

## Gladys Knight – Another Journey (2013)

Written by bluelover

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*1. Old School 2. I Who Have Nothing 3. The Dream 4. All in Due Time 5. Settle 6. I L-O-V-E Y-O-U 7. I Hope You Dance 8. I Who Have Nothing (club Remix) 9. Searching for the Real Thing*

Gladys is back. At 69 years of age her voice remains a crisp, steady, robust marvel. She still packs a powerful vocal punch. This effort finds her going after today's contemporary sounds with some mixed results.

The standout song is "I Hope You Dance"--originally covered by Gladys for the soundtrack to the film "The Family That Preys." That soundtrack was never released commercially, but here it is at last (perhaps in response to all those requests on youTube!) The tune fits her persona like a hand in glove and her recording simply soars with rich orchestration and a gospel feel.

"I (Who Have Nothing)," which GK recorded first in 1979 in standard ballad fashion, is updated here twice--once with a hip-hop tinged, head-bobbing beat and again with a disco feel, courtesy of the Leon Sylvers Remix version. Sylvers' take on the song is sleek, propulsive and danceable.

Elsewhere we find Knight continuing in the "I Hope You Dance" vein, with themes of determination, faith and patience. "The Dream" is a feel good, sing-along tune, featuring a Boys & Girls Club Choir and passionate shout-outs to inspiring personalities of past and present. "Settle," originally on the "For Colored Girls" soundtrack is a churchy, hand-clapper with explicit instructions to have faith in the Lord. Sylvers also contributes the sparse ballad "All In Due Time." I think the lyrics could have been a little less "on the nose" with this one, although one

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couplet about "a train with no tracks/a play with no acts" is memorable.

"Old School" (the title says it all--back in the day nostalgia) has a mellow groove and a nice hook, but not enough GK for me--instead we get a verse by Pip #1, Bubba Knight and a guest rapper appearance. "Searching For The Real Thing" puts Gladys back in the quest for romance mode. Her performance is feisty and energetic and the melody is fine, but the production is a bit gimmicky for my tastes. I prefer GK singing with instrumentation that has more of the human touch and fewer computerized sounds.

Another Journey is on the skimpy side---only 9 tracks in the CD era? The production doesn't exactly sound big-budget either, but this is not surprising with many veteran soul/pop artists no longer signed to major labels. ---New Yorker, amazon.com

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