

# Holdin' It Down For My Girls



Singer taragirl reveals to **SHE** her musical journey, admiration of N'Dea Davenport, and purpose to empower young women through her music.

By Dana L. Oliver  
Photography Provided By taragirl

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ara "taragirl" Betterbid follows a legacy of outstanding female vocalists, but the twenty-something year old brings lyrical sassiness and sophistication that stands out in today's industry. With young girls shaking their "money-makers" and "gettin' bodied," taragirl's debut album "The 26<sup>th</sup> Power" hearkens back to that feel so good when in love and out of lust music of the early 90s.

**On transition from Jersey to New York to Philly:** "When I left for school in New York, I was confident in my decision and ready for anything. When I left New York for Philly, I was looking for change, but I didn't know what it would be or how it would happen. I wasn't in a good place so the adjustment, though needed, was very hard for me. Now that I'm settled, I look back and know it was the right decision. Sometimes you just have to trust God and have faith in where life leads you."

**On studying music and journalism at NYU:** "I was always

an overachiever. I didn't want to waste time undeclared. I got two solid years of music training. I was doing music theater, but the genre was literally bringing me down. I didn't fit their cookie cutter. I loved journalism and writing. Just living on my own in a city of dreamers was enough to motivate me into wanting more and having the opportunity to develop the skills, build a foundation, and think about ways to achieve success through my art while in school was integral to who I am today."

**On open mics in Philly:** "When I first attended the various R&B

**“Women are in power and control of what they say.”**

open mics I knew people didn't expect that much just looking at me. I started to get a real kick out of their reactions and shock, so I purposefully would never hype myself up. I would just sing the first line and then gradually by the end I'd be wailing and before you knew it, I was getting standing ovations. That stuff is how I built my buzz. People still come up to me now—years later—and remember me from those week night jams."

**On her sound:** "This album [The 26<sup>th</sup> Power] represents one side of me. Definitely vocally I just love complex vocals. I'm influenced by great singers. I'm about super-strong vocals and sassy female lyrics."

**On her influences:** "I'm influenced by Aretha Franklin. She is my favorite singer of all time. I love

Dinah Washington, Madonna, Mary J. Blige, Lauryn Hill, D'Angelo, who I feel so bad about his situation, Mariah Carey, Gladys Knight, Stevie Wonder, En'Vogue, a group that represents where I am stylistically right now, Whitney Houston, and N'Dea Davenport. I love her voice [Davenport]." On her musical goal and purpose: "Your music is you in so many ways. I want my music to be positive and honest. I want to experience more stylistically and push more out of the genre. Everything I put out there in the final end is me. There are not enough intelligent female artists but that is a priority to me.

People are hungry for good music. People are sick of music. The system that's in place makes it hard to get

good music. I care a lot about what I'm saying and how I say it. A lot of my audience is girls...young girls. Women in general. Women are in power and control of what they say.

**On what separates taragirl:** "The person is the artist is the art. I think my primary God-given gift is the ability to communicate with people through a unique combination of my voice, my writing, and my personality using my own experiences. I come from a lot of joy and a lot of pain, but I always keep my head up and want to inspire others to do the same. I think it's the honesty in the writing and delivery of the song that people respond to most."

Find out more on taragirl at [www.taragirl.com](http://www.taragirl.com) and [www.myspace.com/taragirlmusic](http://www.myspace.com/taragirlmusic)