these. Do you have a new label lined up for you guys? And, what about the rumours that Neil is gonna be joining The Who for their next album and tour?

Ged: (Laughing) Well that's news to him I'm sure. Let's see, one at the time. First one, No we don't have a new producer lined up for the next album, we're in the process of talking to them. Second question, we have no comment at this time. And as far as Neil joining The Who, I think that's news to him.

15th call: When you were selecting what you were going to put on this album, why did you exclude Toronto from your live recording?

Ged: Well we'd done a lot of live recording in the past in Toronto, and we figured that it was time to record some audiences in different parts of the United States and overseas. We thought we'd go south.

Alex: We also filmed a special on the Grace Under Pressure tour that was done here in Toronto at the Maple Leaf Gardens. And there was a live soundtrack from that also.

16th call: First of all I'd like to ask Geddy. You have a unique, excellent style of bass playing. And I was wondering. And I was wondering when you're writing a bass line, are you trying to make a statement about your bass playing, or do you write a bass line that fits into the context of the particular song that you are writing?

Ged: Yeah, I think it's really the latter. You're just trying to write a part that suits the song and enables you to play something that is interesting and you won't get bored with. I think what happens is though after years of playing you develop your own style, and that's the kind of thing that comes sort of inevitable in

whatever bass line you choose to write. Whatever melodies come out, there seems to always be something that uniquely you, in the you're playing.

16th call: Secondly, I'd like to ask you guys. Two of my favorite Rush songs are La Villa and Yyz. I was wondering if we'll hear another instrumental song from Rush?

Ged: I think that's very possible.

Alex: Yeah, we talked about this just recently; that we'd like to do another instrumental song on this next album.

Ged: So we'll try and do it.

17th call: My first question is for you Alex. And being a great guitarist that you are, I'm surprised nobody has asked you asked you this question yet, but, what is your favorite guitar solo and what was the hardest to put down on record?

Alex: My favorite solo? It's really a little difficult. There are so many. No there are parts of solo's, or there are some solo's that I really like, but I like most of them. It's like if you have fifteen kids, which one do you like the best? Lighthouse has always been a favorite of mine, and the solo from Mission, I've always felt it captures an emotion which is, I think probably the most characteristic thing about my playing. The second question, I remember the solo in Camera Eye being very difficult to get. It had been a long day, worked very, very hard on this solo, couldn't find a direction, couldn't find anything. I turned to Terry and said "Terry, I just wanted to get out of the studio for some inspiration." And I went outside, and there was a full moon out, and I thought - I'll walk out there, and I'll look up to the

moon and try and get some inspiration. And I looked up at the moon, and as soon as I looked up this cloud came in front of the moon. And I went "okay, thank you." Went inside and said, "maybe we don't really need a solo here."

(Laughter)

18th call: What happens to a lot of your technicians and stuff, on some of your live albums you see, crew chiefs and stage left and stage right and what have you. What happens to these guys down the line, are they kind of temporaries, or are they permanent with you?

Ged: Well a lot of the guys have been with us quite a long time. A few of them disintegrate along the way, but, generally we try to keep the same people together. A lot of our closest crew members have been with us for quite a while.

Bob: Well, that's all the time we have for tonight. Good night.



Bass Is Still The Key

By Robin Tolleson

Geddy Lee may joke about his frustration at having to play a lot of bass parts on keyboards or pedals, but he's used sounds from other sources from the very beginning of the band, even before MIDI. Certainly one of his strengths has always been the variety of bass colors he gives Rush. It's interesting that you never know where Geddy's sound might be coming from—his hands or feet, a keyboard synth, guitar of some kind, or footpedal.

One minute the bass sound is crisp like a Rickenbacker, the next it's a low rumble that pins your ears back, then a roar like a church organ. His bass parts are compositions in themselves. There's a different sound for each mood or time change in Rush's music.

Several years ago, in the course of a Blindfold Test with the great jazz drummer Tony Williams, I decided to cross him up and play something different than the Elvin Jones, Miles Davis, and Chick Corea tracks I had been feeding him. I let him listen to Rush's "Limelight" [from *Moving Pictures*].

