Jimi ‘Prime Time’ Smith – Give Me Wings (1998)

1. Killer Joe 2. U For Me 3. Give Me Wings 4. If Trouble Was Money 5. Tipping 6. Walking The Dog 7. When You're Doin' Alright 8. Soul Fixin' Man 9. Out On A Line 10. One Woman Too Many 11. I'll Play The Blues For You 12. Last Night Jimi "Prime Time" Smith (vocals, guitar); Mick Massof (vocals, bass); Donald "Hye Pockets" Robertson (vocals, drums); Tom Burns (harmonica); Captain Jack McDuff, Michael Pendergast (Hammond B-3 organ). Recorded live at Blue Alley, Minneapolis, Minnesotta on May 29, 30, 1998.

As a singer, Jimi "Prime Time" Smith has limited pipes. As a guitar player, he rates much higher. On Give Me Wings (Atomic Theory ATM 1142; 73:52), recorded live at Blues Alley in Minneapolis, Smith wails with liquidy Hendrixian facility on the blues, stretching into headier realms than your basic 12-bar cliches through his hip phrasing and choice of notes. That jazzy quality is evident on the opener, Benny Golson's oft-recorded "Killer Joe." Minneapolis resident Jack McDuff sits in on one number, his own minor key vamp "Walkin' the Dog," which recalls Hendrix's B-3 organ shuffle "Rainy Day Dream Away." Prime Time gets down in the alley on his Jimmy Reedish original "U for Me," featuring guest harmonica player Tom Burns, and on a rough rendition of his mother Johnnie Mae Dunson's "When You're Doin' Alright." But he unleashes his most savage licks on two tribute numbers —Albert Collins' slow blues "If Trouble Was Money" and Luther Allison's show stopping shuffle "Soul Fixin' Man." Smith manages to pay tribute to both Collins and Johnny Guitar Watson on a nasty "One Woman Too Many," then turns in a stirring rendition of Albert King's "I'll Play the Blues for You" before stomng on the distortion box for the crunchy closer, "Last Nite." A solid and soulful offering from this Chicago native and current Minneapolis resident.

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