Jimmy Owens – No Escaping It (1970)

A1 Didn't We 3:07 A2 Lo-Slo-Bluze 6:45 A3 Put It All Togetha 3:45 A4 Complicity 8:15 B1 Chicago Light Green 2:46 B2 No Escaping It 6:05 B3 Milan Is Love 5:05 B4 Funk-A-De-Mama 5:34 Jimmy Owens(Trumpet, Flugelhorn) Kenny Barron(Piano, Electric Piano) Chris White(Bass, Electric Bass [Fender]) Billy Cobham(Drums) Howard Johnson(Tuba, Baritone Saxophone) Billy Harper(Tenor Saxophone, Flute) Ray Alonge(French Horn) Sam Brown(Guitar)

Representing the native New Yorker's first album solely under his moniker, You Had Better Listen on Atlantic was credited to Jimmy Owens and Kenny Barron. Barron is on board playing piano, along with Chris White on bass and Billy Cobham on drums. Owens alternates playing trumpet and flügelhorn on eight self-compositions, with "Didn't We" (Jim Webb) and "Chicago Light" (Barron) the only exceptions. His tone is warm and his notes are decisive, particularly on flügelhorn. The mood-setting "Lo-Slo-Bluze" is a fitting tribute to the genre. Cobham keeps it together on "Put It All Together," where Owens' trumpet harmoniously connects with the Quartet Plus and extra players Howard Johnson (tuba, baritone sax), Billy Harper (tenor sax, flute), Ray Alonge (french horn) and Sam Brown (guitar). The LP's best effort comes on "Complicity," a fusion masterpiece that features a nodding acoustic bass solo from White, while Barron contributes on piano, playing some rapid, dancing chords, and gets into a cutting contest with Cobham's bombastic drumming. "No Escaping It" has a large ensemble sound, and while not immediately entrancing, its fluid changes and many solos, (including a ringing guitar trip by Brown) makes it special. The most romantic cut is "Milan Is Love," where Owens' caressing trumpeting shows that sentimentality can have an edge and still be sweet. The humorous "Funk-A-De-Mama" is what the title infers and then some. --- Andrew Hamilton, Rovi

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