

THE SPIRIT

OF

#4

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EDITORIAL

Hello and welcome to SPIRIT no.4 that's one very eventful year behind us now, although we still have much to look forward to in the coming year. Neils book, the live album and of course the video filmed at the NEC in April. Yes, plenty to look forward to.

I hope you managed to attend at least one of the shows on the last tour (Some of you did, see reviews this issue) Hello to all the people we met at the gigs, a good time was had by all concerned. A big welcome to the many new readers we now have since the tour. I do hope you're enjoying the mag.

PLEASE KEEP SENDING IN YOUR OWN CONTRIBUTIONS I know I keep on about this, but without your input it would cease to be a FANzine.

If you're a regular reader and have not yet SUBSCRIBED, would you please consider doing so? £6/4 issues. DO NOT SEND CASH! Cheques P/Orders only-payable "SPIRIT OF RUSH" !!

Issue no.5 will be available mid September. Watch the music press for the adverts. BETTER TO SUBSCRIBE THOUGH!!!

A FANZ VIEW

AIRBORNE, MIKE OLDFIELD

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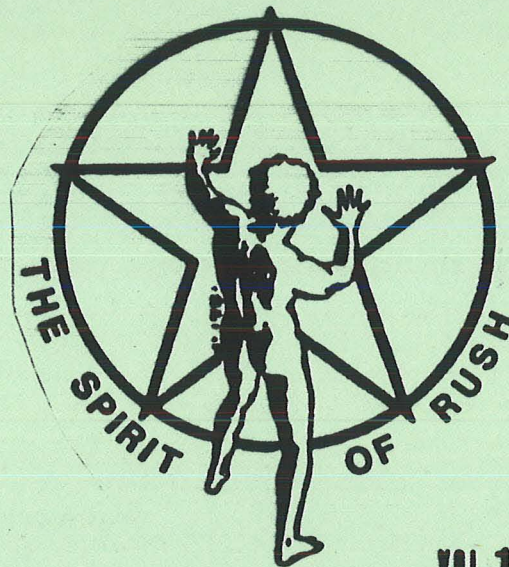
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LAUREL & HARDY MAGAZINE

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VOL 1 NO.4

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PRINTERS : PRINT PLUS (LES)

CONTRIBUTORS : LOADS OF...

MANY THANKS TO EVERYONE WHO HAS TAKEN THE TIME TO HELP. YOUR EFFORTS ARE APPRECIATED. KEEP IT UP!!

NEWSPEAK!

NEIL HAS A BOOK BEING PUBLISHED IN THE SUMMER, DETAILING HIS EXPERIENCES IN AFRICA & CHINA. PUBLISHED BY RANDOM HOUSE IN NORTH AMERICA, A EUROPEAN DEAL IS STILL TO BE CONFIRMED.

THE NEW DOUBLE LIVE SET LOOKS ON SCHEDULE FOR A SEPTEMBER RELEASE (WORLDWIDE WE HOPE)

PRIME MOVER WAS RELEASED AS A SINGLE IN APRIL TO COINCIDE WITH THE EUROPEAN TOUR. IT CAME IN THE FOLLOWING FORMATS -
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PRIME MOVER (AGAIN) WAS RELEASED AS A PROMO CD SINGLE IN NORTH AMERICA LAST SEPTEMBER, IN A VERY LIMITED EDITION. (ANYONE HAVE ONE?)

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GEDDY LEE
of
RUSH



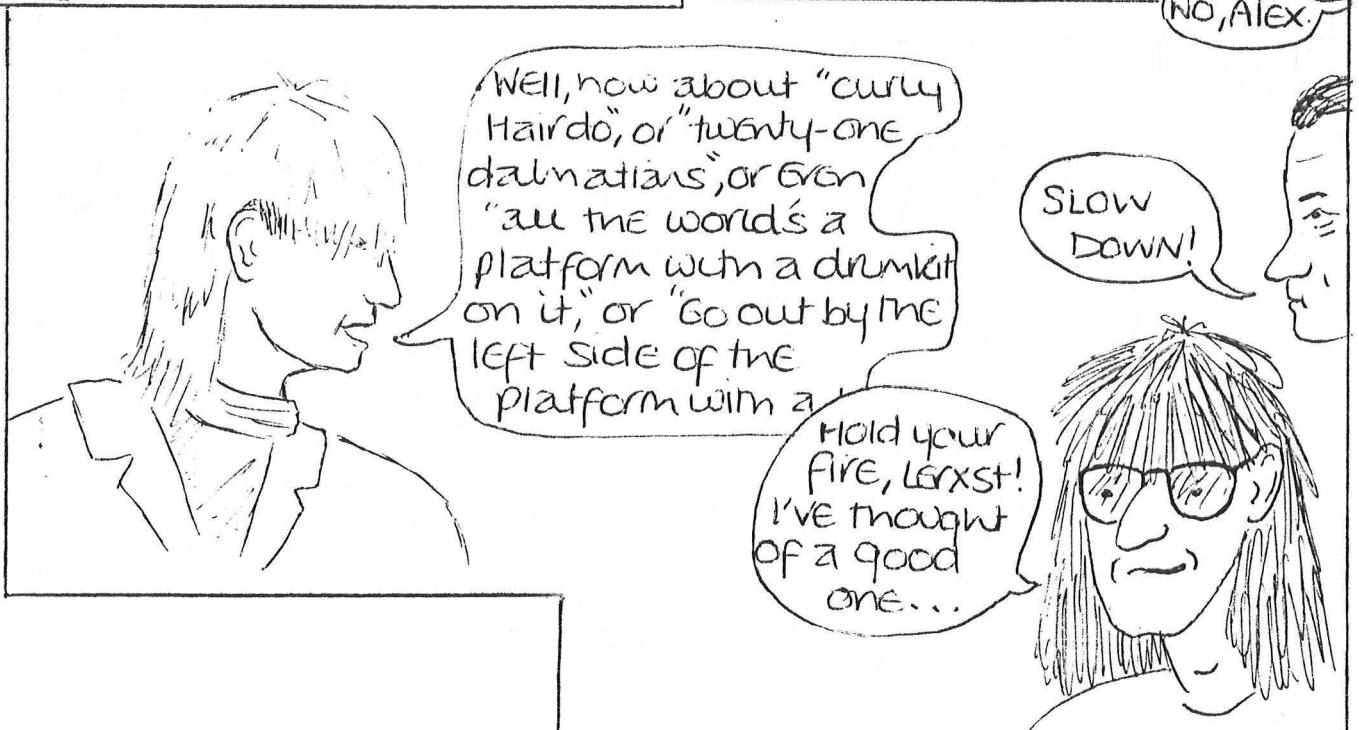
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HOLD YOUR FIRE

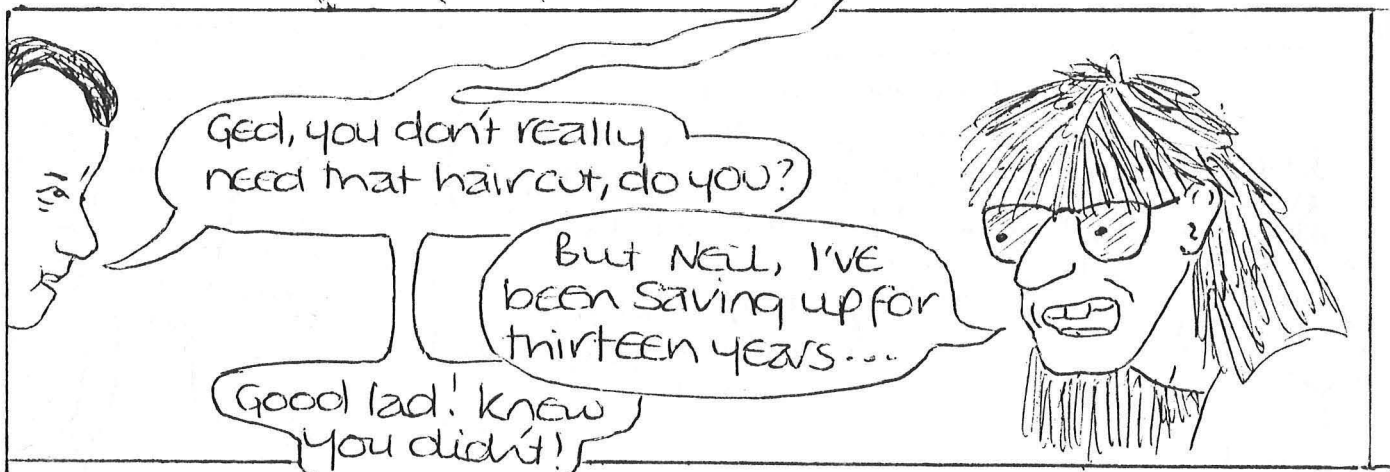
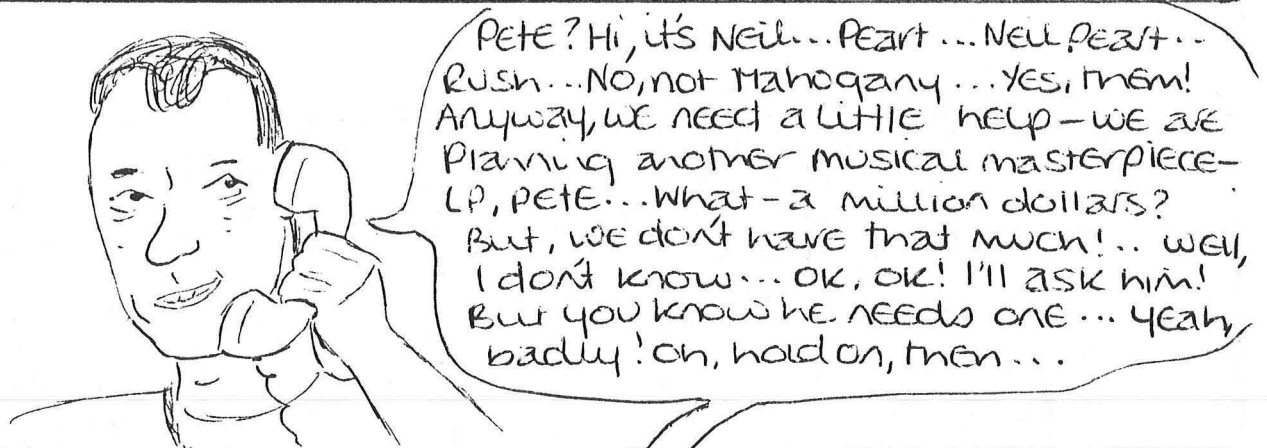
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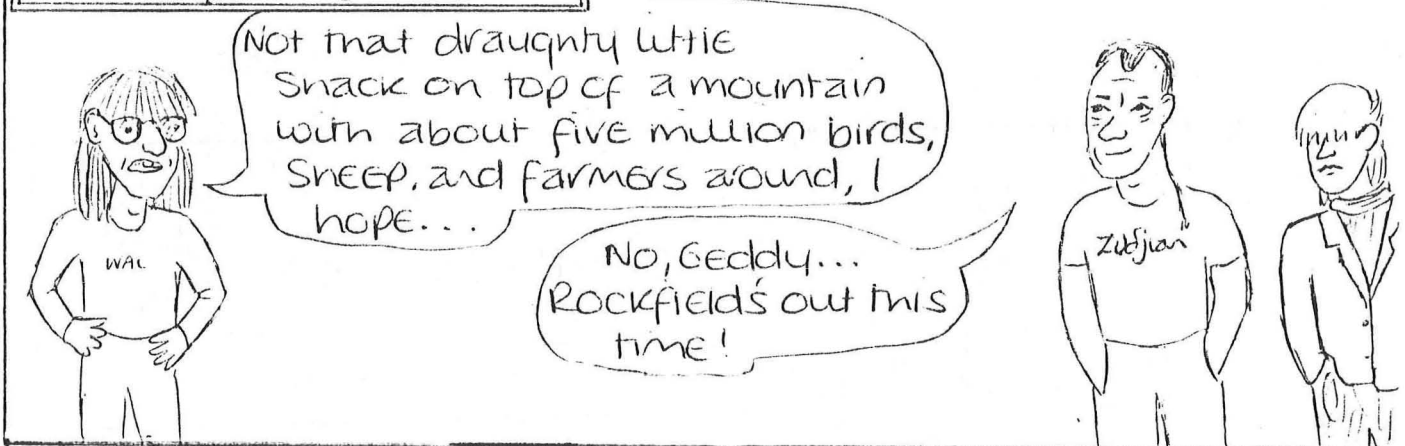
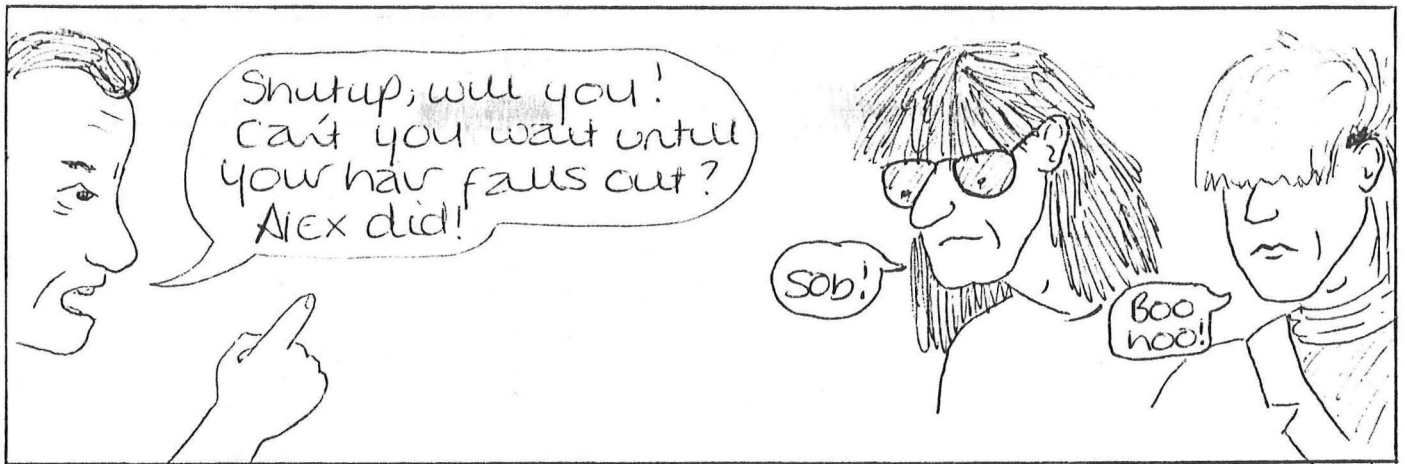
By
CHAZ
1988

ONE DAY, SOMEWHERE IN TORONTO...









At last, Pete Collins found them a studio in Oxfordshire... And one in Surrey... And one in Shmenqland... and one in Toronto... And one in Paris!



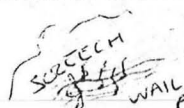
I hope there are no high parts this time... I don't like wearing tight trousers!

Hmm... have to hire a woman for that part, men!



4- JIMBO

Better make sure we have an orchestra handy in case Alex can't master the difficult bits again!



ALEX PRACTICING

FEEDBACK

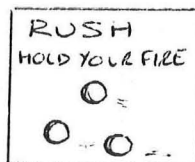
Can anyone draw? Our budget won't allow Hugh Syme this time...

AT LAST, after months of work, our heroes ended up with 'HOLD YOUR FIRE', a compilation of ten masterpieces - 'Force Ten' about Ged's indegestion after eating Alex's cooking, 'Time Stand Still' about broken watches, 'Open Secrets' about Geddy's nose job, 'Second Nature' with Richard Clayderman playing the introduction, 'Prime Mover', a ditty about Zodiac Mindwar, 'Lock and Key' about the UK tour dates, 'Mission' about the UK tour, 'Turn the page' about reading Ayn Rand books, 'Tai Shan' which is about nothing in particular, and 'High Water', about blocked drains.

