



David Ramirez - *All the Not So Gentle Reminders*

"I'm over the anger, the sadness, all the not so gentle reminders of my nature. I'm moving forward; I can see it coming soon."

From "Waiting On The Dust To Settle"

David Ramirez took a little time to get back to himself, and now he's dead set on making music for himself—for the sake of the music, and nothing else.

"I love all the records I've made in the past," says Ramirez. "But in making them, there was always the thought in the back of my mind of where and what it could get me. I made both creative and business decisions with a goal in mind; a goal that often never came. This time it was all about just the joy of making it, about having fun with it."

The Austin, TX-based singer-songwriter—whose career has seen six full-length studio albums, three EPs, countless collaborations, and an illustrious supergroup project in Glorietta—spent a season of rest away from his focus on writing songs. In the wake of the end of a long relationship, he wanted to prioritize processing his grief as a human, not as an artist bleeding onto the page.

"The last thing I wanted was to write a heartbreak record. So I stopped writing altogether, and I just waited until I saw my heart start coming back to life. I wanted the next thing to be hopeful and sweet and beautiful—a testament to music and my love for it."

Ramirez's new record, *All the Not So Gentle Reminders*, is exactly what he was waiting for. The 12-song album is an expansive succession of dreamlike songs that indeed tell his stories—but more than anything, lean into the possibilities of the trip that music can take us on. "I've been a songwriter for a long time. I love words and stories. But this was about music. I wanted the long musical intros and outros [as heard on "Dirty Martini," "Twin Sized Beds," "A Bigger World," and "Dreams Come True"] to contribute to the stories and be a part of them."

The lead track, "Maybe It Was All a Dream," sets this theme of the ethereal and dreamy from the outset. It's a three-and-a-half-minute musical tour de force—at first, a simple synth line over a subdued drum machine, that eventually morphs into a grandiose rollick of organ, drum rolls, and electric guitars. All the while, staticky, broken voices repeat the almost-haunting coda that gives the record its name. In the end, this "dream" is interrupted and punctuated by a recording of Ramirez's own mother saying, "*David... David... it's time to get up.*"

In "Deja Voodoo," Ramirez questions his own memory, wondering if he remembers his

life as it really was, or if even the past itself is a dream colored by time and distance. He sings, “Maybe it was in another life. Maybe it was just a dream. Was it a memory passed down from another? A cosmic sunflare? Or just déjà vu?” It’s easy to wonder whether the not-so-gentle reminders are themselves facts, or just figments of our imagination—something to be trusted or something to move on from and reclaim our lives.

The songs for the album were written during a writing getaway David went on for two weeks, where he holed up at Standard Deluxe—a music venue and art space in the tiny 100-person town of Waverly, Alabama. His goal was to get out of the noise of Austin for a while, to be alone, to get back to writing with the “uninterrupted silence [he had] been missing.”

All the Not So Gentle Reminders was recorded at Spectra Studios in Cedar Park, TX just outside of Austin, engineered by Charlie Kramsky at the helm. He tapped local staples as the house musicians for the sessions, including Barbara Frigiore, Jeff Olson, James Westley Essary, and Christopher Boosahda (who also helped to produce the album alongside Ramirez). And in the spirit of the exuberance and joy of the recording, he also called upon a handful of friends to contribute and sing background vocals throughout the album.

“It made sense to bring in this group as we were so tight musically and relationally from touring together the last few years. Like all my albums before this I never want to repeat what I’ve previously made. This was no exception. I brought in Boosahda to co-produce because I had never tried my hand at the captain’s wheel, and I wanted someone experienced and with a different musical background than me to bring some extra shine.”

Throughout the album, David tackles memory and dreams, fleeting romance, the possibility of something better ahead, and his own deep appreciation for music and his place in making it. The fact that he considered giving it up altogether—a decision he thankfully didn’t follow through with—*All the Not So Gentle Reminders* only serves to be that much more impactful as a testament to music and its power.

Most pointedly in “Music Man,” he recalls his own turning point as a boy, listening on a Walkman his father gave him... a fateful turn that led him to where he is today. “*So take a look at me now. I’m quite the music man. Take a look at the crowd. We’re all here for the music, man. It’s the music, man.*” On what is his most ambitious, lush, and exuberant record to date, David is leaning in full-hearted to who he knows he is at his core—and not letting anything else stand in his way.

“I will always be me. I’ve seen enough of the business to know that chasing its praises will only land me in a world of disappointment and self-doubt. I’m wholly back in my chi and, fingers crossed, have the strength to stay.”

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