

Stylelist

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Artist Kalup Linzy's On the Rise

By Brooke Bobb

While you may not have heard of Kalup Linzy yet, you've definitely heard of his pal and new music partner James Franco. Though Linzy, an artist, sometimes *General Hospital* soap star, musician and drag queen, has been a fixture on the art scene for quite sometime, he's beginning to bring his eclectic and often flamboyant talents to a more mainstream audience (he was most recently featured in this month's *W Magazine*). Frankly, we're pretty tired of the James Franco conversation and with Linzy now on our radar it may be tough for the heartthrob actor and doctoral degree enthusiast to steal the spotlight going forward. The duo's music group is called Linzy and Franco, and their debut music video for the song "Rising" wasn't only a Franco-ophile YouTube sensation, it also got people talking about Linzy and his art form.

But Linzy's also got a few solo projects up his glittery sleeve - he hopes to release a full music album by the end of this year, and just yesterday opened a brand new art show at Lehmann Maupin Gallery in New York that showcases his both his music and his new penchant for animation.

Check out our chat with Linzy below to find out more about his latest show, singing on stage with James and his dreams of collaborating with En Vogue and hanging at a bar with Marvin Gaye.

Tell me a little bit about your show opening tomorrow at Lehmann Maupin.

It's called "Shuffle" and it's artists who incorporate music and performance and the show's going to run until August. They're going to be showing an animation video of mine where I did the music to it as well. The music is mostly R&B, a little hip-hop but it was done with a lo-fi garage band so it has that kind of sound to it. I'm into animation right now, I had some assistants do one for a music video a while back, and then I worked with Leica house and that was sort of the first extent of it. I want to do another one, so the idea is to try a little myself first and just build on it.

What's it like working with James Franco as a musical partner now in Kalup and Franco? Do you guys have anymore exciting projects coming up?

It's pretty cool, it's mainly an extension of when he does some of my live performances and then some acting like I did when he invited me to come on *General Hospital*. I'm hoping, the actual EP will be done in August. After I finish doing the opera I'm going to go deep into those songs and just see if he has more time to record, because you know he's working on a big movie right now so it becomes difficult to get every idea done but I'm happy people are giving us attention and there is material for a full-length album. So I talked to James' manager last night and hopefully at the end of the year or beginning of next year we can wrap it up.

Any other celebrities besides your friend James, musicians or actors, you're

interested in collaborating with?

I always have felt like maybe I'd like to do an En Vogue track, something also with Erika Badhu. They come to mind because I really get inspired by both of them musically.

If you could shop in one store for the rest of your life what would it be?

Jil Sander.

If you had to wear clothes from one decade only, what would it be?

It would definitely be the 70's. And maybe even the 50's too.

What are three adjectives that describe your personal style?

Laidback, embraced and (long pause) zoned. Does that work? Yeah because, I always try to find a zone and like a specific space of style.

What was your first job?

I was a photo technician at The Winn Dixie in Stucky, Florida.

What's one thing that few people know about you?

That I still find myself attracted to girls... but I wouldn't be in a relationship with one. It's just moment and glimpses.

If you were a literary character, who would you be?

Shug Avery from *The Color Purple*.

If you could have any superpower what would it be?

I'd love to be able to click my heels and be in one place whenever I feel like it, sort of like Dorothy.

Who would be your ideal drinking buddy from history?

I would want to meet and just chill with Marvin Gaye but you know, Abraham Lincoln also comes to mind. I'd definitely hang with Marvin at a bar but I don't think I would see Abraham at a bar or a club. I mean that's a tough question for me because I love history so much... I watch the History Channel all the time.

Facebook or Twitter?

I prefer Facebook. Twitter I'm still, I go on Twitter sometimes but I don't even have my Facebook and Twitter linked. When I joined MySpace a long time ago, one of my cousins suggested that I join because I felt lonely and I was telling her about it and she literally said come here I'll set you up. And then everybody moved to Facebook

and now I can look there and if I miss my family or cousins, I can just go online and see it. Twitter it's like one-liners, there's not enough room to talk. And I like to talk.