

BLUE

ÖYSTER

CULT





### It's all in the umlaut. The eyes of the Ö.

Keyboardist Allen Lanier added it to the group's latest evolution of name in late 1971, on the verge of their self-titled debut album. It seemed to reflect the Ger-magic symbolism and alchemic heaviness to which the band was aspiring. Be occult.

They liked a three word moniker. First there was Soft White Underbelly, a Great Neck, Long Island, jamming band centered around Donald Roeser's guitar and Albert Bouchard's drumming. Donald and Albert had settled in a house near the State University of NY at Stony Brook, and Allen regularly ventured out from "the city" with his guitar to play with them. There, they were discovered by Sandy Pearlman, a rock theorist with an ear for the otherworldly, and subsequently signed to Elektra Records in its most feverish era.

When singer Eric Bloom replaced the original frontman, they became Stalk-Forrest Group. Bloom had been working in a local music store when the band asked to rent his PA for a gig at the Electric Circus. The change in personnel didn't convince Elektra to release their album, recorded in California in early 1970; only a promotional single, "What Is Quicksand," ever saw the light of night, and the band returned to Long Island. To the bars.

"We had thought we would go right to the Fillmore, opening for the Airplane," says Eric today, on the eve of yet another west coast tour, a remarkable longevity for any band. Instead, working to stay alive, they developed into what Pearlman, their resident astronomer and mythopoetic manager, would christen Blue Öyster Cult. In between "Born To Be Wild" and "We Gotta Get Out Of This Place," they would slip in their own originals as covers, focusing arrangements, bringing in Albert's brother Joe on bass, switching Allen to keyboards, and developing staging, like the crossed and arcing guitars that signaled "Cities On Flame With Rock And Roll."

The harder, more cohesive sound layered well over the acid-rock osmosis of San Francisco's Summer of Love by way of the Doors' Robbie Krieger that had characterized their earlier explorations. Their kinship with Pearlman, and Richard Meltzer, another "rock writer" of the arcane Crowdaddy school, gave them an

unexpected and intricate lyrical slant. The band kept a folder full of Meltzer's and Pearlman's word associations in their rehearsal room, and would leaf through it, setting fragments to music.

"There wouldn't have been a band without Sandy's vision," says Donald, an insight that also gifted him the new name of Buck Dharma (the other members declined theirs). Pearlman's lyrics were rooted "in literature and conspiratorial insight into history;" Meltzer's full of "free-association, dadaesque." More, Sandy's messianic sense that the Cult could pursue a darkling optic even as the music wove rings around the wordplay gave the band more than enough musical room to color and interpret, a "blank canvas," in Buck's words. Their cycle gang imagery - enhanced by the biker bar in Hempstead that became their haven, Conry's - had a futuristic feel, a Mad Max sense of mutant apocalypse that fit well with an emergent genre called Heavy Metal, a term bastardized from the writings of William Burroughs, who knew well the transmaniacon.

Columbia A&R rep Murray Krugman was attracted by the band's bipolar approach to metal's blunt riffage, separating them from the primeval hordes following in Black Sabbath's wake even as it bait-and-switched their appeal. Albert had designed the crunching guitars of "Cities On Flame" after Sabbath's "The Wizard," but there was as much Motor City boogie (Amboy Dukes) and Rebel boogie (post-Allman Brothers) as

English midland crunch. In the fall of 1971, Clive Davis signed Blue Öyster Cult to CBS.

The band had made their demos at the Warehouse, an 8-track jingle studio ("GE brings good things to life") run by David Lucas, whom they'd met when they played a "swinger's party" at a summer camp, and stayed to record their album that October. Lucas "brought our music to fruition," coaching the band's harmonies and capturing their sound on tape. Indeed, if anything, BÖC's talented cast of characters meant that theirs was a true communal effort, the shared bond of a band.

Now all they needed was a logo. On the cover of the first album, artist Bill Gawlick stylized a hook-and-cross "Kronos" after Saturn's celestial symbol. Thus emblazoned, BÖC's debut appeared in January of 1972. It held wish-fulfillments ("Stairway To The Stars"), fetishesque love scenes ("Before The Kiss, A Redcap," "She's As Beautiful As A Foot"), madcap guitar chases ("I'm On The Lamb But I Ain't No Sheep") and moments of transcendent bliss that descend into nightmare ("Then Came The Last Days Of May").

"The first record stands as a mark of what Blue Öyster Cult would be and become," says Donald. Their birthmark.

