

the spirit of
Rush

April '97

Issue . 37



Spirit of **Rush**

EDITORIAL

Hello and welcome to yet another issue of "The Spirit of Rush". This issue is a tour report special, which covers a major portion of dates Rush played on the first leg of their t4e tour.

The 2nd (Final?) leg of the t4e North American tour dates can hopefully be found elsewhere in this issue, if they arrive in time for printing... If you can get over there to catch one or two shows you are advised to do so. We poor old Europeans may not be privileged with our own "Evening with..." tour unfortunately.

Some of you have ordered tickets for this years convention already (thank you) which takes place at Leicester University on Saturday August 30th as you already know. The rest of you can now use the ticket order form enclosed with this issue to order yours with. Come on now if the event is half as good as last years It'll be a blast.

No response at all to last issues editorial request for info about where to stay in Leicester, if you know somewhere cheap and clean please write and let us know.

A couple of people responded to my request about handing our leaflets in the area in which they live (many thanks to you all) starting with the next issue I will send out flyer sheets which you can photocopy for distribution (record shops etc.) In the town/city where you live.

Music Mail (see advert on back page) have been kind enough to donate a copy of Neil's "A Work in Progress" for a prize in the raffle at this years convention (thanks very much) they have also been kind enough to allow readers 10% off the prices of all their Rush related items included in their advert for videos and books! Just tell them that you saw the advert on the back of "The Spirit of Rush" to qualify for your

discount, it's as simple as that.

Back to the convention, I recently went up to Oxford to see "The Jack Secret Show" in rehearsal for this years convention (They are also planning other gigs before then, we'll keep you posted) and they sound better than last year already, if you can believe that! The new t4e material is sounding great. The band promise loads of songs which they did not play last year (and a couple that they did). As way of a teaser the boys will be playing almost 3 hours worth of material this year. So don't forget to get your ticket order off to me now before you do anything else.

By the way are you all squatting up for the quiz or should that be SWATTING!

Till the next issue take care.

Mick

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Burnett & Brad Parmerter.



DISTANT EARLY WARNINGS

Alex Promises I Mother Earth.

At a recent I Mother Earth gig in Toronto at The Warehouse on February 2nd, Alex joined the band on stage to play Promise. This was the songs first public performance and by all accounts it went down a storm, so come on Victor let's see you do some shows in the near future, if you do we'll be there.

Two legs are better than One.

The 2nd leg of the t4e tour is coming together slowly, SRO/Anthem tell me that the tour starts on April 25th and will run for 3½ weeks, the band will then take 10 days off before starting an another 3½ weeks on Friday June 6th in ST. Louis. The last show will be in Ottawa on Tuesday July 1st.

STOP PRESS: You will find a full list of dates on the inside back cover.

Driven

to another video...

The video for Driven, has been released in North America, I doubt it'll be seen on MTV in Europe, but keep an eye just incase.

No Junos, Again.

Rush were up for Best Album of the year at the 1997 Juno Awards. The award was won by The Tragically Hip. Not only was Rush up for an award at the Junos but so was a band called Victor.

Yes Alex and the boyz were up for the New Group Juno, but they didn't get it either.

Oh well, there's always next year...

Yeah right!!

2112

toys??

Yes that's right, Hasbro have released a batch of their Nerf Toys (Those guns that fire little foam darts thingies) called *Max Force 2112*.

Another Rush based publication has mentioned that these things have been inspired and endorsed by the band.

The official line is "Hasbro have not approached us in anyway, if they had we would have told them that we are not interested."

To let you know how odd this whole thing is, one quote I heard from across the pond goes like this.

Nerf Boy, Nerf Girl, Send your Nerf Dart around the world.

Please, give me a break...

Rush

Re-Mastered

Polygram will re-release all the albums that Rush released on Polygram/Mercury label during May. The albums will be Re-Mastered giving a new fresher sound.

Ged on the Pavement.

Geddy gets a mention on the new album from Pavement, called "Brighten the corners". The song Stereo has

TWO DISCS OR NOT TWO DISCS THAT IS THE QUESTION.

The next full release from our Canadian friends will be a live album. The album won't now be released until next year (1998) as there is something special being planned.

No track list is available yet, nor is there a final word on how many CDs there will be. All I can say is there will be at least 2. After all you have enough material for about 4 discs.

the following line...

"What about the voice of Geddy Lee, how did It get so high, I wonder if he speaks

like an ordinary guy, I know him and he does."

Stereo was released as a single here in the UK a few weeks ago. You should buy that

rather than the album if you want to hear the song.

ALBUM CATALOGUE # DOMINO WIGCD31

Polka Rush.

Don't worry Rush have not started writing any Polka tunes. There is a new fan club in Poland called "*Realms beyond the Night*." If you want to know more then write to them at.

"*Realms Beyond The Night*"

Fan Club/Fanzine,
OS. Piastowskie 57/9,
61-156 Poznań,
Poland.

S I G N A L S

Dear Spirit of Rush,

In my first issue (#36) I noticed in a letter a mention of "Andy and Matty" offering Guitar transcriptions of Rush songs, I would be very interested in obtaining some transcriptions. So could you please let me know how to get some of these transcriptions, which songs if not all are available and how much they are per song or book.

Yours,

G.A Brently,
North Yorkshire.

Geoffrey. Andy and Matty have been doing transcriptions for a while now. If you turn to page 7 you'll find our Different Strings section, in here Andy talks about the technical details as well as a new TAB. There are also the contact address to get hold of the TABS.

Dear Editor,

I came across the following recently in a sales catalogue for a book of quotes, and for the uninitiated, like myself, who may not be all that familiarly with the literary greats, this may be of interest?

"I can resist every thing except temptation....."

from Lady Windermere's Fan Act 3 by Oscar Wilde, 1892.

As we well know, Neil is an avid reader, and does like to draw influence from what he sees, and obviously reads!

Neil Elliott, Surrey

P.S. I've already been squatting for the convention!

Hello Mick,

I received the latest copy of S.O.R. (#36). This was the last issue of my current subscription.

As you might know I'm not such a big Rush fan anymore and I don't like the new album so much. And furthermore I'm very disappointed that they don't come over to Europe. They haven't been here since '92! And I as a European fan (at least I was) think that's a (little) bit anti-social. They as artists have an obligation to all their fans; not only their American or Canadian fans.

So, these are a few reasons that I don't want to re-subscribe to The Spirit of Rush.

For the clearness: IT'S NOT THE QUALITY OF S.O.R. THAT I DON'T RE-SUBSCRIBE.

So I'll wish you all the best in the future, on the private level and with S.O.R.

With kind regards,

Hans Kist.
Holland.

What can I say, thank you for being honest with your reason for not re-subscribing. But please realise that Rush don't come here because they don't want to. They do, but they feel that the European record company does NOT do enough work to promote the band, now how many of us can argue with that?

Dear Spirit,

Thought I'd drop you a line to let you know of my trip to see the band at the last show of the first leg of the t4e tour, at the Continental Arena, Meadowlands on December 15th.

A very fulfilling 3 hours entertainment (including the amusing interval footage - which included some dodgy 1960's biker film dubbed in Italian, I think? - and some ancient cinema confectionery ad's. Very bizarre! This must be down to Alex?). I won't go into a track by track review, suffice to say that the new material sat in there nicely alongside the 'old classics' and newer pieces, though I thought some of the song selection could have been varied a bit more - after so many years I could have done without Closer/Freewill/Subdivisions/Spirit/Sawyer etc. and substituted them with a whole night's worth of material and more, but then it all comes down to personal choice. It was nice to hear the "2112" again, and for the first time in its complete form, including The Oracle. Natural Science was a nice dip into the memory, and the use of front projection with new pieces added to it was very good. The only slight cheesy piece was during discovery, the effect on the screen just did not work. The live on screen pieces were well interspersed, with close ups of Alex pulling faces and generally goofing around as usual. All in all a very worthwhile experience, and just a shame that Europe is not on for shows this summer!

On a slightly different note, there are a few bootleg CD's doing the rounds from this tour already, they are double discs, and therefore not complete shows, as it would have to be on 3 discs to take in the 2hr 45mins they were on stage, but are worth picking up! Another new CD that just came out is of excellent quality, is "Rocinante" - a 1 CD 1978 Hemispheres show that is 70 minutes of excellence, and worth tracking down a copy, even though they are only limited to 100 copies!

Keep up the good work, and see you at the convention.

Barry Turner, Preston.

P.S. To cap the whole thing off, I even saw Mike Portnoy and John Myung from Dream Theatre with their wives at the show!

Dear Mick,

Thank you once again for another fantastic issue of SoR. Really great. I am very pleased that the day for the convention has changed. It was not possible for me to come over on a Sunday, especially with work on Monday and with two little baby-girls (aged 3 and 5) at home. If there are no major problems I'll be at the convention this year. So I hope to see you all there. Maybe I can come over with John from Germany who was apparently the only foreign visitor last year (so, John, if you read this, please contact me and we'll go together).

I also signed up the SoR Petition on the Rush/NMS WebPage and I hope that a lot of other Rush fans will do so. Keep me informed.

I bought the two video-set from Neil Peart "A Work in Progress". FANTASITC!!!!!! Have you seen it already?

In reply to all the reviews on the last album "Test for Echo" I just want to quote a phrase that Neil Peart wrote in the Signals tourbook back in 1982: "I guess it will be like always; some will Love it, some will Hate it, and some will just say: Rush ???? Test for Echo ???? what the hell is that???"

That's it, keep up the good work.

Kind Regards,

Partick Clerens,
Keerstraat 46,
B-1760 Roosdaal,
Belgium.

Dear Mick,

Enclosed you will find a picture of the Counterparts - Screw, which makes my car look more beautiful and brings the Rush - message all over good old Germany.

Bye,

Gerhard Zimmerman.

Thanks Gerhard for sharing this with us, has anyone else done something similar, EG. Naming your house LA VILLA STRANGIATO?

Dear Mick,

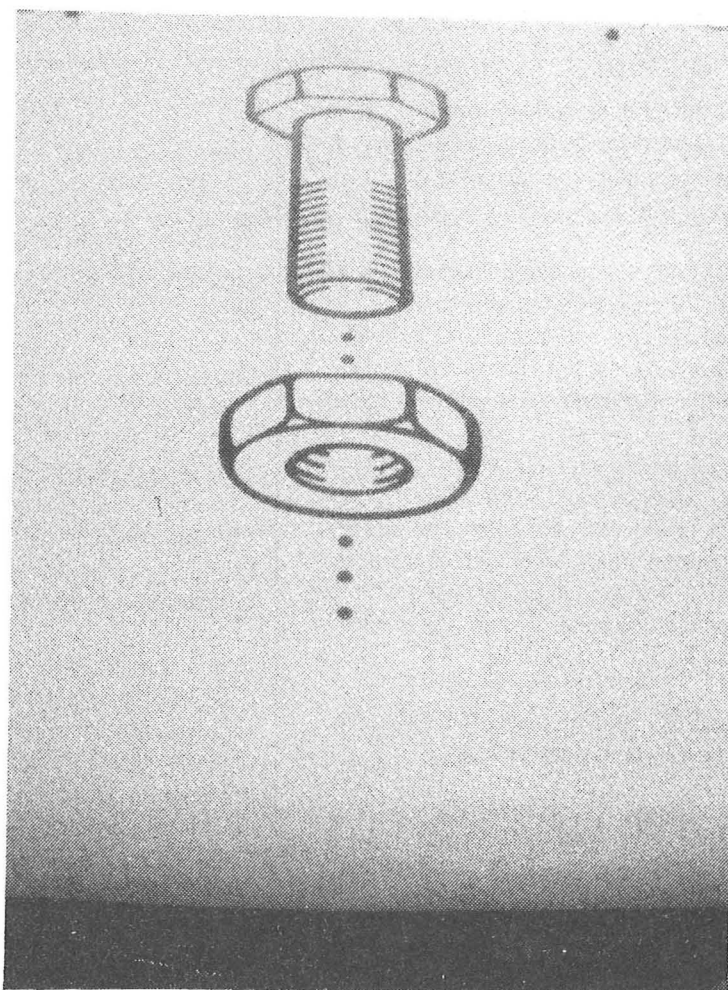
Thanks for the magazine, really excellent. I am well cheesed off by the news that there is no UK dates and I think it is awful really. Why are Rush doing this to their loyal fans?? I have been watching Rush for almost eighteen years now and every year we have seen less and less of them. What crime did we commit to deserve this? I would love to be able to afford to go to Canada to see the band but the truth is I can't for the foreseeable future and that means I might not see the bands live show, which sounds great from the reviews in the latest edition.

Anyway keep up the good work Mick, the magazines are Superb!

All the best

Simon - York

Simon, we completely agree with you to a degree. Although I think blaming the band is not the answer, blaming East/West is the Answer. let's just see what the coming months brings us.



"You'll be amazed at a mazda"

S
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Rush rocks right into the Order of Canada

By Norman Provencher

Breakfasts at the Geddy Lee household will never be the same after this afternoon's Order of Canada ceremonies at Rideau Hall.

"I'll definitely be wearing (the Order of Canada medal) to breakfasts; probably other occasions, too," said the 43-year-old lead singer and bassist for Canadian power trio Rush.

"I'll probably try to get my kids to call me 'Sir', too," Lee joked over the phone. "It'll probably be easier to convince my 2 1/2 year-old than my 16-year-old."

After 25 years on the Canadian rock scene, with about a dozen albums with sales of more than a million copies each, the members of Rush join the power elite, philanthropists, humanitarians and public servants as "officers of the Order of Canada" this afternoon in a ceremony presided over by Governor General Romeo LeBlanc.

Lee, guitarist Alex Lifeson and drummer Neil Peart also earn the right to use the letters OC, for officers, after their names. LeBlanc will present the awards this afternoon to 43 individuals, including public servant Ronald Gould of Ottawa and businessman Frederic Martin of Aylmer.

Rock and popular musicians have been inducted into the exclusive club before. But Bryan Adams, Stompin' Tom Connors, Bruce Cockburn, producer David Foster and jazz musician Moe Koffman, among others, were all recognized as individuals. Rush is the first rock band to be decorated with the Order of Canada since the national honor system was created in 1967.

