Herbie Hancock - The Imagine Project (2010)

1. Imagine (Featuring Pink, Seal, India Arie & Jeff Beck)
2. Don t Give Up (Featuring Pink and John Legend)
3. Tempo De Amor (Featuring Ceu)
4. Space Captain (Featuring Susan Tedeschi and Derek Trucks)
5. The Times, They Are A Changin (Featuring The Chieftains and Lisa Hannigan)
6. La Tierra (Featuring Juanes)
7. Tamitant Tilay/Exodus (Featuring K Naan and Los Lobos)
8. Tomorrow Never Knows (Featuring Dave Matthews)
9. A Change is Gonna Come (Featuring James Morrison)
10. The Songs Goes On (Featuring Chaka Khan, Anoushka Shankar and Wayne Shorter)

Herbie Hancock - Arranger, Concept, Keyboards, Piano, Prepared Piano, Vocals (Background) Alex Acuña - Percussion Ibrahim Ag Alhabib - Vocals (Background) Abdallah Ag Alhousseyni - Guitar (Acoustic), Vocals (Background) Saïd Ag Ayad - Djembe, Vocals (Background) Lawrence Azerrad Design Danny Barnes - Banjo, Bass, Guitar Jeff Beck - Guitar Richard Bravo - Percussion Kofi Burbridge - Hammond B3, Vocals Oteil Burbridge - Bass, Vocals Rodrigo Campos - Percussion Céu - Vocals Matt Chamberlain - Drums Michael Chaves - Guitar K.S. Chithra - Vocals Vinnie Colaiuta - Drums, Tambourine Kevin Conneff - Bodhran Curumin - Drums Paulinho Da Costa - Percussion Toumani Diabaté - Kora Fatoumata Diawara - Vocals Larry Goldings - Hammond B3 Elaga Ag Hamid - Guitar, Vocals (Background) Jessica Hancock - Vocals (Background) Lisa Hannigan - Vocals David Hidalgo - Vocals The Hill-Tones - Vocals (Background) India.Arie - Featured Artist, Vocals Juanes - Vocals Manu Katché - Drums Bhawai Shankar Kathak - Pakhawaj Drum Seán Keane - Fiddle Chaka Khan - Vocals Larry Klein - Bass, Composer, Keyboards, Vocals (Background) K'NAAN - Vocals Rhani Krija - Percussion Abdallah Ag Lamida "Intidao" - Guitar, Vocals (Background) Eyadou Ag Leche - Guitar (Bass), Vocals (Background) John Legend - Vocals Lionel Loueke - Guitar Conrad Lozano - Vocals Lucas Martins - Bass (Electric) Dave Matthews - Guitar, Vocals Mike Mattison - Vocal Arrangement, Vocals Augustin Makuntima Mawangu - Likembe Ndofusu Mbiyavanga - Percussion Alan Mintz - Vocals (Background) Matt Molloy - Flute Paddy Moloney - Tin Whistle, Uillean Pipes Mandy Montiero - Groomer James Morrison - Vocals Dean Parks - Guitar Sridhar Parthasarthy - Mridangam Louie Pérez - Vocals P!nk - Vocals Maria Ruvalcaba - Vocals (Background) Oumou Sangare - Vocals Seal - Vocals

Anoushka Shankar - Sitar Wayne Shorter - Featured Artist, Sax (Soprano) Satyajit Talwalkar - Tabla Susan Tedeschi - Vocals Fernando Tobon - Guitar Alhassane Ag Touhami - Guitar, Vocals Derek Trucks - Guitar Visi Vincent - Drums Pete Wallace - Keyboards George Whitty - Keyboards, Sound Design Tal Wilkenfeld - Bass

Herbie Hancock's star-studded The Imagine Project was several years in the making, recorded in seven countries with musicians from all over the globe. Hancock's band with producer/bassist Larry Klein, drummer Vinnie Colaiuta, percussionist Alex Acuña, and guitarist Lionel Loueke is a common denominator. Much of what's here is interpretations of well-known pop, folk, and soul songs. That said, The Imagine Project (named for the John Lennon song) feels more like an overreach than a seamless or successful series of collaborations.

The best things are indeed fine. There's a gorgeous reading of Baden Powell's “Tempo de Amore,” thanks to Lucas Martins’ bassline and CéU's singing. “Space Captain” by the Derek Trucks-Susan Tedeschi Band -- with Hancock and Colaiuta -- brings out a much-needed soulful grit to Tedeschi’s vocals, gospelized four-party harmony, and Trucks' tough slide playing. Bob Dylan's “The Times They Are a Changin'," with Lisa Hannigan's raw, emotive vocals, is underscored by interplay between the Chieftains, Toumani Diabaté's kora, and Hancock's piano. The tune moves past its American folk revival beginnings to reflect a global sentiment. “Tamatant Tilay”/”Exodus” pairs the nomad Malian guitar band Tinariwen’s song with Bob Marley's classic. K’NAAN, Tinariwen, and three members of Los Lobos are all featured on vocals. Tinariwen dominates with Hancock’s funky clavinet pushing against their snaky wall of guitars and ululating singing; it's the hippest track here. Klein’s “The Song Goes On,” features Anoushka Shankar, Wayne Shorter, Chaka Khan, and K.S. Chithra with some lyrics translated into Hindi. A full-on Indian session band interacts with Shorter’s knotty soprano sax, and the only truly engaged Hancock piano playing on the set is here. Then there's the rest: “Imagine"'s intro features overwrought singing by Pink and Seal, but turns itself into a Caribbean-flavored tune with India.Arie and her tasteful understatement. Konono No. 1's driving likembe break has Oumou Sangare's vocal accompaniment adding depth to save it. Peter Gabriel's “Don’t Give Up,” a duet between Pink and John Legend, reeks of overproduction; Legend's singing mimics Gabriel’s; Pink's dry acrobatics are hollow. Dave Matthews is a poor choice as a lead vocalist on the Beatles' “Tomorrow Never Knows.” His voice is unexpressive and doesn’t match the musical drama created by drummer Matt Chamberlain, and Danny Barnes and Michael Claves on psychedelicized banjos and guitars. This mixed bag of a record feels like a deliberate grab at Record of the Year Grammy, but it's too uneven. Hancock has taken many risks in his career, but this doesn’t feel like one of them.

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