

Maria Isa establishes SotaRico Brand

Written by Alaina L. Lewis

The recession has forced people to re-evaluate their spending habits; some have decided to take sizable steps back from the world of entertainment in pursuit of the more economically fetching Block Buster Night. Yet as rare as it is to find a four leaf clover, it was a night of good fortune for anyone lucky enough to partake in the unmatched events that occurred in the Main Room of First Avenue on Friday, June 5. For merely the cost of \$6 and enough money left over to pay a thirsty parking meter at the end the affair, you got a taste of some of Minnesota's finest entertainers who came together under one roof to musically extend their love and their pride for the proprietor of SotaRico, Maria Isa.

From the moment the hour struck 8, the stage at the Maria Isa CD Release Show for her current album ***Street Politics***, was like a floor to ceiling threshold of nothing shy of good music. The talent that the songstress brought with her to celebrate her latest offering to her hometown crowd was a mixed bag of entertainers that covered the best in every genre of music that cultivates within the growing scale of the Minnesota Sound. From Hip Hop, to Ska, to a bit of Rock N' Roll, the easily sold out crowd went crazy with support for every opening act that set foot on the stage.

The crowd trickled in slowly as the night began, but as Hip Hop favorites like **St. Paul Slim** and

Self Devine

hit the stage, mixed in with the musical treats offered by

Mayda

Kill the Vultures

and the kings of "geek funk"

Dance Band

, it was clear to everyone who appreciates good music that this was a gem of an event that had a priceless lineup. The MC of the evening was none other than

Muja Messiah

, who just moments prior to the lady of the night emergence unto her much deserved spotlight, took a break from making the announcements to serve the eager crowd with his lick of Hip Hop heat.

As the evening went by effortlessly, the countdown to Maria Isa and her Bakers Dozen's sought after performance began as a white screen came down from the ceiling with a narrative video of her journey to ***Street Politics***. The five-minute film portrayed a message of pride and quite like her diverse opening acts, that phenomenal spirit transcended throughout the colorful crowd who bonded together under the arch of SotaRico to support Minneapolis' princess of Latin Hip Hop and Soul.

As the screen lifted and the infectious sounds of her new song "Derechos" came drifting effortlessly from 22-year-old Maria Isa's vocals, the night having begun several hours prior, had now finally arrived at its hour of heightened fascination.

The hour plus set was filled with a mix of everything: Latin, Hip Hop, and even a bit of Rock and

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Pop. The audience had the opportunity to get a raw taste of Isa's new album. Throughout the night there was a constant delivery of foundation shaking rhythms. At one point in the show she was accompanied on stage by two of her featured artists on ***Street Politics***, **Muja Messiah** and

Killa Capone

when they performed the sexy song “

Never Let Go”

and the title track “

Street Politics

.” As if she could top the already roof shattering evening, she then offered the crowd a reason to fear the dentist when she sweetened the musical deal by performing her first single off the new album, “

Caramelo

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Quite like the flowers adorned in her hair throughout her performance, Isa's music was a lush garden of effortless melodies that interchanged in their sound, but never disrupted in its beauty. Her live band that resounded her unrivaled vocal instrument added that touch of authenticity that easily could make them America's next Gwen Stefani and No Doubt.

As the evening drew to an end there was a silent hum of sadness that swept through the room as the crowd reluctantly filed towards the door wishing the show didn't have to end. It is said that reliving a night of perfection is something permitted solely to the owner of fictitious time machines or make believe time travelers, but nowadays there is a way to repeat that incomparable magic. If you're as intelligent as I was after I heard the last melodic note fall from the First Avenue stage, you didn't hesitate to cop *Street Politics*. At least in your disk player the rotation of good music *never*
has to end

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