And, while Lee says he and the band are pleased and honored, he's still a bit unclear as to why they were selected.

"It can't be about politics, we've never really been a very political band."

Nevertheless, Lee concedes that much of the band's early material, with lyrics drawn in large part from the philosophies of libertarian author Ayn Rand, was taken too literally for the band's liking. In some circles, Rush was identified as a conservative, almost anti-government group, an idea Lee says missed the point of a lot of the songs such as the classic *Free Will*.

"We noticed it particularly in the English press in the late '70s and '80s," Lee says. "A couple (of journalists) carried those ideas much too far and it became totally absurd."

Lee acknowledges the band found merit in many of Rand's theories but "only as they pertained to the idea of artistic freedom. I'd have to say we were never very interested in the more extreme libertarianism of her politics."

What the band is interested in these days is their album, *Test for Echo*, which has already sold more than 600,000 copies in Canada and the United States. In an unusual development, *Test for Echo* has been nominated for a Juno as album of the year, while the band Victor, a side project for guitarist Lifeson, is nominated in the best new artist category.

Rush is on a break from a U.S. tour and is putting together dates for the tour's second stage, including a stop in Ottawa some time around Canada Day.

"You know what it's like in Canada at this time of year. The available dates are complicated by the hockey playoffs and we're at that hair-pulling stage with other bands on tour."

A nervous *Rush* as rock stars receive

Order of Canada

Rock 'n' roll did it for Rush, Frank Shuster made it with his droll wit and the King of Kensington got there after two decades on TV.

The Grammys, Genies or Junos it wasn't. How about the Order of Canada.

Try Geddy Lee, OC, on for size.

The bassist-singer and his fellow Rush-ites Neil Peart and Alex Lifeson were the first rockers to be given the medal of distinction in its 30-year history.

"I'm just going to wear it all the time and see if it gets me better tables at restaurants," the irreverent Lee, decked in a black suit and tie, said after a formal ceremony at Rideau Hall, the official residence of the Governor General where 43 Canadians were inducted Wednesday.

As the hip rock stars brushed cuff-links with philanthropists, scientists and business leaders in the regal ballroom, the trio was a long way from the dingy bars where they started out 25 years ago.

The honor was created in 1967 to recognize "significant achievement in important fields of human endeavor."

"It kind of touches you in a place that none of these other things do touch you," said Lee.

"It's not so much music related as your country saying thank you ... something about our home country has kept us here and moments like this make you feel like you've made the right decision."

It was perhaps fitting that Rush, which has stayed put in Canada, was being decorated for its contribution on the same night as the Grammys where several Canadians were up for awards.

The Rush rockers said they were more nervous than they've ever been when Gov. Gen. Romeo LeBlanc presented them with the Order.

"I'm just a musician in a band," said a humble Lifeson.

It's a distinction that some say is long overdue for the unofficial ambassadors of Canadian rock.

The band, which is currently taking a break from a tour promoting their latest release, *Test for Echo*, is noted for raising millions of dollars for charities.

The Order of Canada was also a long time coming for Shuster. He and his late partner, Johnny Wayne, started making people laugh after the Second World War.

He said the honor also belongs to Wayne, who died in 1990 at age 72.

Media mogul Roger Landry, publisher of Montreal's *La Presse*, and genetic researcher Charles Scriver, also of Montreal, were promoted to the order's highest level of companion.

Rush, Shuster, the late philanthropist Peter Bronfman and Arthur Labatt were among the 10 people decorated as officers, the second highest distinction.

Among the new members are actor Al Waxman, the King of Kensington in the former television series, Alan Abraham, the former lieutenant-governor of Nova Scotia, William McKeag, former lieutenant-governor of Manitoba, Montreal police chief Jacques Duchesneau, and Gordon Penrose, the zany Dr. Zed of Owl and Chickadee magazines for children.

DIFFERENT STRINGS

test for echo - technical rundown

I thought I'd look at the instrument/gear changes that the guys went through during the writing/recording of 'T4E' and the subsequent US tour.

Undoubtedly the biggest changes were made by Neil - not only to his playing style (see "Starting Over", Iss.32), but to his kit. The Ludwig kit from the last couple of albums was replaced by an all new Drum Workshop kit in a Red Sparkle finish with all DW hardware. His trusty Slingerland Artist snare drum has been retired in favour of 13" DW piccolo replacements. The tom-toms are 8", 10", 12", 13", 15"(two), 16" and 18". The single bass drum is again a 22" with double pedals. Cymbals are again Zildjian, except for the Chinese Wuhan.

Neil now sits further back from the kit and his snare is set much higher to accommodate traditional grip. He even changed his shoes! He now wears suede-soled dancing shoes rather than sneakers.

For the recording of 'T4E' Geddy again used his trusty Fender Jazz bass. For the first time he recorded everything direct (ie. Without amps) using a combination of Demeter Tube D.I., Palmer Speaker Simulator and SansAmp PSA-1. Rather than using a five-string bass Geddy recorded several tracks with the E string tuned down to D. Live, Geddy used the same Trace Elliott Quadra 4 amps and cabinets used on the 'Counterparts' tour.

Alex took his usual collection of guitars into the 'T4E' sessions, but ended up recording about 70% of the tracks with a new Les Paul Custom he had recently acquired. He again used mainly Marshall amps plus a HiWatt with a Mesa/Boogie pre-amp. He also used the Digitech GSP 2101 signal processor utilised for the 'Victor' sessions.

Because of the mixing of acoustic and electric sounds on 'T4E', Alex has experimented with hybrid instruments and the Roland VG-8 system. The 'Half The World' video shows Alex playing a Godin LGX acoustic/electric and he used this live for 'Resist'. The majority of the live acoustic/electric work was, however, performed using a custom-made red PRS with piezo pickups built into the bridge saddles, these were provided by Mike Christian Electronics in New Jersey. The picture on page 21 of SoR #36 shows the separate outputs on the guitar. Stewart reckons Alex continuously mixed the "acoustic" and electric signals with a volume pedal.

On the tablature front, I've had a chance (thanks to time off for chickenpox!) to write out a couple of things off 'T4E'. This issues tab on offer is therefore 'Limbo'. Send the usual two first class stamps.

Look out for the November 1996 issue of the US magazine 'Guitar', which had a guitar and bass transcription of 'Test For Echo'. The bass part is transcribed for a bass tuned to D, but Geddy plays the parts on a Bass tuned to E.

Finally, to Haydn Walker, whose letter appeared last issue - Matty does in fact do bass tabs, I do the guitar stuff. Write to Matty at the address below and he will supply you with some bass tabs.

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

Matty Kassell,
13 New Street,
Bentley,
DONCASTER DN5 0AZ

Paradigma



Chris Eidskrem - bass Tom Erik Evensen - tenor vocals and guitars Zilla - soprano vocals
Tom Kvålsvoll - bass vocals and lead guitars KJ Lervåg - drums, percussion and synth
Additional musician: Eirik M. Roald - cello

Formed in 1991, complete line-up Autumn '92.

Paradigma was one of the first metal bands to include atmospheric soprano vocals. And Paradigma goes beyond that; As the first band ever, they entwine the ethereal soprano with tenor, as well as guttural and melodic bass. Guided by three lead vocalists, Paradigma's uniquely heavy and melancholic music allures the listener into covens deep within the misty subconsciousness. Once removed of their ancient layers of dust, the treasures revealed are infinite.

The demo *As Autumn Dies* was released by the end of 1993, and this led to a record contract with Voices of Wonder. The albums are released through their metal label, Head Not Found.

The debut CD *Mare Veris* was released in April '95. This CD was very well received worldwide. In February '96, their 2nd CD *Skadi* followed. Now introducing cello as one of the band's regular instruments, Paradigma's atmospheric music is even more enchanting than before.

This release proves that Paradigma is moving further into the everwinding mazes of innovation.

True atmosphere. True genuinity. True contrast-filled heathen doom.

Paradigma - The Beauty of Gloom

Available merchandise:

«*Mare Veris*» CD

«*Skadi*» MCD

Posters and photos available upon request

2-sided, coloured T-Shirt

2-sided, coloured LongSleeve

Wholesale: VOICES OF WONDER Records A/S, Box 2010 Grünerløkka, 0505 Oslo, Norway.
Fax +47 2271 7587

Merchandise, booking & information: THE LAIR, Sinsenv. 56A - 202, 0586 Oslo, Norway
Merchandise: HEAD NOT FOUND, Box 447, 1701 Sarpsborg, Norway

Interview for Spirit of Rush, UK - late '96

The questions were answered by Tom Kvålsvoll

The editor of Spirit of Rush asked me to a tribute to Rush for one of the upcoming issues of his magazine. This is something I will do with delight. I myself started the label Arctic Serenades back in 1994, and our first project was to do a Norwegian Tribute to Rush sampler. Due to lack of resources and very bad planning, it wasn't released. One of the recorded tracks, Witch Hunt, was done by the leading Norwegian Art/Doom metal band Paradigma. This tune was later released on their mini CD Skadi (Voices of Wonder/Head Not Found). Tom Kvålsvoll tells you why they chose to record a version of Witch Hunt:

1. Why did you choose to record a cover version of a Rush tune, and why specifically Witch Hunt?

- We were asked to perform a Rush song on the above mentioned compilation. After thinking about it a while, we said yes. We listened through all of Rush's albums, and finally settled for Witch Hunt. We fell in love with the structure of this song. We wanted to revive the gloominess of its lyrics as well, so this was really the track for us to cover. Witch Hunt's lyrical theme is not limited to the middle ages only. It is equally important today, considering the floundering, thoughtless Christian and Moslem fundamentalists. Sadly, I believe that Witch Hunt always will continue to be an actual text.

Although written in a major key, Witch Hunt has got a most melancholic feel to it. I gladly admit that we admire Rush's ability to create atmosphere, yes, even melancholy from a major scale. Before listening closely to Rush, I generally thought of major as they keys for merry imbeciles. Now I know this is not always the case.

2. Paradigma has existed for about 5 years or so. What has Rush meant for the musical development of Paradigma?

- Nothing. This might seem strange to the readers of Spirit of Rush, but it's the truth. We haven't had a particularly close relationship to Rush's music until these last two years. It was not until listening closely to Rush's collection of albums that we saw their brilliance. Some friends of us, even at our label, seem to think of Rush as gods or something. We don't go that far, but Rush are without question extremely competent musicians, and we do indeed understand why Rush has been a cult band for about 20 years. They absolutely deserve the success they have got.

3. What is your view on your version of a Rush tune compared to the cover versions on the «Working Man» tribute?

- They all emphasize Rush's supremacy when it comes to musicianship. These versions are very well focused on the various techniques and ways of composing that Rush took use of, although I sometimes feel the cover versions were a bit close to being replicas of the original at times. The «Working Man» album has got better sound and recording quality than ours, as it obviously had a bigger budget.

Our version is maybe a bit different from the «Working Man» recordings, in the sense of interpretation. We see no point in performing Witch Hunt the same way Rush did. We'd rather try to re-vitalize the song by adding our own touch to this brilliant song's atmosphere. We sought to stress the meaning of Witch Hunt's lyrics by the use of our three vocalists and five instruments. I re-arranged the music without making any major changes to the underlying melody itself. That was a most interesting task, which I really enjoyed. Afterwards, the band got together and arranged the vocal lines. Some die-hard Rush fans might think of this as ruining a perfect tune, but we think not. By altering the arrangement we show how a Rush song can turn out to become quite different. And it is still a Rush song.

4. How can Rush fans get a copy of your MCD «Skadi»?

- Hopefully in a proper music store. We're distributed in the UK by Plastic Head, in Germany by Nuclear Blast, in the US by Nuclear Blast/Relapse. Our merchandise can also be ordered from:

Wholesale: VOICES OF WONDER Records A/S, Box 2010 Grünerløkka, 0505 Oslo, Norway Fax +47 2271 7587 Tel +47 2271 8930

Merchandise: HEAD NOT FOUND, Box 447, 1701 Sarpsborg, Norway

test for echo world tour 96-97

the set list

half

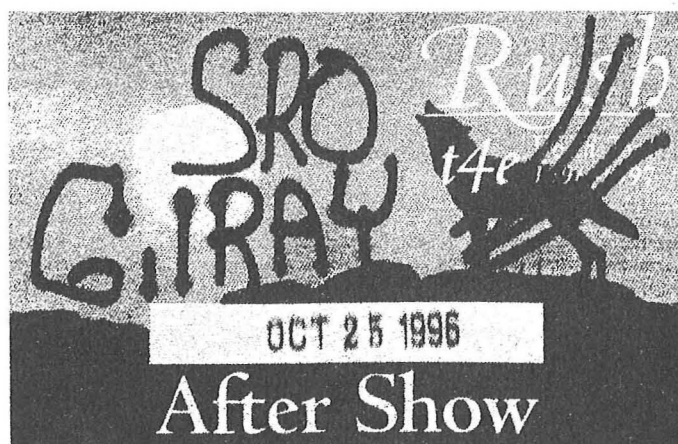
Dreamline
The Big Money
Driven
Half the World
Red Barchetta
Animate
Limbo
The Trees
Red Sector A
Virtuality
Nobodys Hero
Closer to the Heart
2112

the other half

Test for Echo
Subdivisions
Freewill
Roll the Bones
Resist
Leave that thing Alone!
The Rhythm Method
Natural Science
Time & Motion
Force 10
Time & Motion
The Spirit of Radio
Tom Sawyer

encore

YYZ



merchandise

Black shirt with wolf on front.

Dates on back.

\$25

Black shirt with world split in half on front.

Dates on back.

\$25

Black shirt with

"if you want something done right..." on front.

"...just forget it" on back.

\$25

Tourbook

\$15

White shirt with album cover on front.

Dates on back.

\$25

Tan shirt with 3 kid pics of the band on front.

Dates on back.

\$25

Orange tie-dye with fractal on front

Dates on back.

\$35

Rainbow tie-dye with fractal on front.

Dates on back.

\$35

Poster 24"x36" Lots of color concert shots

from Counterparts tour.

\$10

White shirt with stone man on front pocket

Mariners' map on back.

