



UDLS: Friday, Sept 23, 2011

Murray Patterson

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- ▶ typical 70's band (formed in 1968 actually)
- ▶ solid, timeless rock band – one of their initial inspirations: Led Zeppelin (example: **What You're Doing**)
- ▶ well-known songs include: **Limelight**, **Tom Sawyer**, (maybe **2112**, **Subdivisions**)

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# In Pop Culture



- ▶ some pretty weird dudes: sort of nerdy, outcast
  - ▶ lyrics: **Subdivisions**, **The Body Electric**
  - ▶ tour with Kiss (interview with Gene Simmons)
- ▶ not mainstream, but has a huge cult following: quoted as “the most successful cult band next to Kiss”
- ▶ featured in: Family Guy, **South Park**, Futurama, an episode of **Trailer Park Boys**, and in the movie “I Love you Man”
- ▶ great documentary on the band – **Rush: Beyond the Lighted Stage**

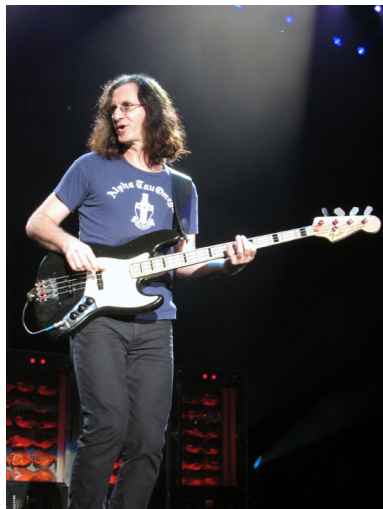
# Wikipedia Sez:

**Rush** is a **Canadian** rock band formed in **August 1968**, in the **Willowdale neighbourhood** of **Toronto, Ontario**. The band is composed of bassist, keyboardist, and lead vocalist **Geddy Lee**, guitarist **Alex Lifeson**, and drummer and lyricist **Neil Peart**. The band and its membership went through a number of re-configurations between **1968** and **1974**, achieving their current form when **Peart** replaced original drummer **John Rutsey** in **July 1974**, two weeks before the group's first **United States** tour.

Since the release of the band's self-titled debut album in **March 1974**, Rush has become known for its musicianship, complex compositions, and eclectic lyrical motifs drawing heavily on **science fiction**, **fantasy**, and **philosophy**, as well as addressing **humanitarian**, **social**, **emotional**, and **environmental** concerns. Rush's music style has changed over the years, beginning with blues-inspired heavy metal on their first album, then encompassing hard rock, progressive rock, and a period with heavy use of synthesizers.

# The Band

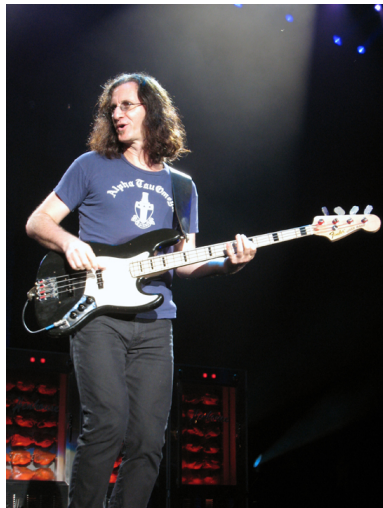
## Geddy Lee



- ▶ **Born:** July 29, 1953 in North York, Ontario, Canada as **Gary Lee Weinrib** (“Getty”, from mother)
- ▶ Lee’s parents were Jewish refugees from Poland (survivors of Dachau and Bergen-Belsen) (**Red Sector A**)

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- ▶ lead vocals and general front man for the band, known for his “high-pitched screech”
- ▶ also plays bass, keyboards, etc., often simultaneously (**Tom Sawyer (Live: Rush in Rio)** <3:30>)

# The Band

## Alex Lifeson



- ▶ **Born:** August 27, 1953 in Fernie, BC, Canada as **Aleksandar Živojinović** (“son of life”) to Serbian immigrants, and raised in Toronto, Ontario
- ▶ Geddy Lee was his school classmate and good friend (John Rutsey was his neighbor)
- ▶ Lifeson is a solid, perhaps virtuoso guitarist (self-taught, since before age 12) (**La Villa Strangiato (Live: Rush in Rio)** (3:00))



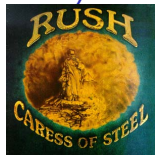
# The Band

## Neil Peart



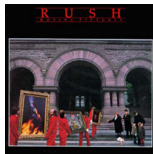
- ▶ **Born:** September 12, 1952 in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada as **Neil Elwood Peart** and grew up in Port Dalhousie, Ontario (now part of St. Catherines)
- ▶ A.K.A. “The Professor”, Neil Peart is considered one of the top 5 drummers in the world (**Drum Solo** (0:25,1:50)) (**Family Guy** tribute)
- ▶ also the band’s principal lyricist, an avid traveller and writer

