



René Pérez Joglar

(AKA Residente Calle 13)

Rapper, Singer, Writer, Filmmaker and Social Activist

1978 – Present

"When you're making art, you have to be like that: honest and real, and that thing of bringing back that connection with human beings. I think it's missing in music. I want to bring it back."



Residente was born in February of 1978 as René Pérez Joglar and grew up in San Juan, Puerto Rico, one of eight siblings in a middle-class household. His mother, Flor Joglar de García, was an actress who was part of the theatrical company called Teatro del 60 (Theater of the 60s). His father, Reinaldo Pérez Ramírez was a labor lawyer, a musician, and a writer who, at the age of 17 founded a band called Latin Tempo. His father studied Political Science and Law at the University of Puerto Rico with the idea of contributing to the Independence of Puerto Rico. While he was studying Political Science, he became the president of the Juventud Independista Universitaria (University Independence Youth). Immediately after he graduated from the School of Law, he founded a law firm dedicated to representing labor unions.

Both of Residente's parents were a strong influence in his life.

"In Puerto Rico, you are born and are already involved in politics. My father was in the workers' struggle, in political and social affairs, and in different brigades, from Cuba to Nicaragua, and I grew up with that, seeing those photos. My family has to do with the way I see things." - Residente

Surrounded by art, music, and sports from early life, Residente taught himself to play the guitar and took classes to learn to play the saxophone and the drums. He joined his school band at the age of 12 as a drummer. At high school, Residente's interest in drawing and music was evident,

but baseball was always his passion, a sport that he practiced for many years until he finished high school. After high school, he had to decide which career path to follow, baseball or the arts. He chose the arts and was admitted to the Escuela de Artes Plásticas (School of Visual Arts) in San Juan, Puerto Rico, where he obtained his Bachelor of Fine Arts degree. His portfolio earned him a scholarship and he transferred to the Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD), where he finished his Masters in Fine Arts.

Several years after college, he teamed up with his stepbrother, Eduardo José Cabra, to form the group Calle 13. In short order, the brothers became the hottest new artists in popular Latin music, garnering Grammy attention as well as widespread critical notices and steadily mounting album sales. Their popularity continued to build, partly propelled by the announcement in September 2006 that the duo had received three Latin Grammy nominations for Best New Artist, Best Short-Form Video, and Best Urban Album - all of which they later won. Residente, became the island's first intellectual-styled reggaetón star. He wears tattoos of Jean-Michel Basquiat, Matisse, and his mother on his arms and frequently displays a political message written on his body.



René and Eduardo first met when they were two years old, when the René's mother married Eduardo's father. Although their parents later divorced, the stepbrothers remained close. Their



group name, Calle 13 (meaning "13th Street"), along with their stage names, arose from their living situation. René moved to a house on 13th Street, or Calle 13, in a gated community in a suburb of San Juan. Eduardo visited his stepbrother regularly and at the main gate of the complex, the security guards would ask each person seeking entry; "Residente" (Resident) or "Visitante" (Visitor)? Their response to the guards became their stage names. When they first came on the music scene, Calle 13's music was a style of reggaeton that was both exciting and unique. Reggaeton is a blend of Jamaican music influenced by reggae and dancehall with the music of Latin America, such as bomba and plena, as well as that of hip hop. Residente was the vocalist, usually

rapping in Spanish, and Visitante provided the beat, known as "Dem Bow" and was the producer. While their lyrics were absent of the misogyny that frequently characterized rap, their political diatribes and sexual explicitness have been considered offensive by some across Roman Catholic Latin America. Calle 13 did not shy away from controversy. They were critical of other artists in the urban scene and denounced the music industry for their profit-making practices and even called out the Governor of Puerto Rico. Over time, their content became increasingly political. Their songs spoke out against government oppression and in favor of the working class of Latin America.

“If you are writing and really being honest with what you feel, you’re going to be writing about everything you live with, about the society that surrounds you, and not leaving things out because they might bring you problems, besides, I haven’t really used all that many bad words.”

- Residente

Notwithstanding the controversy over the nature of Residente’s lyrics and his strong political opinions, the music of Calle 13 received a tremendous amount of critical acclaim, as well as commercial success. Their albums included *Calle 13* (2005), *Residente o Visitante* (2007), *Los de Atrás Vienen Conmigo* (2008), *Entren Los Que Quieran* (2010) and *Multi Viral* (2014). This body of work earned them four Grammy Awards and twenty-seven Latin Grammy Awards, setting a record for most Latin Grammy wins.



Residente has also been recognized numerous times for humanitarian efforts. He has been honored for:

- "...having fought for the permanence of the Puerto Rican identity and the freedom of the island" ([Ateneo Puertorriqueño](#) in 2011),
- ... his "contribution to communication and popular culture" ([National University of La Plata](#) in 2012),
- "...his social commitment and identification with young people in Latin America"
- ([Amnesty International](#) in 2012),
- "...his musical career and philanthropic efforts." (BMI Champion Award)

In 2015 the Nobel Peace Summit recognized Residente with the Nobel Peace Summit Award for his song lyrics and his support for social causes. He became the first Latin American recipient of this honor. That same year after working with his stepbrother for 10 years, the group disbanded and both brothers followed solo careers.



As a result of a DNA test, Residente learned that his familial roots could be traced back to 10 separate locations around the world. That knowledge inspired him, over the course of two years, to visit his ancestral lands including Siberia, Moscow, China, the Caucasus, France, Spain, England, Armenia, South Ossetia, Antigua, Ghana, Burkina Faso, Niger, Serbia, and Puerto Rico. He collaborated with local musicians in every part of the world that showed up in his DNA. He wrote and recorded an album, a documentary film, and a

book while visiting these countries. All three works titled *Residente*, crystallize his images and thoughts about apocalypse, war, exploitation, resistance, and evolution.

"When I got the results of my DNA test, I started to make music. I started to research about the places that I learned that I had blood. At the studio I had a map of all the places to understand it better, and then I started to conceptualize the ideas for the songs."

- Residente

In 2013 Residente married Soledad Fandiño, who is an Argentine stage, television, and film actress, in a private ceremony in the El Yunque rainforest, in eastern Puerto Rico. They have one son together; Milo is now 7 years old. Sadly, the couple divorced in 2017. Since March 2019, he has been dating Polish model Kasia Marciniak (aka Kasia Monica). They live in the Chelsea district of NYC. Even though the rest of his family resides in Puerto Rico, he still feels very connected to them. Most days he chats with his entire family, including his mother, five sisters and four brothers using the internet.

Residente is currently working on his next solo album at the Electric Lady Studio in Greenwich Village, NYC. He explained that "Depending on where I am in my album, I might be recording words or musical instruments. I'm usually at the studio around three hours" each day. This next album, which does not have a title, explores how the rhythm of brainwaves can be turned into music. Residente is currently consulting with professors at Yale University and New York University to identify and record brain patterns in worms, mice, monkeys, fruit flies and even fellow hit maker Bad Bunny to create new songs. "I wanted to prove to the people that even though we are different in certain ways, we can connect with each other with our brain frequencies,"



"Artists are supposed to make music because they have a reason for making it. My music always has a purpose. My lyrics, they have a purpose. I don't make music because I want to sell an album or fill a concert or [for] my music to be on the radio, it's because I really feel it. If you're not making music for that reason, then you're a businessperson." – Residente

TO LEARN MORE

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