

# Spirit of Rush

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Issue No. 29





# SPIRIT OF RUSH EDITORIAL

Hello and welcome to the latest issue of 'Spirit'. You may have noticed that this issue has shrunk in size, (page count that is). This has been forced upon us, through a severe drop in readership, it was a straight decision keep the magazine A4 and drop the page count or make the magazine A5 in size. I think after 28 issues at A4 it would have been a real shame to change the size to A5, from next issue we'll change the type face to cram as much as we can in, and knock the photos on the head. (After all, we all know what the guys look like!). Money is tight, with rising printing costs, postage and envelopes to be paid for and our readership falling issue after issue, these drastic measures have been called for. Your subscription is now more important than ever, if you had a reminder with this issue, please use it and re-subscribe ASAP it can make all the difference. On a happier note Neil's Buddy Rich project 'Burning For Buddy' has finally been released in the U.K. (See Bio This Issue). It's volume 1 of a 3 volume set. The guys plan to re-group in April to begin writing material for the new album. Please make it quick!.

Since our last issue those nice people at Ultra Disc have released 'Signals' in their Gold Disc series, big mistake though! at 3.14 in 'The Weapon' where Ged sings "And the things that he fears" etc. up to "Against him" at 3.28ish this whole vocal phrase is missing!, it's strange to hear the music only, with no singing over it. At £25.00 a pop you would of thought the quality control that Ultra Disc boast about in the packaging would have spotted this error.

Terry Brown has been keeping busy, he had a hand in mixing 5 songs on Canadian band 'Moists' album 'Silver'. The albums stand out track 'Push' went top thirty here in the U.K. late last year. The album is chocked full of good songs and is well worth a listen.

Howard Ungerleider is currently in Europe with the guys from Queensryche. Once again he's behind the lighting desk doing his usual bang up job, see you at the Royal Albert Hall on March 10th Howie! Why not tell Rush about the place, if Queensryche can play there, Rush certainly can.

Our one time North American distributor Ray W. has become engaged, congratulations from everyone at 'Spirit' to Ray and his best girl Lisa.



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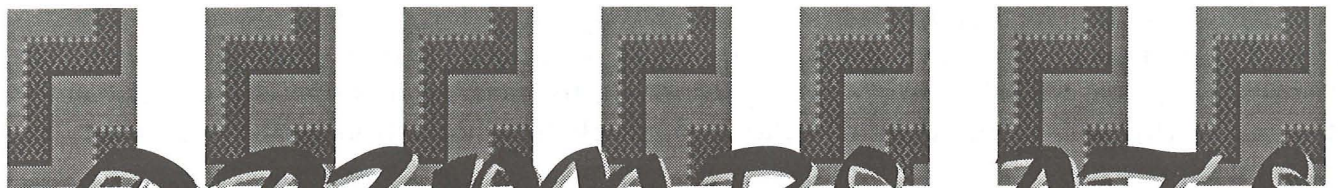
Mick Burnett,  
23, Garden Close,  
Chinbrook Road,  
Grove Park,  
London.  
SE12 - 9TG  
England.

Editor: Mick Burnett  
Co Editor: Neil Elliott  
Typist: Janet Balmer  
Printers: C.J.L.

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Dream Theater recently played a one off show at Ronnie Scots Jazz club in the heart of London. January 31st was the date for the band to present us with an evening of cover versions of songs by bands that have influenced them over the years. The ninety min set packed in loads of stuff, which included a song which Rush have never performed live 'Tears' was as close to the '2112' version as you could have hoped for, with the best vocal performance I have ever heard by singer Jame Labrie. OUTSTANDING. Steve Howe popped in as did Marillion to enliven an already sparkling performance by the band themselves. The band will return to London on the 15th March as part of their 'Awake' World Tour. So go and buy their current album 'Awake' and get down to the Forum on the 15th for an evening you won't forget.





# DRUMBEATS

Kevin J. Anderson and Neil Peart

After nine months of touring across North America — with hotel suites and elaborate dinners and clean sheets every day — it felt good to be hot and dirty, muscles straining not for the benefit of any screaming audience, but just to get to the next village up the dusty road, where none of the natives recognized Danny Imbro or knew his name. To them, he was just another White Man, an exotic object of awe for little children, a target of scorn for drunken soldiers at border checkpoints.

Bicycling through Africa was about the furthest thing from a rock concert tour that Danny could imagine — which was why he'd done it, after promoting the latest Blitzkrieg album and performing each song until the tracks were worn smooth in his head. This cleared his mind, gave him a sense of balance, perspective.

The other members of Blitzkrieg did their own things during the group's break months. Phil, whom they called the "music machine" because he couldn't stop writing music, spent his relaxation time cranking out film scores for Hollywood; Reggie caught up on his reading, soaking up grocery bags full of political thrillers and mysteries; Shane turned into a vegetable on Maui. But Danny Imbro took his expensive-but-battered bicycle and bummed around West Africa. The others thought it strangely appropriate that the band's drummer would go off hunting for tribal rhythms.

Late in the afternoon on the sixth day of his ride through Cameroon, Danny stopped in a large open market and bus depot in the town of Garoua. The marketplace was a line of mud-brick kiosks and chophouses, the air filled with the smell of baked dust and stones, hot oil and frying beignets. Abandoned cars squatted by the roadside, stripped clean but unblemished by corrosion in the dry air. Groups of men and children in long blouses like nightshirts idled their time away on the street corners.

Wives and daughters appeared on the road with their buckets, on their way to fetch water from the well on the other side of the marketplace. They wore brightly colored pagnes and kerchiefs, covering their traditionally naked breasts with T-shirts or castoff Western blouses, since the government in the capital city of Yaoundé had forbidden women to go topless.

At one kiosk in the shade sat a man holding several bottles of Coca-Cola, Fanta, and ginger ale, cooling in water. Some vendors sold a thin stew of bony fish chunks over gritty rice; others sold fufu, a dough-like paste, of pounded yams to be dipped into a sauce of meat and okra. Bread merchants stacked their long baguettes like dry firewood.

Danny used the back of his hand to smear sweat-caked dust off his forehead, then removed the bandana that he wore under his helmet to keep the sweat out of his eyes. With streaks of white skin peeking through the layer of grit around his eyes, he probably looked like some strange lemur, he thought.



In halting French, he began haggling with a wiry boy over a bottle of water. Hiding behind his kiosk, the boy demanded eight hundred francs for the water, an outrageous price. While Danny was attempting to bargain it down, he caught sight of a gaunt, grayish-skinned man walking through the marketplace like a windup toy running down.

The man was playing a drum.

The boy cringed and looked away. Danny kept staring. The crowd seemed to shrink away from the strange man as he wandered among them, continuing his incessant beat. He wore his hair long and unruly, which in itself was unusual among the close-cropped Africans. In the equatorial heat, the long, stained overcoat he wore must have heated his body like a furnace, but the man did not seem to notice. His eyes were focused on some invisible point in the distance.

"Huit-cent francs," the boy insisted on his price, holding the lukewarm bottle of water just out of Danny's reach.

The staggering man walked closer, tapping a slow, monotonous beat on the small cylindrical drum under his arm. He did not change his tempo, but continued to play as if his life depended on it. Danny saw that the man's fingers and wrists were wrapped in scraps of hide; even so, he had beaten his fingertips bloody.

