

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Locals On The Rise: Tia

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ST. CROIX -- Out of nowhere came [Tia](#). Literally. When you hear stories about most recording artists, memories of childhood singing contests come to mind, along with accounts of family and friends who recall impromptu performances at home, school and every chance the would-be star could get.

Not Tia. She became interested in singing four years ago, and has done it professionally for about two and a half years. "It wasn't something that I thought of," Tia told The Consortium in a phone interview on Tuesday. "I didn't ever think that I'd be a singer."

But how is it that someone with such a standout gift of singing only find her true self some 20 years later?

Hit Play: [No Love Sweeter](#)

"I had a government summer job working at Government House and I realized that I hated a desk job," Tia, 24, said. "I've always been a creative person, drawing and writing poems, so I knew that having a desk job wasn't for me."

Realizing the nine-to-five route probably would not work for her, Tia wrote a song, sang it to her mother and received a positive response. "Mom said it was really good," the St. Croix native recalled.

As fate would have it, Tia, whose birth name is Tiara Mason, met popular local disc jockey (DJ), widely known as DJ Genius, and after listening to his mixtape, she decided to release her own. Her first single, "No Love Sweeter," was inspired by the reggae superstar Cruz Rock, which led to the [uplifting](#)



Tiara Mason, known as "Tia", is the territory's

latest singing sensation.

And the feedback has been great. The rising star says the community has shown her love and support. Some of it comes from "people that I don't even know, so it seems to be resonating because they like the music."

Tia hasn't released a full album, but that's intentional. The reggae artist said her plan is to "flood" the airwaves with hit singles until she becomes a household name. "Once I feel like I'm in a good place, then I will definitely take the time out to do an album," she said.

While there's new music forthcoming in the fall, Tia already has five singles on the market: No Love Sweeter; Healing; [Be Without You](#) (produced by Dean Pond on the Walk in the Park Riddim); Be Sober and Sunset.

As momentum continued to grow, Tia, who doubles as a radio personality on one of the territory's most popular stations, Isle 95, with Glen Dratte on the Big, Fat, Morning Show, said, "I made up in my mind that this is what I want. I have realized that this is truly what makes me happy, and I haven't been happier."

Tia has seen her popularity rise, but she's only performed at local events -- the biggest of which will be a concert at The Lyme Nightclub on Saturday, where mainstays like Etana and I-Octane will perform.

Even so, her tone has consistently remained humble.

"At this stage I'm just investing in myself, brand, how I want things to look and sound," she said. "But I do think in the long run that I will be able to make money from the music business."

If her singles are anything to go by, Tia's undoubtedly on the path to success.

Oh, by the way, the young St. Croix beauty is engaged to DJ Genius.

Correction: July 22, 2015

A previous version of this story incorrectly titled two of Tia's singles. The first as "No Love Greater", however, the correct title is "No Love Sweeter", and the second as "Feelings", when it should have been "Healing". The story has been updated to reflect the correction information.

[Watch the original video](#)