# The Early Years (1968–1976)



- ▶ started in Willowdale in Toronto, Ontario by Lifeson, Jeff Jones and John Rutsey. Lee Replaced Jones several weeks after
- 1974 self-titled album. Took off when picked up by WMMS in Cleveland, Ohio for Working Man
- ▶ after the release of debut album, Rutsey left the band and Peart joined on July 29, 1974, two weeks before the group's first U.S. tour
- 1975 **Fly by Night**: with Fly By Night, epic mini-tale By-Tor and the Snow Dog and Anthem (Ayn Rand)
- 1975 **Caress of Steel**: with Bastille Day, and back-to-back The Necromancer and The Fountain of Lamneth – atmospheric, story-telling, major deviation from Fly by Night – highly unpopular
- 1976 **2112**: with 20-min title track divided into seven sections (2112). Despite this, 2112 went platinum in Canada (others songs on album: Passage to Bangkok and Something for Nothing)
- 1976 **All the World's Stage**: live album

# Mainstream Success (1977–1981)



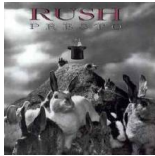
- 1977 A Farewell to Kings:** with *Xanadu* and *Closer to the Heart*
- 1978 Hemispheres:** with *The Trees* and *La Villa Strangiato* – both recorded at *Rockfield Studios* in *Wales, UK*. More progressive and experimental: increased usage of synthesizers, 12-string and classical guitars, triangles, glockenspiel, cowbells, etc.
- 1980 Permanent Waves:** with *Spirit of the Radio*, *Freewill*, *Entre Nous* and *Different Strings* (which uses string harmonics). Musical shift towards reggae and new wave elements. Lyrical shift away from sci-fi/fantasy to more humanistic, social and emotional elements.
- 1981 Moving Pictures:** pinnacle album, with *Tom Sawyer* and *Limelight* as well as *YYZ*, *Witch Hunt* and *Vital Signs*. Became even more synthesizer heavy
- 1981 Exit...Stage Left:** live album (forshadows next phase?)

# Synthesizer Period (1982–1989)



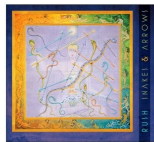
- 1982 **Signals**: kicked off the period with **Subdivisions**, **Chemistry**, **The Weapon** and **Countdown**, where keyboards were suddenly shifted from the contrapuntal background to the melodic front-lines
- ▶ Creative differences between Rush and long-time producer **Terry Brown** began to emerge, with them parting ways in 1983 (quote from documentary) (next album title is in words of Hemingway)
- 1984 **Grace Under Pressure**: with **Distant Early Warning**, **Afterimage**, **Red Sector A**, **The Enemy Within**, **The Body Electric** and **Between the Wheels** – Peart adds Simmons synthetic drums
- 1985 **Power Windows**: with **Grand Designs**, **Manhattan Project**, **Territories** and **Emotion Detector**
- 1987 **Hold Your Fire**: with **Time Stand Still**, **Open Secrets**, **Prime Mover**, **Mission** and **Tai Shan** – more prominence to Lee's multi-layered synthesizer work; critics note Lifeson's diminished guitar work
- 1989 **A Show of Hands**: live album

# Return to Guitar-Oriented Sound (1989–1997)



- 1989 Presto:** with *The Pass*, *War Paint*, *Scars*, *Superconductor*, *Red Tide* and *Available Light* – synthesizers still used, but pushed more to the background again
- 1991 Roll the Bones:** with *Dreamline*, *Roll the Bones*, *Ghost of a Chance* and *Neurotica* – even more of a departure from synthesizers, using more of the standard three-instrument approach
- 1993 Counterparts:** with *Animate*, *Cut to the Chase*, *Nobody's Hero*, *Alien Shore*, *The Speed of Love*, *Leave That Thing Alone* and *Cold Fire* – kicks off a real guitar-driven phase – one of the first time lyrics are related to love and relationships (and most of the album is dedicated to this subject)
- 1996 Test for Echo:** with *Test for Echo*, *Driven*, *Half the World*, *The Color of Right*, *Virtuality*, *Resist*, *Limbo* (search “Rush Limbo”), *Carve Away the Stone* – ventures almost completely from love theme – it and **Counterparts** two of Rush’s most guitar-driven

# The Later Years (1997–present)



- ▶ hiatus: in **August 1997** Peart's daughter died in a car accident, followed by his wife's death from cancer in **June 1998**. Peart tells Lee and Lifeson "consider me retired" and goes on an extensive trip throughout North America on his motorcycle
- 2002 Vapor Trails**: they're back! with **One Little Victory**, **Ghost Rider** (homage to Peart's book), **The Stars Look Down, How It Is**, **Out of the Cradle** – the first studio recording not to include a single synthesizer, organ or keyboard part since the early **1970s**
- 2004 Feedback**: cover of songs that were influential to them during the **1960s** – includes **Summertime Blues** by Cochran/Capehart, **Heart Full of Soul** by Graham Gouldman (Yardbirds), **Mr. Soul** by Neil Young and **Crossroads** by Robert Johnson (Cream)
- 2007 Snakes and Arrows**: with **Far Cry**, **Armor and Sword**, **The Main Monkey Buisness**, **The Way the Wind Blows**, **Hope**, **Faithless**, **Malignant Narcissism**

Thanks!

Any Questions or Comments?