

THE SPIRIT OF R U S H

Issue No. 50

Year 2000

New Millenium Issue

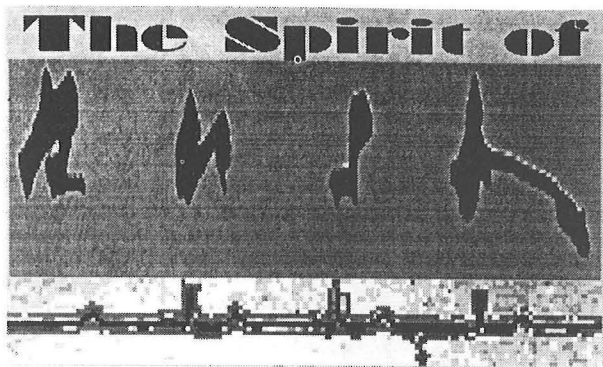


R U S H

different stages



ANTHEM
RECORDS, INC.



Editorial

Hello and welcome to the grand 50th issue of 'The Spirit of Rush'. Thirteen years and (just about) still going strong, thanks mainly to you all out there. We have no Rush news I'm afraid – things are still very quiet with no releases, video or otherwise planned for this year. Still, we do have the convention to look forward to once again – the date in case you have forgotten (since last issue) is SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 9TH, 2000, at the LIMELIGHT CLUB IN CREWE. Tickets are now on sale at a mere £10.00 each once again. Please use the ticket order form enclosed with this issue and DO NOT FORGET to enclose a stamped addressed envelopeor else!!

While we're all waiting for some action in the Rush camp, the next best thing is her already! The new Dream Theater album 'Scenes From A Memory' is in the shops and has been since before Xmas. I'm sure you all have it by now but if not why not? The album was voted best album of the year in 'Classic Rock' magazine and rightly so, it is a concept album and it's up there with the best of them. Both Rush and later Queensryche had their careers boosted to the next level with such albums and if there's any justice in the world it's about time Dream Theater's went up a few notches as well. The band will be in Europe in March and April on their current world tour (see details later in the magazine) and they promise a suitable 'production' stage show when they perform the entire album in concert. Janet and I went over to Europe in early November last year to catch the band and they were in fine form. Even though they did not perform the whole album, the 30 mins or so which they did was barnstorming. You would be foolish to miss them when they

arrive in April. With Spock's Beard doing the support slot for them it promises to be 3 hours plus of superb entertainment (will you be there Andy F?.....you better be pal!)

YYZ will be doing a sort of mini convention gig at the Limelight in Crewe on Saturday 19th February 2000. Janet and I will be going along, perhaps we will see some of you there. Come if you can – we'll have a laugh, get drunk etc. What more could you want. More details later in this issue.

*Regards,
Mick*



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Signals

Dear SOR,

I'm just dropping a few lines due to a couple of things I've discovered this summer.

First the cover of Toto's last album "Mindfields". Does it ring a bell to anyone? And secondly, a new Rush tribute album entitled "Red Star". I haven't heard it yet, but with bands like Engrave Speed Death, Killingfield or Shallows of the Mundane, well, God knows how it sounds! [See Anthony Nolan's letter for more details - ED].

That's all. I hope you all had a good time at the Convention! Keep up the good work.

EVA GARCIA
A CORUÑA, SPAIN

P.S. Saludos to Peio from Euskadi.

Dear Sirs,

Hi! Just received your fanzine in the mail today and I'm very pleased with it (of course). I read in your letters column, a man named Mark Lilley also, like me heard about the upcoming Rush symphonic rock album. From what I heard, it's (the album title) is supposed to be called "The Invisible Symphony" and is supposed to have such songs as Animate, The Spirit of Radio and others on it. I thought it would be released last March, but apparently it's still in the making. And, like Mark mentioned, it's to be a limited edition. You can pass this info' on to Mark for me. Also, other friends of mine are also anticipating the release of the album.

Well that's all for now. I love your fanzine! Thanks and bye! Sincerely. [Thanks Lisa for your info' - ED].

LISA BOEHM
CLINTONDALE, NY, USA

Dear Mick,

Congratulations on yet another cracking Convention - tremendous, superb etc, etc. Plus the fact that I actually won a prize, after 3 Conventions of trying (press kit). The karaoke was a laugh, though I couldn't quite get 'Geddy's' voice.

Signals

More news of Rush on TV - can anyone remember 'Pans People' dancing to 'Spirit of Radio' on Top of the Pops?

Neil Peart got the vote for best drummer of all time in the 'Classic Rock' mag. Next is for best bass player, guess who I voted for? It also said Neil is picking up his drumsticks after 2 years, here's hoping!

Special hello to the following:- Paul & Babs, Moz, Steve & Mark (Wigan), Steve & Lloyd (Warrington), Chris (Notts), Tom (Peterborough), plus from back home, Graeme & Graeme (father & son), Reese & Norman.

Let's hope there is some news in the new year - maybe a recording and even a tour to follow. Newcastle Arena sounds good, dream on!

Cheers again Mick for a fantastic Convention and reaching No' 50 fanzine. All the best for Xmas and the new year to everyone at S.O.R. and Rush fans everywhere. 'Let's keep rockin'.

JOHN GILCHRIST
CHOPPINGTON, NORTHUMBERLAND

Dear all,

Thanks for issue 49, as always an enjoyable and informative read. Put me down for a Different Stages shirt, I'll have some of that! Unfortunately I was unable to attend this year's convention due to being on holiday in Spain at the time, but with next year's date announced so soon, I'm looking forward to it already.

Whilst in Spain, I tried to track down the music shop in Barcelona that sold Rush bootlegs that was mentioned by Peter and Eve in a previous issue. That wasn't a success, but I did manage to pick up a remastered copy of All the World's A Stage for about a fiver in one of the city's large department stores. Plus, if memory serves, Different Stages was in the store for about £18.00. If they can do it for that price in Spain, why can't our shops do the same?

Over the last couple of issues it's been fun to read some of the first time letters and also those letters recalling memories of previous Rush gigs. It set me to wondering where those people are that attended the Hammersmith show now immortalised on Different Stages. I was one (Circle, Block 5, Seat R15!) and I know

one or two others have written in to say that they were there, but what about the other 3,000 or so people there that night? Can so many of them have left Rush behind?

Please excuse me if I'm rambling, but if there is one band that attracts such fierce loyalty from their fans, it's Rush. I don't know the answer and I doubt if anyone does. 21 years is a long time I suppose, but I and many others are still here, why aren't they? I recently lent a friend my copy of Different Stages and he told me that after the first four tracks he switched the CD off, went out, and bought his own copy! His quote was "I'd forgotten just how good they are". I wonder how many other people have forgotten too?

Strangely enough though, I actually have more recollection of the Hemispheres show the following year. The 30 minutes of Cygnus/Hemispheres was just glorious and I can also clearly remember Alex's guitar cutting out just as the band went into the electric section of A Farewell To Kings. Plus Max Webster were a much more enjoyable support than the Tyla Gang. A few days later I was watching Top Of The Pops when the host began introducing a band from Canada over here on tour at present....but it was Max, not Rush as I had briefly hoped. I still got a kick out of them doing Paradise Skies anyway.

I noticed that the Mad Jock recently mentioned Second Nature as one of his favourite songs. I have to agree completely. I've said before about how underrated I thought this song was and it's nice to know that someone else agrees. With reference to his enquiry about pubs with Rush on their jukebox, my reply is IF ONLY!! In this part of the world I think there would be more chance of hearing the Teletubbies play Death Metal. I could be wrong of course. If I am, Essex/London readers, please let me know!!

On an unrelated note, I saw Spock's Beard at the LA2 this Saturday just passed (2/10/99) and what a bloody brilliant gig it was too! I've been going to gigs since 1975 and the show is definitely in my top ten. The band themselves were totally into it as well, which is always a good sign. A great night for sure. *[The 'Spirit' crew also attended the Spock's Beard gig and we couldn't agree with Dave more. Catch them when they support Dream Theater in April - see later in this issue for details - ED.]*

Finally, I'm glad that the convention was

another success and keep on plugging away, it's very much appreciated. Best wishes.

DAVE LACK
ROMFORD, ESSEX

Dear S.O.R.

Firstly thanks for printing my letter in issue No 49. I have only received one reply to my request for Rush fans to write to me regarding Rush collectables or anything to do with Rush.

I recently read in Classic Rock magazine that Geddy Lee was voted the best Bass player of all time by the readers. Also Neil Peart was voted the best Drummer of all time. This has made me think that there are a lot more Rush fans out there than we realise. The point I would like to make is that I am thinking of writing to Classic Rock Magazine regarding the idea of a petition from all the UK Rush fans which could be sent to the band maybe via S.O.R. before the start of the next Rush tour if there is one of course. I do not want to do this right now because of the situation with Neil Peart as I do not want to put pressure on Rush at the moment - this is probably the last thing they need right now.

