RUSH

THE NEW ALBUM

PRESTO
RUSH

'Presto'
(Atlantic WX327)

RUSH ARE too bloody clever for their own good. After extending their hilarious early mythic anthems ('By-Tor And The Snow Dog II' and satin-clad splendour through '2112's murky political awakenings, to arrive at a series of smooth if quirky late '80s technio-rock albums, they've never descended into predictable rifframa. The most terrible thing they've become is comfortably familiar, the Richard Briers of Heavy Metal, and as frighteningly unfashionable as electric blue Spandex trousers.

Rush are horribly sensible swots. They won't make a bad album. The worst they'll do is merely make another one.

'Presto' is somewhere between the two. 'Rushies', like 'Trekkees' are a breed apart, and will find no fault with Geddy Lee's sanitised whine and thrusting bass, Alex Lifeson's rasping bidgeson, Neil Peart's crisp, award-winning percussion or Rupert Hine's smoothie production.

Indeed, 'War Paint's convincing exposure of vanity and failing relationships, or 'Show Don't Tell's wicked riff, or 'The Pass's low-key melancholy, almost convince that 'Presto' will be mentioned in reverential whispers along with 'Moving Pictures' or the lush 'Signals'.

But they're negated by 'Superconductor' or 'Chain Lightning's alarming tendency towards blandness.

Peart's wordy, worldly concerns often overwhelm Lee's ability to imbue them with any emotion. His tongue busy tripping Stanley Unwin-like over thesaurus inspired multi-syllables.

'Presto' belies its pun-inducing title. It will not shock, stun or amaze. Rush are not prepared to settle for less, and are too limited, too old and cushy to try for more. The taming of the shrewed.

'After all, who do they expect to get excited about a song called 'Anagram'?" JON HOTTEN