

# guitar moderne

The Zine for Adventurous Guitarists

## Release: Bill Nelson and the Gentlemen Rocketeers

Posted on [July 18, 2012](#)

In the '70s, Bill Nelson's Be-Bop Deluxe sat in a musical space between the primitivism of Punk and the pomposity of Prog. Bebop's technically complex music was rooted in blues and jazz but looked firmly to the future. Nelson's later releases with Red Noise, and especially on his solo records in the '80s, were stellar examples of how guitar-based music could incorporate the technology of the times (synths and drum machines) while offering some serious playing for fans of the instrument.

*Bill Nelson and the Gentlemen Rocketeers Recorded Live In Concert At Metropolis Studios, London* [Convexe], is a three disc set (two CDs and one DVD) that provides an overview of Nelson's career in the form of a live-in-the-studio concert.

"October Man" from the solo record *The Love That Whirls*

The boxed set is a guitar-porn delight. Nelson plays a different guitar on almost every one of the 14 tunes, including the [Campbell American Nelsonic Transitone](#) in the video above, and, on another tune, another Transitone; his iconic Gibson ES 345 from the Bebop days and a three-pickup Les Paul, both with Bigsby's; a white Airline '59 Coronado map-style and a Saturn '63 from [Eastwood](#); a [Duesenberg Starplayer TV](#); a Gretsch White Falcon; a couple of D'Aquisto resembling guitars, a blue-green semi-hollow that looks like a Gretsch but isn't, a solid-body that looks like a PRS but isn't, and another solid-body that looks like it has paired lipstick pickups set up as humbuckers.

### Early Be-Bop Deluxe

Bill Nelson has been kicked around by the business more than most as he explains in this extensive interview:

But from the evidence of *Bill Nelson and the Gentlemen Rocketeers Recorded Live In Concert At Metropolis Studios, London* he has emerged with his enthusiasm and chops

intact. The four instrumental bonus tracks are, in this case, truly a bonus.

There is currently a slew of '60s and '70s bands putting out live performance discs by the original or remaining members of the band. This one holds up better than most; more than a retrospective by a guitarist who pushed the envelope, this is also a collection of great music, well performed.



This entry was posted in [Recordings](#) and tagged [Be-Bop Deluxe](#), [Bill Nelson](#), [gear](#), [guitar](#), [jazz](#), [Video](#) by [guitar moderne](#). Bookmark the [permalink](#).

2 THOUGHTS ON "RELEASE: BILL NELSON AND THE GENTLEMEN ROCKETEERS"



**Dar Shelton**

on [July 18, 2012 at 8:45 pm](#) said:

I don't know what guitar moderne zine is, but I do know an adventurous guitarist when I hear one , and I consider myself very fortunate indeed to have stumbled across Bill Nelson in 1995 , via his masterpiece of that year (there's at least one every year ) , Practically Wired, and have been following his adventures closely ever since . The 'Rocketeer' video was my first taste of seeing him in action , after years of long-distance listening , and that was/is a treat, but the playing and music itself always stands strong on it's own.

It's impossible to pigeonhole Bill Nelson , because his output covers such a broad range of guitar styles, musical genres (often transcending genres and exploring on his own, which one of the main appeals) , and instrument palettes.

One thing is guaranteed though, when the man straps on his guitar(s) , and that's that the listener is in for the most tastefully articulated melodies (that I've ever heard) , and on top of that , the most refined and sophisticated repertoire of guitar sonics (that I've ever heard) . The 'Rocketeer' video is a fine sampling of these attributes , and is highly recommended for anyone who loves to dive deep into the beauties of electric guitar sound and music.

DS 7-19-2012



**Tom Parsons**

on [July 18, 2012 at 8:03 pm](#) said:

It's about time that Bill Nelson gets credit for his incredible career in music. From the rock and roll of Be Bop Deluxe to his solo keyboard works of the 80's in an ambient style, and his prolific output as a solo artist with his modern guitar instrumentals, Bill is an artist that continuously delivers quality. He has also worked with many bands such as Big Country, Gary Numan, Sea of Wires, and Channel Light Vessel. This collection is definitely the jewel of the Rock Legends series of DVDs and CDs; not to be missed. Five stars!!

[Featuring Recent Posts WordPress Widget development by YD](#)