"This is the first one that I've really liked," said Tony. "Even though it's a 7/4 here and goes into 3 over there, it feels really relaxed. I get an emotional feeling from it. I like the bass playing and the bass sound. The groove is good, and that's the bass and the drums."

Williams' compliment underscores a basic fact. The musicians who come in contact with Rush have a healthy respect, if not a fondness for the band. And the average listener just gets turned on by the grandness of it all, even if they don't know how well the group is traversing the odd time signatures.

The members of Rush all take their music very seriously—they're all repeat poll-winners in music magazines—and they've improved since their early, more heavy metal-influenced days, both as players and songwriters. And Lee would deserve credit for expanding the group's sound as much as anyone, with his integration of bass pedals and synths into the musical picture.

Drummer John Rutsey joined Lee and guitarist Alex Lifeson in the original Rush. They played mostly high schools around Ontario at first because they were too young to play the clubs where the legal drinking age was 21. When the age was lowered to 18 they began doing showcases in Toronto, and found a loyal following and a record deal with Mercury/Polygram in 1974. Two weeks before their first tour of the U.S. later that year, Rutsey announced he was leaving the group, and Neil Peart answered their frantic ad for a drummer. The trio has been the most consistent progressive hard rock band in the business ever since.

BASS PLAYER got the opportunity to speak with Geddy Lee while he was busy working with producer Peter Collins on Rush's upcoming live double-album.

* * * *

Who were your first musical influences?

I was first influenced by bassist Jack Bruce. Cream was one of the groups that I loved when I was growing up and first got into music in a more serious way. We used to play Cream songs way

back when. What I liked about Jack was that his sound was distinctive—it wasn't boring, and it wasn't typical. And he was very busy. He wouldn't keep his place, which I really liked a lot. He wouldn't keep quiet as a bass player. He was obtrusive, which I like in a bass player.

I guess it helps if you're in a trio setting. You might run into trouble if you were to start adding more musicians.

Yeah, the freedom of the trio is that you're allowed to be as busy as the thing can take. Obviously you have to use taste and discretion where and when you're being busy. But the thing that appealed to me about bass players all along were bass players that played more than they were supposed to play, or more than the conventional bass player would play.

On Hold Your Fire [1987], the bass is in some great-sounding rooms. There's one section on "Lock And Key" where you get a good trebly effect. I know you used Rickenbackers in the past, and that sound reminds me of it.

You can get that sound out of most basses I think, but a Rickenbacker has a particular kind of top end, and bottom end as well. It has a particular kind of classic twang to it. I found that I wanted to get a little more subtlety in the sound, and I couldn't quite get it out of the Rick. I wanted to change the top end a little bit, get a little different shaped bottom end. Then I moved to a Steinberger, which really gave me a totally different sound. The top end didn't range as high and twangy, and the bottom end was quite a different shade. I liked it a lot, and used it onstage, and on the *Grace Under Pressure* album. But on *Power Windows* I got introduced to the Wal bass, made by a small company in England. Our producer, Peter Collins, had one and suggested I try it out. I used that bass on *Hold Your Fire*, and I'm very pleased with the results and its flexibility. I use a 4-string most of the time, but on "Lock And Key" it was a 5-string they made with an extra low B. I find that low string really means more today, because we're living in the world of synthesizers that go lower than basses ever went before.

On "Force Ten" [from Hold Your Fire] you do some chordal stuff on bass. What were you thinking of then? It really pushes the tune ahead.

Before I had a visit from Jeff Berlin, who's a friend, on the tour I had the opportunity to watch him goofing around backstage with a bass, and was just amazed at his knowledge of bass chords. That's something I had never really exploited in my playing, so he inspired me to play around more with it. He probably doesn't know it, and would be embarrassed to hear it. I ended up using bass chords on "Force Ten" and "Turn The Page." Not so much in the sense of strumming them as using my thumb more, almost like a fingerpicking style of playing, which is something that I'm still working on. Just plucking with my thumb and going back and forth between the thumb and the first two fingers and pulling. Almost like a snapping technique. It's opened up a bit more range for me. There's more melodic possibilities and rhythmic possibilities too, which is an important role for the bass player. If you can establish not only a melody but a rhythmic feel, that's an extra tool.