\$25

Dog tags.

Rush test for echo.

\$7

Black hat with Rush test for echo on front.

3 snowmen on back

\$25

Black hat with Rush test for echo on front.

Stone man on back.

\$25

Black button-down shirt

embroidered stone man on pocket

\$50

Black kiddie shirt

embroidered stone man on front

\$25

Button, 1 1/2" square of album cover

\$3

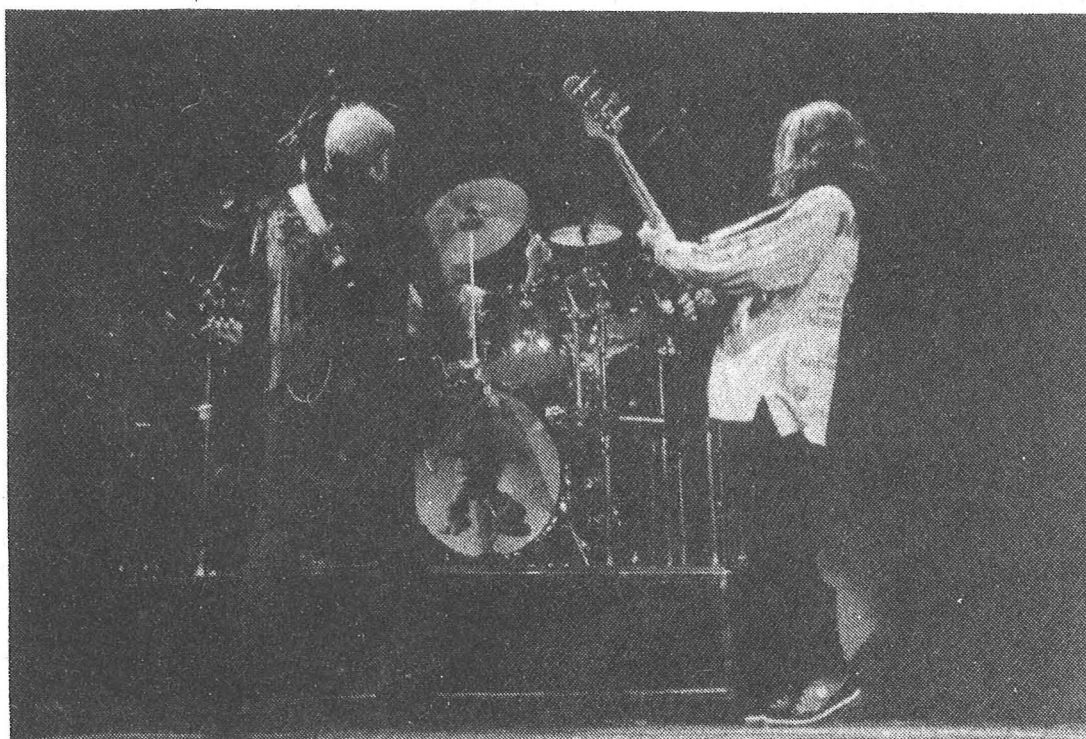
Badge silver

\$5

Key chain.

Silver with Rush — Limbo

\$7



what the papers said

DAY 1: Albany, NY, October 19, 1996

ATTENDANCE - 9,727

CAPACITY - 9,727

The Albany Times Union

October 17, 1996

POWER TRIO RUSH KICKS OFF TOUR IN ALBANY

GREG HAYMES Staff writer

Canadian power trio Rush doesn't hit the stage at the Knickerbocker Arena until Saturday night, but you may have already seen drummer Neil Peart, guitarist Alex Lifeson and bassist Geddy Lee around town.

You see, not only is Rush kicking off its latest tour at the Knick, but the band has also been rehearsing there this week, too.

"We usually pick a different place to start off the tour each time we go out on the road," Peart explained on the telephone from Toronto, where Rush was winding up some preliminary pre-tour rehearsals.

"Of course, it needs to be a place where we can book the arena for a week and a half or so. Last time out, we went to Pensacola, I believe, but we've gone into places like St. John's in Newfoundland, Hamilton in Ontario and Greensboro in South Carolina one time.

"It's nice because you get to stay in one place for a little while and really see the area, instead of just flying in, doing the show and flying back out again, which is usually what it's like on tour."

Plus, Rush gets Albany out of the way before the snow flies, too.

"Well, yes, that's part of the rationale, too, I must admit," Peart concedes. "We call it creative routing."

The snow plays a major factor, since the band had more than their fair share back in January when they trudged into Bearsville Studios just outside of Woodstock to record their latest album, "Test For Echo."

"It was simply unbelievable," the drummer declares. "There we were right in the middle of the Blizzard of '96. It socked us in on the very day that we arrived there."

"But we had no complaints, really. It was gorgeous. I do love winter, and in its place, it's a fine time of the year. So the Catskills was a particularly beautiful place to be with all that snow coming down."

It also forced them to focus on their music, and the results are some of the strongest songs that the band has crafted in more than a decade.

"We feel that it's a particularly strong album," Peart proclaims, "but of course, we learned long ago that it doesn't necessarily mean that the echo will come back the same way."

"With this album, we're sending out a kind of signal, and we're hoping that the 'Hello' is going to come back as strongly as we put it out, but you never know. Only time will tell."

After Rush ended its Counterparts tour in May of '94, the band took a long hiatus. "It was the longest break that we'd ever taken," Peart reveals, "but it was a very fruitful time."

During the break, Lee and his wife had a baby girl, Lifeson produced his first-ever solo album (under the name Victor) and Peart kept himself quite busy producing a tribute album to big band drummer Buddy Rich.

He worried about being able to get back into the swing of things with Rush when it came time to start work on "Test For Echo."

"Well, I did worry about it. I'd been away during the intervening time doing so many different things that I truly wondered - especially from a lyric-writing point of view - whether I'd be able to sit down at the desk and distill all of the thoughts and experiences into rock lyrics. Once I got going, it was really no trouble."

"Or at least no more trouble than usual, let me put it that way. It's always initially a frustrating, disappointing process for me. It always takes me three days or so to get into a swing where I don't want to burn every piece of paper that leaves my desk."

"But that's normal, and it's as it should be. You have to call up your discipline and refine the craft aspect of the process. Fortunately, within a few days we started to become happy with the results."

During his long time off from Rush, Peart also explored two very different activities - drumming and writing.

"I found Freddy Gruber, who is a 70-year-old master teacher from California, to help me re-explore the whole world of drumming. I've been working with him for two years now, and I'll probably stay with him for the rest of my life."

So what can a drum teacher show someone like Peart, who's been playing professionally for years?

"Well, pro tennis players certainly know how to play the game, but they all have coaches, don't they? Freddy serves the same kind of purpose. He doesn't tell you how to keep the beat or anything, but watches you play and makes suggestions like sit further back or raise your snare drum higher or make your motion more circular."

"All of his advice added up to such a regeneration for me on the drums that I literally started over. I hold the sticks a different way and sit at the drums a whole different way. He helped to rebuild my whole approach to the drums, day by day, down in the basement. It was a revelation."

While drumming may have kept Peart sharp physically, he turned to writing to keep his brain in shape.

"I did a lot of prose writing, and I'm actually having my first book published here in Canada this month," he

reveals. "It's called 'The Masked Rider,' and it's a book about bicycling in West Africa, basically recounting a trip that I took through the country of Cameroon back in '88 - woven in with a lot of ranting and ranting, silly little tangents and self-indulgences."

But writing isn't new for Peart.

"I've been pretty serious about prose writing for the past 10 years, and I've explored everything from essays to fiction. But I get the most enjoyment out of travel writing. I love to travel for a start, but I also love the documenting, the collecting of notes and gathering of background information.

"I've got lots of material. I just need the time to put it all together. But I think I'd like to be able to finish about one book a year.

"Drumming is pretty much all-consuming, but prose writing is a great thrill for me because I get to use the other side of my brain.

"It keeps me walking straight and balanced."

The Albany Times Union
October 20, 1996

RUSH IS GREETED WITH OPEN ARMS

by Greg Haymes

Albany - Canadian rock trio Rush sent out their signals in support of their new album, "Test for Echo," from the Knickerbocker Arena on Saturday night, and the response came back loud and clear.

Rush has always had a strong fan base in the Capital Region - heck, in their earlier days, they managed to sell out two shows in the Palace Theatre only a week apart - but this is the alterna-rock 90's, where bands often achieve superstar status and then disappear in the span between their first and second albums.

Having released their debut album some 22 years ago, Rush is a veteran band with a lot of history hanging around their necks. But they've been off of the scene for three years, which is nearly an eternity in the rock world.

In fact, "Test for Echo" has already dropped out of the Top 40 on the Billboard album charts.

So bassist-vocalist Geddy Lee, guitarist Alex Lifeson and drummer Neil Peart took their show to the people - rehearsing in town last week and launching their world-wide tour at the Knick on Saturday.

It wasn't quite a sell-out, but it was pretty close, and the fans' enthusiastic response welcomed back Rush with open arms.

"We're only immortal for a limited time," Lee sang during the show opener, but judging by the rabid response from the fans, Rush's time isn't up quite yet.

After all these years, Rush has finally managed to click with their own unique brand of progressive rock rooted in the power-trio tradition of bands like Cream, Hendrix, and Mountain. And to top it all off, they've thrust the whole hyper-hybrid smack into the cyber-happy 90's.

Just a few years ago, Rush's music took second billing to over-powering arena theatrics. In concert these days, the band has still got the stuff to dazzle an audience - their bedazzling light show is still second

to none - but this time around, they toned down the gimmicky end of the show in favor of the music.

The stage set was minimal, dressed only in a sort of kitchen-kitsch motive complete with white refrigerator plunked down next to Peart's drum riser and a shelf full of blenders, mixers, and other small appliances sitting next to Lee's amps. And of course, there were the requisite batch of film and video footage on the big screens behind the band.

But it was the music that was front and center, mixing old repertoire with "Test for Echo" selections. Whether it was the whip-snap instrumental of "Limbo," the Bic-flickin' crowd fave "Closer to the Heart" or the heavy metal leanings of "Time and Motion," Rush was up to the required tasks.

Touring for the first time ever without an opening act, Rush took full advantage of the extra time onstage. Their first set ran a full hour and a half.

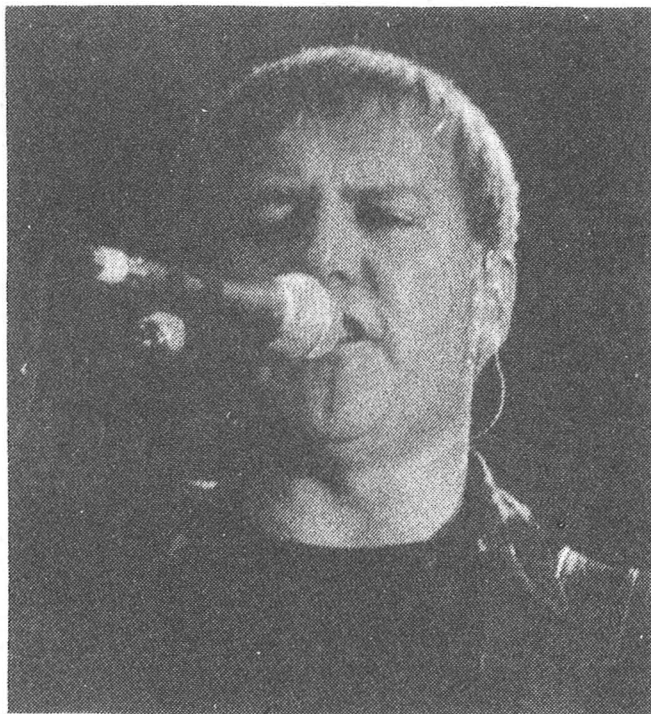
"We're gonna take some Geritol and be back in 20 minutes," Lee joked, but sure enough, they came charging back from intermission after just 19 minutes with the title track of the new album. And they kept cranking it out for another 75 minutes.

Rush was coming back from a three-year break (their longest ever), and the time off clearly did them good. They were considerably more animated and looser onstage than they've been in the past, yet they've sacrificed none of their precision.

On the downside, Peart's lyrics - inspired by writer-like Ayn Rand, John Dos Passos and science fiction in general - frequently weigh like an anchor on the music.

Let's face it, lyrics like, "Why are we here? Because we're here," aren't exactly the deep philosophical ponderings they aspire to.

On the other hand, it's only rock 'n' roll. The churning "Half the World" attempted some kind of zen-like yin-yang balance, but in truth it was a pretty good groove. And there simply aren't very many bands who can squeeze such an onslaught of poly-syllabic words into their lyrics and still rock like Rush does.



DAY 2: Buffalo, NY, October 20, 1996

ATTENDANCE - 8,898

CAPACITY - 9,876

The Buffalo News
October 21, 1996

RUSH IN NO HURRY WITH
MEMORABLE 3-HOUR CONCERT

By PAT RILEY
News Contributing Reviewer

Recall that evening of rock and roll you paid for this summer. It was a "festival." You saw six bands perform a few hits during limp half-hour sets before they scampered back stage to eat catered food.

Now imagine one band on stage all night performing songs from 12 of its 16 albums. If you can picture this, it's probably because you were at the Marine Midland Arena Sunday night when Rush played for a raucous three hours (with a short break) on the second date of its "Test for Echo" tour.

It's the longest show the power trio from Toronto has ever put together, and as one of the few active bands with more than 20 years of material to choose from, it makes sense. This extended play provided its dedicated legion of Buffalo fans some of the most memorable treats of their concert-going lives.

Geddy Lee on bass and vocals, Alex Lifeson on guitar and Neil Peart on drums were in top form performing their singular brand of music - a brand that has been labeled everything from "post-progressive" to "the thinking man's rock."

Lifeson, who's at his best during his ethereal solos, has been riding high since 1993 when Rush returned to its guitar-oriented roots. Trim and dressed in black, he refrained from his usual comic banter, delivering his guitar parts with intensity.

