

'Everyone Falls in Love', the making of a team - Billboard hit solidifies Tanto Metro & Devonte duo



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Everyone Falls in Love literally made the duo Tanto Metro and Devonte the 1997 Billboard-charting single, solidifying a bond of friendship which had made the Penthouse Records single possible in the first place. After that success, they have been a team up to now, coming up to two decades later, when their latest project is an album with famed production duo Sly and Robbie.

Before Everyone Falls in Love, they recorded only one song together, Living in Style, which was never released.

Everyone Falls in Love was recorded the same year it was released, after some near misses because of Tanto Metro's busy travelling schedule with the Shocking Vibes outfit. It was recorded at Penthouse, then at Slipe Road, St Andrew, in an early-morning session with only three persons present - the performers and recording engineer.

In creating Everyone Falls in Love, the music came before the lyrics. "*Originally, when Germain called me and gave me the rhythm, the only person on the rhythm was Buju Banton*" Devonte said. That song was Up and Personal, Sean Paul later adding One More Try. Along with Everyone Falls in Love they were the first songs released on the rhythm.

"*I took the rhythm from him, I started vibing*" Devonte said. It was on a cassette, so he was using a Walkman (the Sony brand which became the standard name for all of the personal music players of the day). "*A night-time me used to just vibe on the little headphone, because you don't want to wake up your parents and the rest of your siblings*" he said.

He said, in the vibing, that is what came out, singing the chorus, *"Everyone falls in love sometimes... I said OK."* Then, he said, *"I started singing that" and them came up with the deejay part, "Tell me what you wanna do.."*.

"I said this nice" Devonte said.

Although they were not yet an official duo, Devonte and Tanto were good friends. *"Him would come for me anytime him come off the road (overseas performances). Because he used to go on the road, with Beenie Man and the rest of Shocking Vibes entourage"* Devonte said.

Riddim discussion

"I said Tanto, I have this beat from Germain. I want you to come pon da beat ya" Devonte said. The deejay agreed, but it took a while for that agreement to materialise in a songwriting session to nail the lyrics down and, after that, a recording session. Tanto left Jamaica and returned a few times. Germain pressed for the song, Devonte said, asking that the singer record his part, which he resisted.

Tanto said it took about three weeks for them to have the songwriting get-together, which was done at Tanto Metro's apartment. He left again, on his return, suggested an early-morning session. It happened.

"Me an Devonte a brethren from long time. Putting off da song deh, over and over, me just say make we get it out of the way and done ... We record da song deh about 7 o'clock in the morning. A jut me, Devonte and the engineer alone in the studio" Tanto said, Devonte adding the engineer's nickname, Coolie.

It was basically done in one take, a few adjustments done afterwards. There is one thing, though, which has never been fixed and which has worked out quite well. Devonte said, *"I remember when the song was being mixed by Tony Kelly (who made the beat), him say to Germain, 'him no have the s inna falls y'nuh'"* Devonte said.

"Him call me and say him want me to say falls in love" Devonte said, who initially could not believe he had left off the last letter. *"I came in the studio to put the s on the song, and them say you know what, leave it, a so it a go hit"* he said. That decision was made between Tony Kelly and Germain.

"Them say let it stay, it going hit". So it stayed at 'fall' although the title remains, Everyone Falls in Love. And, in performance, the s is always present.

Sean Paul was then added to the rhythm and the song taken to IRIE in Ocho Rios, which started playing it. *"From there it just grew. It grew on us a lot"* Devonte said.

Response to song

The first performance was also in St Ann, at a beach show in Priory, the response indicating to them that they had a seriously strong song on their hands. Outside Jamaica, they first did it live in Miami.

"Is Red Rat call me from Miami and say Tanto, da tune ya big!" Tanto Metro said. Although it was being played on radio stations, he did not realise the impact until the Miami show. *"When Devonte sing 'everyone falls in love...' and the whole place get up, me say no sah!"* Tanto recalled. *"Da tune ya gone"*.

So was the duo. *"That song took us far. I think it was the milestone we needed to cross"* Devonte said. Their first album, Everyone Falls in Love, was also a Penthouse production.