

## WHO'S NEXT



# DANIEL MERRIWEATHER

**HOMETOWN:** Melbourne, Australia  
**INFLUENCES:** D'Angelo, Otis Redding, Stevie Wonder  
**ALBUM:** *Love & War*, out Feb. 23  
**WEBSITE:** [danielmerriweather.com](http://danielmerriweather.com)

DANIEL MERRIWEATHER WAS FIRST DRAWN TO MUSIC at age 4, when he discovered his mother's violin. Soon he was playing Vivaldi and Bach concertos, but at 10 he was nudged toward R&B music by his discovery of Boyz II Men's *Cooleyhighharmony*. "That album pretty much taught me how to sing," he says. "I knew every note of every song." Eventually he dropped out of high school to pursue a musical career. "It was either singing or deep-frying chicken at KFC," he jokes. "I was really lucky to be able to do what I love for a living. Things weren't looking too good there for a minute."

Merriweather first caught the public's attention as the singer on producer Mark Ronson's UK hit version of the Smiths' "Stop Me if You've Heard This One Before" in 2007. His Ronson-produced debut album is already a hit overseas ahead of its imminent arrival

on American shores. Like several of Ronson's other productions, *Love & War* heavily features the backing of New York soul band the Dap-Kings. "A lot of the album was made through just letting them interpret and play my songs until it felt good," says Merriweather. "It was cool, because the songs I write are very different from songs they would normally play."

As a songwriter Merriweather finds inspiration everywhere. "I might be reading a book that inspires a lyric or I'll hear a piece of music that inspires a chord progression," he says. "Though people seem to inspire my songwriting the most. I'm fascinated by the human condition, however limited my understanding of it is. Sometimes writing a song is a way of trying to decode human nature and figure out why and what we are."