

# Film Review: Gospel According to Dolly Parton, Queen Latifah in ‘Joyful Noise’

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on January 16, 2012 - 12:43pm

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CHICAGO – The old fashioned musical has gotten a boost from the recent popularity of “Glee” and other singing shows. It was inevitably that the marriage of the gospel choir and the movie musical would take place, and writer/director Todd Graff (“Camp”) is the matchmaker in “Joyful Noise.”



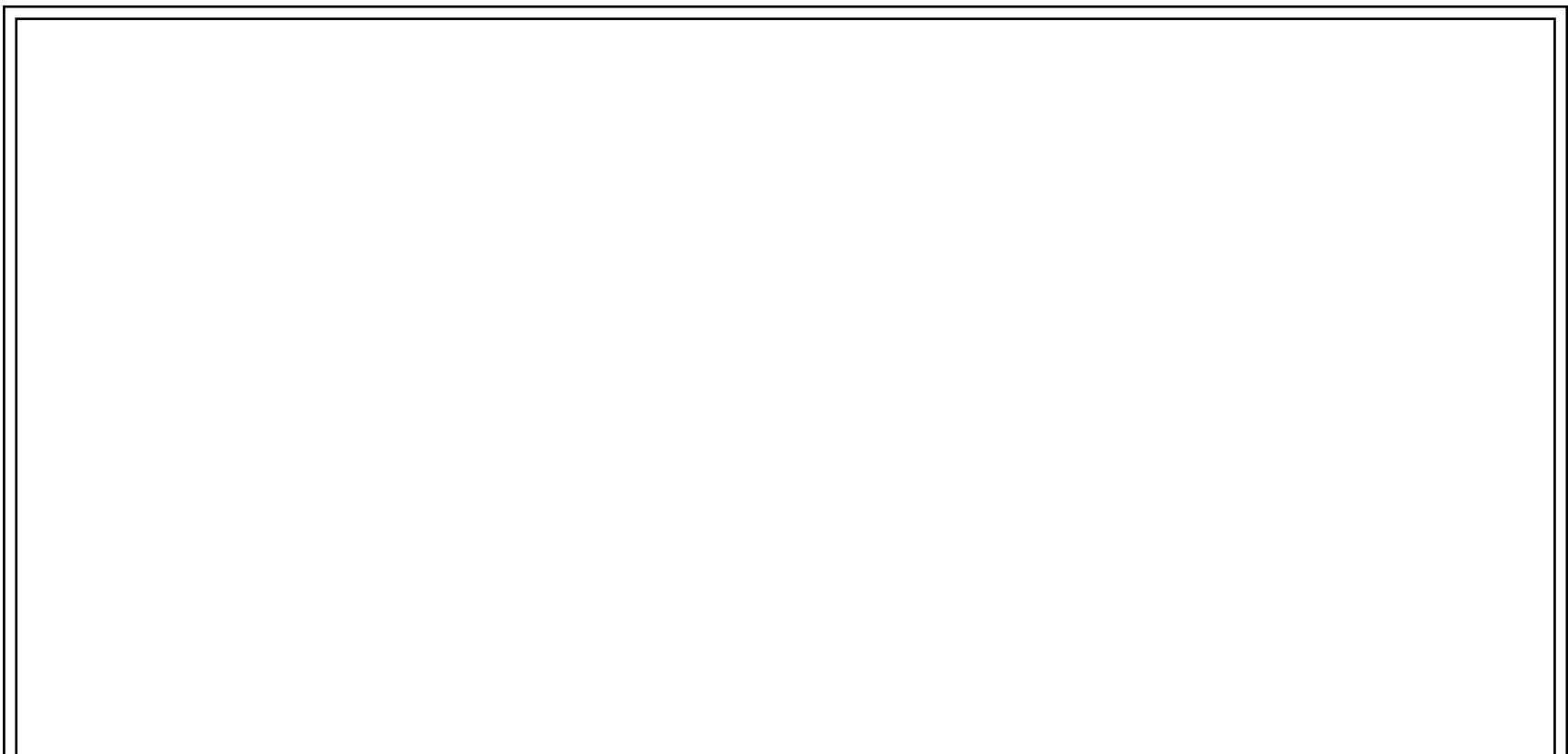
Pairing Queen Latifah and Dolly Parton as members of a small-town competitive gospel group, “Joyful Noise” does just fine when breaking into song, but anytime the plot invades the proceedings, the atmosphere produces a sour note. Graff simply pours too many story elements into the musical stew, which is flat and bland when maneuvering through the various small town rivalries, and only produces steam whenever the gospel and other songs are performed.

The film opens with the gospel choir from a small town Georgia church competing in a regional singing competition. Choir director Bernard (Kris Kristofferson) falls ill at the show, and passes away shortly thereafter. This leaves his widow, G.G.(Dolly Parton), to continue his musical legacy, but the church pastor (Courtney B. Vance) surprises everyone by naming Vi Rose (Queen Latifah) to replace Bernard. Vi Rose is a traditionalist, and the choir wants to do more modern choreography and songs, which are typical winners at the competitions.

Enter G.G.’s grandson Randy (Jeremy Jordan), a so-called “troubled” youth who is sent to live with his pneumatic granny. He has a voice like an angel, and the modern sensibility to take the choir to another level. He clashes with Vi Rose immediately by setting his sights on her daughter Olivia (Keke Palmer). With G.G. and Randy on one side, versus Vi Rose, Olivia and the pastor on the other, can this plucky group of gospel singers win the national title? As long as they make a “Glee”-ful...I mean joyful noise.

*“Joyful Noise” opens everywhere on January 13th. Featuring Dolly Parton, Queen Latifah, Keke Palmer, Jeremy Jordan, Courtney B. Vance and Kris Kristofferson. Written and directed by Todd Graff. Rated “PG-13”*

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Dolly Parton (G.G.) Gets the Point from Queen Latifah (Vi Rose) in 'Joyful Noise'  
*Photo credit: Van Redin for Warner Bros. Pictures*

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