It was only appropriate that the band would play something from its 1976 breakthrough concept album "2112," since that record's signature galloping guitar-bass sound can be heard throughout the latest

album, "Test For Echo." But not even the most fantasy-prone fan could have expected what was delivered 90 minutes into the evening: Rush trotted out the entire 20-minute concept song "2112," something they haven't done since shortly after its release. To students of "Professor" Peart's lyrics, this live performance was a chance to test their memory. And musically, it may have been the most energized "jam" to take place in the arena since its opening.

Lee's bass lines were blistering and dominant and his vocals were right on target, at times soaring with melodic emotion, and shifting from his higher to lower registers with ease. He was aided by a sound set-up which was much improved from the audio of the "Counterparts" tour three years ago that had Lee sounding tinny and distorted.

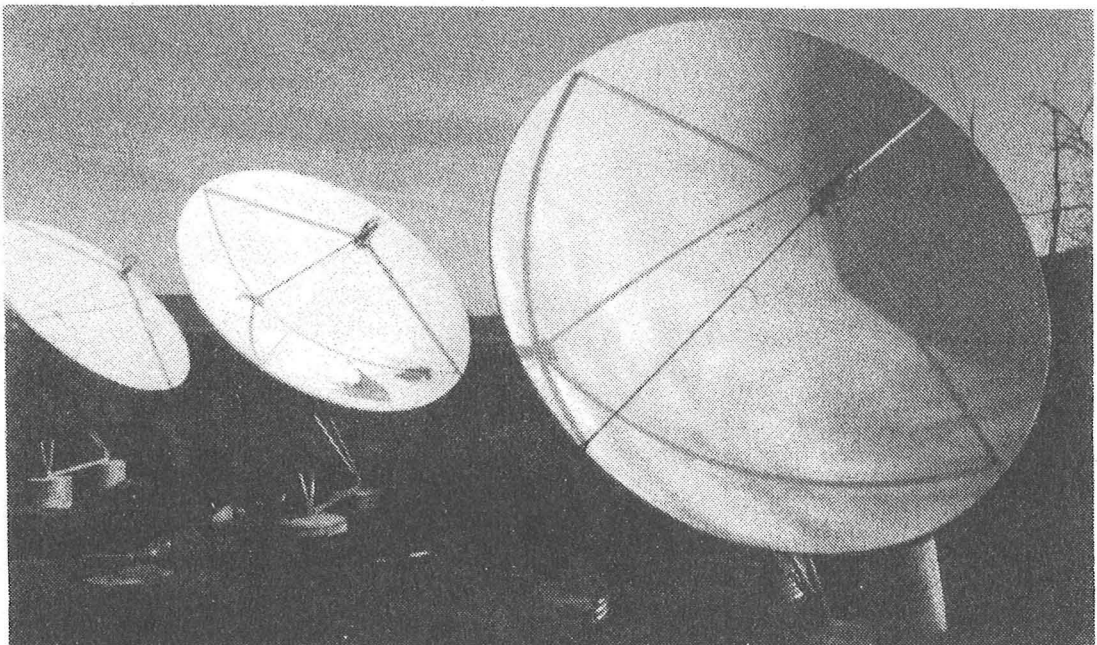
The air drummers in the crowd rested their arms and paid close attention as Peart offered the latest version of his masterful drum solo "The Rhythm Method." Influenced by his recent foray into music of drummer Buddy Rich and some recent drum lessons, Peart served up his trademark sounds with noticeable big band variations.

Eager as always to mix the past with the present, Rush performed most of its latest release. Standouts included "Driven" and "Resist," with its opening line, "I can learn to resist anything but temptation" paraphrasing Oscar Wilde.

A driving rendition of 1993's "Animate" whipped up a frenzy while 1970s anthem "Closer to the Heart" inspired a sing-along and a display of lighters that was remarkable in this anti-tobacco age. But the crowd responded most whole-heartedly to the songs from the early '80s, with radio tunes like "Freewill," "Subdivisions" and "Tom Sawyer" supplying fans with the "adrenaline surge" mentioned in "Red Barchetta."

The jaw-dropper of the night was the brilliant but little known (i.e., never played on radio) "Natural Science." From the 1980 album "Permanent Waves," this dynamic, reverberating epic which declares that "science, like nature, must also be tamed," left half the fans guffawing with glee and the other half quietly attentive.

"Natural Science" and "2112" together used up 30-minutes - and Rush still managed to play 24 other fist-pumping songs. As the crowd filtered out, large sections of the throng continued to scream and holler, apparently sated beyond words. That's entertainment.



DAY 4: Grand Rapids, MI, October 23, 1996

ATTENDANCE - 6,537
CAPACITY - 8,000

The Grand Rapids Press
October 23, 1996

REJUVENATED RUSH HITS G.R. ON THE UPSWING
by John D. Gonzalez

"I'm the new guy," says Neil Peart, laughing at the fact that he wasn't the original drummer of the rock group Rush.

But Peart is who most rock historians and fans recognize as the one who pushed Rush from its original blue collar rock into more art rock realms, making the Canadian trio a force on FM radio in the late 1970s and early '80s.

Peart joined the band in July 1974 after original drummer John Rutsey quit shortly after Mercury Records re-released the band's self-produced debut.

"It's really not an interesting story," says Peart of auditioning in front of singer/bassist Geddy Lee and guitarist Alex Lifeson. "They were looking for somebody, I tried out and we got along well, and that was it. Before that I was playing in the local bands (in Toronto) and working in the farm equipment business."

Peart and the guys haven't toiled in the toiled in the club scene since. Today the band still tours and records more than 20 years after creating a buzz on American soils in the late '70s with concept albums like "A Farewell to Kings" and "Hemispheres."

But the latter albums - 1980's "Permanent Waves," 1981's "Moving Pictures" and 1982's "Signals" - were what made Rush an international smash.

The shorter songs on "Permanent Waves," brought more radio airplay, and sold-out shows, including five nights at London's Hammersmith Odeon. Then in 1981, "Moving Pictures" songs "Tom Sawyer" and the instrumental "YYZ" further established the band, "Tom Sawyer" climbing on the pop charts to No. 44 in June of 1981.

The U.S. success was sweet, but so were the sold-out gigs in London, where Peart had once visited before his Rush days.

Inspired by music of The Who and other British bands, Peart set out to experience Europe right after completing high school. He stayed there for about 18 months.

"I was searching for fame and fortune," Peart says. "It wasn't there."

But it was an invaluable experience where he learned about music, and about life. "I basically just copied a list of record companies and managers and booking agents off the back of record album," Peart says "It was one of those things where experience was worth more than success at that time. I got to play in some bands, have a real job and make a living, things that are life affirming." Rush kept up with the times and released other albums in the '80s. Some did better than others. The '90s included "Chronicles", a 1991 collection of essentials from the band's career.

But not until the current "Test for Echo" did the members begin to feel invigorated again. One review said it was a "welcomed return by an irrepressible and

influential band."

"Nothing wrong with it," he says of the review. "But I got some great advice from American writer Tom Robbins once. I had just read his novel ('Shinny Legs And All') and then read a scathing review of it in the New York Times; it really made me mad.

"So I wrote to him and asked if he had been bothered by that review, and not to consider that it reflected his readers, and he wrote back saying that he never read his reviews because if he believed the good ones he would have to believe the bad ones, too. Since that time I'm careful not to read the reviews."

Still, band members were excited about "Echo." The trio had been doing its own thing after release of '93's "Counterparts." Geddy Lee stayed home as he and his wife had a baby girl. Alex Lifeson worked on a solo record. Peart produced a big-band tribute to Buddy Rich, for which he received the Buddy Rich Lifetime Achievement award.

It made "Echo" more satisfying for them to work together again.

"And also because it was such a departure; we took quite a long break from the band," Peart says. "The Buddy Rich tribute led me into a field of study with a teacher that led me to practicing every day down in the basement and completely re-inventing my approach to the drum set in a profound way after 30 odd years.

"To see it bear fruit on this record, and to feel the results I had been after...I feel fortunate to find the right teacher (70-year-old jazz player Fred Gruber), who led me to the paths of righteousness."

The Grand Rapids Press
October 23, 1996

First arena-rock show was quite the Rush
by John Gonzalez

The Van Andel Arena rocked - I mean really rocked - for the first time as 7,981 fans lift the downtown arena Wednesday night screaming for more Rush. Literally.

Hordes of fans leaving the show cheered loudly, many joyous over witnessing one of the finest rock shows to hit West Michigan in years.

No offense to the Neil Diamond fans who danced and sang the night away recently at the arena's first major concert. But Rush fans partied hardier. And they proved it throughout the 2 1/2 hour, two-set performance.

Even though the show started a bit slowly because of some tweaking of the sound system, fans rose to their feet immediately. On the main floor they remained up all night.

When it was all over, fans were treated to 26 songs, many of which have never been played live before because of time limitations on previous tours.

Fans voiced their approval when the first set closed with both movements from "2112," the title cut from the group's 1976 breakthrough album.

The audience probably liked it even more when the band played "Natural Science" (from "Moving Pictures"), another song that wasn't played much on past tours because of its nearly 10-minute length.

But the Canadian power trio also included some of the songs that made it commercially successful, too.

Geddy Lee, the band's lead vocalist, bassist and keyboardist, sounded classic on just about any tune, especially on the time-tested hits such as "Subdivisions," "Freewill" and "Tom Sawyer," all from albums released in the early '80s.

Guitarist Alex Lifeson was a surprising life of the party. Not only were his solos full of vitality, but his enthusiasm on stage made him a pleasure to watch. And he was funny, too. He introduced himself on stage as Tommy Lee and then kissed a cardboard cut out of Lee's wife, Pamela Anderson, which was resting on a stack of amps.

But the night's shining star was drummer Neil Peart, who was alone worth the price of admission. Though he was feeling a bit sick, and retreated immediately after the concert to his hotel room, Peart never gave less than 110 percent.

He was precision-like on some tunes ("Animate," "Dreamline") yet broad and biting on others ("Subdivision," "The Spirit of Radio").

He stole the show during the second set while playing a drum solo; a solo fans will be talking about for years for its revolving set and building-to-a-crescendo flurry. Even Mick Fleetwood would have a tough time following this act.

Peart truly plays his percussion with heart.

Performing on a decent stage (carpeted even) Rush kept its presentation entertaining yet never extreme. Its technology theme was never overdone, only using the arena laser beams and video screens to augment the

music. It would have been easy for Lee to turn a Bono (of U2) and do something goofy like order pizzas from stage for everyone. (Bono did that at The Palace on the Zoo TV Tour.)

Video effects on "Roll the Bones," where a rapping skull gets a few laughs, and "Driven," which features footage of classic cars, make it all entertaining and not at all overbearing.

As for the sound system, Rush sounded superb, clear and crisp, especially if you were seated on either side of the main floor. The upper level was not as strong, but still impressive.

On a mid-show stroll of the venue listening for sound quality, however, the system failed miserably at the back of the arena and even on the main floor. For whatever reason, the mix was muddy and not as clear as in other spots. I took in the first five songs of the show from the back of the room and decided to move on because it was so bad.

I also noticed that fans were very interested in a pair of surround-sound speakers placed at the back of the arena to achieve certain audio effects. The band used them during songs such as "Subdivisions" (to accent the chorus) and "Limbo," an instrumental from Rush's latest studio album, "Test For Echo," (to play some rain).

The concert also brought a night of firsts to the Van Andel Arena: First fist fight among patrons who had too much to drink; first bonafide sea of Bics (brighter than Neil Diamond's); and first whiff of substances that would make the Black Crowes proud.

DAY 5: Detroit, MI, October 25, 1996

ATTENDANCE - 15,197
CAPACITY - 15,197

The Detroit News
October 24, 1996

LISTENERS WILL BE QUICK
TO LOSE INTEREST IN RUSH

BY TOM LONG, DETROIT NEWS POP MUSIC CRITIC

Canadian rockers Rush made the transition from maybe-metal to commercial-progressive quite a while back, and it has certainly worked in terms of sales over the band's past two decades. Rush, who plays the Palace at Auburn Hills on Friday, is a consistent platinum player, and its latest CD, Test for Echo, is firmly ensconced near the top of the charts these days.

Problem is, Rush's idea of progressive isn't terribly forward looking. Anything on Test for Echo could have been recorded in 1973 by the almost forgotten Uriah Heep. This is not progress, this is bad taste with staying power.

Not that the three geezers who comprise Rush aren't fine musicians. Singer-bass player Geddy Lee has toned his pop-your-eyeballs-out screech down to an almost folksy tenor, and guitarist Alex Lifeson lays an efficient mix of lines and chords over drummer Neil Peart's busy thumping. Polished players all.

But the songs here strain to make statements about the modern condition while exhibiting the depth of a puddle. And much of the time the musical changes

scream "This is impressive" when in fact they are fairly mundane.

The album is perhaps epitomized by the absurd "Dog Years," wherein Lee cries out the chorus Dog Years - it's the season of the itch with operatic fervor over a storm of rousing instrumentation as if this is something powerfully affecting. Honest, it's not.

Lee gets off some good lines, most notably in "Half the World" (Half the world hates what half the world does every day), but Rush spends so much time trying to be heavy it undercuts what few fine moments it can come up with.

This music obviously works for 15-year-old boys hiding from homework with the headphones on. It has worked in that way for a long time now, and perhaps there's value in that (there's certainly money in it). But others encountering Rush will likely find themselves in a rush to turn the stereo off.

In Concert
8 p.m. Friday. Palace of Auburn Hills. Tickets \$27.50-\$40. Call (810) 377-0100

The Detroit Journal
October 26, 1996

Rush knows how to keep it fresh
By Gary Graff, Journal Music Writer

Together for 27 years, it's clear that the Canadian rock group Rush is no "Fly By Night" operation, to cop the title of its second album.

But during the three years leading to the release of its new album, "Test For Echo," there were alarmingly constant rumors that the trio was no more.

"It wasn't a concern to me because I was so involved in so many other things," says drummer-lyricist Neil Peart, who joined Rush in 1974. "I assumed it would come along in due course."

"You just don't worry about those things, really. You say 'O.K., it's time to get together and make a record,' so you do."

And what if somebody decides not to answer the call?

"Well, we've never had to deal with that," Peart, 44, says with a chuckle. "I don't get too reflective about things like that, especially when life is so reflective."

