

Leela James Delivers Thought U Knew & Video For Whatcha Done Now



Leela James is back with her cozy and familiar eighth collection of songs, *Thought U Knew*. James's voice has always

been perceived as a throwback because of its maturity and her affinity for R&B legends whose influence is easy to hear. But the millennial singer was a precocious talent who was recognized early on by both the Godfather of Soul James Brown and Soul Survivor Pete Rock. Two decades on and her vocals are an underrated but established part of the R&B world despite the genre's battle to remain relevant in the mainstream.

Thought U Knew is consistent and stands firm on James's artistry, comprising nine songs entrenched in the habits of classic soul, blues and funk. The title track taps Bootsy Collins for its musical direction as she promises to be a woman who never loses her composure because a relationship has ended. Pieces of the past are also evidenced in the usage of Mtume's "Juicy Fruit" for "Good On Me" and Shirley Brown's "Woman To Woman" on "Whatcha Done Now." These musical footnotes work well for James's new nostalgia because her commanding vocals take control and swing like a masterful jazz improvisation. "Faded" cuts through the atmosphere with strong images from lyrics comparing the giddiness of love to being intoxicated. The earthy guitar is straight from Jimi Hendrix's playbook of electrified blues. Rapper Yo Yo is the only guest appearance on the album via "I Was Your Woman," an unapologetic goodbye to a cheating lover. Leela James's *Thought U Knew* reveals that after two decades she is still inspired by and committed to making undiluted soul music. Her voice is just as strong as when she debuted on the *Bait* soundtrack, but today, there is more nuance coming from years of touring and recording. Check out the video for "Whatcha Done Now" below.

Watch: Leela James - Thought U Knew

Watch Leela James pay tribute to *Set It Off* in her video for “Thought U Knew.” Her crew comprises fellow soul singers Avery Sunshine, Syleena Johnson, and California rapper Medusa. The song is the title track from her 8th album due for release on October 27th.

Listen: Leela James: You're The One

Leela James offers an affirmed answer to a timeless question about love with her current song “You're The One.” When she tells her lover that 24 hours is not enough time for them to be together there is no doubt what the sentiment means. James' hearty alto is warm and under the sway of romantic commitment. “You're The One” is leading up to her next album, *See Me*. It is her return after the 2019 *Are You Ready* EP with The Truth Band. She previously shared “Put It On Me” which will also be on the tracklisting for *See Me*. The singer goes back on the [road](#) next week after the worldwide lockdown. [See Me](#) comes out July 30th.Â Â

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Watch: Leela James & The Truth Band Perform That Woman

[youtube id="wFGt0VnEdyw"]Watch Leela James and The Truth Band (not to be confused with the British rock band from the '60s) perform ["That Woman"](#) in the official video for the song. James belts out the tune by infusing her soulful delivery with a rasp into the band's bluesy rock chords. Her conviction makes it clear that she is not going to tolerate any man disrespecting her and it is reminiscent of the same kind of emotion Tina Turner exhibited on "Better Be Good To Me." James and the Truth which consists of bass player Eric Ingram, guitarist Jairus "JMo" Mozee and drummer David "Dae-Dae" Haddon have a five-song EP titled *Are You Ready?* coming out April 12th. The singer had this to say about the project:Â

â€œI was most excited to join forces with The Truth Band in creating this Are You Ready? project, because I knew it would become something magical. We pretty much recorded the project over the course of two weeks and it was effortlessÂ because the music just flowed naturally. It felt good to work on music and not be inhibited in the approach. Iâ€™m constantly evolving as an artist, not to mention I love all kinds of music, always have and always will, and I think this project is the beginning of showing just that.â€

For James's fanbase, the title can be read as an invitation to her new sound because they are accustomed to her singing R&B but "That Woman" is just as soulful as anything she's ever recorded. She and the band also produced *Are You Ready?*Â

