

THE SPIRIT OF  
**RUSH**  
ISSUE 55 WINTER 2001





# The Spirit of E d i t o r i a l

Hi and welcome to the first Spirit of the title of my favorite film. The best news this time out is the news that we've all been waiting for - Dirk, Lerxt and Pratt are in the studio and writing together again. I'm sure like me that you consider this the best Christmas pressie that you've had in a very long time. Lets hope all goes well and that an album will see the light of day B4 years end!

We didn't have room for the Rockline interview with Geddy in this issue, it will be in the next one though. Unfortunately not many of you wrote in with your thoughts on 'My Favorite Headache' does this mean that you don't like it or what? Come on, you still have time let us know what you think for our next issue.

You will have seen the advert in our last issue regarding the convention in Toronto in May this year. Many of you have enquired if Janet or myself will be attending - unfortunately neither of us can make it this time. We wish the organizers every success with this endeavour (we will keep advertising it here in Spirit). If the day goes anything like our conventions here anyone who attends is in for a hell of a weekend, that's all I can say. Check out their web site for more info. [www.rushcon.org](http://www.rushcon.org)

Does anyone remember 'A Show Of Fans'? Of course you do. Well the guy who put together that great North American fanzine is joining the team here at Spirit. Please welcome aboard Steve Streeter! Steve is going to attempt to revamp our web site. With the amount of Rush activity now beginning to take an upturn we feel that there are many Rush fans on the planet that do not even know that Spirit exists, to this end we have re-named the site

[www.spirit-of-rush.com](http://www.spirit-of-rush.com)

The main aim of the site is to be the backbone of the magazine, which will remain our main focus. We really need to raise the profile of Spirit and we wish Steve all the very best in this. If you would like to help him in his work please E-mail me at the usual address and I'll pass your details on to him.

The new series of 'Top Tens' started on Channel 4 here in the U.K. on Saturday 3rd February. I'm

sure many of you are familiar with it. Well set your videos in March because Rush are to be featured in the top ten progressive bands. We all know that they should be right up at #1 but will they? We'll just have to wait and see. Once you have seen the programme, send in your views about it to for us all to share.

The convention will again take place at the Limelight in Crewe, on Saturday, September 8th. Tickets are now on sale from us here at the editorial address. Please use the enclosed order form to order your tickets. Do not forget to enclose a stamped addressed envelope with your order.

One more thing, look out for a CD in April called 'An Introduction To Rush'. It is an hour long and does what it says on the label. All right !!! Finally, If you have a subscription reminder enclosed with this issue please return it ASAP, thank you.

Next issue should be with you just in time to read while eating your Easter eggs. Take care.

*Regards,  
Mick*

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## **Exclusive: Geddy Lee on the Rush reunion**

By PAUL CANTIN

For the first time since the summer of 1997, the members of Rush are back together making music.

Singer-bassist Geddy Lee confirmed to JAM! Music Friday that he, guitarist Alex Lifeson and drummer Neil Peart have ended a lengthy hiatus and gathered in a Toronto-area studio to begin work on a new record. "We are all back together now, and we are just starting that process of writing," Lee told JAM! Music on Friday in an exclusive interview.

"It is too early to say anything concrete has gone down. We are just getting to know each other again and getting comfortable with the prospect of hanging out together for the next couple of months."

On Wednesday, the threesome met up at the at the studio, but most of the time since then has been spent setting up their gear and working out technical bugs. A cold hit guitarist Alex Lifeson, which further put a crimp in the momentum, as well as the fact that the studio has been a beehive of activity.

"It was a bit surreal, I would say. I think everyone would agree on that," Lee said. It was really just a lot of talking. A lot of hubbub going on. It all seemed like a bit too much fuss. Everyone is getting comfortable and debugging the equipment. "A lot of conversations are happening. A lot more talk than writing, at this stage, which is what needs to go down."

As Rush finds its footing, the myriad assistants and techs will gradually be excused and the three will begin work in earnest. "We will strip everything right down. Once everything is up and running (in the studio), we will just have someone around for equipment problems. But we will try to keep it as low-key as humanly possible," he said.

"We're trying to make this session as casual and relaxed as possible, considering all that has gone down in the last number of years, I think that is extremely important for us, to keep things emotionally humane."

Lee said it is crucial that the three keep a casual, low-pressure approach to the sessions, which will hopefully yield the group's 17th studio album. "This project is about so much more than us making a record," Lee said. "It is about us coming back together. It is about the psychological health and welfare of all

the people who have gone through a very difficult time ... I want it to happen, and I want it to happen in a very positive and natural way."

Given that approach, the last thing on anyone's mind is when to expect a new record. I have totally thrown the timetable out," he said. "I insisted that be the case with this project ... I think the pressure of deadline is exceedingly inappropriate at this time in our career."

## **Sammy Hagar Book Would Have Questioned Rush Manager's Loyalties**

A chapter in a book about the Red Rocker, Sammy Hagar, to have been published in 1999, detailed the circumstances resulting in singer Sammy Hagar's leaving the band. These circumstances involved their hiring of long time Rush manager, Ray Danniels, who has managed Rush since their debut album. The book was never released. Shortly after partial transcripts made their way to the Internet in May of 1999, the following was posted to various Hard Rock news sites:

"Ex-Van Halen frontman Sammy Hagar blocks book! "Red Rocker" Sammy Hagar recently won an injunction from a court keeping the release and sale of a book about him from hitting the stores. At one time Sammy was a part of the project, then following a financial dispute bailed on the book. Author David Huff filed a lawsuit against Hagar citing breach of contract. Sammy in turn claimed rights to certain materials used to complete the book. There are also issues over the inclusion of stories about Hagar's split from Van Halen. Author, Huff has also been hit with possible suits from Ray Danniels, manager of Van Halen. Danniels isn't comfortable with parts of the book that mention how he figured in Hagar and Van Halen separating."

Below is a segment of the chapter detailing the hiring of Danniels. It begins shortly after Ed Leffler, Van Halen's previous manager, succumbed to cancer in 1993. This led to a search for a successor which eventually led to Ray Danniels, Alex Van Halen's brother in law at the time.

"The next day the band got together for further discussions over the management situation. When Hagar



# R U S H N E W S

arrived for the meeting, another figure was present. It was Alex's brother-in-law Ray Danniels. Apparently the brothers had enlisted the Canadian to be their unofficial advisor in the management hunt.

"Ray was in the room with us discussing the different management proposals," the singer stated. "Immediately he tried to sell himself to us by stabbing every other manager we had talked to in the back. Instead of coming into this thing telling us what he could offer, he did the opposite. He says, 'Well, if you want to use so and so, that guy steals money from his clients. Oh, you want to use that guy, he was caught doing drugs. That guy there, oh, he's hated by every record company.' You know what I mean. He had something negative to say about every single person, and Ed and Al are going, 'Oh really!' I'm sitting there listening to this guy saying, 'Bullshit!'

Then he started attacking Shep and Johnny, two of my very best friends. He said quote unquote, 'Shep stole money from Alice Cooper. He made side deals with promoters. Johnny Barbis will burn you guys; he's a promotion's man, and all he'll do is sell you guys out - and sell you cheap.' When he said that shit, I said, 'Listen you fucking asshole. Those guys are my friends. Don't ever say anything bad about them in front of me again, because I'll punch you in the fucking face.'

Outside of Ed Leffler, Shep was one of the most brilliant managers I knew. Johnny was just a great guy, and the brothers knew that. They would never do the things Ray Danniels was accusing them of. I was so damn mad, I went off and busted him on the whole thing. I said, 'You're a piece of shit for the way you've come into this band talking to us. I would never allow you to be my manager.' After that, I had to get out of there.

Later I heard from Michael Anthony that Ray stayed up all night with Eddie and Al slamming me. He said things like, 'Sammy wants his guys in there so that he can make side deals. Him and Ed Leffler made side deals. Him and Ed Leffler stole from this band.' It was all total bullshit, and these guys, I'm telling you, it was really, really bad."

The subject of Danniels handling Van Halen's affairs was closed as far as

Sammy was concerned. However, Ray was far from being out of the picture. From the very moment Hagar confronted him with the lies he was spreading about other managers, then threatening to punch him out, a dangerous enemy had been made.

"Ray Danniels is a cunning snake," declared Hagar. "He's like the devil where he can tell you everything you want to hear. When it came to me, Ray couldn't pull off that shit. From that day on, the two of us never got along.

.....Hagar says he was appalled at the negative comments directed toward Rush by Alex Van Halen that he attributed directly to Ray Danniels. Sammy was even more offended at the fact that Al's brother-in-law wanted to manage Van Halen so badly, he was willing sell out his other band to get the job. For over two decades, Danniels had stood behind Rush. From what Hagar was hearing, apparently that was a thing of the past. The Red Rocker even spoke to Ray himself about the Canadian trio and was astounded by the answers he received.

"Ray even bad-mouthed Rush to me," said an incredulous Hagar. "Can you believe it? He was saying shit like, 'If they had a good singer, they could have made it on pop radio.' He was telling me that with the kind of music they play, Rush would never be any more than they already have been. I started hammering him with questions. I said, 'Ray, Rush should have been the Canadian Led Zeppelin.'"

"Why don't they sell records? Why did their last record only do 400,000 or 500,000 records?' He said to me, 'If they only had a singer.' He was crazy to say that, because Geddy Lee has one of the most unique voices in rock.

Rush's big problem is they never had any videos - which is one of the major complaints I had against Ray. I knew his dealing with MTV would bury us. I even called over there and asked them about their relationship with him. They didn't even know who Ray Danniels was. When I told them he was the manager of Rush, they said, 'Well, we never had a relationship with Rush. We've only had a couple of videos from them.' In other words, Ray had no clout with them whatsoever."



# The making of MY FAVORITE HEADACHE, recording, songwriting, practicing, the Order of Canada Medal, South Park; The Movie, and Other Stuff.

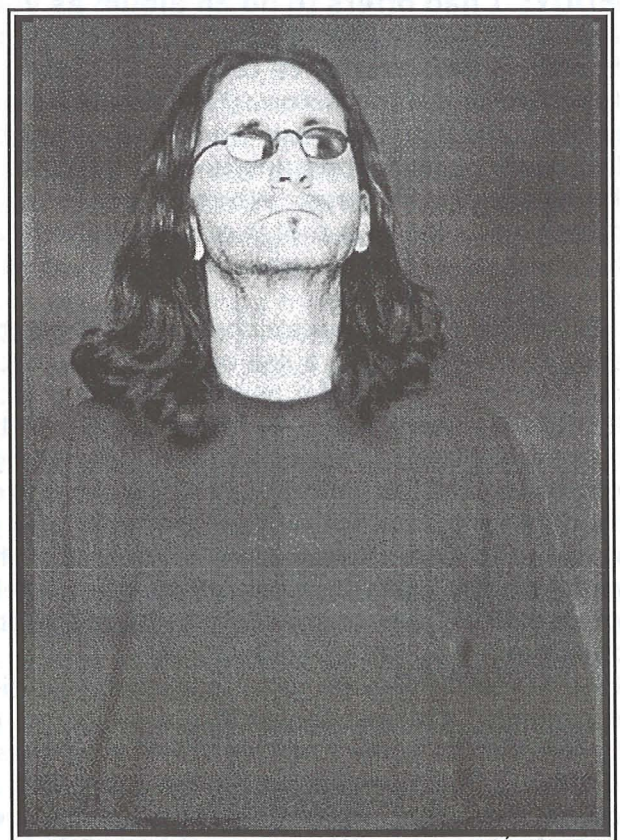
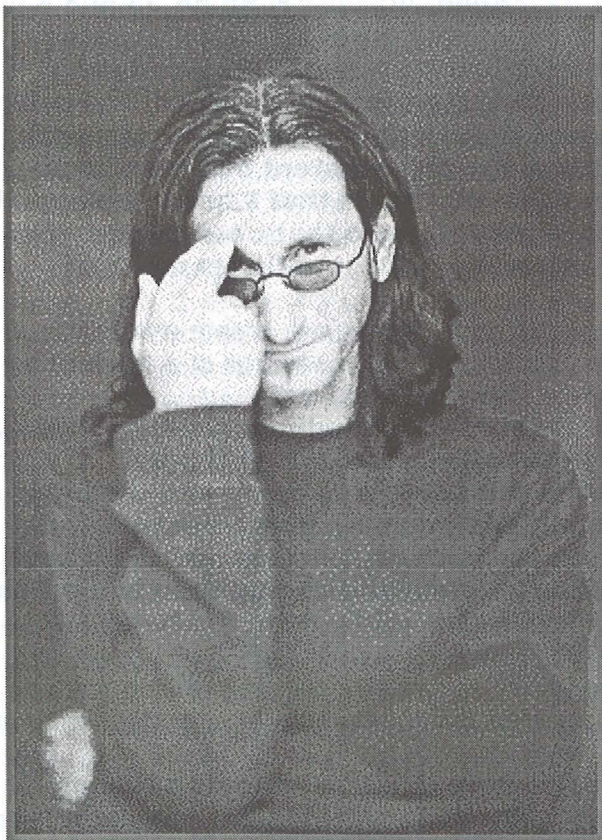
"By Christopher Buttner - Reprinted with Permission of GlobalBass.com"

*Each of the three members of **RUSH**, drummer **Neil Peart**, bassist/vocalist **Geddy Lee** and guitarist **Alex Lifeson** is considered a Maestro of his respective instrument. Induction into a number of magazines' 'Halls of Fame' throughout the world for Best Guitarist, Bassist, Keyboardist, Drummer, and Band, attests to Rush's "musician's musician" status. Closing out the century on a high-note, RUSH, by a two-to-one margin, won the **JAM! ShowBiz** online poll as **Canada's "most important musicians of all-time."***

*Finally, on November 14, 2000, Geddy Lee released that first solo album, **MY FAVORITE HEADACHE**. Geddy called me on November 13, 2000, at 7:30 p.m. (Eastern Standard Time), and I am sure he was grateful this was going to be the last interview of the day. He had begun his promotional tour along the east coast of the USA on, or about, November 9, and I could tell he was really tired from several days of answering a cornucopia of repetitive, if not inane, questions. Not realizing he could be so tired he was starting to get slap-happy, I thought I should ease him into the interview with some self-deprecating humor.*

*"I know you're totally burnt out from answering a lot of incessantly repetitive questions for the past several days, so if mine are either too philosophical or just out right too dopey, let me know."*

**Geddy snickers, "Dope, dope, dope away. Be as dopey as you like."**



**Photos courtesy of Andrew MacNaughton**

I didn't want to dwell on questions only anal bassists would be interested in, such as, "So what kind of strings do you use?, Do you prefer Rosewood or Maple fingerboards? What pick-ups are in your main axe?", etc. Many consider Geddy Lee one of the most well-rounded musicians, on par



with Sting and John Paul Jones, plus he is a well thought-out, cerebral guy with a great, dry sense of humor. I put together a list of 'outside of the box' questions with two friends of mine, keyboardist Jordan Rudess and bassist John Myung, both members of Dream Theater and both incredibly talented musicians who cite RUSH as a major influence.

