

Bio Information: **PIP PYLE'S BASH!**

Title: **BELLE ILLUSION** (Cuneiform Rune 193)

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FILE UNDER: JAZZ / ROCK / FUSION

Drummer and composer **Pip Pyle** is widely recognized as *the* drummer of the **Canterbury** school of progressive rock. As the drummer for **Hatfield and the North** and **National Health**, as well as stints with **Gong**, **In Cahoots**, **Soft Heap** and many, many others in both England and France, Pyle is one of the great drummers of both progressive rock and jazz-rock/ fusion. His newest project, **Bash!**, is a modern electric jazz fusion outfit that integrates all of his past musical experiences while showcasing his compositional skills. This CD by Pip Pyle's Bash!, called **Belle Illusion**, is the group's first release as well as the first recording ever released under Pyle's name in the USA.

Born in Sawbridgeworth, England, in 1950, Pyle's sole musical training consisted of a few classes with jazz drummer **Buzz Green**. He began his career as a musician in several British Blues bands. At age 15, Pyle was a founding member of the **Brunos Blues Band**, later renamed **Delivery**, which included his childhood friends **Phil** and **Steve Miller** as well as vocalist **Carol Grimes**. Pyle played on Delivery's 1970 album, **Fool's Meeting** (B&C; Cuneiform reissue 1999), and subsequently joined the band **Chicken Shack**. In 1971, Pyle met globe-hopping guitarist **Daavid Allen** and recorded on his album, **Banana Moon**. Pyle subsequently moved to France, where he joined Allen's psychedelic rock group **Gong** and appeared on the band's **Camembert Electrique**, a classic album of psych/space rock.

Returning to England, Pyle helped reform Delivery and in 1973, cofounded the legendary Canterbury/progressive rock band **Hatfield and the North** with the **Miller** brothers and **Richard Sinclair**. With **Dave Stewart** on board, Hatfield released two albums on Virgin, featuring Pyle's drumming, lyrics, and some compositions. After it dissolved in 1975, Pyle played in numerous jazz groups, including **Keith Tippett's** and **Elton Dean's Weightwatchers**. He then joined another classic Canterbury group, **National Health**, remaining until its 1980 demise. Pyle also began a long-term association with **Soft Heap** and recorded with numerous artists in the '70s, including **Gilli Smyth** and **Lady June**.

Pyle spent 15 years during the 1980s-90s as the drummer for Phil Miller's jazz/fusion group, **In Cahoots**. He also recorded with numerous others, including **Stewart** and **Barbara Gaskin**, **John Graeves**, and **Patrice Meyer**. In 1984 Pyle formed **Equip'Out** (1984-1995), a jazz group that included **Sophia Domancich**, **Dean**, **Hugh Hopper**, and **Didier Malherbe** and released a CD on Voiceprint. In the '90s, Pyle was a founding member of **Shortwave** (Miller, Hopper and Malherbe); rejoined and toured with Gong for several years; and played in **Kramer's Brainville**. In 1998, Pyle released his first solo album, the song-oriented and Canterbury-infused **7 Year Itch** (Blueprint).

In 2002, Pyle formed the group **Bash!** to perform his own jazz-infused, rock-energized compositions. Besides Pyle, the virtuoso ensemble includes guitarist **Patrice Meyer**, keyboardist **Alex Maguire** and bassist **Fred Baker**. **Belle Illusion**, despite it being this group's first release, is an organic and remarkably mature work. Its success is in part due to the player's high level of skill, and in part due to the fact that Pyle penned his compositions with these specific players in mind. According to Pyle, **Belle Illusion** "is the nearest to writing for specific musicians that I've ever done," as well as the drummer's first effort to compose all tunes directly from drums. Featuring superior sound, the CD was recorded live at two festival shows: a June 6th, 2003 show at Le Triton near Paris, for **Les Tritonales**; and an Aug. 10th 2002 show in Seattle WA, for **The Progman Cometh Festival**. Bash! continues to perform at festivals and clubs worldwide.

Patrice Meyer is an internationally acclaimed French guitarist whose playing never fails to astound fellow musicians and audiences alike. He has worked with numerous British musicians, including playing in various Hopper groups, playing in **Emmanuel Bex's Tertio**, and appearing on **John Greaves' 2001 Caretaker** CD. Meyer first worked with Pyle in 1985, when he recruited Pyle and Hopper to tour and appear on his band's album, **Dromadaire Viennois** (1987). Prior to Bash!, Meyer played in Pyle's earlier group, **Equip'Out**.

Fred Thelonius Baker is a widely acclaimed British bassist who has played fretless bass guitar with almost every noteworthy jazz musician in England. He is also an accomplished guitarist who has played in numerous jazz and folk projects. Besides recording with numerous musicians, Baker released a solo album, **Missing Link** on Blueprint in 2003. Baker worked with Pyle on other projects prior to Bash!, including playing together with **In Cahoots**, and contributing to Pyle's solo album.

British pianist and Hammond organist **Alex Maguire** has long been the keyboardist of choice amongst knowledgeable bandleaders. He began working with **Sean Bergin's M.O.B.** in the 1980s, and continues to this day. He began a long-term working relationship with Elton Dean in the 1990s, playing in Dean's **Quartet**, **Newsense**, and other groups, and appearing on numerous recordings, including Dean's 2001 Cuneiform release, ***Moor song***. Maguire has also worked with **Michael Moore**, and appeared on recordings by **Jah Wobble and Deep Space**, **SFQ**, and **The Dedication Orchestra (Brotherhood of Breath** tribute band). Maguire's playing on Hammond organ and Fender Rhodes piano in Bash! remains respectful of the jazz tradition while willing to push the envelope.

PIP PYLE FROM HIS LINER NOTES FOR THE CD, *BELLE ILLUSION*

"Most of the tunes I wrote on this CD come from rhythmic ideas that I fell into messing around on the kit. Apart from "Foetal Fandango" I have never written from the drums before, usually from keyboards or guitar or even from voice. I found it quite fun to do...and I quickly started imaging instruments and then particular people playing them.. So perhaps this is the nearest to writing for specific musicians that I've ever done. Patrice Meyer and Freddie Baker quickly came to mind, having caught their volatile chemistry when jamming together with "In Cahoots". I met Alex only recently in London at jam session with Elton at Jim Dvorak's place... and was struck by7 his fantastic rhythmic and harmonic quirkiness. For once, I was even writing for myself as a drummer, too! ... Bash were asked to play 2 gigs with excellent recordings equipment and landed up with some good live takes. ...While it's warts and all, un-overdubbed, it's what a Bash gig is like; the sound is good for once for a live show and it's an honest representation of men at work and play, which is a first for me on record. So there you go and here it is..."

– Pip Pyle, January 2004