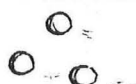
They also solved the problem of Ged's haircut - an elastic band and the Francis Rossi look; and instead of Hugh Syme they got Alex to draw around a 10 p piece (it was better than batman.) And Neil, like us, was pleased with the result. 'Thats a wrap, guys'!



25/11/88



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Time 9:00 - 12:00



RUSH

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R U S H

THE TOUR BOOKS

Written By Geoff Sheard

One area which Neil Peart pays special attention to is the tour book (Concert programme, tour programme, call them what you like). Over the last half dozen tours Neil has written a history of how the 'new' album was recorded, the problems that were encountered and what is new and different about this album, as opposed to all those that have gone before. This makes the tour books very useful to a Rush collector, if you collect them all they form a detailed album by album account of the history of Rush.

There have been ten Rush tour books, to the best of my knowledge, one for every album since *All the worlds a stage*, except *Exit...stage left* and *Hemispheres* for which there were none and two respectively. The first of these tour books was something of a budget affair to go with the 1977 British tour. The tour book is twelve pages long, with the only full colour pages being a centre page spread of Alex and Geddy. The tour book is otherwise made up of pages printed in yellow and red or yellow and green. Through the tour book there are sections of text written by Geoff Barton describing life in the year *2112* from the priests of the temples of syrnix point of view. This tour book is of historical interest as it is from the first Rush U.K. tour. There were only seven dates on this tour, they didn't all sell out, and not everyone there bought a tour book. Most tour books from the 1977 British tour will have got lost or thrown out over the last eleven years, so copies of it in mint condition are rare indeed. Is it the first ever Rush tour book? I don't know. The first three Rush albums were not commercially successful enough to give Rush full headlining status. *2112* was far more successful than its predecessors, however after its release Rush actually supported Aerosmith in their home town of Toronto. *2112* was recorded during the winter of 1976, with *All the worlds a stage* being recorded at Toronto's Massey Hall on June 11, 12, 13th 1977. This means that during early 1977 Rush were still playing as support act in their home town, not making headline status until they returned in June. Perhaps there was a tour book for the *2112* tour, or a page in a Kiss, Aerosmith or Blue Oyster Cult tour book when Rush were playing as their support.

The first British tour may have provided the impetus for the band's management to pull their finger out and get some merchandise together for the first time. There is no doubt about the budget, rather unprofessional 1977 British tour book, if that isn't the band's first effort then the previous attempts must be pretty rough!

The 1977 British tour finished at the Liverpool Empire on June 13th 1977. The sleeve notes of *A farewell to kings* says it was 'recorded at Rockfield Studios, Wales, June 1977' which indicates that the band dived straight into the studio after the last British date. Rush did not hang around as regards another tour, by February 12th 1978 they were back in the U.K. playing Birmingham Odeon, the first of 14 British dates. The tour book was all you would expect from a successful band, twenty four pages long with a purple cover

on which there was an 8"x8" colour picture of the *A farewell to kings* album cover with the words 'Rush world tour 77-78 Exclusive concert Edition' under it.

The *A farewell to kings* tour book centre page spread and front and back covers are in colour while the rest is in black and white. The first few pages list the U.K. tour dates, and the people and companies who help keep Rush on the road. The fourth page is an advert for the first six Rush albums, and the 'new' single, *Closer to the heart*. Two pages are given over to a brief history of Rush titled 'A condensed Rush primer, by Neil Peart'. During the course of the primer Neil describes how the band came together, how he joined, the near failure of the band after *Caress of steel* and the subsequent success of *2112* and *All the worlds a stage*. He sights the future as 'touring the United States and Canada extensively until February 1978, when we plan to return to Europe...'. Rush must have knocked out *A farewell to kings* and gone straight back on the road, do they never get tired? The rest of the tour book is made up of band photos, and a double page spread for each band member with a brief description of their equipment.

The *A farewell to kings* tour covered at least the U.S.A., Canada, Britain and mainland Europe. However, my tour book is definitely from 'The 1978 U.K. winter tour'. Presumably different versions from the U.S.A., Canada and Europe exist, although I have never come across them.

By June 1978 Rush were back at Rockfield Studios recording *Hemispheres*. Was *Hemispheres* the best or worst Rush album yet? Opinion was divided (excuse the pun) although the album did sell well, which ensured that the 'Tour of the Hemispheres' was a sell out when it opened at Newcastle City Hall on April 23rd 1979.

Was the tour book any good? Is the sky blue? Is Luxembourg small? Was it any good?.....Yes! The best yet, another twenty four page effort, but much more colour this time. A page given over to U.K. and Europe tour dates. A page 'Behind the scenes' about how the show is set up and run. A page by Geoff Barton about the history of Rush. Personally I prefer Neil Peart's written work, but Geoff Barton's effort is accurate and complete, if brief. The main body of the tour book is made up of black and white and colour pictures of the band, with each band member having a double page spread containing photos and an equipment list. This format was to become familiar, with the black and white pages giving way to a full colour production as the band became more successful.

To me the most striking aspect of the *Hemispheres* tour book is the double page spread advertising all the albums Rush had released, in chronological order, up to that point. This was a piece of marketing genius, the album covers for all eight albums (including *Archives*) were aranged four to the left and four to the right. The full double *Hemispheres* album cover is across the centre with the *Hemispheres* logo above it. All eight albums have a complete track listing next to them, so you can see which album songs come from. I saw Rush for the first time on the *Hemispheres* tour and remember getting up the day after the gig, reading my tour book and thinking 'look at all these albums I haven't got!'. At the time I only had *All the worlds a stage* and *Hemispheres* so I went out and bought the rest! Just what the band intended.

The last gig of the 'Tour of the Hemispheres' was at the Pink Pop Festival in Holland on June 4th 1979. Most festivals have a programme with a few pages on each band playing. Perhaps there is a Pink Pop concert programme that features Rush, if so I have not come across it.

After the Pink Pop Festival Rush went home for their first Summer holiday in four years. They started writing songs for what was to become *Permanent waves* in July 1979 and decided to get themselves into top form for recording the album by doing a few quick dates. This was the 'Semi-tour of some of the hemispheres'. They only had time for

a couple of dates in Britain, on September 21st and 22nd at the dreadful Stafford Bingley Hall, the acoustics being so bad they turned Rush into one big wall of noise. The tour book for the 'Semi-tour' was a curious thing indeed. It was furnished with a nice colour cover, and was an impressive twenty eight pages long, however at first sight I was not sure it was a tour book. On the cover was written 'Rush - The words and the pictures' and inside were photos of the band (disappointingly in black and white) and photos of Neil Peart's original hand written and illustrated lyrics for the first six studio albums. There is no doubt, however that this is a tour book as the introductory page (again written by Geoff Barton) finishes '...enjoy tonights concert and watch out for me in the front rows...'. I assume that 'The words and the pictures' had been put together for independant release, and was hastily commandeered as a tour book when Rush decided to slip in this quick tour. The story does not end here as in 1980 'The words and the pictures' Volume Two appeared. Apart from the lyrics, there are infact no words at all in this book! It is very much like the first volume, twenty eight pages again, mostly black and white and this time featuring lyrics from *Permanent waves*. Many lyrics from the first six studio albums were included, repeated from the first volume. It would seem that after using the first volume as a tour book, the release of *Permanent waves* quickly rendered it out of date. The first volume was then re-hashed to include the new lyrics and put out as Volume Two. As the inner sleeve of *Permanent waves* has all the lyrics for the album printed on it, there is no reason to buy Volume Two unless you want to see Neil Peart's original copies of the lyrics. I would say that Volume Two is worth having, if for this reason alone.

Permanent waves was recorded during the end of September and October 1979 at Le Studio, Morin Heights, Quebec, with the mixing taking place at Trident Studios in London during November. Early in the new year Rush were back on the road, arriving in the U.K. in June 1980. The tour book for the *Permanent waves* tour was the first in a new 'international' style that they have retained right up to, and including, the *Hold your fire* tour. The tour book contains no tour dates, so can be sold worldwide and at first sight it looks like a copy of the *Permanent waves* album. It is 12"x12" and has the Permanent waves album cover on the front with the Mercury logo and the catalogue number SRM-1-4001 on it indicating that the U.S. album cover was used. The tour book cover has 'Chicago Daily Tribune' and 'Dewey defeats Truman' blanked out, but does have the 'Lee, Peart and Lifeson' sign. In the U.K. there were two versions of the *Permanent waves* album cover, one like the tour book but with only Lifeson on the sign, the second with 'Blank Daily Blank', 'Dewey defeats Truman' and the full 'Lee, Peart and Lifeson' sign. I sometimes wonder how many variations on the *Permanent waves* album cover there are world-wide!

The *Permanent Waves* tour book is twenty pages long, thirteen of which are in black and white. Incredibly you have to wait until the *Grace under pressure* tour book until you get a full colour production. Pages three to five are titled 'Personal waves, the story of an album by Neil Peart' and are a vast improvement on Geoff Barton's efforts in the previous two tour books. Neil gives an excellent description of the making of *Permanent waves*, detailing the the 'Semi-tour of some of the Hemispheres' and how it came about. Many of the photos in the tour book are either lifted from 'The words and the pictures' first volume, Volume Two, or are obviously taken from the same photo sessions. The remaining photos are a selection of classic live shots, some of which are familiar from previous tour books. Each member of the band gets just one precious colour page to describe their equipment. The back inside cover of the tour book is given over to the album covers, all nine of them, and a full track listing for all the albums. I feel that this advert for the Rush back catalogue is not as good as the *Hemispheres* tour book, however it does its job well enough, it makes you realise that there is a lot of Rush to buy.

The declared intention of Rush was to release a second live album after the *Permanent waves* tour, however they changed their mind on May 9th 1980 after the second of four nights at the New York Palladium. They decided to make another studio album as they were feeling very positive and not in need of the creative rest offered by a live album.

August and September were spent working on ideas for new songs, with a short series of dates ending on October 1st 1980 at Portland, Maine, to get Rush into top form before entering the studio. The short tour did not make it to the U.K., and if there was a tour book I do not know about it. I suspect that the *Permanent waves* tour book was sold as it was still the most recent Rush album at the time.

During October and November of 1980 Rush recorded and mixed *Moving pictures* at Le Studio. This album was a landmark. Regarded by many as a peak in achievement, summing - up everything the band had been trying to do it represented a turning point - it sold really well! In excess of three million copies in fact, and suddenly Rush were selling out stadiums, not theatres, in North America.

Rush were back on the road in early 1981, and after a long North American trek made it to the U.K. in October 1981. The tour book was along the same lines as for the *Permanent waves* tour, at first sight looking like a copy of the album with it's 12"x12" format and the *Moving pictures* cover on the front. The only addition to the album cover were the words 'Nineteen hundred and eighty one' printed under the words 'Moving pictures'. It is twenty pages long, seven of them in black and white. Two of the black and white pages contain 'A Rush newsreel, byline: Neil Peart', where once again Neil describes how the 'new' happened. The remaining five black and white pages go almost unnoticed, adding contrast to the mainly colour production. You would not think the band were trying to cut corners by printing some pages in black and white, although there is little doubt that they are!

Like the *Permanent waves* tour book one page is given over to each band member, with a picture and a short description of the equipment used. One page is given over to a list of those who help keep Rush on the road, and another is an advert for the Rush back catalogue, like the one in the *Permanent waves* tour book, with the addition of a *Moving pictures* track listing. The tour book is in an international style again, with no tour dates and no indication of whether it is to accompany a U.S., Canadian or U.K. tour. I often wonder if any of the later international style tour books are available with Neil's text translated, perhaps into Japanese to accompany a tour there. Once again if such tour books exist I have not come across them.

The *Moving pictures* tour book has a more polished look to it than any of its predecessors. The time and effort that has gone into it is evident, with more recent photos of the band, many of which are clearly taken during the making of *Moving pictures*. There is one particularly nice page that shows Neil's hand written and illustrated lyrics for the *Moving pictures* album. As far as I am aware this is the only place these are published.

After the British tour Rush went back to Le Studio, and by September 1981 were busy mixing *Exit...stage left*. This task was completed by Christmas, allowing the band some time off before retreating to The Grange, Muskoka Lakes, Ontario to spend March 1982 working on songs for what was to become *Signals*. It is perhaps surprising that Rush did not take six months off after mixing *Exit...stage left* then release it and tour. This would have let them off the hook as regards a new studio album and explains why there is no *Exit...stage left* tour book, they never toured to promote it. April to July 1982 were spent recording and mixing *Signals*, with the obligatory huge North American tour following. The success of *Moving pictures* meant that the *Signals* tour of the U.S.A. and Canada was even longer than usual. This coupled with the long delay between finishing the *Moving pictures* tour and starting the *Signals* tour (due to the mixing of *Exit...stage left*) meant that Rush did not tour the U.K. during 1982.

The annual Rush tour had been on the calendar since 1977, and with hindsight the absence of live dates during 1982 was an indication of things to come as the *Grace under pressure* and *Power windows* tours did not make the U.K., or Europe, at all. British fans

had to wait until May 1983 before the *Signals* tour arrived in the U.K. It was another short series of sold out shows, with the tour book continuing in the style of the previous two. The 12"x12" tour book has the *Signals* cover on the front with the addition of the words 'New world tour - MCMLXXXIII' below the picture of the dalmation and fire hydron.

The tour book was an extension of the *Moving pictures* tour book as *Moving pictures* was an extension of the ideas in the *Permanent waves* tour book. Once again there were twenty pages, this time only five in black and white. The cover of the *Signals* tour book is of a thicker card than previously, giving it a better feel. Curiously this good idea was subsequently dropped on later tour books. Neil's introductory piece is once again present, 'Stories from Signals, collected from the drummers diary, by Neil Peart'. This once again gives an excellent insight into the making of the album, this time song by song.

The familiar format of one page per band member for a photo and equipment list is retained with the rest of the tour book being given over to live shots from the *Moving pictures* tour. The exception to this is a page given over to a (good) crossword by Dave Webb, and the obligatory back catalogue advert, once again Rush excell themselves, the addition of *Exit...stage left* and *Signals* making twelve albums in all. The cover of each album is reproduced with four albums across the page and three down. Track listings for all albums are included, and the point is made, there is more Rush than ever to buy!

The *Signals* tour book is a definite, if subtle, improvement over what has gone before. Rush do not seem to ever change radically, but rather evolve from album to album. They always learn from their mistakes and improve as a consequence. This is true of everything they do, including tour books.

Once again the U.K. tour dates came close to the end of the tour. By mid-August 1983 Rush were in hiding working on material for what would become *Grace under pressure*. They played at New York's Radio City Music Hall from September 18th to 23rd in order to air some of the new songs live. I have no idea if a tour book was sold at these gigs, though I suspect that the *Signals* tour book was on sale.

Rush retreated to Le Studio again to record the new material. It took from November 1983 to March 1984 to complete work on *Grace under pressure*, and the ensuing tour did not come to Europe. Disaster! *Signals* did not sell well compared to *Moving pictures*, I can only speculate that the *Signals* tour did nothing to help sales of the album in Europe so the bands management decided that the cost of bringing the American show, complete with lasers, was not worth it. Solution, shoot the management!

The disappointment of not seeing Rush live in the U.K. was in no way diminished by the excellent tour book we didn't get the chance to buy at a British gig! Another twenty page tour book along the same lines as the previous three, 12"x12" with the *Grace under pressure* album cover on the front. The only addition to the album cover is the number 1984, indicating the year of the tour. The only real change for this tour was the absence of any black and white pages for the first time, with the addition of page numbers. This tour book is definitely a more up market affair than its predecessors, it has a 'no expense spared' feel about it that the others do not have. The tour book starts with an introduction 'Pressure release, by Neil Peart'. Neil spends much of the article describing the hunt for Peter Henderson, a new producer to replace Terry Brown who had produced everything that they had done up until this point. There is a page per band member for a photo and an equipment list, and the same one page advert that appeared in the *Signals* tour book with the addition of a *Grace under pressure* track listing. The rest of the tour book is made up of photos from the *Signals* tour and stills from the videos made to promote the singles from *Grace under pressure*.

