

The Shindellas

Shindo

The Shindellas have an acute understanding that Black women singing together to form one sound has historically shaped the foundation of pop music. It bleeds onto each verse that they sing and each harmony they create. The depths of their melodies contain the gospel-inspired vocal tradition of En Vogue and the thundering, genre-bending flair of The Pointer Sisters. They make songs that combine all of the elements that made Black girl groups ubiquitous in the 1960's and bonafide superstars in the 1990's while crafting a fresh sound that's firmly planted in soul music's past, present and future.

The Nashville based trio, composed of Tamara Chauniece, Stacy Johnson and Kasi Jones, officially formed in 2017. Their debut album *Hits That Stick Like Grits* arrived in 2021, showcasing a glorious introduction to a group that can seamlessly weave the spiritual and the soulful as if



photo credit: Ezelle Franklin

it's one sound. But with their forthcoming sophomore album *Shindo*, the group is ready for a fresh start.

"We've come to a whole new level in our friendship, in our musicianship, and (now) let us share the *Shindo*," Kasi said about the new LP.

Shindo, out Oct. 20, is a potent reflection of the group's new chapter—one that starts and ends with love. Across nine tracks, The Shindellas are able to further showcase the depths of their unique voices while proving that they're not only students of the rich lineage of Black girl groups but they're a worthy act to lead a resurgence

of those groups amid a current drought. *Shindo* feels and sounds like The Shindellas in full bloom. While *Hits That Stick Like Grits* featured a group trying to grapple with the uncertainty of the social unrest and public health crisis that dominated 2020, *Shindo* finds the group on the other side of the journey—soaking in all of the bliss that comes their way. The album opens with "Up 2 You," a song with a tempo so bouncy that it makes you want to get lost in the rhythm and fall in love as quickly as they sing about it. "Think of Me" has a traditional R&B sound that highlights the group's crisp vocal arrangements at their best.

When hitmakers Chuck Harmony and Claude Kelly developed The Shindellas and signed them to their label Weirdo Workshop, they wanted to create a sophisticated girl group with a “New American Soul” sound that couldn’t be defined by industry standards. *Shindo* firmly encapsulates that goal. It blends Tamara’s gospel background, Stacy’s previous career of singing commercial jingles and Kasi’s love for musical theater to create a standard that sounds like an oral history of Black music that you never want to stop reading.

“Last Night Was Good for My Soul,” the album’s lead single, centers the essence of that joy. For nearly five minutes, The Shindellas take listeners on a groovy escapade to pure bliss that feels as breezy as a sunny afternoon on the beach. The disco-infused track marked the group’s first *Billboard* chart entry, reaching the top 15 on *Billboard*’s Adult R&B Airplay chart.

The Shindellas are eager to share their growth with fans and new listeners alike. With *Shindo*, the group is ready to feel the love again. And everyone’s invited to feel it, too.

WHAT DOES THIS NEW ERA MEAN FOR YOU ALL?

STACY: “It’s a joyous time for The Shindellas. We have been through so much in the last few years, but we all stayed together. We took another leap of faith and kept pressing through a lot of the unknown. We felt like it

and everything stopped. We literally, as musicians and artists, did not know what was going to happen, and we’re still recovering from the changes that happened.

KASI: We lost all of our gigs. It was just a crazy...

TAMARA: A crazy time, but it forced us to get really, really, what we call soul-naked with each other, about all of our hopes and goals—individually and collectively, and also get honest about what we were afraid of. We had to get honest about our fears, and the music is what bonded us and what kept us going.

KASI: But also during that time, some other stuff started happening. Stacy became a published illustrator of this children’s book. I got engaged and got married. Tammy fell in love, too. As we got *Hits That Stick Like*

Grits out, and we got all of this new energy into the new album, we also started writing with the guys, so it’s more of our literal voice. It really has felt like a fresh start.

WHAT DOES SHINDO MEAN?

STACY: *Shindo* is a term that we use in the studio. It’s like a feeling of goosebumps or chills. That’s what we’re named after. The Shindellas are the ladies who bring the chills.

BLACK GIRL GROUPS AREN’T AS PREVALENT AS THEY WERE IN THE 90S. WHAT ARE SOME OF



album artwork

was time to celebrate. It’s time to be happy and fall in love and be with our community and celebrate people and encourage people, so that’s what we wanted to share in our music.

WHAT WERE SOME OF THOSE CHALLENGES?

STACY: We got together in 2017. We went on our first tour and started releasing music in 2018. We were planning our own tour and started pulling together our own band and doing auditions. We were dreaming big. Then COVID happened,

THE BLACK GIRL GROUPS THAT INSPIRE YOU ALL?

KASI: TLC and En Vogue, and I love them too because En Vogue was so many of the things that we are, like powerful singing, very unique voices individually, very feminine but still very strong. TLC was much like us in that each member had their own identity and they could really go back-and-forth between masculine, feminine and avant-garde. They were sexy, but they weren't always sexual.

TAMARA: We also have a Mount Rushmore of girl groups: The Supremes, The Clark Sisters, The Pointer Sisters and The

Andrew Sisters, so I think they pretty much cover everything.

HOW LONG HAVE YOU ALL WORKED ON THIS ALBUM?

TAMARA: We really started immersing ourselves in it during the latter part of 2022 and into this year. For some of the songs, we might've had a slight chorus for it a couple of years ago. In 2019 and 2020 we had a bunch of voice memos with just ideas, and now it's just a full body of work.

KASI: We had a gig in Atlanta in 2021 or 2022 and on the ride back there's a voice memo that was just hours and hours long of just us like freestyling,

coming up with harmonies. Sometimes it's not even words, like just singing (the phrase) "Good As Gold" (the fifth track on *Shindo*). Almost everything from that ride is on this album.

WHERE DO YOU SEE THE FUTURE OF THE SHINDELLAS?

KASI: We call ourselves "mavericks beyond music." We talk a lot about the place music can take us outside of the music industry into helping or community, empowering young girls and women.

TAMARA: I see us at peace and really thriving and leaning into ourselves even more.

For more information, please contact Asha Goodman 615.320.7753, Reid Kutrow or Carla Sacks 212.741.1000 at Sacks & Co., asha.goodman@sacksco.com, reid.kutrow@sacksco.com or carla@sacksco.com.