



All Hail the Soca Queen

By Danielle Harrington

If you have any life in your body, it is impossible not to get up and move when you hear Alison requesting all hands in the air. Alison Hinds once belonged to a band named Square One and recorded eleven albums, including their debut Full Bloom. The CD was huge internationally and featured the #1 single "Faluma". Square One was at the peak of their popularity and so was Alison, who was increasingly in demand also as a solo act. When Alison went solo, she was instantly embraced by her fans enabling her to take her dynamic live show worldwide, touring throughout the U.S., Europe, Canada and the Caribbean. The immediate acceptance confirmed Alison's belief that her decision was fated and she was destined to achieve. So too was the recording of her first solo CD. Crowned the undisputed "Queen of SOCA" by fans worldwide, her powerful, emotional vocals and high-energy live shows are legendary to Caribbean music fans. So it's fitting that Alison's much anticipated solo debut is entitled SOCA QUEEN.

Where do you call home?

I lived in England and then moved to Barbados when I was 11 and did my secondary schooling here in the States.

Let's talk about the early years of your musical career and how it's flourished into the success it is today.

I didn't start off doing Soca, I started off doing ballads, R&B and reggae. I built the majority of my career when I joined a band called Square One and developed as an artist. We grew up and operated as a family. There was a certain level of comfort, so it was different stepping out on my own as a solo artist, knowing it was just going to be me on the stage. It's been different in a good way, I have really come into my own as an artist and I've been able to explore much more and really get into me and improve.

How would you describe Soca music?

Soca music to me is very happy music, its very party oriented and makes you feel good, wanting to smile and get up and dance. It's very infectious with many hook lines and melodies.

I love your album, what was in your heart as you selected the songs for the CD?

I like that the album represents me as an artist in terms of me being a Soca artist but also an entertainer. I have a few cross over tracks which are very club oriented as well as the Soca which I am known for. There are a few woman empowerment songs on the album.

What message were you trying to convey in your hit single "Roll it Gal"?

I'm telling women to take pride in themselves, don't take any abuse, look after your kids, do your studies, believe in yourself, and look to God.

I enjoyed your recent performance at Crash Mansion, you seemed to really connect with the crowd getting them involved in your performance; and I remember looking at you thinking wow she's having such a good time! Do you have a favorite song to perform?

I have different songs I like to perform for different reasons. The track "Togetherness" is one of the songs I have to perform no matter where I go because it's a song that makes everybody very happy. "Faluma" is another song that people love to hear. "Ladies Rule" is one of my favorites because not only is it a woman empowerment song but it's very interactive allowing me to talk to the audience.

Do you find it difficult being a woman in the entertainment industry?

Not for me personally, I think being in Square One helped me a lot since we supported one another. I had people encouraging me and helping me develop as an artist.



Alison Hinds

What has been one of your biggest accomplishments to date?

Career wise I would say the success of "Roll it Gal", because it's the first song that has really gone into mainstream and been played all over and gotten a lot of love allowing the people outside of the West Indian market to know that there is a Soca artist named Alison Hinds. I'm hoping to get Soca music into the Indie market in a big way.

When you're not working how do you wind down?

When I'm home I love to read, going to the beach and spending time with my family to get away from it all.

Where are a few of your favorite vacation spots?

I like the Caribbean because they're all very different in culture; I always have a great time.

What would your fans be surprised to know about you?

That I can read horror novels comfortably and go to sleep but cannot stand to watch it on television or in the movies and not freak out.

What advice would you give to any of our readers with dreams of pursuing a musical career?

First of all know that you have a love and a passion for it. Don't do it because it's the "in thing" to do to be popular or famous because it can be a fickle business, like one year you're up, next year you're down; so that love for it is going to sustain you. Be very focused and have good people around you that will help you stay focused. Do your best to set the standard of music you do to the highest you could possibly get it. Be a perfectionist when it comes to your music and do it to the best of your ability and you'll succeed.

Where do you see Alison Hinds in 5 years?

Performing a full fledged Soca show with theatrics, I want to do a Vegas styled show where you have dancers and sets. I want to have a Soca show with all of the bells and whistles.