Elton John vs Pnau – Good Morning To The Night (2012)

01 – Good Morning To The Night 02 – Sad 03 – Black Icy Stare 04 – Foreign Fields 05 – Telegraph To The Afterlife 06 – Phoenix 07 – Karmatron 08 – Sixty

As Elton John tells it, he was in a Sydney record shop, picked up a record by Australian electro-duo Pnau and liked it so much he signed them to his management company. Pnau – whose Nick Littlemore had minor UK success as Empire of the Sun – have repaid him by refashioning his early-70s catalogue into eight new songs, the result being half-art, half-science. Each track contains slivers of up to nine (mostly obscure) songs, with Elton's voice drifting through like ether. At its best, shimmering and Balearic, the process makes dreamy summertime listening, but when it misfires, it may as well be sent straight to your local winebar. Foreign Fields is an example of the latter, being essentially 1973's High Flying Bird plumped out by church bells and cosmic "oohs". It also has the misfortune of being sandwiched between two of the record's best confections: Black Icy Stare seamlessly stitches three tunes into one enormously enjoyable retro-funk disco number, while the dubby atmospherics of Telegraph to the Afterlife show Pnau at their best. An interesting diversion for both parties.--- Caroline Sullivan, guardian.co.uk

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