

## Reviews

### ***The Second City* Perth launch show**

"... she proved not only can she elegantly deliver her soul repertoire, but also she can cut the stage up So You Think You Can Dance style. Respect. I'm impressed." – Leona Devaz, [Weekend Notes](#)

### ***The Second City* album**

"The album... encapsulates her thoughts, dreams and beliefs into an explosion of soul. Her piano and voice take you on a journey to a world full of positivity, love and understanding. Her first single from the album titled *Under One Sun* is as inspiring as it is catchy." – Alasdair McDonald, [Sydney Morning Herald](#)

"Shameem's new album, *The Second City*, is an uplifting and contemplative soul-pop record brimming with rich vocals, infectious R&B rhythms, jazz-infused melodies and spiritual undertones. It's also filled with beautiful messages. For instance, her new single 'Under One Sun' is a heartfelt cry for unity between people of different races, ethnicities and religions." – [The Brag](#)

"This album blew me away. I'm not going to lie, this isn't my usual type of music, but Shameem is such a standout that I had to give it a try anyway! And I'm so glad I did. This soulful, enchanting collection, with a distinctive jazzy feel, Shameem hasn't messed around with this one. The lyrics were amazing; I was so relaxed by this album that it took me way too long to write a review at all! Upcoming artists are my favourite, Shameem offers such an honest, refreshing album. Definitely give this one a chance!" – [Love 'Em](#)

"... a fun and enjoyable blend of meaningful tracks with highs, lows and twists. Of the many themes within *The Second City*, unity and equality are a stand out, two hot topics in the current Australian environment." – Aaron Bryans, [Xpress magazine](#)

Shameem's 15-track album is fascinating Sunday arvo, lounge material. Early numbers *Beautiful Soul* and *It's All Illusion* emphasise the artist's mannered rhythms and layered, sultry vocals. Hit single, *Under One Sun's* catchy hooks and charming melody make for a highlight, while *Other Half Of My Heart* further softens the tempo. *Give Me A Reason's* soothing love ballad vibe matches *Chill In The Fire's* warm, eclectic harmonies. *Expectation's* silky electric guitar riffs and *I Give Thanks'* energetic beat shake up the album's dulcet tones. It, though a few songs too many, comes out a textured and sexy compilation." – Thomas Munday, [The Music](#)

"Shameem is a classy crooner, effortlessly laying down smooth as silk soul and RnB tracks, while exhibiting an impressive vocal range and tonal flexibility. Or, expressed less technically, she sings like a funky angel. Electronic vocal manipulation is used sparingly and while she engages in some vocal gymnastics, just because she can, any urge to overdo this has been thankfully resisted. *The Second City* breaks new ground for Shameem with a more polished production and cohesive approach to the album, with the inclusion of several brief interludes in which the singer expresses her appreciation for life and those she loves. However, this gives the album an overly sweet, syrupy vibe. The extra spit and polish has resulted in more complex songs and a sound closer to mainstream pop. Notable tracks include the jazzy 'Hole in My Heart', with its mix of smooth and broken vocal delivery and 'Chill in the Fire' with the exotic allure of some Persian lyrics from Shidan Toloui-Wallace. However, the highlights are those in which Shameem casts off the cabaret/lounge tone and dips her foot into other genres, such as the rock edge to 'Expectation' and the brief sortie into electro-pop in 'I Give Thanks'. Shameem is at her most engaging when expressing angst, putting some torque into her voice in 'Give Me a Reason' or displaying anger in 'Imposter'." – [BMA Magazine](#)

“The Second City’ is the Perth native’s second full album and even before its January release there’s quite a buzz on it on the back of the lead single ‘Beautiful Soul’. The Alicia Keys-flavoured tune won some high profile support and it stands out on the album. It features some tight beats and is built round an ultra catchy chorus.

‘Under One Sun’ is another album highlight.... pleasant pop soul with a thoughtful, socially conscious lyric. Indeed, throughout, Shameem lyrics comment on a lot more than the usual relationship thing. The album’s consistent lyrical theme is about the importance of giving thanks. The set features a number of brief sketches or interludes exhorting to us to give thanks for everything we have and that sentiment is summed up in the final outro.

