



## Recorded Live in Concert at Metropolis Studios, London

### Bill Nelson and the Gentlemen Rocketeers

Convexe Records - CVX902140 (2 CD / 1 DVD)

Available from [MVD Entertainment Group](#).

A review written for the Folk & Acoustic Music Exchange  
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Bill Nelson's shining moment, the group Be-Bop Deluxe, holds a special place in all true progrockers' hearts. He started out with a critically acclaimed solo LP, *Northern Dreams*, then quickly re-emerged in ensemble and, from the very start, showed himself to be of unusual talent. The Be-Bops emitted 5 LPs and a live twofer as well as a posthumous *Best and Rest Of* and an A-side/B-side anthology among a couple others before Bill formed Red Noise, also a prized LP but indicative of the more angular tack he'd take from that point on. Solo albums followed, each one more fragmentary and experimental than the last, until one day it was reported in music magazines that he and Robert Wyatt were about to go bankrupt and homeless. Apparently, that never quite happened, and Nelson went on not long after to release a staggering plethora of solo CDs (as many as 8 a year!). His Wikipedia page and discography listing is daunting. However, everyone was convinced, despite all pleas to re-form the band, that we had long ago seen the last of Be-Bop Deluxe.

Therefore, one could fairly hear the globe-encircling cries of ecstatic relief as this 2-CD / DVD set was announced and then issued. It isn't really Be-Bop Deluxe—bassist Charlie Tumahai, for one, died far too young—but it's close enough and about half the set is composed of Be-Bop tunes. If that isn't quite full heaven, it's so near as makes no difference and chockful of Bill's psychedelic / acid / prog / rock guitaristics. Only 120 people attended this and the other Metropolitan concerts in what was an ongoing series, population constrictions due to space considerations, but I think I speak for the rest of the prog world when I glance the audience's way and say in my best Monty Python accent "!!!You lucky bastards!!!" to all hundred-plus of 'em.

In a highly unusual 7-man format, the presence of two keyboardists and a sax widens parameters appreciably, ambient and jazzier simultaneously. BBD was a foursome and taking on the Rocketeer septet format is quite a shift, but then Nelson has never stood still for very long. Fans will not be unhappy with the selection of cuts, and even I was surprised to see and hear him covering one of my all-time BBD faves: *Lovers Are Mortal* ('n I sure woulda loved to hear it matched by *Eros Arriving* but, as I mentioned, this ain't heaven, it's Earth, and we mortals are allotted only just so much!). Visually a cross between one of the Blues Bros. and a Man In Black, Bill's voice is in good shape, his playing is quite fine, and both formats are just what the doctor ordered: 2 CDs for the car and righteous road trips, and a DVD for visual feasting... the latter including four solo/duet numbers not on the CDs. What more could ya ask? A return engagement in a year or so perhaps? Cross yer fingers, o ye faithful.

### Track List:

#### CD 1 / DVD:

- The October Man
- Night Creatures
- God Man Slain
- Contemplation
- Lady You're A Strange Girl
- Adventures In A Yorkshire Landscape
- Furniture Music
- Do You Dream In Colour
- Ships In The Night
- Lovers Are Mortal
- Maid In Heaven
- Sister Seagull
- Wonder Of The Moment
- Panic In The World

#### CD 2 / DVD:

- Beyond These Clouds The Sweetest Dream
- Golden Dream Of Circus Horses
- A Dream For Ian
- For Stuart

#### DVD BONUS: An interview with Bill Nelson

All songs written by Bill Nelson.

This is one of 3 critiques of the first half of a six-title issuance in the Metropolis Studios Concert series. For the other two, see [here](#) (Bill Nelson) and [here](#) (The Zombies).

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