Just flicking through the *Grace under pressure* tour book, after looking through the previous seven, there seems to be a shift away from their former style. Perhaps it is the

inclusion of photos by Yousuf Karsh; its hard to pin down, but the tour book seems to be much more cohesive than its predecessors. The photos of the band, live shots and video stills sit together really well. Add to the tour book a cover that is, in my opinion, the finest thing that Hugh Syme has ever done, and you have a tour book that radiates professionalism. The *Grace under pressure* video shows a vast improvement in the band since *Exit...stage left*. I think the excellent tour book is just one more way in which the band had progressed.

Rush were tucked away in an isolated farm house in Ontario by February 1985, working on material that would eventually form *Power windows*. In March 1985 Rush played a few shows to brush up their new songs. This mini tour did not make the U.K., the *Grace under pressure* tour book was probably being sold at the concerts. By April Rush were recording at the Manor, Oxfordshire. Unlike *Grace under pressure* that was recorded in one place Rush moved about to record *Power windows*. After three weeks laying down rhythm tracks at the Manor they moved to Air Studios, Montserrat, for a further three weeks of guitar overdubs. By June Rush were at SERM East Studios, Mayfair, for final overdubs and vocals then mixing of the album. *Power windows* was completed by September 1985, nine months after the band first started writing for the album and six months after they started recording.

Rush actually started writing songs for what was to become *Hold your fire* almost exactly one year after finishing *Power windows*, during the autumn of 1986. During the year after recording *Power windows* Rush toured from November 1985 to May 1986, however it was to be the most 'relaxed' tour to date. As with the *Grace under pressure* tour they did not make it to the U.K., the expense not making it worthwhile.

The excellent tour book that accompanied the *Power windows* tour was the only consolation for the lack of live dates in the U.K. It is another full colour effort, thirty two pages long (including the covers) and represents the single biggest jump in the size of a Rush tour book. At thirty two pages long the term tour book becomes almost justified, as it is getting to book like proportions! Neil Peart produces his now familiar description of the recording of the 'new' album in 'Looking through power windows, by Neil Peart' which again takes three pages at the beginning of the tour book. This is probably Neil's best effort to date in this department, included are fewer facts but more about his thoughts and feelings as the album progresses from writing the lyrics through to mixing. The value of this is in giving the reader an idea of how the band 'ticks'. The facts are not important as any of the Rush interviews done during the *Power windows* tour will fill in these.

The *Grace under pressure* and *Power windows* tour books were never officially available in this country, however Neil Peart's introductions are re-printed in Issue One of The spirit of Rush, with the introduction from the *Hold your fire* tour book in Issue Three (back issues of The spirit of Rush from the editor). There is of course more to the tour books than Neil's introductory pieces, and so for those interested in the original tour books most are available from the Rush Backstage Club. After paying \$8:00 membership, the following tour books are available through the club:- *Moving pictures* (\$3:00), *Signals* (\$3:00, and for a limited period free with your membership), *Grace under pressure* (\$4:00), *Power windows* (\$6:00) and *Hold your fire* (\$7:00). This is good value; I recently saw the *Grace under pressure* tour book selling in the U.K. for £15:00.

Returning to the *Power windows* tour book, the familiar format is retained with one page per band member for photos and an equipment list. The inside back cover is an advert for the fourteen Rush albums (including *Archives*) now available with the majority of the tour book being made up from video stills and live shots. All of the photos are very high quality with no 'grainy' effects caused by enlarging a photo too much. The quality of the printing is faultless, with a high quality 'glossy magazine' feel to the whole tour book. Once again Rush progress and produce a bigger, better, tour book than before.

At this point it is worth mentioning the feature on Neil Peart in the May 1987 issue of *Modern Drummer*. This feature comprises a Sound Page (flexi-disc) on which is *Pieces of Eight*, a piece of music written and recorded by Neil using nothing but percussion instruments and a two page article entitled 'Neil Peart, The quest for new drums'. You might expect this article to be written by a journalist who knows nothing about Rush, but it is infact written by Neil himself. Neil's introductions to the tour books detail the time during which the 'new' album was recorded. In exactly the same way this article describes the period between the making of *Power windows* and *Hold your fire* making it a valuable link piece between two tour books.

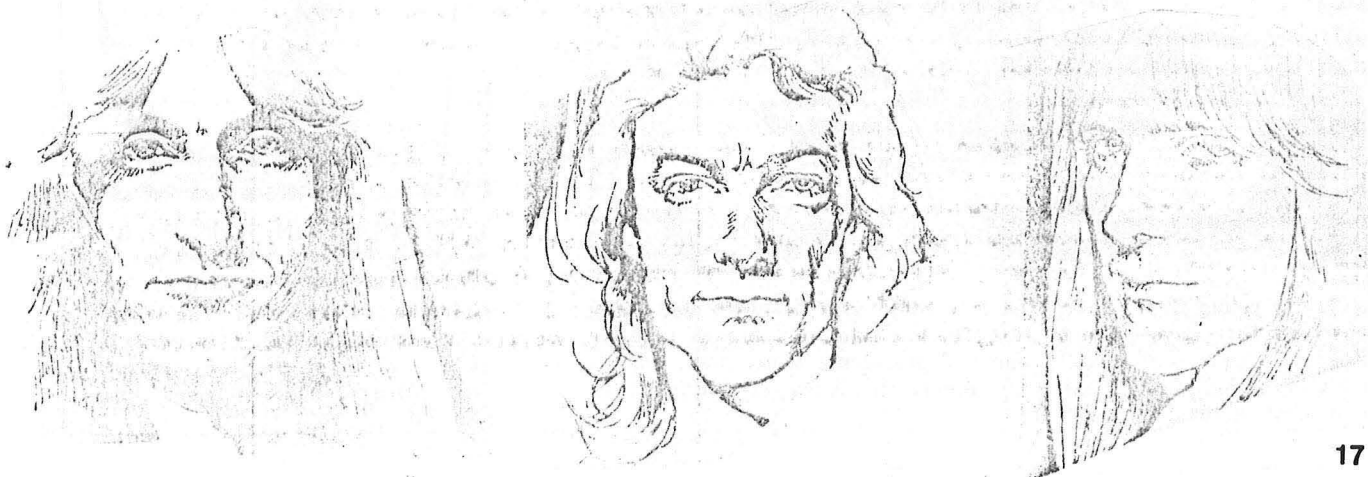
September 1986 saw Neil Peart tucked away in a lakeside cottage working on lyrical ideas for the songs that would eventually form *Hold your fire*. By October the whole band assembled at Elora Sound to start work on musical ideas, and for Neil to continue with the lyrics. This time the band decided not to play any live dates before starting to record the new songs. After a short break over Christmas the band returned to The Manor, Oxfordshire, to start recording. After three weeks they moved to Ridge Farm Studios, Surrey, to start on the overdubs. From here they moved to Air Studios, Montserrat, then to McClear Place Studios, Toronto. By May 1987 Rush had moved again to Studio Guillaume Tell in Paris to mix the album. September saw the release of *Hold your fire*, and Rush were back on tour. After touring the U.S.A. and Canada they are scheduled to mix a new live album (Hooray! Make it a SLP set!) in March before they return to the U.K. in April.

Most people reading this will no doubt have seen Rush on the U.K. tour, so will already have a copy of the *Hold your fire* tour book. For those who don't, it follows closely the pattern set on the *Permanent waves* tour, and continued by each subsequent tour book. The 12"x12" format remains the same, and Neil Peart's essential introduction is included, 'Fireworks, the making of *Hold your fire* by Neil Peart'. As with the *Power windows* tour book Neil is more interested in getting across the feel of the band, not just the dry facts about the album.

The thirty two page full colour format is retained from the *Power windows* tour, with a page for each band member and the usual excellent advert for the entire Rush back catalogue. The remainder of the tour book comprises the high quality live shots and video stills we have come to expect, and of course the quality of production is superb.

Tour books only form a peripheral area of interest to a record collector. The Rush tour books are so good, however, that they really deserve attention. By looking through a complete tour book collection, the development of Rush can be clearly seen from the rather amaterish, budget 1977 British tour book through to the slick professionalism of *Power windows* and *Hold your fire*.

Lastly there is, as all record collectors know, no such thing as a complete record collection. Likewise there is no such thing as a complete tour book collection. My own feeling is that the most likely gaps are the 1979 Pink Pop Festival, and tour books by other bands with Rush mentioned as the support act from the 1973-1976 period.



QUEEN FER A DAY

Actually, it's Rok Kritik Fer A Day. Heavy Metal trio Rush decided it was about time they found out what in tarnation 'Heavy Metal' means. So they elected to ask the experts, the boys and girls at Beetle Magazine. They were so impressed with our laidback lifestyle that they decided, "Well, what the hell; there's nothing to this rock writer biz that we can't do." So, here's what happened when Rush took over Beetle's offices for a day.



1. It's off to work we go-ho-ho. Early in the morning, the three newly anointed business types fight their way through the traffic of Bathurst Street in order to be on time, just like all good Beetle staffers do. Notice that Neil holds his morning paper lower than the other two. That's 'coz he likes in-depth news.

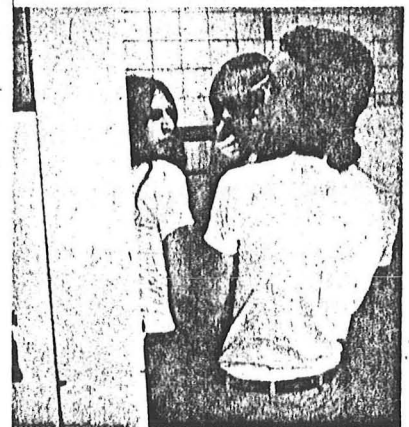


3. Pretty young Geddy takes dictation while Alex proposes something obscene. These boys catch on fast. On the side Alex makes massive financial deals with record company presidents while Neil, who is gallantly attempting to hustle some advertising, is prepared to spend the rest of his natural life on hold.

Photo story by
Paul Sterling



2. Our heroes ascend the stairway that leads to the massive Beetle complex. Not accustomed to the hard, rigorous businessman's lifestyle, Alex wonders: "Golly, why can't the roadies carry my attache case?"



4. Tho' it's still early in the day, it's becoming clear that this magazine biz is not all it's cracked up to be. Neil sings "Here Come The Warm Jets", Geddy says, "We aim to please, will you aim too please!" while Alex prepares a snack for himself.



5. Foregoing the Beetle staffer's usual modest repast of dogmeat pie (available across the street) and mud coffee (just north), our heroes opt for a little rock. Geddy proves that he knows which end of the guitar one should pose behind, Alex finally washes his hands and Neil models an all-purpose drumstick.



6. It's time to tackle the publisher's job! Let's count the money! Let's do nothing for the rest of the day! Let's sit around and watch the slaves work their butts off for their measly weekly wages! Let's light our fat cigars with crisp dollar bills! Actually our publisher's not like that. He doesn't smoke.



7. Now it's time to clean up the editorial end. But we can't file anything, 'coz then the editor could never find it. We can't peel the stickers off his desk, 'coz then he couldn't remember the name of any bands.



8. Well, it's back to the old can. Geddy's having problems with his breakfast. The old Rice Krispies can't decide which end to come out. And with the other two voyeurs hanging about, Geddy's having problems getting in the mood.



9. It's getting nigh on showtime and Alex feels he must prepare for the evening's gig. The beauty parlor was never like this, which also explains why Alex has never been beautiful. However, we have no snappy lines to explain why Alex wears dark glasses in the office.



10. 'Tis the end of the day and our heroes are convinced that the publishing biz really ain't such a hot way to make a living. Tired from a full day of takin' care of business, Rush decided that three chord boogie beats out eight hour monotony any day. So as our heroes slowly drag their butts off into the sunset, we bid a fond farewell to lovely Bathurst Street where the natives are hard at work, straining overtime to get out the next ish.

HEMISPHERES

SOUNDS REVIEW 1978

This really is a most confounding album. Even though I've had a copy of 'Hemispheres' in my possession for a goodly while now, more or less since Rush completed it's recording in late summer, I still find myself torn between two vastly different points of view. To wit:

(A): This LP is the definitive, culmiative Rush statement. After a largely inauspicious debut as a three piece Canadian Zeppelin imitation outfit, the band have developed through four years and seven albums and have now blossomed to become the most technically accomplished and musically ambitious 'heavy rock' band exant on the planet today. A lovingly crafted, highly complex album, 'Hemispheres' is brimful with profound lyrical statements ... music with a message ... (TRITE BUT TRUE).

Or (B): 'Hemispheres' finds Rush wallowing way, way out of their depth. Listening to the album, it seems impossible to think that this band were once honest, unpretentious purveyors of straight-forward, hard-hitting heavy metal music. Now, having forsaken basic beginnings, Rush sound ambitious beyond their musical means. They seem to have tried too hard, to have stretched musical aspirations too far. Now, like an elastic band, they've snapped to hang flaccid and useless. And drummer Neil Peart's lyrics, which were once sword and sorcery/sci-fi slanted, now convey 'social messages' and altogether fail to convince.

'Hemispheres' comprises just four tracks, three on side one, one (the epic track) on the flip. The LP kicks off with 'Circumstances', a concise, self-contained track, with an instantly memorably chorus. Musically the song is very much in 'Closer To The Heart' spirit, though not lyrically: people take their chances in life, says Peart, but it's a sad fact that many are often 'tricked by circumstances'.

The pastoral/medieval flavoured number 'Trees' follows. Over a largely straight ahead (although at times oddly funky) rock rythum, we're told of the plight of the maples who feel that the taller oaks are having an unfair share of the sunlight in the forest. The maples form a union, win their cause and eventually all the trees are kept equal by 'hatchet, axe and saw'.

The lengthy instrumental 'La Villa Srangiate' closes the side. Fast paced, multi faceted, it contains many different musical interludes, ranging from Spanish guitar passages to jazz rock sessions and taking in snatches of synthesizer, straight ahead heavy metal, the sabre-dance: and much more along the way.

Side two is taken up with a single track, the long-winded conclusion to the tale of 'Cygnus X-1' begun on the previous Rush album 'A Farewell To Kings'. God of the mind Apollo ('I BRING TRUTH AND UNDERSTANDING') battles God of the heart Dionysus ('HE BRINGS LAUGHTER, MUSIC, JOY AND TEARS') and our hero, the shapeless spirit of Cygnus, arrives in Olympus to act as mediator between the two. This tale unfolds over a highly involved musical score, not as immediately accessible as say '2112', but nonetheless effective, especially when Cygnus materialises in the city of imortals and hears the sound of the battle: distant dronings and great understated thunderings.

Those are the basic essentials anyway, but like I say, I'm really unable to decide whether 'Hemispheres' is a masterwork or mistake. Sometimes the album sounds totally convincing: on other occasions it appears messy and disjointed, and yet I suppose the very fact that I'm certain about the merits of this LP makes it a failure. After all, in the past just about every Rush review I've written has brimmed over with superlatives ... and this time around you'd be hard pressed to find even one.

When it comes down to it, I'd much rather hear about a battle between By-Tor and the Snow Dog than Gods by the name of Apollo and Dionysus. Which would suggest that I reckon Rush should return to basics ... that they have become too ambitious for their own good.

What the hell. The albums released on November 8 - see what YOU think...

GEOFF BARTON



JIM LADD: Since the last time we had Neil Peart on our show, there has been a major change in the world surrounding Neil Peart, Geddy Lee and Alex Lifeson. The popularity of Rush has literally exploded; a situation which has a bitter-sweet reality for Neil Peart...
(JL) Do you like it this way?