During "Prime Mover" [from Hold Your Fire] you really dig into your part during the guitar solos. I read how you guys compose the guitar solos as a group. Do you have to wait until the solo

is composed before you come up with your parts?

We obviously have a chordal structure, and a melodic fix or picture of what the part's going to be. Usually I put it down, and between Neil and myself, we get little rhythm patterns going. I play around with the melody, and depending on what the tone center is and what the chord structures are in that area, I just write my part. Then Alex plays different solos around what Neil and I have already put down. He's quite content to work with what we've put down, and in most parts he's around through every stage anyway, so he's quite aware of the direction it's going in. He'll go down and wail, and a lot of times he will surprise us. It's a totally different direction than we had expected it, but it's always within the melodic structure that exists.

At the end of "Open Secrets" [from Hold Your Fire] it sounds like you guys are jamming, almost an improvised thing.

It sort of was. That song went through a lot of changes, and by the end of it, we had established this bass riff near the top of it. At the end we got into this groove when we were in the demo stage that we knew would be fun. So when Neil locked into that groove and went with it, he felt so good that we just let him go. And I just jammed to what he already put down.

That's an interesting sequence at the beginning of "Big Money" [from Power Windows]. Do you do programming?

Usually I'll do a basic sequence as a direction of a part, and then when (keyboardist) Andy Richards comes in the studio he listens to what I've done. If he can improve on it, he has full license to go ahead. And the nice thing about working with him is he's very open to everybody's ideas. I can think up an idea that I don't have the technical ability to play, but he does, and he'll take that idea even farther than I imagined it. That's a real bonus for me.

Sometimes it's hard to tell if you're playing a bass guitar or a keyboard. On the verse of "Territories" [from Power Windows] there's a real droning type of bass part. Then, on the B part, you get into a more staccato kind of sound.

Whenever you hear that low bottom end that drones underneath, it's usually my Moog pedals. I've been using those for years and they're really great when I have to go to keyboards and sustain the bottom end. Because they have an unobtrusive bass that doesn't phase.

When you started playing bass, did you have any idea that you'd end up playing keyboards and pedals?

Not at all, and every year it amazes me more and more how much stuff I have on my side of the stage that I have to deal with. Because I really am not a proficient keyboard player. I know my name pops up in these keyboard polls from time to time, and it's really unfair, because I really am not a good keyboard player. I'm really strictly a synthesist and sort of an orchestrator. I am learning how to play keyboards better every day, and I am presently studying piano.

You do actually miss playing the bass at times?

Oh yeah, it's a constant frustration too, because when we're recording, a lot of times I know I won't be able to play bass in certain parts of songs because I'll be playing the keyboards. So I'm very reluctant to put a bass part on the record that I won't be able to play live. So it's a battle. We overcame that a little on this past

tour, because now technology has finally caught up with us. I can now program certain keyboard chords to pedals onstage that can trigger different synthesizers.

As a bassist, does the technology make it easier, or do you just keep coming up with harder things to do?

In the end you're as busy as you want to be as a bass player. You really have to serve the song the best way possible. And if it serves the song to be busy, that's fine. But if it best serves the song to be a bit more fundamental and groove-oriented, you have to do that. You usually wait for your moments. It's difficult to be a musician with taste. I think taste is the most difficult thing for a player to acquire. Sometimes being a little more subtle with your talent gets you farther and adds more to the song. Not to say that I've always exercised that belief. There have been times where I've definitely been out of turn, and thrown some notes out that were probably not in the best service of the song's groove. But I think the older I get, and the more experience I get at writing and arranging, the more I try to bear that in mind.

It's definitely not something we think about when we're young. It's more going for broke then.

