

Breaking free of Juno's pigeonholes

TRIPLE BILL: First Nations nominees want recognition in wider field, says rapper Joey Stylez

BY STUART DERDEYN
STAFF REPORTER

Three Juno Award nominees all on the same bill is a rare treat.

That's exactly what you get when Derek Miller, Joey Stylez and Inez Jasper hook up for a killer triple-bill tour starting in Agassiz tonight.

All three artists have seen their respective careers hit highs this year, with blues rocker Miller recording an acclaimed album with the former Stevie Ray Vaughan rhythm section Double Trouble; Stylez getting nationwide airplay for tracks from his album *The Black Star* and Inez's "Singsoulgirl" becoming a runaway R&B hit.

Of course, it smarts a little that three artists having success in three very different genres are competing against one another in the same category: Aboriginal Music. At the APCMAs (Aboriginal People's Choice Music Awards) and CAMAS (Canadian Aboriginal Music Awards) — they won in various categories.

"I am really blessed to be nominated in this category, but we also submitted in the best new artist and rap categories, too," says Stylez.

"And I think I deserve to be nominated in both of those two, especially if you look at that I did as many sales as the artists in those categories and sold as much or more albums and on iTunes as some of the category nominees.

"But they get a lot of submissions, so maybe it's just easier to pigeon-hole you with, 'OK, he's native, put him in that category — done. I'm trying to compete to be the best artist, period.'"

In concert

SOS Medicine Show

Where: Seabird Island Gym, 2895 Chowat Rd., Agassiz
When: Tonight at 6 p.m.
Tickets: \$15 at the door

Where: Biltmore Cabaret, 2755 Prince Edward St.
When: Monday at 7 p.m.

Tickets: \$15 advance at Biltmore, Highlife, Zulu, ticketweb.ca

and that we should get together. We performed at the APCMAs in Winnipeg and it was crazy," said Stylez.

The two have worked on a few tracks together and Stylez can't sing Miller's praises enough. Having Inez finish the bill is icing on the cake.

And while playing live is something he loves doing, right now the based-in-L.A. rapper/rocker is focused on his new CD and a reality-show idea tentatively titled *Red Hollywood*.

Besides his ongoing relationship with great video director Stuey Kubrick, he's talking to many leading urban labels and producers looking to get to the next level.

"I've been doing a lot of stuff here: Hosting NBA all-star parties, hitting the Grammy dos, starting a newspaper about tattooing called *Suag Ink* and getting together with film directors, swinging clothing deals and more that you can't really pull off in my hometown of Saskatoon."

He's banking on the expanding Native American youth market giving him pull with labels and being

