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## SKAM DJ TONY ARZADON ON SPLITTING FROM JUMP SMOKERS: “EDM WAS BECOMING THE BIGGEST THING IN THE WORLD; I WANTED TO DEVELOP MY OWN BRAND.”

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Starting at 16, SKAM DJ Tony Arzadon, dance-music hero, has been involved with the genre for almost all of his life. Fusing big room House with Chicago’s notable music style, his new single featuring producer Deepak "All Of My Life" is coming out soon, along with his upcoming Green Label Live: Las Vegas (<http://greenlabel.com/tag/green-label-live-las-vegas/>) show this weekend at LAX at the Luxor (<http://www.luxor.com/lax/>).

**For those who don’t know, you’ve been in the game for a while now, starting deejaying back when you were only 16. What got you started at such a young age?**

I was born in the Philippines and toured all over Asia with my family. My father’s band got a big break to start touring in the States and we ended up moving here, to Chicago (<http://greenlabel.com/places/chicago/>). During my freshman year of high school one of my classes made everyone come in with something that they created that was special to them. Most kids made volcanoes and I ended up learning how to use pitch control with a tape deck. From then on I thought it was the coolest thing in the world to mix music together like that.

**As a Chicago native, how is the city’s roots in House (<http://greenlabel.com/?s=house+music>) and dance music reflected in your style as a DJ?**

Before the EDM wave came, the Chicago scene was at the forefront of everything. It was super soulful and had a great groove to it and you ended up seeing it develop in Germany and London with their own styles. Chicago, though, has always been the focal point for me. I always try to incorporate that sound into what I do.

I interviewed The Jump Smokers (<http://greenlabel.com/sound/jumpsmokers-interview-green-label-live-vegas/>) a couple weeks back and they mentioned that you used to be a part of the group. How has your career as a solo artist been since then? What made you decide to venture off on your own?

Musically I felt it was my time to part ways. That project with them was the most amazing ride I'd been given a chance for, but right around that time electronic dance music was becoming the biggest thing in the world. I ended up wanting to develop my own brand. I didn't want to focus on remixes as much and went into my own material.

Your new single, "All Of My Life," featuring Deepak, is coming out soon. What can you tell us about the track?

I actually wrote the melody for the track a year-and-a-half-ago. My manager put me on to Deepak. He hasn't had any single releases yet, but writes for other artists. He wrote "All Of My Life" back in 2009. It just so happened my melody was in the same key, so we did some stuff to make it mesh and it fit perfectly. I did a test run of the track in Vegas and it worked out great so I wanted to go back and fit the track back to my style and it was perfect.

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You have a bunch of residencies at the moment, including one at XS in Las Vegas. As a resident DJ, how do you craft your sets and keep people in store for something new every time they see you perform?

My music style from five or six years ago has completely changed from just being in Vegas. We're very much in the bubble in EDM. Everyone's attention span in a nightclub is very short. You need to switch it up to keep people interested and it forces me to keep things fresh and interesting. I saw what Diplo (<http://greenlabel.com/style/diplo-k-swiss-the-board/>) was doing before Major Lazer and how he would be able to mix it up so seamlessly between genres. No one wants to hear straight EDM for two hours, so I try to keep my sets a mix of everything.

There's a quote from you in a documentary I saw on YouTube where you mention that, "In the '80s my dad was actually playing in Vegas and they had their names on the big signs and billboards, and so now today I'm playing here in Vegas and I get to see my name on billboards." Is that a drive you've always had?

I never really planned for that, but it kind of fell in my lap. Having a billboard as a DJ is a huge deal, but I felt that the accomplishment of doing the same thing my dad has done drove me to work even harder and to play as many other places as I possibly could. I really wanted to take it beyond what my father wanted to do and had dreams of. To this day, my dad helps me out on the creative end more than any one else. We have an amazing relationship, personally and professionally.

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