



YVES DE KEERSMAEKER A CHANGE OF PACE

BY MARLENYS GUZMÁN

As children we dream big. As adults we forget our dreams and settle for reality. We go on to work in industries that are detached from our childhood ambitions, and even though we may like or even love what we do, there is still that small spark inside of us asking us what if? What if we decided to leave everything behind and reach for the stars?

Yves de Keersmaeker was born in Belgium but has resided internationally. He is a former interior designer and an antiques dealer with an incredible résumé who specializes in English antiques, and interior design. He's taken on many projects in various parts of the world, but back in 2015 he decided to take on a new challenge – it was time to follow a lifelong dream, to become a singer. “When I moved to Casa de Campo, I made a list of the things I wanted to try before I was 50. Singing was on top of the list.”

Becoming a singer is not an easy task; it requires discipline, hard work, and dedication, all of which Yves was ready to give and more. A fortu-

itous encounter led him to famous vocal coaches, Seth Riggs and Debora Lebendiker, who have helped him achieve his goal. He has participated in various workshops and even travels to Sweden to work with Seth Riggs and his wife, Margareta Svensson-Riggs. He's even worked with Manny Perez, a famous opera coach. “Posture, the straight position of the face, the natural opening of the mouth, the release of muscle tension in the body, the perfect flow of breathing through the belly, the singing technique, the phrasing of the lyrics ... I had no idea it was so complicated,” Yves laughs. “You need a perfect technique, but it must seem effortless.”

YdK, as he is artistically known, is inspired by the crooners of the 1950s such as Nat King Cole, Perry Como, Frank Sinatra, and Marvin Gaye. “These singers had a flawless vocal technique combined with a strong emotion which is rarely heard these days,” he says. “My music is about a connection with the audience. A small venue or a



beautiful theater and an audience that listens and understands the words. I am a storyteller, I tell a tale, a story of love, passion, romance, it is the story of my life, but also the story of your life ...”

Yves has performed various times in Casa de Campo. His song choices usually include emotional lyrics that tug at the heart and touches upon struggles we’ve all experienced over the years. “I try to sing songs that mean something to people, and give something to them,” Yves explains. During his last live concert, he was accompanied by the Cuban pianist Jorge Sosa and the Dominican band “Batuta” by musician Juan Pablo Polanco. YdK delighted his guests with rhythms of Jazz, Bossa Nova, and other musical genres, leaving everyone present impressed with the progress he has made in music.

This rising artist has taken on a new challenge; performing and recording with a classical string orchestra. “Most instruments are recorded with separate microphones put in different angles, so

we capture all the sounds,” Yves explains. “Then we record the vocals in its purest form. The process is very long but the end product is incredibly rewarding.” While doing this he continues to look for opportunities in the Dominican Republic, as well as in Belgium and the United States to develop more concerts with bands or orchestras.

“We are recording my first album at the Air Studios in London, then we need to go for the final mix and mastering of the album. This is big. It is one of the best studios in the world with a great recording engineer that has worked with great professionals.” He also plans to film various music videos in the upcoming months and release his first single.

To anyone wanting to become a singer Yves advises, “You must find your voice. A singer needs to evoke an emotion, a sensation, a feeling. You need to dive into your soul and discover your true inner self. You need to train hard so that the sound shines.” **CL**