If any readers would like to write to me regarding this idea I would be grateful. Some good news that I have read in the press is that Neil is playing again and there is a chance of a DVD video version of Different Stages great news. *[Not at the moment, I'm afraid - ED.]*

As I said in my last letter any letters regarding Rush and the swapping of rare recordings will be gratefully received. I have quite a collection to trade with so get writing. Thanks.

MR P DE-LA-MARE
7 St George's Court
Hillside Road
DOVER
KENT
CT17 OUT.

Dear Mick

Thanks for the new copy of SOR. I thought I appeared charming & witty (ho-ho). Sorry that I couldn't make the convention, then (unlike now) we were kind of busy so it was hard to find the time.

As I was reading the letters and stuff I thought I would just let other people know about some of the other bands that are kind of like Rush and that I think would definitely appeal to fans. 'Saga' are definitely one band to listen to

especially the album *Worlds Apart*. They're not as heavy but still worth checking out. 'Kings X' are brilliant as well, I always go on about them and I know that they have a kind of Christian slant to their lyrics but don't let that put you off. You should buy the album 'Faith, Hope & Love' (terrible title) or 'Dogman', they're tops. Some maniacs who are really into space rock should also get the early albums by muso nutter Todd Rundgren's band 'Utopia'. They're really crazy. Songs about glass guitars and stuff.

Anyway enough of my hollering & poor spelling. Keep up the good work & let's all hope that Neil gets back in the swing and they get back to where they were after 'Counterparts' - forgetting the slightly naff effort that was 'T4E'.

OK. Keep up the good work. Cheers. *[Thanks James, we saw Saga at the LA2 in London before Xmas and they blew us away. We have championed Kings X in our pages before now, as well - ED.]*

JAMES
(Broad - from Silver Sun)

Dear SOR,

Please find enclosed a cheque for £10 with regards to subscription. My brother-in-law, Simon Browne whose letter was printed in issue 48 which I've just read, has shamed me into joining. For the last few years he has furnished me with copies of your excellent publication, but on hearing of your cash flow problem, together with his gentle pressure I decided it was time to act. Hope it's not too late and we all enjoy SOR for a few more years yet.

In common with many of your readers I fell in love with the music of Rush way back in 1978 - first hearing *A Farewell to Kings* round a friend's house after school, his elder brother owning the records. That was it, within weeks I had bought *A Farewell to Kings* and *Hemispheres* and I was hooked. Their music has meant and still means so much to me - it's been a constant companion, has inspired and comforted me and helped me through some lonely times. It also opened up a whole new musical journey for me as regards to other groups. I have seen them three times, 1980, 1983 and most recently the *Hold Your Fire* tour, all fantastic. Middle age, large mortgages and two kids have put pay to most of my CD buying power, but thanks to Simon, he has

managed to keep me up to date.

Imagine my surprise when at one of these boring family get togethers my wife's sister's new boyfriend turns out to be into all the same music as me, especially Rush. Brilliant. Anyway must go, I've got yet another episode of the teletubbies to watch with my young daughter..... how times change. Keep up the good work. Yours sincerely. *[Glad to have you aboard Ian - ED.]*

IAN STROUDLEY
ASHFORD, MIDDLESEX

Dear Mick,

Just thought I'd drop you a line with a copy of a TRIBUTE (?) album I chanced upon whilst just on holiday over the pond.

It's called RED STAR - TRIBUTE TO RUSH and if this is a tribute, you can understand why Geddy was originally wary of this type of album being released. If you have the album already then count this as my review of said album *[read Anthony's review at the end of this letter - ED]*. I can only think it was made/released to give the record label (DWELL RECORDS) something that might be bought by these particular bands and I know it's each to their own, but in my opinion it's bloody awful!

I bought it in RECORD EXPLOSION in New York and I didn't tape it on my Binatone tape player - it does sound that bad.

We then went on to TORONTO for a bit of RUSH ANORAKING and I couldn't wait to see the RUSH star on the walk of fame - bit of a letdown really as I was expecting too much, but after my girlfriend had cleared the cigarette butts off, we took a few photos as you just have to do. Headed off for Danforth & Pape, which is in a bit of a "rough" neighbourhood, so it was in and out as quick as possible.

Maple Leaf Gardens has had a face-lift since I went for the PRESTO tour in '90 and not before time too, as I always thought it was a rundown venue for what was at the time the premier place for concerts etc. in a city such as TORONTO. Headed for the GASWORKS club where RUSH played in the '70's and I had been to last time for a top night out, only to find out it had burnt down a few years ago, much to my girlfriend's dismay.

So, it was off to the ORBIT room for a pint or ten. It's quite a bit off YONGE ST, so taxi ride later we arrived at this single door on College

St, up the stairs and we were in. Quite small with small stage to the left and long bar and seating to the right. Behind the bar is a photo of Alex and a glass case with adverts for upcoming bands about to play there. Upon talking to the barman, he informed us Alex had been a regular visitor over the past few weeks, but as last night (14th Oct) was his son's birthday, they weren't expecting him for a while, dammit.

Spotted the enclosed photo's [see photo on editorial page - ED] on the wall and on seeing Geddy had played at the club, quizzed the barman who informed me it was only 3 weeks previous that Geddy had come to the club after 5 years of trying to get him in. Once there it took another couple of hours to persuade him to get up and play one song, but as the barman wasn't a RUSH fan he didn't know which one - sacrilege. After reading CLASSIC ROCK, we found out it was IN THE MOOD.

Listened to 97.7 for my RUSH fix - heard quite a lot - Spirit, Barchetta, Sawyer - which was used as a signature tune for a phone-in competition to win money. Also heard Neil doing an advert for anti-racism - he introduces himself as Neil Peart from RUSH and spoke of how he has been to various places and seen racism and how he's lending his support to stamp it out. All in all it's only about 35 secs long.

Did my usual tour of the HARD ROCK CAFÉS and was shocked to see RUSH memorabilia in both cafes. In the Skydome HARD ROCK, there is a Geddy signed and framed copy of A Farewell To Kings, a backstage pass for the COUNTERPARTS tour and a gold disc for GRACE UNDER PRESSURE. Onto the HARD ROCK on YONGE ST and even better, there is an Alex autographed Gibson framed guitar and a PRESTO award for 100,000 units being sold, signed by all three. These are the only items I've seen of RUSH stuff in any of the HARD ROCKS I've been into.

That's enough of my ranting now Mick, keep up the excellent work on the 'zine. Thanx.

ANTHONY NOLAN
WARRINGTON

RED STAR - TRIBUTE TO RUSH

ANTHEM - Drum fills everywhere and sounds like it was sung by your dad with a bad throat.

WORKING MAN - Musically pedestrian and thankfully cut short. Screeching out of tune guitar and the singer must have stabbed his toe at the end!

BASTILLE DAY - Motorhead driven intro' at 100mph.

SUBDIVISIONS - Without keyboards, sounds like Sepultura.

WHAT YOUR'E DOING - Sepultura soundlike again and that's insulting Sepultura! Does it really need mutha-fucker lyric?

TEARS - Not a bad voice, but why cover a "slow" track and rev it up?

A PASSAGE TO BANGKOK - You really don't want to hear this, sounds like a pub singer and manic drummer after 10 pints. At one point I thought the disc was stuck!

TOM SAWYER - You must be joking, but an excellent Megadeth riff right in the middle.

TEMPLES - Apparently the meek shall NOT inherit the earth. First chorus played at 500mph, then gets quicker!

FREEWILL - Sounds very much like Geddy at the beginning. Probably closest on this album to the original.

BARCHETTA - Not bad musically, but the "singer" actually speaks the lyrics.

SPIRIT - Sounds like a failed opera singer backed by a Woollies guitar and completely out of time by the end.

P.S. The "FILE IN RUSH" sticker on the tribute disc should have said "FILE IN BIN".

Dear SOR readers

Everyone knows how good the "Spirit Of Rush" conventions are, but they happen once a year. Rush fans are a patient lot, but recently we have been contacted by a number of different people who simply can't wait a whole year between get togethers. So, we've decided to do something about it. YYZ will be playing

at the Limelight Club on Saturday, February 19th and the event is being run as a mini - Convention.

Doors to the venue will open at 7:30 and the aim of the evening is to create the vibe of the Annual Convention.

There will be videos on the big screen downstairs - some of you may have seen them, some of you may not - there will be a selection of collectors stalls, so bring loads of pocket money.

