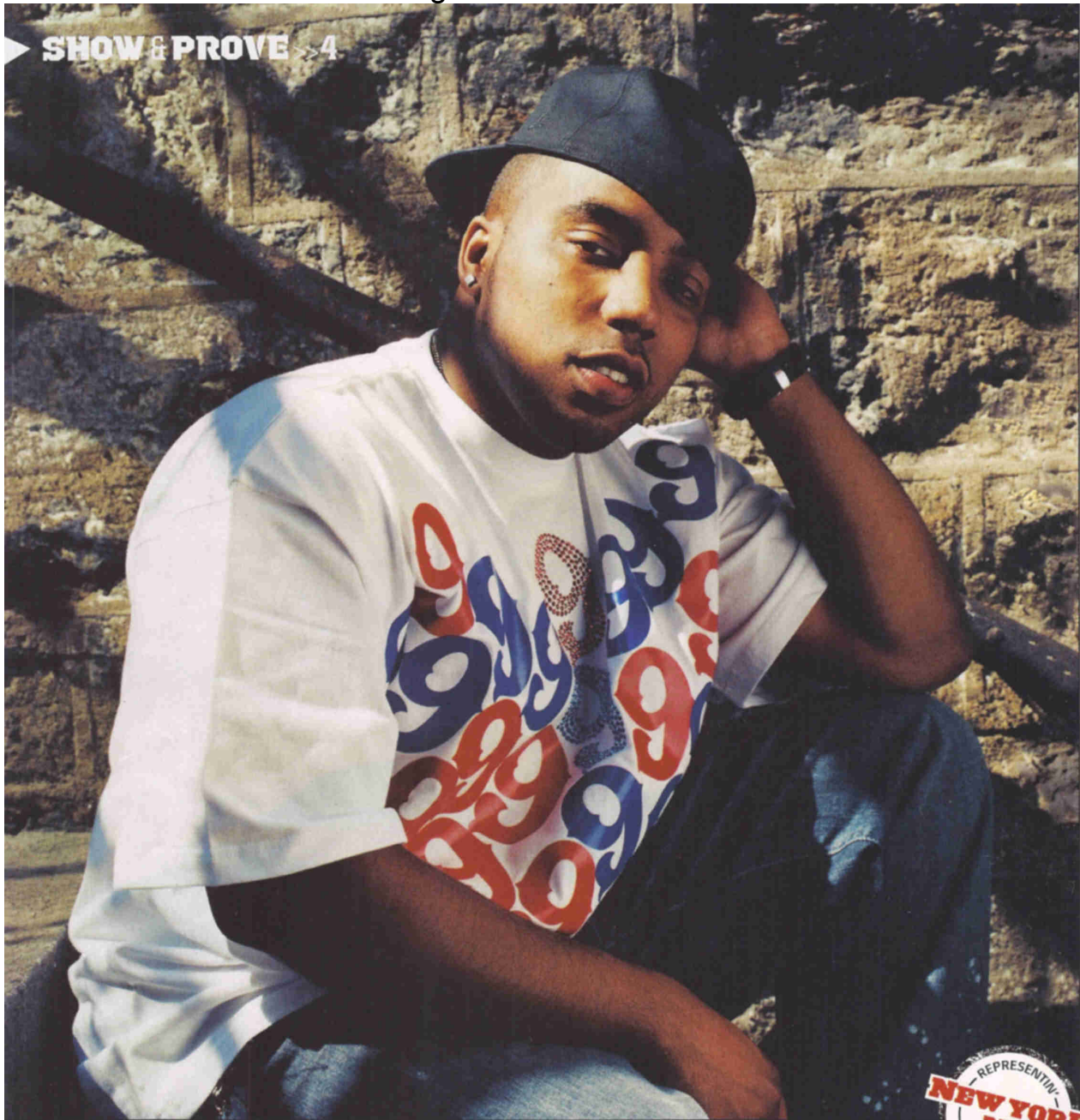


▶ **SHOW & PROVE** >> 4



## MIMS >> Welcome to New York City



**I**f Shawn Mims has his way, the Big Apple's bitter frown will soon turn upside down. "A lot of MCs talk about guns and violence, and then they want to go to clubs the same night and get the girls to side with them," says the 25-year-old Washington Heights native, whose party starter "This Is Why I'm Hot" is buzzing nationwide. "Girls don't [like] drive-by shootings. They want to sit in the club and pop bottles. I'm bringing that lavish side back to New York."

Surprisingly, Mims' positive vibe was inspired by tragedy. After learning of his absent father's experience as a DJ, an 8-year-old Mims begged his mother for a pair of turntables. On his 13th birthday, she finally broke down and bought him some basic equipment. Sadly, Mims' mother passed away that same year due to complications during the birth of his younger sister. "That hurdle made me to want to know what my life is about before I'm not around anymore," he says. "She was, and is, my inspiration."

Over the next six years, Mims taught himself how to record music. By the

time he was 19, "Love 'Em All," a song he co-wrote with Choclair, made its way onto Canadian radio. In 2004, the rap rookie released his first semi-hit, "I Did You Wrong," which received moderate spins and led to a spot touring alongside Method Man. Despite these early successes, though, label offers didn't come. "My teams weren't putting in work for me," he says. "I knew I was good enough, so it was time to do it alone."

This past summer, Mims went at it for delf and dropped "This Is Why I'm Hot" under his new company, American King Music. Now, the sparse club heater is serving as the first single off his upcoming debut, *M.I.M.S. (Music Is My Savior)*. Without releasing any big-name DJ-assisted mixtapes, Mims has taken an atypical approach to Rotten Apple acclaim. "I probably have more support in New York than most bigger artists have," he says. "They see that I'm doing this alone, and I'm all about bringing fun music back to the city. If my peers attack me for that, then I'll just have to accept the hate." —MATT BARONE