

Written by Ernest Kanjo

Tuesday, 24 April 2012 23:24 - Last Updated Monday, 30 April 2012 20:07



Linda Bonglack Nyanganji is on record as making a name on the **English News** desk of the State-run **Natio**

nal Radio Station

just few months after her arrival on the airwaves. This was thanks to her content-rich reports, excellent delivery style and most important, irresistibly attractive voice. Her

letter slot

on the station's age-old news magazine,

Written by Ernest Kanjo

Tuesday, 24 April 2012 23:24 - Last Updated Monday, 30 April 2012 20:07

Cameroon Calling

affectionately known as

CC

won her more hearts. However, it is the weekend

culture round-up

she runs in the 3pm News on Fridays that fetches her more friends, especially lovers of art and entertainment or better still showbiz. Linda has for some time now been involved in gathering, packaging and reporting art and culture worthy stories. Her fans on radio might just be contented with the talented broadcaster's voice and enjoy her admirable intellectual standing. Yet, they know little about her option to take on culture reporting. That the Sakerette, former student of Saker Baptist College, SBC, Limbe, Cameroon finds herself on that beat is not a result of chance. She is just living in a world where she was bred. The National Station broadcaster who within the last five years has enjoyed a huge following on radio has all along hidden herself in a God-given skill she has owned from birth. Singing! Everyone sings, but Linda sings and puts meaning in it. She is in fact a musician.

"I come from a singing Family, so am I -I Joined a group with the African Star hero Sidney, now Sine-I've done choruses with Ateh Bazore, Didier Bobgala, etc-I'm a guitarist"

TIPTOPSTARS has been keen on Linda's sporadic attempts at music ventures and we think the ever-smiling 1.6m-tall culture reporter with a humble up-bringing now has something up her sleeves. She may soon be putting an album in the market. She has a mind on this and when the time comes, her fans would at least not be taken by surprise. Our editor caught up with the journalist/singer to find out more about her musical parcour. On the line to Yaounde, Linda talked about her choir days, back-up experience, song writing skills and plans to step into the singing profession full swing. . Here are excerpts of the interview with Ernest Kanjo.

{xtypo_rounded2}

Ernest Kanjo (EK): Greetings from Tiptopstars Linda. How are you doing?

Linda Bonglack (LB): I'm doing good Ernest, and you?{/xtypo_rounded2}{xtypo_rounded2}

EK: I'm ok, we thank God. We hear you sing Linda. Could you trace your roots in singing?

LB: Yes, I do. As cliché as it may sound, I come from a music-loving family. My father of blessed memory owned and played a guitar as a hobby for most of his life. During his brief stint as a primary school teacher in the seventies, he would play his guitar and sing with his pupils in class. That's what one of his former pupils told me recently. I can imagine that was pretty cool. He did teach me and my sisters how to play the guitar as well. When she was in high school, my mother was selected to travel to the USA and Canada as part of a music group called **T**

he Cameroon Choristers

. They released a

turntable

and

cassette

after that. She also usually led singing in church. As a family, we sang special numbers on Christmas or just any other day. It was fun.{/xtypo_rounded2}{xtypo_rounded2}

EK: What inspired you into singing?

LB: I'll say I stumbled into singing on a somewhat professional level by fate right after I graduated from University and didn't have much to do. I joined a new singing group called

Story of the Cross

Written by Ernest Kanjo

Tuesday, 24 April 2012 23:24 - Last Updated Monday, 30 April 2012 20:07

and we set out to record a demo at one of the oldest recording studios in Bamenda known as **EDJABS**.

That's where the sound engineer and studio manager at the time, Carlos Towa and Bobgala Didier, artistes in their own right took note of my singing skills, especially the fact that I could sing several parts. They asked if I could come and do back-up vocals from time to time. Of course I accepted.

EK: Which are some of the choral groups you've been part of?

LB: I'm a choir kid. I moved from the children's choir in church and at school while growing up, to being one of the **music prefects** at Saker Baptist College and later, one of the music directors of the University of Buea Choir. Then besides the group I mentioned earlier, I was also part of

The Grassroots, a Bamenda-based Afro-Jazz band of eight members-five instrumentalists and three singers. We staged a couple of shows at Alliance Franco Camerounaise in Bamenda and Dschang, and travelled to Maroua in 2008 for the National Festival of Arts and Culture known by its French acronym as FENAC. We are kind of in hibernation now. Oh, by the way,

Sine

was part of the group before I joined. Yes, I'm name-dropping, hahahahaha!

EK: What parts were you doing in the choir ?