Geddy chooses his words carefully and was kind enough to answer questions that should enlighten all musicians, not just bassists. Almost immediately, a weak connection forces Geddy to switch phones so I can accurately record the conversation. He puts me on hold and switches to the other phone in his hotel room. When he picks up, he states, **"I'm going to have to sit on the toilet and talk. I'm sitting at an interesting body angle here... you should see this."**

I reply, "You will spare me any and all sound effects, won't you!?" We're both laughing and quickly relaxed once we find our common ground: Bathroom and toilet humor.

CHRISTOPHER - What are the emotions right now? Is your anxiety level running higher than if this were the release of another RUSH album?

**GEDDY: It definitely feels different. Mostly because if it were a RUSH album, I would be in rehearsal for an upcoming tour, designing some stage gear or rear screen projection multimedia materials. I would be in a very different mode and I wouldn't have the same available time to be so aware of the CD release. I'm excited. The feedback I have been getting is overwhelmingly positive and I am starting to feel like it was definitely worth doing. (Laughs). So, I don't know what is going to happen when the CD comes out, how well it will sell, etc. But, from a personal point of view, it was a very worthwhile endeavor.**

CHRISTOPHER - There are those fans who would have anticipated, or hoped for, a 'lead bass' album; a blatant, self-indulgent display of your bass playing prowess. When you realized that the evolution of what you were putting together would result in a record, did you give any thought as to how you wanted to be seen as an artist?

**GEDDY: I had offers to do an album as you just described: 'Bassist running up and down scales'. It really didn't interest me very much. I am moved more by melodies, song structure, and evocative textures. That is what intrigues me; songwriting and song structure and expression. There was a time when fast playing and fretboard pyrotechnics on the bass were important to me and when I am recording a bass track, that is still very important to me. I like to be obnoxious and insistent and take some chances with the bass. When I do a take, I very often try things that I haven't planned to try to see if I can pull it off. I feel safe and comfortable to do that once I know that the song structure around the bass part is very interesting and it satisfies me in a compositional sense.**

CHRISTOPHER - As a musician, are you the entrepreneurial type who has to create a little bit every day, whether it's a line of a song in a notebook, recording a few measures of a track or do you just tune it all out for periods of time and create when the mood strikes?

**GEDDY: I have a lot of hobbies and I can be very remiss in reminding myself to go down to the basement to work. When I usually go to my studio to work, I start with something that is going to take two minutes just to put some idea down and the next thing I know, ten hours have gone by and my family is screaming at me because they want me to come up to have dinner with them. I have such an extreme attitude about work, where I can just completely be derelict of my responsibilities and then when I am not derelict, I am completely indulged in it. I swing pretty wildly from the two extremes.**

CHRISTOPHER - Speaking of 'dereliction of duties', do you ever just sit down to practice any one instrument, be it the bass, guitar or the piano, getting lost in playing twiddly-bits, or does the bulk of your practice come from the creative process?

**GEDDY: I like to practice on the bass, but I don't do it as often as I should. I do go downstairs, plug in, fiddle around and have some fun with it. Always, invariably, it leads me to just start writing something. It's hard for me to just practice without writing something. As far as my keyboard playing goes... I'm really just an adequate keyboard player, I'm a really good bluffer! With the help of modern technology, I can compose intricate keyboard parts and then I have to go back and learn them in order to perform them properly. (Laughs). So, I really don't consider myself a fabulous keyboard player. To me, that's not an issue, it's more of using the instrument to get ideas or support the**



atmosphere of the song. I do love using keyboards and I love writing keyboard parts, but I am not a player in the true sense of the word. I definably do not look at that instrument the same way as I do the bass guitar. I have a piano in the house and I was playing with my young daughter the other day and I realized what a lazy bastard I am. I really love the sound of the piano and it's so gratifying to sit down and play... I should really spend more time with it.

CHRISTOPHER - The lion's share of RUSH lyrics come from Neil, so was there a feeling of artistic vulnerability in finally committing your own lyrics, thoughts, observations and emotions to your own music?

GEDDY: Sure! It was a very exposing process. I think that is what I liked about it. I liked the fact that I was forced to get inside of my emotions and to really try to figure out a lot of what I was going through. Most people are like this: They think of stuff during the day. The mind goes to certain places, they remember things, and they try to figure things out. To remind yourself to write that stuff down is a great benefit. Then you come back to it and you analyze it days later, and lyrically shape what you felt when you wrote it down. For me, how I feel about what I wrote down turns into a song. Above all, forget the songwriter, forget the end result. That was a very interesting learning process for me as a person! Just to learn how to do that was something that was pretty key for me. Then, once I have lyrics, being able to shape them around a song is nothing new for me, I've been doing that for 25 years. The soul searching part of it, the spontaneous part of it, that was, and remains, a really terrific process.

CHRISTOPHER - You're revered as a bassist, a singer and a multi-instrumentalist 'deity' by many musicians all over the world. To many, you are the bassist by which all others are judged. At this point in your life, from what artists do you draw inspiration; what bass players take your breathe away when you hear or see them perform?

GEDDY: Well, certainly there is the whole 'old school' of them who were the bass players set in my mind. John Entwistle, Chris Squire, John Paul Jones, and Jack Bruce. These days, I think Les Claypool is a brilliant bassist, of course Jeff Berlin is still out there and playing... he's a remarkable talent.

CHRISTOPHER - What songwriters make the hair on your arm stand-up? What bands and what artists are in your CD player these days?

GEDDY: If I hear STATE OF EMERGENCY by Bjork, that really blows my mind. It's a brilliant song, she's awesome. She is not for everyone's taste, but she is damn well for my taste, I love her. She is a real artist, she's deeply talented and her voice is as compelling as any voice as I have ever heard. I like the music that RADIO HEAD is putting together. I love Thom Yorke's singing, I love their song structures. They're a very interesting band. I like the TRAGICALLY HIP, if we're talking about Rock or Pop music. But there are a whole range of other things, and things from the past, of course, that I still find very inspiring. Every time SOLSBURY HILL, by Peter Gabriel, comes on the radio I remember where I was when I first heard it, that song doesn't age because it's so well written - there is something so right about it.

CHRISTOPHER - Even 10,000 listens later, there is something still fresh about it.

GEDDY: Absolutely! When I hear songs like that, I want to go down to my studio and work.

CHRISTOPHER - RUSH has been considered a Progressive Rock Band for a long time, therefore, do you consider yourself a Progressive Rock Musician or has the tag of 'Progressive' worn out?

GEDDY: Well, I certainly identify with Progressive Rock and I certainly don't mind RUSH being labeled as a Progressive Rock group. I have always felt I was more accurately a Hard Rock musician. I don't know that such a thing as Progressive Rock really exists anymore. If it does, it's being reinvented by bands like RADIO HEAD and artists like that who are pushing the envelope a little bit. So, it's a somewhat dated phrase, but I don't think that it's an objectionable phrase.

CHRISTOPHER - So Progressive Bands that are still out there, those who attribute so much of their influence to bands like RUSH, YES and ELP, those who are keeping the genre alive. Do you listen to them, and if so, what are your thoughts?

GEDDY: I am not really familiar with them, to be honest, and I have never really spent much time paying much attention. But I would always be interested in hearing what they do. I probably don't go to the record stores as much as I should to find out what is new. Someone was telling me about this whole new MATH ROCK thing that is starting to happen.



CHRISTOPHER - (I spell it out) M-A-T-H? MATH ROCK?

**GEDDY:** Ya, it's this whole genre that is born out of ProgRock, where they take all the weird time signature stuff and construct their songs, like math equations. (Laughs). I can identify with that. RUSH used to do some of that stuff ourselves.

CHRISTOPHER - Sure gives 'Numerology' a whole new twist.

**GEDDY:** (Laughs again) Obviously, there is a need, from time to time, for music that is complex. That's a good thing. Maybe we're musically coming back around to a time like that.

CHRISTOPHER - Step out of the role of Geddy Lee for a second to answer this one: Do you consider yourself an influential musician?

**GEDDY:** (Sighs). I always feel a little arrogant to think of myself like that. I prefer to think of myself as a musician who is still learning and trying to do something every time out. But, I would be naive not to recognize the number of musicians who tell me they have been influenced by me and sight me - as well as Alex and Neil - as a musician who has been a positive influence on their playing. I don't think you can ignore the facts.

CHRISTOPHER - Tell me about your home studio. What's in the signal chain?

**GEDDY:** My studio is designed for atmosphere. I have a really cozy, comfortable room that has a great, huge glass door that views my backyard. I'm a big believer of daylight in the studio. I have my Mackie 32/8 console and I am a big believer in using Emagic Logic Audio. I run the full 24-bit system - the whole deal. I'm running it on a Macintosh 9600, the workhorse. Plus, I have a multitude of hard drives. I am in the process of gathering together old compressors: LA4s, 1176s, those kind of things. I have been using LA4s in the studio, that kind of stuff - high quality compression equipment. I also used four Empirical Labs Distressors on mixing the album. They are very useful. After the experience of making this record, I am in the process now of trying to gather a few bits of gear, Neve and other old compressors. The more I work in the digital domain, the more I realize those pieces of gear are essential. Then there is my bass gear which consists of a bunch of Demeter, SansAmp, Palmerson, and Avalon equipment. The bass was recorded direct onto three tracks and I didn't really use any 'real' bass amps, per se.

CHRISTOPHER - How much of what was produced for **MY FAVORITE HEADACHE** was tracked at your home or Ben's home and how much, if any, of what was recorded at home made it to the record?

**GEDDY:** Quite a bit of it really. Almost the entire song, 'STILL', was recorded at both of our homes. We added and replaced some of the original guitars, except the drums, of course. None of the drums were recorded at home. The drum recording sessions were moved to Studio X in Seattle. Almost all of the vocals on 'STILL', and a lot of the backing vocals, in general, were kept from what was recorded in my home studio. The entire bass track for 'MOVING TO BOHEMIA' and 'ANGEL'S SHARE', was recorded at my home and the bass track for 'STILL' was recorded at Ben's house... recalling just a few parts.

CHRISTOPHER - Ben lives in Vancouver and you live in Toronto. How did you guys swap files? Were you sending DATs back and forth, were you e-mailing files?

**GEDDY:** Both Ben and I have built identical systems. Basically, when I would go to see Ben, I would take a DVD RAM back-up all of my files and, occasionally, just take the hard drive on the plane with me. I would walk into Ben's place and away we'd go.

CHRISTOPHER - In the process of tracking the record, how often were you in Vancouver and how often was Ben in Toronto? How long did the whole process of tracking the record take before the two of you went into a pro studio?

**GEDDY:** We spent a couple of years working back and forth.

CHRISTOPHER - YEARS?!

**GEDDY:** Ya, we would do seven to ten days working at my house and then we wouldn't do anything for two or three months. (Pauses, then laughs). Then I would go to Vancouver and work for seven to ten days at Ben's house and then we wouldn't do anything for two to three months. And that went on for way too long! Then, one day, I finally said, 'Ben, c'mon! We have gotta' get this together here, Buddy! It's just dragging.'

(Now we're both laughing).

