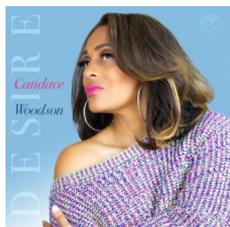


CANDACE WOODSON; Desire (Expansion)

Written by Bill B

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For some time now we've been enjoying some tasty singles from one time southern gospel singer, Candace Woodson. A music graduate of the Tennessee State University in Nashville, we first heard of Candace back in 2015 when she released the insistent mid-tempo modern soul groove, 'Free' (not the Deneice Williams' classic, by the way). Candace's 'Free' was tough and gritty and we learned that the lyric really was intensely personal. Candace, you see, had, thankfully, just been given the all clear from a life threatening cancer.... she truly was "free".

We were also told that the single heralded an imminent album but instead of a long player we were treated to several Tom Glide mixes of 'Free'. Now at long last the album is with us and the ten tracker confirms what we guessed from 'Free'.... Ms Woodson is a real contender with a powerful voice that can also do "tender". Her gospel roots are obvious.

Hear the lady's soul credentials at their best on the ballad 'The Answer Is No' – a convincing piece of work. It's one of several slower moments though equally insidious is a brace of electro-flavoured mid tempo items.... 'Don't Think I Want It' and 'Perfect' on which some clever brass fills weave in and out of the electro backing. 'Free' (in its Ton Glide mix) remains the big dancer though the more mid tempo album title track will please the more sophisticated, less frantic rug cutters.

I'm sure that Ms Woodson would be the first to admit that this album pushed few envelopes. It's not meant to be a ground breaker. But factor in a great soul voice, catchy songs and memorable hooks and there's nothing here not to like. With health issue now behind her, Candace can build on 'Desire' and go on to fulfil the potential that she shows here.

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