DESIINGER BIO:

One song can change everything, and after the release of his platinum debut single “Panda,” 19-year-old Sidney Royel Selby III went from a local Brooklyn hook-man to a breakout rap star with a platinum, No. 1 *Billboard* single and a record deal with Kanye West.

“In the hood, I was the man you came to for the music if you wanted me to spice shit up,” Designer says. “Everybody came to me.”

While growing up in Louis Armstrong Housing project in the Bed-Stuy section of Brooklyn, Desiigner was exposed to all types of music. His parents put him on to old school R&B, while his sister exposed him to reggae. It didn’t take long before young Desiigner started to develop his own tastes and find his unique voice.

“I was always a music fan as a kid. As soon as I came out the house, I was singing to the girls,” he says. “I was the ladies’ boy, singing happy birthday and all that. That was my thing, go to girls’ parties and sing happy birthday to them.”

It was all fun and games, but as he grew older, Desiigner found himself running with the wrong crowd, and he was shot at the age of fourteen. The youngster was in and out the hospital the same day, but the incident led him to shift his focus towards music full time. “I’m not gonna lie, I was a bad kid,” he says. “It was just wrong place, wrong time.”

When Desiigner decided to drop “Panda” in December 2015 on his Soundcloud, the timing couldn’t have been better. The track, which was partly inspired by BMW’s white X6 (the vehicle’s black tints resembles the color patterns of a panda), became a viral hit. It garnered millions of streams, spawned unforgettable memes and countless fan-made videos on Instagram, Vine and Snapchat.

The track also inspired a number of unofficial remixes from T-Pain, Fabolous, Lil’ Kim, Lupe Fiasco and Meek Mill. After catching the collective ear of Kanye’s G.O.O.D. Music camp, Desiigner was signed to the label and to the all-star contributing cast on Yeezy’s February 2016 *The Life of Pablo* LP. “Panda” was sampled and Desiigner’s vocals were featured on “Pt. 2,” while the rising rap star also guested on “Freestyle 4.”

“The first time I was in the room with G.O.O.D., I gave them the vibe that I was ready to work,” Designer says. “Kanye built on ‘Panda.’ He had an idea for it. He put something on the beginning and let me rock out in the end. It was crazy.”

But by the end of 2016, it became clear that the influence of “Panda” was far crazier. While April found the track landing a No. 1 spot on Billboard’s Hot 100 chart, May had earned it a RIAA platinum certification. By December, “Panda” had become the year’s most streamed song with 1.6 billion streams across all platforms and earned nominations for BET’s Hip Hop Award for Best Track of the Year, People’s Champ, Best New Hip Hop Artist and Best Hip Hop Video, the American Music Award for Favorite Song – Rap/Hip Hop and Video of the Year, the MTV Video Music Award for Best Hip-Hop Video and Best New Artist, the Teen Choice Award for Choice R&B/Hip-Hop Song and the Grammy Award for Best Rap Performance.

Performing “Panda” on *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert* and *The Wendy Williams Show* and his next single “Tiimmy Turner” on the *BET Awards* and *Jimmy Kimmel*, Desiigner proved that his infectious energy is just as effective onstage as it is in the studio. As he steps into 2017 and the next phase of his music, Desiigner is fully focused on turning all of his “Panda” success into a legendary career.

“If your music sounds great, it’s no problem,” he says. “Music has no law. And any great musician knows that.”