

ML EXCLUSIVE!



Enrique Iglesias

“Keeps Getting Better”

Words by Vanessa Pascale

Do you know what it feels like

to walk into a nightclub and have people fall all over themselves just to be near you? **Enrique Iglesias** does. The tall, dark and very handsome Enrique, dressed comfortably in jeans and an **adidas** baseball cap, welcomed such a scene at the *Euphoria* CD release party **TARGET** and he hosted at Los Angeles hot spot **MyHouse** July 6th.

The multi-platinum superstar, with chart-topping hits “**Do You Know?**,” “**Hero**,” “**Rhythm Divine**,” “**Bailamos**”... and 21 #1 tracks on **Billboard’s Hot Latin Songs Chart**, released his 9th album, *Euphoria*, a diverse compilation of tracks featuring collaborations with **Akon**, **Usher**, **Nicole Scherzinger**, **Pitbull** and more. “I feel really satisfied with it. I think it’s the most eclectic album in my career. I’m not saying it’s the best, obviously that’s up to the fans to decide. But it’s definitely the most exciting album,” said Enrique.

His teaming up with different artists has made *Euphoria* an album that appeals to assorted tastes; perhaps expanding his fan base further—if that’s even possible (he has sold over 58 million albums worldwide). “I think the collaborations are cool... They’re artists from such different musical backgrounds and being able to mix all of them in one album has been fun and different. Every song, musically, is completely different from one another. A lot of the collaborations depended on the song. I kind of go more based on the song than really who it would be cool to collaborate with. That’s kind of how it happened on this album.”

Euphoria is unique because this is Enrique’s first bilingual album—mixing English and Spanish. “I wanted to do this many years ago, but I don’t think the record companies were ready for it. Now, I’m with a different label: **Universal Spanish** and **Universal Republic**...and I thought it was the right time,” Enrique explained.

The Miami-native is often traveling, but Enrique continues to return to the place he has called home since he was 8-years-old. I chatted up the charming **Grammy award-winning** singer/songwriter, who revealed how the **Magic City** has influenced his career, what he can’t live without, and some more juicy tidbits.

Enrique’s first released track on *Euphoria*, “**I Like It**,” featuring **Pitbull** and **Lionel Richie**, is his latest billboard chart-topper. Filmed in Miami, the attention-garnering “I Like It” music video, which debuted at this year’s **MTV Movie Awards**, also featured MTV’s notorious *Jersey Shore* cast. “It was one of things that was, uh, different,” said Enrique about filming with the *JS* crew. “But I gotta tell you, the guys and the girls were a pleasure to work with. I say this because obviously, when we watch these reality shows you see the drama, the fighting and you think you’re going to see this in real-life, but the guys were great... They were down-to-earth, which is good to see. They know perfectly well where they stand. It must not be easy to go from being someone who is not known to suddenly being extremely popular. I think they handle it very well.” Lyrics from Lionel Richie’s hit “**All Night Long**” are also featured in the catchy song. “I worked with Lionel in the past, and he came by the studio

and laid vocals on that.” As for working with Pitbull, “Pitbull and I grew up in the same town [Miami]. We have a bunch of friends in common and his energy is off the roof. He’s like a freakin’ **Energizer Bunny**. He doesn’t stop,” Enrique said with a smile.

Their shared hometown is what Enrique credits for influencing his successful career. “Growing up in Miami, it was so diverse musically, because you have so much Latin influence and you also have the Anglo influence, obviously. I always say that if I hadn’t grown up in Miami, my music would be completely different. I don’t mean that for the better or the worse, I really don’t know. But I guarantee you it would be completely different because Madrid [where he was born] is different when it comes to music. I think about that a lot, believe it or not, because I’d say it was tough for me to move to Miami because my parents were divorced,” Enrique candidly expressed. “My mom stayed in Spain with my sister and it was a whole—it was a new culture, new climate, new friends. It took me about a year to adjust and it was difficult. But once I adjusted, I loved it. Now, I think about it and am like well, things happen for a reason because if I didn’t live here I don’t think I’d be able to sing in English or even have the influence that I have in my Spanish music.”

