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Showbiz

Miguel Mendoza: Rich boy can sing

By JOJO PANALIGAN
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MIGUEL MENDOZA

"It has been talked about too much...can we talk about something else?"

Young singer Miguel Mendoza is weary of explaining what he is doing in showbiz when he could be touring the world, sipping cocktail while floating in either of his family's two swimming pools or even just unperturbedly maxing out his credit card at malls.

Although he was one of the strongest finalists in "Philippine Idol" a few years back, and even after placing 3rd in Pinoy Dream Academy (Season 2), Miguel still has to contend with people who think he only made it this far because of his, well, money.

"First of all, I am not rich—just blessed," he told Manila Bulletin Online in an interview last Aug. 21 during the launch of his debut album, "Somebody," at Techno Wave, Il Terrazo.

"Now, I can always deny that I am blessed but people will know the truth, anyway. I just hope people would accept people for who they are. I don't go around telling people, 'Hey, look at me, I'm so blessed' — I'm not that shallow. Besides, there's more to me than that."

An unbiased spin through "Somebody" should convince critics. With his sinewy, silken voice and unique vibrato, Miguel effortlessly weaves through the tracks here namely "Beauty and Madness," "Be My Number Two," "Ligaw na Damdamin," "Sa Piling Ko" and "Hanggang Tingin" (the promotional single that comes with a music video directed by Charlotte Dianco).

It's not only on record that the 20-year-old looker can blow his pipes. During the press conference (which doubled as his birthday celebration-concert), Miguel demonstrated that he even sings better live, augmented by his piano-playing skills and suave stage persona.

"This [singing] is something I've always wanted to do. My heart is really pushing me to do this that is why even if no one supports me - even if I lose all the money in the world—I will still heed my calling," he said.

When asked why money has become such an issue for him, Miguel said that, perhaps, some people just want to see others "struggling" because it makes for a more romantic picture.

"And I understand that," he said. "I just have to prove myself."

It's not as if more people are against Miguel. Hardly the case.

During his album launch, it was obvious that Miguel has the charisma to win over even scoffers. By the time Miguel concluded his hour-long set, the lad had people eating out of the palm of his hand.

Is it the same with Apple Chiu, his rumored girlfriend?

"Apple and I are just friends—now. We did become a couple but our relationship only lasted a couple of months after Pinoy Dream Academy. Right now, we are friends, good friends. I'm accountable for her and she is accountable for me," said Miguel who co-wrote "Ligaw Na Damdamin" with Apple after their break-up.

Apart from promoting his CD via a mall tour, some TV guestings and out of the country shows (Vancouver, Guam), Miguel is part of the Tony-Award winning

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