Yeah, and that's good, that's fine. That's something that does come with growing up as a musician and changing your style, or just absorbing more knowledge about what songs you want to play. And it's also dependent on the style of music that you want to play. If you don't want to play anything other than a very indulgent brand of music, then you don't have to.

"Grand Designs" [from Power Windows] features a great drum part by Neil. Some good bassists might be thrown off by that kind of part.

I don't remember any difficulty with that song, as a matter of fact. One of the best things about playing with the same person for a very long time is you have this kind of telepathic connection in a way. You know each other so well stylistically that there's a whole range of probabilities that you have in common. So if I hear him going in a direction or he hears me going in a direction, we can shift to that direction. I think we've figured out a way to complement each other so that it's comfortable. It's something that comes with time and work. And knowing when to simplify and when not to simplify. Sometimes when a bass player is playing with a rhythmically difficult drum part, that's the time to simplify, help the part cruise by playing more consistently. That can help knit the parts together. At the same time, if there's another drum part coming up where he's going to be more solid and fundamental, that will enable the bass to stretch out a bit and get more active. So it's give and take.

There's not any ego involved at this point, but it's hard to get rid of it when you're a kid.

Yeah, and it's not necessarily the best thing to get rid of, because that's what drives you sometimes. Having an ego is not a bad thing. That's what makes you move, that's what makes you happy with yourself. But when your ego is encroaching on other peoples' presence, it becomes a problem.

Do you and Alex ever both play pedals simultaneously onstage?

Sometimes, when we just want a ridiculous amount of bottom end. That bottom end from pedals really sounds great in certain halls, it really fills and gives you a lot of pant flap, as we call it. It

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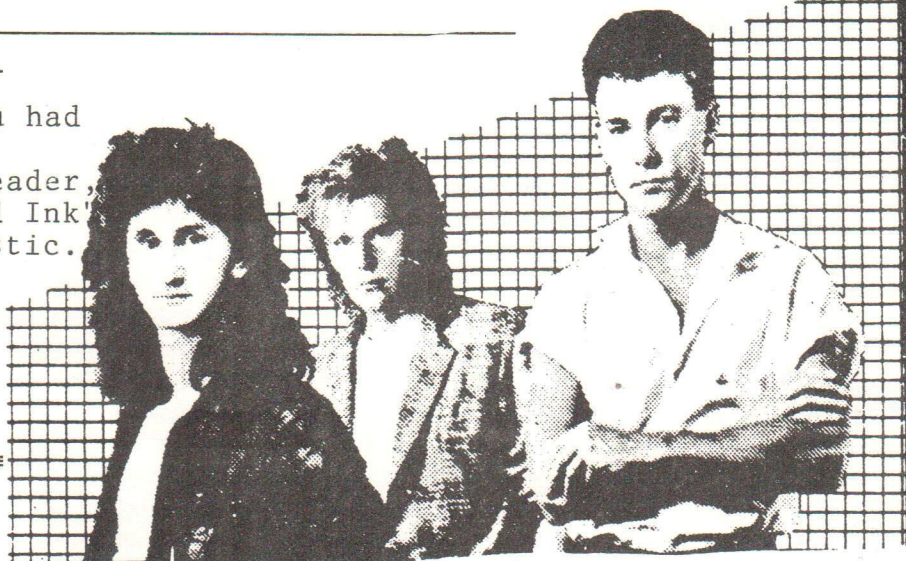
We'd like to make a small but valuable correction for our "A Glimpse at What's Beyond" section in this month's issue.

Coming in mid October of this year will be a Rush 'coda' album entitled 'Chronicle'. It will contain unreleased material as well as some new tunes such as a 58 min., mega-marathon lenthed song. Keep a look out Rush fans!



- P - O - S - T - E - R -

Just when you thought you had them all. Jerry Brown, a dedicated Rush fan and reader, produced a Rush "Pen And Ink" poster that's just fantastic. To get one for your own send \$10 plus \$2.50 postage to: Jerry Brown, 10930 Whitely Ct., Jacksonsville, VA 32216.



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Analog Productions 1989

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