Peart says that Rush's time off, following a shortened tour for its 1993 album "Counterparts," was originally intended as a "paternity leave" for singer-bassist Geddy Lee. But, the drummer acknowledges, it soon became something more.

"It was the first kind of freedom we'd all had," Peart says. "It was an important time. It wasn't going away and lulling in a hammock for a year and a half in-between tours and albums."

Peart was perhaps the busiest of the three musicians. He took drumming lessons. He recorded the first of three intended all-star tribute albums to jazz great Buddy Rich. And he published - privately - a book about his 1988 bicycle trip through West Africa.

Peart says the musical studies were a particularly enjoyable part of his time away from Rush.

"For me, it was a period of music development," he says. "I changed almost everything about the way I played...so subtly nobody would notice it. It's still me playing it, very aggressive, but it's...more about movement, about dancing around the drum set, a much more relaxed flow of the rhythm."

"One thing I loved about this period was life was reduced to such a simple formula. All I had to do to get better was to practice every day. It's not easy, but it's a simple goal."

On the other hand, guitarist Alex Lifeson's extra-band project - a solo album under the moniker Victor - had greater potential repercussions for Rush. When the album was released at the beginning of the year, Lifeson freely told interviewers that he had contemplated leaving the group.

Rush was working on "Test For Echo" by the time those comments were published, but Peart says he wasn't surprised by them.

"He was coming off the high of doing a solo record and being the big boss," Peart explains. "He wasn't sure he wanted to return to being part of the team."

"For me, I like the reward of seeing things improved. Everything is improved by going through the process of working on it with the three of us. I think Alex felt the same way in the end."

With a sign on the studio door that read "Individually, We Are A Ass/But Together, We Are A Genius," Rush recorded "Test For Echo" in a rural Ontario studio, not far from Toronto. With blizzards coming and going, the trio resumed its usual working arrangement, with Peart writing lyrics he'd then turn over to Lee and Lifeson to craft into songs.

"I have a melody in my head," Peart explains, "just to give me something to go by, rhythmically. But I don't try to express that to the other guys; it's better for them to take in fresh directions, and they often take it in ways that are surprising to me."

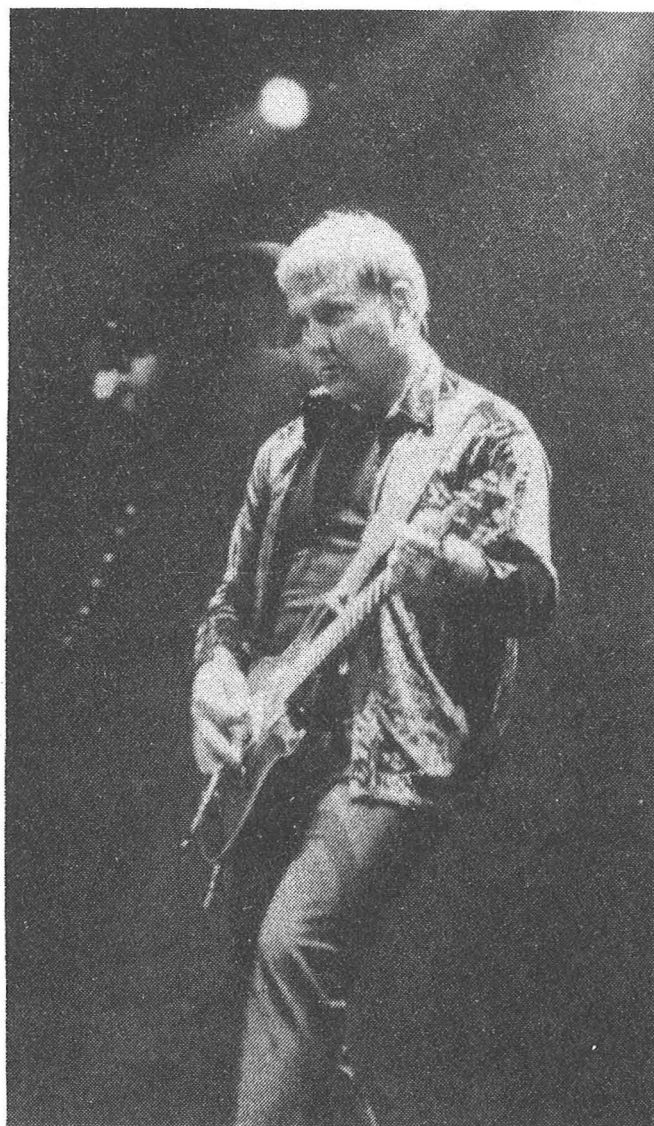
"The first time I hear a song, it's such a revelation. The words and phrases come alive to me in ways I couldn't have anticipated."

For its tour, however, Rush has opted for a fresh direction - an "evening with" approach with an intermission and no opening acts. Peart says that format has been considered for awhile, but because Rush benefited from the opening spot on several key tours during the '70s, the group "hated to close that door" to other bands.

Still, this gives Rush a chance to do away with the song medleys it has taken to playing in recent years and to work up songs that have never been played live. Peart says that list includes "Natural Science" from the group's 1980 album "Permanent Waves" as well as the 1976 concept piece "2112," which Rush has never played in its entirety.

"In 1976, we were still opening a lot of shows," says Peart. "If we were playing a 40-minute set, we didn't want to devote 20 minutes to one song. So we had an abridged version of the whole piece...and just because of circumstances, that became habit."

"Now we have a chance to correct that. It's been great exchanging lists of old songs, ridiculous lists of things that hadn't been played before. It's such a fresh format for us...It makes it even more exciting for us to come out and play again."



DAY 6: Rockford, IL, October 26, 1996

The Rockford Register Star
October 27, 1996

RUSH STICKS WITH TRADITION
FOR ROCKFORD CONCERT

By Edith Lee

Subtlety is not a real important virtue in rock.

Therefore you get the suggestive opening video scene of Rush's Saturday night MetroCentre concert: The theme to 2001: A Space Odyssey plays while a bolt slowly screws into a nut.

Neither was the Rush show for the faint of ear. Except for a few acoustic introductions, the volume was loud enough to make me wonder how many in the mostly GenX/late Baby Boomer crowd will begin losing their hearing now.

Also, the band fell into a few rock cliches, including the obligatory crowd clap-alongs, the smoke and light show.

But Rush's three-hour show still rocked in a way that said, "Take that, grunge boys!"

Granted, the 5,100 fans there might not have caught all of the progressive and philosophical rock themes like alienation and hypocrisy. Some may have been too busy drinking beer, pumping fists or banging their heads to notice the musicianship. But it was all there, courtesy of a band with two decades of performance under their belts.

Lead singer Geddy Lee, who helped give the band its trademark sound with one of the most distinctive wails

in rock, still has it. He played some keyboard, but the band seemed to click best when he was on bass. When he, lead guitarist Alex Lifeson and drummer Neil Peart blasted at full volume, the Lifeson and Peart dropped out for three- or four- bar bass solo, Lee got to show off more than his voice.

Rush pumped out the hits, including "Tom Sawyer", "The Trees", "Roll the Bones" and "Nobody's Hero" and several songs from the new album Test for Echo, including the title track, "Limbo" and "Half the World". The single "Driven" with its hyper beat was one of the best.

This tour has been touted as the band's biggest stage production ever. The math bears it out; four semis and four busses stood outside the venue, while a three-man band performed inside.

The laser beams, giant globes of white lights and prop satellites were all right, but it was the big-screen, dual video backdrops that lent the most to the show. On "Test for Echo" the images of political and religious figures and money spoke volumes. The alternating closeups of Peart's hands and entire drumsets were synchronized to his killer solo.

The drum solo. Now there's usually a cliché. Often I begin yawning seconds after they begin. Not Peart's. It had to be one of the best I ever heard. It wasn't all snare, bass and top hat (sic). Like a good drummer, he actually made the drums beat out a melody, not just a beat.

As for the concert's volume, loud as it was, we would have lost something if they cut down on the volume by eliminating the stereo of the hanging speakers facing the stage.

The band acknowledged the petition drive which reportedly put Rockford on the tour. "We appreciate the gesture", Lee said.

DAY 7: Chicago, IL, October 28, 1996

ATTENDANCE - 13,400
CAPACITY - 16,595

Entertainment Ave!
October 28, 1996

RUSH IN THE CONCERT HALL!

My experience with Rush is a simple one - I basically liked the songs I heard on the radio but never made it a point to expand my musical knowledge of the band. They never instilled that "I have to buy the CD the day it comes out" attitude, but I wouldn't change the station when a Rush song came on. But, back when I was in college, I knew this guy who basically thought that the trio that is called Rush might as well be the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. I didn't realize how many people thought the same thing until I caught Rush's show at The United Center in Chicago.

As the place was filling up I was trying to figure out exactly what could draw such a devout legion of fans to fill up one of the larger indoor venues in Chicago, especially since they haven't been out in the public eye in years and their new CD, "Test for Echo," didn't seem to be getting much attention other than "hey, there's a new Rush CD out." I guess I would have to wait about another three hours to figure out what that drawing power is. In the meantime I saw a show, complete with about a gazillion lights, more mirrors than, well, a house of mirrors, a giant video screen, and a stage set-up that included what looked like a

cardboard cut-out of a Baywatch dudette, an old-style refrigerator, some old-style blender and milk-shake looking things, and satellite dishes with lasers. Oh yea, there was music too. One thing I found out by seeing Rush live is that most of that radio stuff doesn't do them justice as musicians and music makers. Sure, the show had many of those hits I was used to; your "Subdivisions," "The Big Money," "Free Will," and their latest "Test for Echo," but I got to hear many a many a song I have never heard before. And I slowly started to realize just what those 18,000ish fans saw in this band.

As I stood and listened and watched I realized that this Alex Lifeson character is one kick-ass guitarist. As I stood and listened and watched I realized that this Neil Peart character plays the shit out of the drums with the best of them (and he can spin a drumstick between his fingers which I always find cool, and he had this drum-set that spun around so it was actually two drum sets, and he never missed a beat). As I stood and listened and watched I realized that this Geddy Lee character, although looking a little aged, still can direct this trio through musical experiences. And you know, as I stood and listened and watched I realized that this crowd knew every word, every beat, and appreciated every ounce of the show that Rush put on. It was cool.

See, for all of you people like me who only know these guys from the radio, I will tell you that you are missing something. And I don't think that even just buying a CD or two will add to that. The ultimate experience to change your attitude about Rush is to be there with the worshipers, follow their lead in the "shoving your fist in the air," "pretending to hit that cymbal crash" moment, and realize that as musi-

cians this band of three can blow away many a band of, well, many.

The band was great, although it did seem like it took a little while for them to get into the music as much as the rest of the crowd, and they had one of the better sound systems I have seen (I really wish I could have surround sound speakers like theirs in my living room!). The lighting effects weren't overbearing, but added just enough, giving a little kick when it needed but not annoying, and if you like a good solo, from guitar to drum, this band puts it out there for you.

I can't really say that I am now a member of the Church of Rush, but I can say I have been enlightened a little. This is a band that radio can never do justice, I guess mostly because the really cool songs are too long. You sure as hell won't hear many stations playing the full blown version of "2112" that the band played at their show. It's too bad.

The band played for nearly three hours - two sets with a "Geritol" break of about 20 minutes in the middle. It was three hours I can honestly say weren't wasted. I only had one problem with the show. Hmm, I don't know if it's a problem, it's just my feelings keep changing from "who cares?" to "What the hell does he need that for? Who's gonna care if he forgets a line, it will just add to this show being more special?" See, Geddy Lee was using a "lyric monitor." Basically a little TV that scrolls the lyrics to the songs so he doesn't have to worry about forgetting a line. Part of me says that it takes away from some of the spontaneity of a live show, but the technical part of me knows that it can really screw some things up, lighting and laser wise, if a song isn't played right. I guess it's just something that will continue to keep me awake at night. I can say this, whether the crowd knew it was there or not, they sure didn't seem to care, so, I guess I shouldn't care either.

Oh yea, I have to rate the band! Well, I liked the show and the crowd seemed to love it, so it's going to be the TWO BIG GIANT THUMBS UP for Rush!

That's it for this one, I'm The Dude on the Right!
L8R!!!

The Chicago Sun-Times
October 29, 1996

RUSH SHOWS IT STILL
CAN ROCK AFTER 22 YEARS

by Bob Kurson

If you were a square-jawed, bully-brained high school jock in the '70s, odds were you despised these things: vegetarians, members of the science club, standardized personality tests, and the rock group Rush. Especially Rush.

To many clean-cuts, Rush represents the apocalypse of rock. The band sang in octaves high enough to make the Bee Gees blanch, wrote lyrics that vacillated between befuddling gibberish with high-concept double-talk, and attracted the grubbiest-looking fans this side of a Dead concert.

Monday night at the United Center, Rush proved again why it has endured for 22 years despite the lack of endorsement from snobbish, pretty-boy critics: they simply rock like hell.

Covering songs from every period of its evolution (including the entirety of "2112") Rush thrilled the

near sell-out crowd with its usual display of technical precision and lightning-quick musicianship. But the revelation this night wasn't in individual flash, rather in the band's emergence as a blistering and evolving rhythm unit.

Staying true to the spirit of its recent stripped-down studio sound, Rush favored lean and wicked grooves Monday night, cutting back a bit on the elaborate solo histrionics that made them legends among wide-eyed teenagers taking their first guitar or drum lessons. The results was a cleaner performance in which the band's often complex songs were allowed to breathe cleanly and throb seductively.

But don't worry, speed freaks. Faster-than-Flash drummer Neil Peart continues to serve as religious icon for two decades of hyperventilating air drummers, many of whom recklessly whirled elbows, wrists and hair at the UC while trying to match their hero note-for-note. And guitarist Alex Lifeson still looks like he can keep up with furious-fingered youngsters half his age.

Only bassist-singer Geddy Lee seems to have been affected by the years, judiciously avoiding some of the ultra-high notes he once hit without reserve. This caution was most notable during parts of "2112", when Lee dropped his vocals an octave mid-song. But on other numbers, such as radio hit "Closer to the heart," he cranked it up and hit the top floor.