**GEDDY:** Finally, earlier in 2000, we said, 'Okay, this is it, we're going for it.' And that's when we got serious and Ben came to my house and we brainstormed for a few weeks and got everything pretty well ready-to-rock. Then, Matt Cameron (former Soundgarden



**drummer), came along and we went into the studio and recorded the drums, replacing the tracks that were not standing up to scratch.**

**CHRISTOPHER** - After playing with Neil for so many years, a drummer by which all other drummers are judged, what was it like playing with a guy like Matt Cameron, who is more of a straight ahead rock/pocket player? How was your playing style effected? As a bassist, was there more freedom of creativity, inspiration and experimentation to go crazy on the bass?

**GEDDY:** **Matt really slotted in very well. A lot of the song structures were fairly together when he added his drum parts. I was so impressed with him, I can't begin to tell you. He has such a great sound and impeccable taste and such a strong groove, he is really fun to play with. So, from a bassist point-of-view, it was a really great experience locking in with him. A different experience then with Neil, but none the less, very inspiring.**

**CHRISTOPHER** - So he came in to lay down the drums after you guys had the basic tracks laid down?

**GEDDY:** **We wrote these songs, and took so long recording them in our home studios, that we had pretty final structures by the time Matt was available. So many of his drum parts took the songs to a new place! He would play to these song structures and afterwards I would like what he played so much, I would go back in and redo my bass parts, because I wanted to play along with him.**

**CHRISTOPHER** - Your producer, David Leonard (PRINCE, **SANTANA, BARENAKED LADIES, JOHN MELLENCAMP**), who is more a 'go with the vibe' guy, got you and Ben out of 'micro-managing each note.' So, as an attention to detail kind of guy, was there any kind of a creativity catharsis - if you will - in terms of making **MY FAVORITE HEADACHE**, compared to how you would go about making a RUSH album?

**GEDDY:** **David was great and that is a great question, because David had a very definitive effect on us. He's so experienced and loves the idea of being in a collaborative situation. He instinctively focused on a lot of things that I found important: in the way the groove of a song works that I don't think I would have thought of being so inside of it all. And, he's a very talented technician and a great engineer. The other thing he brought to the table was, rather than approach these songs in a manner that was more 'assembly line', where you lay the bass down for ten days, guitar for three weeks, vocals for however long... he basically introduced the concept of, 'Let's put the song up and let's just work on it and we'll mix it up.'**

**CHRISTOPHER** - If you got tired of it, put it aside and move on to something else, right? So, the creative juices were constantly flowing and getting triggered through other stimulation, style and input?

**GEDDY:****Exactly! He always made you feel connected to the song! I don't know why I have never worked that way! I guess, it's just a band routine you get into: Okay, it's the bassist's turn, and then you give the other guys a day or a week off when it's the guitarist's turn. But you know what?! It's much more interesting to watch a song come to full fruition the way I did it on my solo album... because the way this record was recorded was the way you write the songs. So why not take that same approach in the studio? I guess he used to work that way with Prince for many years. Prince would even take it one step further where Prince would mix it! He would write it, arrange it, put some overdubs on it, mix it and... BOOM! There is your song. To me, that's a really kinda' cool way to work.**

**CHRISTOPHER** - There is a big difference between touring and performing. Touring is a necessary evil and the two are truly at the opposite ends of the like/dislike emotional scale. How highly unlikely is it that you will get a bunch of guys together and do a few gigs in support of MY FAVORITE HEADACHE, outside of an obligatory one-off gig at Alex Lifeson's ORBIT ROOM? Will there be, maybe, a regional tour or a few major city gigs in the near future?

**GEDDY:** **Ya, there is a chance. Of course, it's a slim chance, depending upon if the 'Gods Of Scheduling' are working WITH me, but it's something I am thinking about. It would take a lot of effort, I think, to get together, but... it would probably be an experience that would be worth doing. But, you never know! There are a lot of demands on everyone's time right now.**

**CHRISTOPHER** - If you had to put together the consummate back-up band to do a tour to promote MY FAVORITE HEADACHE, who would you want in the line-up, for whatever the name of the band would be: Geddy Lee and the Press-on Nails?



**GEDDY:** (Laughing) **Yea!!! That's a really good title!**

**CHRISTOPHER** - You can send me the royalty check on that one!

**GEDDY:** **Awright, give me your address later. Well, I would definitely want Ben there and either Matt or Jeremy... I would love to have both Matt and Jeremy in the band, but either one would be an honor to play with. I have a good friend, Jason Sniderman in Toronto, who is an excellent keyboardist who I would want to bring with me. And, I would try to find a couple of guitarists. It would be great to bring the guys from THE TRAGICALLY HIP out on the road, Paul Langlois and Bobby Baker. Both of those guys are very good guitar players and that would make a pretty cool band!**

**CHRISTOPHER** - As a professional musician, where do you prefer to be? The studio or the stage?

**GEDDY:** **I like them both, but I like writing more than anything.**

**CHRISTOPHER** - Do you miss the roar of the crowds after four years? Is there still - pardon the pun - a 'rush' of emotion when you get on stage, the lights go up and the crowd goes wild?

**GEDDY:** **There totally is! I think the most enjoyable tour I have ever done in a long, long time was the last tour, TEST FOR ECHO. Do I miss it when I am not there?**

**Ummm.... In an abstract way, I do. But, in a wearying way, I don't. I could easily see myself doing another tour and enjoying it, and if that did not happen, I don't think I would cry about it.**

**CHRISTOPHER** - Do you envision yourself getting more and more into the business end of things, possibly management or the production end of the music business to share your wealth of knowledge with other up-and-coming talent, or would you always need to be the creative type, writing and recording your own words and music?

**GEDDY:** **I would like to shift more into writing for and producing people. I love to write. It's my first love. I would like to think that Ben and myself have begun a partnership that will take us into different areas of music that we can continue to write, enjoy and keep me involved with music other than what I do with RUSH. Of course, I love what I do with RUSH and I will continue to do it as long as we all believe it is all worthwhile to do. These things are all finite and there will come a day when that will end. Some writing and production projects will be a great way to spend my elderly rock years.**

**CHRISTOPHER** - 'Geezer Rock'?

**GEDDY:** **I'm not sure what the formal title will be... (laughs).**

**CHRISTOPHER** - You and Jeff Berlin are pretty tight. The last time we spoke, four years ago, you mentioned that he is a bassist that you really respect and someone who you would like to study with. Have you had the chance to study with Jeff at all?

**GEDDY:** **No, I haven't. I went to visit him about a year ago, just hanging out in Florida, but we came very close to working together. He's putting an album together right now and we're trying to make our schedules work so I can do something with him for that record. But, something happened... and it never happened. We're destined, someday, to do something together. But, I have not studied with him and it's something that I would like to do.**

**CHRISTOPHER** - RUSH, according to the record company, has sold 35 million records world wide, which is nothing to sneeze at and I am sure makes you very proud. But, moreover, Rush was the first rock group recipient of the prestigious Order of Canada medal, therefore you were one of the first rock musicians to receive the award. Being honored by one's country in such a way is something that very few people will ever experience. Can you verbalize what you, personally and professionally felt in receiving that award, and possibly can you verbalize the feelings the three members of RUSH experienced as a collective?

**GEDDY:** **First of all, when you live in a country like Canada, it's quite different from America in the sense that it's very tied to traditions that were born in Britain. To be called upon by your government or by your representative of the Queen, to be given an award like that, which amounts to a good citizenship award in the highest sense of the term, it's really a pretty tremendous honor. It's your country's way of acknowledging your contribution of betterment to your society. We've never really been big 'flag wavers' or nationalistic, but we've all stayed in Canada, so there is some sense of national pride. To be given that award was a very big thing for all three of us. I don't think there was a cynical remark from any of us, during the whole plane trip, when we received the award and when we went through the whole pomp and ceremony. It was a pretty special time, so it means something very special to all of us.**

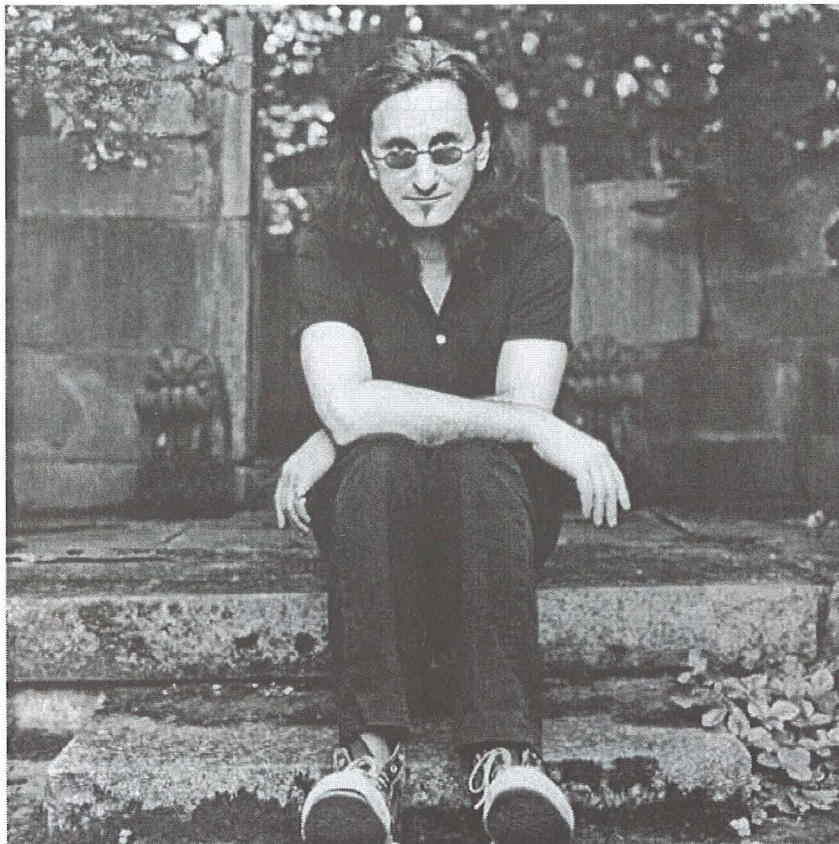


CHRISTOPHER - Were any of the politicians wondering who you were, possibly scratching their heads when the three of you showed up for the award ceremony, saying, 'Huh? RUSH who?'

**GEDDY:** (Laughs) **They're politicians, they would never let you know if they were wondering!**

CHRISTOPHER - Touché! I've always appreciated RUSH's very dry sense of humor. I was very surprised when I saw that you and Alex (Lifeson) contributed a song to the soundtrack of the SOUTH PARK movie, BIGGER, LONGER AND UNCUT. How were you approached by the SOUTH PARK producers, Trey Parker and Matt Stone, to do the tune?

**GEDDY:** **Matt Stone is a major punter. He's a big RUSH fan and he actually got a hold of us through our band photographer, Andrew McNaughton. They bumped into each other at a party. I got a call when I was at Ben's house as we were laying down tracks that they wanted us to record the Canadian National Anthem for the movie. It was the whole 'Blame Canada' thing, so we called them back, had a funny conversation, agreed to do the project and Alex and I spent two days in his home studio and we put it together.**



**Photo courtesy of Andrew MacNaughton**

CHRISTOPHER - Long after we are all gone, how would you want Geddy Lee, singer, songwriter, and musician, to be remembered in the music history books, and how do you want RUSH to be remembered?

**GEDDY:** **As a comic in all seriousness, I have to say... that is a very hard question to answer. I guess, we were people who just dedicated to trying to get better. Music is all about wanting to be better at it. If you have some magical chemistry that actually find the music you make compelling, that is a big bonus. It's elusive and it's hard to know when that is going to happen. But, I think how I feel about it. Boy, that's a nice philosophical way to end the interview.**

To read more of Christopher's work, check out these web pages:

[www.aarvak.com](http://www.aarvak.com)

[www.mackietone.com](http://www.mackietone.com)

[www.musicgearreview.com](http://www.musicgearreview.com)

[www.globalbass.com](http://www.globalbass.com)



# Geddy Lee - Exclusive

## Interview By Steve Adams for S.O.R.

I first met Rush singer Geddy Lee 17 years ago, when as a long-haired teenager I bunked off school to get the autographs of my then favourite band as they arrived at Birmingham Airport for a UK tour. At the time, he and his fellow Canadians Alex Lifeson (guitar) and Neil Peart (drums) were arguably the most popular progressive rock band on the planet, a position achieved through hard work and commitment during a fairly gruelling nine year recording career to that point.

Seventeen years later everything and nothing has changed. Rush still exists and consists of the same three members but the band's profile and popularity has waned considerably, especially in the UK. Album sales have been in freefall - a situation exacerbated by the fact that the band has only toured the UK twice in the interim (in 1988 and 1992), and an appalling lack of record company support on this side of the pond ("I can't say they've been the most helpful in my career. I've certainly had better relationships around the globe with record company people, but what can you do?" says Lee).

Despite the sleight to a territory that helped establish them, Rush have retained a hardcore following in the UK, a phenomenon borne out by the annual fan convention, burgeoning tribute bands and the fact that Geddy Lee's first solo album *My Favourite Headache* a marginal music product in the year 2000 has been deemed worthy of release over here. The wholly personable singer admits he hasn't got the "foggiest notion" about what sort of reception the album will get in the UK and Europe, but remains philosophical.



