

Janiva Magness – Love Is An Army (2018)

Written by bluesever

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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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