

projecting raw emotion in their work, but for me this is all part of the music. If my music stirs the emotions and has an impact on someone then that's a job well done."

As Nina talks about her work, the sweet-natured, cake-eating, English Rose depicted on her album cover, gently reveals a darker side. In a similar way the fairy tale has underlying dark threads to what appears to be an innocent, magical tale, these traits are littered throughout her album, which mixes light poppy numbers with dark ballads.

"All my songs have a piece of me in them," says Nina. "Single Bed is about how I enjoyed being single. Despite it often being seen as a negative thing in society, it was a time in my life that I really discovered who I am. Clown was written when I was going through a tough period in my life, and it is still hard to listen to the track as the music stirs up past emotions.

"I wanted to make it a listener's album, so hopefully this contradiction between light and dark takes the listener on a journey and keeps them engaged."

Single Bed was Nina's debut single along with Bruising, both of which received extensive global airplay on radio stations such as BBC Radio 2 and BBC Radio 6 Music. The tracks were also performed live by Nina at the finale show of Norwich Fashion Week 2013 at The Playhouse. Now, Single Bed has been nominated as one of the UK's top ten songs at the 2014 Unsigned Music Awards, and Nina herself has been nominated in the best female category. As this issue went to press, the winners of each category were not announced, but Nina is hopeful, as she touches the wooden table in front of her, that she is in with a good chance.

"Just to be named as a top ten unsigned act in the UK is quite an achievement," says Nina. "When I found out it came as a bit of a shock, but a good shock! When you start out you have to put yourself forward for things like this, but this time the nomination came out of the blue. Last year's Unsigned Music Award best song was won by Molly Smitten-Downes, who went on to represent the UK at this year's Eurovision Song Contest, so it is a great platform to get noticed. It would be amazing if we could attract a publishing deal to help us with our second album!"

No stranger to success, Nina was hand-picked by BBC Introducing to attend their Master Class last year, and she came runner up in MTV's Brand New for 2013 unsigned competition.

For now, at least, Nina has her feet firmly on the ground and it seems unlikely that she would let any fame that came her way go to her head.

Finishing her bespoke cocktail, she absentmindedly smooths down her red dress ("I don't care about what people say about redheads not wearing red, I love the colour!") and chats about her plans to take Europe as well as the UK by storm next year. It looks like it could be a story that has a

happy ever after.

❖ Special thanks to Ye Olde Sweet Shop, London Street.

"I'm quite an emotional person and I always wear my heart on my sleeve. I'm either really happy or I am not, which makes me sound like a manic depressive, but I never shy away from my emotions and this has inspired my work."