"From talking to the European press there seems to be a whole revisionist attitude towards Rush and progressive rock in general, almost as if it's a new thing to talk about again," he says. "I don't know who pays attention to that, but at least they're talking about it. I hope the enthusiasm I've received over the record so far will spread enough to make people at least curious about it." Across the Atlantic initial response to the album has been excellent, with a variety of rock radio stations giving it airtime, much to the singer's surprise and delight. "I'm amazed at how enthusiastically it's been received," Lee offers genuinely. "It's very gratifying that the early reports have been so overwhelmingly positive. I'm just bracing myself for the backlash!"

The solo album has been something a labour of love for the singer, but would probably never have seen the light of day but for the most tragic of circumstances. He's only had time to work on it because Rush has been put on hold for the past three years during which Neil Peart has had to contend with the deaths of his daughter (killed in a car accident) and his wife (of cancer) within the space of 18 months. Lee is clearly uncomfortable talking about the subject, let alone while promoting something as trivial as a new album, and his voice becomes heavy as he discusses what has clearly been an awful period. "It was a terrible time, a very dark couple of years that were difficult for all of us," he says quietly. "For what Neil was going through, and for the reverberations it had throughout our lives. These were our friends and really part of our family."

It's clear that making the album has been a release from some of the despair, and Lee is grateful for it. It was also a chance to work with Ben Mink, one of his closest friends and a successful songwriter in his own



right, best known for co-writing much of kd lang's material. The pair met when Mink's experimental prog rock band FM supported Rush on an American tour in 1981.

"We've been close friends for a long time but he lives in Vancouver and I live in Toronto," says Lee, warming to his subject once more. "We've often talked about trying to find some excuse to spend more time together, and writing music seemed to be one way we could accomplish it. Of course we were worried that the professional side of things would interfere with the absurd nature of our friendship, but we decided to risk it."

After almost 30 years in Rush I was surprised it had taken him so long to get round to making a solo record (there have been rumours before), but Lee's quick to assert that he never had any desire to do so. "I'd never thought about it. I know how much work it takes to make an album, and as long as Rush was fully functional I knew that if I involved myself in another project it would only remove me from my family even further. As it became apparent that [Rush's] hiatus was going to be quite lengthy, I decided that the time was right to experiment with Ben and see if we could make some music worthy of either being recorded by other people or recorded by ourselves."

Another surprise, not only he did he not want to make a solo album in the first place, but while he was making one he didn't even know he was doing so. "Not really, no," he laughs. "We first started writing just to write, and didn't really have a destination for the songs. Quite frankly I thought maybe we'd end up finding a young artist that needed some material and trying to work some sort of production/writing situation. But as the material developed and we spent more time with it we started putting our own idiosyncratic touches to it and once you start doing that it becomes your own and you're doomed if we give it to someone else now they'd only change it. "So we started feeling a little territorial about it and at the same time getting a lot of encouragement from our record company, so we said what the hell, let's go and do it."

A record deal was hardly a foregone conclusion, but encouragement from his record company gave the project the ultimate green light, for which Lee is obviously hugely thankful. "I have a good relationship with Atlantic Records and in particular Val Azzoli, who I've known for over 20 years. I sent him a few songs and asked what the hell should we do with them. After a couple of days he called back and said 'Let's go make a record'."

And with that My Favourite Headache was born, a very modern though obviously progressive rock record, and one which sounds far more like Rush than one might have expected given Mink's involvement. Lee makes no excuses for the fact. "Well I am what I am, and part of my attitude towards music and my style of putting songs together is borne out of the context of working with Alex and Neil for almost 30 years. You can't rub that out and pretend it doesn't exist," he says. "The music I make in Rush is not music I pretend to like, it is music I like, and it's a genre I like to experiment with. Bringing Ben in was just a different attitude and I think there's a lot of things on this record that could not have existed in the context of Rush. There's a rhythmic attitude and melodic layering that is quite different, but at the core of it it's still me playing my bass and singing the way I sing."

Speaking of singing, a big change for Lee is that he sings his own words on the album in Rush all the lyrics are written by Peart. It was clearly a big deal for him. "That's what made this whole process very challenging for me I never expected that stepping out of the band would be as interesting as a writer as it has been," he offers. "What started fairly insecurely ended up feeling very rewarding. Delving inside myself, experimenting with lyrics and piecing them together was really good for me, both psychologically and compositionally as a songwriter."

Was he ever been tempted to call on 'The professor' Peart for advice? "No" he laughs, "but I've studied with him for a long time!" It's clear that the whole business has re-energised the singer, and he's even contemplated organising some small showcase gigs with the band that played on the record. "I'll spend some time talking about it and if I can work out the logistics maybe do a few small showcase kind of dates, that kind of thing," offers Lee. "I'm not sure if we could do it what with everybody's schedule, so I'm reluctant to say there will be dates but if I can make it work it'd probably be good for me to do."

And then there's the small matter of reactivating Rush, who he says are due to get back together to write again next year. Would he have more confidence if it ever came to fighting with Alex on arrangements? "Oh I have no trouble standing up for myself, I'm a bossy mother! I'll probably be unbearable to work with" It's clear he's looking forward to it, but also recognises that the band's reunion could also be quite a difficult and emotional time. "I have no way of predicting how it's gonna go, I just remain optimistic. Guardedly optimistic, but optimistic none-the-less," he says, slipping back into sombre mode. "I hope that whatever we've gone through as people and as musicians [during the last three years] will impact to make a very interesting piece of work."

And something the band could bring over to the UK on tour? "I'd love to do that," he says equivocally. "It's been a long time since we've been in Europe I guess the last time was Roll The Bones. Hopefully the writing sessions will go well, an album will be borne of it and everyone will feel like travelling a little bit so we can get around to all our fans. "I'd love to be able to come back. I travel to Europe a lot personally but it'd be nice to schlep my band with me."



# WHY AM I HERE?

## A reflection, by Ray Wawrzyniak

I came up with quite an existential title this time around, didn't I? I mean, c'mon, admit it; although we have all been taught not to judge a book by its cover, who among us has not partaken in this unpardonable sin? To parallel that behavior, who among us has not judged a book, or any piece of prose, by its title, if not its cover? So, I know the pressure is on. Whenever Mick requests that I sit down and write a reflection on a recent Rush-related fiasco I may have attended, I don't take titling my piece too lightly. I never want to be too corny, or too obvious, and just cleverly steal a line from a Rush song. Sure, I've done it once or twice, but I always feel the pressure to be original. As well, I usually tend to find humor in almost any event, and therefore try to reflect that ode to humor, sometimes subliminally, in titling a written piece. So, why, "Why Am I here?" this time around? Well, as you'll most likely deduce upon completion of reading this passage, that theme crept up on me often recently. Let me explain...

As always, this is a story about Rush. More precisely, it's a story in which I'm supposed to share with you what happened during two recent opportunities I had to spend time with, so to speak, two members of Rush. The first such episode came on November 10<sup>th</sup> 2000. On this particular evening, I traveled with Joe, a wonderful, definitively true friend of mine for almost half my life now, up to Toronto, Ontario, Canada. We made this 90 minute trip to see Alex Lifeson of Rush perform that evening at what was being billed as "Soul in the City 2000", an event honoring the 6<sup>th</sup> anniversary of The Orbit Room. Of course, Joe and I were hoping for the best. You know the dream: Alex would come out, play for four hours, throw in a few bars of some Rush classics, send the crowd into a frenzy, and leave, with the patrons buzzing, thirsting for more. But, deep down inside, I think Joe and I both knew what we were in for. Deep down inside, I'm sure we both knew we'd see a recreation of some of Alex's Kumbaya appearances from the mid-'90's. You know, instead of the four hours we'd love to see, it would probably be an appearance by Alex on stage for two or three or even four songs, if we were lucky. And, indeed, when all was said and done that evening, that was the case. After making the drive to Toronto (highlighted by Joe introducing me to the amazing Radiohead, whom Joe had been trying to sell me on beforehand. Their amazing record, "The Bends", certainly received rave reviews by the time we rolled into Toronto..), Joe and I easily found the Capitol Events Theatre, a surprisingly, pleasantly beautiful venue that served as the host site for the evening. After sitting through maybe two+ hours of soul music by other "established" local artists (not exactly my cup of tea...), the real show began. And, indeed, the expected happened. About halfway through the show, Alex appeared on stage, and performed two songs with the amazing Dexters. I'm sure you can picture it: he appears from stage right. The assembled Rush fans go nuts. Ear-shattering cries of "All right Allllllleeeeeeeex!" ring through the venue. He proceeds to rip through two tunes, and disappears immediately thereafter. Subsequently, during the "encore", Alex reappears with all the other artists who performed that evening, to take part in an evening closing "celebrity jam" of sorts. He leaves the stage, looks are exchanged, kinesically representing our collective awe, and at 1:00a.m., Joe and I proceed to make the 90-minute drive back home. Now, I have a point to make about all that. And trust me, it relates to the title. But, let me now please reference Rush-related episode #2, if I may...

On November 24<sup>th</sup>, 2000, my trusty travel companion and equally true friend Kevin and I made a short trip over the Niagara Falls Rainbow Bridge, on our way to St. Catherine's, Ontario, to catch up with Geddy on one of his stops on his "My Favorite Headache" promotional tour. This was one in a (relatively) long line of in-store record signings that Geddy was doing in support of his first ever solo release. Geddy was making quite a few stops on this promotional tour, which I would have loved for him to take overseas to his loyal European fanbase, just as a reward for your patience and dedication. For Kevin and I, this was no big deal, travel-wise. The drive from here in Buffalo, New York, to St. Catherine's, Ontario is about a half hour. Upon arriving at Sunrise Records, a record store in the Pen Center in St. Catherine's, it was quite odd to come to grips with the fact that momentarily, not only would we be having an opportunity to exchange greetings with Geddy, but, we would be doing just that in a mall!! Kevin and I braved the elements that day. We stood, outside, in a line that ended up being 300 fans long, in the freezing cold, for a little more than three hours. And what was the reward? Well, we were all herded in, literally past a garbage dumpster, through a narrow back entrance into the stock room of this seemingly run-of-the-mill record store, to share a



minute or two with Geddy. Each fan approached the table, including yours truly and Kevin, presented Ged with whatever piece of memorabilia you chose to have him autograph (my Signals tourbook, if you're keeping score at home...), exchanged what was most likely kind words of congratulations on the success of "My Favorite Headache", and were immediately asked to escort yourself out the front of the store, so as to keep the herd moving. We did that, and episode #2 was complete, successful, and now worthy of reflection.

Back to the beginning. After each of those two events had taken place, I frantically called Mick, sharing with him every detail that I had recorded from each respective event. I mean, I'm a writer, I thought, shouldn't I be taking notes, so as to make this piece you are now reading more descriptive? As a writer, isn't it my job to make you feel as if you were actually there, just by reading what I have written? But somehow it took me a while to get going on this one. Normally, I'm an enthusiastic writer. I don't need to be encouraged to write. I love to sit down and write, probably because I love to reflect. However, upon further review, I didn't think a simple regurgitation of exactly what happened at each event was appropriate. Rather, I sensed a theme developing.

First of all, why am I here? I mean, why am I here in this fanzine? Why is this piece appearing in a publication that is going to be read by millions and millio..., all right, maybe not by that many, but you get the point. Why am I writing this? I mean, as I sit here at my trusty keyboard, it's 8:18 p.m. on January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2001. The two loves of my life, my beautiful (and very understanding!) wife Lisa, and my little angel Kaitlyn, are sitting at home. I'm here at school (where I teach), typing away. Why? Why am I taking this so seriously? Funny thing is, I actually consider myself a writer sometimes, moreso than I consider myself a teacher. But, you know what? I'm not a writer. Yeah, I'm a teacher by trade, but my true love is that of being a husband and father.

So anyway, why am I in this fanzine? Do you really need to be told the answer? I think you know the answer. C'mon, we all have a similar story. In my case, one day, the repeated playing of a certain album by Rush that my cousin always used to play every time I went over his house eventually caught the ear of my brother. That album, "Moving Pictures", made it's way into my family's house, and suddenly, I became interested. Very interested. Who were these guys, anyway? I've certainly never heard anything like this before! I've gotta find out more about these guys...

The next thing you know, there I go driving up to Toronto. I spend money on gas, food, parking, all to see Alex play four songs one night, and arrive home dead tired after 3:00 in the morning. Heck, I wasn't alone. During the course of that night, Joe, Bill Banasiewicz (who was also, not surprisingly, in attendance), and I, struck up a few innocent conversations with others who had come from (literally) various parts of the globe, just to see Alex play a few songs. Heck, I even got to thinking, why was I there with Joe? Why? Simple. Obviously, at some point in Joe's life, he was introduced to Rush's music as well. Sometime after that introduction, in the mid-'80's, Joe and I crossed paths, realized our common interest, and here we are, years later, making this trip together. Standing by each other's side during our respective weddings. Going to sporting events together. Why? Why were we there? Why were we there together? Do I have to spell it out for you?

