A RUSH OF OLD AGE

RUSH 'Signals' (Mercury 6337 243)

THE TROUBLE with life, the universe and everything is that nothing is getting any younger. I recognise this as I get up every morning and look in the mirror; Rush recognise it whenever they come to record a new album.

Neil Peart is no longer the naive, young idealist who scripted the epic fantasies of 'By-Tor And The Snow Dog' and '2112'. While his politics may not have shifted any closer to liberalism he has found a whole new set of preoccupations with which to concern himself – notably the isolatory effect of 'hi-tech' on the human psyche and the increasing realisation that he is growing older, mellower and, he feels, not particularly wiser. The result, as John Osborne discovered before him, is not a growing enlightenment but rather confusion: "Thirty years ago, how the words would flow/With passion and precision/But now his mind is dark and dulled/By sickness and indecision" ('Losing It').

The aftermath of this philosophising is an album that, while lyrically possibly Peart's finest and musically finding Rush extending their boundaries to incorporate reggae, I fear may ultimately disappoint long-standing fans. It would be stretching the terminology of the genre even to describe this as 'hard rock'; only the final track 'Countdown' with its overdubbed NASA commentaries and soaring helicopters, could realistically be referred to as 'heavy'. Indeed, Lifeson's guitars periodically take second place in the mix, to Lee's increasingly dominant keyboards. Lee's voice, meanwhile, though something of an acquired taste, proves particularly adept on 'Digital Man' and manages to tug every last iota of poignancy from the superb 'Losing It'.

Highlights are the child-like romance of 'The Analog Kid', the Police-style white-reggae of the new single 'New World Man' and the touching desperation of the afore mentioned 'Losing It'. The production and musicianship are customarily immaculate, though, there are one or two down-spots, like the plagiarising of Manfred Mann's
HOW DO the Donington promoters seriously expect any more than 40,000 people with a band like Status 'bunch of men' Quo headlining? The first 30 minutes or so of their set wasn’t too bad, then came the sheer boredom of what misfit Parfitt calls a SOLO.

The worst thing is you criticising Status ‘GBH of the earhole’ Quo because they can only play one tune; you call this ‘no-nonsense boogie’.

And Gillan, excellent though they were, made three very silly mistakes: 1) They degraded themselves by supporting Status Crap (sorry). 2) They started the set with two new songs. 3) They degraded themselves by supporting Status Crap (whoops, did it again). Besides this Gillan were amazing, and Janick will soon be heralded as one of the greatest axemen ever. Saxon also rated highly on the classic ‘sledgehammer’ tenner-side versus ‘Wild-side’ was a bit corny (Wudja believe a draw?) anyway Saxon were great.

Hawkwind – nice group shame about the robot. It smelt of incense to instigate a healthy bout of can throwing.

Uriah Heep were at something of a disadvantage: 1) They’re at a festival band. 2) It was pissing down. 3) They failed miserably, still, nice T-shirt, eh? Anvil tried really hard and deserved more return for their efforts (‘Lips’ what a sick name). Anyway, to finish off, whenever people write “I doubt whether you’ll print this letter” you always do, so here goes; as this letter calls Status Crap (damn, it’s becoming a habit) I doubt whether you’ll print it anyway. Mark “I’m not afraid to sign my own name” Mosley AKA George the Hippo.

FOR THE second year running the Monsters of Rock Festival at Donington has been ruined by the sound. How much longer must festival-goers suffer from this curse? Hard working performances by Uriah Heep and the brilliant Anvil were totally ruined by the (in the words of Ian Gillan) ‘Mick Mouse’ equipment. The guitars were almost totally obscured from the mix and were only audible during solos.

1982 was certainly my last visit to Carlise/Donington. If I pay a penny more or see six bands I would like to be able to hear them! Surely a soundcheck could be organised the night before to prevent this kind of debacle. All I can say is: Thank God for Reading!

Andy Gilbert, South Norwood, London.

IT BEGAN one midsummer’s night. I was reading my recently purchased Kerrang when I heard a strange muffled sound (foot unlike Robert Plant’s ‘Aaaahhh’, on ‘Slow Dancer’) coming from my pile of Kerrang magazines. I steered myself towards that corner of the room and stopped about a foot from the mags. Looking down I saw in the dust, well, I thought I saw, what appeared to be four rock hard spuds, very hairy and sporting newly acquired potato jackets. They were headbanging and singing “we got moshed at Donington, yeah, yeah, yeah.” I couldn’t believe it, I turned and fled for the door. I woke up screaming and sweating, it was the most horrific ‘monster’ dream I’ve ever had.