NEIL: Funny you should say that - I find it a little uncomfortable to be truthful. There was a perfect measure of success that we reached over the past 2 or 3 years that gave us independence; no one leaning on us or telling us what we had to do to our music to make it sell, because it was commercially successful enough to make the business side of things very happy. Also we could go out and headline our tours and be in control of the presentation of ourselves, and our motive. Travelling and playing and all that was in our control, but at the same time we didn't have people following us around everywhere, hotels full of people and all the rudeness going on too, that makes it so strange.
(NP)

(JL) And that's strange as opposed to fun to you?

(NP) Yeah, I find it very uncomfortable, that position, the way people tend to consider us and look at me as a human being now; I can't deal with it comfortably. I can't relate to people who have a one sided view of me, thinking that they've known me for all these years and they know everything about me. Also the adulation side of it too makes it very uncomfortable, you can't relate to a person on a basis like that. I like to meet a person on a professional basis or on a stranger basis and strike up a friendship out of whatever common points we might have, but when someone's coming at you so intently, yelling and screaming or whatever, going berserk, there's just no way of responding humanly. You can either put out a little facade and weather it out, or quiver inside and escape as quick as you can - like I do!

(JL) You go on to say that to live in the limelight "One must put aside the alienation and get on with the fascination, the real relation, the underlying theme"...

(NP) That's coming back to music again. How difficult sometimes it becomes to maintain music as a focus. When you're on the road for instance it's 2 hours of every day that you spend on stage, and for most part of the rest of the day leads up to that or winds down from it, and it is definitely the focus of your life. When the day gets more complicated, there's more and more demands on your time; instead of time on your hands, you have hands on your time (I like that!). That's the question involved there - you have to put aside all that, and it's songwriting that's important and that's going to make the difference between feeling good and not feeling good - and if I walk off stage knowing that I haven't played as

well as I can, I feel bad, and it doesn't matter how many thousands of people are telling me that it was good - it wasn't. On the other hand when I walk off stage knowing that I've played well or close to as well as I can, then I feel very satisfied, and it's a sort of peace of mind that nothing can intrude on, negatively or positively, you just feel good about it and you don't need external ratification or external approval for that.

(JL) You mentioned this last time we got together too - you've made a point of you guys being very principled in what you do, and you seem to have a very strong, almost moral commitment to being professional and good and honest in your writing as opposed to just whatever's going to sell.

(NP) Yeah, without trying to be too bombastic about that, it is true that we have tried to guide everything by the principles that first made us interested in it; in terms of the freedom of choice and the type of material that we would play and the expression of music that we felt was exciting and good, and would excite other people as well. We are music fans and we like music, and we know what we respond to in music, so therefore if we respond to that in our music that little equation will hold true. In terms of ethics or morals or whatever, that too becomes a greater thing, because the bigger the whole enterprise becomes the wider our career becomes spread, we try to watch over things like our programmes and all of the things that are sold with our name on them. It becomes very important to us because of that fact. Things like our album cover packaging and all of that leads to arguments and disagreements; the kind of mental pressure of worrying about all these things and trying to make them all come together at the beginning of a tour ... it would be so easy to delegate them, but at the same time it feels like you're cutting yourself loose in a certain way. If you stop paying attention to the details and stop wanting to do interviews and communicate, all of those things are very important to what we believe in, and to the communication of what we believe in, so that's the thing that grows in the telling too, unfortunately.

(JL) In 'Tom Sawyer', is this an overview, how you'd look at a 1980's rocker, today's kids on the street?

(NP) There's a lot of different ingredients in that song lyrically. It began as a song by another writer, a friend of ours who writes for a group called Max Webster. His lyrics we've always admired very much, and we have a close working relationship with that whole band, so he gave me this song and suggested it might be suitable for us. I added a certain amount of rewriting on it and it came out to be a 50/50 his and mine. The stance of it does definitely have a modern day's rocker persona about it.

(JL) This is without question the most popular song on the album.

(NP) Surprisingly so - it always surprises me how certain songs tend to become more popular than others, and you can never predict the ones. It was always one of my favourite songs, right from the rhythm track or it, because that's the part of it that I really liked, and that song exemplifies a change in our writing style that we've tried to institute on this album. We've tried to write more from the stand point of rhythm - we'll establish a rhythmic feel that we like and work the musical changes around that. In the past we would often find a musical pattern that we liked and then work rhythmic changes around that, which made the strata of our music very much different in that respect because there'd be shifting rhythms all the time, and it gave the music a certain 'twitchiness'; 'Tom Sawyer' is an example of a really steady, confident song.

(JL) There were times, in the way you guys write, where I think people would come away from listening to a song for the first time and say "That sounds like

they took 4 different songs".

(Nr) That's certainly valid, we've tended very much to work in pieces. Now that we have more experience with arrangements and dealing with rhythm and melody and so on, we can apply that experience into a conventional manner and manage to make it more interesting than a cliché without becoming meandering. That's something Pye Dubois (the other writer) is able to create very well, this modern day street character. That's a part of his writing that I wanted to incorporate into our style too - so yes it does have partly to do with that streetwise character of integrity or whatever - a hero certainly. That has a certain amount of nostalgia in it for me because the 'Tom Sawyer' boyish adventurousness I really relate to - I was always poking around in rivers and streams, building rafts, going on hikes, that sort of thing.

(JL) When I was a kid I used to poke around Becky Thatcher.

(NP) (Laughing) well that's of course a part of it too.

(JL) What is the occult interest in this band - and who has that?

(NP) The occult... I think it's more of a fascination than an interest. I would say that we all share that interest; things like 'The Twilight Zone', we're all very much fans of that, and the supernatural is a very appealing thing. I'm somewhat of a pragmatic person, I believe in an objective reality and all of that stuff, so I find it hard to be really convinced that these things are all true, but at the same time I find them fascinating to think about, regardless if they are or not. I think that's the only way I can express it. To me, creating an alternate world, sometimes I can see it as just a vehicle but at the same time it's a fascination for it's own sake - the fact that there might be an alternate universe and powers that we don't know about, people with ways of communication and expression, methods of technology and so on that are advanced; all of that is fascinating to think about.

(JL) In a lot of the symbols on the album cover and so forth it's more specific than "are these people in different time zones", "are there other entities", if you had to put a collar on it, it'd be more like black magic than white magic. I mean the five pointed star, the guy that's burning with the cross and all of that - and I'm trying to stay away from the word here of any type of satanic thing, but it does bring that up as opposed to something else in the occult.

(NP) Well, that's interesting... I have to say that occult symbolism too is a very attractive thing graphically alone. All those pentagrams and weird hieroglyphics and stuff are very attractive graphically, but I think that the influence is felt in our symbolism, but it must be just a graphic association, because certainly none of us is involved in Alistair Crowley or black magic of any kind, or devil worship or anything like that. No one else has ever made that association with me - I find it hard to justify and I can be specific about different examples; for instance the five pointed star just evolved from the words to the song, and in '2112' it just mentions the red star was the symbol of the solar federation, which was a totalitarian authoritarian kind of collectivist oppression.

(JL) "Witch Hunt", a song for the moral majority, an ode to the KKK.

(NP) Partly so, it has to do with that mob mentality as far as I'm concerned. Like for instance in the part of Canada where we live, Province of Ontario has film censorship, it has to do with that, and it has to do with racism or religious persecution or prejudice of any kind any time; Nazism, McCarthyism, any of them, take your pick; I hate them all. Basically what I'm rousing

on is mob mentality, and that's the kind of mentality that killed witches as much as killed Jews or kills Negroes now - and I think all of it is terrible.

(JL) I really like the way it opens. Is that a crowd?

(NP) Yeah, we created all that ourselves, you just flashed me back in my whole memory!... We were out in the snow, I guess it was early November or so up at Le Studio in the mountains with snow and everything. We set up the microphone about 40 feet away from the studio, and then went out in the parking lot in the thick of black night - there's no street lights or anything round there, it's very, very dark, and we were all standing out there! I sort of played the part of the rabble rouser and stood there giving a very evangelist kind of speech, exhorting the crowd to blood and violence and save your soul!, we had all the guys from our crew, the other guys in the band all screaming and so on, and we did all this again and again and tracked it over each other to create this feeling of wild hysteria: that madness that comes over a group of people and they do things they'd never do as individuals, and will probably contemplate with horror for the rest of their lives. You just know that people aren't inherently that evil, and it takes a special kind of madness of knowing... It's a really brutal thing but at the same time as a human being I can partly understand how it happens, in the sense of getting all keyed up by everyone around you, and there's no one to censure your approval, You look around to see everyone else being exactly the same, so what you're doing must be right - it's a particular kind of madness, but it seems to come in very sane, balanced people. I've felt that kind of mindless prejudice, just by nature of, what would it be? like 12 years ago, to have long hair was to be discriminated against. Restaurants in my home town wouldn't serve people with long hair, and stuff like that was shocking to me, because it was someone taking a negative attitude towards me without having a clue why, or what I was like or anything, so that was a sharp stab in the face for me. And of course the late 60's was a very tense time of civil rights in America and that was very vivid to my mind, being a naive teenager, and that kind of brutality being as close as a place like Detroit for instance, which is very close to where I was brought up; it made a big impact, to watch that stuff on T.V, it has a certain graphic power. For instance, I can still remember the images now, and the sense of just not understanding at the time, so I know it hit me very hard, and that would probably have a bearing on it now too. I know prejudice and hostility in general have always made a strong impact on my nature. The important part of it, as you say, fundamentally it could be any body any where, it doesn't necessarily have to be the old South or the witch hunts of the 16th/17th centuries, it's all of them...

(JL) It could be the Republican party today...

(NP) Well, I hate to take it as broad as that because I don't think they're all like that, and not everybody wants to protect us from ourselves and shove law and order down our throats. I don't think that's necessarily the foundation of the whole Republican party, but unfortunately there are certain factors of it as there are in both ends - there are a lot of people who would have us do things for their own good; and that principal alone I have a lot of quarrels with! Conservation, by definition must be a bad thing because you can't keep the past alive artificially, that's the premise. But also the premise of Liberalism is sort of mindless change sometimes, so that can be equally bad. The state of America right now, is the state of everywhere; some of it's good and some's bad, and that's been the same for as long as I've known America well, and it's certainly the same in Canada, and it's the same about music. I think that's kind of become my maxim about everything; if someone asks me how I'm doing now it's "well, some good, some bad" - some days I like it and some days

I don't. (Red Barchetta) it's not only a fantasy story, but it's also a personal fantasy of mine, because I have such a relationship to the sensuality of open cars and driving down winding country roads and so on. In the ideal-ogical sense too, it expresses a spirit of rebellion that I really like, rebellion against authority and the individuality that's forever been represented by the car, especially to youth and rock music and so on. It's the ultimate metaphor really for independence and aggression, power almost.

(JL) It seems like, here's a guy who's had it with the city, he's got to get out and drive fast.

(NP) That's what I get when I get home from being on the road all the time, and I've been couped up in a hotel or bus, and in the hall's and airplanes and so on. So I go home and I go driving, and it's a really free feeling, I put a nice tape on and just cruise.

(JL) Where did the chase come from, with the 'alloy aircars' and all that?

(NP) Well the plot derives from a short story I read years ago - it was just one of those things I read in a magazine, 'Road and Track' magazine for that matter, and it was just so powerful it struck me for years and years. Infact it was 1973 I've since found out that I read the story, because I got in contact with the magazine to try and reach the author of the story, which I wasn't able to do incidently. The story was in 1973 prior to all fuel crisis business it was just at the time of Government intervention with safety vehicles, like big trucks, and this guy would take his sportscar and go riding through the country and be chased by these huge things.

(JL) What is the studio enviroment like? you made a point of how you like going back to this place.

(NP) That's a really nice place. It's a mountain range called the Laurentation Mountains in the Canadian Sheild part of Canada, so it's quite rugged and Northerly, and the studio is situated on about 200/250 acres of private, wooded, mountainous area. It's beautifully equiped, technically speaking and very isolated. The isolation is what's important for us, and I guess our last four albums have been made in a very isolated, sort of rural environment. It just facilitates the concentration, that's what it comes down to; there's less distraction. When we used to work in Toronto, we'd have our friends coming over, and business people coming over, which isn't necessarily objectionable because you like to see your friends, but it curtails the amount of work that gets done. The continuity of your concentration is constantly being broken towards other things.

(JL) When you say you don't want your concentration broken - this is something that a lot of creative people talk about, that they go in to, and God I don't want to use the word "Space" here in L.A. man, but there's a certain thing when you have to set up the walls and say OK. it's time to work now.

(NP) It's almost like a switch, I find. For instance when it comes to writing lyrics, which is something that I only do for a month of the year when we're working on songwriting, when I can sit down at that point and take out my note book (all through the tours and everything I'm making notes and writing down titles I like and stuff like that). I find when I go into the writing mode (we tend to describe it as different modes of our lives), I can sit there all day and pour out lyrics; it's just the craftsmanship that takes me time, because the inspiration has already happened and been written down, so all of those associations come back to me at that time and I'm able to sit down and focus on words, period. All I think about is martialling these words into order, and different ways of phrasing them and rhyiming them and so on, and it is a capital

'S' space that your in - nothing else is in there at all, you're thinking only of words. When it comes down to writing the music it's the same kind of thing for us - it's a total world of music, that's all you're thinking of; and it becomes so intense through writing and recording in fact that when you listen to other peoples music, all you're hearing is studio sounds and mixing and plaing techniques. You get so much into the craftsmanship of it; again because the inspirational part of whatever happens so quickly and it's gone so fast, and then there's so much more time goes into making that a reality.

(JL) You literally keep notes for eleven months out of the year, and only really sit down to put songs into form during that time?

(NP) Yeah, that's the only way I can work really, because the intensity that we work under on the road nowadays just doesn't permit anything like that. In the early days we could get together - we'd finish the gig by 10 o'clock and the pressure level was obviously much, much lower - there were no expectations on us and no feeling when you walk on stage that you must be great! so that made a different lifestyle; we were never surrounded by people, there was only 7 of us on the road at the time, we could write on the road, whereas now that's impossible. You can have ideas on the road, but you can never get down to working them out.

(JL) Here's a real humanistic song - 'Vital Signs', which you immediately reduce the human being into a machine.

(NP) I didn't really mean to do that, I meant to elevate the machine to the human being, to a certain extent. That metaphor has been read both ways, a little more than I intended I think, I didn't really want to say that people are machines - because I don't think that's the case. But I find it interesting that when people build the machines they seem to be so human. Not only in the fact of being quirky and idiosyncratic as machines always are; playing you up and seeming to be very vengeful and so on, but also the names that we give for mechanical relationships or electronic relationships and so on. A word like interface for instance; it's a very electronic and high tech word, but at the same time when I think of interface I think of human interface, where there is a perfect rulling and meeting of people on each of their levels - physically, emotionally and intellectually. You achieve interface, in a cold way of putting it, but in humanistic terms it's a wonderful thing. So I find that these relationships between so called pragmatic things and the 'spiritual world of hamanity'... I see the parallels very strongly.

(JL) Finally the instrumental on here, 'YYZ', which you say is the code for the Ontario National Airport.

(NP) Toronto Airport - the airport sends out s little morse code beacon which air-planes can identify it's control tower by, and the one for YYZ in morse code happens to be the rhythm that opens the song; long, short, long, long, long. All those we just turned into rhythm.

(JL) And that's directly from the morse code.

(NP) That is the morse code.

(JL) Alright, you gotta play tonight?

(NP) Yes we have, the second night tonight at the forum.

(JL) What time you going?

(NP) I think it's a 7.30 show here, so we'll be on about 8.35

(JL) What time do you get off, do you know?