Again, then, why was I in St. Catherine's? I mean, it was damn cold that day, damn cold!! Why did I do it? I mean, I'm not a kid anymore. I'm approaching 35 now. I have a home, a wife, a child, a real job. Why was I standing out in the freezing cold for over three hours, for the opportunity to chat with Geddy for a minute or two? Why was I there with Kevin? Our introduction to each other is so bizarre. I worked a grand total of one day in a record store in a local mall years ago. On that single day of record store employment, some guy (who turns out to be Kevin), asks "Mr. I Know Everything Record Store Employee", if there's any records coming out soon. Of course, I mentioned "Rush" somewhere in my dissertation to him, we struck up a conversation, and here we are, years later, traveling the world (all right, maybe just parts of the United States, but, the rest of the world is yet to come!!!...) together.

Look, I'll spell it out for you. It's all because of the music. At one point in my life, at one point in your life, you realized something....just, different about Rush. And, since then, you've probably done many things, because of that simple fact that at one point in you life, you heard a song and thought, "Hey, that's pretty cool.. Who are those guys?" That happened to me twice recently, and sent me into this sea of reflection. I ask myself often, when embarking on some Rush-related outing. "Why am I here anyway?" It's all because of the music. It's simple, isn't it? Heck, why are you reading this fanzine that you subscribe to now? Simple: we just love their music..



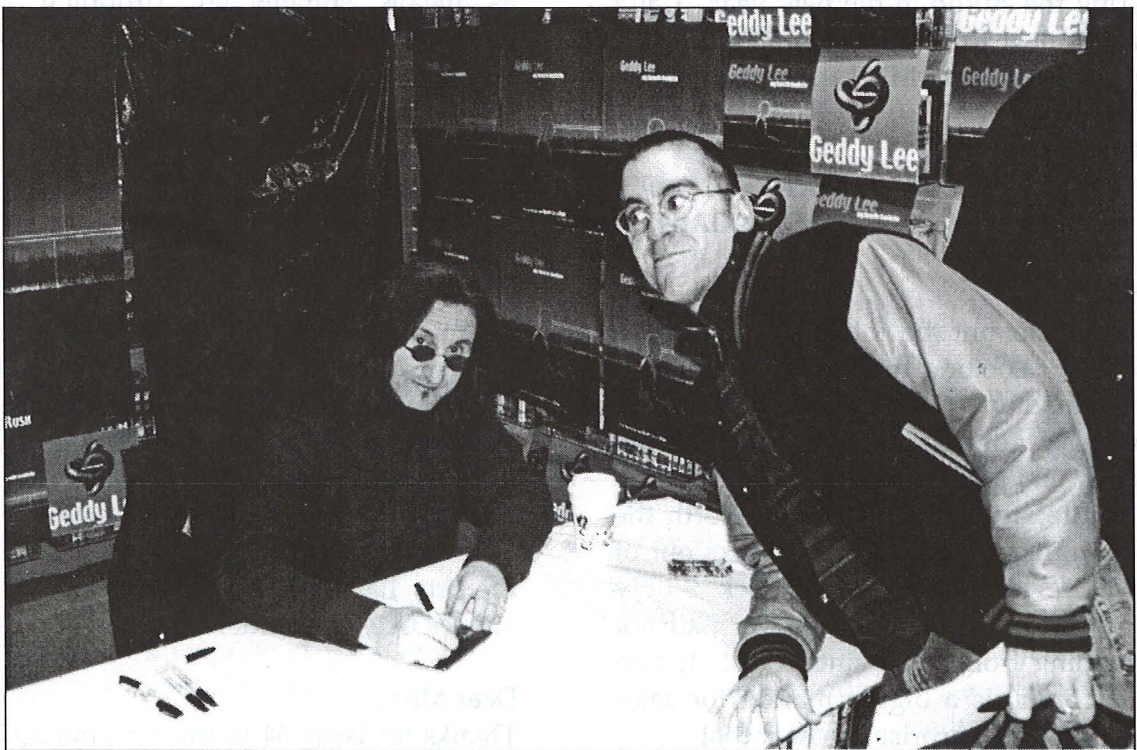
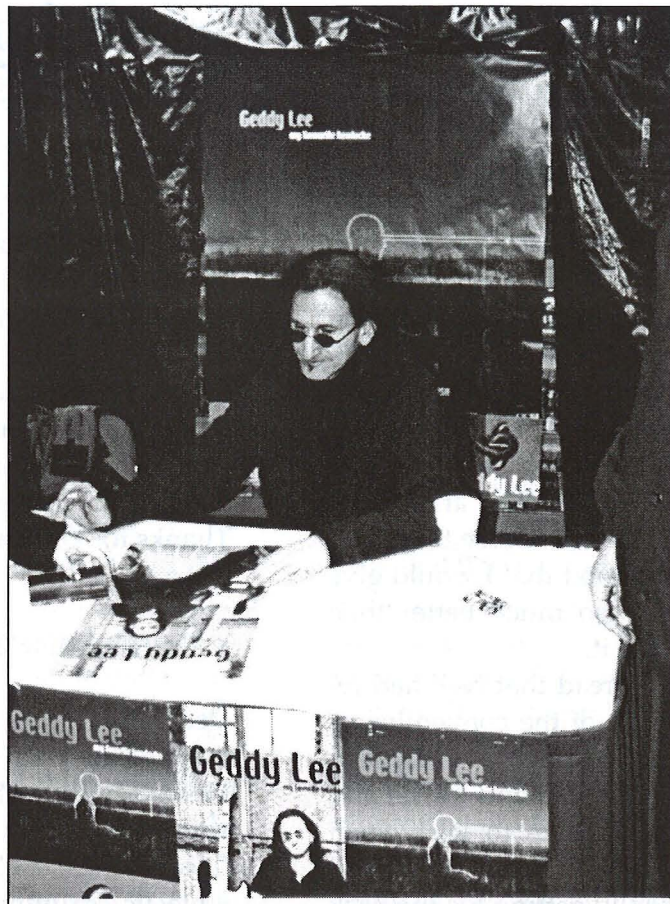


**Meet Geddy Lee**  
In-store autograph session  
Friday, Nov. 24 from 7:30 pm - 9:00 pm  
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Elton John - Live  
Capone - N. Noreaga  
Prodigy - ft. Mobb Deep  
Boulevard - Soundtrack  
Erykah Badu  
Chemical Brothers  
Alicia Keys  
Versace







# Signals

Dear Spirit,

First of all I would like to wish everybody a Happy New Year and here's hoping that Spirit will go from strength to strength in 2001. Anyway, I bought my copy of Geddy's solo album "My Favorite Headache" in November and it's played almost every day, my favourite tracks being the title track, 'Working at Perfekt', 'The Angel's Share', 'Still' and 'Grace to Grace'. To me the album is that good that I would give it 10 out of 10, and it's so much better than T4E....I'm really enjoying it.

It was a bit of a shock to read that Neil had re-married - and on the day of the convention of all days (he kept that quiet). Anyway, congratulations go to both Neil and Carrie and I know that we all would like to wish them both all the happiness for the future. It's good to know that Neil is finally getting his life back together and also brilliant news that the guys are entering the studio in the new year. Can't wait for that next Rush album, but meanwhile I'll carry on listening to MFH - it is really good you know.

All the best.

**MARK V LILLEY  
DONCASTER**

Dear Mick,

This letter is late, but the convention was once again superb. Looking forward to your ideas to revamp the day. It will be difficult to better things as it is.... or do you have plans to bring Alex, Geddy and Neil over?!!

'My Favourite Headache', was well worth the wait. I would say 9 outstanding tracks out of 11. It was reviewed in 'Classic Rock' - only giving it 3 out of 5, but the reviewer had not heard anything from Rush since 1980! It also stated that Brazil is a bigger market for sales than the UK. I was surprised to hear that.

So many people write to SOR saying "I didn't go to the convention this year, I might go next year". The date is Saturday September 8<sup>th</sup>, order your ticket

# Signals

Special New Year greetings to the following: Ray (New York), Paul, Babs, Moz, Kate, Chris and Nick (Wigan). Chris (Notts - thanks for the t-shirt), Brian (Durham), Steve, Deb and Lloyd (Warrington). The boys back home (Gary, Graeme and Norman [can I have the platinum disc this year?!]). Plus 'A Happy New Year' to everyone at 'Spirit of Rush'. Thanks for keeping the name of Rush alive.

Cheers,

**JOHN GILCHRIST  
CHOPPINGTON, NORTHUMBERLAND**

Dear Mick,

Happy new year! Let's hope it's a hum-dinger. I love 'My Favorite Headache'. Funny thing is I knew I would as soon as I saw it in the rack. Great songs! Cameron has always been a fantastic drummer and there he is again gouging out my eyeballs. The bass playing is, as always, suitably jaw dropping. Not that happy with Mink though - but I'd only be nit picking.

It was fucking great reading the last issue. Loads upon loads of good news! They're up there now...up there in Quebec banging out tunes! Overall though, the best news was Neil's wedding. I'm so made up for him after all those cruel things that happened to him.

There also seems to be a few good bands around at the moment - Clinic, At the Drive-in (their guitar player is a Rush fan, trust me!) ...and you will know us by the trail of dead. All flattened faces!!

Anyway cheers man!

**NAME AND ADDRESS WITHELD**

PS Lets have less Dream Theater and more articles like 'The Underlying Theme'. Brilliant!

Dear Mick,

Thanks for issue 54 of this fine magazine. I've been subscribing for a few years now since #25 and with the positive news coming from Canada, Hopefully you will be able to continue for a good while yet. Unfortunately, I didn't get my latest issue at the same time as everyone else due to insufficient postage on the



envelope. The Post Office didn't even tell me until they had had it for nearly 2 weeks. Why didn't they get me out of bed to pay up the remaining 17p? Did they not realise what was inside the envelope??!!

Regarding Ged's solo CD, where the hell did he get that title from? We have 11 great new songs from the best singer/bassist/keyboardist etc. in the world. Which, dare I say.....of a soft (?) rock nature, with a Presto (not my favourite Rush album either) feel to it. Great to hear Ged singing on a few ballads for a change. I was lucky enough to have an advanced tape of it from my mate Kevin, albeit of a bit dodgy quality but this only inspired me to get the CD ASAP. I tried 2 different record shops on the day after the CD was released, only to find that they had both sold out of all copies they originally ordered, but I did get the last copy in the third shop. So there is still some interest in the band over here. Are you listening guys!!! I'll let others do a track-by-track analysis of the CD, suffice to say I love it and think it's much better than Victor (sorry Alex) with Ged's vocals again sounding better the older he gets. The only disappointing thing for me was the lack of lyrics. I am unable to access the internet to get them so I would be very grateful if anyone could send me a copy of them at to the following address **{no need Brian, see later in the mag for the lyrics- ED}**.

Brian Swales  
14 East Lea  
Thornley  
Durham DH6 3EA

Also I'm always on the lookout for anyone who may be interested in swapping audio or video material by the band. I have approx. 30 videos and 60 audios/CDs I am willing to share with any like-minded fans.

I was also wondering if anyone can help me in my search for CDs. There are 3 in particular I'm looking for: "Mystic Dreams", "Virtual Songs" and "Cygnus".

Anyway, keep up the good work Mick and team and you can even send the next issue without postage, providing the PO get their finger out.

**BRIAN SWALES  
THORNLEY**

#### **GEDDY LEE – MY FAVORITE HEADACHE**

I must admit some trepidation upon hearing of Geddy's solo project. initially I was afraid that

it might be another 'Victor' (of which I'm not the greatest fan) and also, with Ged's references to 'Massive Attack' and Trip-hop albums, there was a worry of God-knows-what emerging!

Anyway, upon purchasing this thing (it was nice to see that, in true Rush fashion, the release date was put back a couple of times – making the anticipation/worry even greater). After initial listenings all of my fears have been laid to rest; a glorious rumble of bass guitar to begin with and off we go...

48 minutes later and I am sat in my seat with a big grin on my face.

Yes, I like it, in a lot of ways.

I like the songs, the playing, the production, Geddy's voice (especially Geddy's voice!, oh, how I've missed Geddy's voice!!).

You kind of get the feeling that had the tragically enforced three year hiatus never occurred then this might have been close to the end result for the follow up to 'Test for Echo'. Obviously it is missing Alex and Neil's trademark sounds and techniques but this album certainly shows where a huge amount of the melodic direction of Rush originates.

Most of (if not all) of the songs would sit comfortably on a Rush album.....my own personal favourites are the last three, but only just. It really is a remarkably consistent piece of work.

Let's hope that Geddy can produce more ideas of this quality for the next album. If he does, then it could be their best. I can't wait...

**DAVE LYTHGOE  
STOKE-ON-TRENT**

Hiya Mick, Skippy etc

Was I the only one watching a weird but (I thought) hilarious TV show on Satellite TV Channel E4 the other night called BONZAI? They were using various old rock numbers for backing tracks for their assorted activities, and as well as Don't Fear The Reaper and Smoke On the Water, I heard the instrumental Passages to both JACOBS LADDER and XANADU. Made me smile just a bit.

I think that 'Headache' is a great album by the way, although apparently that puts me into some sort of minority according to feed-back I've heard on the net. I've been following the guys for ages now. Bought 'Kings' when it was released and they been my main favorite band ever since. I play bass guitar too, so Geddy is



somewhat 'Up There' as far as I'm concerned. I like this CD every bit as much as Victor, but then I'm yet to hear something I don't like by them. I'm no anorak, believe me, their music just works for me I guess.

