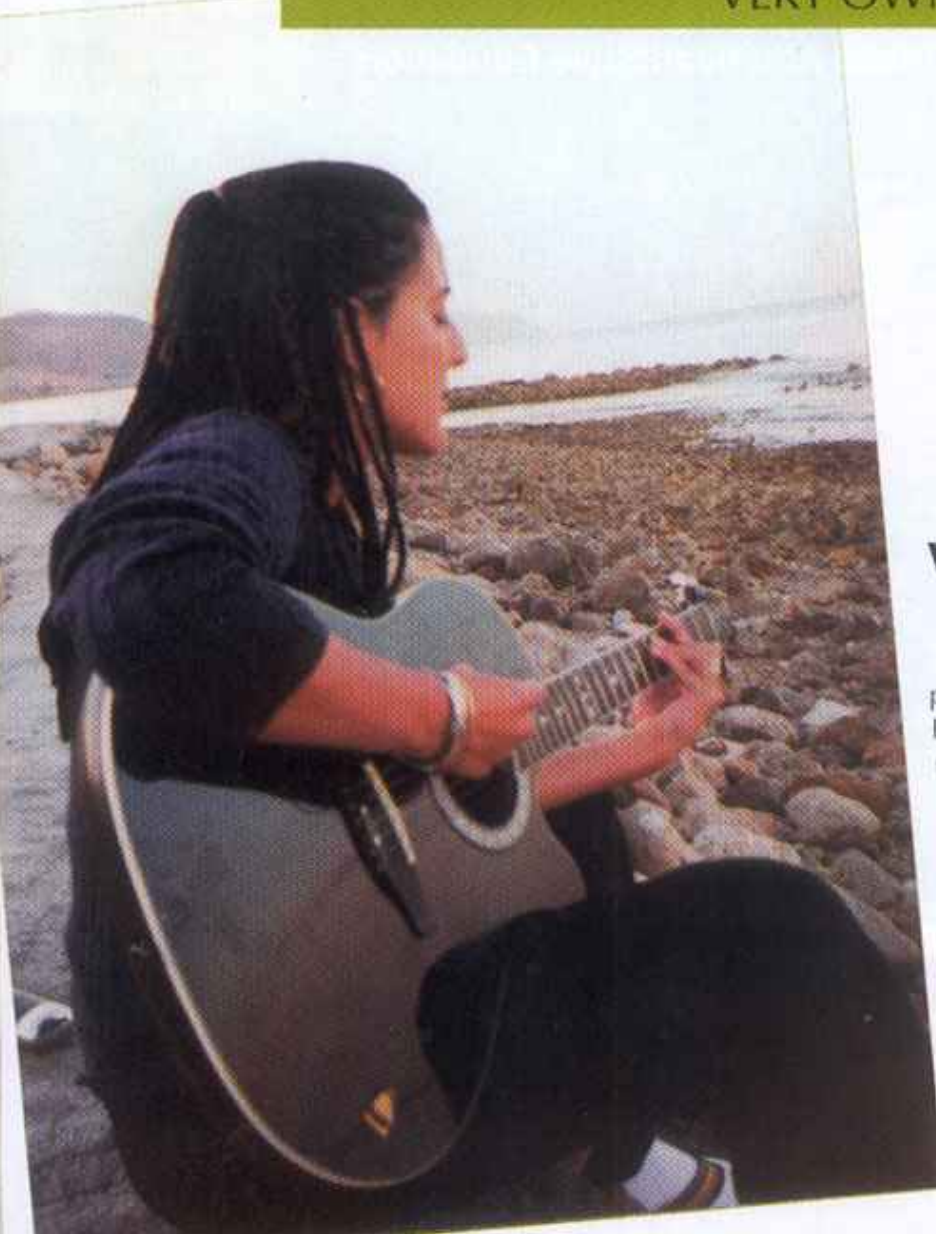


SPEAKING OF COLORS LIVE ON AIR!

WINNER OF THE NILE FM COMPETITION IS OUR
VERY OWN TAMARA YOUSRY



"And the winner of The Battle of the Bands/Artists competition... is... Tamara Yousry... with 'Speaking of Colors'...!"

When I heard this announced on the radio, I was dumbstruck. Although I knew I had already won, since (Auntie) Allison, a 104.2 Nile FM's program host, had already informed me a few days before, I was sitting in the studio itself, hearing her tell it to the people, live on air.

Now it was official. I had won the competition, which meant that "Speaking of Colors", the song I had written six years ago in 1998, and then recorded in Germany in 2000, was about to be heard by masses of people, on a daily basis for one whole month. In a nutshell, it was a dream come true.

For those who didn't catch it, let me fill you in: It all started a couple of months ago when 104.2 Nile FM announced they were starting



to accept original demos on CD by talented local artists who wished to be heard. Basically, if they liked the song, they would play it on the air at some point.

I didn't even hesitate. The following day I drove to Media City in 6th October, CD in hand, and submitted my demo. What was going through my mind? That I'd been yearning to share my music with people for so long, craving to jump-start a music career of some kind, longing for some exposure. Something to that effect. Little did I know of the exposure I would soon be getting.

The song I wanted them to feature was "Speaking of Colors," a simple love song about someone who naturally falls in love with someone they cannot be with. It was aired a couple of times, until one day I received an email from Allison informing me there was going to be a huge competition on the radio where various local talents would be up against each other, and the audience would then vote in for who they wanted to win.

A radio competition where you could interact and make a difference? A radio show where local talent would be featured? This was all very exciting, and a very new concept for Cairo, and myself!

First I was up against an artist called Di Hugo, and when I heard his song I thought, "That's it. I've had it now." It was very good, especially the production. But to my amazement I won that round. Next I was up against a rock band called X-Rock. I had to turn the radio off half way through and walk away. Trying to calm my nerves, I told myself that I would be okay. But I won that round as well which meant I was in the finals!

Next I was going head-to-head with a band called Melancholy. That evening was like sitting on pins and needles. To cut a long story short, I did win. Allison called with the news and asked if I'd come into the studio a few days later while she announced it to the public for the first time before interviewing me. It was my first time being live on the air, and a fantastic experience.

After the hubbub had died down a bit, somebody asked me, "So, what do you do now?" A good question. I want to record some more of my music. This means having to actively consider a producer and a studio, and then I can think about sending my material off to record labels. It also means collaborating with other musicians. "Wow! You are going to be famous now! And you can go abroad!" somebody else said. I had to smile. I think the problem a lot of people have is thinking that it's all so easy. Somebody once said "Rome wasn't built in a day," and it's true! It wasn't, and neither is any kind of career, or success.

Winning the competition has come as a great surprise to me, but equally it has pushed my mind into believing good things can happen, at the right time. I have been singing all my life, and playing the guitar and writing songs for six years. But it's only recently that doors are starting to open. I am half Egyptian and half English, maybe I can cross the cultural divide and achieve success in both countries! Who knows?

Watch this space for more on Tamara Yousry in next month's issue of *Carnival Arabia*. ©