

SA-RA Creative Partners Sign New Management Team, Barrett LaRoda and Jeff Dyson



Pictured from left to right: Mattin Sed, President of Special Products, LaRoda Group Inc.; William McDowell, VP of Shakeji, Inc.; Gary Rose, CEO Robert Rose Jewelry; Gladys Knight; Barrett LaRoda, CEO LaRoda Group Inc., and Steve "Biscuit" Walker, VP of FreestyleMac, LLC

Photo Credit: Marty Frierson

Los Angeles, CA – R&B icon Gladys Knight has always personified the essence of style, grace and soul. An award winning singer and songwriter and an accomplished businesswoman, actress, author and humanitarian, Knight was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1996 for her chart topping recordings as a member of the world renowned singing group, "Gladys Knight and the Pips." She has mesmerized audiences for decades with such hits as, "Neither One of Us," "You're the Best Thing," "Midnight Train to Georgia," "I Heard it through the Grapevine," and "Love Overboard." Like a precious stone with sparkling facets, Knight's captivating eloquence and enduring persona has

captivated audiences for decades.

The essence of her magic and charm will now be captured in an exciting line of fashion accessories as Barrett LaRoda, CEO, The LaRoda Group, and Gary Rose, CEO, Robert Rose Jewelry, proudly announce the creation of the Gladys Knight Jewelry Line. Targeted for December 2009 availability, the jewelry line, exclusively designed for Ms. Gladys Knight, will be carried in major department stores and on the Home Shopping Network, (HSN).

The announcement is yet another feat for LaRoda who has been consistently blazing a trail within entertainment circles as a savvy deal maker, producer and executive producer. From the success of the Annual Plymouth Jazz Festival Tobago, with headliners the likes of Whitney Houston, Rod Stewart and Shakira to the Annual THISDAY Music Festival, one of the biggest and most successful concerts ever held on the continent of Africa with headliners Jay Z, Usher and Mary J. Blige, in Abuja and Lagos, Nigeria, LaRoda is one of the industry's 'behind the scenes' best kept secrets. His LaRoda Group, based in Los Angeles, CA, is a licensing, branding and intellectual properties company, and partners in Sammy Davis, Jr. Enterprises, Inc.

"When Knight, William McDowell, VP of Shakeji Inc., and Steve Walker, VP of FreestyleMac, LLC., approached me to create an exclusive jewelry line," says Barrett LaRoda, "I knew that Robert Rose Jewelry would be the perfect partner based on its quality and reputation." Both McDowell and Walker joined forces to form Ms. Knight's executive management team.

"Gladys Knight has been involved in every phase of the design process and has brought her creativity, personality and artistic input in creating what I know will be a very popular and quality brand," adds LaRoda. Mattin Sed, president of the LaRoda Group Inc. handled the coordination between Team Gladys and the LaRoda Group to facilitate the deal.

Robert Rose Jewelry based in New York, is a leader in fashion jewelry and is known for its up to the minute styling and quality at affordable prices. Robert Rose jewelry can be found at leading department and specialty stores throughout the United States, South America, Europe and Asia. Last Earth Day, Robert Rose launched its environmentally friendly Eco-Chic collection.

“The first time we met Gladys Knight,” says Gary Rose, “we found an incredible combination of class, timeless style and personal warmth. We knew from that moment that this would be the perfect match for Robert Rose Jewelry, and we look forward to working with Gladys in developing a jewelry line that truly represents her personality and her lifestyle, a line that is stylish, fun and easy to wear.”

Mr. Rose continues, “Among the many components we hope to use in her line will be friendly elements like recycled glass, fair trade beads, and parts made from Tagua nuts (a sustainable rainforest crop often referred to as vegetable ivory).”

Says Ms. Gladys Knight, “My team and I were impressed with Gary Rose, CEO, Robert Rose Jewelry, and its family oriented organization as well as their mission to provide quality jewelry for the working woman and appeal to those who are just fashion forward. I am excited to work with a company that shares our ideas of creating natural products that are not only environmentally friendly, but also creates jobs. The affordable prices of the new line, along with quality and attention to family, is an unbeatable combination. I thank the Rose family for this opportunity.”

William McDowell, continues, “The team that surrounds Ms. Knight has always been very careful about lending her name to projects. After over fifty years in the entertainment industry, Ms. Knight has worked very hard to maintain a level of excellence, and has searched for products to potentially

endorse that bring that same effort. To this end, we believe that Robert Rose Jewelry and Gladys Knight will be a perfect combination.”

“It has been a dream and pleasure for me to be an integral part of an iconic legends career as Ms. Knight’s,” states Steve Walker. “Her exceptional skills has shined for decades, in front of and behind the microphone and camera. This venture with Robert Rose Jewelry is an exciting path in the fashion industry we look forward to expanding.”

Gladys Knight’s collaboration with Elton John, Dionne Warwick, and Stevie Wonder, on the Grammy-winning recording, “That’s What Friends Are For,” heightened awareness and raised millions for HIV/AIDS research. She received a “Best New Actress” Golden Globe nomination for her role (her first) in the motion picture, “Pipedreams,” and is author of two best sellers, At Home with Gladys Knight (McGraw Hill), and Each Line of Pain and Glory, My Life Story, (Hyperion-N.Y.) The popular Ms. Knight is also co-owner (along with Ron Winans) of a successful chain of chicken and waffles restaurants.