

Herbie Hancock – Sunlight (1978)

Written by bluesever

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1 - *I Thought It Was You*

2 - *Come Running to Me*

3 - *Sunlight* [play](#)

4 - *No Means Yes*

5 - *Good Question*

Herbie Hancock – keyboards, synthesizers, lead and background vocals (through vocoder) (1–3), string, brass and woodwind arrangements Patrick Gleeson – additional synthesizers (5) Bennie Maupin – soprano saxophone solo (3) Wah Wah Watson, Ray Parker, Jr. – guitar (1, 3) Byron Miller (1), Paul Jackson (2–4), Jaco Pastorius (5) – electric bass Leon "Ndugu" Chancler (1), James Levi (2, 3), Harvey Mason, Sr. (4), Tony Williams (5) – drums Raul Rekow (exc. 3), Bill Summers (exc. 1) – percussion Baba Duru – tabla (2) Bobby Shew, Maurice Spears, Robert O'Bryant, Garnett Brown – brass (exc. 4) Ernest J. Watts, Fred Jackson, Jr., Jack Nimitz, David Willard Riddles – woodwind (2, 5) Terry Adams, Roy Malan, Nathan Rubin, Linda Wood, Emily VanValkenburgh – strings (2)

After Man-Child, alas, Herbie Hancock's American jazz-funk records in the 1970s grew gradually more commercial, less stimulating, and crucially, less truly funky with each release, even as his equipment rack grew larger. Just take a look at the staggering collection of keyboards on the back cover of the Sunlight LP -- all sought-after collectors' items now -- yet Hancock makes so little use of their possibilities here. For much of the album, he seems most interested in establishing a new career as an electronic vocalist. "I Thought It Was You," "Come Running to Me," and the title track introduce the ghostly, gauzy sound of Herbie's singing voice as heard through a vocoder; there's even an electronic Herbie scat choir. Stevie Wonder, he's not. There are still occasional splashes of Hancock harmonic color on the keyboards, but he also relies upon superfluous, self-arranged brass riffs and string backgrounds. The backup bands shift from track to track, from combinations of Headhunters alumni that offer soft-focused facsimiles of the old funk drive to a surprisingly strait-jacketed pairing of Tony Williams and Jaco Pastorius on the eccentric "Good Question." ---Richard S. Ginell, Rovi

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