

DEVA MAHAL



**THE DEBUT ALBUM RUN DEEP
OUT MARCH 23 ON MOTÉMA MUSIC**

*"The best of soul, blues and classic rock all in a row...Mahal should be a major story in 2018" - **Exclaim!***

*"Thunderous modern soul" – **Okayplayer***

"'Snakes' is a hand-clapping, piano-pounding, call-and-response buildup with a melody that harks back to field hollers." – **New York Times**

(New York, NY) Genre defying R&B/Soul goddess Deva Mahal is set to release her much-anticipated debut album *Run Deep* on March 23 via Motéma Music, fresh off the success of her self-titled introductory EP. *Run Deep* was produced by Scott Jacoby (Vampire Weekend, José James, Coldplay), with two tracks produced by Jarrett Wetherell (Beyoncé/FKA Twigs). The album is available to pre-order now with the track "It's Down to You" available as an instant grat.

A rare combination of masterful songwriting and breathtaking vocal talent, Deva Mahal (pronounced "Diva") steps into the spotlight on *Run Deep*, featuring 12-tracks of pulse-pounding soul with a decidedly modern edge. Taking inspiration from the idea of strength through vulnerability, she powerfully connects with raw honesty, rich musicality, and emotionally searing songs of love and loss that convey the true resiliency of the human spirit to triumph over adversity. Born with blues in her blood, the highly astute songwriter has created a unique sound blending modern R&B, indie-pop, soul, rock and gospel.

"Every experience in life leaves a mark," says Deva. "Evidence of its existence. Some experiences leave scars, deep grooves inside your very soul that never truly leave you. That is where *Run Deep* comes from. I never want to wade in the shallow places in life because it's easier, safer or more comfortable. My music speaks a lot about pain and heartache, but I dive into those feelings, submerge myself in them so I can work through them and get to the other side."

The title *Run Deep* connects Deva's musical bloodline with the finely hewn emotions weaved throughout her songs. The sultry grit of 'Can't Call It Love' kicks off the album, followed by the bold R&B stomp of 'Snakes,' a sharp warning to watch out for people with bad intentions. The late-night groove of 'Turnt Up,' featuring Allen Stone, sways under the trance of her whiskey-soaked seductiveness, and Stone's equally sly counterpoint, while the melancholy spirituality of 'Fire' traces a clear path through trial, tribulations and facing one's demons. Despite its title, the track 'Dream' is a clear, wide-eyed reflection of a love gone wrong and finding the strength to let go.

The album's title track 'Run Deep' raises the vibration, celebrating the power of music and the triumph of rising above all obstacles, with a stunning feature by Deva's sister Coco Peila.

Reinforcing her strength and belief in humanity, 'Optimist' shines with its organ-driven rock beat. 'It's Down to You' shows off Deva's soulful balladry as she reclaims her time and energy, while 'Shards' intimately reveals her very core in a stark, confessional anthem. 'Wicked' is an electro-soul call to action in the vein of Stevie Wonder's politically charged classics. The album comes full circle with a cover of the Carole King/Gerry Goffin song 'Take a Giant Step' – famously covered by her father Taj Mahal in 1969 - but rendered current and personal in Deva's rendition.

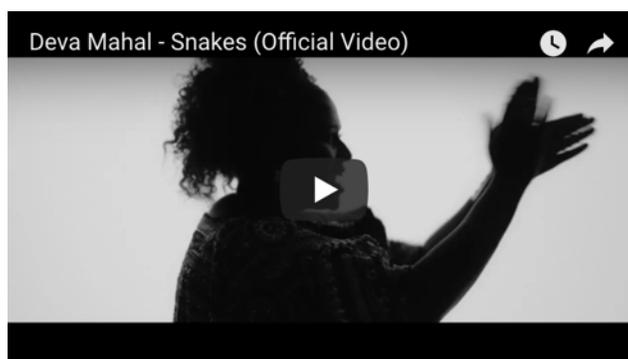
Throughout the album, Deva navigates a wide variation of emotional depth, breathing vivid life into songs that draw on a deep well of personal experience, and serve as revelations, cautionary tales, empowerment anthems, and wry observations on contemporary romance.

The world started to realise Deva's songwriting talents in 2008, when 'Never Let You Go,' a co-write with her father, gained acclaim on the Grammy-nominated album *Maestro*. She's also collaborated with a wide array of artists, including members of TV on the Radio, Sharon Jones and the Dap Kings, and Fat Freddy's Drop (who she toured with in Europe). She's also performed at such renowned venues and festivals as Sonar, Womad, Carnegie Hall, The Apollo, the Atlanta Jazz Festival, North Sea Jazz Festival and Montreux Jazz Festival.

