

Blue Öyster Cult - Spectres (1977)

Written by bluesever

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- 01 *Godzilla* [play](#)
- 02 *Golden Age Of Leather*
- 03 *Death Valley Nights*
- 04 *Searchin' For Celine*
- 05 *Fireworks* [play](#)
- 06 *R.U. Ready 2 Rock*
- 07 *Celestial The Queen*
- 08 *Goin' Through The Motions*
- 09 *I Love The Night*
- 10 *Nosferatu*

Personnel:

- * Eric Bloom—vocals, guitar; lead vocals on 2,4,6,8
- * Joe Bouchard—bass guitar, vocals, guitar; lead vocals on 7,10
- * Donald "Buck Dharma" Roeser—lead and rhythm guitars, vocals; lead vocals on 1,2,9
- * Albert Bouchard—drums, vocals, harmonica; lead vocals on 3,5
- * Allen Lanier—keyboards, guitar
- * Newark Boys Chorus—vocals (on "Golden Age of Leather")

Blue Öyster Cult scored big with *Agents of Fortune* and its now-classic rock hit, "(Don't Fear) The Reaper." It took the album into the stratosphere and the band's profile with it; it put them in the visible pop space they'd tried for years to get to. But upon arrival, they found that kind of success difficult to respond to. Not only did the Cult want to respond, they wanted to cement their place. *Spectres* is not the masterpiece that *Agents of Fortune* is, but it didn't need to be. However, upon hearing *Spectres* again, the album offers proof that the commercial and creative bent of *Agents of Fortune* was still in place at certain moments, and the band laid out a major single in the opening cut, "Godzilla," a tune -- however silly it may be -- that is every bit as memorable as "(Don't Fear) The Reaper." It's not the only big number here either: "Goin'

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Through the Motions" and the truly spooky "I Love the Night" by Buck Dharma also scored. The former track is a wonderful blend of Tommy James & the Shondells, Boston, and Mott the Hoople's roots rock glam attack. Written by Eric Bloom and Ian Hunter, it's a stunning single. It sounds less like the Cult than anything they'd recorded, but as a classic rock & roll single it succeeds in spades. And "I Love the Night" (with its guitar part resembling "Reaper" for a moment) is one of rock & roll's truly strange and seductive love songs. There is more spook and darkness here, of course, in the album's closer, "Nosferatu." As a closer, "I Love the Night" may have been a better choice, but this track has all those layered harmonies, a reverbed piano, Dharma's power chords, and lyric fills that never lose their sense of menace and once more, a story. BOC were the only band in their league, walking the line between AOR rock and metal, and offering such detailed narratives. Spectres also contains tunes that were ready-made for touring, which is what the Cult did immediately after, resulting in the wildly successful live album Some Enchanted Evening. In sum, the only reason Spectres is not regarded as a classic is because it followed Agents of Fortune. Other than the false funk of "Searchin' for Celine," it's flawless as a finely tuned tome that begins with sci-fi humor and ends with gothic horror -- all of which can be hummed to. --*Thom Jurek, allmusic.com*

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