Danny stood transfixed. He had heard tribal musicians play all manner of percussion instruments, from hollowed tree trunks to rusted metal cans to beautifully carved djembe drums with goatskin drumheads \_ but he had never heard a tone so rich and sweet, with such an odd echoey quality as this strange African drum.





In the studio, he had messed around with drum synthesizers and reverbs and the new technology designed to turn computer hackers into musicians. But this drum sounded different, solid and pure, and it hooked him through the heart, hypnotizing him. It distracted him entirely from the unpleasant appearance of its bearer.

"What is that?" he asked.

"Sept-cent francs," the boy said in a nervous whisper, dropping his price and pushing the water closer.

Danny walked in front of the staggering man, smiling broadly enough to show the grit between his teeth, and listened to the tapping drumbeat. The drummer turned his gaze to Danny and stared through him. The pupils of his eyes were like two gaping bullet wounds through his skull. Danny took a step backward, but found himself moving to the beat. The drummer faced him, finding his audience. Danny tried to place the rhythm, to burn it into his mind — something this mesmerizing simply had to be included in a new Blitzkrieg song.

Danny looked at the cylindrical drum, trying to determine what might be causing its odd double resonance — a thin inner membrane, perhaps? He saw nothing but elaborate carvings on the sweat-polished wood, and a drumhead with a smooth, dark brown coloration. He knew the Africans used all kinds of skin for their drumheads, and he couldn't begin to guess what this was.

He mimed a question to the drummer, then asked, "Est-ce-que je peux l'essayer?" May I try it?

The gaunt man said nothing, but held out the drum near enough for Danny to touch it without interrupting his obsessive rhythm. His overcoat flapped open, and the hot stench of decay made Danny stagger backward, but he held his ground, reaching for the drum.

Danny ran his fingers over the smooth drumskin, then tapped with his fingers. The deep sound resonated with a beat of its own, like a heartbeat. It delighted him. "For sale? Est-ce-que c'est à vendre?" He took out a thousand francs as a starting point, although if water alone cost eight hundred here, this drum was worth much, much more.

The man snatched the drum away and clutched it to his chest, shaking his head vigorously. His drumming hand continued its unrelenting beat.

Danny took out two thousand francs, then was disappointed to see not the slightest change of expression on the odd drummer's face. "Okay, then, where was the drum made? Where can I get another one? Où est-ce qu'on peut trouver un autre comme ça?" He put most of the money back into his pack, and stuffed the remaining two hundred francs into the fist of the drummer, the man's hand seemed to be made of petrified wood. "Où?"

The man scowled, then gestured behind him, toward the Mandara Mountains along Cameroon's border with Nigeria. "Kabas."

he turned and staggered away, still tapping on his drum as if to mark his footsteps. Danny watched him go, then returned to the kiosk, unfolding the map from his pack. "Where is this Kabas? Is it a place? C'est un village?"

"Huit-cent francs," the boy said, offering the water again at his original price.

Danny bought the water, and the boy gave him directions.

He spent the night in a Garouan hotel that made Motel 6 look like Caesars Palace. Anxious to be on his way to find his own new drum, Danny roused a local vendor and cajoled him into preparing a quick omelet for breakfast. He took a sip from his



eight-hundred-franc bottle of water, saving the rest for the long bike ride, then pedaled off into the stirring sounds of early morning.

As Danny left Garoua on the main road, heading toward the mountains, savanna and thorn trees stretched away under a crystal sky. A pair of doves bathed in the dust of the road ahead, but as he rode toward them, they flew up into the last of the trees with chuk-chuks of alarm and a flash of white tail feathers. Smoke from grass fires on the plains tainted the air.

How different it was to be riding through a landscape, he thought \_ with no walls or windows between his senses and the world \_ rather than just riding by it. Danny felt the road under his thin wheels, the sun, the wind on his body. It made a strange place less exotic, yet it became infinitely more real.

The road out of Garoua was a wide boulevard that turned into a smaller road heading north. With his bicycle tires humming and crunching on the irregular pavement, Danny passed a few ragged cotton fields, then entered the plains of dry, yellow grass and thorny scrub, everywhere studded with boulders and sculpted anthills. By seven-thirty in the morning, a hot breeze rose, carrying a honeysucklelike perfume. Everything vibrated with heat.

Within an hour the road grew worse, but Danny kept his pace, taking deep breaths in the trancelike state that kept the horizon moving closer. Drums. Kabas. Long rides helped him clear his head, but he found he had to concentrate to steer around the worst ruts and the biggest stones.

Great columns of stone appeared above the hills to east and west. One was pyramid-shaped, one resembled a huge rounded breast, yet another a great stone phallus. Danny had seen photographs of these inselberg formations caused by volcanoes that had eroded over the eons, leaving behind vertical cores of lava.

The road here, too, was eroded, a heaving washboard, which veered left into a trough





between tumbled boulders and up through a gauntlet of thorn trees. Danny stopped for another drink of water, another glance at the map. The water boy at the kiosk had marked the location of Kabas with his fingernail, but it was not printed on the map.

After Danny had climbed uphill for an hour, the beaten path became no more than a worn trail, forcing him to squeeze between walls of thorns and dry millet stalks. The squadrons of hovering dragonflies were harmless, but the hordes of tiny flies circling his face were maddening, and he couldn't pedal fast enough to escape them.

It was nearly noon, the sun reflecting straight up from the dry earth, and the little shade cast by the scattered trees dwindled to a small circle around the trunks. "Where the hell am I going?" he said to the sky.

But in his head he kept hearing the odd, potent beat resonating from the bizarre drum he had seen in the Garoua marketplace. He recalled the grayish, shambling man who had never once stopped tapping on his drum, even though his fingers bled. No matter how bad the road got, Danny thought, he would keep going. He'd never been so intrigued by a drumbeat before, and he never left things half finished.

Danny Imbro was a goal-oriented person. The other members of Blitzkrieg razzed him about it, that once he made up his mind to do something, he plowed ahead, defying all common sense. Back in school, he had made up his mind to be a drummer. He had hammered away at just about every object in sight with his fingertips, pencils, silverware, anything that made noise. He kept at it until he drove everyone else around him nuts, and somewhere along the line he became good.

Now people stood at the chain-link fences behind concert halls and applauded whenever he walked from the backstage dressing rooms out to the tour buses \_ as if he were somehow doing a better job of walking than any of them had ever seen before . . . .

Up ahead an enormous buttress tree, a gnarled and twisted pair of trunks hung with cable-thick vines, cast a wide patch of shade. Beneath the tree, watching him approach, sat a small boy.

The boy leaped to his feet as if he had been waiting for Danny. Shirtless and dusty, he held a hooklike withered arm against his chest; but his grin was completely disarming. "Je suis guide?" the boy called.

Relief stifled Danny's laugh. He nodded vigorously. "Oui!" Yes, he could certainly use a guide right about now. "Je cherche Kabas \_ village des tambours. The village of drums."

The smiling boy danced around like a goat, jumping from rock to rock. He was pleasant-faced and healthy-looking, except for the crippled arm; his skin was very dark but his eyes had a slight Asian cast. He chattered in a high voice, a mixture of French and native dialect. Danny caught enough to understand that the boy's name was Anatole.