Rush will forever be criticized for taking itself too seriously, but the Toronto-bred trio truly looked like they were having fun Monday night. And though many of their fans arrived bleary-eyed and still long-haired after 22 years, they, too, looked like they were having fun. That's not a bad secret for rock critics to remember.

The Chicago Tribune
October 30, 1996

CRANKED-UP RUSH DOESN'T LET
FANS DOWN AT UNITED CENTER.

By Greg Kot

Teenagers in the 1970's had a choice: Blast Rush on the eight-track while kicking back in the school parking lot, or cinch up the leather jacket & silently wish that Rush's helium-voiced Geddy Lee would choke on a high note.

The ultimate rite-of-passage band, Rush remains a primarily testosterone-laden enterprise. At the sold-out United Center on Monday, the Canadian trio's audience was, at least 75% male, & most of them appeared to know every lyric & anticipated every chord change with the accuracy of lifetime obsessives.

Even though it flies well below the radar of mainstream record business, Rush has endured & even flourished. Despite only one Top-40 hit, the Canadian trio has released 20 albums in 25 years & routinely sells out arenas whenever it tours. Like the Grateful Dead, Rush is among the biggest cult bands in the world-reviled, misunderstood or dismissed by the uninitiated, but virtually the only band that matters within its tight circle of worshippers.

Rush revels in its normalcy, its utter lack of fashionability, & in its distaste for love songs. Singer-bassist Lee, guitarist Alex Lifeson, & drummer Neil Peart instead indulge instrumental flash & pseudo-philosophical lyricism-the coolly cerebral

music & message in perfect sync.

Though revered as a technician, Peart doesn't really swing & he sure isn't funky. But that matters little. The bands' best-known compositions, such as the epic "2112," performed Monday in its 20-minute plus entirety, are like roller coaster, in which tempos shift constantly. At this game, Peart has few peers. His four-limbed polyrhythms give the illusion of racing thru an obstacle course at breakneck-speed, barely eluding a crash with each sudden shift in direction.

With the aid of electronic pads on which he was able to pound out some melody lines, the drummer actually turned his solo into something more than a '70's cliché. Not so much an improvisation as a composition, the Peart solo demonstrated a sense of groove missing from the rest of the show; for a brief moment it seemed there would be dancing at a Rush concert.

But before anything so rash occurred, Lifeson & Lee returned to the stage & they burrowed into the labyrinthine twists & turns of "Natural Science," another rarely performed cut resurrected for this performance—a 3 hour career retrospective balancing crowd pleasers such as "Tom Sawyer," "The Trees" and "The Big Money" with a healthy dose of the most recent album, "Test for Echo."

On newer material such as "Virtuality" and "Driven," Rush epitomized power-trio hard rock while demonstrating a feel for more nuanced textures. Although the group's songwriting has always been problematic, with slight melodies propped up by complex arrangements, Rush has lately been paring away some of the filigree & synth overkill in favor of a more direct, guitar-driven approach.

Most notably, Lee's once infernally high voice has lowered an octave or two, & it sounds warmer & more natural than before. A handful of vintage tunes such as "Closer to the Heart" still require him to sing as though he's being stabbed with a fork, an affectation that apparently continues to bring pleasure to great numbers of Rush fans judging by the number of lighters that illuminated the arena. For some people, the eight-track in the school parking lot is still cranked.

DAY 8: Minneapolis, MN, October 29, 1996

ATTENDANCE - 7,753
CAPACITY - 11,000

The Minneapolis Star Tribune
October 27, 1996

"Echo" has more than one meaning

In typically complex fashion, the title song of the new album by the intellectual Canadian rock trio Rush has a dual meaning. On the surface, "Test for Echo" is a snide critique of the U.S. justice system, which sometimes turns criminals into media darlings. But it's also a comment on human nature.

"It's about the numbing process that happens when we are exposed to great tragedies and then we're exposed to moments of hilarity," said singer-bassist Geddy Lee, whose band returns Tuesday to Target Center in Minneapolis. "I feel that that's the condition of contemporary man now — when we read the paper or when we watch TV, we're not sure if we're supposed to laugh."

Rush separated for a year and a half after the tour supporting its last album, "Counterparts," ended. Drummer Neil Peart put together a tribute album called

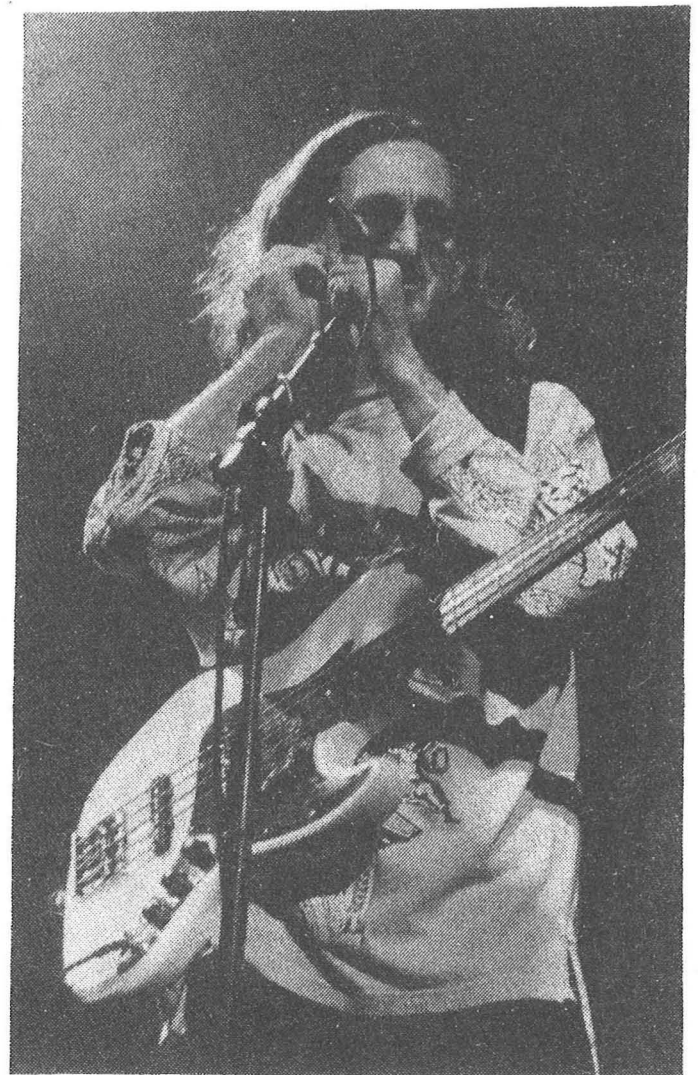
"Burning for Buddy," which honored late drummer Buddy Rich. Guitarist Alex Lifeson formed the band Victor and released an album. And Lee and his wife became parents of a daughter.

When it came time to rejoin, everyone was rejuvenated, especially Lee. "I had had a great year and a half with my family, and I had been pretty well totally away from the music business, so my natural cynicism of all things connected with the music business had subsided. I was really ready to work. I was really dying to write some music. So I wasn't going to do anything to disturb that vibe. I was sitting there like a kid on the first day of camp."

Lee didn't feel, as he said, that he "needed to go out and make a great solo statement."

But Lifeson and Peart came from a different perspective.

"Neil's project was partly driven by charity — all the money was going to charity — and it was partly driven by his love of big-band music and his desire to explore that area of his drumming," Lee said. "I was very supportive of that. Alex had been dictator of the world on his project; he'd got a taste of running the entire show. It was probably more difficult for him to adjust, because he was coming from a dictatorship back into a democracy. The first couple of days, [we] were kind of circling each other a little bit — we did a lot of talking, and then everything was fine."



DAY 9: St. Louis, MO, October 31,
1996

ATTENDANCE - 10,157
CAPACITY - 13,500

The St. Louis Post-Dispatch
November 2, 1996

RUSH LETS MUSIC ROAR
By Chris Dickinson

Back in the mid '70s, Rush's futuristic concept album "2112" was a standard issue platter on every prog-rock fan's turntable. The Canadian metal-cum-art rock trio laid the pomposity on thick, and thousands of shag-haired kids jammed out under the glow of black-light lamps nationwide.

Fast-forward 20 years to the Kiel Thursday night, and all those kids - grown-up now and slightly thicker around the middle - still cared enough about Rush to flick their Bics in unison. Even many of the young fans in attendance looked like '70s throwbacks.

Rock music has gone through many changes since the polyester decade from punk to new wave to grunge and back to punk again. For better or worse, Rush has ignored it all and stayed its own course. On Halloween night, the band pumped out big, virtuosic anthems like there was no tomorrow. And also like it was still yesterday.

Instead of coming on like sad, rumbling dinosaurs, the members of Rush let their music roar. The genre could be dismissed as dated, but what can't be dismissed is that singer-bassist Geddy Lee, guitarist Alex Lifeson and drummer Neil Peart are virtuosos. These three guys have their chops down and know how to slam it up to the nosebleed section.

Lee, a stratosphere-scraping vocalist once described by Creem magazine as "Tweety Bird on helium," stood at the mike and proved that years of arena rock shrieking haven't dulled his edge. Lee possesses a voice of such high, freakish dimensions it's impossible to confuse him with anyone else. Love it, hate it, but at least give the guy credit for being distinctive.

While Lee opted for a more casual contemporary look (wire-rim shades, jeans, sneakers), Lifeson's fashion sense seemed frozen in the New Romantics era (black leather pants, a white modified Jerry Seinfeld pirate shirt). Peart, battering away in the center of a sea o' drums, went strictly functional in a sleeveless T-shirt.

No matter what their dress, the members of Rush stuck firmly to their '70s roots when it came to the music. New songs like "Driven," "Limbo" and "Half the World" carried the trademark stamp of Lee's thick, traveling bass-lines, Lifeson's powerful chording and nimble harmonics and Peart's muscular drumwork.

And no matter how much the new stuff sounded like the old stuff, nothing quite stacked up to the atmospheric reprise of part of the "2112" album. As green laser-beams cut across the arena and thousands of arms punched the air, it was easy to remember the days when a young band named Rush inspired thousands of teenagers to zone out under the glow of the black-light lamp.

DAY 10: Milwaukee, WI, October 31,
1996

ATTENDANCE - 9,730
CAPACITY - 12,777

The Milwaukee Journal
November 2, 1996

PERFORMANCE BY '70's BAND
BRINGS A RUSH OF MEMORIES
by Nick Carter.

Adolescents in the late '70's and early '80's fell into one of two camps: those who would rip a band like Rush to pieces while combing back their hair, adjusting their skinny ties, and listening to Elvis Costello in the school lunch room.

Or, if you were a believer, you were among those who could be spotted at the basement weekend beer bash, splayed out in a bean bag chair and musing over the band's pseudo-spiritual lyrics while passing around a bong and gazing at black light poster (of bands such as Rush).

A time advanced image of that latter bunch was present among the nearly 10,000 who attended Rush's show Saturday [sic] night at the Bradley Center. Such is the loyalty inspired by Rush, now among a handful of older bands that continue to draw big crowds without the benefit of a hit album or heavy video exposure. Deadline prevented a review of the late part of the show.

There's something a bit funny about Rush.

At one level, the band practically epitomizes the corniness and pretension of the worst '70's rock. But when judged by the overwrought tenets of '70's and '80's progressive rock, Rush ranks fairly high as a band. Over the years, the group has learned to take the concepts of teen angst and introspection and spew them into inanely introspective lyrical themes and engaging, if overwrought, power rock arrangements. The band accomplishes its artistic task, but it's just that the forum and direction of its talents, especially with Rush consisting entirely of men in their 40s, seems hopelessly sophomoric and lacking in humor.

The early Rush tune "2112" (its 20-minute-plus 1976 opus; sort of a "Stairway to Heaven" for the stoner crowd) is more a string of musical vignettes than a single composition. The various bits jump from basic hard rock anthems to esoteric art-rock melodies, aided by drummer Neil Peart's hyper-polyrhythmic dexterity and lead singer and bassist Geddy Lee's accomplished bass lines.

Among other vintage material came the AOR classics "Tom Sawyer" and "The Trees," which seemed to please the crowd the most. Among the brightest of the flashbacks was "Closer to the Heart," which had Lee actually wailing an octave above his usual trademark falsetto. Newer material from the recent album "Test for Echo" and songs such as "Driven" and "Virtuosity" [sic] seem to take a more direct power rock course, relying less on synthesizers and complex arrangements.

DAY 12: Cleveland, OH, November 4, 1996

Scene Magazine (Cleveland)
October 31st - November 6th, 1996

Testing For Echo
Rush Return After Two Years In Hiding

by Steven Batten

Perhaps the best visual approximation of the Rush saga, 1996, is that of a lone hiker, standing atop a mountain peak and calling out in no particular direction to see if anyone can still hear him. Testing for echo, if you will. After a solid two-year hiatus from the public eye, that's exactly the situation that the venerable Canadian power trio found itself in. Apparently, however, band members Geddy Lee (Bass, vocals), Alex Lifeson (guitar) and Neil Peart (drums) liked what they heard when they reconvened, because what they came up with is perhaps their strongest effort since 1991's MOVING PICTURES. TEST FOR ECHO, as they've called it, returns to the forefront a band that has long blurred the line between classic and modern, at once progressive AND accessible. TEST FOR ECHO is no exception to that trademark formula. Lee's vibrant vocals and buoyant, limber basslines, paired with Lifeson's articulate arsenal of guitar riffs and Peart's inimitable rhythmic foundations, further blur the line, establishing TEST FOR ECHO as the best of both worlds. In short, a modern classic. Currently touring in support of TEST FOR ECHO, the band will be in town this Monday, November 4, for a full evening of Rush at Gund Arena. Lifeson spoke with SCENE about the band's return to form.

Sorry I'm running a little bit late. I just did the stupidest interview I've ever done, in my whole life.

That bad, huh? What happened?

I don't know. It had nothing to do with the band. This guy went on about the drug scene in America and how musicians are all f**ked up - he just went on and on and on. Finally I just said, "Look, I know you've got some serious feelings about this, but I'm here to talk to you about the record, if you want to talk to me about it. So can we please do that?" It just went on and on. I wanted to smoke a joint, I got so upset." (laughs)

TEST FOR ECHO's a pretty good record, and a pretty good Rush record at that. I was wondering what to expect, since it'd been awhile, but you guys really came through.