YYZ will do a 2 hour set to their usual high standards and the evening will finally round off with a rock disco at the "2112" club across the road.

All in all, it should be a damn fine evening.

The address of the Limelight for those of you who don't know where it is, is:

The Limelight Club
Hightown
Crewe
Cheshire CW1 38P
T: 01270 251929
F: 01270 255519

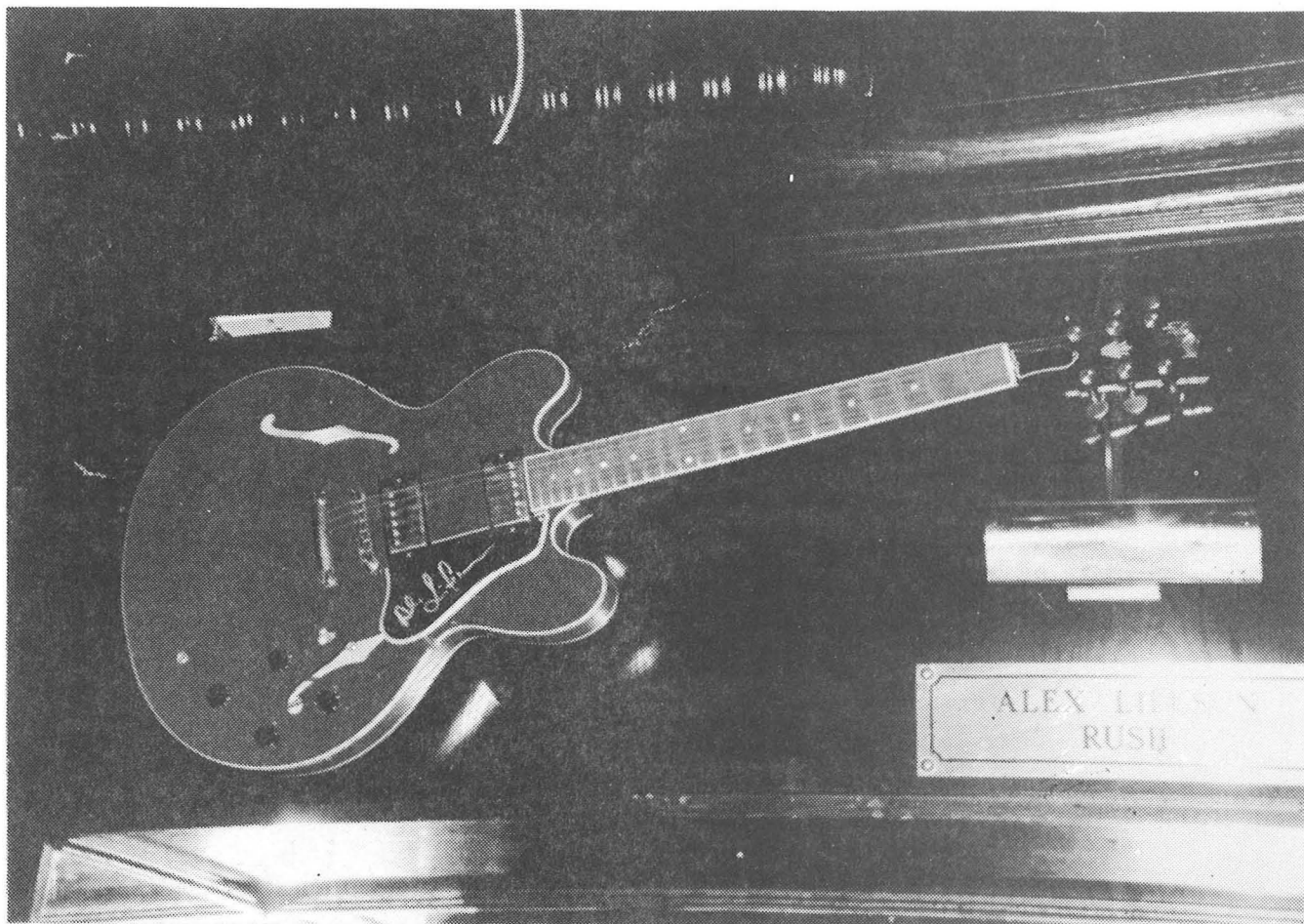
The cost of the event is £5 (£4 to Limelight Club members) payable on the door. For up to the minute details of the mini convention check out the YYZ web site:

<http://wkweb5.cableinet.co.uk/speedboat/>

We hope to see as many people there as possible.

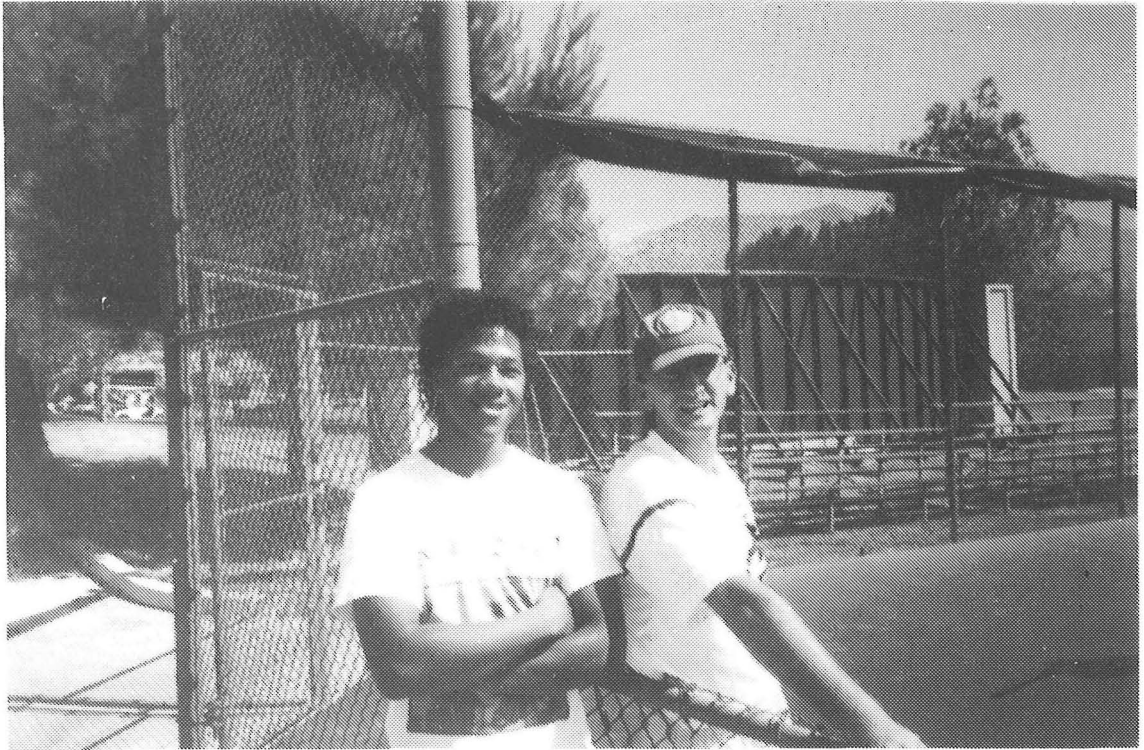
Let's make these events a success, because lets face it, we don't have much to shout about at the moment. Cheers,

