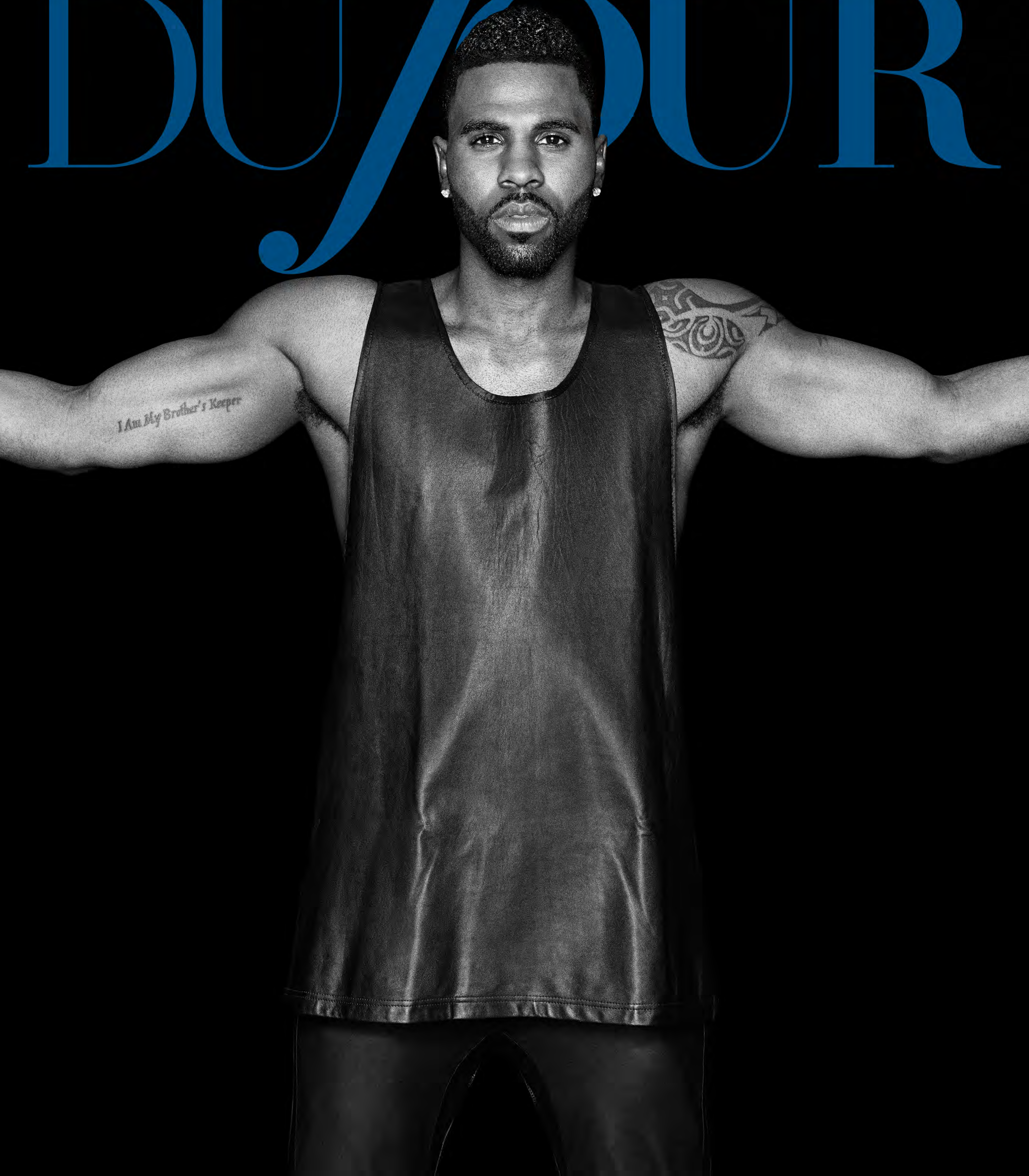


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THE NEW DAWN OF DERULO

JASON DERULO DOESN'T NEED TO SING HIS OWN NAME ANYMORE—EVERYONE ELSE IS DOING IT FOR HIM

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Jason Derulo seems to be hiding in plain sight, a condition that's somewhat peculiar phenomenon for an artist who has sold more than 50 million singles worldwide.

It certainly isn't for lack of bling, or biceps, or MJ-esque dance moves with top hats or music videos with shapely

ladies. Derulo, 25, has consistently topped the charts since his debut single "Whatcha Say" went platinum in 2009, and since then he's put out 10 more best-selling singles, four of which were #1 Top 40 hits. He made tabloid headlines throughout his two-year relationship with Jordin Sparks, and he's now a judge on the 12th season of *So You Think You Can Dance*. Derulo has been in the spotlight for years, so why is he still such an enigma?

