Janiva Magness – Love Is An Army (2018)



1 Love Wins Again 3:18 2 Real Slow 3:51 3 When You Hold me 3:57 4 Say You Will 3:50 5 Doorway 3:57 6 Moth To A Flame 4:44 7 Your House Is Burnin' 3:57 8 Just Another Lesson 3:08 9 Rain Down 4:01 10 Long As I Can See The Light 3:17 11 Who Will Come For Me 4:38 Backing Vocals – Aurelia, Brie Darling, Dave Darling, Gary Pinto, Kudisan Kai, Natasha Pinto, Sugaray Rayford, Thrones Bass – Davey Faragher Dobro, Pedal Steel Guitar [Pedal Steel] – Doug Livingston Drums – Stephen Hodges Guitar – Cedric Burnside (tracks: 9), Dave Darling Guitar, Banjo – Courtney Hartman (tracks: 6) Harmonica – Charlie Musselwhite (tracks: 2) Horns – Alfredo Ballesteros, Darrell Leonard, Joe Sublett Keyboards [Keys] – Arlan Schierbaum Pedal Steel Guitar [Pedal Steel] – Rusty Young (tracks: 3) Piano – Phil Parlapiano Vocals – Bryan Stephens (tracks: 5), Delbert McClinton (tracks: 8) Vocals – Janiva Magness

Janiva Magness released her first album in 1997, but it took her nearly two decades until she snagged a Grammy nomination for Best Contemporary Blues Album in 2016. The nod was for Love Wins Again, her first record for Blue Élan and fifth collaboration with producer Dave Darling, with whom she has an easy, natural chemistry. Love Is an Army, her 2018 sequel to Love Wins Again, illustrates that for however easy her rapport with Darling is, it is hardly lazy. Like its predecessor, Love Is an Army is rooted in Southern soul-blues -- the opening "Back to Blue" is a proud throwback to the classic sound of Stax Records -- but Magness adds new dimensions to this blueprint. Notably, there's a strong country undercurrent that runs through the album, first surfacing on "On and On" -- a steady-rolling number featuring Poco's Rusty Young on pedal steel -- but reappearing on the title track and the fragile "Down Below." When paired with the adventurous blues that pops up elsewhere -- "Home" is a fuzz-drenched gospel number, "Hammer" is densely funky yet finds a spot for Charlie Musselwhite -- this Americana turns Love Is an Army into a rich, rewarding affair that betters its fine predecessor.---Stephen Thomas Erlewine, AllMusic Review

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