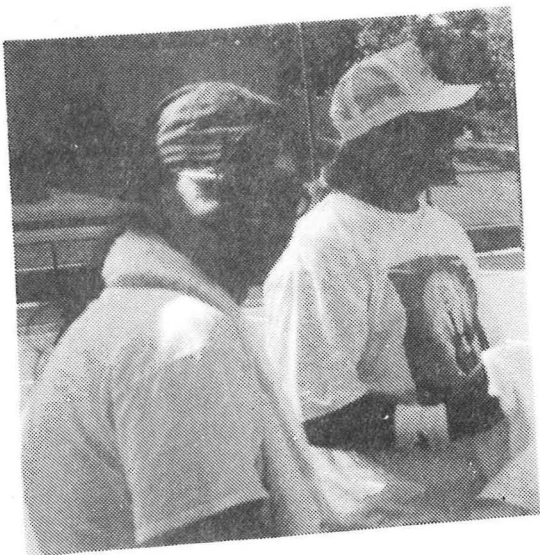
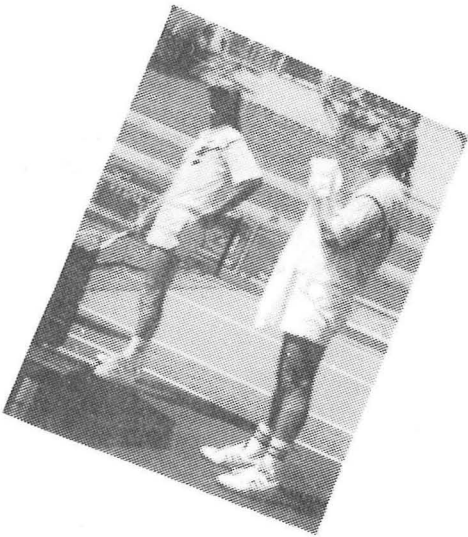
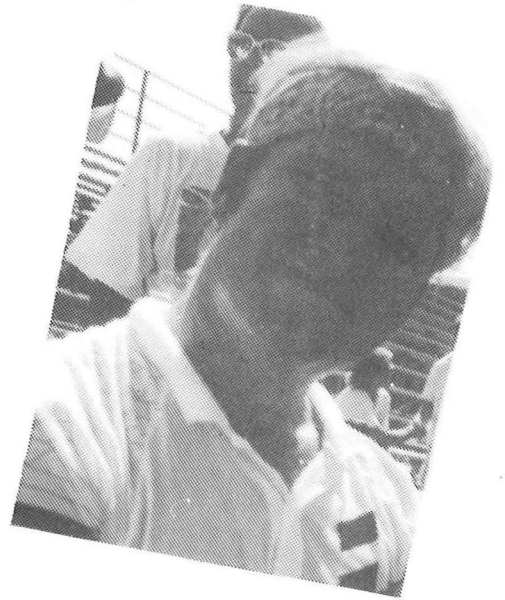
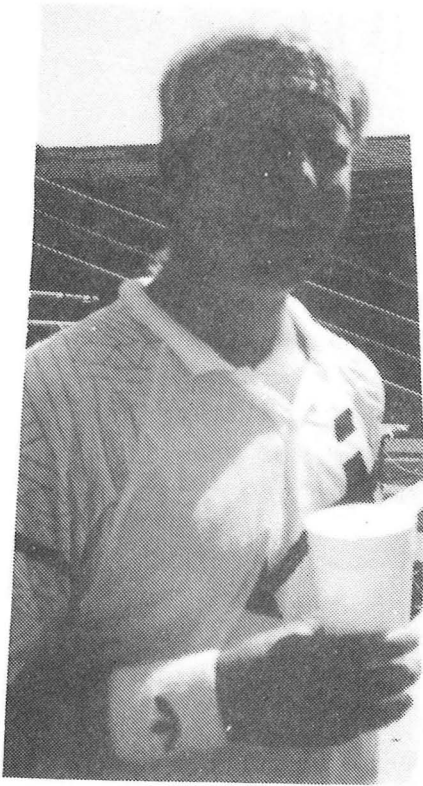
SIMON FRASER-CLARK



'DEUCE'

The following photos were supplied by Dave and Margot our very good friends in Vancouver Canada. They were taken by LARRY JACKSON (that's him below with Alex and Geddy by his side) on September 14th 1990 at the 'Music and Tennis Festival' held at the North Ranch Country Club in West Lake Village, CA, near LA. Nice one Larry.....





DEEP RUSH THOUGHTS

(from the NMS)

I think if Beethoven were alive today, he would really love Rush's music. That is, if he could hear it. ---Ruth Goodman (Ruth_Goodman@mail.dailey.com)

Does anyone have a spare copy of "Hemispheres"? Because on mine they forgot to sing on La Villa Strangiato. ---Chris Lundquist (cs_lundquist@ccmail.pnl.gov)

If the Analog Kid and Digital Man were to have a fight, Digital Man would definitely win. I mean, duh, he's Digital. ---Jeffrey Pojanowski (AWHS39B@prodigy.com)

If the rides really were laughing at Lakeside Park, perhaps Neil really ought to quit smoking that stuff. ---Galen (elmolego@ix.netcom.com)

I once made a tape that contained 90 minutes of "Didacts and Narpets" played backwards at various speeds. Boy, those folks at the church picnic sure were close-minded when it came to music! ---Mike Sweger (MSweger999@aol.com)

My band was going to cover a rush song, but we had to scrap the idea because we couldn't afford the helium tanks for our lead singer. ---ryanj@uakron.edu (ryanj@uakron.edu)

I was really trying to get the "man & star" image shaved into the back of my head for this tour, but I couldn't find a hair stylist that would do it justice. Every time I let my barber try it I just ended up looking like I had another lobotomy. ---C Wolff (tst4echo@sprynet.com)

If she was my girlfriend, I'd dump that chick from "Cold Fire." She sounds like a real bitch to me. ---Steve Whipple (sjwhipl@ingr.com)

I sure wish I could learn guitar as fast as that guy behind the waterfall. ---Steve Whipple (sjwhipl@ingr.com)

Has anyone ever realized what potential the phrase "Hold Your Fire" has for an antacid advertisement? ---Ryan D. Nicklow (rdn103@psu.edu)

I have been told that I resemble Geddy Lee. This would be flattering but for the fact that I have no musical talent whatsoever. --CygnusXTwo@aol.com (CygnusXTwo@aol.com)

I bet if Leonard Bernstein were a Rush fan, he'd have "Superconductor" on his gravestone. ---Jeff Pojanowski (AWHS39B@prodigy.com)

One bad thing about CD technology is that you can't play Rush songs at high speed like in the old days. For example, I used to play the "Caress of Steel" album at 78 RPM just to drive all the neighborhood dogs crazy when Geddy hit the high notes in "The Fountain of Lamneth". ---Mike Sweger (MSweger999@aol.com)

I think that the digital man needs to read the lyrics to "Marathon" and get a life! ---shannon randhow (srandh@yahoo.com)

Dream Theater

Metropolis Part 2 – Scenes From A Memory

(East West Records)

Dream Theater really, really look after their fans. Check out the evidence: a superbly run fan club, an informative and almost daily updated web site, regular tours in territories where it is not financially worth them touring (i.e. here in the UK. Rush please take note!), and at least an album a year (if not a DT record then something by Platypus, LTE or one of the other offshoots).

Of course the best way to look after your fans is to give them what they want. What Dream Theater fans have always wanted (but haven't always got) is DT in full flow, without compromise, going their own way without outside interference. In many ways their last album, "Falling Into Infinity," was their most disappointing in that it so obviously tried to court the charts. Well, my friends, "Metropolis Part 2" couldn't be more disparate: this, after ten years, is the sound of Dream Theater fulfilling their true potential.

This album is a belligerent statement of intent, and what a statement. It's a concept album (or as the band prefer, a play in two parts with DT as the orchestra), most of the tracks are between seven and twelve minutes long, there are no obvious singles, and it features some of the most frighteningly complex musicianship yet committed to vinyl.

But there's no point being technical if you forget to write a tune. Fear not, for tunes abound: be it the chunky Metallica style riffing of "Strange Deja Vu" or the delicate, piano-led "Through My Words". When was the last time you heard a band 'take off' and fly? It happens at least six times on this record, each occasion partly the result of new keyboard player Jordan Rudess. Boy, what a find: check out the frantic solo on "Fatal Tragedy", the ragtime barrel piano (yes!) on instrumental "The Dance of Eternity", or his off the wall 'everything-but-the-kitchen-sink' playing on the chunky "Beyond This Life". DT always lacked in the keyboard department (Kevin Moore: great player, zero stage presence; Derek Sherinian vice versa), Jordan adds a whole new dimension: he's not just a virtuoso, he's an excellent writer and arranger as well.

You'll have great fun playing "spot the stolen riff" (remember, the best artists steal!): fans of Rush, Genesis, Zappa, King Crimson, Metallica, Queen, Radiohead and a whole host of others will spot some very familiar passages here. DT excel when they add their influences to the melting pot, creating a sound which is all their own.

What else can I tell you? Mike Portnoy remains the best living drummer bar one (who he?), James LaBrie sounds more comfortable here vocally than on any previous album. Fans of 'Metropolis Part 1' (from 'Images and Words') will enjoy hearing that piece's central motif entwined in this album. The production is crisp, sharp, complimentary; well done Mike Portnoy and guitarist John Petrucci, who looked after this one themselves. Extra production and mixing by two other Rush luminaries, Terry Brown and Kevin Shirley, adds icing to the cake.

I really cannot think of a criticism to level at this album. In one smooth move, Dream Theater have become the most important rock band of the new decade. They have upped the ante, and I guarantee few will have the ability to better it.

As Rush fans we love our Canadian trio because they always give us something fresh, new, different, exciting and challenging. All the ingredients of "Metropolis Part 2".

So get purchasing, before the band tour these shores in April. As they say, see you down the front.