Before the boy led him on, though, Danny dismounted, leaning his bicycle against a boulder, and unzipped his pack to take out raisins, peanuts, and the dry remains of a baguette. Anatole watched him with wide eyes, and Danny gave him a handful of raisins, which the boy wolfed down. Small flies whined around their faces as they ate. Danny answered the boy's incessant questions with as few words as possible: Did he come from America, did black boys live there, why was he visiting Cameroon? The short rest sank its soporific claws into him, but Danny decided not to give in. An afternoon siesta made a lot of sense, but now that he had his own personal guide



to the village, he made it his goal not to stop again until they reached Kabas. "Okay?" Danny raised his eyebrows and struggled to his feet.

Anatole sprang out from the shade and fetched Danny's bike for him, struggling with one arm to keep it upright. After several trips to Africa, Danny had seen plenty of withered limbs, caused by childhood diseases, accidents, and bungled inoculations. Out here in the wilder areas, such problems were even more prevalent, and he wondered how Anatole managed to survive; acting as a "guide" for the rare travelers would hardly suffice.

Danny pulled out a hundred francs \_ an eighth of what he had paid for one bottle of water \_ and handed it to the boy, who looked as if he had just been handed the crown jewels. Danny figured he had probably made a friend for life.

Anatole trotted ahead, gesturing with his good arm. Danny pedaled after him.

The narrow valley captured a smear of greenness in the dry hills, with a cluster of mango trees, guava trees, and strange beobabs with eight-foot-thick trunks. Playing the knowledgeable tour guide, Anatole explained that the local women used the baobab fruits for baby formula if their breast milk failed. The villagers used another tree to manufacture an insect repellent.

The houses of Kabas blended into the landscape, because they were of the landscape \_ stones and branches and grass. The walls were made of dry mud, laid on a handful at a time, and the roofs were thatched into cones. Tiny pink and white stones studded the mud, sparkling like quartz in the sun.

At first the place looked deserted, but then an ancient man emerged from a turret-shaped hut. An enormous cutlass dangled from his waist, although the shrunken man looked as if it might take him an hour just to lift the blade. Anatole shouted something, then gestured for Danny to follow him. The great cutlass swayed against the old man's unsteady knees as he bowed slightly \_ or stooped \_ and greeted Danny in formal, unpracticed French. "Bonsoir!"

"Makonya," Danny said, remembering the local greeting from Garoua. He walked his bike in among the round and square buildings. A few chickens scratched in the dirt, and a pair of black-and-brown goats nosed between the huts. A sinewy, long-limbed old woman wearing only a loincloth tended a fire. He immediately started looking for the special drums, but saw none.

Within the village, a high-walled courtyard enclosed two round huts. Gravel covered the open area between them, roofed over with a network of serpent-shaped sticks supporting grass mats. This seemed to be the chief's compound. Anatole took Danny's arm and dragged him forward.

Inside the wall, a white-robed figure reclined in a canvas chair under an acacia tree. His handsome features had a North African cast, with thin lips over white teeth and a rakish mustache. His aristocratic head was wrapped in a red-and-white-checked scarf, and even in repose he was obviously tall. He looked every bit the romantic desert prince, like Rudolf Valentino in *The Sheik*. After greeting Danny in both French and the local language, the chief gestured for his visitor to sit beside him.

Before Danny could move, two other boys appeared carrying a rolled-up mat of woven grass, which they spread out for him. Anatole scolded them for horning in on his customer, but the two boys cuffed him and ignored his protests. Then the chief shouted at them all for disturbing his peace and drove the boys away. Danny watched them kicking Anatole as they scampered away, and he felt for this new friend, angry at how tough people picked on weaker ones the world over.





He sat cross-legged on the mat, and it took him only a moment to begin reveling in the moment of relaxation. No cars or trucks disturbed the peace. He was miles from the nearest electricity, or glass window, or airplane. He sat looking up into the leaves of the acacia, listening to the quiet buzz of the villagers, and thought, "I'm living in a National Geographic documentary!"

Anatole stole back into the compound, bearing two bottles of warm Mirinda orange soda, which he gave to Danny and the chief. Other boys gathered under the tree, glaring at Anatole, then looking at Danny with ill-concealed awe.

After several moments of polite smiling and nodding, Danny asked the chief if all the boys were his children. Anatole assisted in the unnecessary translation.

"Oui," the chief said, patting his chest proudly. He claimed to have fathered thirty-one sons, which made Danny wonder if the women in the village found it politic to routinely claim the chief as the father of their babies. As with all remote African villages, though, many children died of various sicknesses. Just a week earlier, one of the babies had succumbed to a terrible fever, the chief said.

The chief asked Danny the usual questions about his country, whether any blackmen lived there, why had he visited Cameroon; then he insisted that Danny eat dinner with them. The women would prepare the village's specialty of chicken in peanut sauce.

Hearing this, the old sentry emerged with his cutlass, smiled widely at Danny, then disappeared around the side wall. The squawking of a terrified chicken erupted in the sleepy afternoon air, the sounds of a scuffle, and then the squawking stopped.

Finally, Danny asked the question that had brought him to Kabas in the first place: "Moi, je suis musicien: je cherche les tambours speciaux." He mimed, rapping on a small drum, then turned to Anatole for assistance.



The chief sat up, startled, then nodded. He hammered on the air, mimicking drum playing, as if to make sure. Danny nodded. The chief clapped his hands and gestured for Anatole to take Danny somewhere. The boy pulled Danny to his feet and, surrounded by other chattering boys, dragged him back out of the walled courtyard. Danny managed to turn around and bow to the chief.

After trooping up a stairlike terrace of rock, they entered the courtyard of another homestead. The main shelter was built of handmade blocks with a flat roof of corrugated metal. Anatole explained that this was the home of the local sorcier, or wizard.

Anatole called out, then gestured for Danny to follow through the low doorway. Inside the hut, the walls were hung with evidence of the sorcier's trade — odd bits of metal, small carvings, bundles of fur and feathers, mortars full of powders and herbs, clay urns for water and millet beer, smooth skins curing as they hung from the roof poles. And drums.

"Tambours!" Anatole said, spreading his hands wide.

Judging from the craftsman's tools around the hut, the sorcier made the village's drums as well as stored them. Danny saw several small gourd drums, larger log drums, and hollow cylinders of every size, all intricately carved with serpentine symbols, circles feeding into spirals, lines tangled into knots.

Danny reached out to touch one — then the sorcier himself stood up from the shadows near the far wall. Danny bit of a startled cry as the lithe old man glided forward. The sorcier was tall and rangy, but his skin was a battleground of wrinkles, as if someone had clumsily fashioned him out of papier mâché.

"Pardon," Danny said. The wrinkled man had been sitting on a low stool, putting the finishing touches to a new drum.

Fixing his eyes on his visitor, the sorcier withdrew a medium-size drum from a niche in the wall. Closing his eyes, he tapped on it. The mud walls of the hut reverberated with the hollow vibration, an earthy, primal beat that resonated in Danny's bones. Danny grinned with awe. Yes! The gaunt man's drum had not been a fluke. The drums of Kabas had some special construction that caused this hypnotic tone.

Danny reached out tentatively. The wrinkled man gave him an appraising look, then extended the drum enough for Danny to strike it. He tapped a few tentative beats, and laughed out loud when the instrument rewarded him with the same rich sound. The sorcier turned away, taking the drum with him and returning it to its niche in the wall. In two flowing strides the wrinkled man went to his stool in the shadows, picking up the drum he had been fashioning, moving it into the crack of light that seeped through the windows. Pointing, he spoke in a staccato dialect, which Anatole translated into pidgin French.

