

NICOLE WILLIS: My Soul Sensation (Persephone)

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Though this new release from Nicole Willis is being branded as an album, with just six tracks, it's really more of an old fashioned EP and two of the cuts ('I Call Your Name' and 'Reparate') have already been out as singles, so that means for your moneys you get just four new songs.

So here's rundown of those four new 'uns. 'Save It' opens the album. It's a mid-tempo groove with just a hint of reggae about it. The title cut offers some reggae style horns (courtesy of Jimi Tenor) though as the track unfolds, the flavour becomes more Afro-beat. The third new song is 'My Reflection' - a kind of homage to the disco era while the last newbie is 'Free' – a more blatant disco romp.

The LP/EP is completed by the two previous singles – 'Reparate' and 'I Call Your Name'. The former, you may recall, is a bass heavy dance groove while the latter is an infectious electro-funk mover and it gets my vote as the set's standout.

Brooklyn-born soulstress Nicole sings with conviction throughout, betraying her 30 years in the business while her new, credit-sharing band - Banda Palomita (Ndioba Gueye (electric bass), Julius Heikkilä (guitars), Antti Kujanpää (keyboards, synths, and sequencer), Ilari Larjosto (drums, engineer, and producer) and Luiz Orlando Sá Do Carmo (percussion) – work their socks off but things just don't quite ignite. Maybe the mini album needs just one more BIG tune...as it is, file 'Soul Sensation' under "workmanlike".

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