Miami has been home to Enrique for well over 20 years now, and of all places to live in the world, he chooses here. “I just like it. I’m not here all the time so it’s hard to get sick of a place when you travel constantly. My best friends live here, and I love the water,” Enrique thoughtfully explained. “I think it’s a good center point. You can go to South America, you can go to Europe, you can go all over the U.S.” No complaints here, well, except for one. “It gets a little too hot in Miami in the summer, that’s the only thing.” When he is in town, you’re unlikely to catch this guy about town. “I don’t really go to that many spots. I like going to the movies. When I’m in Miami, the couch is my favorite place,” confessed Enrique. “Whenever I come home it’s usually from a long trip for work and I like staying home. But I loooove being able to get away on the boat, going water skiing—having a day off is great if you like the water.”

When this busy guy has a chance to relax on his couch, what’s on the T.V.? “**The World Cup!** It’s all about the World Cup,” Enrique stated robustly. When I asked what team he was rooting for, he replied seriously, “I’m rooting for Jamaica.” Unfortunately, I had not been following the World Cup and made the mistake of responding with, “Ok, very cool.” Appalled with my reaction to his answer, Enrique busted out laughing. “Jamaica is not even playing! That shows me how much you watch the World Cup.” Ooops. In my defense, I never claimed to be a soccer enthusiast. *He’s the fan*. Following my tiny gaffe, Enrique playfully shared that he was rooting for Spain, making sure to add, “And, *they are* in the World Cup, by the way.” There are worse things than getting teased by Enrique Iglesias.

He also divulged the two he can not live without—his dogs: a Golden Retriever named **Grammy** and German Shepherd named **Lucas**. Inside *Euphoria*’s CD case you’ll find, Enrique’s album dedication to Grammy (who sadly passed away recently) and a photo of the two together on the beach.

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And of course, there is another special someone in Enrique's life. Sorry, ladies —yes, he is still dating the beautiful, blond, tennis player, **Anna Kournikova**. "All is cool. Everything is good," Enrique said of their relationship.

How long has it been? 9 years? I think I read that.

"Nooooo," said Enrique exaggeratedly. "Like 3 years."

3 years?

"Yeah."

I read that's it been 7-9 years.

"Are you talking about dog years or what?" he jokingly asked.

No, I'm talking about regular, human years.

"Regular? About 7."

Have you written any songs for her?

"Um," he paused. "You know, I never say who I write my songs to, it's kind of embarrassing," he guardedly responded.

So, you do write your songs for somebody, but you're not going to say?

"Sometimes —not every song. Whenever I have in the past [written songs], ya know, I never say."

Ok, so there are no songs *known* that are about Anna?

"It depends."

Depends on what?

"On the song," he matter-of-factly stated.

The playfully elusive singer is quite good at evading certain questions. However, he was open to talking about the music he listens to. "I listen to the radio a lot, constantly. I'm not one of those people who play CDs often. I listen to the radio, whether it's Spanish radio or Top 40... 'cause I always like listening to new music. The last song I bought was, um, let me see, was "**Cooler than Me**" [**Mike Posner**]." Enrique also stated that he has 14,000 songs in his **i-Pod**. "It's too much. I'm going nuts going through it. I gotta start skimming it down," he said with a laugh. "I have anything from **Juan Luis Guerra**, **Lionel Richie**, to **Kings of Leon**, **Hombres G**, I can name you a lot of people that you wouldn't know."

As for the question I like to ask stars the most: *What do you think fans would be surprised to find out about you?* "I dunno, that um. Uhhhh, that I," he paused. "I dunno. What can I tell you? Let me see, I could tell you something disturbing," he said with a mischievous grin. "But I want to keep on doing good," Enrique laughed. Careful with his words, the coy singer finally responded, "Let me think about that one, before I tell you something *really* disturbing." Dark and magnetically mysterious, all part of his enticing appeal, it's these traits that make the best and most intriguing songwriters. **ML**