

STAR POWER

Chloe Dolandis isn't easily pigeonholed into one genre when it comes to her music or career. Raised in Boca Raton, she has found success for her wide range of talents close to home.

BY JESSICA TZIKAS

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She can be called a lot of things: musician, songwriter, voiceover talent, on-air personality, TV host. And that's how Boca native Chloe Dolandis, 32, who recently competed in an international country music competition, likes it.

Dolandis grew up performing in musical theater, a memory from her childhood that she credits as the foundation of her career. Beyond theater, the young star also enjoyed commercial and voiceover work, diving head first into all of her interests. "I explored all these different spheres and followed the lead of whatever was taking shape," she says.

What was taking shape was a fruitful career not far from home. Dolandis has been a fixture in the local creative arts scene since she was a child—giving credit to her hometown for a lot of her success. "There is so much culture in Boca and so much accessibility to quality entertainment," she says. "When you are based in South Florida, you can go south to Miami, north to West Palm, Orlando, Tampa and Jacksonville."

Her performing experience started at local spots like the Delray Beach Playhouse and the Boca Raton Teen Cabaret, where she

learned to find comfort on stage. It continued through her education both at Olympic Heights Community High School, where she was a big part of the drama club, and at Florida Atlantic University, where she minored in commercial music. "Boca is amazing because of the talent that is here, being around other kids [who] had a super talent, it's been so great," she says. "I could go on, I love my hometown."

Today, Dolandis is finding even more success. And while she remains a Delray resident, her recent trajectory has garnered some far-reaching recognition. That's mainly thanks to her newest achievement: becoming a finalist, and winning a runner-up award, for her song, "One Man's White Trash (Is Another Man's Treasure)," in the 17th annual Nashville Songwriters Association International Song Contest, presented by Country Music Television. "To be a finalist out of thousands of entries, selected by some of the

top songwriters in the world, that's a huge honor," Dolandis says. "The industry connections I've made have been incredible, and I've gotten attention from some hard-hitting music people." But beyond the musical notice, Dolandis praises the contest for helping her realize what a strong community she has at home. Locals came together to campaign for her song (the CMT contest was based on a popular vote). "[Even though] we didn't win, seeing the community support me and my song was one of the most heartwarming moments of my life," she says.

With this achievement, Dolandis plans to expand her songwriting career and broaden her audience, both nationally and internationally. But this Boca star isn't saying goodbye to her town just yet: "I'm going to continue performing [in South Florida] and doing live shows. The energy I get from the audiences down here is awesome, and I'm so grateful because that's how I make my living: I pay my rent from doing these gigs," she laughs. "So it's neat to have that as my foundation."

To see Chloe Dolandis live, check out her calendar of events at chloedolandis.com/shows. ■