Rush is worth thinking about

By Larry Nager

The Canadian rock and roll band Rush and its opening set at Riverfront Coliseum Wednesday night shared a basic format — the power trio. Beyond that they had nothing in common.

The power trio's formula of guitar, bass, plus drums often equals the worst sort of heavy metal sedum. Nowhere has this equation proven more true than in the hands of the Jon Buncher Axis.

THEIR HALF-HOUR set was a compendium of the worst heavy metal cliches — extended, meaningless guitar solos, dull, plodding bass lines, and, of course, the obligatory, five-minute drum solo.

At 8:30, after a half-hour break, Rush took the stage. In the course of their two-hour set they revealed the almost unlimited possibilities of the power trio.

Although Rush is basically a heavy metal band, its creative use of space — putting holes in their music in all the right places — is what sets it apart from other bands.

Guitarist Alex Lifeson employed a number of different guitars and a wide assortment of techniques. From a delicate classical finger style to raunchy power chords, he kept the guitar sounds rich and varied.

Neil Peart provided strong drumming while retaining a rhythmic subtlety rare in rock and roll.

GEDDY LEE'S baritone vocals were somewhat reminiscent of Geddy Lee's baritone vocals were somewhat reminiscent of Led Zeppelin's Robert Plant. His bass and keyboards contributed greatly to the group's wide range of sounds and rhythms from the hard rock of "The Analog Kid" to the sweeping reggae of "Digital Man," both from their most recent LP, "Signals."

Lee's keyboards were especially effective on the space fantasy, "Countdown," providing appropriate sound effects.

With its odd meters, varied musical textures, and lyrics that never descend to the Baby, let's party level, Rush showed itself to be the thinking person's heavy metal power trio.

Larry Nager is a Cincinnati newspaper and free-lance writer.

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headliners

Capitol records can hardly be objective about one of its most successful rock artists, Billy Squier, but let's listen anyway — "Mysteriously, he is solidly rooted in traditional rock forms amplified by the courage to explore new ground with style, a sharp-toned ear and a gift for writing inventive lyrics." — Billy Squier's official bio — "These qualities have allowed him to create some of the best and most consistently satisfying music of the decade. It's real rock that defies superficial labels or the stigma of being too closely associated with any singular, temporary or narrow-minded lifestyle."

Transcribed: Squier will rock the wrinkles out of your jeans in a concert Tuesday night at the Cincinnati Gardens, providing there are any wrinkles left after Def Leppard's heavy-metal assault opens the concert. Tickets are a modest $8.50 and $10 at Ticketron.

If you are in the mindset for a more delicate, but no less mind-altering, entertainment experience, offered at a price of about half (you can afford it), try the Percussion Group at 8:30 p.m. Tuesday in Corbett Auditorium on the University of Cincinnati main campus. No kidding, this group has a well-deserved international reputation, and this concert will include the American premiere of Karel Goeyvaerts' "Instant X0." The program also features William Alright's "Take That," a work inspired in part by the gale scene from "Ben-Hur."

— James Chute

concert calendar

"Live at the Center" series: Dancer starts at 7:30 p.m. Sunday, Cincinnati Arts Center. Ticket:


Livingston Taylor/Noa John Koelstel: Folk festival, 7 p.m. Saturday, Newport, Kentucky. Tickets:

University of Cincinnati concerts: Symphony Orchestra, 8:30 p.m. Monday, The Concert Orchestra, 8:30 p.m. Thursday (April 7).

Music Live/With Lunch series: Music for harpsichord and guitar by Carissima Judson, Church, Thursday, April 8. Church, Friday and Saturday, free lunch available. $20/18-17.

Carr and Friends: Irish folk music concert, 7:30 p.m. Thursday, April 8. Northen Kentucky University Center Theater, $2, 572-5873.

SIGHTSEEING CRUISES

1:30 p.m. & 3:30 p.m. Every Sunday at 1:30 p.m. Cincinnati Riverboat Cruises. Call 314-814-5000 for reservations.

OPENING DAY

"Altmann's magic is the real thing...he's in his prime as a director."
— Pauline Kael, The New Yorker

"The surprise is Cher, who is poignant and effective in her first dramatic role."
— Roger Ebert, Chicago Sun-Times

"Wonderfully entertaining, a rich, funny, touching, insightful film."
— Sheila Brennan, Los Angeles Times

"A complete learn-to. The Programmers on how complete programs to date.解决方案, play computer.

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— Cincinnati Post, March 31, 1985

CONCERTS MARCH 30, 1985