The sorcier was finishing a new drum today, Anatole said. Perhaps they would play it this evening, an initiation. The chief's baby son would have enjoyed that. From the baby's body, the sorcier had been able to salvage only enough skin to make this one small drum.

"What?" Danny said, looking down at the deep brown skin covering the top of the drum.

Anatole explained, as if it were the most ordinary thing in the world, that whenever one of the chief's many sons died, the sorcier used his skin to make one of Kabas's special drums. It had always been done.





Danny wrestled with that idea for a moment. On his first trip to Africa five years earlier, he had learned the wrenching truth of how different these cultures were from his own.

"Why?" he finally asked. "Pourquoi?"

He had seen other drums made entirely of human skin taken from slain enemies, fashioned in the shape of stunted bodies with gaping mouths; when they were tapped, a hollow sound came from the effigies' mouths. He knew that he was wrong for trying to impose his Western moral framework on the inhabitants of an alien land, I'm sorry, sir, but you'll have to check your preconceptions at the door, he thought jokingly to himself.

"Magique." Anatole's eyes showed a flash of fear \_ fear born of respect for great power, rather than paranoia or panic. With the magic drums of Kabas, the chief could conquer any man, steal his heartbeat. It was old magic, a technique the village wizards had discovered long before the French had come to Cameroon, and before them the Germans. Kabas had been isolated, and at peace for longer than the memories of the oldest people in the village. Because of the drums. Anatole smiled, proud of his story, and Danny restrained an urge to pat him on the head.

Trying not to let his disbelief show, Danny nodded deeply to the sorcier. "Merci," he said. As Anatole led him back out to the courtyard, the sorcier returned to his work on the small drum.

Danny wondered if he should have tried to buy one of the drums. Did he believe the story about using human skins? Probably. Why would Anatole lie?

As they left the sorcier's homestead to begin the trek back to the village, he looked westward across the jagged landscape of inselbergs. As always at sunset, the air was filled with hundreds of kites, their wings rigid, circling high on the last thermals.



Like leaves before the wind, the birds came spiraling down to disappear into the trees, filling them with the invisible flapping of wings.

When they reached the main village again, Danny saw that the women had returned from their labor in the nearby fields. He was familiar with the African tradition of sending the women and children out for backbreaking labor while the men lounged in the shade and talked "business."

The numerous sons of the chief and various adults gathered inside the courtyard near the fire, which the old sinewy woman had stoked into a larger blaze. Other men emerged, and Danny wondered where they had been all afternoon. Out hunting? If so, they had nothing to show for their efforts. Anatole directed Danny to sit on a mat beside the chief, and everyone smiled vigorously at each other, the villagers exchanging the call-and-response litany of ritual greetings, which could go on for several minutes.

The old woman served the chief first, then the honored guest. She placed a brown yam like a baked potato on the mat in front of him, miming that it was hot. Danny took a cautious bite; the yam was pungent and turned to paste in his mouth. Then the woman reappeared with the promised chicken in peanut sauce. They all ate quietly in a circle around the fire, ignoring each other, as red shadows flickered across their faces.

Listening to the sounds of eating and the simmering evening hush of the West African hills, Danny felt the emptiness like a peaceful vacuum, draining away stress and loud noises and hectic schedules. After too many head-pounding tours and adrenaline-crazed performances, Danny had been convinced he'd forgotten how to sit quietly, how to slow down. After one rough segment of the last Blitzkrieg tour, he had taken a few days to go camping in the mountains; he recalled pacing in vigorous circles around the picnic table, muttering to himself that he was relaxing as fast as he could! Calming down was an acquired skill, he felt, and there was no better teacher than Africa.

After the meal, heads turned in the firelight, and Danny looked up to see the sorcier entering the chief's compound. The wrinkled man cradled several of his mystical drums. He placed one of the drums in front of the chief, then set the others on an empty spot on the ground. He squatted behind one drum, thrusting his long, lean legs up and to the sides like the wings of a vulture.

Danny perked up. "A concert?" He turned to Anatole who spoke rapidly to the sorcier. The wrinkled man looked skeptically at Danny, then shrugged. He picked up one of the extra drums and ceremoniously extended it to Danny.

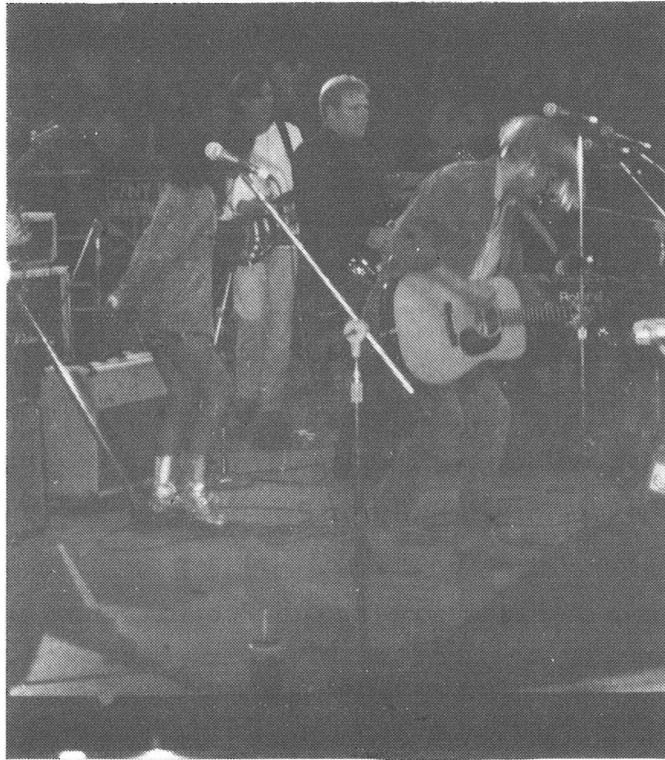
Danny couldn't stop smiling. He took the drum and looked at it. The coffee-colored skin felt smooth and velvety as he touched it. A shiver went up his spine as he tapped the drumhead. Making music from human skin. He forced his instinctive revulsion back into the gray static of his mind, the place where he stored things "to think about later." For now, he had the drum in his hands.

The chief thumped out a few beats, then stopped. The sorcier mimicked them, and glanced toward Danny. "Jam session!" he muttered under his breath, then repeated the sequence easily and cleanly, but added a quick, complicated flourish to the end.

The chief raised his eyebrows, followed suit with the beat, and made it more complicated still. The sorcier flowed into his part, and Danny joined in with another counterpoint. It reminded him of the "Dueling Banjos" sequence from *Deliverance*.

The echoing, rich tone of the drum made his fingers warm and tingly, but he allowed himself to be swallowed up in the mystic rhythms, the primal pounding out in the





middle of the African wilderness. The other night noises vanished around him, the smoke from the fire rose straight up, and the light centered into a pinpoint of his concentration.

Using his bare fingers \_ sticks would only interrupt the magical contact between himself and the drum \_ Danny continued weaving into their rhythms, trading points and counterpoints. The beat touched a core of past lives deep within him, an atavistic, pagan intensity, as the three drummers reached into the Pulse of the World. The chief played on; the sorcier played on; and Danny let his eyes fade half-closed in a rhythmic trance as they explored the wordless language and hypnotic interplay of rhythm.