(NP) 8.35, 9.35, 10.35; about quarter to eleven, we do just over 2 hours.

(JL) Well I wish you luck, hope it goes well.

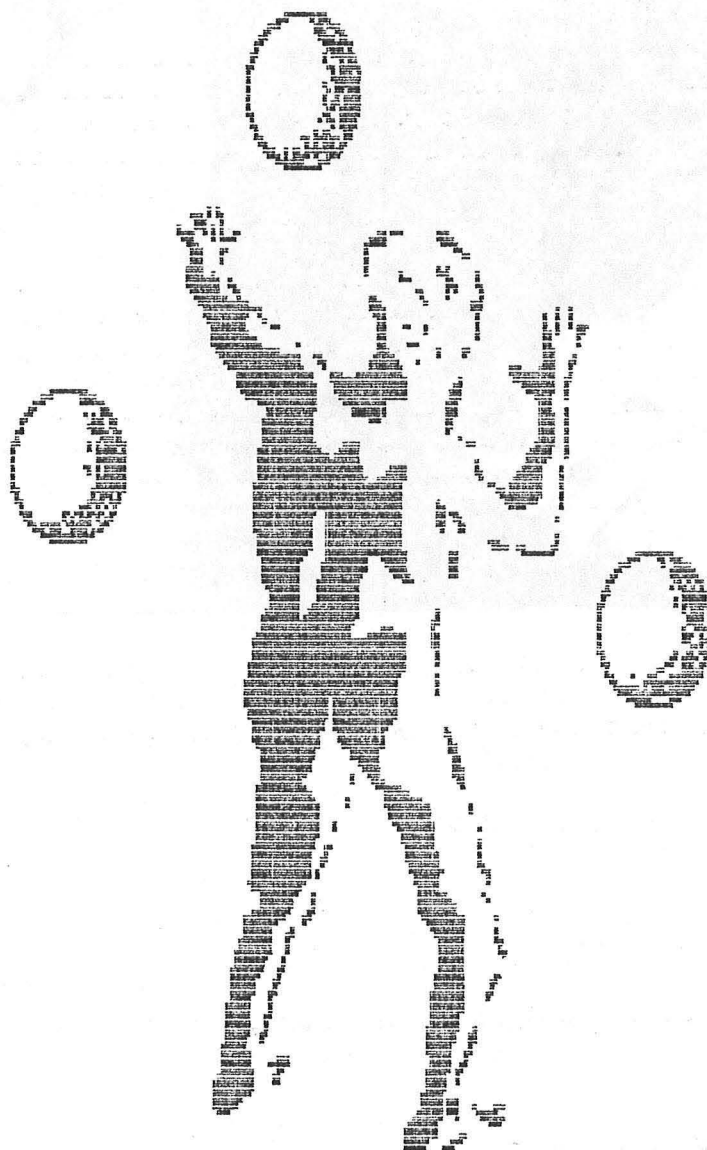
(NP) It should be a good one, three in a row's our lucky one always; we play three consecutive nights and the third ones great, we blow ourselves out, and then the fourth one's an anti-climax!

(JL) Sounds like my sex life!

(NP) Ha, ha!.....



A transcription --
of GEDDY LEE 1982





NEIL PEART
of
RUSH



DATELINE -- APRIL . MAY 1988

PLACE -- EUROPE

EVENT -- RUSH IN CONCERT

Well after 5 long years; or 3 studio albums; at last a chance came to see my fav band again. Was it going to be an anti-climax, or were my pre-gig expectations to be fulfilled - no worries:- what a great show on both nights.

Rush proved that translating the complex material of the last couple of albums was no problem, and they put on a show that will long linger in my memory. It was not just the euphoria of seeing them in the flesh again after such a long time, but also witnessing the sheer enjoyment portrayed in their performance. I certainly hadn't seen them in better form (even though that has only been twice before).

Playing as usual a full two hour set with the majority of tracks coming from the last three albums - 12 in all, yet with a distinct nod made to the past - indeed every album from '2112' onwards was represented with three tracks from 'Moving Pictures', I certainly think they got it right.

The progression in the band's music was there for everyone to see, as they captured power with melody with that spark of originality that combines to form that unique 'Rush' sound. Combine this with the superb set, lights, lasers etc; and you had a complete rock show - can't wait for the video.

Songs like 'Big Money', 'Marathon' and 'Territories' from 'Power Windows' showed this extra lead Rush have taken sonically - the old rhythmic elegance is there, but on top of this you have melody.

'Hold Your Fire' has taken this a step further, songs like 'Time Stand Still' where Geddy sings with a passion previously unheard of; 'Turn The Page', 'Mission', 'Force Ten' all showing Rush's further development in songwriting skills. Songs with punch and style.

But let's not forget other highlights, 'Closer To The Heart' and 'Red Sector A' back to back was perfection, as was Neil's drum solo on 'YYZ/Red Lenses' and the set closers 'Spirit' and 'Sawyer' were amazing. A stroke of genius putting these two Rush songs together at the end of the set.

And of course there was the encore where as Geddy puts it "We take the piss out of ourselves, as you guys say". For me 'La Villa' came to life again with a cracking solo from Alex.

Can't wait for the live album, and I hope I make the video!

All I can say is it was worth the wait - let's hope it's not too long before Rush tour again.

NAVEEN, (LIVERPOOL)

Here is my review of the concerts I saw at Wembley:- Well I hardly know where to begin, 'cause my wife and I have almost been driven into a catatonic state of bewilderment by Rush.

As you full well know, it all started on a Thursday morning scuttling out of sweat soaked sheets, anticipating the day ahead. When all of a sudden your good self and your lady arrived at the door to take us all to Wembley, for a few beers and a bit of leaflet distribution before the evenings concert.

After much hanging around (4 hours thereabouts) a black Jaguar arrives carrying

a passenger, one Mr Neil Peart. It hurriedly passes before my beaming eyes without even a glance from Neil to us admiring fans outside. Much to everyone's disappointment.

But then half an hour later the dynamic duo arrived, yes Geddy and Alex in fine form, waving and leering from the depths of a black limo; a quick snap from the wife's camera, and a blur was recorded for prosperity's sake.

Time passes by ever so slowly, but wait, what's this? Ah! the soundcheck, much waited for and much enjoyed by us all eagerly waiting, ears pressed to the wall for a quick tasteful sample of what lies ahead.

More time passes by, then at last the doors open and the evening begins. From beginning to end it was beautiful, too beautiful for words, but I shall try. Cataclysmic, Gargantuan, magnanimous. Well as I said too much to put into words. We stood there, front row, pressed against the stage, tears welling up in our eyes from the sheer emotion carried out, above and over our heads into the arena by Geddy's voice.

The ferocity but finesse of Neil's drumming, the power and the glory of Alex's finger work, and above all the togetherness of one and all in the heat of the night. It didn't matter of what race, colour or creed we were, we were all stuck in a time capsule that we wished could last forever.

Everything we had waited for, everything I wanted to see, hear and feel was being unleashed before my very eyes. I thought I was going to piss my pants, either from emotion or an over indulgence of larger or both.

All I can say now is; it was worth waiting five years to see the Kingdom of Heaven, for all but too brief a moment, but still, I had tickets for the Saturday as well. And oh God what a week that was. (We're still buzzing)
Yours truly on cloud 9...

TERRY, (CATFORD)

Terrible! boring! a waste of money, an appalling light show, bad P.A., poor timing, run of the mill drumming, uninteresting and pointless guitar solo's..... Absolutely none of these phrases could be used about the Rush gig on the 24th of April at the NEC.

The quality of the light show was evident from the start, when the Power Windows binoculars picture was drawn in lasers on the projection screen, although better was to come. Particularly the backdrop to 'Marathon', with the wire frame runner. However the most important part of the show was of course the music.

The first two thirds of the show was mainly spent on the recent material, much of which had not been seen live in Britain. Before the show, I was doubtful as to whether tracks such as 'Lock And Key' and 'Force Ten' could be effectively produced live, but Geddy proved that there was no need for an additional keyboard player.

The whole set was held together by Neil's drumming, which was faultless. (I wonder if there is a Guinness book of records for the height drumsticks are thrown?). I would tend to agree with Jonathan (I've got a solar powered bicycle with solar cells on the saddle) King in that he (Neil, not Jonathan) is the best rock drummer around at present. One of the highlights of the evening was the drum solo, making full use of the electronic percussion and the revolving kit which was highlighted by superb use of lasers.

Alex's guitar playing was consistent throughout, particularly during the solo's in 'Mission' and 'Limelight', although I do not suggest that he should try his hand (or should that be throat) at vocals, after his singing(?) at the start of 'La Villa Strangiato'.

On the negative side, the band did seem to lose their way slightly during the instrumental part of 'Mission', when the audience seemed to be hit with nothing but an enormous wall of sound. It was also noticeable that the audience's reaction was very muted during songs, and it was only when older material such as 'Tom Sawyer', 'The Spirit Of Radio' and 'Overture' were played that they woke up.

One notable event was towards the end of 'Tom Sawyer' when a surprised roadie had

a guitar hurled at him by Alex from some distance, but managed to catch it deftly, while a reserve guitar quickly found itself on stage. At points the back projections were unclear because the stage lighting was too bright, but most of the time they would good to the point of distraction from the music.

The beginning to 'Tom Sawyer' was very inventive, with the stealing of the pictures from the Moving Pictures cover, and the girl counting down the start of the song. So, overall an extremely good show, in all aspects, and one that was long awaited, proving itself to be a class above most other band's gigs.

M.J. HAYTER

In the annals of rock music Rush are quite unique in their no compromise attitude toward the creative process. Living testimony to this being the fact that each album has marked a genuine progression from the last. The "raison d'etre" of Rush, their driving force, remains the urge, the need to develop and to expand their collective musical horizons.

Hence, that it's been five long years since Messrs Lee, Lifeson and Peart crossed the pond for live performances is a matter of immense frustration to Canada's finest musical exports dedicated European followers, especially with the tempting reports from their 'Grace Under Pressure' tour, and 'Power Windows' tours of North America, hinting at an ever-evolving, spectacular stage-show. To say that the London Wembley Arena dates on April 28, 29 and 30 were eagerly anticipated, would be somewhat underestimating the matter!

Lights down to a jubilant, joyous roar of excited approval and 'The Three Stooges' launch straight into 'Big Money', complete with superlative 3-D graphics adding an appropriately cynical undertow to the biting lyrics - a perfect opener. The band look relaxed, confident, and the broad smiles say it all, they're delighted to be back in a land which provided many high points during the mid-period of their career.

That irresistible, surging tale of sadness of Stateside Suburban normality 'Subdivisions' flexes it's musical muscles, into the beauty of 'Limelight' to complete a triumphant trio of introductory tracks.

Rush's stage set has undergone radical revisions since we last saw them in the U.K. on the 'Signals' tour in 1983. Neil's new 'Ludwig' drumkit includes a battery of electronic pads and a KAT keyboard percussion unit, which he uses intelligently and sparingly, as one would expect from this most cerebral of drummers. Geddy's keyboards have, likewise, expanded, and he has since traded in his trusty Rickenbacker for a fabulous sounding 'Wal' bass, which throughout the concert was an utter joy to hear.

Many of the rich, tonal textures of recent albums are reproduced in the live environment courtesy of a vast array of foot pedals, controlled by Alex and Geddy, which trigger the appropriate synth sections backstage, with a little help from Jack Secret who loads the appropriate floppy discs on cue!. This means that our heroes must remain relatively static for much of the show, they're certainly not able to move about the stage so much as in days of yore, but the 'State of the art' visuals more than compensate for this imbalance, featuring a full-blooded attack on the senses, with it's stunning laser images, varillites and the creative use of back projections illuminating Neil's eloquent lyrics. 'Technology High' indeed! In addition the crystal clear sound that Rush achieved in the echoey expanses of the infamous 'Wembley barn' was the best I've ever heard there, a fine accomplishment in itself, making full use of the dynamics of their music.

Not surprisingly 'Power Windows' and 'Hold Your Fire' dominated much of the main part of the superbly paced, twenty one song set. 'Marathon' provides the first big production number of the night, the band unleashing previously unparalleled heights of musical and emotional synthesis as that choir soars heaven-ward at the tracks climax to an accompaniment of amusing celestial choral visuals. The docu-dram 'Manhattan Project' receives similar subliminal treatment, band and lighting crew pulling out all the stops in order to produce the full effect of it's grandiose punch!.

'Turn The Page', 'Prime Mover' and 'Force Ten' are all played with verve and vigour, it's apparent that the band are thoroughly enjoying, even thriving on the challenge of reproducing the intricacies of the latest album live. But it's devastating versions of 'Time Stand Still' and especially 'Mission' which shall forever burn particularly bright in my minds eye.

The latter track is one of Rush's finest moments on vinyl to date, it's fragile musical theme made all more poignant by Neil's perceptively melancholic lyric, dealing with genius' obsessive quest for creative perfection and it's shortcomings, a familiar subject to Rushologists!.

However, to my mind the highlights of the current set are provided by a brace of songs from the most dark, often disturbing of albums, 'Grace Under Pressure', namely 'Red Sector A' and 'Distant Early Warning', during which Alex in particular shines with some wonderfully inspired, blistering axework on his custom built 'Signature' guitar; fragmented, green laser light pulses all around the arena to both tracks, quirkily dynamic, algebraic time signatures, helped by several thousand air-drummers!.

Geddy introduces "A sort of dance song to change the pace a little called 'Territories'". Rush's plea for internationalism with it's delicious, quasi-exotic bass-line.

Time for the band to unwind, disconnect from all the technology and take a trip or two down memory lane with 'YYZ', 'The Spirit Of Radio' and, of course, 'Tom Sawyer', which rounds off the set in more ways than one. Neil's drum solo leaves the audience gasping with astonishment at the great mans precession, grace and sheer power, the electronic effects including a tremendous blast from a sampled horn, adding a new dimension to the solo.

Encores? none other than those perennial favourites 'Overture/Temples Of Syrinx' from '2112' and a storming rendition of 'La Villa Strangiato' by which time we're 'In The Mood' for a party, with red balloons 'n' all!!!

An unforgettable series of concerts from a band at the absolute zenith of their performing capabilities. As another page is turned in the history of Rush's evolution we await the next chapter with anticipation and fascination. After all, 'Anything Can Happen'....

SIMON POUND

"Well well, hello again for another tour. (This is getting to be habit forming)". So where do you start, well at the beginning I suppose. It all started back in 87 I think, when a friend rang me up and told me that Rush were going to be playing in Britain, but no dates.

Well as you can imagine I got very excited and all that, it was like a garbled reply going down the line whattt ddid you ssay. Yes you guessed it - knocked for six (as usual)

So there I was the next day at our local record store in Edinburgh (There's not really that much to choose from) asking a poor fool behind the counter if any tickets for Rush were up for sale, to which the reply was "Who". Yes I definately thought it's going to be difficult to get tickets but anyhow, on with the review...

Firstly I'd like to take you all to a little town called Glasgow and a place called the S.E.C.C. well there we all were, standing outside, after coming off the bus from Edinburgh on a glorious April evening and having been told the Birmingham gigs were good, I was really looking forward to this, so anyway we go past the bouncers with recorders all in very uncomfortable places (ouch) and then in, firstly I was struck by the sheer size of the equipment (six lorry loads no less) and all the onstage effects which we could see from our vantage point which wasn't much.

So it was time, the lights dimmed and from the centre stage a lone piper stood and played 'Scotland The Brave' I think, I'm not sure because the crowd understandably were going mad. I was standing there thinking, will they be able to produce live, such a complex and multi textured album, and then another thought entered my brain, "bugger it" which seemed an apt comment.

After playing this, the piper disappeared stage left, and the three stooges theme began playing in, well here we go... A flawless production of 'Big Money', with the lights going bananas then smoothly into 'Subdivisions', complete with scenes from the promo video as well as at the end a very nice shot of the CN tower. Next up was a perennial favourite 'Limelight' much appreciated by all.

