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**Maren:** Gutsy performer with an inspiring message.

### Maren

*The Roxy Theatre*  
West Hollywood

**Contact:** Hotline, 310-500-8038;  
Maren@marenmusic.com

**Web:** www.marenmusic.com

**The Players:** Maren, lead vocals;  
Ed Faris, guitar; Tony, bass; Nicco,  
drums.

**Material:** Maren's edgy material is emotionally expressive with lyrics that are both inspiring and personal. "Dare to Dream" is one of her best songs with verses about achieving what seems impossible by doing it yourself. Her softest gem, which shows a romantic side, is "Marry Me."

**Musicianship:** Maren's style is gutsy and seductive with smooth powerful vocals similar to a combination of Avril Lavigne and Amy Lee (Evanescence). Strong, professional musicianship by Ed Faris, Tony and Nicco excellently backs up Maren's vocal performance, complementing her presence and never upstaging her.

**Performance:** Maren was dressed to impress in red silk covered by a white sporty jacket and black pin-striped pants with black pointed high heels. The artist's sense of style matched her incredible per-

formance. Her band also performed well and matched her style with chains, punk hairdos, etc. Her professional dance background gave her performance the effect of a dramatic stage show. And, her contagious smile, high energy and self confidence connected Maren closely with the audience.

**Summary:** Maren's dance moves enhance her already strong musical act. A powerful stage presence accompanied by strong music skills could make Maren attractive to industry willing to develop her. She comes off as friendly, which should be a big plus for her commercially, as she's already bringing in a good draw.

—Laura Phillips

### Marinella Nittu

*Monsoon Café*  
Santa Monica

**Contact:** Y3K GM Entertainment,  
323-661-1037; shadow\_sky  
@earthlink.net

**Web:** www.marinellanittu.com

**The Player:** Marinella Nittu, vocals.

**Material:** A recent arrival from Italy, Marinella Nittu presents operatic classics and pop standards, including time-tested favorites such as "I feel Pretty" and "O Solo Mio." Nittu also performs "Time To Say Goodbye," an Italian love song made famous by tenor Andrea Bocelli. However, unlike the expressive Bocelli, Nittu forgoes personal interpretation. Rather than revealing anything of herself, she plays it safe with a note-by-note rendition. While this approach

showcases her impressive vocal skills, it takes more than that to "sell" these songs.

**Musicianship:** As her accompaniment, Nittu uses pre-recorded music instead of live players. This works part of the time, but the soundtrack doesn't always support her voice and, sometimes, overpowers it. Recorded music typically constrains spontaneity and, with no adjustments for dynamics, there are no surprises — or inspired moments — that can be the difference between an average performance and a memorable one. Indeed, with pre-recorded music, what you hear is all you ever get.

**Performance:** This diva delivered in the spectacle department and dished up a fair bit of glamour. More of an entertainer than a communicator, Nittu had no problem sauntering while she sang. In fact, even though her performance lacked an emotional connection, her striking auburn hair, lavish make-up and curves that would give a Lamborghini trouble, gave her an imposing presence.

**Summary:** Unfortunately, it's hard to tell what Marinella Nittu is trying to accomplish. When covering classic songs, her artistry comes through the interpretation. But, Nittu's mechanical renditions reveal nothing unique. Different material might be helpful and it's possible that more contemporary songs would allow her to relax and share herself with an audience. Additionally, a good producer could very well help Nittu move from a vocally proficient performer to a confident and artistic communicator. Because, as it is now, she is an enigma without a vision.

—Lisa Elaine Scott



Marinella Nittu: Italian diva delivers opera classics and pop standards.