LENNY KAYE



L TO R: Allen Lanier, Eric Bloom, Albert Bouchard, Joe Bouchard, Donald (Buck Dharma) Roesser

### 1. Transmaniac MC (3:21)

-S. Pearlman-A. Bouchard-D. Roesser-E. Bloom-

With Satan's hog no pig at all  
And the weather's getting dry  
We'll head south from Altamont  
In a cold-blood traveled trance  
So clear the road, my bully boys  
And let some thunder pass  
We're pain, we're steel, a plot of knives  
We're Transmaniac MC

Behind the pantry, behind the tree  
The ghouls adopt that child  
Whose name resounds forever  
Whose name resounds in terror  
And I'm no fool to call that hog  
'Cause man, I remember  
Those who did resign their souls  
To Transmaniac MC

And surely we did offer up  
Behind that stage at dawn  
Beers and barracuda, reds and monacaine,  
yeah  
Pure nectar of antipathy  
Behind that stage at dawn  
To those who would resign their souls  
To Transmaniac MC

Cry the cable, cry the word

Unknown terror's here  
And won't you try this nasty snack  
Behind the scene or but the back  
Which was the stage at Altamont  
My humble boys of listless power  
We're pain, we're steel, a plot of knives  
We're Transmaniacon...

Look, all right! You can feel it!

## 2. I'm On The Lamb But I Ain't No Sheep (3:10)

-S. Pearlman-A. Bouchard-E. Bloom-

Canadian mounted, baby  
Police force that works  
Red and black  
It's their color scheme  
Get their man  
In the end



It's all right  
Yeah, it's all right

Frontenac Chateau, baby  
I cross the frontier at ten  
Got a whip in my hand, baby  
And a girl or a husky  
At leather's end  
It's all right  
Yeah, it's all right baby  
It's all right  
Yeah, my lovely bel punice  
You know you, you kill and you maim  
The husky know

*Mush you huskies-ride mush you huskies-  
ride mush you huskies  
Ride mush you huskies-ride mush you  
huskies-ride mush you huskies  
Ride mush you huskies-ride mush you  
huskies*

Homswoop me bungo pony on dogsled on ice  
Make a dash for freedom, baby  
Don't skate on polar ice  
It's too thick to be sliced  
By the light  
Of long and white polar nights  
It's all right  
It's all right  
Yeah, my lovely bel punice  
You know you, you kill and you maim

Ah, here they come now, yeah  
C'mon ride!

## 3. Then Came The Last Days Of May (3:31)

-D. Roeser-

Parched land, no desert sand  
The sun is just a little dot  
And a little bit of water goes a long way  
'cause it's hot it's hot  
Three good buddies of mine were laughin'  
and smokin'  
In the back of a rented Ford  
They couldn't know they weren't going far  
  
Each one with the money in his pocket  
To go out and buy himself a brand new car  
But they all held the money they had  
Money they hoped would take them very far

Sky's bright, the traffic light  
Now and then a truck  
And they hadn't seen a cop around all day  
what luck  
They brought everything they needed  
Bags and scales to weigh the stuff  
The driver said, "The border's just over the  
bluff"

Wasn't until the car suddenly stopped  
In the middle of a cold and barren plain  
And the other guy turned and spilled  
Three boys blood did they know a trap had  
been laid?

They're OK the last days of May  
But I'll be breathin' dry air

I'm leaving soon  
The others are already there all there  
Wouldn't be interested in coming along  
Instead of staying here?  
It's said the West is nice this time of year  
That's what they say

## 4. Stairway To The Stars (3:43)

-R. Meltzer-A. Bouchard-D. Roeser-

You can have my autograph  
I think I'll sign it 'love to you'  
Should I sign it just for you?

Stairway to the stars  
Think I'll write 'good health to you'  
Stairway to the stars  
We got better things to do

You can drive my motorcar  
It's insured to thirty thou  
Kill them all if you wish

Stairway to the stars  
Think I'll write 'good health to you'  
Stairway to the stars  
We got better things to do

Mow 'em down now!

You can have my autograph  
I think I'll sign it 'good health to you'  
Upon the cast, your broken arm

Stairway to the stars

Think I'll write 'good health to you'  
Stairway to the stars  
I hope you heal up real quick

Stairway to the stars  
Stairway to the stars  
Stairway to the stars  
Stairway to the stars

C'mon - let's get outta here

## 5. Before The Kiss, A Redcap (4:59)

-S. Pearlman-D. Roeser-

So grab your rose and ringside seat  
We're back home at Conry's Bar  
The blond girl with her tattoo  
Reds and wine, cokes of course  
Oh my Susie, my Susie  
Why did we ever start  
It's morning now, you'd never know  
The gin, the gin  
Glow in the dark  
Glow in the dark

And underneath the black light  
Underneath it all  
Four and forty redheads meet  
Come to doom, doom the dawn  
With threats of gas and rose motif  
Their lips apart like swollen rose  
Their tongues extend and then ~~out~~  
A redcap, a redcap