And then the introductions, "Good evening Scotland, it's been a long time". Then Alex steps up to say good evening as well, then we were off into 'Marathon' with the running man on the back screen, and then with a short, very short breather before announcing the first 'Fire' track 'Turn The Page'. Very nicely done, I thought with the light man doing a very fast job with the veri lights.

Then into 'Prime Mover', a track which for me didn't quite have the impact I thought that it should. And then again there was 'Manhattan Project' with what seemed to me anyway, the standout track at that time, with it's lights and superb back screen projection, a very good one, you might have been mistaken for thinking that this one was part of the fear trilogy.

But onto an old time favourite, 'Closer To The Heart'. After having watched the video to this one, I was stunned to see that a song which by now must have been played at least a million times, still sounded fresh and exciting and could hold the crown awed, not least for the choir (We're famous for that) and then to be congratulated by Geddy at the end, well what can I say.

So there we were waiting on tender hooks after being told that 'Red Sector A' was next, we all just stood and stared, not a sound as I remember it, but after the end, there was the usual mixture of shouts, whistles and catcalls, all good clean stuff.

So onwards ever onwards to 'Force Ten', this was where the stage and special effects really came into there own with 'Time Stand Still' - magic, sheer magic. Then we were taken once more back down the tunnel for 'Distant Early Warning' and then, (pardon the pun) turn the page for 'Lock And Key' and the quiet and melodic 'Mission', (You have your own views, I have mine).

And then with a bang into the dancing song 'Territories' with the warrior on the back screen. So now it was medley time, starting with 'YYZ' with that amazing drum solo from Neil, complete with startling noises to frighten the ones who had never heard it (which seemed to be most of the crowd), and then into a short Red lenses' followed by an immaculate version of 'The Spirit Of Radio' with the effect of bright lights on "concert halls" frightening to say the least, but anyway up on the screen a clip from 'Moving Pictures' with that girl, a collective roar of quite astounding quality on the lead in for 'Tom Sawyer', what a song, it still manages to reach deep down inside and rip the guts out of you, then thank you. Exit stage left, to a roar for more (groan).

Then the wisper and the moan of the intro for '2112', along with the starman making his prescence felt as usual, and then taken along at breakneck speed through the 'Temples Of Syrinx' into the mood changer or 'La Villa Strangiato', with it's clipped performance standing out as an example of how Rush were, and can still play to their own exacting standards.

Finally being deposited back 14 years to 'In The Mood' then brought back for an extended however short onterlude befor the finale, and with the words still ringing in your ears a very happy "Thankyou very, very much and Goodnight" it ends.

So that was the end of the concert that went from on exteme to the other, with faultless musicianship onstage, to some poor guitar mixes from the desk, is Jon Erickson playing at silly buggers? or is it just that the sheer scale of the equipment is too much for one man to cope with, but by and large a good time was had by one and all, and for that night time did stand still, but for all too short a time, well that's it all finished for another year.

On finishing up, I hope that this review has given some insight to all of you who didn't or couldn't get to Glasgow for that night, and that it manages to convey all the excitement that went on inside the S.E.C. that night. "Also I'd like to mention that, I... ah, um, uh... well I have to go now".....

DAVID (OGGY) OGG (EDINBURGH)

Five years of waiting.

Three albums in the bag.

Singles that have barely made the top fifty, and yet still put the chart-topping teeny-bobbers to shame.

Three nights at a crowded Wembley Arena, excitement so thick, you could cut it with a knife.

All that and a front row seat to boot.

It would be simple to do a straight forward review, but the media has done that already. I could go through the concert track by track, detail for detail, but no, you know what they played.

So perhaps, a few lasting memories the Wembley gigs left with me: like the sheer power with which they open the show, their sense of the dramatic aired plainly as 'The Big Money' roared from the speakers.

Like the superb lighting on Alex's guitar solo during 'Limelight', or the way the cheer that greeted Geddy's "Hello London!" made him back off the mike in surprise.

How about the excellent use of back-projection, used to full effect during the masterpiece that was 'Manhattan Project' - the film of the building exploding right on the band's time change, chilled me to the bone - and the array of lasers displayed in 'Red Sector A'.

They had me wishing time would stand still, and 'Time Stand Still' went through it's live paces, packed with even more emotion than they had managed to achieve in the studio. Aimee Mann's larger than life appearance. Alex playing synthesizer.

Then there was the video that introduced the power of 'Distant Early Warning', the lighting on 'Lock And Key', and the powerful tug Alex gives to the heart strings with his solo at the end of 'Mission', surely one of the most emotive pieces he has ever concocted.

Memories, special ones, all. But even more special are these:

'Closer To The Heart', now in it's lengthened state, the band having more fun with it now, than ever before. The centre of gravity around which the whole show revolved. A classic in the true sense of the word.

Anyone who says drum solo's are boring, should have taken a look at the professor this time around. He threw his heart and soul into it, amidst a lighting display of Star Wars proportions. Revolving drumkit, and a sampler for those big band sounds thrown in too. Spectacular does not even begin to describe it. Neil surpassed himself - and so did Hearn on the lighting board.

And to follow, all that with the glory that is 'Spirit Of Radio' ... what can one say? - a little more perhaps..

Like the twist to the video that introduced 'Tom Sawyer', on which Geddy raises his bass playing to an art form, and the self-parody that has made 'Overture' and 'The Temples Of Syrinx' more enjoyable than ever (everyone say "Oi!").

How about Alex's antics throughout the show, and especially during the encores. Not only would he qualify for the Monty Python school of silly walks, but his face pulling would surely qualify him for the National Gurning Championships. Hilarious, let alone his singing over the intro to the track! Neil and Geddy were cracking up watching him too. How they kept playing I'll never know.

All this during a piece which has always featured some awesome musicianship from all three - 'La Villa Strangiato'. And then, of course, there was party time during 'In The Mood', balloons and handclaps all thrown in at the end to bring the show to a riotous close.

The overriding emotion was elation. The band performed with an ease and a looseness on all three nights, that put the 83 shows to shame. They were magnificent. Five years of waiting indeed, was it worth it - you bet!.

Lets hope they return a bit sooner next time. Now, would someone please tell me who those guys were who came on during 'In The Mood' on the third night...

STEVE DAMARELL

Never having seen Rush before, live on stage, (even though I've been a fan for around ten years now). I was determined to get to see at least one show this time around. So with a seat booked through an organised coach trip, I eagerly counted down the days.

The I learned that due to public demand, Rush were to play an extra date, fixed for the 21st. So I rushed out to the local Virgin's (no pun intended) to grab a ticket. Now it didn't seem so far off.

At 7.00 p.m. 21/4/88 I arrived at the NEC and noticed that there weren't that many cars in the carpark. As I approached the arena, I began to think that I'd got the wrong date (people were trying to sell tickets in the carpark).

I walked up and passed the security staff, this was the night alright, but there didn't seem that many people about. There was a giant blue curtain draped in front of the South stand. I bought my beer and overpriced programme, plus the usual sweat-shirt/T shirt. Found my seat on the East stand, I could see the stage well enough.

The first thing to catch my eye was the three red spheres hung from the ceiling. Just after 8.00 p.m. the lights dimmed, still the arena was only about half full. Then we were told we could move closer if we liked, so the people around us crowded forward towards the stage, and I was left with a perfectly clear view of the stage.

On the screen appeared the first laser image of the boy looking at us through his binoculars, and as the intro of three blind mice came to an end, the stage burst into life as Geddy, Alex and Neil appeared and burst into 'Big Money'. The audience voiced their appreciation as Rush's first live show on these shores for five years got under way. (I'm sure there was about 10,000 people there).

After Geddy and Alex danced their way through 'Subdivisions' and 'Limelight', Geddy approached the microphone and greeted us to a warm welcome, and that they were glad to be back after too long an absence. We were then treated to 'Marathon', (accompanied by the runner on the back screen) followed by two songs from 'Hold Your Fire', 'Turn The Page' and 'Prime Mover' accompanied by a dazzling light show.

I certainly didn't know what to expect when Geddy sang "anything can happen" on 'Prime Mover'. The sound quality was excellent, especially on the newer songs. The back screen projection was used really well on 'Manhattan Project', and put the message of the song across clearly and certainly made you think. 'Closer To The Heart' came next, with everyone singing along, (couldn't see any lighters held high though) Alex had his classical guitar mounted on a stand in the playing position, which made the change of guitars easier. (one of his inventions I suppose).

We were then treated to a fantastic laser show on 'Red Sector A', I was hoping for a stunning explosion after "shouting guards, and smoking guns" but sadly no, (probably been watching the Grace video too much). Then followed the two more songs from 'Hold Your Fire', 'Force Ten' which had abstract images of the band on the screen. The next song started with a ticking clock, and I think everyone knew what was coming before Alex broke into the opening riff of 'Time Stand Still', so far no mishaps and I was enjoying myself.

The audience were enjoying themselves and of course the band looked as if they were having a good time. Then the boys disappeared from the stage as the intro to 'Distant Early Warning' played through, then they reappeared to power their way through the song. After two more songs from 'Hold Your Fire', Geddy announced that it was dance time, and accompanied by tribal dancers on the screen they danced their way through 'Territories', where at the appropriate point everyone shouted "better beer".

Into the home straight now, as the familiar beat to 'YYZ' began, then, as the song reached Alex's first guitar break, his string broke, and as the roadies raced on to change his guitar, we were treated to a few extra seconds of Geddy's bass, then Alex came back in looking totally unflustered. The 'YYZ' broke into the start of what has to be one of (if not THE) best drum solo's I've ever witnessed, when the kit started revolving with the lasers and lights flashing around it I just totally freaked.

As J. King says Neil Peart IS the best drummer about. Then after filtering into a bit of 'Red Lenses' the stooges burst into 'Spirit Of Radio', much to the audience and my delight.

Next on the screen appeared the cover of 'Moving Pictures', and then a voice proclaimed "Moving Pictures take 28", then in cartoon form, a man ran to the front

of the screen, totally delirious he grabs a picture, puts it in a bottle and lights it, and blows a hole in the back of the screen, then he shouts "Hey kid, come here" and as the little girl stands up she transforms into a rather tasty young lady (as cartoon women go), who then proceeds to count in 'Tom Sawyer' in a beautiful Texan drowl.

Then, as soon as they had appeared they were gone, but not for long, as the familiar intro of '2112' began, which sent the audience totally bananas. It is surprising that Rush still perform this with the same passion and commitment as when it was first released. Although the anger's gone from the song the power and passion are still there. And it is as though they are giving the record industry as a whole a two finger gesture, as if to say we're still around, and bigger and better.

The crowd loved it all the same. Finally came a musical masterpiece 'La Villa Strangiato', followed by a mind blowing version of 'In The Mood', which ended with both musical and a visual frenzy of sound and lasers, (just like something out of Star Wars).

Saturdays show was a different affair altogether. A total sell out, with people wanting to buy tickets outside. This time I was in the East block again, but just to the side of the stage, a much better seat. Tonights show was being filmed, and I found the camera and mount on the side of the stage, kept getting in my way, and it was hard to concentrate on the show.

Especially with the camera men moving about on stage. Also, the sound through some of the early songs such as 'Manhattan Project' and 'Marathon' didn't seem quite up to scratch. I saw Alex charge across the stage seemingly screaming at the technician on the side of the stage. He certainly didn't seem to smile quite as much.

Although after 'Closer To The Heart' they looked as though they were enjoying themselves again. Perhaps, as has been pointed out to me, they were possibly trying too hard to make sure things worked out.

Also, the coloured lights that lit up the audience diluted some of the lighting effects. Still, I enjoyed myself thoroughly at both shows, (this time Alex brokes a string right at the end of 'Tom Sawyer').

If Saturday's show is included on the 'Hold Your Fire' video, which looks as if one might be released, then look at the audience, stage-right and a girl with an inflatable banana, and I should be a few rows behind, slightly to the right. Just think - fame at last....

JON (BRISTOL)

Rush have come a long way since their last performances in Scotland over five years ago, what I thought then, was an immaculate stage presentation has grown into what must be the ultimate in live performance...

The house lights dim and a solitary Scots piper begins the show. The Scottish lament fades as the now familiar stooges theme prepares the crowd for what is about to be a night to remember.

In a mass of sound and colour the band burst into 'Big Money' the crowd surge forward - Rush are back! throughout the entirety of 'Subdivisions' and 'Limelight' the crowd sing and punch the air in perfect uniformity, leading into 'Marathon', the outline of a digital man appears on the backdrop and proceeds to run the length of the song.

Barely are we four songs into the set, flowing pores, open heart singing, then we are hit with the first songs from 'Hold your Fire', both 'Turn The Page' and 'Prime Mover' go down brilliantly, as does 'Manhattan Project', which utilises the effect of the backdrop superbly.

The atmosphere generated by 'Closer To The Heart' I doubt could be created anywhere else in the world, you just had to be there to believe it, the 'Glaswegian Choir' were at their best.

'Red Sector A', 'Force Ten', 'Time Stand Still', 'Distant Early Warning', 'Mission' 'Lock And Key' and 'Territories' followed, with cleverly adapted light and laser show, complementing the mood and atmosphere on each track superbly. 'YYZ' next and

the crowd stood in awe as Neil performed the customary drum solo, the guy is a f.....g genius.

'Red Lenses' followed by 'Spirit Of Radio', sent the crowd awol and a superb rendition of 'Tom Sawyer' leads the trio into '2112 Overture', 'Temples Of Syrinx', 'La Villa Strangiato' and finally 'In The Mood'.

And so the show comes to an end, lets hope it's not another five years before Rush grace our shores with their presence.

And surely the final word must go to Alex, Geddy and Neil... CHEERS'

MARK, (GREENOCK SCOTLAND)

I had not played any pre Hold Your Fire records for many months, and I decided I that I would not play any before the concert. I arrived at the N.E.C. at about 6.30, and was handed a 'Spirit Of Rush' leaflet just before going in. I had a good look at all the promotional goodies for sale, bought a programme, and took my seat about 7.10. As 7.30 approached I was waiting for the support band to start (having been told by the box office that there would be a support band).

I decided by about 7.50 that the taped music in the arena must be the support band. Several people started appearing around the stage, checking guitars, tweaking knobs, and pushing buttons on the mass of electrical gadgetry set up in the vicinity.

Four blokes climbed up the rope ladders at each corner of the stage, and sat in their chairs suspended high above the stage, to operate the spotlights. Shortly after the music ceased, the lights went out, and then the intro - music started, and the outline of a bloke with binoculars off the back of 'Power Windows' was drawn on the rear stage screen. This faded out, and all was quiet in the inky blackness and then it happened; in an instant I was pinned to the back of my seat by an explosion of sound and light.

This effect was quickly cancelled out by the rush of adrenalin that surged through me at my first sight and sound of Rush Live. If there is one thing that 'Big Money' does not possess, it's a subtle opening.

I have given several friends a case of the convulsive lurch, when I have put my 'Power Windows' tape in the car and turned up the volume. Nobody expects an intro like that, and I certainly wasn't prepared for it as I sat there in the dark wondering exactly what the evening would bring. Well, what a superb opening sequence - 'Big Money', 'Subdivision', 'Limelight' and 'Marathon' - all absolutely brilliant to behold live, with the light show and back-up video's/graphics on the rear screen.

By the end of the first four tracks, my ears had become sufficiently numbed, so that it was no longer necessary to cringe at the sound level. We then had Geddy saying "Hello Britain, England, Birmingham! How you all doing?". "It's been a long time since we've been over here, and we've got a whole lotta songs that we'd like to do for you tonight".

I really thought they could have involved themselves a bit more with the audience, by talking in a more ad-lib fashion, rather than with a pre-determined pattern, but I guess that's perhaps a bit over critical.

