

Top music talents with Port St. Lucie ties collaborate to produce theme song, music video for city

By Christin Erazo

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PORT ST. LUCIE — It's been a guarded secret in Port St. Lucie for more than a year now, but on April 27, residents will have their chance to watch the star-studded production of the city's 50th anniversary theme song and music video.

"City Within A Dream" will premiere during the end credits of a 90-minute documentary drama titled "City of Dreams," which chronicles the city's young history.

The song was created by a Grammy award-winning arranger, a Grammy and Academy award-nominated songwriter — who co-wrote the theme song for the movie "Rocky" — and an award-winning composer.

All have ties to Port St. Lucie and donated their services, said Richard McAfoos, co-director and producer of the documentary and music video.

The song features Alana Ferraro, a junior at Port St. Lucie High School, and the children's choir of Holy Family Catholic Church.

McAfoos has kept the details of the project under wraps, but revealed the video contains aerial images of Port St. Lucie landmarks, roads and development, all accompanied by an uplifting ballad.

The music video was created to keep audiences glued to their seats at the end of the film and to bring a musical perspective to the documentary.

"('City Within a Dream') has the potential to be an anthem-type song that appeals to all ages," said Joe Garofalo, 51, the music video and film's lead director and producer. "The motivation of the music video is to point out our youth, as well as the youth of our community, which is the future of our city."

McAfoos, who is also head of the Port St. Lucie Historical Society, began recruiting for the film and music video nearly two years ago and approached Garofalo to direct.

Garofalo, a Port St. Lucie resident since 1989, is executive director of the Treasure Coast International Film Festival and has filmed two full-length independent films in the city.

"The music video is an extension of the documentary because the story is consistent," Garofalo said. "But, the collaborators wanted to be sure the music video could stand on its own."

One of the music video partners included composer Mark Barnes, a 24-year resident of the city, who wrote the song's melody in a half hour after only watching snippets of the documentary.

"The music has a light and airy feel that represents the hope and growth the city has seen," Barnes, 49, said. "I felt like we had a hit on our hands."

Garofalo then reached out to legendary singer/songwriter Carol Conners to name the song and write its lyrics.

Conners, a Los Angeles resident and frequent visitor to Port St. Lucie, has been nominated for 10 major music awards and is credited with co-writing the theme song for the iconic boxing flick, "Rocky."

"I conveyed to Carol that I wanted the message of the song to be about the future," Garofalo said. "That coming here was a dream many had and this place was the foundation for children to have a wonderful life. Carol loved it and ran with it."

When it came time to choose a singer, McAfoos and company unanimously chose Ferraro, after she won a local talent showcase last year.

McAfoos said she was simply the best singer for the job.

"It's really cool to one day look and say I was a part of this," said Ferraro, 17. "I've never been a part of something this big."

The final piece of the music video puzzle came in the form of Robert Navarro, a Port St. Lucie resident and a 2007 Grammy award winner, who put the final touches on the song by balancing the anthem's score and vocals.

Garofalo said he is pleased with the final product and honored to be part of the community effort.

"This is historical," Garofalo said. "You put all this local talent together and you get magic."

