

MUSIC REVIEW Rush Returns With A Few Changes June 29, 2002 By ERIC R. DANTON, Courant Rock Critic It had been more than five years since Rush played Hartford, but fans remembered every drum fill, every guitar lick and darn near every word to every song the band played Friday. The three-hour concert at the cnow.com Meadows Music Centre was the first show Rush has performed anywhere since 1997, and the opening date of the trio's Vapor Trails tour. Befitting their triumphant return to the stage, the musicians changed things up a bit. Longtime staples of the band's set, like "Closer to the Heart," were missing Friday, and were replaced by some unexpected tunes both new and old - like the acoustic version of "Resist" from the "Test for Echoes" album. After a solo from drummer/god Neil Peart, guitarist Alex Lifeson and bass player/singer Geddy Lee sat on stools with acoustic guitars to play the world-weary song. Much of the show Friday was, if not world-weary, at least wistful. The musicians lingered over Rush's sensitive side with the poignant "Bravado," which followed the equally affecting tune "The Pass." The band seemed relaxed and almost giddy at times. While past Rush shows have had all the spontaneity of open heart surgery, Lifeson stretched out on guitar and Lee demonstrated his bass chops a few times with mini-solos, including one on "Driven." The stage set was typical of the musicians' tendency to not take themselves too seriously. On stage right were Lifeson's guitar amplifiers and Peart's drums were in the center. Stage left, however, were three coin-operated Maytag clothes dryers - which tumbled for most of the show. With a skillful balance of new and old songs, Rush reinvigorated the classics and demonstrated the live vitality of more recent material, from "One Little Victory" on the latest album to the band's first radio tune - and, poetically, the last song of the night - "Working Man." Welcome back, guys. Rush's setlists Friday: Set 1: "Tom Sawyer"/ "Distant Early Warning"/ "New World Man"/ "Roll the Bones"/ "Earthshine"/ "YYZ"/ "The Pass"/ "Bravado"/ "The Big Money"/ "Between Sun and Moon"/ "Vital Signs"/ "Natural Science." Set 2: "One Little Victory"/ "Driven"/ "Ceiling Unlimited"/ "Secret Touch"/ "Dreamline"/ "Red Sector A"/ "Leave That Thing Alone"/ "The Rhythm Method"/ "Resist"/ "Overture" and "Temples of Syrinx" from "2112"/ "Limelight"/ "La Villa Strangiato"/ "Spirit of Radio." Encore: "By-Tor & the Snow Dog"/ "Cygnum X-1"/ "Working Man."

