

Singer will revisit scene of first album at Celebrate Aurora fest



By Brock Weir

When York Region singer Matina Z hits the stage at the end of this month in the Celebrate Aurora music festival, it will be a homecoming of sorts.

The fledgling vocalist has already dropped her first album, 'Whispers in the Dark' and is working on her second, but this first unexpected venture is nearly 100 per cent Aurora - produced in the studios of Attitude Productions based on Orchard Heights Boulevard, featuring drummer Mike Thorne, and produced by Pete Swann; only the voice was supplied by the Newmarket native. 'I have always had an extreme passion for music ever since I was little,' says Matina. 'I used to sing all the time and write poetry when I was a kid and it evolved as I began to take up guitar and then it just turned into a whole album. I have always known my passion for music and knew early on that I wanted to do this, share my music with people around the world, and just get out there and sing to people.'

It has almost been this passion alone which has driven her to success, never having vocal lessons or training, and only enough guitar lessons to get a handle on the basic chords.

'A first album was never an intended project for me,' she says. 'It started off with 'Runaway' which was the first single I wrote after about a year playing guitar. After that, ideas just started coming out and I started writing new songs. It evolved into an album in 10 months, but it was never even intended as a project.'

As time goes by, she brings more clarity to her passion. She had heard that the more she writes the easier it becomes, and that is advice she has found to be true. She writes and strums her guitar every day, and she can find ideas for songs just about anywhere. The lead track on her first album is called 'Stage Nine Clinger', inspired by one of her own brother's misadventures. First released as a single, it spent six weeks at number one on a leading web-based Italian radio station.

'That just motivated me and showed my hard work and dedication is paying off, and it inspired me to continue my journey,' she says. 'Most of my ideas come from what I see going on around me and I have a great group of friends. We always talk and we'll always tell a story, and someone immediately says, 'Yeah, you've got to write a song about this!''

Thankfully, she adds, they are usually pleased with the results!

'When I put a song out there, my main goal is to put it out to as many people as I can because even if it just touches one person, I feel like I have done my job,' she says. 'I get a great joy from it and I just want to get to as many people as possible. When I perform, I see people are having a great time and I love it when they come up to me and say my songs are songs they can actually relate to. It shows they are listening to the lyrics and paying attention to it.'

Going out on a North American radio tour to promote her debut album has only bolstered this from her perspective. She says she wants to continue getting out there, build her base, and continue to reach as many people as possible - and evolve her craft at the same time.

She describes her musical style as 'pop-rock alternative but with an edgy twist' and it is this edge that defines her sound. Influenced by Foo Fighters, U2, and Coldplay, she promises her next album might be a little bit softer, more in line with Coldplay, but maintaining her signature edge.

Her ultimate goal? When asked, she replies evolution as an artist but when prodded a little further, she confesses that a real ultimate would be to play London's Wembley Stadium.

“Once you get to that level where you can pack stadiums with a large audience, you know that you are doing something right and you have touched a lot of people,” she says.

While Town Park, the site for Celebrate Aurora on July 26 - 28, can hardly accommodate the full capacity of Wembley, she promises festival-goers “really catchy hooks and great songs they can relate to.”

For a full list of talent lined up for Celebrate Aurora, a collaboration between Farley Flex's REAL Corp., and Aurora's Habachat, visit www.habachat.com/celebrateaurora.