Danny became aware of the boys standing up and swaying, jabbering excitedly and laughing as they danced around him. He deciphered their words as "White Man drum! White Man drum!" It was a safe bet they'd never seen a white man play a drum before.

Suddenly the sorcier stopped, and within a beat the chief also quit playing. Danny felt wrenched out of the experience, but reluctantly played a concluding figure as well, ending with an emphatic flam. His arms burned from the exertion. sweat dripped down the stubble on his chin. His ears buzzed from the noise. Unable to restrain himself, Danny began laughing with delight.

The sorcier said something, which Anatole translated: "Vous avez l'esprit de batteur." You have the spirit of a drummer.

With a throbbing hand, Danny squeezed Anatole's bare shoulder and nodded. "Oui." The chief also congratulated him, thanking him for sharing his white man's music with the village. Danny found that ironic, since he had come here to pick up a rich African flavor for his compositions. But Danny could record his impressions in new songs; the village of Kabas had no way of keeping what he had brought to them.



# *Signature* **GUITARS**

Most guitarists into Rush will know which instruments Alex has played over the years - Gibson ES335, Fender Strat, PRS etc. But one make of guitar played by Alex was not a household name - Signature. Alex used Signatures almost exclusively for the 'Hold Your Fire' album and tour and for the 'Presto' album and tour.

As well as wanting to find out more about Alex's involvement with Signature, I wanted to know more about the guitars themselves since I own an Aurora model Signature similar to Alex's. The only other person I know of who owns a Signature is Steve Zimmerman from Seattle. Not only does he have two Signatures (both Aurora's), but one actually belonged to Alex! Steve managed to get hold of a guitar that Alex had apparently sent back after having some hardware changes made. The guitar is Candy Apple Red with gold hardware, has a number 4 on the headstock and the 21st fret marker has "Alex Lifeson" engraved in it!

So what were Signature all about and how was Alex involved?

The Signature Guitar Company was started by Russ Heinl when he lived in Toronto. Russ ran his own company, Heinl Electronics, and distributed Kramer guitars in Canada. He wanted to create a guitar designed and built in Canada; a guitar that would be personalised for the owner with an engraved fret marker - a Signature. The prototypes were designed by Jean Larrivée, a respected Canadian luthier. Various pickup combinations were considered but finally Evans pickups were chosen. According to Russ the bodies were either alder or basswood, the necks maple and the fingerboards ebony.

Russ already knew Alex and took a prototype of the new guitar for him to try out. This guitar was fitted with a new MIDI pitchshifter device called the IVL Pitchrider. Well, Alex didn't like the Pitchrider but he loved the guitar. Alex then became involved with the development of the instrument - working on switching arrangements, layouts etc. He also specified active pickups. Evans did not have a stock active system so

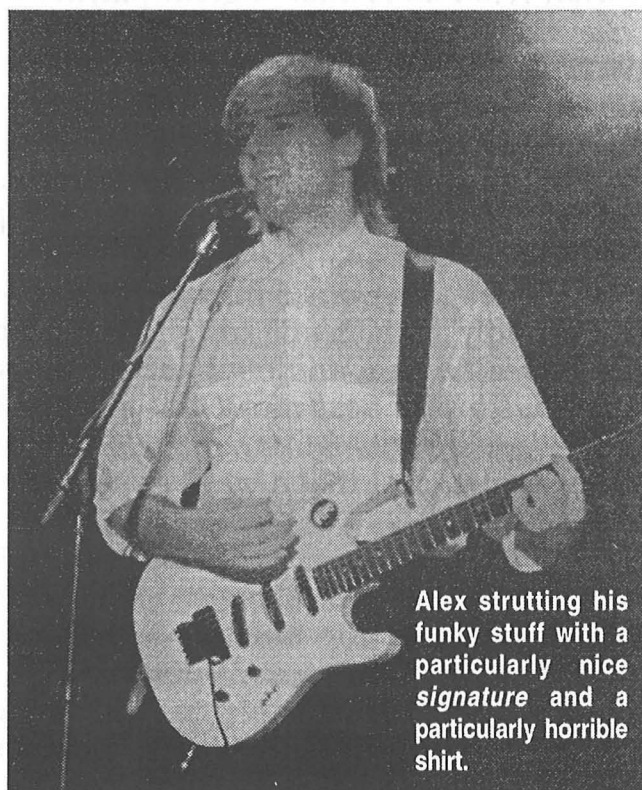


they designed an active tone circuit to complement their passive pickups. Russ and Robert Tilley at Evans, told me that some instruments did have true active pickups which were made by Fernandes/EMG. Production models of the guitar were made by Godin in Quebec and assembled by a company called 12th Fret in Toronto.

That first guitar that Alex tried became known as "Great White" and is the one he played most on stage - it had a number 1 on the headstock. He also used this guitar on the 'Beyond Borders' Guitar Player Soundpage recording. The accompanying article has a good photo of Alex holding the guitar complete with Pitchrider. On the HYF tour, Alex used five Signatures including Great White. He also used Great White on the Presto tour and it was at about this time that Signature Guitars was closed down. Strangely, the headstock of Great White got broken at a show on the Presto tour and, although it was repaired, it was never quite the same instrument. Spooky! Russ had a major US distribution deal in the offing, but was being pressured into using American-made pickups (Seymour Duncan), while the European market was happy with the Evans equipped instruments. I don't know all the details but sadly Signature was closed. Russ pulled out of the music technology business and moved to Vancouver Island. Apparently, Jean Larrivée has 30 or 40 unfinished Signatures in his workshop in Vancouver! Alex still has a couple of Signatures: bolt-on Aurora (named after the town in Ontario) models and neck-thru instruments. He also had Evans modify a PRS by installing the active system from one of the Signatures. This is the guitar he has used for the live version of 'Time Stand Still' on both the Roll The Bones and Counterparts tours.

I think these guitars greatly contributed to the Rush sound of the late 1980's and have a unique character. If anyone else out there has a Signature I'd like to hear from you. Many thanks to Russ Heinl, Robert Tilley at Evans and Steve Zimmerman for their time and information.

Andy Piercy.



Alex strutting his funky stuff with a particularly nice *signature* and a particularly horrible shirt.



# BURNING FOR BUDDY

## A TRIBUTE TO THE MUSIC OF BUDDY RICH

by Neil Peart

### WHAT' S IT ALL ABOUT?

Well, as the title suggests, it's about the music, not just the drums. Although Buddy Rich was justly celebrated for his fiery drum solos, he was also known for his exciting ensemble work. The signature arrangements which he commissioned for his big band showcased the songs and the band, not the drums alone, and so it is on this tribute.

Apart from few original pieces contributed by the guest drummers, all of this music is drawn from Buddy's repertoire. From his first big band in the late 'forties until his passing in 1987, Buddy's music was never about nostalgia. It was always young, and reflected the changing times. He pushed big-band music forward from traditional swing to absorb influences from latin, rock, funk, fusion and contemporary jazz, and all of that variety is represented on this tribute.