Before the kiss  
Before the kiss

Doors like flint and window panes  
And endless shadow bar  
The owner's boys have gone to work  
We'll stop big deals behind that bar

While outside on the tumpike  
They got this new hit tune  
Thrills become as cheap as gas  
And gas as cheap as thrills

One Threat and mundane here at last  
Expect to cross once more  
Lecherous, invisible  
Beware the limping cat  
Whose black teeth grip between loose jaws  
Still ripe and fully bloomed  
A rose and not from anywhere  
That you would know or I would care

And the owners act most cheerfully  
Back home at Conry's Bar  
When the patron's thought at last  
Grow too big for their skulls  
Awful things are happening  
We've let this drama fold  
And now the time has come at last  
To crush the motif of the rose

So grab your rose and ringside seat  
We're back home at Conry's Bar  
The blonde girl with her tattoo  
Reds and wine, cokes of course  
Oh my Susie, my Susie

Why did we ever start  
It's morning now, you'd never know  
The gin, the gin  
Glow in the dark  
Glow in the dark

## 6. Screams (3:10)

-J. Bouchard-

Screams in the night  
Sirens delight  
Heat broken glass  
Satan's bred trash

Big city madness  
Comfort my soul  
Give me a hole  
Where I can grow

String of bright lights  
Running up through the sky  
Throughout the hot night  
The cars racing by  
You know they all see  
But most of them pass  
She cried buy my wares  
Don't hide in your glass wheel

Screams in the night  
Sirens delight  
Heat broken glass  
Satan's bred trash

Big city madness

Comfort my soul  
Give me a hole  
Where I can grow  
Sounds of guitars  
Fill up the night  
Can't make me feel  
I said it's all right  
In one hotel bed  
You think you can grow  
If you find a hole  
Please let me know, whoa

## 7. She's As Beautiful As A Foot (2:58)

-R. Metzger-A. Bouchard-A. Lanier-

She's as beautiful as a foot  
She's as beautiful as a foot  
She heard someone say  
The other day

Didn't believe it when he bit into her face  
Didn't believe it when he bit into her face  
It tasted just like  
A fallen arch

She's as beautiful as a foot  
She's as beautiful as a foot  
She heard someone say  
The other day

Don't put your tongue on the bloody tooth  
mark place  
Don't put your tongue on the bloody tooth  
mark place

Her face changing now  
A Guernsey cow

She's as beautiful  
Oh, so beautiful  
Beautiful as a foot

REPEAT 3X

She heard someone say  
she heard someone say  
The other day

## 8. Cities On Flame With Rock And Roll (4:03)

-D. Roeser-A. Bouchard-

My heart is black and my lips are cold  
Cities on flame with rock and roll  
Three thousand guitars  
They seem to cry  
My ears will melt and then my eyes

Let the girl, let that girl rock and roll  
Cities on flame, now, with rock and roll

Gardens of Nocturne, forbidden delight  
Reins of steel and it's all right  
Cities on flame with rock and roll  
Marshall will buoy but Fender control

So let the girl, let that girl rock and roll  
Cities on flame, now, with rock and roll

My heart is black and my lips are cold

Cities on flame with rock and roll  
Three thousand guitars  
They seem to cry  
My ears will melt and then my eyes

So let the girl, let that girl rock and roll  
Cities on flame, now, with rock and roll

## 9. Workshop Of The Telescopes (4:01)

-S. Pearlman-A. Bouchard-D. Roeser-A. Lanier-  
J. Bouchard-E. Bloom-

By Silverfish Impertrix whose incorrupted eye  
Sees through the charms of doctors and  
their wives  
By Salamander Drake and the power that  
was undone  
Rise to claim Saturn, ring and sky  
By those who see with their eyes closed  
You'll know me by my black telescope

Your green tree mantle from which these  
things derive  
A lens of quartz and refract scope  
That crystal lens whose crystal rope once  
Bound me to those doctors and wives  
When my vision was oh, so cloudy  
And I saw things through two eyes

I am a sailor on the raging depths  
And I know a thing or two  
Back to the corner, mates, and over the side  
Yes, I know a thing or two

By Silverfish Impertrix whose incorrupted eye  
Sees through the charms of doctors and  
their wives  
By Salamander Drake and the power that  
was undone  
Rise to claim Saturn, ring and sky  
By those who see with their eyes closed  
You'll know me by my black telescope

Before my great conversation when the ridge  
was closed  
Before my visit to the workshop of  
telescope

