



## Live at the Fillmore '68

### [It's a Beautiful Day](#)

[Classics Music Vault](#) - CMV0220 (CD / DVD)

Available from [MVD Entertainment Group](#).

A review written for the Folk & Acoustic Music Exchange  
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Despite a hell of a lot of struggle to get there, It's a Beautiful Day was one of the flagship rock groups of the late 60s, went through the usual sets of changes and folded and reformed more than once but tours to this very day and as strongly as ever. There has only, however, up to this point been video documentation of the ensemble in a closing-of-the-Fillmore documentary and then an appearance in the *Stamping Ground* festival boner video (mostly an abortion visually and very if-y sonically). Until this *Live at the Fillmore '68* set, there's been only one official live release, the Carnegie Hall gig, up to now, and why that was so and how this footage was obtained is not mentioned in the liner notes by founding violinist David Laflamme and rock journalist Dean Sciarra. Doesn't matter 'cause there's a lot of Boomers who are going to be awfully happy this old concert emerged at all. Took 45 years to do so (Jesus!), but here it is.

The CD runs a full 79+ minutes while the DVD is 41 and not really an It's a Beautiful Day flick but *The David Laflamme Story*, which is just as good and filled with classic and current performance clips alongside a raft of commentary by Dave, critics, band members, and so on. All the CD songs get plenty of room for improv and extensions (*Hot Summer Day* spills past 11 minutes), and the repertoire features a menu of the group's best: *Bombay Calling*, *Wasted Union Blues*, the signature *White Bird* and, yes, even the heroic *Time Is*. The line-up is the original roster (then struggling under managing a-hole Matthew Katz, who was in the process of being rejected by a very unhappy Jefferson Airplane and Moby Grape) and very typical of what audiences were treated to at the justly famed Fillmore West.

It's too bad the Classic Music Vault label didn't make it more clear to the consumer that the documentary's completely different from the sound disc, as that's a BIG selling point, but I'm telling you now so that you know. I'm completely enamored with rock docs and grab all I can. Having a concert DVD and a duplicate CD is nice but having a vintage performance and an accompanying retrospective film is even better. That's what you get here, which means you're treated to a much fuller understanding of the music and its makers. Including the two in the same package isn't all that common but, lord, what it does to open up the elder of days and a band's evolution is about as good as it gets.

Violin was not exactly a commonplace in those times—was, in fact, so exotic and unheard-of that LaFlamme, as he notes in the DVD, was able to pal as a fellow traveler with the greats: Santana, Hendrix, Joplin, the Airplane, etc. What Ian Anderson was doing for the flute, David was accomplishing with violin, and of Hendrix and Joplin he notes "they weren't able to live on this planet any more; they just weren't", which is about as cogent a summation as I've ever heard and something only aesthetes would fully understand. Beautiful Day's music was progressive, as so much of the time's Fillmore fare tended to be, and the CD in this twofor makes that vivid. Not hard to understand, then, why the gods and goddesses of the era took a shine to Dave and his band and why it still has a solid following.

### CD Song List:

- Love for You
- Bulgaria (with Love for You reprise)
- White Bird
- Wasted Union Blues
- Time Is
- Countryside
- Bombay Calling
- Changes
- Girl with No Eyes
- Hot Summer Day

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