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|----------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Home | News & Features | Commentaries | Lifestyles | Caribbean | Community News | Contact us |
| | Gospel Minute | Church News | Sports | Special Fetatures | Previous Issues | |

LIFESTYLE

Melina's Music



Don't try to pin down Melina Soochan to any one musical style. You see, this young Montreal singer-songwriter revels in her musical freedom as she dabbles from in one style then the next as she entices audiences. Sometimes they all come together in what she describes as a "quirky fusion of styles (and) a sultry blend of indie pop, rock, jazz, folk and blues."

Call it what you will, Melina has been devoting much of her time and energy over the past five years, perfecting her style and sound and exploring ways to get it out there. Slowly, she's beginning to make an imprint on the Montreal music scene.

Now she is hoping that her recently released single "Mama Song" with its accompanying video will make its way to rotations on radio and television music channels. She says she is really excited about the song, which she describes as "poprock with a little jazz... the type of song that can fit easily into rotations of any music station."

Another of her earlier releases, XRay Eyes, are now on regular rotation on Bravo and CJNT television music channels. It's not only about getting her music on the airwaves. She also plies her trade at upscale piano bars and hotels, where audiences are treated to a repertoire of standards and originals, most of which are colored by a touch of jazz. Melina says jazz is her genre of choice, if she really had to choose.

"I find myself adding a little Jazz to almost everything I do because it's the genre that makes people most curious. I also enjoy the improv aspect of it," she says. Little surprise since most of her formal training has been as a classical pianist. (She holds a B.Mus. in classical piano from McGill University as well as an ARCT performer's diploma from the Royal Conservatory of Music of Toronto.)

Self-trained and fiercely passionate about music, the former West Island resident (mom's from Romania and dad from Trinidad) has been at it since she was four years-old. Along the way, she has been inspired by other strong women singers and songwriters such as Alicia Keyes and Sarah McLaughlin.

She is confident that success in the highly competitive and demanding music industry will come, but she is still trying to define what success will look like. "Whatever it is, I'm hoping not to have to leave Montreal to find it... I love this city," she says. She is also high on helping others find their space in the music business.

She recently launched a songwriting competition for teenagers between the ages of 13 and 17, offering those up-and-comers an opportunity to have their music listened to and judged by industry professionals.

Teens are encouraged to upload You Tube videos of their music, which will be judged by a panel of professionals and the top ten will compete at the Centre for Education and Theatre in Montreal, located at 2205 Parthenais, Suite 115, Montreal, on Saturday, June 25th, in front of a live audience and a new panel of judges, by performing their song as a soloist or as a duo. According to Melina, winner and the runners-up will be awarded "crazy awesome prizes." Info.: info@acousticnightsmontreal.com or call Melina at 514-823-9390.

FASHION MADNESS AT TMR HALL

On the evening of Saturday June 18, all kinds of craziness will break out at Roosevelt Hall in Town of Mount Royal. If you're a fashion fan, you have to be there to witness Montreal's most daring designers show off their stuff. Organizer Laighton McKay of King Pin Fashions says this signature event will showcase some of the more interesting styles for the summer, fall and winter. Among the fashion houses and boutiques showing off their stuff will be Christina Formals , Yabsaso Fashions , Perez Collection , Kema La Kema , Boutique Modalie and the host Kingpin Fashions. So if you have a thing for style and fun with a little madness, be at TMR Hall on June 18. Info 514 554 6743

ISLAND SCOOP

production
sounds

NEVILLE 'NATO' BROWN HE'S BIG ON COMMUNITY AND NURTURING CARIBBEAN CULTURE



It's not easy for our Caribbean Community to empower itself when all the odds appear to be against us. Many members of the Community find themselves being afraid to participate openly in anything that might nurture and empower their Caribbean heritage. This fear has led many of us to live life like crabs in a barrel.

That being said, our community needs to go back to those times when thousands of Blacks paraded the streets of Montreal during carnival. We need to refresh ourselves and re-focus, standing strong in our efforts to do for self, family and community.

To accomplish this we need to relearn how to love, respect and unite our community. I strongly believe that by understanding our history, we can acquire the right tools to acquire our future goals. On that note I would like to take this time and acknowledge the work of Neville "NATO" Brown, one of our cultural pioneers. Neville "NATO" Brown was born in Trinidad and grew up in Mon diablo. A man bursting with cultural passion, love and ideas, he was involved in various national cultural activities at the highest level before he migrated to Montreal in 1976. And when he landed in the city he wanted to immerse himself in the same cultural activities.

To that end, following a couple Xmas Parang limes he, along with a few others of a similar cultural mindset, created an organization called 'WEST-CAN' [West Indian-Canadian], now one of the primary Caribbean cultural groups in the community.

Today, the group organizes and remains deeply involved in various cultural events, including Parang, Dances, Netball, Soccer, and much more. Ever determined to pursue and realize his dreams, Neville Brown has branched out into promotion. So far he has brought numerous artists from his homeland to the city, initiated an annual dance to celebrate Trinidad and Tobago Independence, and comedy shows. He has even made the bold move of holding Caribbean events on a Sunday.

Among his other accomplishments since settling in Montreal is publishing the Canada Weekend Post and Montreal Camera newspapers. But his greatest challenge was the moulding of Montreal Carnival and branding it CARIFESTA.

When thinking about what's needed to rebuild our Caribbean community, Nato says, "Rebuilding a community starts with the mindset of us as Black people." This process consists of taking pride in who we are as people and the realization that we as Black people must come together and work towards common objectives. Also, as adults we must be examples to our youth, our FUTURE BLACK YOUNG LEADERS. This can be accomplished through love, guidance and nurturing to enable them to become respectable men and women.

Rebuilding our community and preparing our youth are just one of the fundamental reasons for Nato's launching his new Calypso tent, Montrea Socialypso Elite. His goal is to not only give artists the respect they deserve (financially), but to create a platform for the youth to express themselves, culturally speaking.

Island Facts :

- June 10 th, 1940 - Marcus Mosiah Garvey founder of the UNIA and a national hero in Jamaica died in London of heart failure.
- June 12th, 1972 - Dancehall artist Bounty Killa born in Trenchtown, Kingston, Jamaica.

Be free to send your feedback on any of my articles to Productionsounds@gmail.com or www.productionsounds.net

PRODUCTION SOUNDS CHART

1. Town Ting - Cassi
2. Ah Ting - Kerwin du Bois
3. Trini - Benjai
4. Bottom Town - Luta
5. Party song - Jamesy P
6. Wine to the side - Benjai

- 7. Stick On- Problem Child
- 8. Hot Gyal – Lady Star ft Ghost
- 9. Dance & Dingolay
- 10. Illegal - Ma

BE LISTENING TO THE YOUTH HAVE THEIR SAY ON CKUT



As part of the I LOVE BURGZ program, LOVE (Leave Out Violence) in partnership with BUMP, recently put the finishing on a media and broadcast development program for Little Burgundy youth. The five-month training program will culminate in a live radio show to be aired on CKUT later this month.

Generation Z, as the youth call themselves, are responsible for every aspect of the production of the radio show, the objective being to allow them the opportunity to express themselves through a medium they have never done before. Also, it affords them access to an audience which the youth hope will listen to some of the issues of interest and concern to young people.

A rare opportunity in the world of radio, the youth say. This project is made possible thanks to CKUT and Sou Perspectives. So we invite you, the reading audience, to listen to this live youth production which will be aired on CKUT 90.3 FM, June 21st, beginning at 7p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

For more information on programs call Mikaella at LOVE, 514-938-0006 or Chesco at BUMP, 514-937-3157.

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