The next two tracks were from 'Hold Your Fire', and I felt they were a bit of an anti-climax after the opening salvo. Things picked up after, with 'Manhattan Project' and then 'Closer To The Heart', with Geddy involving the audience for the chorus line. We then had four excellent tracks taken from 'Grace Under Pressure' and 'Hold Your Fire', then 'Lock And Key' which, again, I felt seemed to fall a bit flat after the previous four tracks.

However, we then had the totally superb track 'Mission', surely with 'Time Stand Still' and 'Open Secrets' the pick of 'Hold Your Fire' and one of the best tracks Rush have ever done, (which reminds me - why the hell didn't they do 'Open Secrets') After I had floated back down to my seat after 'Mission', we had the excellent track 'Territories' and then went into an instrumental medley, with the highlight being the spellbinding drum solo from Neil Peart and his revolving drum kit.

This neatly flowed into 'Spirit Of Radio' to complete the medley. Next we had 'Tom Sawyer' to close the show. The inevitable encore brought a combination of older tracks, which to my mind sound far superior with the benefit of more modern ins-

truments, and probably increased playing skills. Then that was it - all over, two hours of sheer ecstasy had flashed by seemingly so quickly.

Unfortunately, unlike a video, I could not rewind and play it again to relive the experience, so I reluctantly left the arena, wandered back to the car, and drove the fifty or so miles back home. I couldn't play any music on the way back - that would be sacrilege. I just wish I could have got tickets for Saturday and Sunday as well, but I was unable to, so I was not to see Rush again live - or was I?

Ah!, but wait, I was going to London next Saturday with a mate to watch the John Player Rugby Union cup final at Twickenham, and I suddenly twigged that, having noted the tour dates in the programme, the match coincided with the final Rush gig at Wembley. So I persuaded my mate that it would be a good day out if we went to see Rush after the Rugby. He was rather unsure, but had no choice really, as I wasn't going to London and back without seeing Rush again.

Anyway the day came, and after the rugby, we picked our way through the traffic from Twickenham to Wembley, catching all the traffic leaving Wembley from the Rugby league cup final which had also been played that day. So we arrived at Wembley around 6.00 and played some of 'Power Windows' in the car at high volume with the windows down (Power Windows in my car of course!) while we waited for the doors to open.

We went in when we saw the queue move off, bought a couple of sweatshirts and took our seats, this time in the terrace directly in line with and facing the stage. Again there was no support band, but who cares, I was here to see Rush!. This time I was ready for the opening chord of 'Big Money' - however, my mate wasn't, as I did not tell him that this track was coming first, so it was his turn to put a head shaped dent in the arena roof. It didn't take him long to become a Rush fan.

So that's it, the highlights. Well, the opening four tracks, Neil Peart's drum solo, 'Mission' and also the whole presentation. Lets hope we don't have to wait another five years to see them again!...

ANDREW MCKENZIE

A trip of a lifetime, to see Rush in Germany, well any sane man would on seeing the price, would have said I was not so sane. But I stumped up the cash and made my way with a feeling of excitement down to London. Then finally getting on the coach for Frankfurt. So we were on our way, past ferry strikes and onwards again finally arriving in Frankfurt, with a day to rest and enjoy ourselves.

Now with time catching up on us all, we headed off to the 'Festhalle' (thrilling stuff eh!). We arrived to find all of these people standing outside waiting to get in, anyhow once inside, we all headed for the front, some of us getting lost, but all finally meeting up midway through the concert. Anyway the concert began with the 3 stooges theme.

Smoothly running through 'Big Money', with Mr Big's car making rapid movement across the screen. Next into 'Subdivisions', with all the back screen projections accompanying throughout. Then into 'Limelight', which as usual received a big welcome by the German and mixed European crowd. With a welcome in German, and then in English (We'd all learned to understand German).

'Marathon' was introduced, at this stage I decided to get out of the front row, and into some real fresh air, doing my bit to keep pace with music, running round the hall (I told you I was mad), to come to rest at the end of the song.

Geddy then announced that they would be on stage for a couple of hours, if that was alright with us, well we really had no choice in the matter and the answer was definitely affirmative. Anyhow we were treated to 'Turn The Page' with the balls making a very prominent feature for the first time that night, then on again into 'Prime Mover', which had a better reel to it, but that's beside the point.

Once more 'Manhattan Project', with the superb back screen projections, which might or turned a few heads in the German crowd, I don't really know, but never mind. Anyway 'Closer To The Heart' came next, which received the little lighters going up and funnily sparklers upstairs. So with that out of the way, we charged on to 'Red Sector A', it's difficult to say how this one was received by the crowd, due to the con-

tent or the song.

Then onto the next 'Fire' tracks, 'Force Ten', which was run through with amazing ease, and then into 'Time Stand Still', with Aimee Mann appearing on the backscreen very good effects on that one. Next we were given the back screen of the 'Grace Under Pressure' cover, and the little boy on the missile while 'Distant Early Warning' was on. So far everything was sounding and looking good, then came 'Lock And Key', with the prisoner being led away, to what is left to the imagination, then finally the last fire track, to me a beautiful song 'Mission'.

Next it was time for 'Territories', with the dancing warrior in his different masks, quite frightening really, but however we come to the point of the evening that everyone really enjoys, yes, it's medley time. Starting with the Toronto morse code intro for 'YYZ', with a drum solo that must have been heard back in Britain, and then slipping effortlessly into 'Red Lenses' before a big stop then you all know what, 'Spirit Of Radio', with those words "Concert halls" blasting out in light and sound.

Then we come to 'Tom Sawyer', and so we end the first medley. But it's only a short stop, the wind and synthesizer sound for '2112' was really effective as was the star man, which went down a treat. A mention must be made to the group I was with, who up to and after this point were enjoying ourselves so much, that I think we might or spoiled it for fans standing around us, but what the hell, we were there to enjoy ourselves.

So once the general noise of '2112' died down a bit, and the strains of 'La Villa Strangiato' echoed around the hall, it was a stamping and clapping part, pulling the crowd through every chord, but it still managed to sound fresh and not strained as with any other band, it might have. Then finally to the last song, which to my mind seems to get faster and better every time I've heard it live, and so at the end well almost, red balloons floated gently down, to sum up the night for me, the culmination of waiting five years to see this, and then finally realising that Rush have definitely got better with age, have mellowed but can still rock with the best of them.

At the end, there was a concerted effort to get out, but people were standing looking totally knocked out by what they had seen. So that's all from your roving reporter. Many thanks are due to M.G.P. for organizing the tour for us, and also to those Germans whom I met at the concert. But mention must be made to all those who were of great and wide selection of people who went to see Rush, and who like myself enjoyed themselves to the full - they know who they are, and I hope are not too embarrassed to show themselves in public again - but that's up to them. One last thing; Hello Rob, please write, address is:

DAVID OGG,
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RUSH RUSH RUSH RUSH RUSH RUSH

by Bob Dunne

It was about six years back when Geddy Lee, a stringy-haired Ken Hensley look-alike, Alex Lifeson, a typical street punk who just happened to play guitar, and John Rutsey, a pint-sized drummer, decided it was time to give their unique rock'n'roll vision a fighting chance. Forming your proverbial high school band, superstardom seemed just a gig away, as it does to all naive new bands. Today, six years into the future from that initiation, a flashy trio called Rush knows that stardom is close. And after six years of playing bars, high schools, pubs and dives, they know exactly what it takes to get there.

Rush's first "big break" came about a year ago when, tired of playing the aforementioned loser circuit and making just enough money to meet the payments on their equipment, the hard-rockin' trio opened a local show for The New York Dolls. Tho' Rush readily admits that the show was not one of their best ("I looked out and saw all these people!"), they surpassed The Dolls with ease. It was a turning point.

It was also a turning point for Vic Wilson and Ray Daniels, the band's management team. Previously the band had played the barband rut in order to keep body and soul together. Now, even though it meant making some financial sacrifices, the band was prepared to turn down loser gigs in order to entice better gigs their way. Vic and Ray secured the financing needed to go into the studio and work on Rush's debut album. A producer was found and left to his own devices. Mistake.

The quality of the recording was plainly lacking. No one faltered. Undaunted, they all put their heads and money together and offered the aborted tapes to Terry Brown, a local producer-engineer who has worked with Procol Harum, Thundermug, April Wine and whose studio was

used to overdub all the guitar parts, and re-record the really badly done tunes. The result was an album's worth of tunes; loud, raucous and rough material that throbs out of the speakers.

Now came the hard part, soliciting an acceptable label deal from one of the Canadian labels. Asking for virtually no front money and a minimal amount to be spent on promotion, Vic and Ray were still unable to peddle the tapes. Having invested heavily in the product, they were not about to see the album go down the tubes. Moon Records, their own label, was quickly established and the debut album was released with a negligible amount of promotion.

Yet the tiring years in the local circuit paid an unexpected dividend. The initial pressing of the album was sold out quickly, making everyone involved realize "the cult following they had hoped for did, in fact, exist."

Signing a booking contract with the prestigious ATI agency in New York, Rush was enthused about their future potential. ATI in turn forwarded a copy of the Moon Records album to Mercury Records who also had The New York Dolls and was just starting to realize vast amount of cash with their other Canadian 'discovery', Bachman-Turner Overdrive. Quick to pick up on a good thing, Mercury locked up Rush for a two-album contract that was worth somewhere in the region of \$200,000. This came at a time when record companies were admittedly cutting back on all expenses, particularly in terms of advances. Where Canadian companies weren't willing to put up five grand for promotions, Mercury was willing to go all the way.

However, success takes a toll. Just before the hotwax windfall came Rush's way, John Rutsey left the band, citing legitimate health reasons and a basic dissatisfaction with the musical

direction. This left our heroes up the ol' crick without a paddle. Moreover, ATI had already secured a number of lucrative American gigs for the band, the first of which was a Washington, DC TV show that they were much looking forward to. Enter Neil Peart, a veteran drummer with a number of Ontario bar bands. The change was a good one.

"Rutsey's health was really bad," says Geddy, more compassionate than one might expect. "He was running himself right into the ground. The type of schedule we had is rough on a healthy person. It's hard to put up with, but he was really suffering from having to play so hard so often. Also, Alex and I have always moved in the same musical direction, and he was growing in a different way. I knew . . . I think we all knew . . . that it was eventually going to happen. It should have happened a year before it did."

So, let's take stock of this situation. We have what must appear to be yet another average contender in the Heavy Metal Final Heat; a band with an almost trite name and an approach to music that has been used several times before. Is that all? Ah, no.

There is one thing to be said for spending endless fruitless years going through the mill. It breeds a confidence and determination that 'overnight successes' and prefabricated 'stars' can only view second-hand. And, aside from whatever hype usually accompanies the signing of an artist, Rush do what they do well. There is no lack of talent in this unit and, once again, playing together for this long has only served to weld what would otherwise have been diverse musical ideas into a strong, seamless Direction.

Rush may not offer any startling new alternatives to what has passed as hard rock in the past, but they are not merely copyists

repackaging the same old hat mundane three chords in a totally random stab at the big money. Because of their sincere belief in their music, because of their years of perspiration, because of their infectious enthusiasm, Rush offer an opportunity to experience some first class music played with such energy, a willingness to give the audience what they've paid for. They realize that the musical idiom they are dealing with has not progressed a whole lot since the Yardbirds first made the possibilities evident. Hence,

sales figures, reports from field reps, gold records and audience reaction, something they've always been strong on.

Geddy Lee is the frontman, though no one has officially declared him as such. His vocals are difficult to describe, a delicious high pitched banshee wail that owes much to a bad case of post-nasal drip. Let it suffice to say that at some early stage in his life, Geddy must have slipped off his bicycle seat and into the crossbar awful hard. His bass playing is methodical and

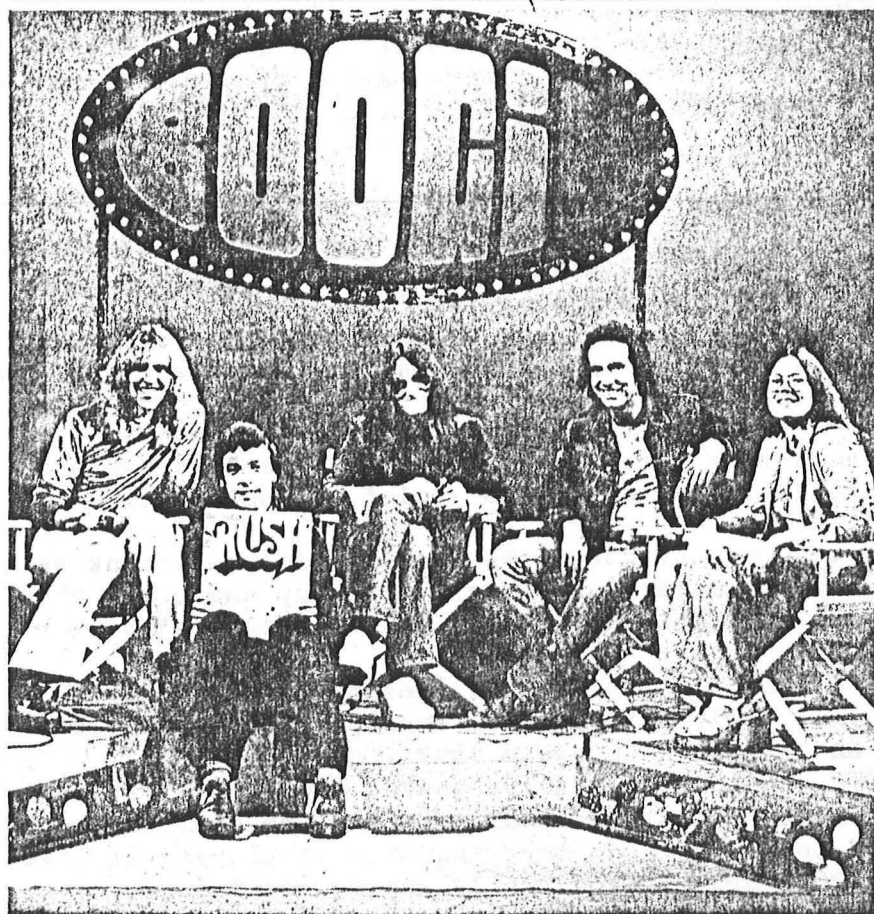
talking. A devout fan of Beck and (especially) Page and all other guitarro monsters; Lifeson watches his fretboard closely and actually seems amazed when he wrestles out the right riffs. He can be obviously pleased with the sound, something few technically good guitarists have time for. "God is the music, I'm just the instrument" some will say. Not Alex! Like a heathen in heat, he knows that it's him popping all the right notes and he's proud. No religious experiences for this kid.

Neil Peart flails away at his massive kit, filling in any gaps and touching all the bases. "I draw from a lot of sources," he says, admitting that he has a place in his heart for a chosen few percussionists. "But I suppose visually the closest comparison would be Keith Moon." No small feat, folks.

Now that Mercury has sunk two hundred big ones into Rush and the band has had some exposure in the States, does it look like the investment is going to pay off for all involved. Geddy, without false modesty or hyperbole, explains the current situation. The reaction to our American gigs has been great. A friend of ours took a copy of the album on Moon Records and sent it to a friend of his who is the programmer for WMMS in Cleveland. We got a call from her immediately saying that they had only played one song on the air and they got about fifty calls on it from people who wanted to know who it was. Since then WMMS has worn the grooves off the record and Mercury says the sales are doing well, better than even they expected."

At press time, the album has just entered the charts, the much coveted 'bullet' affixed. The sales figures are definitely healthy and a number of gigs have resulted in great word of mouth excitement about this 'new Canadian discovery', Rush. Geddy puts it more succinctly.