His critics would have you believe it's because he's unremarkable. They would say, you might remember his songs—who hasn't driven home late at night blasting "Ridin' Solo"—but the only thing will remind you you're listening to Jason Derulo and not another artist is the oft-repeated sound of him singing his own name in auto-tune. They would say he depends on sampling and collaborations, and you could switch him out with any other heavily produced pop singer of the moment and never know the difference.

But the sheer accumulation of Derulo's hits tells a very different story, and to label the shape-shifting

nature of his work spineless isn't just short-sighted—it's missing the point. In a time when everyone is fighting to "brand" himself, Derulo is an unabashed chameleon. And he has absolutely no qualms about what he's doing. "I think I take more risks than anybody in the industry," he says defiantly. "My music doesn't fit into a mold, and that's why it's so successful. A critic can't write a hit song, so I can't take what they say seriously."

Derulo's fourth album *Everything is 4* features collaborations with Jennifer Lopez, Matima, Stevie Wonder, Keith Urban, Meghan Trainor, K. Michelle and Julia Michaels. Derulo is varied enough in his stylings to accommodate this diverse array of artists naturally, and as a result the album is inherently textured. He's smart to share the stage. Plus, he seems to truly enjoy learning from artists he admires—particularly when "learning" entails dancing all night with J-Lo.

"Jennifer and I literally just danced the whole night in the studio we were making 'Try Me,'" he says. "The song reminds us of our Caribbean roots, you know—I'm Haitian and she's Puerto Rican, so we really just danced the night away."

Still, if there's anything that proves Derulo is finding his footing, it's the crown jewel of *Everything is 4*, "Want to Want Me," which is notably not a collaboration.

"Want to Want Me" has gone platinum in Canada, the U.S. and the U.K., and has over one billion streams on Spotify and 800 million on YouTube. It is the most added track in the history of Top 40 Radio, and to some ears the best song Derulo has ever written. A sizzling ode to booty calls, it's to this summer what Iggy Azalea's "Fancy" was last summer, and Daft Punk's "Get Lucky" was the summer before that.

In conversation, Derulo says it really does feel like a new stage in life. "I feel younger than I did five years ago. I think new beginnings always do that to you; you feel fresh."

The "new beginning" to which Derulo refers has as much to do with his personal life as the new heights he's

Opposite Page:
Buckley Cocktail jacket,
\$7,990; Evening shirt,
\$790, **TOM FORD**.
888-866-3673. Earrings,
DERULO'S OWN.



Above: Shirt, \$350, **CALVIN KLEIN**, calvinklein.com.
Necklace and earrings, **DERULO'S OWN**.
Opposite Page: Singlet, \$298, **SKINGRAFT**,
skingraftdesigns.com. Earrings, **DERULO'S OWN**.





Above: Bomber, \$1,630, **PHILIPP PLEIN**, *philipp-plein.com*. Tank top, price upon request, **ROCHAMBEAU**, *rochambeau.nyc*. Pants, price upon request, **DIESEL BLACK GOLD**, *dieselblackgold.com*. Sneakers, \$705, **DSQUARED2**, *dsquared2.com*. Earrings, **DERULO'S OWN**
Opposite Page: Suit, price upon request, **DOLCE & GABBANA**, *Madison Los Angeles, 855-745-9900*. Shirt, price upon request, **GIVENCHY**, *Madison Los Angeles, 855-745-9900*. Loafer, \$1,590, **TOM FORD**, *888-866-3673*. Earrings, **DERULO'S OWN**. Makeup by Nia Hicks, Barber by Brian Bull, Stylist Assistance by Hanni Fox and Erika Timm.

achieved professionally. His highly publicized relationship with Sparks ended last year, and though there are rumors of bad blood, Derulo seems to have a clear head about it.

“I think everything happens for a reason. I think I was in that relationship for a reason,” he says. “I don’t regret anything, but at the same time I know how good it feels to be on my own right now. It’s pretty clear that I’m not ready for that. I’m just not in the right space.”

It would interest some to know that Derulo, for all of his lusty lyrics and excitement about his newly minted singlehood, actually has pretty whimsical notions of real romance. “I think true love can never be broken,” he says. “So I don’t think I’ve found true love yet.”

For now however, Derulo doesn’t have much time to think about relationships; he says life moves so fast that he has to write the name of the city he’s performing in

on his set list just to remember where he is. But in the spare moments he does have, he likes to catch up on Game of Thrones and The Blacklist like the rest of us.

For fans who’ve been missing the familiar sound of Jason Derulo’s voice singing his own name, you’ll have to refer to the archives, because he says the trademark is a thing of the past.

“It was a thing, but everything runs its course, you know, and it was done. The only time it’s done on this album was with Meghan Trainor. At first I was like, ‘Nah, I’m not doing that,’ and she was like, ‘Well I’ll sing it then,’ and I said no—but she was like, ‘Please, please, please, please!’ So I said, ‘Fine.’ And, she did it, and it sounded really good, so I was like, ‘Alright, cool.’”

We’ll miss it, but no one will wonder whether they’re hearing Jason Derulo now. ■