Any news on the next convention?

If anyone is planning a Canadian jaunt for the next tour.... a little way off I know but what the hey, then drop me a line on [tumble.downtheyears@lineone.net](mailto:tumble.downtheyears@lineone.net) as it's something I'm considering myself.

Keep it rolling Mick..... The magazine is doing just fine.

KEN WYNNE

Email

Dear Mick,

Thanks for the mag - I enjoy getting it and reading it, and Happy New Year to you and Janet. I writing to you about a totally amazing band (with Jason Bonham on drums) called The Healing Sixes - and would like shameless promotion for them!

Check it out on my site at [www.cavemanproductions.com/REVS/sixes2order.html](http://www.cavemanproductions.com/REVS/sixes2order.html)

Thanks very much - speak to you soon,

KEVIN (the Caveman) SHIRLEY

Email

### Not Quite Perfekt

Pre-ordering my copy from one of the now notorious websites, I waited eagerly for its final release, after a couple date changes.

A friend downloaded the title track from an MP3 site a couple of weeks before, and I must that what I heard did not fill me with any great excitement! Dismissing what I heard and any overriding thoughts until I had a CD copy in my machine.

When it arrived through the door I was pleased to see that I had a Canadian copy of the album in a digi-pack sleeve, with a sticker stating: The debut release by/Le premier album par Geddy Lee of/de Rush.

The album overall has some interesting moments, without being anything too ground breaking. A couple of the songs could sit fairly easily in any recent Rush album, but Geddy has tried to bring an overall different effect to proceedings. It took a couple of listens to really get anything out of it, but after a while there were a few numbers that easily slipped into my consciousness. Particularly 'Working At

Perfekt' became quite catchy, with that great violin sound. A couple of others have a very comfortable feel about them, and there are for me, no particular turkeys in there, they are all competent and well crafted, if some do lack that spark.

Lyrically there's nothing too heavy, nor too thought provoking, highlighting why Mr P. writes the majority of the bands lyrics. Also, perhaps the reason why they are not included on the album!

Overall opinion - nice to hear something again from the Rush camp, but not in the innovative sound and feel that I got from the excellent 'Victor' album. Which for me anyway, showed a way the band should have edged more towards than what T4E gave us! It would also have been more interesting if he had tried some different vocal variations to add some spice. Geddy has produced a well-rounded and polished product that has some very enjoyable moments without it knocking your socks off, but will not get too much airplay on my system!

NEIL ELLIOT  
SURREY





# Another Brush with Greatness

By **Monica Davidson**

I was very fortunate this past Monday evening when I was granted another opportunity to meet Geddy.

Geddy made a stop on his My Favorite Headache promo tour in Seattle, Monday November 27, 2000. KISW, our rock radio station had been mentioning during the previous week that he would be interviewed at 6:00 pm at the station. They didn't say if it was an "in-person" interview or via telephone. I called Anthem/SRO and asked them about Geddy's schedule for that week and they said he would have four stops: Seattle, San Jose, a Rockline appearance in Los Angeles, and Orange County for his only signing for that week at the Virgin Megastore.

I knew there was a pretty good chance of meeting him either before or after the interview at KISW so I scouted out the building a few nights before to check out the logistics to see where I should park, which entrance he would most likely arrive at, etc. On Monday Steve and I got there around 5:15 pm and got a great parking spot right across from the main entrance of the building. On our drive there we had KISW on and they announced that the interview was still on for 6:00 pm and that Matt Cameron would be making an appearance with Geddy. This was also great news! It would be nice to meet both of them.

We entered the building and stood in the lobby area and hung around for awhile waiting. We each brought our MFH CD's and I brought a photo taken by the Spirt of Rush folks that was a live shot of Geddy from one of the Toronto shows during the Test for Echo shows that a bunch of us attended. It was nearing 6:00 pm and we were wondering if somehow he had already arrived and got to the station (which was on the 16th floor) without passing by us. I left Steve to watch the elevators and I went on up to where the station was. It was deserted and only had a buzzer to be let in after hours. It didn't look like anyone was there yet so I went back down to the lobby. A few more minutes went by and then Matt Cameron started walking up the steps outside and entered the building heading towards us near the elevators. We addressed him politely and he was very nice and signed our CD's and posed for a few photos. I asked him about playing on the CD and he said it was a thrill and 2112 was his first Rush experience. After a few minutes of chatting with us, he went up in the elevator to the KISW studios.

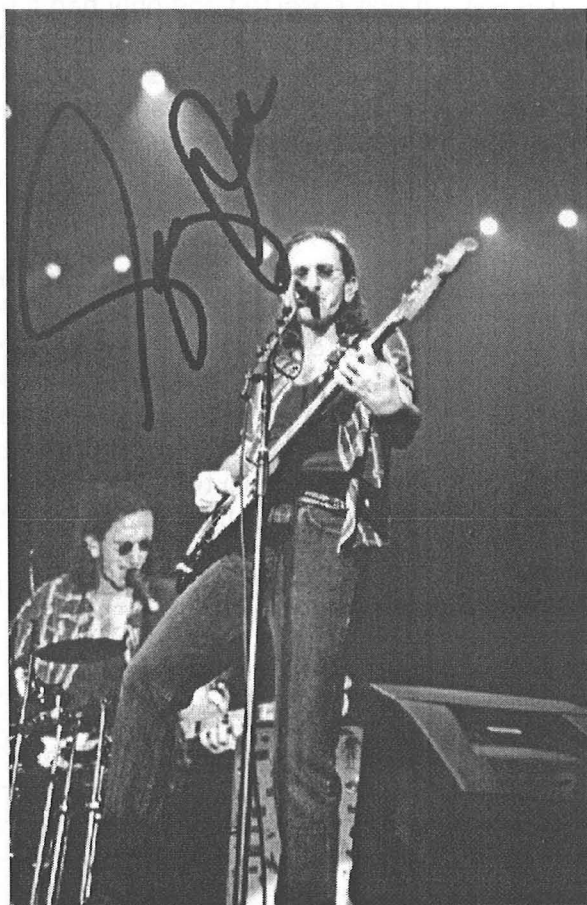
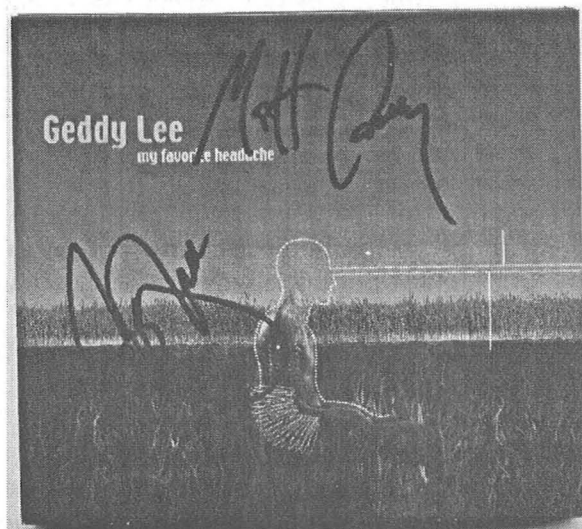
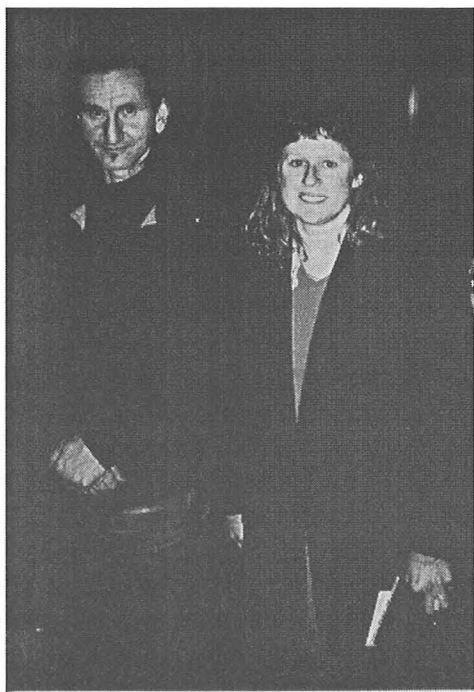
It was only a few minutes later, around 6:05 pm when I saw Geddy heading up the sidewalk. He arrived in the lobby where a KISW employee was waiting to take him upstairs. Someone from Atlantic Records was with him also carrying a few promo posters for My Favorite Headache. We approached him as they were waiting for the elevator and he was nice enough to sign our CD's. We let him go without asking any questions since he was already a few minutes late for the interview. We happily ran back to our car so we could tune in to the radio and listen to the interview. Once the interview was over we would head back outside to the outer lobby area and hopefully catch a glimpse of him again as he was leaving the station. The interview started at 6:15 pm and lasted until 7:30 pm. At that time several fans exited their cars and headed for the building. We were able to get back inside (the doors to this building automatically lock after 6:00 pm or so) and waited in the warmth of the lobby near the elevators.

We didn't have to wait long - Geddy came out of the elevator with Matt Cameron and the Atlantic Records employee. There were only about 12 fans so he was very nice about signing something for everyone - and some people had more than one item. I had him sign the photo that I brought of him since he had already signed my MFH CD. He also posed for several photos including one with two little boys and one with me! attended my first show on 3/18/80). When he entered the building about an hour and a half earlier, he had his trademark tinted glasses on but when he exited and greeted the fans he had them off and they were resting on the top of his head. That was one of the first times we had seen him without glasses on since the Presto era. The autographs and photo taking lasted about 5 minutes and then his driver (the Atlantic rep.) said they had to get to the



airport for Geddy's flight to San Jose. That was one of the greatest moments for me. I have met him and Alex several times but this was the first time I have had a photo opportunity with one of them - after 21 years of being a fan!

Everyone thanked him and gave a wave as they exited the building and headed toward the parking garage, driving away in a new Audi heading towards the South I-5 on-ramp.





# My favourite headache - lyrics

## Grace To Grace

A Hundred Thousand Years  
A Hundred Thousand Miles Of Track  
A Hundred Thousand Tears  
Hundred Thousand Souls  
You Can't Give Back

When The Dark Subsides  
An Eternity Goes By  
On The Fault Line  
Between Then And Now

When The Truth Hides  
An Eternity Goes By  
On The Fault Line  
Between Then And Now

Grace To Grace  
Immaculate Vision  
Of What Should Have Been

Face To Face  
Eloquent Stories  
Of What Could Have Been

A Hundred Thousand Dreams  
A Hundred Thousand Beams Of Light  
A Hundred Thousand Schemes  
Gods In The Heavens Can't Get It  
Right

When The Dark Subsides  
An Eternity Goes By  
On The Fault Line  
Between Then And Now

When The Truth Hides  
Integrity Falls Shy  
On The Fault Line  
Between Then And Now

Grace To Grace  
Immaculate Vision  
Of What Should Have Been

Place To Place  
Elegant Story  
Of What Could Have Been

When The Truth Hides  
Integrity Falls Shy  
On The Fault Line  
Between Then And Now

When The Truth Hides  
An Eternity Goes By  
On The Fault Line  
Between Then And Now

Grace To Grace  
Immaculate Vision  
Of What Should Have Been

Face To Face  
Elegant Story  
Of What Could Have Been

Grace To Grace  
Immaculate Vision  
Of What Should Have Been

Grace To Grace

## Home On The Strange

He Sleeps With A Chain Saw  
Got Eyes Like An Outlaw

He Takes A Two Smoke Walk  
He Don't Like To Talk

And He Don't Like Change  
And He Don't Like Change  
You May Think He's Deranged  
But He'd Rather Be Home,  
Home.. Home On The Strange

He's A Canadian Icon  
He's Sleeps With His Clothes On  
He Likes To Work With His Hands  
He's An Apolitical Man

And He Don't Like Change  
And He Don't Like Change  
You May Think He's Deranged  
But He'd Rather Be Home,  
Home.. Home On The Strange  
One In A Lifetime  
One In A World  
One In A Life Time  
One In A World  
One In A Life Time  
One In A World

He Sleeps With A Chainsaw  
He Sings Fa Fa Fa Fa Fa  
He Likes To Work With His Hands  
He's An Apolitical Man

And He Don't Like Change  
And He Don't Like Change  
You May Think He's Deranged  
But He'd Rather Be Home,  
Home.. Home On The Strange

And He Don't Like Change  
And He Don't Like Change  
You May Think He's Deranged  
But He'd Rather Be Home,  
Home.. Home On The Strange

## My Favorite Headache

One Man Standing On The Plains Of  
Abraham  
Watching A Damaged Sunrise  
One Man Standing Near The Edge  
Of A Quiet Breakdown

I Watch The Sea  
It Helps To Anchor Me  
I Watch The Sea  
It Helps To Anchor Me

Once You Start Hiding  
You Keep On Hiding  
Till Your Paranoia Calms Down  
Once You Start Watching  
You Keep On Watching  
Till You're Tied Up And You're  
Spellbound

Just Between The Ice Ages Anyway  
I Want To Talk But I Haven't Got  
Too Much To Say  
I Don't Mean To Be So Nihilistic  
Forgive Me If I Seem To Be Too  
Realistic