LB: I sang second part or **alto** for a really long time, then when I started singing in recording studios I realized it had made my voice sort of bland, therefore solo and ad lib attempts didn't come easily for me. I tried to sing **soprano** from then on. I sing the three basic parts, that is, including

tenor

.
At AFC Bamenda with The Grassroots

EK: Tell us about your studio back-up experience.

LB: Ouch! Some more name-dropping, huh? Hahahaha! Aw dear. They are mainly

Written by Ernest Kanjo

Tuesday, 24 April 2012 23:24 - Last Updated Monday, 30 April 2012 20:07

Bamenda-based. As recently as 2011, I did a number of choruses for **Ateh Bazore**, after not having sung for quite a while. Then there's

Carlos Towa

, who may go by a different artistic name now. Like most artistes I've done back-up for, he released the album much later. I will sometimes recognize my voice in CD being played, say, on a bus when I'm travelling and I'll be like, Oh, so they finally released that album... Some of the albums I've featured in are

Philemon Bein's

Moments of Refreshing

both video and audio,

Father Bon

's first two or three albums,

Chop Samuel's

Taxi Driver. I also

did back-up for

Zuluman, Wara Festus

and had a video appearance for Bobgala Didier. I would say I have sung for so many musicians, some of which I don't remember any more. Some were just one-off singles or commissioned works. Such include the anniversary anthem for the Bamenda Linguistic Centre whose studio session was directed by the renowned

Loh Benson

. We also did the send-forth anthem for the former, late Archbishop of Bamenda, Paul Verdzekov. I also sang and

played the guitar

in the

Mey-low-d Foundation

documentary, though I'm not sure it's been publicly released yet. To me it was just fun all the way. I hardly kept records.

EK: *Do you compose your own songs as well?*

LB: Yes Ernest, I do.

EK: *How many songs have you composed so far?*

LB: Hihihhi. Errmm, I think I have like...four complete songs to my name, songs I composed from scratch and not something I've done over or remixed. The rest will just be bits and pieces, choruses, guitar melodies which I hope to fill in with melodies some day! Hahahaha, man, I just love to listen to good music and sing when I get the chance.

EK: *When you write songs, what are the themes you exploit?*

LB: God. Then social or humanitarian issues!

EK: *Would you be a full-fledged musician if you had the chance to?*

LB: Several people have asked me that and I'm reminded of the biblical *Parable of the Talents* here. When God gives you a talent, skill or ability, no matter how small, he does so, because He want you to use it to inspire, encourage and bless others. So, yeah, but I guess I'm just too busy being a journalist right now. Nonetheless, my love for music and the arts in general still finds a place in my work as I have a passion for arts, entertainment and culture reporting, promoting talents and the Cameroon's budding industry in my own small way.

EK: *What genre of music would you do if finally you hit the music lane?*

Written by Ernest Kanjo

Tuesday, 24 April 2012 23:24 - Last Updated Monday, 30 April 2012 20:07

LB: Aw man! Definitely not rap, hahahahaha! Something afro and contemporary at the same time! World music perhaps!

EK: *Any ambition of doing an album, when?*

LB: Yeah! Maybe! I'm keeping an open mind to that. When the time is right, I believe everything will fall into place.

EK: *Do you train your singing voice? How often and how do you do that?*

LB: To be honest, I hardly. A sound engineer and good friend who so believed in my singing potential gave me some training material by **Seth Riggs**. He even recorded an accompanying audio message to encourage me to sing. That was sweet. But I just got busy with other things, or just became lazy too because, man, singing is work. I won't mind having a home studio though, especially as long as I still have neighbours because voice training can get pretty cacophonous.

EK: *Any word to your fans and the public at large?*

LB: My fans should stay on for I got much in store for them. They'll soon discover the hidden side of Linda and I'm preparing to give them just the best like I've always done on radio. To the public, please you all should buy original CDs and desist from pirated ones. To lovers of culture, please do always attend concerts, film premieres, book launches, fashion shows, painting exhibitions, handicraft fairs and what have you.

EK: *Who is your role model in music?*

LB: It will have to be Beyonce. Her voice is phenomenal, and she's got a wide range, like I heard one entertainment reporter put it, she shocks you with a falsetto out of nowhere. But I'm more inspired by the music style of Asa, India Arie, and Lauryn Hill or Danielle Eog, Charlotte Dipanda, Sanzy Vianny, Careyce Fotso and others right here at home.

EK: *We appreciate your time Linda, thanks for letting TIPTOPSTARS take a ride into your singing world* .

LB: A million thanks Ernest and congratulations on the great job you guys are doing.

Know more about Linda

Written by Ernest Kanjo

Tuesday, 24 April 2012 23:24 - Last Updated Monday, 30 April 2012 20:07



...and friends, ...