



Q&A with singer, producer Akon

The Grammy-nominated artist performs concert for breast cancer

Oct. 3 in Boca Raton.

September 23, 2009



He doesn't drink, doesn't smoke and is a philanthropist who launched a Web site, IsThereSomethingICanDo.com that is a Google for finding charities.

No, the person in question is not a Jonas Brother or even Mother Teresa, but Grammy-nominated artist Akon.

The hip-hop collaborator from Senegal took time off from his busy schedule to talk with Forum Publishing Group writers Mike Rothman and Dave Dipino about the Second Annual Think Pink Rocks Charity Concert coming up Oct. 3 at Mizner Park in Boca Raton.

He also discussed his inspirations, past and present, and even let the world know for the first time about his new album *Stadium Music*, set for release before the World Cup in 2010.

MR: Hey Akon, what's going on? Where are you calling us from right now?

Akon: I'm at home in Atlanta.

MR: We just wanted to thank you for taking time out to talk with us and I am going to throw things over to Dave to get this started.

DD: With the album *Freedom* what were your goals and aspirations, and almost one year after the album's release, do you feel like you've accomplished those goals?

Akon: With the *Freedom* album my goals were to expand my horizons with the Euro Market. A year later I'm very happy with the cross marketing we've done outside the domestic markets.

DD: Can you talk about the song *Keep You Much Longer* and where you were coming from as an artist when you wrote that song?

Akon: It's about trying to make it [in my career] while I'm heavily involved with my girlfriend. But, there's no time for her and eventually the tables turn and she has no time.

MR: I read on your website that you are currently working on your next album. After your last album *Freedom* in 2008 with its autobiographical, heartfelt nature, what kind of identity do you want for this album?

Akon: Every album is a different situation. This album is more experienced-based with the more experiences I have had. The album is called *Stadium Music* and I am setting this whole album up for the World Cup 2010. I'm making a bunch of crowd, stadium-type dances and anthems that will be for the soccer hype. When the World Cup in 2010 comes along, people will have that party music to dance to.

MR: You have worked with hundreds of amazing artists, including T-Pain, [Eminem](#) and [Michael Jackson](#). Is there anyone in particular that you were extremely excited or in awe of working with?

Akon: Oh MJ, hands down. I was shocked that he even wanted to work with me. I was working my career so that I could one day work with him and then found out that he already had plans and wanted to work with me. It happened so naturally.

DD: Is there anyone you've yet to work with that's on your list?

Akon: No. I've already covered everyone on my list. I can't think of anyone I haven't worked with... It's forcing me to actually create new artists and try to find new talent.

MR: Obviously you are a very charitable person with initiative like the Konfidence Foundation and the website, IsThereSomethingICanDo.com. How did you get connected with Think Pink?

Akon: A friend brought it to my attention three years ago and told me how it was for [breast cancer](#) and a good cause. I told him to just count me in.

DD: Has cancer affected you or someone you know with in your life?

Akon: No absolutely not. I was blessed actually because no one in my family has even been affected. I would like to be able to know more about it and be able to about it when it happens or if it happens.

DD: What do you hope to accomplish and what can the fans of your music expect for the Oct. 3, Think Pink Concert?

Akon: We had a great time last year. I know this year will be an incredible time. As for collaborating, we'll see who's down in Florida that I've collaborated with and ready to jump on stage with me. Kardinal Offishall always pops up when I go somewhere. He's always there.

DD: Can you tell me about your record labels?

Akon: Kon Live and Konvict Muzik are my two record labels. Kon Live is more pop with [Lady Gaga](#) as the franchise [over there] at the moment. Of course T-Pain is on Konvict Muzik.

MR: One of your most recent single, "Sexy Bitch" has an insanely contagious beat that I have had stuck in mead head the entire morning. Thank you by the way.

Akon: No problem.

MR: With *Sexy Bitch*, what were the inspirations there?

Akon: That song is actually also going to be on "Stadium Music." I put it on David Guetta's album because I am not dropping an album this year, and I wanted get everyone familiar with what they are about to hear from me next year with "Stadium Music."

MR: I also heard you don't drink or smoke, how does this affect or help your concentration with your music?

Akon: It definitely helps me focus on my music that I don't drink or smoke. This way I don't make any bad decisions.

The Second Annual Think Pink Rocks Charity Concert is set for 7 to 11 p.m. Oct. 3 at Mizner Park, off Federal Highway, between Palmetto Park and Glades roads. Tickets are on sale for \$30 and can be bought at www.thinkpinkrocks.com.

IF YOU GO

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