"We didn't believe the reaction we got in the States. Especially in the Mid-west. The kids are really hungry for music. They're not afraid to show you that they like you. In fact they go nuts if they like you. American kids are crazy. We love 'em."



they have elected to take their considerable innate talents and work them, push them, cajole them into something that is saleable above and beyond the barband route. They have taken their loungeact ploughshares and turned them into top flight weapons. The final proving ground is neither the daily paper's reviews, the rock magazine's reviews, nor the amount of airplay they receive (though all are invaluable assets). Rush knows that the determining factor is success...

somewhat pedestrian, but the structure of their material allows little else. Yet he has been known to really 'cook' (a cool word for all you hep cats) and he shakes like a palsied junkie when he steps up to the microphone. Totally confident in his abilities to get the joint jumpin', Geddy just stands and lets the feeling move him.

Alex Lifeson, between living chapters of the Teenage Dream, has studied hot guitar pyrotechnics to the point where he can let his fingers do the

CIRCUS

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Right now we're going through the horrors of learning of our indulgences on record", chuckles Rush guitarist Alex Lifeson. "We've recorded it, now we have to learn how to play it...we've all grown third legs and extra arms, so now we can do it live WITHOUT tapes".

The blond Canadian axeman may be joking, but at one point not all that long ago the typical Rush fan might have taken him seriously. Alex, bassist/keybard/vocalist Geddy Lee and drummer Neil Peart have always been meticulous craftsmen, but with their last three releases (Signals, Grace Under Pressure and Power Windows), they've become technocrats as well. All three albums were marked by an added emphasis on studio effects, digitally sampled sounds and keyboards that made live reproduction difficult at best. With 'Hold Your Fire', they've effectively reversed the trend.

"In some ways 'Hold Your Fire' is a step back," explains Lifeson. "On this one, the keyboards don't have as predominant a role. We wanted to get back to the energy of a three piece. While it does encompass some elements of the last three albums, it's probably the toughest music we've done in a long time".

And the fans have responded to that toughened sound by putting 'Hold Your Fire' in the top 15 after only five weeks. Not bad for a band that was admittedly on the point of breaking up only two years ago.

"Grace Under Pressure' was a hard album for us to do", Lifeson states candidly. "Things didn't run smoothly. There were a lot of problems about the band and the record...we were exhausted when we finished it. At that point, I couldn't imagine coming up with anymore original ideas.

"But Hold Your Fire was different", he continues. "We took the longest break we've ever had in our 13 years together last summer and we were fired up and fresh when we recorded it. It was probably the most fun (to record) of any album we've ever made.

Immediate plans call for Rush to tour the States until March, at which point they'll retreat to the studio to mix their next record, another live set due out by summer. And then it's off to an extensive European tour.

"I think that after every record, we feel that we've peaked creatively", speculates the guitarist. "But we feel very positive about this one. We still have fun with it and we're looking forward to having even more fun with it playing it live."

After being in Rush for nearly 20 years, that's really saying something...

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INNERS

Dear Editor,

I'd like to briefly reply to the criticism levelled at me and my 'Innerview' feature (issue 2) by Naveen of Liverpool.

Straight away I'll admit I tried to be controversial in my personal comments about Mr. Peart, and 'hypocrte' is probably a more appropriate description than 'bigot', but I believe that most of my points, (with particular reference to the Europeans issue) and options were justified by what Peart had said. I was interpreting, and merely transcribing his words.

Obviously it was my opinion, and (like arseholes) we've all got one. I'm curious to know why Naveen defends Mr. Peart so adamantly - surely he has no more knowledge of the man than I do? I also took offence at the quotes where Naveen suggested that "we all know..." what Mr. Peart is like. I for one certainly don't - I can just get an impression by what he writes and says.

Sorry that went on so long, but I'm keen to make it clear that I have an INDIVIDUAL opinion (which I expressed), and hopefully none of us has exactly the same impressions of everything about Rush.

Thanks Naveen for your gratitude at my writing of the original article, keep enjoying the music!.

STEVE ADAMS

Dear Editor,

Some words from a Canadian? - sure.

I get this weird feeling when I read comments found in issues 2 and 3. Most of the comments are reasonable, but a few seem a bit 'loaded'. I have to wonder if the people who wrote them now regret the fact? oh well.

I'd like to express my empathy for European Rush fans who seem to feel cheated. At least they've made it this time around! I'm sure no reasons for their absence will be adequate, and there seems to be many reasons.

I would like to give a hand to the many fine artists who have contributed their works. I find it interesting to know how other people react to Rush, both mentally, emotionally and intellectually.

There seems a lot of different feelings for 'Hold your Fire'. Indeed, it is a high point for Rush. I would like to see some longer pieces appear on the next album, utilizing the instrument combination abilities that have been aquired in recent years. What do you think?.

KEITH HEBERT (B.C. CANADA)

Dear Editor,

Thankyou for sending me 'Spirit Of Rush'. It is a thoughtfully put together magazine with many curiosities for a collector like myself.

Please find enclosed my personal review of the Wembley concerts. I did actually write another one to start off with, but it was much longer and tended to gush a bit too much (but then Rush are worth gushing about!) So I've written this shorter one with a much more clipped style. I hope it works.

I'd like to make a couple of comments about a letter that was published in issue 3. It was expressing a point of view which, these days, has become overloaded with cobwebs it is so old. I think you know the one I'm referring to; 'Rush's new material is rubbish, what happened to the fantasy, the science fiction, the lyrics about other worlds and sword and sorcery? where's the long hair and the kmono's gone?, something like that.

There's a guy where I work who spouts the same drivel too, he even had the audacity to say 'Grace Under Pressure' is a terrible album! take a look at your own poll results and I think you'll see that isn't quite true.

You see, I don't mind these people upholding this point of view - everyone is entitled to an opinion after all - but by spouting off about it all the time they are managing to fill the heads of the uninitiated with some incredible misconceptions about Rush.

If you were to mention the material or the band to someone who had never heard their music the immediate response would be "Oh, heavy metal". That's total bull. I've never considered Rush to be heavy metal - to categorise them so doing them a vast injustice. But these people who go on about long hair and Tolkeinesque lyrics (as good as they are) are only giving people the wrong impression.

Rush are all about progression. They never fail to amaze me with their ability to soak up any amount of different musical styles and turn them into something original. Just like time - they've never stood still. Each album is different. Each album is a peak of it's own. They are always challenging stylistically and lyric-wise, while still managing to be melodious. They are not commercial. They don't go out and write hit singles (if they did I, for one would feel betrayed) and, because of this, they have managed to maintain their integrity. Their music is always enjoyable, on whatever level you wish to take it.

So, can you imagine what would happen if they succumbed to the temptation of these people. With their cobwebbed opinions, can you imagine what would happen if they churned out '2112' after '2112' or 'xanadu' after 'Zanadu'? uproar from the majority of their fans, for one, "we told you so" from the music press, for another. Boredom for themselves too, powerchord after powerchord, scream after scream. Geddy would be wearing tight trousers again; Alex would be looking for a new kimono; Neil might even grow his moustache back!

One thing for sure though, they'd soon go stale. If they'd continued along the path set by 'A Farewell To Kings' and 'Hemispheres' they would have split up within five years. - But they didn't. You know why? because they HAVE got integrity, they DO believe in their art and what they're doing, and they also know that the aforementioned albums will always be there for their fans to listen to.

And I listen to them a lot - because I love them. And I love 'Hold Your Fire' and 'Power Windows' just as much. I love Rush because they are always forging ahead, leaving their contemporaries floundering in their wake.

Long may they continue to do so. I just wish these other people could appreciate all this - anyway thanks for letting me air MY opinion. Keep up the good work.

STEVE DAMARELL

Dear Editor,

In reply to the above letter from S.D of Middx - I must first apologise for my poor hasty, and misguided judgement. I can only put it down to the fact that I was starved, like the rest of us, of the lads doing the honours of visiting

our shores for a live performance.

(I was also in the front row at Wembley, like yourself), after the sheer brilliance of the performances, I saw with my wife, I can now see what majestic perfection 'hold Your Fire' and 'Power Windows' truly are. I just needed to see them live to appreciate them.

Now that I have, I can only agree with the things that you say. But I hope I haven't given you the wrong impression of myself, by the letter you referred to in issue 3. For you see, I too don't wish the band to churn out '2112' after '2112', or to don silk kimono's again, (as for the long hair, well I'm not one of those either, I'm as bald as a coot myself).

Well now I've cleared the air about that, as you have probably guessed by this quick reply to your letter that I have a small, but significant part in the mag to which you have kindly contributed your time and effort, like myself.

At least it shows people do take music and Rush seriously. Appologies once again for a hasty and much regretted letter.

TERRY (CATFORD)

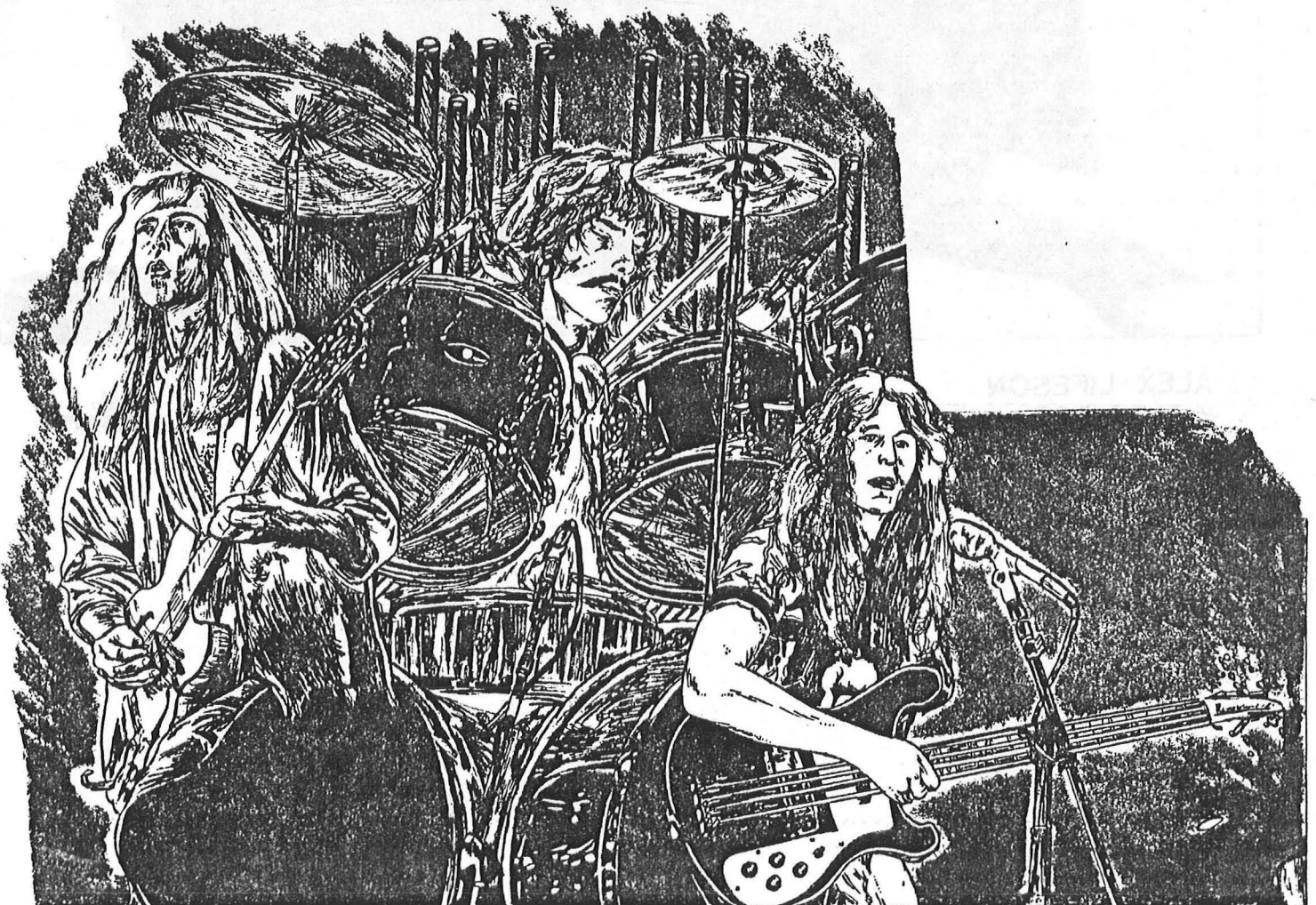
Dear Editor,

I think this is one of the best things to happen for Rush fans for a long time; as you say 4 years is a long time!.

I read every word of 'Spirit', and I got a lot more information that I wanted to read about Rush out of it, than I have out of any other publication. I sincerely hope that fan's everywhere contribute, and make this fanzine a national newspaper!.

Many thanks to Mick Burnett and his team. Keep up the good work. I hope to be contributing more for future issue's.

ERIC RYAN





ALEX LIFESON
of
RUSH



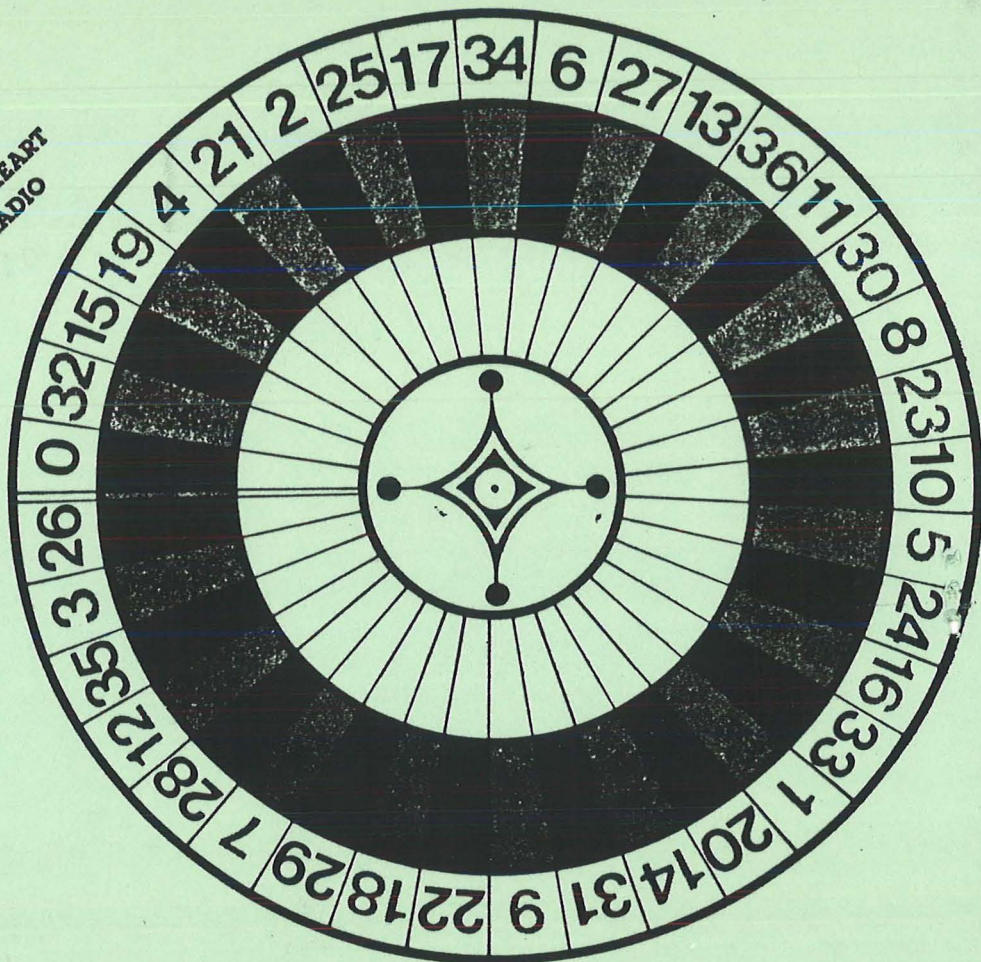
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