

In the Hot Seat

Keila Gumbs



~ Female vocalist winner of the Heineken and Bliss Green Synergy Music Awards ~

Talented, beautiful and smart – all these describe the young lady Keila Gumbs.

Originally from the Dominican Republic, but raised on the Dutch side of our friendly island, this lady rocked the crowd at Bliss at the finals of the Green Synergy Music Awards competition.

Gumbs has been singing since she was a baby. She started singing publicly at the age of 15 when she entered the Loud and lovin' it competition and placed second. After that, she kept doing more of these kinds of competitions, as people encouraged her to keep performing and keep entering competitions.

Gumbs also goes by her artiste name Keila Michelle.

This young lady has entered a few pageants including the Miss Talented Teen 2005 and the Leeward Islands Talented Teen 2005 in Anguilla, both of which she won. She chose to sing the song reflection by Christina Aguilera for her talent part in both shows.

She has performed at other competitions and various events and the recent event NAGICO had. She says of performing that it's like a job, but also something you love doing at the same time.

When asked how she had heard about the Green Synergy Award Competition, Gumbs says she had seen the ad but wasn't sure if she should enter. After various people encouraged her to enter, she finally decided to give it a try. She performed in the last round right before the finals and made it to the finals. She said she was nervous performing that first night and her mom asked why she was so nervous, "You've done this so many times; this should be old to you." But when nerves hit you, you can't do much about it Gumbs says.

For the first round at the competition, she sang Kelly Clarkson's A moment like this and Fantasia's I believe, but she admits she was still deciding up to the very last moment at Bliss which song to perform.

The day before the finals, Gumbs was sitting by the phone when she got the good news that she had made the finals. At the finals, she sang Whitney Houston's Saving all my love, which required a lot of vocal strength and Deborah Cox's How you got here, mixing it with a little bit of house at the end.

When called on stage to join the other competitors, Gumbs remembers being very nervous, as she awaited the results with her head down. When they called her name, she was ecstatic She says she felt so relieved that all the hard work with her music had paid off .

She advises everybody who has a dream or those who have singing, dancing or acting talents, not to let anybody tell you that you can't do it! Show the world what you can do. She says people used to tell her she especially on St. Maarten; a lot of people would have never thought she would be in the position she is in today. So do what you love and don't give up she says.

Besides her music, Gumbs has other plans but wants her music to be always there with her no matter what she does. She wants to go on to study psychology. The thing everybody wants to know is what she will do with her winnings from the competition.

Well Gumbs is a very sensible and smart girl and is saving her money for a purpose that is important to her.

Taken from the Daily Herald, Aug 20, 2008