By Silverfish Impertrix whose incorrupted eye  
Sees through the charms of doctors and  
their wives  
By Salamander Drake and the power that  
was undone  
Rise to claim Saturn, ring and sky  
By those who see with their eyes closed  
You'll know me by my  
Black telescope

## 10. Redeemed (4:01)

-S. Pearlman-H. Farcas-A. Bouchard-A. Lanier-

Don't you give up my young, young friends  
Here's a story I think will please  
How Sid Rastus Bear was in fact redeemed

Redeemed from the cell to which he had  
been thrown  
By men whose love was more

For the ice and cold

Goblins of surcease, villains of wise  
They pranced his brain on through the long,  
long night  
Sir Rastus Bear who'd ever believe  
You'd be by a song  
Redeemed

Up on the north forty  
I'm sure it was Christmas day  
When Sir Rastus Bear taught children  
how to play

Games of life and love  
And songs, oh those songs  
Oh those deep but true  
Hill country song  
Goblins of surcease, villains of wise  
They pranced his brain on through the long,  
long night  
Sir Rastus Bear who'd ever believe  
You'd be by a song  
Redeemed

Redeemed good lord, from the ice and cold  
Redeemed from the to cell which I've been  
thrown  
Redeemed by virtue of a country song  
And I believe good lord, it won't be long  
Won't be long  
It won't be  
Won't be long-long-long-long-long-long-long-  
Long-long-long-long-long-long-long-long-long-  
Long-long

## BONUS TRACKS

### 11. Donovan's Monkey (Demo)\* (3:50)

-R. Meltzer-A. Bouchard-

Recorded September 11, 1969 at CBS Studio B,  
New York  
Columbia Records Soft White Underbelly Demo Session  
Produced by Jay Lee and Bob Devere

### 12. What Is Quicksand (Demo)\* (3:40)

-R. Meltzer-A. Lanier-

Recorded July 21, 1969 at CBS Studio B, New York  
Columbia Records Soft White Underbelly Demo Session  
Produced by Jay Lee and Bob Devere

### 13. A Fact About Sneakers (Demo)\* (2:50)

-R. Meltzer-A. Bouchard-

Recorded September 11, 1969 at CBS Studio B,  
New York  
Columbia Records Soft White Underbelly  
Demo Session  
Produced by Jay Lee and Bob Devere

### 14. Betty Lou's Got A New Pair Of Shoes (Demo)\* (2:34)

-B. Freeman-

Bobby Freeman Music (BMI)  
Clockus Music (BMI)  
Recorded July 21, 1969 at CBS Studio B, New York  
Columbia Records Soft White Underbelly  
Demo Session  
Produced by Jay Lee and Bob Devere

\*Previously Unreleased

A note about the bonus tracks:  
"Donovan's Monkey," "What Is  
Quicksand" & "A Fact About  
Sneakers"-Staples of the band's  
(then called **Soft White Underbelly**)  
repertoire. These songs were all  
demoed for Columbia Records, who  
rejected them! The band changed its  
name to **Stalk Forest Group**,  
eventually signed to Elektra Records,  
and put out a promo single which  
included a newly recorded "What Is  
Quicksand." However, radio wouldn't  
touch it. Stock copies were never  
pressed. The band was dropped and  
knocked on Columbia's door again.  
Second time was the charm!  
Columbia signed them up and a nice  
very long career continues to this  
day. Something to inspire all those  
artists who get dropped or rejected.  
"Betty Lou's Got A New Pair Of  
Shoes"- Pure old style rock and roll.  
A Bobby Freeman cover.

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**Eric Bloom: lead vocals, stun guitar, keyboards**

**Albert Bouchard: drums, vocals**

**Joseph Bouchard: bass, vocals**

**Allen Lanier: rhythm guitar, keyboards**

**Donald "Buck Dharma" Roeser: lead guitar, vocals**

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Engineered by David Lucas and Bill Robertson

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Other titles available by Blue Öyster Cult:  
*Tyranny And Mutation* (CK 85481)  
*Secret Treaties* (CK 85480)  
*Agents Of Fortune* (CK 85479)  
*On Your Feet Or On Your Knees* (CGK 33371)  
*Spectres* (CK 35019)  
*Some Enchanted Evening* (CK/PCT 35563)  
*Mirrors* (CK 36009)  
*Cultosaurus Erectus* (CK 36550)  
*Fire Of Unknown Origin* (CK/PCT 37389)  
*Extraterrestrial Live* (CGK 37946)  
*Revolution By Night* (CK 38947)  
*Career Of Evil* (CK 44300)  
*Workshop Of The Telescopes* (C2K 64163)  
*Super Hits* (CK/CT 65638)  
*Don't Fear The Reaper: The Best Of Blue Öyster  
Cult* (CK/CT 65918)

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