

Prophesy

V2 VVR 1015912

Cultural activist with mini-disc recorder travels the world to make fifth concept album.

Since 1993's *Spirit Dance*, cultural integration has been paramount to

2010 chants and classical music. Highlights include Natacha Atlas's wailing Yemeni vocals (*Acquired Dreams*), Terry Callier's spoken word blues (*The Preacher*) and words of wisdom from a Chicago cabby (*Street Guru*). Epic and diverse, it's a miracle that *Prophesy*

Ron Sexsmith

Blue Boy

COOKING VINYL COOKCD214

Baby-faced Canadian songwriter's fourth album. Steve Earle produces.

As if in response to whoever's bright idea it was to have Ron Sexsmith clutching a maple leaf on the cover of 1999's *Whereabouts*, *Blue Boy* marks a move to a slightly crunchier sound attributable to alt.country linchpin Steve Earle. Even without former producer Mitchell Froom's simpatico woodwind, Sexsmith's an audibly sensitive soul, but fortunately Earle hasn't pretended he can make a hopeless romantic sound like a rattlesnake. Fans – and those include Paul McCartney and Sheryl Crow – will recognise the usual, healthy quota of finely crafted songs here, many of them – see *Just My Heart Talkin'* – demonstrating Sexsmith's ability to turn a sweetly understated lyric full-circle. Enjoyable, but a gold star or two short of his 1997 masterpiece, *Other Songs*. ★★★
James McNair

Duncan Sheik

Phantom Moon

NONESUCH 7559-79614-2

Winsome US guitar poet beholden to Nick Drake.



Ron Sexsmith:
cherub rock.