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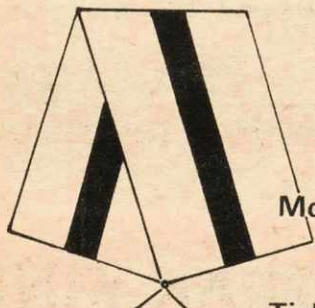
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*The  
Government  
Inspector*

by Nikolay Gogol

## Rush's dinosaur rock evolves into mainstream sound

G. Forsyth

Let me begin by saying that I fully expected **not** to like Rush's latest magnum opus, **Moving Pictures**. Like such bands as Styx, Yes, Genesis, or Supertramp, I had Rush pegged as another fatuous art-rock group. Art-rock bands can be identified by their pompous, over-blown, and pseudo-intellectual style of music. Their playing is devoid of creativity, humour, or wit; instead, a high premium is placed on such self-indulgences as virtuosity for virtuosity's sake, technical flash, and complicated song structure and chord changes, all dished up in high seriousness. Further, art-rock lyrics studiously avoid any reference to sex and passion, the cornerstones of rock music; romance is only alluded to in the context of Olympian purity of body and spirit. In sum, I find art-rock in general as dessicated craftsmanship of the lowest order, its main audience consisting of young adolescents not yet interested in sex.

Until recently, Rush has fallen squarely within the art-rock camp. But last year's

single "Spirit of Radio," a fine pop song, indicated Rush was moving away from the confining strictures (sic) of art rock. "Spirit of Radio" displayed a newfound sense of melody and discipline that was hitherto unknown (or expected) from the band. One could only wish for a further maturation.

Well, **Moving Pictures**, their ninth, is further evidence of Rush's move toward the rock and pop mainstream. While hard-core fans may scream sell-out, Rush should be applauded for their attempted split with art-rock.

**Moving Pictures** highlights a cleaner, less cluttered and frenetic style of music than has appeared on previous epees. While each song is still anchored with at least one catchy riff, melodic reggae and jazz inflections now tend to intersperse the great slabs of chording. The science-fiction, man vs. technology platitudinous lyrics are still present, the last relics of art-rock, but they seem less obtrusive this time out. Besides, singer Geddy Lee has modified his irritating screech to a lower register, so it's now easier to ignore their patented goofy lyrics.

Musically, there's not a stinker among the seven tunes here. Throughout, rampant instrumental self-indulgence is successfully held in check, with the possible exception of the 11-minute "The Camera Eye." Indeed, "Vital Signs" and "Limelight" would make admirable additions to a radio station's playlist.

It's a shame the same discipline applied to the music wasn't also given to the lyrics. Lyricist Peart offers us such flannel-shirted lines as:

The world is the world is  
Love and life are deep  
Maybe as his skies are wide.  
In the same song appears the horrid couplet:  
Though his mind is not for rent  
Don't put him down as arrogant.

To summarize, **Moving Pictures** is Rush's most accessible album so far, and bound to be their most successful on the charts. It's a pleasant surprise to see Rush evolve from an art-rock dinosaur into an enjoyable poppish hard-rock band. Now if only they would hire a new lyricist, their break with art-rock would be complete.

## Stolen Honour-continued

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inadvertantly grabbed the hot fireplace grill to steady himself. Then "Oh shit," he finished up as the letter, flung from his hand in the instinctive jerk of pain, landed on the blazing logs and was instantly reduced to ashes. There was a stunned silence for a moment, then Lady Bradley spoke up.

"Nice play, Shakespeare," she said with devastating wit. Lord Bradley only stared with his mouth open but, as this was uncharacteristically demonstrative of him, it passed for a quick retort.

Lord Cavendish had the grace to blush but he was not for long nonplussed. "Fear not, my friends," he said with cool confidence. "I only had a moment to examine the ransome note but, for a highly-developed, ornately-carved, photographic memory such as mine, a moment can last forever. I was able to memorize the contents of the letter and can recite it by heart. It read as follows: Bread, milk, half-dozen eggs, package of Players and... Sorry, wrong note."

His audience laughed dutifully at the old but ornately-carved joke.

"But seriously folks," continued Lord Cavendish. "The real note said: Dumb Dora died young. Better think fast if you don't want the Della to follow suit."

Lady Bradley reacted first. "Why the hell doesn't whoever this fiend is just say how much and where?" As she spoke she was glaring surreptitiously, if such a thing is possible, at

Charles. But the sturdy manservant just shook his head at her. Lord Bradley said nothing, which didn't surprise anybody, and it was the balding sleuth who picked up on her query.

"I'm not certain that money is what he, she or it is after," he said with fine legal precision. "I detect the workings of a deeply-depraved but diabolically-cunning mind at work here, a madman who will stop at nothing to achieve his sinister ends."

"Which are?" asked Lady Bradley reasonably.

"I can't tell you, either because I am not yet ready to play my last cards or because I don't know," parried the giant brain suavely. "But observe the pattern. The first note made reference to Don Quixote, by Cervantes. The second note mentioned Dumb Dora, a character from David Copperfield, by Dickens."

"So you think the criminal is an educated person, or perhaps someone with a B.A. in English Lit." said Lady Bradley eagerly.

"No," responded the domed savant. "I think he wants us to believe that he is so inclined. Then, while we are searching the ranks of the unemployed, where most educated persons are to be found, he will have a free hand to carry out his dastardly scheme, whatever it is. But I think I can stop him."

"How?" asked the harried Lady.

"If you will recall, the references were C. for Cervantes and D. for Dickens. I believe the arch-fiend is a methodical man who is getting his pseudo-literary references from the

library. Therefore he is even now researching novels by authors whose surnames start with E. And I am on my way to the public library where, with the aid of the plodding but good-hearted constabulary, I will arrest anyone who has checked out a book by any author from Mignon Eberheart to Euripides." So saying the dashing detective dashed from the room.

"That's either the stupidest theory I've ever heard or the smartest," said Lady Bradley, staring after him thoughtfully. "But if he is right, he has forgotten one thing. There is a well-stocked library right here within Bradley Hall. Come Charles. The only way for us to prove your innocence is to catch the madman ourselves." So saying she and the butler swept off to stand guard within the ornately-carved portals of the Bradley Bibliotheque.

Lord Bradley had taken no part in any of this discussion and he was, in fact, still staring at the fireplace with his mouth open. He was not a notoriously quick thinker but something was definitely amiss.

"I'm not a notoriously quick thinker," he mused, "but some... thing... is... definitely... amiss. I may be a bit of an eraserhead but I know you can't read messages that weren't there."

Lord Bradley had been the closest to Lord Cavendish when the latter had slipped and dropped the note into the fireplace. And he had seen that the note from which the detective had supposedly memorized the message had been nothing but a blank sheet of paper.