Oh, great, thank you. I love this record. I think it's one of the best we've done, if not the best. I always feel that way after we finish a record, but there's something about this record that's really special. I guess it's 'cos I was there. (laughs) We had such a great time making it. Everyone was in great spirits every day, really looking forward to working every day. Part of that was due to the break we had - everyone went off and did other things with their time. But there's a quality and a feel to this record that I don't think any of our other records have had.

That was probably the biggest break that the band has ever taken, but it certainly seems to have worked.

Yeah. Geddy definitely wanted to take the time off because he and his wife had a baby. He wanted to be home for the first year of her life. There was absolutely no problem with that from Neil and me.

We went on and did other things - I did the Victor

project, and Neil finished up the BURNING FOR BUDDY tribute that he did, plus all the millions of other things that he likes to do. And that stretched out from 12 months to 18 months.

We all went into this project with such a rejuvenated energy level that we couldn't wait to get into it.

Now having said that, the first week was a little bit weird for me. I was feeling a little bit unsettled - I had just finished VICTOR, I had worked really hard on it and I was really on a high, being in control of the whole thing.

The first week, Geddy and I spent just talking about direction, personal direction, things that we wanted to do with our lives. Everything felt kind of same-old, same-old to me.

Once I exorcised those ghosts, the following week we wrote five songs. We dove into it, and it was very, very positive from then on.

What kind of things did you draw from musically this time around?

It's tough to pinpoint where that is exactly. You kind of sit there and you look at each other and you think, Well, what next? Let's just play. And we'll jam and something will develop that way. Or we'll have some of Neil's lyrics, and we'll get a sense of what mood he's trying to create, whether it's dramatic or neutral or whatever, and write accordingly.

I think Rush has always been cinematic in its approach to the way we develop our songwriting. We try to be quite visual with it, and you just kind of take it from there. With me, it's all the instinctive, spontaneous stuff that I do that I think is the best that I do, and Ged's great at developing things, so we have a really good partnership in that sense.

Since Neil writes the lyrics, do yours and Geddy's ideas ever clash with his idea of what the song is?

Not really. I don't think he has a preconceived idea of the music. I think for him, it's really exciting that we work on music to his lyrics. He doesn't hear anything until we've developed it to a fairly complete end. And then we play the stuff for him, because it's totally foreign to him.

A number of times, he's commented that he never would've thought that a piece of music would've worked with those lyrics. He might have a rhythmic sense in his mind, and he will write that way, with a particular rhythm in his head. But quite often, the music is totally unrelated to that kind of preconceived rhythm that he had.

You've worked with producer Peter Collins in the past, and there seems to be a pretty good relationship there. Soundwise, were you trying for anything different this time around?

We definitely wanted to get more size out of the drum kit. We went to Bearsville in New York to record the drums. They have an enormous studio there that really suited Neil's kit. He changed drums and spent a lot of time selecting the drums that he wanted - the particular tone of the drums, the tunings.

I wanted a little more aggressiveness out of the guitar, a more direct kind of aggressiveness. So, again, we went in that direction.

Conceptually, I wanted to develop the guitars in such a way that the acoustics played a much more important role in the overall guitar sound. So we developed that aspect of it.

ATTENDANCE - 9,255
CAPACITY - 12,000

The Pittsburgh Post Gazette
November 4, 1996

FANS HERE GET THE SAME RUSH
THAT THEY GOT 22 YEARS AGO

by Tracy Collins

More than 22 years after first playing the Civic Arena, the Canadian power trio Rush played a searing three-hour set last night that served as a killer career retrospective.

"It was right here, on August 16, 1974, that we played our first American date," singer/basssist Geddy Lee told the crowd, adding that the band had played Pittsburgh more than any other U.S. city. "The only difference between then and now is that tonite we're going to play a lot longer."

Judging from the mix of ages in the crowd, some were in their 30's when they discovered Rush's live show that night in '74. Others were still having their diapers changed every two hours.

That passage of time prompted more than a few self-depreciating age jokes from singer Geddy Lee, but the band tempered the nostalgia by playing a half-dozen songs from its 2-month-old disc, "Test for Echo." Those songs showed that the band's vitality hadn't waned through 20 releases.

Another interesting thing about crowds at Rush concerts is that more than the obligatory air guitarists, these fans boast a number of air drummers and air bassists, and Lee and drummer Neil Peart showed why their playing draws such fanatic fascination.

Lee, in particular, was dazzling all night on bass, no more so than on a solo midway through the band's anthem, "Closer to the Heart."

Peart again proved himself a master of the drum cage, making use of every piece crowded around him on his carousel mini-stage. Shortly after intermission, he launched into an eight-minute solo at the end of the instrumental "Where's My Thing" that produced many pretenders in the crowd - and many cheers of appreciation.

Rush's music - a complex mix of rhythms that sometimes take their time interlocking into a foot-stomping melody - has always been more arena-friendly than radio-friendly, in part because seeing Lee, Peart, and guitarist Alex Lifeson at work makes you appreciate the music's intricacy all the more.

The first half of the show had favorites like "The Big Money," "The Trees," "Red Barchetta" and a much appreciated rarity from the band, the entire space opera "2112," an album-side-long Rush classic that has been truncated because of concert time constraints over the years. After intermission - a "Geritol" break, Lee quipped - the band had the crowd on its feet with favorites like "Freewill," "The Spirit of the Radio" and "Tom Sawyer."

While even a three-hour show can't fulfill all of the requests for a rabid Rush fan - there was, remember, a new disc to sell - the band truly aimed to keep its faithful customers happy. And with Lee in full voice and the band at peak stride, few of the near-capacity crowd went away dissatisfied.

RUSH GIVES LOYAL AUDIENCE
A THEATRICAL PERFORMANCE

by Rege Behe

To paraphrase comedian Bill Murray, there are only two types of people in the world: those who love Rush and those who hate Rush.

Now, we're not talking about the portly political commentator, but the Canadian trio whose brand of progressive rock has somehow stood the test of time for more than 25 years, at least among their fans.

Sunday night at the Civic Arena, Geddy Lee, Alex Lifeson, and Neil Peart returned to the site of the first show in the United States (August 16, 1974, according to Lee) playing to a large crowd that seemed enthralled by the group's theatrics, technical wizardry and stage show that included cardboard cutouts of Marilyn Monroe, Pamela Anderson, and the Three Stooges, a working refrigerator and an often stunning light show.

"Dreamline" opened the show, a spacy, meandering song about being young and full of wonder.

Hmmm. Okay, you have to give the group the benefit of the doubt on this one, since it's possible you're only as old as you feel (although before intermission, Lee poked fun at the group's taking a 'Geritol break'). Much to the band's credit, however, they didn't act like relics on the stage.

Bassist Lee, resembling a thinner version of shock rock deejay Howard Stern, moved across the stage like a whippet, piercing through the wall of music with his inimitable voice.

Guitarist Lifeson sound like a chorus of Strotocasters at times, flaying his guitar with amazing passion.

And drummer Peart...is there any drummer more revered by his fans? In every row last night, there was at least one guy playing air drums, trying to keep up with the complex rhythms and syncopation Peart is known for.

Individually, there's no doubting Rush's musical chops.

Collectively, however, the sum of the parts did not always equal the whole. Songs like "Big Money," "Drive," and "Red Barchetta" just go in too many directions to fulfill Rush's sci-fi/cyberpunk/environmental visions.

When they nailed a song, however, there was an undeniable moment of transcendence that only the most jaded of observers could deny.

"Animate" and "Nobody's Hero" fell into this category, along with "Subdivision" and "Roll th Bones." Sparrer in structure and with less soloing, these songs seemed subtler in approach than most of the other material.

Of course there were the Rush classics: "The Trees," "Closer to the Heart," "Freewill," with the show ending with "Spirit of Radio" and "Tom Sawyer." On radio these songs sound dated and shopworn, but onstage Lee and his mates seemed to be able to breathe new life into them.

For that alone, give the band a nod.

Cliff Norrell did the engineering on the record, and he was terrific to work with. He grew up with our music, and it was an exciting opportunity for him to work with us because he was so familiar with all our material. He had even played in a couple of bands early on that'd played a few of our songs. We worked very closely, and he was aware of our history, so it was his opportunity to kind of develop songs more in a particular direction.

And of course, Andy Wallace coming in and mixing. The guy is just a genius. He was terrific to work with, great to watch, very fast, very knowledgeable, very bright guy. He did everything for a reason. Nothing was in the mix just because it was there. It had to have a purpose and a place. There's a great sense of dimension in his mixing.

That worked out remarkably well considering that he came in at the tail end of the project.

He came in fresh, so it was just a question of his take on it. Consequently, he'd get things to a level where he was ready for us to come in and make comments, and we made a point of not going into the studio until he was at that point. And we'd hear completely different takes on these songs that we'd lived with for six or seven months. It was really exciting to hear how he heard it. There were things that we really wouldn't have thought of, and that was really the whole point of him being there.

Given how well this has worked out with the break between records, do you anticipate doing it that way next time around?

I think it's probably inevitable at this point that we will, and that's only because touring is not a priority with us anymore. We will still tour.

This tour won't be as long as some tours in the past, but certainly it will be a decent tour. But to go out and do 120 or 150 dates is just not in us anymore. So I would guess that after this tour we'll take another, not as long as this break was, but probably a fair chunk of time before we start the next project.

That's me saying that now, but it all depends, really, on how excited we are by the end of the tour. We may decide to just take a few months off and clear our heads and then jump into the next record. We already talked about the next record while we were doing this one. So there's that in the future, certainly.

Any future side projects or ideas in the works?

No ideas. I can't really speak for the other guys, but I know that I would like to do another project like Victor was, whether it would be the same as Victor in terms of lineup and the people I worked with, I don't know. But I'd certainly like to work on another solo project.

I'd like to work as a producer as well, work with other bands and musicians. My slate is clean, and it's pretty broad, so. I just like the whole idea of activity.

Has the idea of an instrumental solo record ever crossed your mind?

I don't think that I would want to really do anything exclusively instrumental on a record. On a few things, yeah, I kind of would. But a whole record, no.

But I'd love to have the opportunity to work on a soundtrack, which is basically instrumental given a visual cue and source of inspiration. I think that would be really exciting and a lot of fun.

Scene Magazine (Cleveland) November 7th - 13th, 1996

RUSH GUND ARENA
NOVEMBER 4

by Pete Roche

Canada's elite power trio arrived in town Monday night to deliver over two-and-a-half hours of seminal prog-rock that documented its entire 25-year career. Billed as "An Entire Evening With Rush," the concert was a spirited performance on the part of bandmates Geddy Lee (bass and vocals), Alex Lifeson (guitars) and drummer extraordinaire Neil Peart.

Global touring is hardly new to these arena veterans (they're currently touring behind their 16th studio album), but what distinguished this visit from past shows was the lack of an opening band. Never before has the trio been able to play 25-song sets - the time constraints of sharing a bill with an opening act simply wouldn't permit it. But Rush were unhampered on this night at the Gund, and ticket-buying fans rejoiced the fact.

Surprisingly, Lee and company didn't start off with new material, but "Dreamline" saw the band bolting out of the starting gate anyway. Lifeson's serrated guitar sound fueled the twists and turns of "Driven," giving the crowd its first luscious taste of the new TEST FOR ECHO.

The automotive theme continued. The band revisited the classic "Red Barchetta" while a live camera feed played its images on a huge video screen behind Peart's rotating acoustic kit. The black-clad Lifeson drew quick laughs by mugging with cardboard cut-outs of Marilyn Monroe and the Three Stooges while picking arpeggios and fierce solos. "Animate" and "Nobody's Hero" were choice selections from the 1993 album COUNTERPARTS.

The progressive rock purists didn't reach Xanadu until the threesome rendered the epic "2112" in its entirety. Gradually the 1975 space opera unfolded, telling the tale of a future-world hero who discovers a guitar and learns the forbidden art of music. The band was understandably breathless after winding down with the defiant "Temples Of Syrinx" coda, but a 20-minute intermission allowed overjoyed fans to make potty stops and beer runs.

The stage was slightly modified for the band's second set. Satellite dishes were unveiled on each side of the stage, and tundra-esque snowscapes were projected onscreen. When Rush returned and lunged into "Test For Echo," the dishes pivoted to the churning rhythm and emitted green laser beams that pierced the darkness. The art of skillful lighting is usually lost on such big rock events, but the pod configurations and color schemes for this show were phenomenal - surely amongst the best to ever illuminate the Gund.

"Subdivisions" was the only cut from SIGNALS, and featured Lee on both bass and keyboards. Nobody really cared that the set consisted primarily of guitar-based rock and roll. FM radio staple "Freewill" only underscored that point, and Lifeson and Lee's guitar-bass jam in the middle of the song raised the intensity level considerably. These older songs typically sounded better than more recent, unproven Rush cuts, and the crowd reaction to them was markedly louder.

After some instrumental foreplay with the funky "Leave That Thing Alone," Lifeson and Lee abdicated the stage to the percussion prowess of Peart. The band's lyri-

cist approached his solo as a musical composition unto itself, flailing away on his snare and hammering out melodies on electronic xylophone pads. With his mathematical rhythms and meticulous stick work, Peart demonstrated again that while drum solos in general do suck, his is one you don't want to miss.

More techno-rock mayhem from the '80s ensued with "Natural Science" and the bass-guided "Force 10." The only predictable move Rush made all night was to wrap things up with the ageless hit "Spirit Of Radio" and the perennial favorite "Tom Sawyer."

Encore instrumental "YYZ" reminded all in attendance of why they became Rush devotees in the first place — the individual members are brilliant, tight-playing musicians whose arrangements are always clever and exciting. The night's only drawbacks were the sparse (but obvious) keyboard sequences piped into the mix for certain tunes, like the horns on "Roll The Bones." You'd think a band of Rush's caliber wouldn't have to rely on cheap tricks.