Andrew Field

DREAM THEATER - Metropolis 2000 European tour Dates
Special Guests: Spock's Beard

Fri March 24 - Ice Hall - Helsinki, Finland

Sun March 26 - Solnahallen - Stockholm, Sweden

Mon & Tues March 27 & 28 - Rockafeller - Oslo, Norway

Thurs March 30 - The Vega - Copenhagen, Denmark

Fri March 31 - Columbiashalle - Berlin, Germany

Sat April 1 - Stadthalle - Offenbach, Germany

Mon April 3 - MDH/Academy (0161 832 1111) - Manchester, UK

Tues April 4 - Shepherd's Bush Empire (0171 771 2000/734 8932) - London, UK

Wed April 5 - Rock City (01159 588484) - Nottingham, UK

Info/tickets from: www.gigsandtours.com

Fri April 7 - Zenith - Paris, France

Sat April 8 - Phillipshalle - Dusseldorf, Germany

Tues April 11 - Palamarino - Rome, Italy

Wed April 12 - Tenax - Firenze, Italy

Thurs April 13 - Palastampa - Torino, Italy

Sat April 15 - Zeleste - Barcelona, Spain

Sun April 16 - Polideportivo Anoeta - San Sebastian, Spain

Tues April 18 - Riviera - Madrid, Spain

Wed April 19 - Aula Magna - Lisbon, Portugal



METROPOLIS PART 2: SCENES FROM A MEMORY

Dream Theater release their fifth studio album *Metropolis Part 2: Scenes From A Memory* through Elektra Records on October 25th. From the opening chords of 'Regression,' it transports you to a numinous world that only progressive rock's premier standard bearers could create. A sequel to the group's classic 'Metropolis Part 1 (The Miracle And The Sleeper)' from their breakthrough 1992 album 'Images and Words', the disc was produced by Dream Theater's own Mike Portnoy and John Petrucci.

'We've always wanted to write a concept album,' says Mike. 'All my favourite albums have been concept-driven: Pink Floyd's *The Wall*, The Who's *Tommy*, Queensryche's 'Operation Mindcrime'; all have been big influences.' The story surrounds a character named Nicholas, who, according to Mike 'is haunted every night by his dreams about another lifetime'.

Scenes From a Memory was recorded at Bear Tracks studios in Suffern, New York; this is the same studio at which the group recorded their landmark albums 'Images & Words' and 'A Change of Seasons'. 'One of the unique things about this project was that it was the first time we ever wrote an album in the studio with no demos. We wanted a certain freshness to this recording,' John explains.

'One of the biggest challenges of this record was to include songs that if you heard them out of context, would still stand on their own,' says John. 'I think we accomplished that.' Mike seconds John; 'We want to keep evolving. If Dream Theater has been about anything, it's been about not being afraid to stick your neck out.'

Music Street Journal : Issue Number 19 - November 1999 **Dream Theater - Scenes From A Memory**

Review by Vivian Lee

Since 1985, the five-man outfit named Dream Theater has offered progressive rock fans thoughtful and emotional music that makes them marvel and ask, how do they do that? DT's brand of prog vividly shows eclectic, hard-to-place influences, which include jazz, neo-classical, and ethnic music forms. The band mostly plays as a very focused unit. Their latest offering is *Metropolis, Part 2: Scenes from a Memory*, an intelligent, well-executed album with an interesting fantasy theme. A two-act murder mystery, *Scenes* is a continuation of *Images and Words*' "Metropolis, Part 1", a song about twin brothers, Miracle and Sleeper. This concept album seems to be in the vein of The Who's *Tommy* in its epic rock-opera aspect.

Jordan Rudess will bowl over fans of the Kevin Moore era with licks and chops that show he's got virtuosity to spare. John Petrucci's guitar work is up to its crunchy, wail-y standard. Mike Portnoy's playing contains the usual odd rhythms and double bass drum pounding although it seems a bit tighter and more restrained to my ear. Thinteresting quality to James LaBrie's voice in *Scenes* is that the vibratos or high note hitting that marked him in previous works are gone. Though *Scenes* isn't driven by any one instrument, John Myung's bass work is markedly downplayed.

Scenes from a Memory is an epic not just in duration but concept as well. The music is lyrically and sonically poetic, direct and intelligent. Overall, longtime Dream Theater fans will forgo their frustration at the story's lack of resolution and love this CD. I urge them to add this to their collection.

Track by Track Review

Regression: This track starts the album with a man's accented voice guiding the listener into a "more relaxed state of mind". A short acoustic introduction to the journey the listener is about to undertake. People who enjoy sound as well as music may like this track; attributes are the man's soft tone, the ticking timepiece in the background, acoustic guitar, and a woman's alto leading into LaBrie's tenor voice.

Overture 1928: This is a strong yet brief instrumental piece. It will probably get lots of play with instrumental music fans. 'Overture' has shades of 'Metropolis, Part 1' but without its heaviness. Strange Deja Vu: Portnoy shows restraint allowing Myung's bass work to be felt clearly on this melodic song that rocks hard. Portnoy and Petrucci provide harmonizing backing vocals.

Through My Words: This is a beautiful yet sad ballad featuring piano. Harmony vocals back up LaBrie's middle toned sounds. If this song doesn't make you cry, check your pulse.

Fatal Tragedy: Soft and sad at the start, ghosts of the past taunt Nicholas with hints of the last life's events. LaBrie's vocals are smooth and heartfelt. Then the song grows louder and darker, and the tempo quickens. The guitar gets crunchier while the drums and synth predominate. There is a Queenish flavor to the keys and guitar in the middle of the song that perks the ears up. The guitar solo is typical Petrucci- up down and all over the place, dueling cooperatively with Rudess' energetic keyboard harmonics.

Beyond This Life: This piece starts out loud, hard, fast and strong with pounding double bass drums and mid-toned crunchy guitar. The entire song isn't crunchy or shreddy, though. There is a beautifully intricate acoustic guitar part before the grinding solo. The distortion of LaBrie's vocals is interesting as he alternates between raspy and soft. The instrumental solo before is very Yes-like in some parts and Emersonian in others.

Through Her Eyes: Theresa Thomason's voice mingles with organ-like keys and bluesy guitar setting up the sad tone of this quiet ballad. As LaBrie sings of loss and life, Petrucci and Portnoy harmonize in the back. This song is even more sorrowful and gorgeous than "Through My Words".

Home: This one is the first radio cut from the album. "Home" builds from acoustic guitar and quiet cymbal tapping, to crunchy electric guitar. The background vocals are discordant and harmonious all at once. During certain parts of the song LaBrie's vocals seem to be raspy in order to signal the character's sinister intent.

Dance Of Eternity: This is another strong instrumental. Otherworldly, this one includes synth and samples from old Dream Theater songs. Although this piece is hard, fast, crunchy and shreddy in the beginning and the end, it shows a sense of whimsy and fun in the middle. The most notable occurrence is in the ragtime piano parts. It seems to rock really hard without being dark in tone. One Last time: Classical piano and electric guitar introduce this melodic ballad. The raw harmonics of Petrucci and Portnoy provide a good foil for LaBrie's polished voice. The instruments cooperate well to the end, where the song's piano finish sets the sad final tone.

The Spirit Carries On: LaBrie's vocals are breathy and well-honed as he contemplates mortality in song. The track's middle part takes on a rock ballad feel, but the presence of the gospel choir mellows that out in the cut's finish.

Finally Free: The story of Miracle and Sleeper concludes with a man's accented voice leading Nicholas into wakefulness "Open your eyes, Nicholas". The song takes on a dark gothic tone as violin sounding synth and sounds like bells, wind and thunder follow. Piano keys lead into a long orchestral part including LaBrie vocals with harmonic backing by Petrucci and Portnoy. And then Nicholas screams, and we get white noise to end the album.



Westword Magazine

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To Rush or Not to Rush?

Geddy Lee presents the case for Canada's most famous power trio

by Michael Roberts

Okay, I admit it: I've never understood the appeal of Rush. When friends would tout the instrumental gymnastics and lyrical insights of bombastic discs such as 1976's '2112' (largely inspired by the writings of -- gulp -- Ayn Rand), I'd respond with a shudder and go back to my Clash albums. But a funny thing happened on the way to the Nineties: The Clash, along with most other bands from that era, vanished, while Rush kept going and going and going -- and their astoundingly rabid boosters followed them every step of the way. One Denver aficionado, John Castellano, even started a petition drive to ensure that guitarist Alex Lifeson, drummer Neal Peart and bassist/vocalist Geddy Lee would bring their latest tour to Colorado. Such dedication inspired me to give another chance to the latest Rush opus, 1996's 'Test for Echo.' But while repeated listenings were not nearly as painful as I'd anticipated, they still didn't reveal to me the essential greatness of the music made by these three Canadian art-rock legends. So I turned for help to Lee, the man who in the mind of many observers epitomizes all that was, is and will continue to be Rush. Our conversation was quite a pleasant one, with Lee proving himself to be a charming, personable chap with -- I'm not kidding -- a wonderfully self-deprecating sense of humor. (To hear an outtake from the interview, visit our Web page at www.westword.com.) Will these characteristics persuade you, gentle reader, to become a member of the Rush army? Read on -- if you dare.

