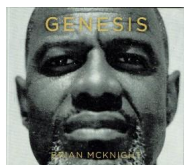


Brian McKnight □ – Genesis (2017)

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Brian McKnight □ – Genesis (2017)



1 *Genesis (Prelude)* 2 *I Want U* 3 *10 Million Stars* 4 *Hungry 4 U* 5 *Forever* 6 *Don't Leave* 7 *So Damn Real* 8 *UDONTHAV2BLONELYNOMO* 9 *Everything* 10 *Die For Your Love* 11 *Blow Your Mind* 12 *Genesis*

Brian McKnight's studio albums from 2009 through 2016, a period beginning with *Evolution of a Man* and ending with *Better*, were largely casual if always spirited, simultaneously self-indulgent and off the cuff. With frequent use of traditional instrumentation, they also tended to diverge from the prevailing programmed and otherwise synthesized sounds of contemporary R&B. On *Genesis*, McKnight opts to switch it up with modern production stylings, though he's not competing with the stoned, lecherous, younger likes of Bryson Tiller and Ty Dolla \$ign here. In fact, the approach resembles that of 2006's *Ten*, for which McKnight connected with Tim Kelley and Bob Robinson to sound up to date with typically mature songwriting true to his age and experience. McKnight reconnects with Kelley, who serves beside him as co-producer, and the result is similarly positive, with no hint of creative desperation or compromise. Overall, this is more rooted in the electronic-oriented R&B tradition of Kashif and company than, say, an attempt to keep up with mid- to late-2010s hitmakers such as DJ Mustard and Metro Boomin. Just as significantly, McKnight's lyrics and melodies come across as more considered than they did on the latter preceding albums. The usual situations and emotions -- romantic devotion, sexual longing, pleading for commitment, and so forth -- are covered with fresh touches. One of McKnight's best albums, *Genesis*, also marks 25 years since the singer released his debut. Remarkably, his voice has barely changed since his arrival at the tail-end of the new jack swing era. ---Andy Kellman, AllMusic Review

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