Throughout his career Buddy sought new material and creative young arrangers, and he often hired his musicians straight out of the music colleges at Berklee or North Texas State. Some of those players, seasoned but still youthful, appear in this version of the Buddy Rich Big Band - all but two of them veterans of Buddy's own bands. To accompany them, we invited some of today's most prominent drummers, and what resulted is a lot of great playing, and a lot of great music.

### HOW IT CAME ABOUT:

It started when I was a child . . . My father's pride and joy (apart from me, of course) was a hi-fi record player in a little wooden cabinet, and he liked to play the music of Count Basie, Duke Ellington, the Dorseys, Glenn Miller, Frank Sinatra and Tony Bennett. As a teenager, naturally I rejected "my father's music" and turned exclusively to rock.

However, once I was out on my own I began to "discover" the music for myself, and I would proudly write home to tell Dad I'd bought an Ellington or Sinatra record. I began to realize that the big-band era was a special time - then people listened to and danced to the best musicians playing the best music of the day. (Most people would agree that this is not always so.) But still, rock was the music of my time, for better or worse, and that's what I spent the next twenty-five years playing, most of it with Rush.

Then early in 1991 I received a letter from Buddy's daughter, Cathy. She invited me to play at a Buddy Rich Memorial Scholarship Concert in New York - with the Buddy Rich Big Band. At the time, I wasn't sure how to respond. Or more like, I wasn't sure how to avoid this scary opportunity - with pride intact. Not only had I always considered Buddy Rich to be the greatest drummer who ever lived, but I had been playing rock drums all those years - how was I going to step into Buddy's shoes?



Well, I was terrified at the prospect, so of course I had to do it. After a lot of preparation and anxiety, my big-band debut was a mostly positive experience, but there were a few obstacles. The logistics of producing a show with six different drummers (and drumsets) complicated the rehearsals, so that I was only able to go through my tunes with the band once. The monitors were also . . . let's say underdeveloped, and with the horn players 'way across the stage from me, during the performance I couldn't hear the rest of the band. Hardly ideal circumstances. Fortunately enough, all my preparation carried me through, and it came off okay - just not as perfect as I'd wanted it to be.

After the show I was disappointed and down on myself about it, but I cheered up when I realized that all I had to do was do it again - so that I could do it right. This time though, I wanted to try it under more controlled circumstances. Like in a recording studio.

Almost three years later, in January of '94, I learned that a birth in the Rush family would be giving me some unexpected time off. After considering my options (a bicycle tour to some exotic locale?, a prose-writing project?, maybe just a rest?), I decided that what I really wanted to do was record some big-band music. "Somebody," I thought, "Somebody ought to produce a Buddy Rich tribute record, and I could play on it."

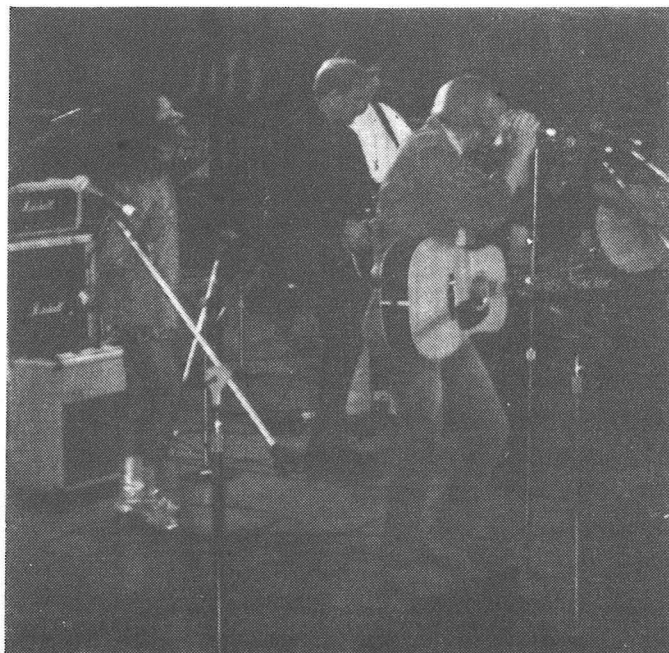
Well, it seemed that "somebody" might as well be me, so I contacted Cathy Rich to gauge her reaction to the idea. Without Cathy's help, her connections in the drumming community, and her blessing, I knew it could never happen. Fortunately her response was favourable, so we began exchanging lists of drummers, candidates who ought to be invited. "Many are suggested; few are chosen." Inevitably, some politely declined for one reason or another, or wanted to do it but were unavailable in our time-frame, but eventually we had a list of drummers confirmed. Now Cathy began organizing the band - Buddy's usual lineup of four trumpets, three trombones, five saxes, piano, and bass - from people she'd worked with on the Buddy Rich Memorial Scholarship concerts.

### **HOW IT WENT:**

By our deadline, the middle of May, it had all come together - though not without a lot of work from a lot of people. Liam Birt, Rush's tour manager, signed on as co-executive producer (with Cathy) to handle the logistics, the finances, and the practical side of things. Our manager Ray Daniels went to Atlantic Records to convince them to release the final record, and Cathy's husband Steve Arnold also worked hard on the project, helping out with liaison, musical advice, comic relief, and good suggestions (well, mostly good . . .). Larry Allen, who has looked after my own equipment for almost twenty years, did the same for many of these drummers, and kept all those drum kits going up and down and in and out at the proper times.

We recorded for two weeks at the Power Station in New York, often with two drummers a day, and as many as five tunes. The fifteen-piece band was recorded entirely live "off the floor," with minimal opportunity (or need!) to make repairs. This was very demanding for the musicians, and also for engineer Paul Northfield. He had to put together a drum balance for each drummer within a few minutes, keep all those horn players happy with their headphone mikes, and record every run-through as if it were "the one." And of course, it often was. From my previous work with





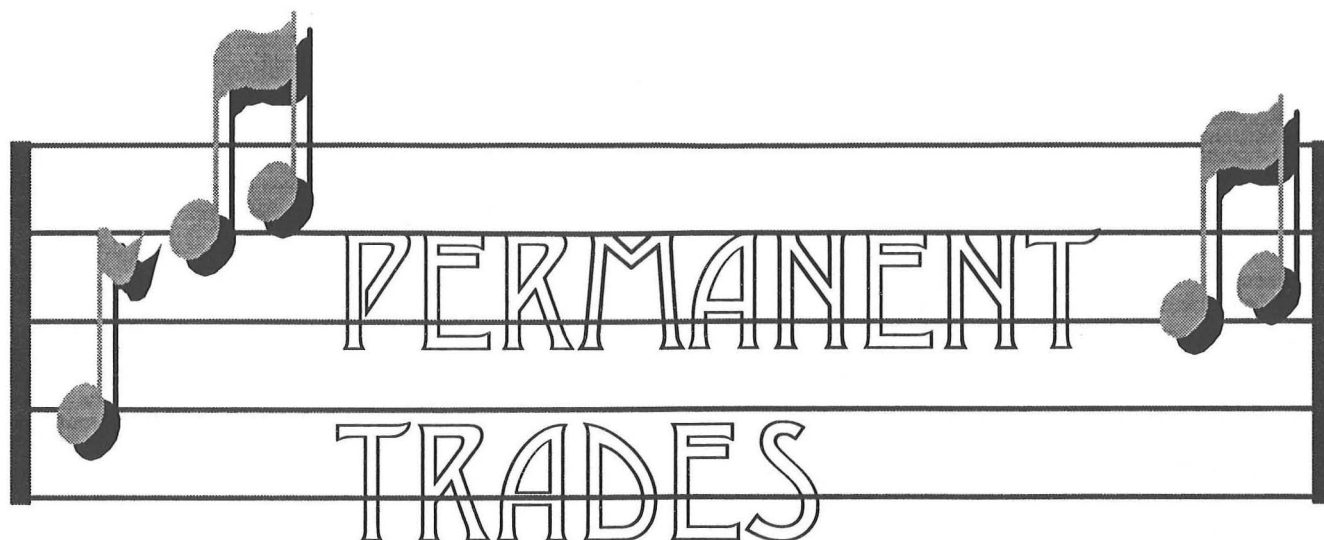
Paul, I knew he was the man for this job - he knew how to record a room, regardless of the style of music, and he was fast.

