

TEDASHII

THIS TIME AROUND

“I’m very proud of the courage and bravery that I had to muster to go in and create music that is completely different than anything I’ve ever done, but still authentically who I am, especially in this new season,” Tedashii says with optimism as he describes his latest EP *This Time Around*. It’s the kind of optimism that is born from overcoming incredible tragedy. If Emerson is correct that “fractures well cured make us more strong,” Tedashii is indeed finding his strength. It has been well documented that in 2013, Tedashii suddenly lost his one-year-old son. After he passed away, Tedashii’s world came to an abrupt stop. Recording, touring and performing were replaced with mourning, anger and eventually counseling.

Along the way, Tedashii relied on his faith but found strength and healing again when he returned to writing and recording. What followed was his fifth studio album *Below Paradise*, an album so painful and personal yet filled with hope. So when Tedashii speaks with a sanguine tone about life and creativity, he indeed understands that life does unfold in seasons.

“I can’t pretend like I’m better and fine. I’m not. I’m getting better and things are going to be fine,” Tedashii says. “But, I make music for where I am now.” Indeed his new EP, *This Time Around*, can be summed up in one word: Growth.

The first single, “Be Me” is a boisterous and sonically anthemic record that music fans can blast aloud in celebration of boldly being who you are supposed to be. The second single, “Jumped Out The Whip,” is a left coast party that will literally transport you to Pico and La Brea. And the current single titled, “808,” is a hip-hop slow jam. Scoring points with the wife, Tedashii says, “it’s a love song for my bride, but for any woman a guy wants to share that sentiment with...” A part of the journey to Tedashii’s growth as

an artist was collaborating with music producer GAWVI, one of the most prolific music producers of now who's worked with everyone from Pharrell and Rodney Jerkins to Trip Lee and Lecrae. Tedashii worked with several producers on this EP, but he found a special connection with GAWVI.

This EP was a creative stretch for Tedashii. It is completely different sonically, lyrically and thematically. And it pushes the benchmark higher for the brand of cerebral hip-hop Reach Records has pioneered throughout the years. Tedashii slips into abstract lyricism over sometimes booming and sometimes quiet emotional music using unconventional language that falls down a metaphorical rabbit hole, more often than not. His EP is like a video game that you can play over and over and find different endings. Like the man, in his music, there's a deeper story yet to be discovered. And yet, Tedashii, the artist, almost would have been Tedashii, the football player.

For Tedashii, who is part Samoan and part African-American, football wasn't all that unexpected. After all, Samoa is often referred to as "Football Island" by many sportscasters and journalists. And he wasn't good at it all. He was really good at it. He was a great football player actually. And after high school he found himself playing football for a university with a storied football program. But after injury ended his collegiate career, he transferred to another college and met a young man by the name of Lecrae. A friendship blossomed and soon enough, Tedashii and Lecrae were college roommates. Lecrae, already involved with music, mentioned to Tedashii in passing, "Man you should do music with me." And as they say, the rest is history.

Despite his athletic gifts, Tedashii always had an artist's soul. He recalls a visit to an extended relative's house. "I was there and someone played an old school LL Cool J song. I leave there after hearing that song and my wheels were spinning. Then I discovered Tupac, the Geto Boys and UGK, all major influencers where I grew up." As he got older, he discovered blues and jazz and started to learn to play instruments. After creating music with Lecrae, that old love for music and creating came flooding back to Tedashii. He's been making music and communicating through his art ever since then.

Yes, his music is slightly different from the musical inspirations of his youth, but it is uniquely all Tedashii, a busy proud Christian family man living in Atlanta, GA.

In early 2016, Tedashii will return with his next musical offering with this EP. And **This Time Around**, his message is simple. “I’m ready for this moment. I’m excited for this moment. I’m going to maintain and elevate the standard and I’m going to progress as an artist. And, I want everyone on board to take this ride with me.”

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