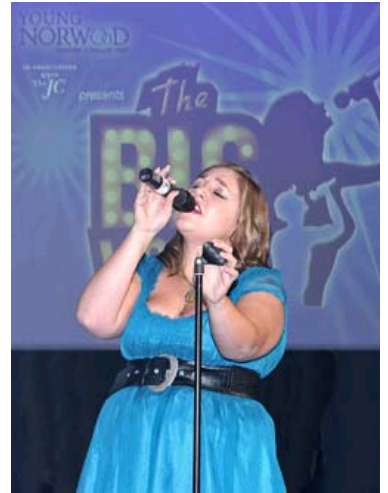


## Yamit Mamo is crowned The BIG Voice 2006

20 November 2006

**Yamit Mamo**, a 24-year-old singer-songwriter from Borehamwood, was last night awarded the title of **The BIG Voice 2006** at the grand final of the singing contest organised by **Norwood**, the UK's leading Jewish Children & Family Services charity. Yamit, who performed her own material with her band, fought off stiff competition from seven other talented young Jewish singers, in particular **Jodie Beth Meyer**, 20, from Ilford, who also reached the final. The event, run in association with the Jewish Chronicle and supported by **Sharon Osbourne**, was held at the Pentland Theatre in North Finchley's **artsdepot** on Sunday 19 November. More than **350 people attended**, helping to raise over **£8,000** for Norwood.

There was a tense atmosphere as **Brenda Edwards**, one of the judges who is currently appearing as Mama Morton in the musical **Chicago**, stepped forward to reveal their decision. Following a pause that seemed to take an age, Yamit's name was announced, sending her vociferous supporters wild with delight. She was congratulated by compere **David Prever**, Smooth FM's Breakfast Show presenter, as well as Brenda and the other three judges; performer and singing coach **Rick Guard**, Head of ITV Entertainment **Rachel Ashdown** and member of the group G4 **Jon Ansell**. Yamit's prize will be a day with her band in the recording studio of renowned songwriter **Guy Chambers**, with a professionally-produced CD to take home.



A delighted Yamit declared: "I am so glad to have been given the opportunity to perform my music with my band in front of this great crowd and these knowledgeable judges. I am touched and honoured to have been chosen as winner of The BIG Voice, especially as the competition is in aid of Norwood, which is an amazing organisation that does so much great work."

Rick Guard, who wrote and sung the title soundtrack to the forthcoming film *The Truth About Love*, starring Jennifer Love-Hewitt, described Yamit's singing as "effortless", and after one of her performances he was moved to say: "I couldn't fault that in any way. If you were to release an album tomorrow I would buy ten copies". Brenda Edwards, who was the last remaining female contestant on last year's X-Factor, said of Yamit: "Our decision was unanimous. Yamit is a natural with great charisma. I love her songs and would be delighted if she would write something for me to sing at my next concert."

The judges also praised Jodie, a sessional care worker for Norwood in East London, for her remarkable stage presence and powerful voice. Rachel Ashdown, who is currently producing *An Audience With Take That* for ITV, said: "Jodie gave the crowd full value for money. People paid £20 to see her tonight, but they will be paying £60 to see her on the West End stage in a couple of years!"

The other six finalists were Joel Lindsey, Eliot Alderman, Corrine Westwood, Daniel Risner, John Franklin and Nicole Conway, with the latter two reaching the semi-finals. Jon Ansell, whose band G4 were runners-up on 2004's X-Factor, was extremely impressed with the high standard of competition. He said: "There was some great talent singing tonight and I really enjoyed it. I was particularly struck by the way in which the semi-finalists and finalists took the judges' comments on board and used them to improve their subsequent performances".



David Prever, who has recently moved from LBC to Smooth FM, said: "I hadn't realised that Norwood was such a big charity. I thought that the standard of contestants was exceptional – better than a lot of singers on TV. They all deserve to do really well."

Sara Parish, Young Norwood (YN) Fundraiser, who organised the event, was delighted with the evening. She said: "It was a fantastic night, and the audience were thoroughly entertained. I would like to thank David Prever, our judges, our contestants and everyone involved with putting on this event. The money raised will go towards supporting children and families in our community."

A special thank-you must go to the musical directors of The BIG Voice, Tony Abrahams and Paul Stone, whose band, The Soul Agents, provided the backing to the majority of the evening's performances.

For further information please contact David Wosner, Public Relations Officer at Norwood on 020 8420 6942 or email [david.wosner@norwood.org.uk](mailto:david.wosner@norwood.org.uk)

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