WW: Let's start with the new album. A lot of groups that have been around as long as yours has don't even bother to write new material; they'll release an "MTV Unplugged" set or its equivalent. Why do you think it's important for veteran bands to write new material and to do new songs?

GL: I think if you don't, you end up being called a veteran band all the time. [He laughs.] There's something nice about being considered contemporary from time to time. It's not really very interesting to me to be constantly living off the past, and although there may be some fans who might prefer that we do that, to me, without getting the new material going and without being involved and feeling that this is my creative time, there's no point in carrying on, really. I couldn't really see us lasting too long without the spark of new material and new juices flowing. And that's really the most fun part of the whole thing. I can't imagine doing without it. It would be a building without any foundation.

WW: The new songs are definitely harder and punchier and more concise than I think a lot of people expected. I'm wondering what led you to move in that particular direction.

GL: It's just something that we initiated a number of albums ago, and we seem to have had a hard time getting there. We've gotten into this mode of orchestration that's a hard thing to get away from.

WW: Why is that?



GL: I think that once you become reliant on a lot of other instruments, like keyboards and so forth, and you develop an ear for orchestration, then every time you hear a space, you want to fill it. It's a style of recording and writing and arranging that can seem very enjoyable for a certain time period, but then it almost becomes a trap. There's always this temptation, you know -- "There's the keyboard over there and, jeez, I could put a little line here." Sometimes it takes more discipline to leave well enough alone.

WW: Another surprise for listeners on this album is the song "Dog Years," in part because the words are actually quite funny. [Lines include: "In a dog's life, a year is really more like seven / And all too soon, the canine will be chasing dogs in doggy heaven."] To say the least, you guys are not usually known for your sense of humor. Are there things on previous albums that were intended to be funny and people have not picked up on them?

GL: "Dog Years" is the most overt we've been with our humor. But the humor in our music has been there for many, many years. If you look at any of the titles of our instrumentals, you'll see it. People take them very seriously, but believe me, that wasn't our intention.

WW: Could you give me an example of that?

GL: Well, the whole "La Villa Strangiato" [from 1978's 'Hemispheres'], with its fourteen different parts. Every one of them is a total absurdist piece of work. And there's a certain essential element to our music that's absurd -- and I like that a lot. It's humorous to me, but not in the same way it is to other people, because I think it comes from knowing how ridiculous we are in a certain way. When we were young, for example, we didn't know how ridiculous some of our arrangements were. Maybe if you talked to a jazz musician, he would say, "Wow, they're playing 7/8 time with this weird riff, and then this heavy thing comes in here. That's absurd."

But when we were younger, we were like, "That wasn't absurd. That was cool!" [Laughs.] Now we realize the connotations of it, but it's still so much fun to do that we can't resist. So I guess we're more aware of our weirdnesses. Many of those things were subtle and escaped a lot of people, but they did not escape the fans at the Harvard Lampoon, who a couple of years ago inducted us as honorary members.

WW: Usually when the Lampoon inducts someone, they state their reason for doing it. What was their stated reason for inducting you?

GL: Well, they said we were the musicians of the millennium, which was absurd to begin with. It was basically appreciating the subtlety of our humor and the absurdity of our very being, I suppose. But it was a wonderful ceremony and quite funny -- and really quite memorable.

WW: I can imagine some folks being offended by that, but obviously you were not.

GL: Oh no, not at all. We were very complimented. I was very happy to be part of that -- at least to be exposed to that side of university life.

WW: Harvard fits in with the picture a lot of people have of Rush fans. There's an idea that many of your fans are very intellectual and very schooled in topics like science and mathematics. Is that a complete misconception, or are there a lot of Rush fans who would fit that description?

GL: I think there's a number of them that do fit that description, but there are so many different kinds of Rush fans. Night after night there's a drastic range of people out there. Sometimes there are kids who are really young; it seems clear that this is their first concert. And other times there are people who look as old as me -- and I go, "Wow, that's weird," because when you're an artist, you always have a tendency to think of your audience as being young. But some of them have grown up with our music and are our age, and they are very dedicated to the band and very supportive.

WW: Are there times when this obsessiveness becomes a little disturbing?

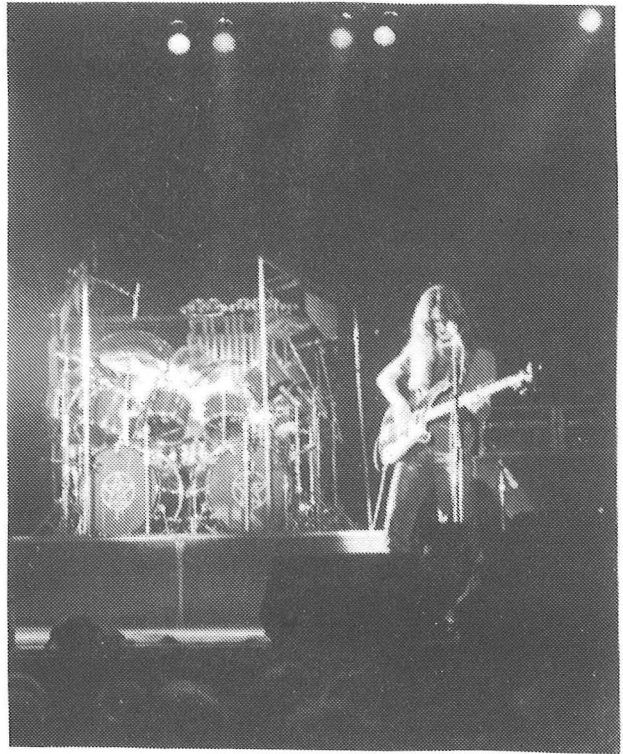
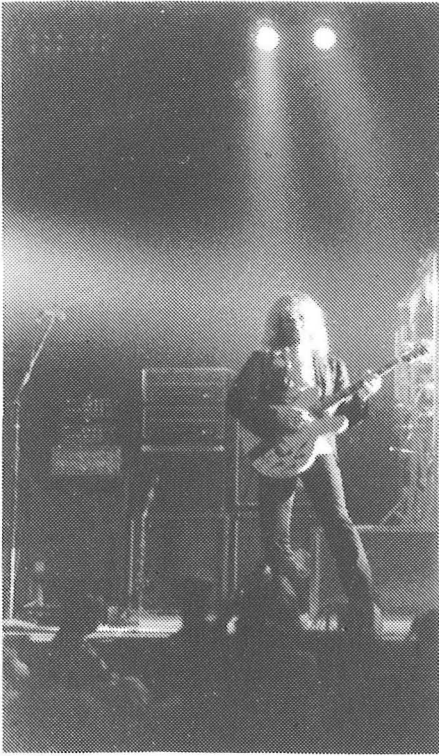
GL: It can get out of proportion, absolutely. Sometimes something you do or say gets blown out of proportion and analyzed to death, and there's no resemblance to the original statement.

WW: Can you think of an example of that?

GL: Yeah, actually, I can. There was a group of musicians who did a tribute album for us -- I think it was last year. And when we were approached about it -- well after the record was under way -- we wanted to know who was doing it, who was involved and what the record label was that was putting it out. And it came to us that the label was in the quote-unquote business of doing tribute records. That felt a little fishy to me. It felt like some guy was getting some musicians together, regurgitating some material and exploiting our fans' support.

WW: Perhaps more of a business decision than a group of people who legitimately wanted to pay tribute to you?

GL: That was our fear, so we inquired about that. Well, that inquiry got blown so out of proportion. Fans were on the Net talking about why we were so insulted that these musicians were trying to do our songs. To them, it was great that someone was recognizing our band. So



it got taken really in a weird way, and there was all this talk that we were going to sue them and have an injunction to try and stop the record, which of course was not true at all.

WW: How did you put a stop to the rumors?

GL: Just by doing interviews saying, "Hello? No. Nobody's suing anybody here. Yes, we're complimented that someone's doing a record, but we just wanted to make sure that you guys weren't being exploited." That's all.

WW: It seems that the concert business in general has been on a downswing over the past few years, but you continue to be a strong draw despite the fact that the way radio formats have changed, there doesn't seem to be a lot of airplay coming your way. Do you have a guess as to why that is?

GL: I would like to think that when fans walk away from our shows, they feel like they got their money's worth, and that creates over the years a certain amount of goodwill. If people are wondering what they're going to spend their money on, and they know a Rush show is coming to town, I think that they feel it's good value for them because of shows they've seen in the past.

