

Lisa Stansfield – Seven (2014)

Written by bluelover

Sunday, 16 February 2014 16:49 - Last Updated Friday, 07 April 2017 15:29

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*01.Can't Dance 02.Why 03.So Be It 04.Stupid Heart 05.The Crown 06.Picket Fence
07.The Rain 08.Conversation 09.Carry On 10.Love Can*

Lisa Stansfield is a bit of a legend really isn't she? Over her three decades in the music industry, she's been responsible for classic hits such as Around The World, Someday (I'm Coming Back), People Hold On, Change and In All The Right Places. It's been a decade since she last released an album and that was 2004's The Moment. Now she's ready to make her return to music with her new album Seven, aptly named as it's her seventh solo studio album.

Stansfield started to tease her return last year when single Can't Dance was released. The track retains Stansfield's classic mix of soul and pop giving the song a throwback sound that works well in a music climate where hits such as Get Lucky by Daft Punk and Blurred Lines by Robin Thicke are topping the charts. The track is the opening number on Seven and it reintroduces you to Stansfield's sultry, soulful and powerful voice. There's something so warming about Stansfield's voice and immediately you reconnect with her eager to see what she's going to serve up next.

Seven was written and produced with Stansfield long-time collaborator and partner Ian Devaney. The album contains 10 brand new tracks that update Stansfield's signature sound so that it works in today's charts. The end result is one that is varied and stunning with Stansfield's vocals at the centre of it all. New single Carry On, which is a nod to 70s disco, is one of the standouts on the record and showcases the impressive vocal range that we know Stansfield for. The verses start off sultry before building into a catchy chorus that you'll be humming long after the track has finished.

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Elsewhere on the album Stansfield strips back the instrumentation for the jazzy Why, surrounds herself with a horn section on the seductive Stupid Heart, and explores midtempo R&B on the gorgeous The Crown. Album closer Love Can marries sultry beats with Stansfield's lower register leaving you on a moody and affecting note.

Our favourite moment on the record is ballad Conversation. Starting out as piano ballad, the track features a restrained and passionate vocal from Stansfield. We can already imagine this bringing out the goosepimples when she performs it live. The second half of the song reveals luscious strings and orchestration as Stansfield's voice hits some serious hit notes.

Seven is a welcome return for one of the most iconic female British singers of our time. 10 years has been a long time to wait for Stansfield to return to the charts but that wait has paid off with this album. There's something about Stansfield as a songwriter and a vocalist that has never been emulated by any other artist and she remains one of the most distinctive artists to come out of the UK. Please don't make us wait another 10 years Lisa, we don't think we could bear it!
--- Pip Ellwood, entertainment-focus.com

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