Once You Start Running  
You Keep On Running  
Till Your Muscles Start To Breakdown

Once You Start Falling  
You Keep On Falling  
Till You Hit The Cold. Cold Ground

I Watch T.v.  
What Do You Want From Me  
I Watch T.v.  
What Do You Want From Me

Just Between The Ice Ages Anyway  
I Want To Talk But I Haven't Got  
Enough To Say  
I Don't Mean To Be So Nihilistic  
Forgive Me If I Seem To Be Too  
Realistic

Once You Start Hiding  
You Keep On Hiding  
Till You Feel You're Safe And Sound  
Once You Start Watching  
You Keep On Watching  
Till You're Tied Up And You're  
Spellbound

I Watch The Sea  
It Helps To Anchor Me  
I Watch The Sea  
I Saw It On T.v

## Moving To Bohemia

Where The Air's Not Clean  
Where The Water's Glowing Green  
Where The Dog's Are Mean

I'm Moving To Bohemia  
Taking You Along  
Say Goodbye To Suburbia  
You Don't Have To Cut The Lawn

I Had A Dream Of A Different Place  
I Had A Dream That You Had A  
Different Face  
I Heard A Scream Of A Desperate Kind  
I've Got A Feeling That You're Gonna  
Love What You'll Find

Where We're On T.v.  
Where The Money Grows On Trees  
Where The Beer Is Free  
Moving To Bohemia  
Taking You Along  
Say Goodbye To Utopia  
We'll Wave Before We're Gone

I Had A Dream Of A Different Place  
I Had A Dream That You Had A  
Different Face  
I Hear The Beat Of An Anxious Heart  
I Feel The Heat...it's Time For Us To  
Start

Time For Us To Start  
I'm Moving To Bohemia  
Where The Literature 's Obscene  
Bathing In Euphoria  
Where The Naked Truth Is On The  
Screen

I Had A Dream Of A Different Place  
I Had A Dream That You Had A  
Different Face  
I Heard A Scream Of A Desperate Kind  
I've Got A Feeling That...



You're Gonna Love What You'll Find  
You're Gonna Love What You'll Find

### Runaway Train

Nothing Blooms  
In A Loveless Room  
You've Got To Want It  
You've Got To Want It  
Who's The Fool  
Where Apathy Rules  
You've Got To Want It  
You've Got To Want It  
If You Don't Want It  
It Remains The Same  
It's A Heart Of Darkness  
That Wants To Play That Game  
If There's No Defiance  
It Remains Insane  
If It's All Compliance  
It's A Runaway Train  
Nothing So Cruel  
Where Malevolence Rules  
You've Got To Want It  
You've Got To Want It  
There Is No Defence  
Against Pointed Arrogance  
You've Got To Want It  
You've Got To Want It  
If You Don't Want It  
It Remains The Same  
It's A Heart Of Darkness  
That Wants To Play That Game  
It Can Be Surprising  
When You Lose The Shame  
And The Sun Starts Rising  
Another Day To Tame  
If You're Heart Is Aching  
Just Remove The Shame  
You've Got To Want It  
Give Your Soul A Shaking  
And Refuse The Blame  
You've Got To Want It  
Who's The Fool  
Where Apathy Rules  
You've Got To Want It  
You've Got To Want It  
If You Don't Want It  
It Remains The Same  
It's A Heart Of Darkness  
That Wants To Play That Game  
If There's No Defiance  
It Remains Insane  
If It's All Compliance  
It's A Runaway Train  
It's A Runaway Train

### Slipping

Meant To Tell You  
Tell You From The Start  
Meant To Show You  
What's Inside This Shallow Heart  
But I Could Not Find The Words  
Worthy Enough To Say  
I Slipped Along The Way  
I Slipped Along The Way  
Tried To Be There

Be There When You Fall  
Tried To Make You Feel Big  
When Life Makes You Feel Small  
But I Could Not Find The Steps  
Quickly Enough To Take  
I Slipped Along The Way  
I Slipped Along The Way  
Want To Change Things  
Want To Clear The Air  
Fix The Things Around Us  
So Badly In Need Of Repair  
But I Might Not Have The Sense  
Sense Enough To Change  
I Slipped Along The Way

### Still

Trick Of The Light  
Or Just  
A Loss Of Perspective  
Flaw In The Grand Plan  
Just The Way It Is  
Looks Good From A Distance  
But The Closer I Come It...  
Becomes More Daunting But  
These Moments Will Pass

### Still

Halfway Up The Hill  
My Fingers May Bleed  
But I've Got To Get There  
Still  
Standing On The Hill  
My Spirit's Released  
But I've Got To Get There  
Lost In An Abstract Thought  
Dazed And Distracted  
Winded Yet Still I'm Caught  
With A Fragment Of Doubt  
Slowed By Reflection But  
These Moments Will Pass

### Still

Halfway Up The Hill  
My Fingers May Bleed  
But I've Got To Get There  
Still  
Standing On The Hill  
My Spirit's Released  
But I've Got To Get There

It's Just Confusion  
An Illusion  
Easily Overdone  
Here Comes Resolution  
Absolution

It's Not An Illusion  
Not A Fiction  
Easily Overcome  
Here Comes Revolution  
Absolution

Trick Of The Light Or Just  
Too Much Perspective  
Looks Good From A Distance But  
The Closer I Come It  
Becomes More Daunting But  
These Moments Will Pass

### Still

### The Angels' Share

The Angels' Share  
The Secrets Of The Universe  
It's Seldom Fair  
Partly Blessing Partly Curse  
All Those Things We Cannot Know  
We Dream , We Hypothesize  
Maybe These Are Secrets Shared By  
Those Watching From The Sky  
If We Are Only Members Of The  
Human Race  
No Supernatural Beings From A  
Supranatural Place  
If You Can't Solve The Problem  
Come And Tell Me To My Face  
The Angels' Share  
All The Human Mysteries  
There Is No Prayer  
To The Thieves Of Celestial History  
The Myth Of Perfect Reason  
We've Forgotten At Birth  
It's A Kind Of Clandestine Conspiracy  
A Seraphin Joke Of Eternity  
If We Are Only Members Of The  
Human Race  
No Supernatural Beings From A  
Supranatural Place  
If You Can't Solve The Problem  
Come And Tell Me To My Face  
All Those Things We Cannot Know  
We Dream , We Hypothesize  
Maybe These Are Secrets Shared By  
Those Watching From The Sky  
If We Are Only Members Of The  
Human Race  
No Supernatural Beings From A  
Supranatural Place  
If You Can't Solve The Problem  
Come And Tell Me To My Face

### The Present Tense

Living In The Present Tense  
When You Lose The Past  
And The Future Makes No Sense  
You're Living In The Present Tense  
Crawling Out, Secure And Confident  
Imbued With Innocence  
Ready For The Whirl  
Suddenly The View Was More Intense  
Living In A Different Kind Of World  
You're Living  
Living In The Present Tense  
There's Nothing To Blame  
No Victim Of Consequence  
You're Living In The Present Tense  
Something You Said  
It Made Me  
Step Outside ..the Moment  
Eyes Pan Right And Left  
Around My World  
Open Yourself  
Up To The Possibility  
Aware Of Some Reality  
Outside Your World  
In A Silent Universe



The Moment Can Be So Real  
 You Almost Can't Stand It  
 In A Distant Universe  
 Distracted From Ourselves  
 You Can't Help But Wonder  
 In A Crowded Universe  
 When The Talking Turns To Noise  
 You Almost Start Laughing  
 You're Living  
 Living In The Present Tense  
 When You Lose The Past  
 And The Future Makes No Sense  
 You're Living In The Present Tense  
 Nothing To Blame  
 No Victim Of Consequence  
 You're Living In The Present Tense

#### Working At Perfekt

Draw A Line Strong And Clear  
 Make It Bend To Your Will  
 All The Lines In A Face  
 So Hard To Make Stand Still  
 'till The Flaws Disappear  
 'till What's Wrong Disappears  
 'till All That's Wrong Will Disappear  
 Working At Perfect  
 Got Me Down On My Knees  
 Success To Failure

Just A Matter Of Degrees  
 Success To Failure  
 Just A Matter Of Degrees  
 All The Colours Of The Day  
 Have Somehow Disappeared  
 All The Colours Of The Universe  
 Are Closer Than They Appear  
 Are Not As Close As They Appear  
 Are Not As Close As They Appear  
 Not As Close As They Appear  
 Nothing Is Perfect  
 Certainly Not Me  
 Success To Failure  
 Just A Matter Of Degrees  
 Working At Perfect  
 Got Me Down On My Knees  
 But When It's Right  
 It's Right As Rain  
 And When It's Right  
 There Is No Pain  
 And When It's Right  
 You Start Again  
 Working At Perfect  
 Got You Down On Your Knees  
 Success To Failure  
 Just A Matter Of Degrees  
 Success To Failure  
 Just A Matter Of Degrees

**Window To The World**  
 I've Gone Flying, Trying To Reach You  
 You've Been Hiding, Riding Me To A  
 State Like This  
 Give Me That Window To,  
 Give Me That Window To,  
 Give Me That Window To The World  
 We Are Sailing, Flailing Through The  
 Ether  
 You've Been Trailing, Failing Me With  
 You're View Of Bliss  
 Give Me That Window To,  
 Give Me That Window To,  
 Give Me That Window To The World  
 A Little More Than This,  
 A Little Less Than That,  
 You've Got Magic In Your Hands  
 A Little More Like This,  
 A Little Less Like That,  
 I've Got Magic In My Hands  
 You've Conspired, Inspired Me To  
 Find A Place Like This  
 Give Me That Window To,  
 Give Me That Window To,  
 Give Me That Window To The World

**The Indie  is out there!**



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# 'Counterparts' @ <http://www.rushweb.net/index.htm>

## Questions Geddy Lee

Recently, I had the opportunity to send Geddy Lee questions for him to answer. The following are Geddy's replies.

### *My Favourite Headache*

1. When I listen to MFH, I get a positive, happy vibe even from the more cynical or questioning songs. Is this a reflection of the recording and producing process? How much do you think the mood or attitude of the musicians is transferred to an album?

*I do believe that there was an underlying optimistic, and positive atmosphere during the writing and recording of this music. My friendship with Ben Mink is largely based on our equally silly sense of humour and our common outlook philosophically. So even when we are in quite a serious or cynical frame of mind there is usually a tongue in cheek or irreverent element existing.*

2. After the JAM! On-line music magazine article in January of this year, which you stated you were considering doing a solo album, when was the precise moment where you said to yourself, "I'm going ahead with this?"

*Shortly thereafter.*

3. How long ago did you first start writing lyrics for MFH, or was it mostly spontaneous?

*I have kept a notebook for quite a few years, but have been quite lazy about using it. Occasionally I would write things down in it, but would seldom follow through or go back to them. It was while working with Ben, during this extended hiatus from Rush, that I began to get serious about writing my thoughts down and I found this a challenging and thoroughly clarifying experience.*

4. Did you have all the rhythm sections written before Ben came in, or did you duplicate the way you wrote for MFH, as you would do in Rush whereas both Alex and yourself come into the first few writing sessions with a lot of 'Demo Material' that you had recorded earlier at home and sort of see what fits where, etc?

*We wrote almost all of these songs together, Ben and I, in our home studios and our home demos in fact became the basis for this album. The rhythm parts were designed by myself and Ben and improved upon with the input of the 2 drummers we used.*

5. What basses did you use to record MFH?

*I used my black Fender Jazz (1972) and my red Fender Jazz (Fender custom shop built in 1996).*

6. What was the motivating factor behind your selection of Matt Cameron for this production?

*His tone, solid drumming style and his range of experience made him a very desirable choice for us. What a great player he is.*

7. During the recording of MFH, was there any point where you said to yourself, "I'm going to call Alex and Neil to save me?"