The excitement ran high in that studio. From the players in the band and each of the drummers there was a sense that we were creating history, and maybe even magic. The tension was palpable during each take, in the studio and in the control room, but so often when the performance was finished, people on both sides of the glass erupted into spontaneous applause and cheers. Everybody sensed that we'd just made a record.

This is a feeling not often experienced in modern recording, where a song is often constructed piece by piece, layer by layer, so the only time you can say "there it is" is when you imagine it, or when the assembly is finished - and then only if it meets your expectations. This was recording "the old-fashioned way," using an old Neve console and a 24-track Studer analog machine. But one thing that we've learned in recent years is that "old" technology is not necessarily "bad" technology. Often it's just different, and sometimes it actually sounds better. At the same time however, we used modern microphones and such, and did the final mixing on a computerized SSL console, straight to digital, so we weren't being Luddites about it- just using the most appropriate tools for each job.

By the end of our two weeks at the Power Station, we had recorded no less than thirty-nine tunes, or about three hours and twenty minutes of music, and it became apparent that this was not going to fit onto one CD - or even two. Not wanting to put it out as an expensive multi-disc set, we decided to release three individual volumes, hoping that this might entice more people to check out this wonderful music for themselves.





## **AUCTION**

The following items are up for auction. Each has a minimum bid (MB) set against it. Send offers in writing with a SAE, (DO NOT SEND ANY MONEY UNTIL ASKED TO DO SO), TO : **PERMANENT TRADES, 8 RYELANDS CLOSE, CATERHAM, SURREY CR3 5HY**. Trades are welcome, let me know what you have first. If you need information on an item, write enclosing a SAE or 2 IRC's. Items are UK unless noted. Don't be afraid to put in a bid, as sometimes items do not receive an offer, or not much above the MB. But remember, some of them are quite rare, and they will therefore attract firm bids to secure. Postage & packing extra. Closing date for bids is **may 31 '95**.

### **7"**

MB

- |   |    |
|---|----|
| 1) THE SPIRIT OF RADIO - RADIO 7.....                       | £1 |
| 2) VITAL SIGNS - VITAL 7 - P/S.....                         | £2 |
| 3) CLOSER TO THE HEART - 76124 DJ - US PROMO.....           | £6 |
| 4) NEW WORLD MAN - RUSH 8 - P/S.....                        | £1 |
| 5) THE BODY ELECTRIC - RUSH 11 - PAPER LABEL - P/S.....     | £3 |
| 6) THE BIG MONEY - RUSH 12 - P/S.....                       | £1 |
| 7) ROLL THE BONES (EDIT) - SAM 974 - ONE-SIDED PROMO.....   | £4 |
| 8) ROLL THE BONES - A7524TE - SQUARE DICE PICTURE-DISC..... | £4 |

### **12"**

- |  |    |
|--|----|
| 9) NEW WORLD MAN - RUSH 812 - P/S.....                         | £4 |
| 10) COUNTDOWN - RUSH 912 - P/S.....                            | £5 |
| 11) THE BIG MONEY - PRO-382-1 - US PROMO WITH STICKER P/S..... | £7 |
| 12) THE BIG MONEY - RUSH 1212 - P/S.....                       | £3 |
| 13) TIME STAND STILL - RUSH 1312 - P/S.....                    | £3 |
| 14) PRIME MOVER - RUSH 1412 - METALLIC 3-D P/S.....            | £4 |
| 15) ROLL THE BONES - SAM 869 - 3-TRACK UK PROMO.....           | £7 |
| 16) COUNTERPARTS - SAM 1263 - 4-TRACK PROMO.....               | £6 |

## **LP**

17) ROCK SAGAS - CT 1026 - INTERVIEW PICTURE-DISC.....	£6
18) A.T.W.A.S. - US ORIGINAL TRI-FOLD SLEEVE.....	£8
19) RUSH THROUGH TIME - DUTCH.....	£6
20) BAKTABAK - INTERVIEW PICTURE-DISC.....	£6
21) ARCHIVES - 3LP - GREY SLEEVE.....	£10
22) PERMANENT WAVES - WITH BANNED 'DEWEI DEFEATS TRUMAN' SLEEVE.....	£6
23) PERMANENT WAVES - AUSTRALIAN.....	£6
24) RUSH - ANR-1-601 - CANADIAN ANTHEM RE-ISSUE.....	£6
25) HEMISPHERES - ANR-1-1014 - CANADIAN.....	£6
26) HOLD YOUR FIRE - 832 464-1 - GREEK.....	£5
27) A SHOW OF HANDS - 836 346-1 - AUSTRALIAN 2LP.....	£9
28) PRESTO - 82040-1 - AUSTRALIAN.....	£5
29) ROCK OF YOUR LIFE - US RADIO STATION LP WITH ALEX INTERVIEW.....	£10

## **CD**

30) DREAMLINE - PRCD 4120-2 - US PROMO - P/S.....	£5
31) GHOST OF A CHANCE (2 VERSIONS) - PRCD 4485-2 - US PROMO.....	£7
32) STICK IT OUT - PRCD 5314-2 - US PROMO - P/S.....	£5
33) RED STARS OF THE SOLAR FEDERATION - LIVE MONTREAL '81 RARE.....	£18

## **OTHERS**

34) A FAREWELL TO KINGS - TOUR PROGRAMME.....	£15
35) HEMISPHERES - TOUR PROGRAMME.....	£15
36) MOVING PICTURES - TOUR PROGRAMME.....	£7
37) SIGNALS - TOUR PROGRAMME.....	£6
38) ROW THE BOATS - BONES PRESS-KIT.....	£3
39) PRESTO - PROMO PENCILS - 1 BLACK, 1 WHITE.....	£8
40) CARESS OF STEEL - TAKT MUSIC 943 - POLISH CASSETTE.....	£3
41) SIGNALS - TAKT MUSIC 887 - POLISH CASSETTE.....	£3
42) POWER WINDOWS - TAKT MUSIC 887 - POLISH CASSETTE.....	£3
43) A SHOW OF HANDS VOL 1 - TAKT MUSIC - POLISH CASSETTE.....	£3
44) A SHOW OF HANDS VOL 2 - TAKT MUSIC - POLISH CASSETTE.....	£3
45) ANTHEM - 6" X 5" VERY RARE POLISH FLEXICARD.....	£5
46) FLY BY NIGHT - 6" X 5" VERY RARE POLISH FLEXICARD.....	£5
47) MAKING MEMORIES - 6" X 5" VERY RARE POLISH FLEXICARD.....	£5
48) ROLL THE BONES - PROMO CALENDAR.....	£6
49) HOLD YOUR FIRE - ALBUM FLAT.....	£2
50) A SHOW OF HANDS - ALBUM FLAT.....	£2
51) PRESTO - ALBUM FLAT.....	£2

