

MUSIC

# Jason Derulo: Hitmaker breaks out

The pop crooner aims to do more than top charts

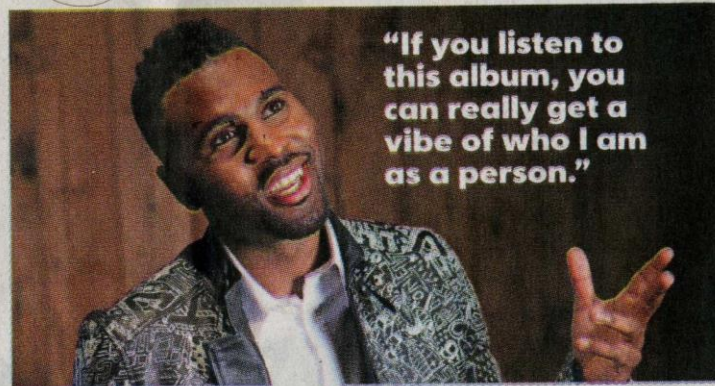
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**NEW YORK** He's one of pop's most reliable hitmakers, but Jason Derulo still isn't a household name.

Having sold 50 million singles worldwide and charted 14 songs on the Billboard Hot 100, "the fact that the dots haven't been connected, it's a little strange," says Derulo, 25. "I think it's because things were too single-driven" since his self-titled 2010 debut, fueled by breakthrough chart-topper *Whatcha Say*.

So with a new album, *Everything Is 4*, released this week, "it's important for people to dive into (it) and get to know me," Derulo says. "If you listen to this album, you can really get a vibe of who I am as a person, not just an artist."

Aside from being his fourth al-



ROBERT DEUTSCH, USA TODAY

**Post-split from Jordan Sparks, Derulo has a new album out.**

bum (after *Talk Dirty* just last year), the title is significant to the charismatic R&B star in that everything he does is for his family and fans. "Four is a number that follows us around," he says. "Four legs on a chair and table represent a strong foundation. Four seasons represent change and (willingness) to accept change. And all of those things are really prevalent in my life right now."

Understandable, given Derulo's whirlwind 2014 with its ups and

downs. He rose to the forefront of pop culture's "booty craze" with top-5 smashes *Talk Dirty* and *Wiggle*. But it was also the year he and his then-girlfriend, pop star Jordin Sparks, ended a three-year relationship.

Despite the split, the new music isn't driven solely by heartbreak. For example, current top-10 single *Want to Want Me* and tropical Jennifer Lopez collaboration *Try Me* are about "newfound excitement and meet-

ing new people," Derulo says. And the gleaming *Love Me Down* is about how the "world might end tomorrow, so why don't we have the time of our lives tonight?"

It's a reflection of Derulo's present mentality, because he has moved on to new relationships. "I've been in a relationship for a long time, and I think it's time to relearn what makes me tick and what makes me happy," he says.

He also has been able to notch some career milestones. He joined Paul Abdul and Nigel Lythgoe at the judges' table for *So You Think You Can Dance* (Fox, Mondays, 8 p.m. ET). He also got a musical hero, Stevie Wonder, to hop on new song *Broke*.

Introduced to Wonder at a White House dinner, "I just asked him, 'You want to play harmonica on one of my songs?' And he was like: 'Yeah, man, (we're) family. It's all good,'" Derulo says. "And then (I asked), 'Would you want to sing on it, too?' He was like, 'Man, if I hear that song on the radio and I'm not on it, I'm going to whup your (butt)'. So the rest is history."