*To save me? From what? No. I didn't feel I needed saving. At one point I thought it would be fun to have them play on a hidden track or something that would have been just for fun.*

8. What song on MFH are you the most proud of? Conversely, what song do you think could have been better in retrospect?

*Hard for me to tell at this point...perhaps Working @ Perfekt and Slipping are my personal highlights... but I had enough time to live with these songs to feel strongly about all of them...I*



*might have remixed a couple but I'm the kind of guy who would keep remixing until the cows come home.*

9. What were the most difficult duties on a Solo Album in comparison with a Rush Album?  
*Knowing when to stop, and assuming sole responsibility for the promotional activities that I would normally share with Alex and Neil.*

10. Did you have a hand in choosing the designers of the MFH package? In addition, how much of a role did you have with the design of [www.myfavoriteheadache.com](http://www.myfavoriteheadache.com)?  
*Yes, I chose Steve Mykolyn to design both the cover and the website and we worked together closely on ideas with Fuel on the cover design, and with the Atlantic records website people on the site design.*

11. How much are you enjoying the current promotional in-store appearances you are doing?  
*I am surprised how much I have enjoyed these sessions. Getting to meet fans and to hear how much our music has meant to them over the years and how favourably they feel about MFH has been very gratifying indeed.*

### *General*

1. Who are some of your favourite performers? (Musical, Theatre, T.V., etc.)  
*Bjork, Radiohead, Tragically Hip, Vladimir Guerrero, Robert Deniro, Martin Scorsese, Jim Carrey, Tom Stoppard, Cormac McCarthy, Bill Bryson, Richard Ford, Gerhard Richter, these are just some of the "living"...I could go on forever*
2. Considering the current state of free agency, can you call the modern day New York Yankees the greatest team in the history of baseball?  
*When considering the greatest team I'm afraid free agency cannot be a consideration. Are the 27 Yanks better? Having never seen them or the gashouse gang or the big red machine or the A's of the early 70's???...who knows and who cares. They are certainly among the best. Being AMONG the Best....certainly that should be the goal....that should be enough.*
3. What team will Alex Rodriguez end up with and how much would this team have to pay for him?  
*17 to 20 million and my guess is L.A. or Seattle*
4. Do you have any aspirations in becoming involved in a ownership role with a Major League team?  
*Who wouldn't, but I'm afraid financially it's out of my league.*
5. Other than baseball, what are some of your other interests and hobbies?  
*I have many. Hiking, biking, tennis, wine collecting, travel, photography, Art and architecture, reading, films, French Wine, did I mention wine?... shall I go on?*
6. What would I find in your CD player right now?  
*Moby, Bjork, Radiohead, Ella Fitzgerald, Chemical Bros. Glenn Gould....*
7. Do you have any interest in producing other Rock Acts, anytime soon, or down the road a bit?  
*I like working with other people and sure, I would produce if the right situation came up. Right now I am helping a band called Rocket Science try and finish an independent release.*
8. If you ever recorded another solo project (or any other project outside Rush), and you could pick any musician(s) you would like to work with, whether they are living today or dead, who would you choose and why?  
*I haven't thought about it and a question like that requires more time than I can afford to say right now.*



9. I have found it to be impossible to locate a good kosher deli in Toronto, where the food tastes like Grandma's cooking. Do you have any recommendations?

*Sadly No. One of Toronto's great flaws is the lack of a truly great deli. Go to Montreal and try Shwartzes...the best smoked meat sandwich on the planet!*

10. Have you begun to pick up your dog's poop in front of Mike Bullard's studio yet? :-)) (In reference to the CTV nightly program, *Open Mike with Mike Bullard*, where Mike asked Geddy to pick up his dog's "presents" in front of Mike's studio.)

*Ha!*

### **Rush**

1. On behalf of Rush fans outside of North America, is there any chance that Rush breaks its recent geographic barriers and rewards these long waiting fans with a possible world tour? (Especially those fans in South America who are longing for Rush to visit?)

*I can't say at this time.*

2. What can you call the greatest single moment in your career with Rush?

*Too many to pick one.*

3. What factors could you give that prevented Rush from falling into the unfortunate trap of drug addiction, etc.?

*We're too normal!*

4. What are your general thoughts of Rush web sites and message boards?

*I haven't visited many. But I have found a strange combination of interesting interpretations of the music, wildly incorrect information and gossip. I encourage free discussion of ideas ...humorous or otherwise...that have sprung from a song title or concept. These sites can provide an interesting forum for that. We designed the interactive section of my website with that goal in mind.*



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(too easy!)

Name that Rush Toon  
(waaaay too easy!)

Tribute Band Concert  
(too cool!)

Talent Show & Contest  
(strut your stuff!)

Rush Karaoke  
(try not to strut too much!)

Mixer  
(party on!)

Fan & Memorabilia Contests  
(for real 'fan'atics!)

Prizes  
(woohoo!)

Birds of a Feather Sessions  
(you know who you are!)

Charity Auction  
(all to the good!)

Guest Speakers  
(dare we say?)

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# The Geddy Lee Interview

By **PAUL CANTIN** Senior Reporter, JAM! Showbiz

**PART 1**

As Geddy Lee neared completion of his debut solo album, "My Favourite Headache," Rush's bassist-singer found himself stricken not with a throbbing cranium, but a wrenched back and shoulder pain.

"The last month of the project, I had a spasm in my neck that would just not go," Lee recently told JAM! Music. "At times, I found myself in quite a stressed-out state of mind. I had to learn how to de-stress myself," he said of his work on the solo album. "I am very passionate about what I do. I throw myself into it 150 per cent. And that means I take my responsibilities very seriously and the deadlines and everything that goes along with having to make sure an album project gets done. I become like I am at home. I am that father figure, making sure everything is taken care of, and that wore me out a little bit. That was really exhausting. I don't think it was any coincidence that when the project was over, (the shoulder pain) went away and it has not come back." He spoke with ease and good humour about everything from the Toronto Blue Jays' signing of Carlos Delgado ("Nobody is worth \$17 million ... If someone is going to get it, he certainly should be one of those guys, though. But it is a bit crazy") to the possibility of a Rush box set ("There is almost no material that we have recorded that we haven't released").

But there is a bit of pathetic fallacy in Lee's physical ailment resulting from the pressure of flying solo. "My Favourite Headache" is an album that repeatedly returns to the theme of facing everything life has to offer -- both good and bad -- and getting through it. "My relationship with music, I think, is one of the reasons I wanted that as a title (for the album)," Lee said. "I am very passionate about what I do, but (music) is not easy, and it makes me nuts. I think a lot of people feel that way about their job, or the person they live with, or whatever. To me it was a very interesting, yin-and-yang phrase. "My Favourite Headache" is really investigating this attitude that can happen, and happens to most people in small moments. Life is overwhelming for you, because something has happened. One of the answers is to just hide from it. The intellectual side is interfering and saying, you can't hide from life. So you rationalize it with bleak, nihilistic phrases like: Who cares anyway? The ice age is coming in another 50 years."

It's an album that will almost certainly be embraced by fans starved for new Rush material but also stakes out distinctive ground for Lee, who is the last member of the band to release his own project. Lee said he is adopting a wait-and-see attitude about touring and making videos in support of "My Favourite Headache." "I'm a little confused about what to do there," he said. "I think it would be cool to put a band together and do some very small shows. Nothing big at all. To do it the way I want to do it, would be a very expensive, tiny tour. That is not the most practical thing to go out there and deal with ... It sure would be fun to go out and do some very small venues and have a good time with those guys. And they are all totally up for it." Meanwhile, here's what Lee had to say about the making of "My Favourite Headache":

**Q: Last January, after JAM! readers selected Rush as the most important Canadian band of the millennium, you told us you were writing songs, but you weren't quite sure if they would end up as a solo album. At what point did you figure out this is where it was all going?**

**A:** About halfway through the writing. We gathered enough songs and we had to make a commitment one way or another as to what we were doing. I was very reluctant to do my own record, for a couple of reasons. To attach my name to it seemed unnecessarily attention-getting. But I think, at the end, I believed in the songs and liked the songs too much to leave them languishing on the shelf. It seemed unfair to the music. For me, it was a matter of trying to figure out some purpose, aside from my own publicity, to do this. Once I could say to myself, "I believe in the songs", that gave me something to fight for. When you are in a band, it is never that issue. It's THE BAND. There's that fighting, team spirit. But for some reason, maybe I am too Canadian, it seemed kind of embarrassing, to toot your own horn. For me, I had to have the added justification of really believing in the music, and really thinking these are great songs that on some level deserved to be on record. That seemed to be the difference.

**Q: After all this time making records with Rush, you still aren't comfortable with the fact that, at**



some level, it is going to involve you going, "Ta da! Here I am!". That is still unappetizing for you?

A: It's a weird thing. After 30 years of being in a fairly anonymous band, really, where we always put the band before us as individuals, to step out of that wasn't something I seemed to need. But once I thought it through and I realized what was going to be involved and how interesting it would be for me to go through this process, I just made the commitment to do it, and what will be will be.

**Q: Working for the first time in so long in a different creative configuration, did you learn something about yourself?**

A: Totally. I learned the pros and cons of myself when I am only responsible to myself.

**Q: Was the stress you spoke of a result of not having the safety net of Alex and Neil to help you get through making a record?**

A: Musically, there was always a partnership between myself and Ben Mink, in partnership with (producer) David Leonard. Those decisions are not stressful. They were fun decisions. Creative decisions. But just the responsibility of getting it done and making sure it was done properly and saying: "Is this mix good enough? Do we remix this? Do I delay the release date because I have got to do this or I am not happy with this?" Those are things that wore me out. That is when I had my partners to turn to and say, "Guys, am I nuts about this? Do we need to redo this, or is it fine?"

**Q: Did you start writing with a blank slate, or was any of this material kicking around that could have turned into a Rush song?**

A: I have one or two, but not many. What turned into "My Favourite Headache" was something I had written on my own, a skeleton already laid out. Whether it was for a potential Rush song, I don't know, but it was something that got me going way back when. Ironically, it was one of the last things we pulled up to work on. So really, we started from scratch. It was all pretty fresh.

**Q: While the sound of the album is pretty distinctive from Rush, it's not like you made a klezmer album. It has a sound to it that Rush fans will be able to warm to pretty easily. But is there any sense that because this was a solo project, you got to try things you wouldn't normally get to do?**

A: There was a different symbiosis there, a different marriage of melodic desire, as strange as that phrase may sound. I have a particular love for writing melodies. I found it unusual that Ben had a very similar point of view on that. We both, when writing together, would arrive at the same place very naturally. That was a bit startling from time to time. The desire, of how we would like to shape music, was very similar. With Alex, we come at it from very different ways, and there is a lot more tension in the writing process because of that. We don't always arrive at the same place at the same time, and then it is a process of trial and error. That is still a very satisfying way to work but quite different than this, and to me, it is a very fundamental difference between this project and a typical Rush project. Because I wrote the lyrics, the way the vocals were developed and the way they fall on the line, rhythmically, I think, is an aspect that sets it apart from a Rush record quite dramatically. I think there is a groove factor that exists between myself and Matt Cameron and is inferred through the guitar playing of Ben, where those grooves came from between him and myself anyway. Again, it is quite different. I could take strokes that I could never do in Rush. I could get rid of the drums for the whole bridge. I could pull them out and construct a techno rhythm for that. These are small issues, but they add up to make the nuances of this project exist in a very different space than a Rush project.

**Q: You have written lyrics from time-to-time for Rush. What's your approach to writing lyrics?**

A: I keep a book, and I have for quite a while. I just got lazy about looking into the book. I write things down and think about stuff. I write what I think about and I come back to it. You know, I don't ever sit down to write a song, per se. I just sit down and write something that is driving me crazy to think about or when the light bulb goes off some time, I write that down and I think back to it later, and I think back to whether that statement hits me still. Sometimes, when I do that, it forces me to write more about how I feel about that line I wrote down. Eventually, I get a volume of thoughts and opinions based on that one little thing I was thinking about. I keep those around the studio and when a piece of music comes along that matches what I was thinking about or (have) written about, then I pull it out. That is when it is like being in Rush again -- I shape the vocal around the music. That is when I become an editor.

To be continued.....



## 10 Stupid Questions

# ACT NATURAL, LEE

by Rob Brunner

Hating Rush is like coloring with a broken crayon: There's no point. Always more interested in structure than soulfulness, the band has spent the past 26 years ignoring naysayers, and you have to admire their dedication (and rock-radio staples like "Tom Sawyer" and "New World Man"). With Rush temporarily on hiatus, bassist-singer Geddy Lee has dropped his first solo album, *My Favorite Headache*, which boasts drumming from Pearl Jam pounder Matt Cameron. So in the spirit of Pearl Jam's first album (that'd be *Ten*, kids), we threw our typical batch of stupid questions at him. --Rob Brunner

--What about the voice of Geddy Lee? How did it get so high?

**Delayed growing up, I guess. I was always a soprano in choirs in school, and that's just the way I sound.**

--That question's actually a quote from a song by Pavement. Heard it?

**Oh! Yeah, I heard something about that. I haven't heard it, but somebody told me about it.**

--The longest song on your new album is only five minutes. That's not very prog-rock of you.

**No. Well...even in Rush I don't think we've attacked anything longer than five or six minutes for quite some time. I don't know that prog-rock is always associated with the lengths of the songs.**

--Tell me the truth: [Rush drummer] Neil Peart's ticked about being replaced by some guy from a grunge band. I mean, the dude only has one bass drum!

**[Laughs] I don't think so. He hasn't said that to me, anyway. And Matt's drums sound really big. It's a normal-sized kit if you're not playing double bass drums. And even Neil had a single bass drum on the last tour.**

--But didn't he have a double pedal?

**That's true. Wow, you know stuff about music.**

--Does that surprise you?

**Uh, yeah.**

--Which do you think is the best of Pearl Jam's 25 live discs?

**Um...I couldn't tell you. I did my homework with Matt's stuff from when he was in Soundgarden.**

--Rush only put out, what, four live albums? What the hell is wrong with you guys?

**Only four. They're younger. They got more energy.**

--"Tom Sawyer" is featured in a Nissan commercial. Are you hard up for cash?

**No. I don't know how that came about. They only wanted to use a little bit so we didn't think it was a big deal. I haven't seen it.**

--You're not touring, Rush is on hiatus. What does Geddy Lee actually do all day?

**Mostly stuff like this. Answering 10 brilliant questions. I talk all day on the phone to promo guys and writers and then I go wash my mouth out with soap.**



