

# pause

## Leela James

### Give Me Five Reasons Why I Should Hit Pause...

**1.** Her debut album, *A Change Is Gonna Come*, is dropping on April 19<sup>th</sup> and chances are you'll hear much more from this old soul-styled sister in the months to come.

**2.** Her voice will surprise you. Though she's merely 5 feet tall, Leela possesses both a schoolgirl speaking voice and youthful appearance. When it comes to singing, her vocal chords show their true strength. No need for fancy production, her pipes are full-grown with a hint of soulful raspiness and when backed by her live band (a rarity in modern day R&B!), the music she creates is reminiscent of the finest from the '60s and '70s.

**3.** Even before releasing her first full-length album, this 20-something, Harlem-based Los Angeles native won the hearts of even the snobbiest of critics — and with good reason. This isn't your run-of-the-mill hip-hop inspired R&B; this is true, gritty soul with a message.

**4.** Much like her music, Leela's look and style is all about being different, while not succumbing to industry trends. This natural beauty doesn't need to prance around half-naked on stage to make a genuine fashion statement and her fans love her even more because of it.

**5.** Although she's finally releasing her debut, Leela was actually signed to RuffNation/Warner Bros. Records about 4 years ago, but had to deal with the harsh realities many artists face in this fickle industry. Fortunately, she was able to make it through a fallen label, business mergers and many regime changes.

### What Else Should I Know Before I Hit Play?

Leela's appropriately titled debut is actually taken from the 1964 Sam Cooke song of the same name. "A Change Is Gonna Come" was actually written as a response to the Bob Dylan song, "Blowin' In The Wind." Both songs were staples of the Civil Rights era, unfortunately the legendary Cooke was shot to death around the time his classic tune was released.



## Frankie J



### Give Me Five Reasons Why I Should Hit Pause...

1. Ready to give fans even more of his smoothed-out and sexy soul, Frankie dropped his sophomore effort, *The One*, this March. This time around he got a little help from heavy hitters such as Irv Gotti, Brian Michael Cox, Mario Winans and Happy Perez.
2. His current smash single, "Obsession (No Es Amor)," featuring Baby Bash, is an English-language remake of bachata group Aventura's hit song of the same name.
3. Despite his Latin heritage, Frank stresses that his music is pure, contemporary neo-soul — not to be filed under the category of "Latin Pop."
4. The Latino heartthrob made his solo debut in 2003 with *What's A Man To Do?* The LP spawned the hit single, "Don't Wanna Try."
5. Frankie made his mark as a member of the popular Mexican-American group, Kumbia Kings, for 4 years.



### What Else Should I Know Before I Hit Play?

Frankie J, born Francisco Javier Bautista in Tijuana, Mexico, confesses that he was Michael Jackson's long lost Mexican brother, "My family would always give me a sombrero because, on television, Michael flings a hat into the crowd, and then he starts to moonwalk. I did the same thing he did, I threw the sombrero in the air, and then I would moonwalk. I was six years old."



## Rebekah Jordan

### Give Me Five Reasons Why I Should Hit Pause...

1. This Los Angeles-residing artist is not only a singer/songwriter, but a multi-instrumentalist to boot!
2. At age 26, the soulful singer possesses a natural, unaltered beauty that's rare in today's mainstream music scene.
3. Her forthcoming J Records debut taps into her life experiences and personal ideals of love.
4. As a songwriter, Rebekah's already provided key tracks for artists such as Tweet and Kelly Clarkson.
5. She's an actress and appeared alongside Adrien Brody in Barry Levinson's *Liberty Heights*.

### What Else Should I Know Before I Hit Play?

Her first single, "If I Wear Your Ring," perfectly captures the feel of her upcoming full-length. With this infectious song, she questions the institution of marriage and most people's ideals of it — something that actually led to the end of her own engagement.

# pause

## Nuwamba

### Give Me Five Reasons Why I Should Hit Pause...

1. His debut CD *Above The Water* is a "sweeping soul symphony, [with] aspects of gospel, blues, jazz and soul vocalizing." In addition to that, Nuwamba also injects doses of funk and reggae.
2. Nuwamba's inspirations are some of the greatest vocal artists to have ever lived. Smokey Robinson, Curtis Mayfield, Bobby "Blue" Bland, Frankie Beverly and Marvin Gaye all hold equal importance in his heart and their influences can be found all over his debut.
3. As a singer/song writer, Nuwamba's music touches on many issues often overlooked by modern music. "The album is a reflection of my life. It's about my struggles, my mistakes, my drama, trying to make my dreams happen and keeping it real," he explains. "As a young brother in today's society, I've had to go through a lot of adversity to maintain and stay afloat. In order to survive, you've got to keep your head above the water."
4. The Fort Worth, Texas native has received local recognition as Fort Worth Weekly's "Best Hip-Hop and R&B Artist of the Year (2003)." Recently, he's also been in town performing on the XM radio show, *The How*.
5. Not only is he an artist, but he's also a businessman who wants to give other cutting-edge performers a chance to shine. He's started his very own outlet, *Barnswallow Entertainment* with hopes of successfully carrying the torch of those who've paved the way before him.

### What Else Should I Know Before I Hit Play?

Though born and raised in the United States, Nuwamba maintains a close relationship with his spirituality and heritage. His name translates to "November" in the Nigerian language Hausa.