‘Hole In My Heart’ is another cut worth checking. This one’s very Alicia Keys... a lovely, loose, jazzy ramble. The album boasts a number of ballads too – notably ‘Other Half Of My Heart’. With just a hint of reggae about it, it’s quite beguiling. Add to that some decent, if ponderous beaters (‘Imposter’ and ‘Give Me A Reason’) and you have a decent contemporary soul set that’s spoiled by one cut that I found hard to connect with. That one’s ‘Expectation’. It’s clearly an experimental tune but veers too much towards rock to please soul sensitivities.” – [SoulandJazzandFunk](#)

“With a variety of background and influence behind her, Perth artist Shameem has continued on her mission to produce lyrically-strong music on her sophomore release, *The Second City*, whilst evolving her sound into a pop-friendly approach that is bubbly, uplifting and settling.

Fusing R&B grooves with some jazz elements and a powerful and unlimited voice, Shameem has composed a list of tracks that flow smoothly despite the occasional interlude interruption. Opening track, *Beautiful Soul*, is immediately catchy with light piano fills and a solid drum beat. It’s the combination of well-placed minor layers that lead to the bigger picture and Shameem has worked them together perfectly to build to a strong chorus highlighted by her soaring vocals and a well executed message.

Other memorable moments include the gospel harmonies within *Under One Sun* which was written in collaboration with Grammy-winning producer James Bryan (Nelly Furtado, Olly Murs, James Morrison) and *Other Half Of My Heart*, which features Astrid Ripepi, is also a high point sticking to a slower pace with a comforting and driving vocal duet.” – [Xpress magazine](#)

“Strong, clean lines define the work of soul songstress Shameem Taheri Lee. This might be ‘neo’ soul, but the kind that was minted in the late ‘90s rather than now. A mixture of soul, r’n’b and jazz (especially in her smooth-ass band) is paired with simple but distinctive hip hop beats. Does indeed sound like Blige or Keys, but every now and then leans into the pop sweetness of Michael Jackson. This is a total timewarp, but a very convincing one.” – Chris Cobcroft, 4ZZZ radio

#### **“Under One Sun” single**

“*[Under One Sun]* is a wonderfully light track that follows her acclaimed debut single Beautiful Soul. Although sounding faintly like a Christmas carol (or perhaps all songs are moulding into Christmas carols after working in a shopping centre all holidays), its message is both lovely and fitting... it’s refreshing to hear someone so young write with such powerful social conscious... it is a meaty, soul driven pop song.” – Cameron Nicholls, [Howl & Echoes](#)

#### **“Beautiful Soul” single**

“‘Beautiful Soul’ is a feel-good number... The powerful message is set to a classic R&B styling with a catchy hook and filled out with a live band feel, a refreshing change from the electronic sound that’s prevalent in R&B nowadays... with a voice like Shameem’s, ‘Beautiful Soul’ is anything but a

dampener. The video and single will uplift your spirit and have you grooving from the moment you press play.” – Kitten Jam, [SoulBounce](#)

“Shameem is a mixed race Aussie whose musical preference is the soul of the 70s which she re-interprets through 90s groove sensitivities creating a thoroughly contemporary sound. Hear it at its best on her latest single, the ultra-catchy ‘Beautiful Soul’. The tune’s built around some tight beats and features some cool piano and an ear-worm of a chorus. The vocal is spot on and the whole package stands comparison with one of Shameem’s heroines, Alicia Keys. ‘Beautiful Soul’ is taken from the lady’s soon to be released sophomore album and it makes soul sense to keep an eye on Shameem in particular and Australia in general.” – [SoulandJazzandFunk](#)

“Amazing voice Shameem. Soul sister. \*\*\*\*” – Rosie Beaton, [Triple J Unearthed](#)

### **Live performances**

“[Shameem]’s songs had a deep, soulful resonance that captivated the audience, propelled by a strong rhythmic backing... The whole band worked in unison to create a rich tapestry of colour...” – [FasterLouder](#)

“Shameem’s vocal suppleness and song-writing talents were on display. Her melismatic improvisation and scatting shone as her tones varied between angelic and forceful. Shameem’s dynamic charisma was apparent to all while her band pulsated. The performance had all the reminiscence of Jacques Prevert, the R&B of Angie Stone, an Ella Fitzgerald treatment with the tightness of a Gil Evans score and the pace of The Brand New Heavies; unplugged and lashed with exuberance.” – Lady Lex, [Scene Magazine](#)

“Some performers need the audience to listen long and carefully before anyone gets that there is something good going on. With Shameem you’d have to be locked in a lead-lined room to miss this lady’s sparkle. Her charisma and sheer energy on stage command attention and the listener is rewarded with a swinging, soulful sound – this is what jazz is all about.” – James Morrison, Australian jazz virtuoso