"My music, my lifestyle… you know there’s a pro to every con, there’s a con to every pro...

But, this is a business. And I will make smart business decisions as far as my marketing is concerned and my music is concerned. And my actions as a man will speak for me as a person."

The ‘Anticipation’ is over, the songbird has landed

If you’ve been mistaking that guy you keep running into recently downtown for Trey Songz, chances are… It’s him! The R&B sensation has set cell phones off and has had social media networks all aflutter with “I think I just saw Trey Songz” comments. Our newly adopted son has been kicking it in Cleveland the past few days in preparation for this Thursday’s “Anticipation 2our,” the first leg of this multi-city phenomenon, at the State Theatre. Throughout rehearsals, tapings and taking fans to Cavs games, CP2 caught up with the superstar to get word on what

all the “anticipation” was about.

I remember interviewing you at a concert in Cleveland back in 2005. It was at the start of your career, still had the braids and everything. You seemed a lot more reserved then and now you’re headlining tours. How has this success ride been for you thus far?

I wouldn’t say I’m any more or less reserved I would just say that time has taken course and I’ve worked very hard to get where I am. In 2005, that’s when I was begging to get on a tour where I could even open up. Hard work has gotten me to this place four albums later, and really never taking a break since then. I had an album come out every other year, then two years in a row. and I have an album coming out this summer. I’ve done Scream Tours, to touring with Ne-Yo to opening up for [Jay-Z] to my own tour to touring off a mixtape. It’s been very much a blessing that I’ve come this far.

Who are you bringing with you?

I’m actually bringing Big Sean with me. He’s come up in a similar fashion. He was actually on the mixtape grind as well before his music was able to get heard commercially. Before he had a hit on the radio he had fans that loved him. His work ethic has gotten him to where he is. Now he’s got four or five hit records on the radio. I saw that work ethic in him early on. Now we’re teaming up to go out there and give the fans what they want.

How is the Anticipation 2 Tour different and/or better than the last?

The difference in this tour is that it’s launched off a mixtape series. “Anticipation 1 and 2” are bodies of work that have never been commercially released. They’re fan favorites. They’re actually music that was specially made for my fans and not made in hopes for a No. 1 single or made in hopes for radio spins. It’s music to keep me relevant in my fans’ minds and show them that this is what I love to do and I would do it if I didn’t get paid for it. So to be able to launch a tour off of it means I will be performing these fan favorites that you have never seen me perform before. That’s the special bond that this tour will have with fans. They will get something special that they may never get again.

Cleveland is kind of a hard town to please. What made you decide to kick off the tour here?

Aww man, Cleveland aint no different from any other town. Cleveland isn’t hard to please, they just want their money’s worth.

The difference in Cleveland is, people don’t have a lot of money to spend…

Yeah, that’s exactly what I’m saying. You gotta give these people a great show world wide, not just in Cleveland. If they’re spending their money, they want to see a great show. You’ve got to please ‘em. And that’s something I plan to do here. As far as the kick-off… We’re kicking off a whole Mid-West run. You mentioned the beginning of my career. This is where my career kind of took off in a lot of ways. The bigger markets weren’t really playing my records like that. It was the Clevelands; it was the Detroits. The real blue collar workers were supporting me and relating to my struggle back when I had “Gotta Make it” out. This is where I spent a lot of my time, in cities like this. I relate to cities like this because I’m from an even smaller town where people are economically depressed. For me, it’s about going where I started, the towns who made me who I am.

Your music has changed a bit since your humble beginnings. We’ve all heard the cliché “sex sells” and I can’t think of a single person whom that applies to more than you. Your content is very adult, yet you have so many young fans. Do you ever view your music as a double-edge sword?

My music, my lifestyle… you know there’s a pro to every con, there’s a con to every pro. “Gotta Go,” is about sex. It was my second single. So there’s nothing that’s really changed about the music I’m making, it’s just that I’m more popular. When I make music I’m making music about life. For just as many songs that are sexual there’s another song that counters it. More people may not know that song because that’s not the song that’s going to get the radio play like a “Love Faces” or “Neighbors Know My Name” will get.

It’s not for me to come at radio or anything of that nature but, this is a business. And I will make smart business decisions as far as my marketing is concerned and my music is concerned. And my actions as a man will speak for me as a person.

Music of today gets a bad rep for a multitude of reasons. What do you feel is most beneficial about the music and the industry of today?

Music is your music. It’s what you chose to listen to. We are responsible for what we listen to and what we put out there but, there’s still every kind of music out there for anyone to listen to. If you want to listen to something to uplift your spirit and want to hear something different than what the radio is playing, there’s an outlet for you to do that. But I think music is about life and living, not inhibitions and holding back.

About two weeks ago there was this entire buzz about President Obama singing an Al Green song. Do you think any president past, present or future would ever be caught singing a Trey Songz classic?

Well, he’s the 44th president and that’s the first president you’ve ever heard singing a Black man’s song so you know, chances are slim but… I don’t doubt it. [laughs].

Any direct words for your Cleveland fans?

Just tell ‘em to be at the spot. We’re kicking off here and it’s going down. I appreciate all the support whether they bought a CD, follow me on Twitter, like me on Facebook, whatever they’ve done to contribute to my success. Even if they listened to a song and told a friend they liked it, I appreciate them. I couldn’t be me without you. Thank you.

The “Anticipation 2our” kicks off in Cleveland this Thursday, Feb. 9 at the State Theatre, 1501 Euclid Ave.
in downtown
Cleveland
. Tickets are $49.50, $67.50 and $77.50 at playhousesquare.org. No shirts necessary. Between these two you’ll be sure to snag one of the many they’ll be ripping off and throwing into the audience!