

Throwback: Phyllis Hyman-Be One



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Philadelphia born singer Phyllis Hyman began her music career after she graduated high school and went on tour with the band New Direction. She performed with other local bands and appeared in the film *Lenny* before moving to New York City in 1975. Her big break came when she met Norman Connors and appeared on his 1976 *You Are My Starship* album. Their cover version of [“Betcha By Golly Wow”](#) was commercially successful and officially introduced her voice to the public. Hyman’s self-titled premiere on the Buddah label disclosed prodigious emotions that delivered ancient luster to songs that would later define her legacy including The Spinners’ [“I Don’t Want To Lose You,”](#) [“No One Can Love You More,”](#) [“Loving You Losing You”](#) and [“The Night Bird Gets The Love.”](#) *Somewhere In My Lifetime* was her debut album for Arista and it gave her fans more of her tortured sensuality in the form of [“Living Inside Your Love”](#) and [“Be Careful \(How You Treat My Love\)”](#) and the [title track](#). *You Know How To Love Me* was Hyman’s marketplace tour de force thanks to the [headlining track](#), [“But I Love You”](#) and [“Complete Me.”](#) The album was a Top Ten album and got her onto the dance charts but a Top Ten single did not arrive until her ’81 duet with Michael Henderson [“Can’t We Fall In Love Again.”](#) It was during this time period that Hyman appeared in the Broadway musical *Sophisticated Ladies* which earned her a Tony nomination. *Goddess Of Love* was her last album for Arista in ’83 and was overlooked despite pleasantries like [“Let Somebody Love You”](#) and [“Riding The Tiger.”](#) *Living All Alone* reiterated her masterful expression of intense feelings evidenced in [“You Just Don’t Know,”](#) [“Living All Alone”](#) and [“Old Friend”](#) that made the collection a

somber but important R&B outing. *School Daze* is Spike Lee's second feature film and Hyman's performance of "Be One" was a rare, priceless and immortalizing cameo. *Prime Of My Life* was Hyman's last studio album and it had the pop hit ["Don't Wanna Change The World."](#) *I Refuse To Be Lonely* was posthumously released in '95 months after her suicide. In 1998 Volcano Records put together a collection of unreleased songs from her time on the Philadelphia International label and it became her tenth studio and second posthumous release *Forever With You*.

Remembering Phyllis Hyman

Thirteen years ago yesterday Phyllis Hyman took her life after years of battling bi-polar disease. She was a wonderful songstress who gave tremendous emotion to her music. There is a [new book](#) about her life but for now enjoy this performance of "Be One" taken from Spike Lee's [School Daze](#).