= The Real Thing (Gwen Stefani song) =

" The Real Thing " is a song by American singer and songwriter Gwen Stefani from her debut solo studio album , Love . Angel . Music . Baby . (2004) . It was written by Stefani , Linda Perry , and her then @-@ husband Gavin Rossdale , who is credited as " GMR " . Nellee Hooper produced the song , with Mark " Spike " Stent serving as an additional producer . An Europop and synthpop ballad , " The Real Thing " talks about mutual love between two lovers .

Interscope Records released the track as a promotional single exclusively in the Philippines a year after the album 's release . It was released as a CD single that featured a remix by the music duo Wendy & Lisa . The remix was also included on the deluxe edition of L.A.M.B. , as well as on the international version of the album .

After its release , " The Real Thing " received generally favorable reviews from critics . Critics appreciated the " vintage " production of the song and labeled it a stand @-@ out track on the album , while also noting its New Order influence . Stefani performed the single throughout her 2005 Harajuku Lovers Tour in a vintage red bathing suit along with a group of breakdancers and the Harajuku Girls . The live performance was praised and compared to Madonna and Cyndi Lauper .

= = Background and release = =

While writing and recording for her debut album , Stefani cited her major influences as Club Nouveau , Lisa Lisa , Prince , New Order , The Cure and early Madonna and advised the producers and writers that she wanted a similar sound for the album . According to MTV 's Jennifer Vineyard , musician and sonwwriter Linda Perry " put Gwen in a headlock " during a party after the Grammys and told her they could make beautiful music together " ; however , Stefani felt scared and insecure about working with Perry . While recording at Perry 's house , Stefani was initially insecure about her writing process and " would go into another room to try to write some lyrics , and when she came back , Perry would already have the whole song nailed . " After a writing session where " What You Waiting For ? " was created , Stefani became less insecure and felt more comfortable when making songs . After working with other musicians , Stefani and Perry worked together on " The Real Thing " . On October 3 , 2005 , Interscope Records released the song as a promotional single exclusively in the Philippines . The label released a CD single , which featured the album version and a remix by Wendy & Lisa of the song .

= = Composition = =

" The Real Thing " was written by Gwen Stefani , Linda Perry and Gavin Rossdale , who is credited as " GMR " on the album 's booklet , while production was done by Nellee Hooper and Mark " Spike " Stent . New Order vocalist Bernard Sumner and bassist Peter Hook also contributed to the song while music duo Wendy & Lisa were in charge of providing guitar and keyboards respectively . The song has two versions : the first is a mid @-@ tempo Europop and synthpop ballad , and the second , which is a slow version remixed by Wendy & Lisa called : " Wendy & Lisa Slow Mix " . Lyrically , the song discusses mutual love between a couple .

= = Critical reception = =

Upon release , the song received mixed reviews from contemporary music critics . Sal Cinquemani of Slant Magazine called the song a " slice of vintage euro @-@ pop perfection , " while John Murphy of musicOMH named it " another poppy ballad which gets away with some cheesy lyrics by being touchingly sincere , making it probably the best track on the album . " Jennifer Nine of Yahoo ! Music agreed , labeling it an " airy , girlishly fresh album stand @-@ out [that] soars lump @-@ throatedly along on a peerlessly evocative Peter Hook bassline like some dreamy combination of Cyndi Lauper ? s ' Time After Time ' and Ms Ciccone ? s ' True Blue ' . Jason Damas of PopMatters claimed that the song " takes us back closer to No Doubt territory again , this time wedding a

distinctively Peter Hook (of New Order) influenced bass line to a sweet pop ballad . "

Rob Sheffield of Rolling Stone called her " some kind of visionary " for getting New Order on the same track as Wendy and Lisa . Kathi Kamen Goldmark of Commonsensemedia agreed , noting that the addition of the musicians " actually works . " Anthony Carew of Neumu called it an " obligatory cut [...] where great care was taken to get that neo @-@ vintage sound sounding just right . " Charles Merwin of Stylus Magazine was more critical , calling it " tepid " , while Nick Sylvester of Pitchfork Media was overall displeased by the song , heavily comparing it to New Order 's " Bizarre Love Triangle " and stating : " Anyone remotely involved with ' The Real Thing ' should find a stray dog and let it bite him " .

= = Live performances = =

Stefani included the song on the setlist for both of her worldwide concert tours : Harajuku Lovers Tour and The Sweet Escape Tour . In his review of the video album Harajuku Lovers Live , Canoe.ca 's James Stevenson , wrote " the Harajuku Girls donned 40s @-@ era bathing suits and carried plastic beach balls while Stefani herself was glamorously decked out in a red @-@ and @-@ white @-@ polka dot suit in one of many costume changes " ; the Harajuku Girls are a dance troupe that has performed with Stefani on multiple occasions . Stevenson highlighted the performance as one of the standout on the concert , noting that it " set [s] the bar high early in the evening . " Corey Moss of MTV News compared the performance to Madonna 's and noted that the song " could have been titled ' Lucky Star 2005 . " During his review of the concert 's video album , Glenn Meads of the Manchester Evening News described Stefani 's performances as " reminiscent of Cyndi Lauper . " Stefani performed the " Slow Jam Mix " of the song during her The Sweet Escape Tour (2007) ; the performance also included Stefani in a 1940s @-@ style bathing suit , once again accompanied by the Harajuku Girls .

= = Track listing = =

= = Credits = =

Personnel
Credits adapted from the liner notes of Love . Angel . Music . Baby .

= = Release history = =