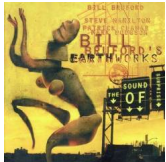


## Bill Bruford - The Sound Of Surprise (2001)

Written by bluesever  
Friday, 22 May 2015 15:41 -

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### Bill Bruford - The Sound Of Surprise (2001)



1 *Revel Without A Pause* 7:33 2 *Triplicity* 6:22 3 *The Shadow Of A Doubt* 6:07 4  
*Teaching Vera To Dance* 8:14 5 *Half Life* 5:18 6 *Come To Dust* 9:56 7 *Cloud Cuckoo*  
*Land* 6:05 8 *Never The Same Way Once* 7:22 9 *The Wooden Man Sings, And The Stone*  
*Woman Dances* 7:42 Patrick Clahar - Saxophone [Tenor], Saxophone [Soprano] Steve  
Hamilton – Piano Mark Hodgson – Bass Bill Bruford – Drums

In past incarnations of Bill Bruford's Earthworks, music often centered around the drummer's electronic sound sculptures using digital triggers and chordal drums. The approach yielded fine results, but Bruford up and changed everything when in 1995 he christened a new Earthworks. Ditching the technology in favor of a traditional jazz kit, his music began reaching back to cool, hard bop, and old-school fusion. In addition to now playing his kit in an unorthodox arrangement, Bruford moved the emphasis from nifty electronics to the kinetic energy generated by his impressive polyrhythmic work. On "Triplicity" his orchestration boasts a dizzying array of time changes, the tempo kept constant only by the hi-hat. It's an aural exercise (albeit a very enjoyable one) just keeping pace. On the spicy "Teaching Vera to Dance," the groove is modern funk; on "Cloud Cuckoo Land," a modified murrenge. Saxophonist Patrick Clahar does an excellent job keeping up with Bruford and pianist Steve Hamilton's changes, but his energies would be better used in emphasizing melody than in rhythmic acrobatics, as his sweetly romantic playing on the languid "Come to Dust" only confirms. But for all the obtuse rhythms and expert playing, *The Sound of Surprise* lacks a certain sense of drama, which previous Earthworks albums (notably *All Heaven Broke Loose* and even the concert document *Live: Stamping Ground*) had in spades. Precisely what made the early Earthworks records so interesting were the chordal drums, largely horn-driven songs, and more progressive outlook. Going back to a traditional jazz quartet format feels somehow like a step backward. ---John Duffy, Rovi

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