Defiant in both voice and in person, Deva has put herself forward as an exemplar of positive body image and overcoming the travails of bullying and discrimination. She's lent her support and talents to organizations like "Voices of a People's History of the United States" which are working to cast the light of truth on racial inequality, gender stereotypes, and bias as well as issues surrounding poverty.

Comments Deva: "All the tracks on this album are letters. Letters to myself (both past and present), to people who have meant something meaningful in my life, to the world and the things about it that I find frustrating, and to all of the great loves in my life."

Deva's track "Snakes" was picked by [The New York Times Playlist](#).



Track by Track
In Deva's Words

Can't Call It Love

I wrote this song back in 2005 while living in New Zealand. This was important to me in my life because I have a tendency to fall hard and fast without really considering the consequences. I needed to write a promise to myself to be more protective of what I have to offer and the energy that I put into someone I love. Like a letter to myself.

Snakes

This track also began as an idea for a song that I wrote in 2005 and was revisited in 2015. It evolved into becoming a warning letter to my younger self about the dangers I would inevitably face in the world on my own. It also serves as a reminder to hold onto my light and to be aware of those out there that don't really have your best interests at heart. Plus, I wanted to write something that I wanted to dance to.

Fire

This song came as a piano piece in my dreams. I later started fleshing it out with producer Andre Harris and then continued to develop it further with the album's producer, Scott Jacoby. It speaks to a relationship that I was in where I ultimately had to admit to myself that I hadn't dealt with a previous relationship, and had to make the impossible decision to end things. Sometimes you are no longer light and can drag really beautiful and amazing people down into the darkness that surrounds you. This a letter to a past love. A kind of apology.

Dream

This song came to me one night while living in Brooklyn and I wrote it in one evening on the guitar. I had been deeply in love with the same person for most of my 20's. This kind of love that lives in your heart and spirit and I had previously been unable to sever the connection. I used to dream of the same child when we were together. In that dream, I was always aware that it was the spirit of the child we would have together. One day, I realized that he had stopped coming to me and that was day that I realized that I could close the door to that chapter of my life. This track is a letter to myself allowing me to move on from something that was extraordinarily painful to me.

Shards

There's a great quote by Maya Angelou that says "When someone shows you who they are, believe them the first time." I have always had trouble with that. I like to see what makes someone good instead of all the things that tell me I shouldn't invest myself in that person. After having my heart shattered, I was able to put it back together but the cracks still remained. Every time I fell in love and it didn't work out, I was carrying the pain of the previous relationship along with the pain of the present. The cracks would never fully heal. For me, each crack had someone's name on it. I wrote this song working through my heartbreak as a reminder to not try to fix someone or go back to someone when they hurt you. To remember the shards in your heart with their name on it when they wanted to return to your life and make a better decision for your future. A letter to those who have broken my heart.

Run Deep (feat. Coco Peila)

This track is my love letter to music and a reminder that I bend but I won't break.

Turnt Up (feat. Allen Stone)

This track represents the cynic in me but also gives breath to the sensual person that I am. I believe that women have the right to love their sexuality and not always be the sad victim. That sometimes, we are the hunter.

Superman (Interlude)

This interlude came to me while walking the streets of NYC. Kind of a wish list for the kind of person I want in my life.

Optimist

I wrote this track on guitar when I was feeling particularly overwhelmed from all the pain and injustice that is happening throughout the world. I needed a song that reinforced my strength and belief in humanity. A letter to everyone who feels powerless and has stopped believing in love.

Wicked

I wrote this track for the people who are continually trying to destroy the world and the people who live in it, to tell them that we won't go quietly into the night. We are powerful and we are many.

It's Down to You

I wrote this track with Binky Griptite from the Dap Kings and it was about a time in a relationship where I felt I was making all the effort and the other person would do just enough to keep me around. I decided I needed to "reclaim my time" and my power. Teaching myself to create boundaries, which is something that is really quite hard for me to do for myself.

Take A Giant Step

I had the extreme pleasure of meeting one of my idols, the legendary Carole King while waiting on her table in Brooklyn. She was wonderfully gracious, humble and generous to me with her time. I told that I sang her song for my dad for his 70th birthday and we even made a little video together on IG. Will never forget that moment in time. When I decided to record "Take a Giant Step" for my album, I wanted to pay homage to her as well as my father for his 75th birthday - to cover a song I have always loved, written by one of the greatest songwriters of all time.

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