

Mel Brown – The Wizard / Blues For We (2011)

Written by bluesever
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The Wizard 1 *Ode To Billie Joe* 4:23 2 *Swamp Fever* 6:07 3 *Blues For After Hours* 6:34
4 *African Sweets* 3:11 5 *Stop* 4:21 6 *Chunk A Funk* 4:55 7 *Miss Ann* 4:10 8 *W-2*
Withholding 2:14 Blues For We 9 *Twist And Shout* 2:39 10 *Blues For We* 2:57
12 *Ob-La-Di, Ob-La-Da* 3:36 12 *Son Of A Preacher Man* 3:33 13 *Set Me Free* 2:37 14
Freaky Zeke 4:19 15 *Indian Giver* 3:40 16 *Stranger On The Shore* 3:37
Mel Brown - Composer, Guitar, Vocals Bass – Ronald Brown (tracks: 1 to 8) Drums – Paul
Humphrey (tracks: 1 to 8) Guitar – Mel Brown, Terry Evans (tracks: 1 to 8) Tenor Saxophone –
Clifford Solomon (tracks: 1 to 8) Trumpet – Mack Johnson (tracks: 1 to 8) Arranger, Conductor,
Orchestration – Artie Butler (tracks: 9 to 16)

This remastered two-fer combines guitarist Mel Brown's second Impulse release from 1968, *The Wizard*, with *Blues for We* released the following year. *The Wizard* is a straight-ahead soul-jazz date picking up where *Chicken Fat* left off with a few originals alongside funky renditions of "Ode to Billie Joe" and Pee Wee Crayton's R&B hit of the late '40s "Blues After Hours." *Blues for We* relies more on an interesting selection of cover versions ranging from "Ob-La-Di, Ob-La-Da" and "Son of a Preacher Man" to the bubblegum staple by the 1910 Fruitgum Company "Indian Giver" and Acker Bilk's "Stranger on the Shore," which was the theme of a BBC television drama. Brown's guitar work on both sessions is fluid and greasy, as are the funky drum licks, but occasionally, the arrangements drift into superior background music. New liner notes are absent, but the original packaging -- front and back cover art and liner notes -- remain intact. --- Al Campbell, AllMusic Review

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