DAY 13: Philadelphia, PA, November 6, 1996

ATTENDANCE - 14,759

CAPACITY - 15,147

The Philadelphia Inquirer
November 6, 1996

LOOK BACK?

NOT THE RUSH TRIO, NUDGING
THE OLD ASIDE FOR THE NEW

by Brian McCollum

Neil Peart has 22 years' worth of Rush records he could listen to, but he never does.

The drummer and lyricist for the stalwart Toronto rock trio wouldn't dream of kicking back in his living room and spinning 1974's FLY BY NIGHT or 1978's HEMI-SPHERES. Too indulgent, he says.

So when it came time to carve out a set list for the band's current tour — which brings it to the CoreStates Center tonight — Peart had to pull out his old LPs just to refresh his memory. Some off-the-wall suggestions from Peart and his band mates, bassist Geddy Lee and guitarist Alex Lifeson, made the cut for the three-hour show.

"The three of us were sending faxes back and forth with potential lists," Peart said. "Some were intended to be ridiculous...but even some of those worked out. Somebody else would take it seriously and say, 'Well wait... What if we did this? It could really work.'"

With 16 studio albums — including TEST FOR ECHO (Atlantic), which debuted at No. 5 on Billboard's album chart last month — there was plenty to choose from. Take away Aerosmith, which fractured for several years in the early '80s, and Rush has the longest track record of any original rock lineup around.

Fans hoping to hear something really odd may be out of luck, however. He won't name titles, but some of the old stuff makes Peart squirm. "Do you want to see your kindergarten paintings hanging on the refrigerator?" he said with a laugh. "That's tough, to know that things you did 23, 24 years ago are still out there in front of people. Of course, it's embarrassing."

With the tour opening on Oct. 19, the famously hard-working Rush ended the longest road break of its career. Since the COUNTERPARTS tour in mid-1994, band members have been involved in side projects (Peart's

Buddy Rich tribute, Lifeson's solo disc), babies (Lee's new son), and even musical training (Peart worked with a drum coach for two years).

"I spent the last two years in my basement basically playing for the spiders," said Peart. "And that did me more good musically than two years of touring — or five years of touring — would ever have."

With renewed energy, Rush went roaring into the ECHO sessions last winter. It had already run through its traditional game plan, hunkering down at a house in the Canadian countryside, where Lee and Lifeson forged song structures, and Peart toiled on the words that would fill them. The result is a guitar-heavy album that rocks harder than anything from Rush in the last 10 years.

Peart, 44, plans to record more Buddy Rich tribute material, and finds touring increasingly less appealing artistically. "In your building years, there's nothing better you could do than...play every night on a stage and force yourself to that level. We would feel it, as a band, getting better," he said. "But, of course, once you've achieved that after 20 years, you have it."

That doesn't mean he's complaining about performing in front of 20,000 demanding fans. When you're held up as one of rock's top drummers, the pressure is intense.

"That's a tremendous challenge, to walk up those stairs every night, especially with 20-odd years behind you," Peart said. "You're no longer trying to prove anything to someone who doesn't know you. You're trying to live up to something."

"It's the ultimate ordeal by fire."

IF YOU GO

Rush will perform tonight at 8 at the CoreStates Center, Broad and Pattison Streets. Tickets: \$24.50 (\$35 seats are sold out). Phone: 215-336-3600.

The Philadelphia Inquirer
November 8, 1996

ARENA ROCK'S RUSH
SHOWS STAYING POWER

By Sara Sherr

If anybody can prove arena rock is still viable in 1996, it's Rush. For two decades, the Canadian trio has updated its sound without embarrassing itself. In the '70s, Rush defined metal. In the '80s, its classic rock effectively absorbed new wave and post-punk.

And in the '90s, frontman/bassist Geddy Lee, drummer Neil Peart and guitarist Alex Lifeson are a better grunge band than their younger counterparts, who most likely have a few Rush albums in their collection.

Rush is the best of both worlds: They're musicians' musicians who also manage to be heroes to suburban boys and their grown-up brothers.

At the sold-out CoreStates Center on Wednesday night, Rush displayed equal parts musicianship and showmanship for three hours. The program reflected all the phases of the band's career: material from the new Test for Echo ("Driven," "Virtuality"), the classic-rock power ballad "Closer to the Heart," the post-punk funk of "Force 10," the individualist hit "Tom Sawyer," and the Rush Holy Grail, the entire 21-minute "2112." The anthemic "Free Will," with its line "If you choose not to decide you still have made a choice," resonated with apathetic voters the day after

the election.

Lee — whose wail has been likened to "a choir of angels" by SCTV characters Bob and Doug MacKenzie and a screeching banshee by nonfans — has developed a palatable style somewhere in between the two.

When he sings "Invisible airwaves crackle with light" in "Spirit of Radio," he sounds like radio static. But even when Lee is screechy, he compensates with bass playing that is agile and funkier than he looks. The revered Peart, who is also the band's lyricist, did a drum solo that used jazz, African and Latin rhythms, accompanied by historical movie clips of dancers. And Lifeson was in his glory for "Spirit of Radio," which includes one of the most famous riffs in classic rock.

The high point of the night was Rush's synth-laden "Subdivisions." When Lee, now in his 40s, first sang "be cool or be cast out" in 1982, he was talking to all the lonely guys in suburban cul-de-sacs who failed to fit in and who spent their time in the basement bonding with their stereo equipment and conquering hard-to-play riffs.

For them, Peart, Lee and Lifeson will always be superheroes, even without costumes and makeup.

DAY 14: Landover, MD, November 7, 1996

The Washington Times
November 7, 1996

RUSH TO STAY AHEAD OF THE REST

by Gerald Mizejewski

The cover art of the newly release compact disc shows a breathtaking, fresh shot of rock climbers hoisting themselves up a Stonehenge-like formation.

The vivid, full-color photos in the liner notes serve as a superb framework around lyrical poems containing themes detailing the human need for affirmation.

But it's the progressive music on the disc — with varying tempos, clean drum progressions and crisp vocals urging reason — that stands out the most.

A chart-topper? Maybe an unknown band off the L.A. club circuit making its way toward the MTV Buzz Bin? Maybe its the next HFStival headliner.

At first glance — and listen — you'd think this was some hot young group straight out of Berklee College of Music. Not by a long shot.

It's Rush, the rock group that stays a step ahead of its competition — and their age — through constant reinvention and innovation. The Toronto-based band assembled two decades ago is back at it again — for the 21st time. The trio that turns out solid albums year after year offers trademark musicianship, confrontation with pertinent issues, and a resulting high volume of record sales via its latest creation, "Test for Echo."

"It was the most enjoyable [album] for us," says guitarist Alex Lifeson from his hotel room somewhere outside Detroit. "We were very unified in what the direction was. I think it shows on this album."

Unification, it seems, was not the only change that Rush experienced since the 1994 release of "Counterparts," a fast-paced concept album chock-full of philosophy, from rational objectivism (a focus on the individual) to the study of complex relationships. Vocalist-bassist Geddy Lee, percussionist Neil Peart and Mr. Lifeson took 18 months between albums to go their separate ways.

"I spent 10 months writing and recording 'Victor,'" says Mr. Lifeson, 43, of his first solo album since helping form the band in 1973. "I had two weeks off and then came 'Test.' Coming off the side project, I was very focused on songwriting and arranging.

"I felt a lot more confident and stronger."

The band took such a long hiatus after finishing its last tour in May 1994 because "Geddy wanted a year off to be with his new daughter and Neil always has a lot of things going on," Mr. Lifeson says.

Mr. Peart, the lyrical brainchild of the band, took drum lessons from Freddie Gruber.

"This is Neil Peart, who I think is the best drummer in the world. He felt there was an area that needed to be improved," Mr. Lifeson says. "He wanted to learn to play with more of a swing groove.

"He now has a circular, fluid technique, not a linear form of playing like he used to have. His endurance is greater."

In October 1995 the band assembled their new and old experiences at Chalet Studio, a country retreat outside Toronto.

"We spent the first few days talking about where we were going as people. We didn't even talk about the music," says Mr. Lifeson, who has long since traded in his long, blond hair and double-neck guitar for a conservative, Dutch-boy do and a sleek Paul Reed Smith guitar.

>From his desk that overlooked Lake Ontario, Mr. Peart, 44, began "sending a stream of lyrics to the small studio at the other end of the house, where Geddy and Alex hunched over guitars and computers," explains Mr. Peart in the "Test for Echo" biographical press release he has written on behalf of the band.

A snowstorm and several months later, the album was mixed by Andy Wallace (Nirvana, Rage Against the Machine, Faith No More).

"When we heard his mix of a song for the first time, invariably we'd say something like, 'Wow, I never thought of it like that before!'" Mr. Peart says.

Now, about a year after settling down to work, the band is back on tour, hitting 70 venues in an effort to please the fans.

"Touring does not play an important role as it did in the past. We all are really enjoying the chance to spend time with our families...and the grueling nature turns up off," Mr. Lifeson said. "But we realize there is a large following that wants to see us. We try to reach a balance."

Lucky for the fans, playlists for the 1996 tour have included classic favorites "The Trees" from 1978's "Hemispheres"; "Natural Science" from the 1980's "Permanent Waves"; "YYZ" and "Red Barchetta" from 1981's "Moving Pictures"; and, for the first time ever, the entire Ayn Rand-inspired "2112" medley from 1976's "2112."



test for echo world(?) tour 96-97 second leg dates

May 1 - Pensacola Civic Center. Pensacola, FL
May 3 - Starplex Amphitheater. Dallas, TX
May 4 - Woodlands Amphitheater. Houston, TX
May 6- Delta Center. Salt Lake City, UT
May 10 - Irvine Meadows. Irvine, CA
May 11 - Shoreline Amphitheater, Mountain View CA
May 13 - Rose Garden. Portland, OR
May 14 - Key Arena. Seattle, WA
May 16 - The Gorge. George, WA

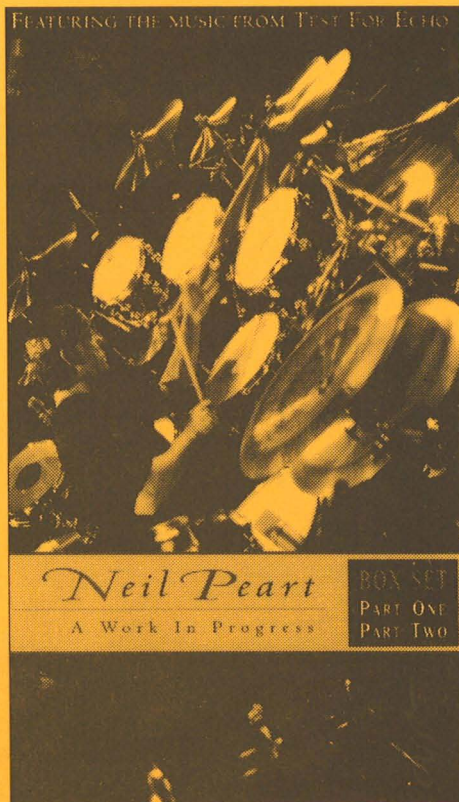
June 6 - Riverport Amphitheater. St. Louis, MO
June 7 - Sandstone Amphitheater in Kansas
June 10 - Deer Creek Music Center. Indianapolis, IN
June 11 - Riverbend Music Center. Cincinnati, OH
June 13 - Pine Knob. Detroit, MI
June 14 - World Music Center. Chicago, IL
June 16 - Polaris Amphitheater. Columbus, OH
June 17 - Star Lake Amphitheater. Pittsburgh, PA
June 19 - Garden State Arts Center, NJ
June 20 - Merriwether Post Pavillion, MD
June 22 - New Jersey
June 23 - Great Woods Amphitheater. Mansfield, MA
June 25 - Jones Beach. Long Island, NY
July 1 - Ottawa

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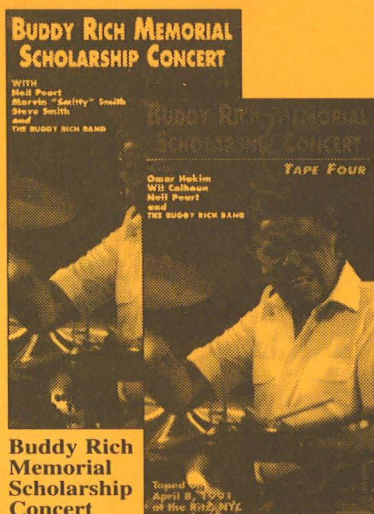
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Neil Peart
A Work In Progress

This two video boxed set represents the first time Neil Peart worked on an instructional drumming project. It documents the "work in progress" of the recording of Rush's new album, *Test For Echo*, as well as the work in progress of Neil himself and his endless apprenticeship to the art of drumming. During a year and a half hiatus from performing, Neil worked with master teacher Fred Gruber to build a completely different approach to the drum kit. Neil uses the songs from *Test For Echo* as examples to discuss these changes, technique, orchestration, creative timekeeping and ornamentation. A booklet provides transcriptions of the main grooves and fills for each song.

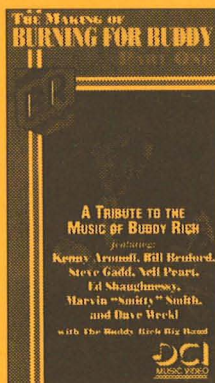
"In the process of watching Neil Peart dissect the songs (from Test For Echo), we are treated to perhaps the most intense views of Peart's playing available anywhere, all filmed with high DCI production values, and augmented by very helpful booklets detailing pertinent beats, fills and the like from each song."

Adam Budofsky, Modern Drummer Magazine



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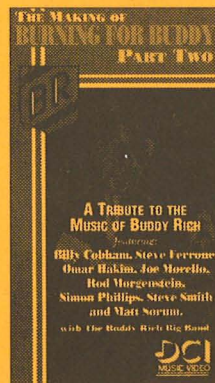
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Neil Peart invited 189 of the world's most respected drummers to record an album as the ultimate tribute to Bernard "Buddy" Rich. This video series was shot during those *Burning For Buddy* sessions. It contains preparations for the recording, final takes, interviews with the drummers and more. All of the footage is tied together with beautiful commentary from Neil Peart.



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