WW: One last question. When I told people that I would be talking with you, I got a very interesting range of reactions. About half of them reacted as if I were going to have an audience with the Pope. [Lee responds with an extended guffaw.] And the other half were like, "I just have never gotten that band." So I was wondering: If you were going to introduce someone to Rush -- to give a primer -- what album would you suggest they pick up to help them figure out where you're coming from?

GL: Wow, that's really hard. That's a real stumper. To pick one album from any one period really only represents the period.

WW: Then don't pick one. Pick several.

GL: I would say, then, that if somebody really wanted to figure us out, they must pick up '2112,' 'Moving Pictures,' 'Power Windows' and probably this album. I think that's our best work, really. But no guarantee that they're going to like it.



Rush Rarities Sale

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An Interview with John Wesley *(Solo artist/guitarist with Fish)*

By Tom Cornell

TC: How and when did you start getting into Rush?

WES: When I was 13 or 14 a friend turned me onto the "2112" album. It just blew my mind! I got the live album after that. I kinda played that 'till it wore out, so I went out and bought the first three records before the live album, just the guitar playing on that. UNBELIEVABLE. A lot of my early concept of how to put a guitar solo together came from Alex Lifeson. I was getting into Clapton and all those guys back then, but there was something different about the way Alex put it together. I really liked that and was really drawn to it.

TC: And this was when you were only 13/14?

WES: Yes. In ninth grade everyone seemed to like Rush. Them and Kiss (laughs). Very strange combination.

TC: The musos and the cartoons.

WES: Everyone would sit back and listen to 2112 over and over again..... that led to something like Dark Side of the Moon.

TC: So the progressive thing continued and grew.

WES: After that when A Farewell to Kings came out and the guitar sounds on that really REALLY blew me away. At that time he was using a 335 Gibson – white 335, and the tone of that, wow! I was a Les Paul guy at the time but I went looking for a 335 and I ended up with a Gibson (Jerry?) Lopez which was basically a 335 up-dated. That was the guitar influence of it. With A Farewell to Kings came another influence that I hadn't counted on or realised was coming about and that was the beginning of the lyrical. Some of the stories and poems on that just blew me away. The emotional concepts of human rights for example on Closer to the Heart, something about them..... really got me hooked onto lyrics. I then went back to the previous albums looking at the lyrical and associating all the lyric writings to Neil Peart and from then I started work with a drummer who was a big Peart fan and actually the tune I auditioned to join with his band was Xanadu. That was my audition piece.

TC: That was what you were playing, from what I recall, backstage before the first Haddington Fish gig.

WES: Yeah! That was such a huge influence. Then of course came Hemispheres and after that my influences began to vary and break up. Like I remember even on my last album, sometimes as a guitar player I find myself wandering around, looking for directions and a great friend of mine, Shawn Malone who played on a couple of my records told me to check out the last studio album...what's it called?

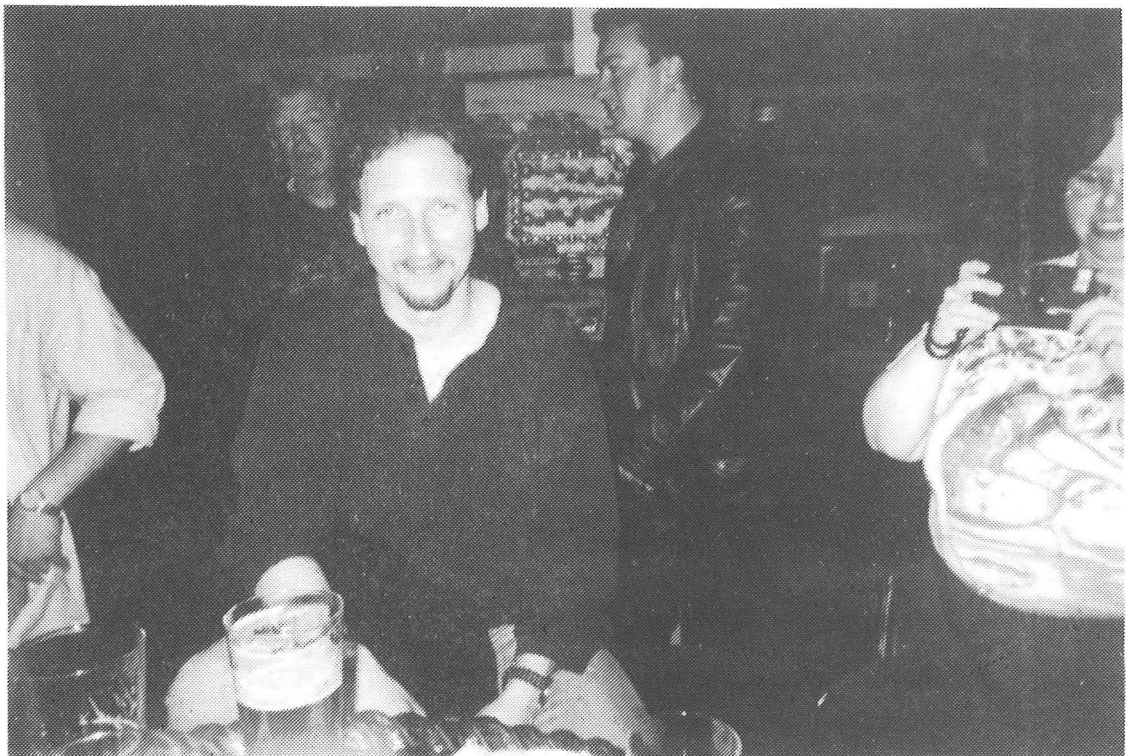
TC: T4E.

WES: Yeah, I was looking to centre on my songwriting again because one of the things I've always looked and gone back to was Alex Lifeson, the way he assembles guitar parts, arranges parts of songs..... and as I say, when I'm looking for some direction I look to see, or to get a dose of, how Alex does it.

TC: I've heard this said about Alex. I don't know if you'd agree, he always plays in the context of the song, you know, opposite to a Malmsteen, who although a good guitar player tends to 'widdle' a lot. Sounds smart but it's not song orientated.

WES: That's one of the things I love about Alex, his instrumentals are within and part of the song. That had a HUGE effect and influence on me. Way back in , I think '79/'80, Van Halen came along and changed the way a lot of people played. I was coming up through all of that, but I remember going back to Alex through all the 'widdly widdly' stuff, even when he was BLAZING with chops it was never out of context of the song. A lot of my influence came from that - it's not my only one - that's wide and varied but I can always look back.

TC: So who would be your other major influences?



WES: Guitar players – several. The top three classics – Clapton/Gilmour/Beck. Alex next to them. All of them for different things.

TC: Do you have a particular album you like most?

WES: Oh man! I would have to say that one of my favourite albums of all time is A Farewell to Kings. In fact that would be one of my top six or seven albums of all artists.

TC: The new live album of course has 'Farewell' live.

WES: Oh I know! I've GOT to get that now. I saw that tour.

TC (with admiration + huge amount of jealousy): You ACTUALLY saw that tour?

WES: Yeah, '78 I guess. I would have been 16 in '78.

TC: Have you seen them since?

WES: Hemispheres tour, in the 80's, as well.

TC: You didn't go to one of the nights the 'big man' played (aka Fish along with Marillion) or supported.... now, THAT would have been cool?

WES: No, no.. I never saw Fish with Marillion. I only saw them when I started working with them. [Marillion supported Rush back in 1983 in North America - ED.]

TC: (tells of our James Broad interview and how he got into the band).

WES: Oh yeah, at 13 or 14 year's old you do YEAH! When I heard Cygnus X-1 I just thought 'what the hell?' Then I heard The Trees and I thought 'God! It's got EVERYTHING! I was almost intimidated but it did give me something to shoot for

TC: I remember the first time I heard them I was given a tape by a friend who was a bit older and worked in a record shop. He said that there 'was this band from Canada – you'd like them, I don't'. So he gave me this 2 hour tape of stuff. There wasn't anything written on it so I put it on and the first thing I heard was 2112 and I was, like 'wow, what is this'. For 2 weeks I went into record shops asking about a Canadian band with a girl singer. When I found out it was a bloke I was like 'what!'

WES: (laughing) Yeah, I even had my hair cut like Geddy's for a while...and people used to call me 'Geddy'. Kinda funny really.

TC: You didn't go for the nose thing though?

WES: No, no. I'm working on it.

TC: Just for the record and out of interest for the fanzine readers, I still haven't found your albums over here. Can you tell us about them...like how many, titles and how to buy them?