So come on Kerrang! and do something about those elusive binders you said you were going to sort out. Then maybe my recurring nightmare will go and I can brave the elements of the dust to regain my Kerrang! Collection and put the mags in their rightful place – in their binders!!

Metal Mickey, Borehamwood.

Watch out in the next few issues of Kerrang! They are coming

KERROSWORD! SOLUTION

SOLUTION

ACROSS: 1 Snider. 5 Grand. 7 Good. 8 Magnetism. 10 Ruby. 11 Led. 13 Let There Be. 15 Pete. 17 Matchstick Men. 19 Quinn. 21 Rock. 23 Ian. 24 Ted. 25 Era. 26 UFO. 27 Glam. 28 Tush. 29 Vinyl.

DOWN: 1 Deguello. 2 Eloy. 3 Dumpy’s Rusty Nuts. 4 Rage. 5 Gezer. 6 Dominoes. 8 Rush. 12 Pete Goalby. 14 Brighton 16 TKO. 18 Animal. 19 Queen. 20 Night. 22 Kim.

LETTERS

Say it loud to: Letters, Kerrang! 40 Longacre, London WC2

DANTE BONUTTO, what the hell are you on about? The feature on our God, Michael Schenker, in no. 22 was a total rip-off! Michael “didn’t have the greatest of reputations for songwriting.” Who the hell do you think helped Phil Mogg to write immortal UFO classics? ‘Doctor, Doctor?’ Who helped Gary Barden write all the MSG songs such as ‘Let Sleeping Dogs Lie’ and ‘Ready To Rock?’ We note the awful messmerising ‘Courvoisier Concerto’ and the brilliant instrumental ‘Into The Arena’?

Are you really an ignorant crackhead, or are you purposely slagging off Michael? Well, I’d like to say that I, and all the other Schenker fans, will buy any record he plays on just for his unique solo’s, cos every one is a classic and any song he records instantly becomes ace. And I can assure you I shall play new discs to death and enjoy every note of the live love from a few rockers who love MSG and the Scorpions, and who would love to see Dante Bonutto fired.

JUST THOUGHT you might like to know, I’ve hi-jacked your office. I’ve put a machinegun pointed at your head and that bulge in your self-expanding Y-fronts under a heavy weight.

The building is surrounded by an army of Scorpion tanks waiting to burn the sky and unleash destruction upon the unfortunates cowering within. Then, when the smoke is gone down, a multitude of Excelot missiles will follow a pre-programmed course to wreak havoc and demolition on the remains of the building. I’m armed and ready to have you begging for mercy, for I’ve got my disposal, among other things.

I’ve been talking to Mayhem, he can get in because it’s always locked. Going to be a load of bull! You said that your God, Michael Schenker, in no. 22. The Bandwagon may have disband now, but the new location (Headstone, N) is just as good a replacement. I’ve been going twice a week without fail it opened and I can assure you that imaginary guitar solos and Rob Longmore are well in evidence!

If the crapwrite of the article would like to go down to the Headstone on a Friday night (that’s if he can get in because it’s always packed) he/she will notice that everybody is having a bloody good time, and half the people there, I
ANTHEM
Words and music by: Lee, Lifeson, Peart

KNOW THAT YOUR PLACE IN LIFE
IS WHERE YOU WANT IT TO BE
DON'T LET THEM TELL YOU THAT
YOU OWE IT ALL TO ME
KEEP ON LOOKING FORWARD
THERE'S NO USE IN LOOKING ROUND
CARRY YOUR HEAD ABOVE THE CROWD
AND THEY WON'T BRING YOU DOWN

CHORUS:

ANTHEM OF THE HEART AND MIND
A FUNERAL DIRGE FOR EYES GONE BLIND
WE MARVEL AFTER THOSE WHO SOUGHT
NEW WONDERS IN THE WORLD THEY WROUGHT

LIVE FOR YOURSELF, THERE'S NO ONE
MORE WORTH LIVING FOR
BEGINNING HANDS AND BLEEDING HEARTS
WILL ONLY CRY FOR MORE

THOUGH I KNOW THEY'VE ALWAYS
TOLD YOU SELFISHNESS IS WRONG
YET IT WAS FOR ME NOT YOU
I CAME TO WRITE THIS SONG

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