

Movies, Books, Music \

POP TALK: Geddy Lee of Rush

By Joey Berlin Copley News Service

Q. Rush is out with its 12th album, "Hold Your Fire." How is it different than the first 11?

A. It's more mature from a songwriting point of view. Productionwise, it's more confident, and the arrangements are more extensive. There's more going on in different parts of the record than we've ever dared to do before.

Q. I think it's the most "adult" Rush album yet.

A. Yeah, I think that's true, as much as I hate to admit it, and as much as some of our fans would hate to view it like that, that's what has happened to some degree. We're changing and our music's changing with us.

Q. How so?

A. We're at a different level now, looking at our lives differently. Taking more time away from the band has put us in a different framework. Requirements that we have for the age we are now are different. It's more important to make Rush part of a total living experience as opposed to keeping my Rush experience and my life experience totally separate. They have to be one, they have to be in common now.

Q. Does rock 'n' roll keep you young?

A. That's the fortunate thing about it, you don't have to be adult most of the time. You can hang on to your juvenile feelings, your juvenile sense of humor. I think that's important.

Q. Isn't that a goal for a lot of people?

A. I think so, but for people who aren't connected to something like what we are connected to, it's very difficult. I have friends with high-pressure jobs who would love to be juvenile, but they don't really see how tied up they are in an adult world. It's very hard for them to make that transition back and forth. People in music, artists, people who don't have to get dressed up to go to work, we're very lucky.

Q. Do people try to drag you into the adult world?

A. Absolutely. I have friends who resent the fact that I'm not as adult as they are. Or maybe they think it's comical. But I feel bad that they can't be as goofy as I can. I still feel a real connection with youth. I want to do a lot of the same things I did when I was younger and I don't feel self-conscious about it.

Q. Over the years your voice has often been described in less than flattering terms. Has that hurt you personally?

A. Less than flattering? My voice has been described in some vicious ways. But you get thick-skinned. To take criticism of my voice at this stage of my career I would find totally unjustified and would really bother me. But in the early days I had a strange singing style. It alienated people, it polarized people. I can understand that now. Then it hurt me. Singing is a very personal thing. You can insult somebody's music, but insulting somebody's voice is always harder to take.

Q. You've just started a tour. How long will you be out?

A. Right through to the spring.

Q. How do you feel about touring after all these years?

A. I don't look forward to touring like I used to. The first couple of legs are an exciting challenge, but I fear losing interest and winding up not playing well enough.

Q. Rush dates back to your junior high school days, doesn't it?

A. It's a very strange life I've had. I've grown up in this band. It's almost growing up on vinyl.

Q. Will Rush go on indefinitely?

A. We've never talked about anything else. I think we're secure for the next little while. If all goes well on this tour we'll record some of the dates for a live album. Beyond that, who knows.

Q. How about a Geddy Lee solo album?

A. At some point I'm going to have to put off some Rush stuff to work with other people. But aside from producing other people and doing some sound-track work, there's nothing musically I'm burning to do.

Q. How do you like doing interviews?

A. Doing six in a day is a little tiring. Talking about yourself so much over a short period of time makes you insane. Last night, when I went to bed I was twitching.

GEDDY LEE PERSONALITY

Born: July 29, 1953

Home: Toronto, Canada

First song he learned: "For Your Love" by the Yardbirds

Family: Married, one child

Rush: Geddy Lee (vocals/bass/synthesizer/music), Alex Lifeson (guitar/music), Neal Peart (drums/lyrics)

Best Rush album: "Hold Your Fire"

Goal: Make better music

Joey Berlin writes the syndicated programs "Sixty Second LP" and "Rex" that are heard daily on 225 radio stations nationally.