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CLOSING DATE 14may - LES SPEARING, 17 FALKLAND HOUSE, BROMLEY RD, CATFORD, LONDON, SE6

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FORCE TEN 1 SIDED DUTCH PROMO  
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THE PASS - AUSTRALIAN  
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SPIRIT OF RADIO SPAIN PIC COVER  
FINDING MY WAY USA PROMO PJ 406 73623  
FLY BY NIGHT/IN THE MOOD USA PROMO 73873  
TEMPLES OF SYRINX USA PROMO 73912  
ENTRE NOUS USA PROMO 76060 DJ  
LIMELIGHT USA PROMO 76095 DJ  
CLOSER TO THE HEART USA PROMO 76124 DJ  
NEW WORLD MAN USA PROMO 76179 DJ  
RED SECTOR A USA PROMO RED VINYL PRO 319-7  
THE BIG MONEY USA PROMO PRO 33-7 DJ  
TIME STAND STILL USA PROMO 888 891-7 DJ  
SPIRIT OF RADIO USA STOCK COPY 76044  
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LIMELIGHT " " " 76095  
TOM SAWYER " " " 76109 PIC COVER  
CLOSER TO THE HEART USA STOCK COPY 76124  
NEW WORLD MAN " " " 76179  
THE BODY ELECTRIC " " " 880 050-7  
THE BIG MONEY " " " 884 191-7 PIC COVER  
VITAL SIGNS UK 1 SIDED PROMO VITAL 7 DJ  
BIG MONEY UK PROMO DJ 12  
BATTLESCAR MAX WEBSTER/RUSH UK MER 59 PIC COVER  
TEARS ARE NOT ENOUGH CANADA 7" INC GEDDY PIC COVER  
PIECES OF EIGHT NEIL PEART MAY '87 FLEXI  
BEYOND BORDERS ALEX LIFESON JULY '87 FLEXI  
CASSETTE SINGLES  
SHOW DON'T TELL ANCS 001

HEAVY DUTY METAL STAR MAN BELT BUCKLE CANADA 1977 - JIMM WATSON (VERY RARE)

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List of over 180 items available. Includes live shows, interviews, promos, TV specials and Counterparts 1994 shows. Also Stick It Out and Nobody's Hero promo videos and Alex at Kumbaya '94. Send SAE or 2 IRCs to:

L. SPEARING,

17 FALKLAND HOUSE, BROMLEY ROAD, CATFORD, LONDON SE6

# *Different Strings*

Since the last issue of Spirit was published Andy and myself have been a bit busy, making calls to all sorts of different people. Andy called up various people in Canada to find out about the history of the Signature guitar company. On the following pages you'll find Andy's piece. I've been setting up SoR with an Email address. I thought I'd set one up for us, as it will be a quick easy way for a lot of you, the readers to get in touch with us from all around the world for various reasons, but mainly to allow you to submit material to SoR for publication. The address for those of you who missed it in the editorial is:

"spirit\_of\_rush@cix.compulink.co.uk"

Some updated news about The Gathering. As you will now know the original idea of having a Christmas party was dropped as issue 28 was a bit late in hitting the streets. We still want it to go ahead with something, so to avoid any confusion or any pre-planning cock up we are not going to suggest a date until we have had enough response from you lot to warrant OUR time in organising a bash. So once again PLEASE write to me at the below address with an SAE, and when details become available we will write to you or phone you.

This issue's guitar TAB is for "Middletown Dreams". Once again transcribed by Andy. Just send 2 first class stamps to cover copying and posting.

The addresses are:

Stewart Gilray,  
Flat 1,  
8 Gravel Walk,  
Faringdon,  
OXON.  
SN7 7JW.

Andy Piercy,  
27 Nelson Street,  
Bury,  
Lancashire.  
BL9 9BL.

Write to Andy for TABs, and myself for Party info. Or alternatively if you have any questions you can write to either of us or Email us.

Stewart.



# SIGNALS



Dear Mick and all at "Spirit Of Rush",

Keep up the good work!

I wrote to you earlier in the year for details of US tour dates, but while I made it to the States, we were on the west coast whilst the tour was winding up in the east and Canada, and money didn't permit a flight to the shows - I'll take the Lear Jet next time!

Still, Floyd were good at the Rose Bowl, as were Metallica and ZZ Top in Detroit a couple of months later.

Not only did we miss Rush live, we missed "Power Windows" by 1 night in New York. Judging by the quotes on their posters, they're pretty good, and even boast a Geddy Lee lookalike - poor sod!

Whilst in Detroit a friend took us to a suburb called Royal Oak, where Rush played - he assured me - in the mid-1970's. We went to a bar called the Metropolitan Music Cafe, run by an eccentric wealthy fan, which had loads of memorabilia especially signed guitars from the likes of Ted Nugent, Kiss, Deep Purple and I think Alex and Geddy. There was a picture of them at a signing partly there. But the odd thing was that, on the pavement outside, were stars and hand prints of rock stars à la Hollywood's Walk of Fame. Alex and Geddy's dated from 1990 and sat proudly alongside the likes of Nugent and George Thorogood. Despite it being 2am and large quantities of alcohol, I managed to get a fairly decent photo of the star, so if you're interested in printing it, drop us a line.

Anyway, keep the standards high.

**Tim Tearle**  
**Woking**



# RUSH TRIVIA

Sponsored by the National Midnight Star

*"Toronto is home  
to a plethora of  
Rush-related sights  
and sounds"*



*Dear Holidaymaker,*

*Thinking of taking a trip to the beautiful Canadian province of Ontario and the wonderful city of Toronto, home of the country's most popular three-piece beat combo?*

*If so, you might want to consider our unmissable exclusive tour excursion options listed below:*



Queens Park – location for the cover photography for *Moving Pictures*



Try driving along downtown Yonge Street at night, and you'll think you're part of the video for *Subdivisions*.



Watch out for Sam The [Record] Man's store and Pizza Pizza, which were both prominent in the same video. You'll be delighted to find a *Chronicles* poster signed by the band adorning the walls at Sam The Man's too.



You can't miss the gargantuan SkyDome, home of Geddy's baseballing heroes the Blue Jays. Maybe

you can spot him in the crowd too – typically inauspicious in baseball cap to hide the hair.



Easily-accessible and familiar Rush touring venues in the city include Massey Hall, where *All The World's A Stage* was recorded, and the Maple Leaf Gardens, venue for the *Grace Under Pressure* Tour video.



Travelling between Niagara Falls and Toronto? Why not call in at *Lakeside Park*, packed full of willows in the breeze and so many memories. It's in Port Dalousie, St. Catherines.

■ Rush members' addresses, favourite bars and wedding/baptism/bar mitzvah venues were unavailable at press time.

## WHO ARE YOU TONIGHT?

More of Alex's introductions from the *Counterparts* tour:

### GEDDY

Bill Clinton  
Kenny G

### NEIL

Bill Clinton  
John Gotti

### ALEX

Brian Dennehey  
Fabio (Yawn)

