Power trio takes plunge into the mystic

By Aaron Beck
THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

Rush rolled into the German Amphitheater on a Wednesday to celebrate 30 years of perfectly enunciated lyrics, existential anxiety and Canadian prog-rock mysticism.

A mere 7,000 people, mostly males, made their way to Delaware County for 3 hours of familiar and not-so-familiar selections from the treasure-trove of bassist-vocalist Geddy Lee, guitarist Alex Lifeson and drummer-journeyman Neil Peart. Three days on and I’m still coming down pretty hard from Xanadu, as I imagine, most everyone around me in that concrete and grassy shed, for we became the last immortal men, found the sacred river Alph, walked in the caves of ice, dined on the honeywine and drank the milk of paradise—and then walked to the parking lot because, after all, we’re workingmen who have to get up at 7 and 9, and go to work at 9.

But not every bit of 210 minutes of anything, really, can be a transcendental experience. Here’s a rundown of the good, the bad and the ugly on Wednesday.

The good:
• Subdivisions, the 1982 song of conforming or being cast out, accentuated with faultless video of cookie-cutter housing developments that morphed into geometric patterns, "an insulated border in between the bright lights / and the far unfurl unknown."
• The pulsating, synesthetic-stoked Between the Wheels, the closer of the 1984 album Grace Under Pressure that Lee said Rush had never played onstage.
• One Little Victory, a speedy, matty and littering thing from the band’s latest studio album with trademark—but not tired title changes—and a complicated song structure that still rocked.
• Lee’s voice, which was as piercing, whizzy and just plain weird as ever.
• Like Ozzy Osbourne’s netherworld pipes, Lee's a perfect vehicle for crying out and delivering messages of doom, concentrated catastrophe and class warfare and hard-rocking letters written on the scrolls of men who have ventured into ice caves and walked with trees.
• Rush’s drum solo on about a million gold-plated drums. All the air drummers in the audience had their work cut out for them as Peart, a little stiffer and slower than in his younger days, had a conversation with himself about African, rock and funky Richey-Influenced jazz styles.

The bad:
• Hard rock before the sun rises. Getting into the proper Rush mood requires darkness, a green laser-light show from 83 (it would come in the second set), reeler madness among the audience (also during set two), and the song Tom Sawyer. Sunshine is for Rush’s fellow Canadians in Barenaked Ladies. Mystic Rhythms, a light-weight, pan-world throwaway suitable for reading rooms of new-age bookstores.
• The ugly.
• Comedian Jerry Stiller, for some random reason, introducing the band via video tape. Embarrassing.
• Lifeson’s scatting and free-styling about a stuffed goat behind him on an amp. I still can’t believe that happened.
• Rush’s attempt to bring da funk with Still the Bones, a 1991 song that featured an animated skeleton rapping. "Gonna kick some guts at ya / It’s a parlay, you dig?"
• All the songs Rush played from its upcoming Feedback album of covers. The Yachtie Heart Full of Soul, Eddie Cochran’s Summertime Blues and Robert Johnson’s Crossroads (a power-to-trio staple thanks to Cream) all were stiff, pleasant, corporate-pickle-style offerings.

Rush, take me to your uncle’s country place and drive me through time and space in that Red Baratheon any day.

Elvis sighting

Elvis Presley hadn’t performed in front of an audience in more than seven years before he agreed in 1968 to do a show for NBC. The special Elvis came to be known as the ‘68 Comeback Special." Now it has been digitally remastered.

The program will be aired at 7 p.m., June 21 at the Georigeville Square 10 theater, 1-270 and Georigeville Road.

Tickets cost $14 at www.screencan.com or $15 the day of the screening.

For more information, call the box office at 614-853-0850.
abeck@dispatch.com

SATURDAY MORNING/BROADCAST

7:00 A.M.  7:30  8:00  8:30

America’s Home Gardening Show (p.m.)
 вещаеет программы с Робертом Гард

SATURDAY MORNING/BROADCAST

7:00 A.M.  7:30  8:00  8:30

FOX 50 50 50 50

SATURDAY AFTERNOON/BROADCAST

1:00  1:30  2:00  2:30

Emmy Awards (Intimate and exclusive)

SATURDAY AFTERNOON/BROADCAST

1:00  1:30  2:00  2:30

Emmy Awards (Intimate and exclusive)

SATURDAY EVENING/BROADCAST

7:00  7:30  8:00  8:30

Access Hollywood (N) 0 0 0 0

SATURDAY EVENING/CABLE

7:00  7:30  8:00  8:30

My Name is Number 181: A story about the number 181 and the people who live in it.

SATURDAY EVENING/CABLE

7:00  7:30  8:00  8:30

The King of Queens (10 PM)

SATURDAY EVENING/CABLE

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