Chicago - Chicago X (1976)



01. Once Or Twice (Terry Kath) - 3:00
02. You Are On My Mind (James Pankow) - 3:18
03. Skin Tight (James Pankow) - 3:17
04. If You Leave Me Now (Peter Cetera) - 3:53
05. Together Again (Lee Loughnane) - 3:48
06. Another Rainy Day In New York City (Robert Lamm) - 2:59
07. Mama Mama (Peter Cetera) - 3:27
08. Scrapbook (Robert Lamm) - 3:27
09. Gently I'll Wake You (Robert Lamm) - 3:31
10. You Get It Up (Robert Lamm) - 3:33
11. Hope For Love (Terry Kath) - 3:00
Bonuses:
12. I'd Rather Be Rich (bonus, original Version/rehearsal) (Robert Lamm) - 2:33
13. Your Love's An Attitude (bonus) (Terry Kath) - 5:59

Personnel:
- Terry Kath - guitar, vocals
- Peter Cetera - bass, vocals
- Robert Lamm - keyboards, vocals
- Laudir DeOliveira - percussion, vocals
- Lee Loughnane - trumpet, vocals
- James Pankow - trombone, vocals
- Danny Seraphine - drums, vocals
- Walter Parazaider - woodwinds, vocals
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- David J. Wolinski - piano & mellotron on "Hope For Love"
- James William Guercio - acoustic guitar & bass on "If You Leave Me Now"; guitar on "Hope For Love"
- Othello Molineaux & Leroy Williams - steel drums on "Another Rainy Day In New York City"
- Jimmie Haskell - string & french horn orchestration on "If You Leave Me Now";
string conductor on "Gently I'll Wake You"

Although it was their tenth release Chicago X (1976) was actually the band's eighth studio effort -- as Chicago IV (1972) had been a live set from Carnegie Hall and Chicago IX (1975), which precedes this disc, was their first best-of collection. Musically, the combo had effectively abandoned their extended free-form jazz leanings for more succinct pop songs. That is not to say that the band couldn't rock, because they could as evidenced by the Terry Kath (guitar/vocals) full-tilt rave-up "Once or Twice," which commences the album. The hot brass section bows deeply and respectfully to their Muscle Shoals counterparts as Kath does his best funky Otis Redding vocal. Showing his tremendous depth of field, Kath bookends the LP with the empowering and positive "Hope for Love." In between those two extremes are some of Chicago's best-known works -- such as Peter Cetera's (bass/vocals) chart-topping light rock epic "If You Leave Me Now" and Robert Lamm's (keyboards/vocals) "Another Rainy Night in New York City." The latter side also reveals a minor motif, as it is a Latin-based song about the Big Apple. It follows in the footsteps of the improv-heavy "Italian from New York" from their previous studio effort, the fusion-filled Chicago VII (1974). Lamm contributes a few other tucked-away classics to Chicago X as well -- such as the aggressive and sexy "You Get It Up." There are also a pair from James Pankow(trombone/vocals) in the form of the syncopated "You Are on My Mind" -- which crossed over onto both the adult contemporary as well as pop music charts. His other composition is the classy brass of "Skin Tight." The upfront horn interjections and overall augmentation are akin to the sound made famous by their West Coast Tower of Power contemporaries. As a majority of their previous efforts had done -- all sans their debut -- Chicago X was a Top Ten album and "If You Leave Me Now" became a double Grammy winner, for both Best Pop Vocal Performance by a Duo Group or Chorus and Best Arrangement Accompanying Vocalist(s). The latter award was actually not given to the band, but rather to noted string arranger Jimmie Haskell and the group's longtime producer, James William Guercio. Another well-deserved Grammy was given to John Berg for his visually enticing cover art -- depicting Chicago's logo on the wrapper of what otherwise appears to be a Hershey chocolate bar. As the disc was released in the summer of the U.S. bicentennial (1976), the all-American image was undoubtedly and duly noted. ---Lindsay Planer, AllMusic Review

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