

MIGUEL

“All I Want Is You’ was the soundtrack of my relationships,” remarks the 27-year old singer Miguel, as he takes a methodical pause to deliberate his next thought. “Kaleidoscope Dream’ is the soundtrack of my life.”

It’s that off-centered and calculated precision that thrust Miguel into the mainstream in 2010 with the infectious first single “All I Want Is You,” from his major label debut album *All I Want Is You* (ByStorm/Jive Records). That song blended a stark hip-hop beat with Miguel’s creamy vocals to form a sound that was completely absent from the radio and established Miguel as one of the most unique and soulful voices in modern R&B. He continued to grow with “Sure Thing,” which peaked at No. 1 on Billboard’s Hip-Hop/R&B chart. With its bubble-pop drums and stunning vocal performance, it further showcased Miguel as an artist that has the angelic voice and songwriting chops to make luminaries proud while still possessing the mysterious, innate cool that modern listeners crave. He then quickly topped off his debut album with his third single “Quickie,” which brilliantly flipped reggae into the sexiest sound on the radio and earned Miguel his second No. 1 hit.

But the man born Miguel Pimentel is not even close to being satisfied. His four-time Grammy® nominated sophomore album *Kaleidoscope Dream* (ByStorm/RCA Records)– which came on the heels of *Art Dealer Chic*, his self-released series of free EPs from early 2012 that drove the internet crazy – is bigger and more encapsulating, with a scope and sound that pushes past the boundaries of R&B and challenges its listeners.

Extensive touring drove the album’s conception, and now Miguel has brought the power of his live performances to record. “I wrote most of my first album nearly five years ago in my bedroom, so by the time the public got to see me perform it, I had evolved so much in that time... with every show I molded the songs into where I wanted my next album to go,” comments Miguel.

Kaleidoscope Dream is, crucially, the purest distillation to-date of who Miguel is as a person. Unlike most of his R&B brethren, Miguel doesn’t listen to the radio. Instead, he’s jamming Queen and the Rolling Stones. For the first time, the record completely reflects Miguel when out of the limelight. The album represents where he goes, what he does, and the people he hangs out with. Of

his lifestyle, Miguel says he "won't be making it rain. But I probably will be at some bar singing my heart out with a Jack and Coke in my hand. That's just who I am."

Strategically, instead of thrusting listeners into this brave new world, Miguel decided to build a bridge. The result was "Adorn," the lead single off *Kaleidoscope Dream* that catapulted to the top of charts garnering Miguel his third No. 1 hit single and a 2013 Grammy win for "Best R&B Song." The song, which was acknowledged in Rolling Stone's 2012 "Singles of the Year" list, incorporates radiant harmonies and heavenly backing vocals - undoubtedly the work of the Miguel that his fans have grown to love, including Pop-Rock singer/songwriter Kelly Clarkson, who called his "Adorn" Grammy performance "... the sexiest damn thing I've ever seen..." during her "Best Pop Vocal Album" acceptance speech. Its buzzing, grinding bass was a preview of the dirtier, grimmer sound that Miguel has brought to the table with the album. "Even though I'm running this way, I had to look back and let the people that I'm trying to bring with me know that I'm paying attention to [them]," he said of the song. "I know that you're there, and I see you. So, come take this ride with me" Those fans have obliged.

Tracks like "Don't Look Back" and "Use Me," two songs released along with "Adorn" as the *Kaleidoscope Dream: Water Preview* further illustrate that journey. These tracks, with their stacked guitars and crashing drums, blow open the doors on the new Miguel, the one who is daring to meld arena rock and R&B like no one since Prince. This is new territory for Miguel, but one that he's perfectly equipped to handle, as he shows that the soulfulness and purity of his voice is strengthened when he belts out sky-scraping choruses. The tracks also display a Miguel that is exploring the darker sides of sex and romance, in a way that is as dangerous and erotic. It is undoubtedly a new direction, but one that Miguel's fans have welcomed and eventually earned him a 2012 Soul Train Music Award for "Best R&B/Soul Male Artist."

With *Kaleidoscope Dream*, Miguel moves into songs that are more open, even soothing. Of "Do You..." and "The Thrill," Miguel says, with a laugh, that the tracks are "very airy. That section of the album just has a free-spirited vibe." "Kaleidoscope Dream," the smoldering title track produced by Salaam Remi, explains Miguel from a philosophical standpoint. "I really believe that we all are creating everything that is in front of us," he says. "So 'kaleidoscope dream' is another phrase for your own collage of what it is you want in your life. That is your 'kaleidoscope dream.' This album is the representation I'm painting for myself. It's my 'kaleidoscope dream.'"

The album also includes the intoxicating “How Many Drinks?” another standout that captures his godsend falsetto, coupled with one-of-a-kind production by Remi.

There is also “Candles in the Sun,” which finds Miguel addressing God, the government and how we as a people treat each other. The closer, stripped-down and re-worked with his touring band, also wraps up his sonic approach to the album. “It was cool to incorporate my band because they’ve been such a huge part of my brand,” he recalls. “They really bring something special to the song. It really takes it to the next level.”

When Miguel self released his three-volume set *Art Dealer Chic*, the EPs grew Miguel’s audience and received loving reviews from music sites such as *Pitchfork*, *Rolling Stone* and *SPIN*. Additionally, the set featured an early version of “Adorn,” the first single off the new album. In turn *Kaleidoscope Dream* was rolled out into three stages as well: two three-song previews and finally the full product.

“Historically, its a very powerful number, a lot of great things come in three” comments Miguel. “When we lose sight of the three most important things in life, that being mind, body and soul, its easy to become imbalanced”

Frankly unconcerned with the radio this time around, and what is usually aimed for -- Miguel wants to focus on the music that people spend their day and night scouring to look for. “I wanted to connect with the people who are looking for music online, always looking to hear dope stuff,” Miguel said of the release strategy. Of both himself, his friends and his growing audience, he says that if the music “is dope, we mess with it.”

Miguel’s unwavering attitude and boundless talent has allowed him to constantly redefine himself and create his own genre simultaneously, as well extend his brand of music across the world – most notably as the supporting act on Alicia Keys’ “Set the World on Fire Tour.” “I’m really painting with a different brush and different colors,” he says. “But still having fun doing me, just being myself.”