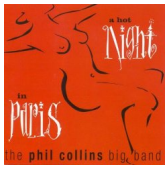
Phil Collins – A Hot Night In Paris (1999)



1. "Sussudio" 2. "That's All" 3. "Invisible Touch" 4. "Hold On My Heart" 5. "Chips & Salsa" 6. "I Don't Care Anymore" 7. "Milestones" 8. "Against All Odds" 9. "Pick Up the Pieces" 10. "The Los Endos Suite" Alto Saxophone, Woodwind – Matt James Baritone Saxophone, Woodwind – Kevin Sheehan Bass – Doug Richeson Guitar – Daryl Stuermer Keyboards – Brad Cole Leader [Musical Director], Trumpet, Flugelhorn – Harry Kim Percussion – Luis Conte Tenor Saxophone, Woodwind – Chris Collins, Ian Nevins, Larry Panella Trombone – Antonio Garcia, Arturo Velasco, Mark Bettcher, Scott Bliege Trumpet, Flugelhorn – Alan Hood, Daniel Fornero, Ron Modell, Tito Carrillo

In the latter half of the '90s, Phil Collins' career hit a bit of a sales slump, and instead of shamelessly chasing after another number one single, he decided to change pace and try something different. Returning to the drums, he assembled the Phil Collins Big Band, reviving the sound of such idols as Buddy Rich and Sonny Payne, but largely sticking with his original material. After a brief European tour in 1996 (which happened to feature Quincy Jones as conductor and Tony Bennett as vocalist), he created a new version of the band featuring several accomplished jazz and studio musicians in support -- notably alto saxophonist Gerald Albright, but also guitarist Daryl Stuermer, tenor saxophonist James Carter, and pianists George Duke and Brad Cole, among many others, in varying roles. That band toured America and Europe in 1998, and it's the one featured on the ten-song, 70-minute live album A Hot Night in Paris. Initially, it may be disarming for long-time fans (and detractors) to hear "Sussudio," "That's All," and "Against All Odds" blaring forth in brash, brassy arrangements, and it is true that the melodies can occasionally sound thin in this context, but once that first reaction passes, A Hot Night in Paris is actually entertaining. Collins doesn't try anything new with the big band form -- he just updates it with his own songs, including the Genesis chestnut "The Los Endos Suite," along with covers of Miles Davis' "Milestones" and the Average White Band's "Pick up the Pieces." As such, it's the sort of record that will inevitably irk purists, since it's targeted right at mainstream jazz audiences, ones that aren't really familiar with big band music but have a vague idea of what it sounds like, but anyone whose standards aren't quite as exacting will likely be pleasantly surprised with A Hot Night in Paris. When the band just plays -- which is quite often, since the themes are stated quickly enough so they're recognized, then they

disappear -- this is swinging, accomplished music that's unpretentious and fun. It's never more than simply entertaining, but that's all it needs to be -- it's more enjoyable than any record Collins has put out in over a decade, and it suggests that this is a dignified and charming way for him to mature. ---Stephen Thomas Erlewine, AllMusic Review

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