



HOUSE COMANCHE'S AUDIOVISUAL UNIVERSE

Florida studio sets underground music to its own playful vision

The great irony of the digital age, of course, is that we're all simultaneously more connected, and more isolated. We can find members of "our community" around the globe, yet never really know much more about them than what they have in common with us.

Local and national music scenes aren't immune from this dichotomous phenomenon. As fan groups grow into the millions on social media, more and more artists create alone with laptops and ring lights, releasing their music online independently and counting the clicks. The days of van tours and sweaty basement communion may never disappear completely, but in a world where it's often tough to get together for coffee with a friend IRL, the idea of a group of people committing to a regular rehearsal schedule, booking shows near and far, and investing money and energetic bandwidth—all for the joy of it rather than any guaranteed profit—can seem damn near impossible.

But in a little home on the outskirts of Tampa, Florida's so-hip-it-hurts Seminole Heights neighborhood, [House Comanche Productions](#) and a host of willing co-conspirators are fusing real-world DIY collaboration to everyone's obsession with oddball online video and creating their own MCU—a unique, provocative and playfully vulgar Musical Cinematic Universe populated by hip-hop cats, agitprop electropunks, digital bobbleheads, floating lips and uncategorizable singer-songwriters whose output careens from torch-folk to disco.

"I'm trying to build an interconnected world," says House Comanche director Derek Forrester. "There are recurring characters in the videos, it's this universe of weirdos. 'I'm trying to create something bigger than, 'oh, here's a video for this song.'"

It's all presented via a charming, instantly recognizable no-budget aesthetic that inspires visions of a young Tim Burton being given ten bucks and ten hours to build a set for *Pee-Wee's Playhouse* in a recently abandoned Chuck E. Cheese, along with maybe a pinch of cult-beloved '50s cartoon *Clutch Cargo*.

"I want it to be a whole weird community, maybe the artists who don't fit in with the usual, easily recognizable scenes," Forrester says.

“Weird” and “fun” are two words that come in a lot in conversation in Forrester about House Comanche, which tracks, given the endeavor’s origins: [Purr Purr Purr](#), the quirky hip-pop project spearheaded by Forrester’s wife, bandmate and creative partner, Shae Krispinsky. Krispinsky and Forrester’s rock bands (**Y Los Dos Pistoles**, [Navin Ave.](#)) have been lauded for their originality and literate earnestness, but Purr Purr Purr is, ahem, a completely different animal. The result of a friend challenging Krispinsky to make a dance record, Purr Purr Purr is a rap crew made up of anthropomorphized cats that sends up thuggy street-life cliches, landing sonically somewhere between Peaches’ nasty, grimy hooks and catchy, danceable pop-trap.

“I can’t remember which one of us suggested that we make it about cats,” Forrester says. “We’ve got cats and, you know, everybody does weird stuff about their pets.”

(There’s that word again.)

Purr Purr Purr’s concept and characters—Lady Shae-Shae, Purrminator X, Tabby Toughboi, DJ Scratching Post—were so visual, Forrester, an insurance adjuster by day, felt they needed to be seen beyond the act’s sporadic live shows. He called in some friends from the Tampa Bay music scene and shot the video for first single “I’m A Cat!” on his phone at the end of 2022, and House Comanche was born.

Since that hilarious, idiosyncratic no-budget introduction, House Comanche has continued to build on its MCU. “I’m A Cat!” was followed by Tabby Toughboi’s rough-and-tumble “I’m A Toughboi,” which features costumed appearances by a who’s who of local luminaries, including members of Dukes of Hillsborough, Radarmen, Same Day Delivery Orchestra, Tension Electric and others. Forrester’s recent video for rising Bay area post-punk duo [Tiger 54](#)’s song “Lip Service” also showcases instantly recognizable elements of House Comanche’s playful style, and the next Purr Purr Purr clip, “Genekelly Beanbelly,” is about a feral feline who makes a deal with the Devil to become a spoiled housecat, so you know that’s gonna be, well, weird.

“As an adult, you’re encouraged to lose the idea of play. But it’s vital to your growth as a human,” Forrester muses. “You’ve gotta continue to explore that. That’s where you learn and grow, where you find the next steps, through not being held down to strict guidelines.”

House Comanche has branched out visually as it’s grown and made videos for other artists, including genre-fluid singer-songwriter Jeremy Gloff and evocative Krispinsky-directed instrumental act Penumbra, Penumbra, whose “Adieu, Rose,” with its charming, stop-motion ghost ballet, is an inspired departure. The studio is also prepping an “En Suite” series of live performances by artists invited to play in the House Comanche bathroom, because “the acoustics are amazing.” A slate of infinitely more serious interviews with artists and performers on subjects like anxiety, addiction, trauma and mental illness as they relate to the creative process is in the works, as well.

Forrester and Krispinsky, who put long hours and hundreds of dollars of their own money into House Comanche videos, approaching friends and musicians they admire when it feels like a

good fit. They don't charge for their services (though Forrester is bullish on his vision, and final cut, if the House Comanche name is to be attached to the result); they'll be launching a Patreon channel in the near future to help cover production costs, and hopefully engender House Comanche Productions' transition from a playground they visit when time allows to a universe they can inhabit full-time.

"I want to make House Comanche into a resource for free video and free art stuff," says Forrester. "It's something that kind of encompasses the stuff about music and art, the sense of collaboration and creativity and fun, that originally drew me to it."

FOR MORE INFORMATION

scott@groundedear.com

[instagram.com/housecomancheproductions/](https://www.instagram.com/housecomancheproductions/)