



LOCAL HEROES - Big Papi - Daddy Yankee sets his sights on Miami

Daddy Yankee's combustible hit single "Gasolina" has driven him to international stardom. The 28-year-old Puerto Rican reggaeton celeb opens up to New Times about his upcoming Miami show and other subjects.

What makes your concerts different from other reggaeton shows?

My fans can expect a lot of energy, a flashy production with dancers, pyrotechnics, and lots of surprises. But I can't say more, since it would be like taking Spider-Man's mask off!

Have you followed the growth of Miami-based reggaeton?

Yes, I am aware that reggaeton has influenced people all over the world, particularly Latinos in major U.S. cities like Miami. Artists like Pitbull have been featured in several tracks of mine.

Will reggaeton grow into something else?

Definitely. Reggaeton has sprung an interest in every music genre. That's the best part of it -- that you can fuse the music with anything you want; crunk, salsa, hip-hop.

Why are English-language audiences being drawn to reggaeton?

People just love the beat. It is fun and exciting. Even if the person does not understand the lyrics, they understand the fusion. It's like when I grew up listening to Dr. Dre, Run-D.M.C. ... I didn't understand their lyrics, but the beat of the music made me feel a passion for it.

What's next for you?

Once my concert tour is over, I will work on the release and media promotion of my upcoming album, the live version of Barrio Fino, titled Barrio Fino en Directo, which I plan to release in November, and another album, El Cartel, for next year.

Your being signed by Interscope, and Tego Calderon by Atlantic, what is the U.S. music industry saying about this?

Everyone is stunned by the fact that reggaeton is appealing to the most difficult markets to break into, like the Anglo music one. This record deal proves the power that reggaeton has.