WES: You'd have to order them! It's kinda weird, the first record I did when I was about 25 and it wasn't released in the UK. The second had a Europe wide release – again except



the UK, but the promotions on it was so poor it only sold a few thousand. There are 3 of them, although there's a combo out right now that you can buy on Dreamcatcher. A full blown album and EP. The first was 'Under the Red and White Sky' and the second was 'The Closing of the Pale Blue Eyes'. You might get it on import, at say HMV or Tower. The third came out recently and is called 'The Emperor Falls'. Again you would probably need to order. They will hopefully be available at Fish gigs and hopefully via his website.

TC: Do you think or feel by listening to them that you could identify a Rush influence on them?

WES: Yeah, on the playing, yeah. As I said I went to T4E before I did the last record to get a, I dunno, a kind of quality update to see what I'd be shooting for. Obviously I don't sound exactly like them, I wouldn't pretend to. Lyrically for instance, Neil doesn't let anything go without giving 100%. Like I feel about Alex.

TC: It's strange, T4E is one album I'm not keen on the lyrics, although I LOVE Resist.

WES: There's one song I really love. Although it's not on the last record I think. The song about the man dying of Aids.

TC: Oh, Nobody's Hero, from Counterparts. That was a wonderful album.

WES: And it's a wonderful song, don't you think? I mean, I can't remember him writing anything sub-standard.

[At this point a large Scot's gentleman called Fish came over with more beer for the table – leading to a bit of noise and banter.]

WES: I remember that I had heard somewhere that Alex was using PRS guitars and so was I for a while, but not for the Fish dates 'cos other guitars are more appropriate. I remember reading everything I could about Alex at the time. It's kinda weird, kinda interwoven wherever I go I kinda get back into that and it's been happening since I was about 13.

TC: I know outside of Fish and solo stuff, you've worked with a few people like Mike Tramp (White Lion and Freak of Nature). Have you found any of them having a Rush influence or is it just you?

WES: Mike and I have various influences, but I don't know if Rush is one of them. Shawn Malone, a monster bass player, admits Geddy having an effect on him. I've worked with him on my stuff and me on his and there's a drummer who's worked with both of us who brought me to T4E before my last record. Shawn has a great new record out – although you may need the internet to find it. As I say, he's a HUGE player. I've got everything he's got.

TC: We'll give him a mention because it's interesting to hear people who have been inspired by Rush or have a Rush connection. Is there any particular piece by Alex you love?

WES: Yeah. I mean, we used to cover Subdivisions in '89 and '90. There is a track where he just holds the final note...carries it on. I wish I could think if the title, I know I heard it live and I was just FLOORED. Also the solo in Tom Sawyer. Mind you, some of the riffs that he comes up with, wow. I always enjoyed playing the solo on Subdivisions. Lyrically, I like the social relevance of it. That's something I also admire about Neil, that he can create a whole storyline, make it right on, socially relevant, whereas everything I write is from a more personal rather than a social point of view. It's great to see great poetry with a social relevance.

TC: One of the things I like is the way he can write a part of a lengthy piece and it still (Wes joins in) 'works as a song in it's own right'.

WES: It's near impossible to get right, yet he manages to do it all the time. As for his drumming, ALL these chops, I've seen a lot of chop players but he always plays within the song. He never seems to lose the groove.

TC: One of the bootleg videos I have has lots of close ups – watching him is amazing, his movement, it's kind of like watching a strange kind of ballet.

WES: The video of 'Red Barchetta' watching him, the time changes and everything. I tell you one thing, I wanted my songs to be like theirs – never boring – always trying to be interesting. You know I've not even mentioned Geddy yet – again he never loses the groove, his choice of melodic bass lines. In a live situation they never seem to miss.

TC: I had someone suggest they were a bit boring live 'cos they didn't run around much.

WES: No! (tuts) I don't go to see how well someone dances or what movements they make.

TC: Unless you're going to see someone like Dave Lee Roth.

WES: Yeah, in which case you're going for that. I mean see David Gilmour – the man never moves from his mike but so f**k. Same with Rush. It's a show involving music.

TC: They seem to be enjoying themselves more now, having a laugh.

WES: Oh, I think they have always done that. I remember seeing them in Lakeland Cleveland, they rented a whole bowling alley for bands and crew. You know having fun. I'd like to do something like that one day.

TC: Appeals to me, then, I'm just a big kid.

WES: Absolutely. I also love the idea of Neil cycling between gigs.

TC: He's got a book about cycling holidays (told him about 'The Masked Rider')

WES: These days when I buy albums I don't look at the titles at the songs anymore I just listen to 'em all the way through and make up my own titles from what the songs say'.

TC: I must try that.

WES: One of the things I like about Rush and Neil is the thing to re-invent themselves. It's one of the good things about playing with Fish, he's always re-inventing himself.

TC: Yeah, some of the stuff on his new album (Raingods for Zippos – a Mad Jock 'must buy') is amazing. I don't understand it all. I mean 'chocolate frogs' – what? I love the lyrics – there's bits that mean something to me (and some just confuse).

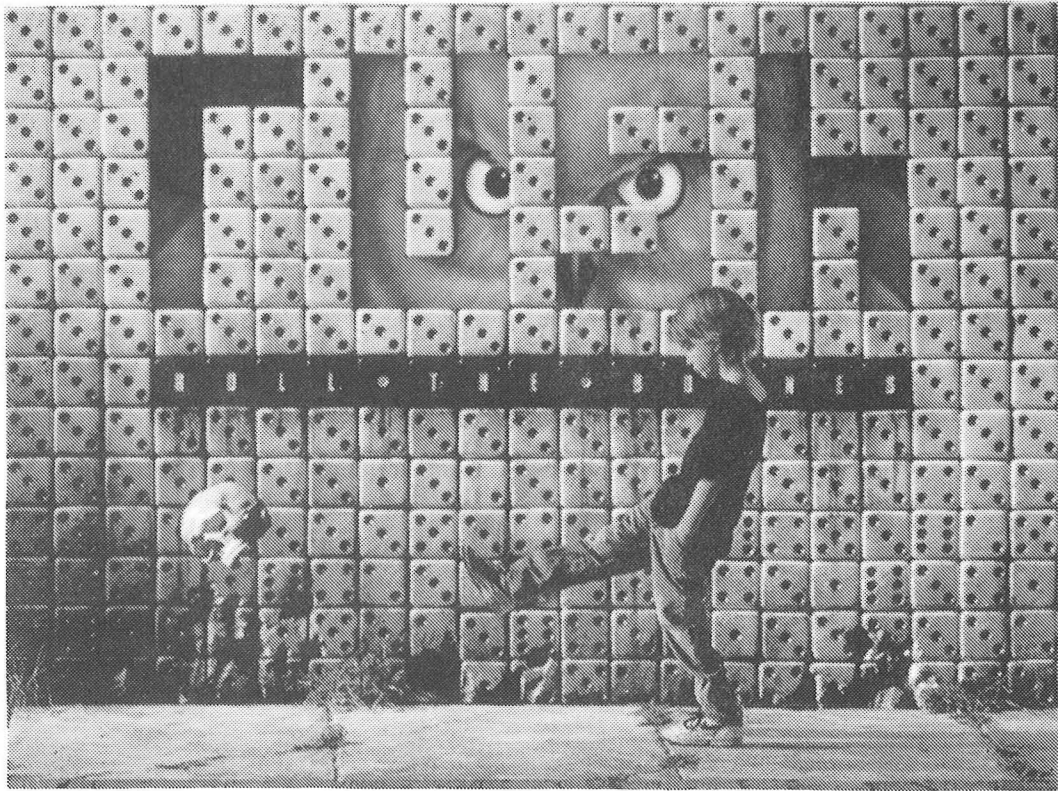
WES: It's what it means to YOU which is the important thing. Lyrics mean one thing to me, it may not be Fish's meaning, but that way I make them personal to play. If anyone asks me what the lyrics mean I always say 'what do they mean to you!'

At this point we discuss Marillion and how, in my opinion, Marillion's music has never sounded better (guitar especially) with him playing it. He explained how for 2 years he was Steve Rothery's guitar tech and support act as well. (They like him that much musically). He spoke with great admiration of Rothery's guitar work and how he 'feels' to play it.

Personally I would like to thank Wes for his time and also Fish, his good lady wife, Yatta and his lady for bringing Wes to the meeting point and waiting for us. Thanks to the manager and locals of the Tyneside in Haddington for trying to stay quiet.

I meant to write a wee review of Wes' albums which I now own – but I ran out of time - but suffice to say they are excellent lyrically, emotional and personal and the guitar work in keeping with the song (well done Wes). The solo to '13 Days' on 'Under The Red & White Sky' being wonderful. Thanks to Wes and all the best to him and his lady to be when they get married soon.

The Mad Jock



YYZ

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