

## Pulse



# An emotional rush

## Express yourself at open mic

By **BARRY WILLIAMS**  
Guardian Lifestyles Reporter  
barry@nasguard.com

Are you tired of the bars and clubs and looking for something else creative to do? Well, Express Yourself, an open mic forum, just might be the place for you.

Performers, including poets, singers, dancers, musicians, and basically anyone bursting with creative energy, have been helping to drive the multi-faceted show which began two years ago.

"It's a passion of mine," said eclectic rhythm and blues poet Nadine Thomas-Brown. "It is a place for people to express themselves and to be as artistic as they wish to be."

"There are many talented voices here that are not other-

wise being exposed," said Nadine who also hosts the show and whose signature red dreadlocks captivate audiences along with her personality.

Brown is also one of four people who originally established Express Yourself, the free show held Wednesday's at 8 p.m. in Da Island Club, located in the Nassau Beach Hotel.

Right now Express Yourself is the only consistent open mic venue for creative artists.

"It's a pity that there aren't a dozen such events. The exchange is a wonderful thing that happens here," said the godfather of poetry Michael Obediah Smith, who has attended most of the events since the show's inception.

At Express Yourself the atmosphere is generally

relaxed, and the mood created by the performers also lends to self-centering. Audiences can relate to many of the themes of the performances, including love, heartbreak, identity and culture, to name a few, which can also be very therapeutic.

Bahamian poet Sean Munnings, a.k.a The Ragga Lover, and author of *Deep Waters* Vol. 1, enralls audiences with his love ballads.

"I write emotively," said Munnings who also demonstrates a knack for humor on stage, which also spills forth from some of his poems.

"I write and read a lot of poetry about romance, eroticism, infidelity, marriage, family, spirituality and Bahamian life in general," he added.

But Sean says even though he is happy to participate in

Express Yourself each week, he is disappointed that a lot of talented people stay at home.

What audiences may also notice is that Express Yourself is a fusion of cultures, which helps to promote understanding through the breaking down of cultural barriers.

"It's a mixture. It's a cross board. We have different nationalities. These are not just tourists. These are people who actually live in this country," said Nadine.

"Cultures are coming together in the arts and it is a very important link and place of understanding. That's what the arts represent. A lot of us artists know a lot about the cultures of the world," said Obadiah.

'Coffee House Discourses' was one of the poems read by

Dickson Wasake, a native of Uganda, West Africa. His themes, style and delivery are definitely thought provoking and intense.

"I write poetry because I love words. I'm in love with words and I love language," said Dickson, who has been a regular performer at the open mic for eight months.

"I write poetry so I can connect with people...to make them think, to make people cry, to make people fall in love again. That's why I write the things I write," he said.

There is also no need to feel intimidated or shy to take to the stage. Many amateurs use the venue to refine their craft. But there is a combination of expert and raw talent performances each week.

"I think this is the best thing

that can happen for artists," said Dickson. "Having such a forum can inspire people to write more. For me, if there is no open mic I find it hard to write. It's a creative tab because it opens my creative mind," he added.

Singers, rappers, and even painters and sculptors are invited to come and talk about their work. Some people just talk about current issues of the day. Audiences can expect to come and see a very versatile show where there are no inhibitions when it comes to expressing yourself.

"From week-to-week the vibe and atmosphere is really different," said Nadine. "I like the fact that we are free to express ourselves however we want to. People are just free to say what is on their mind."

# Summer is sugar-coated, live the sweet life

By **BODINE V. JOHNSON**  
For The Guardian

"It's the hip, the sexy, the chic, the out and bad, the ghetto fab...sunkissed as the hottness".

The ladies of ICandy are getting ready to do it again in royal fashion.

The Summer Solstice is in full swing and on Saturday, The Entertainment Industry's young royalty will be honored at VIVA Pride, July's installment of the ICandy signature event line.

On the list of honorees are Limetree Entertainment, AlphaSound Promotion, Phat Groove Entertainment, The New Breed.Tv, Fantastic Four

Promotions, Concepts Creative Marketing, Blazin Fire Production, Book'Em Entertainment, Flip Flop Entertainment, Weekend Moves, The Design Team, Triart Graphix, KhanAali Designs, Ikonz Entertainment, Kemis.Net, DiplightMedia, Sherich Major, Jualanee Smith, Leah Eneas, Get Music, Padrino Cartel, Frontline, Stereotypez Music and yours truly.

VIVA, hosted every first Saturday night each month at Club ENVY above Conch Fritters is designed to offer what the entertainment scene has been missing until now; fresh, sophisticated nightlife



with a distinctive flair for the creative. Pulsating Pop, Hip-Hop, Funk and Old School Grooves set

the pace for a night to remember. Combine that with decorations and loads of signature drinks and novelty items and

you have one hot party! KhanAali Media Group partners Khandice and Krista have been organizing the VIVA series here in Nassau for almost a year now and are pleased with the responses that they've been receiving.

In the Fall of 2006, ICandy launched its first VIVA, "Inferno." The saying goes, "You draw more flies with honey," well, these ladies used *Atomic Bomb* candies, an old school throwback to the late '80's and early-mid 90's. Simple tokens like these have had patrons coming back for more at each ICandy VIVA event. "It's getting harder to keep up. Now when people

come to the party, they ask for Fun Dip and Cherry Clan... stuff like that. They love it". VIVA Pride is all about living the Bahamian spirit. This month, Bacardi's *Nassau Royale* is the flavor of the night as the ladies of ICandy toast the good life. Expect Bahamian cuisine by Native Way Restaurant and the hottest music this side of the Caribbean. Look for ICandy's signature treats, event souvenirs and a performance by The Bahamas' very own Ta.Da. Ta.Da herself is elated about the performance. Having launched her album *F5* earlier this year and a staple fixture of the Make 'Em Listen.