

KANII BIO 2023

In his bedroom, Kanii learned how to turn his voice into magic. The 17-year-old, left of center artist and singer from Washington, D.C., who started out making music just feet from where he slept, spent his childhood dabbling in various recording software and capturing his preternaturally brilliant voice. With an alchemical combination of club rhythms, sticky pop melodies, and a post-everything approach to maximal electronic music, he's already shown his brilliance to millions around the world. He's had multiple songs on TikTok go viral, including the 2022 single "Attachment," which has more than 70,000 creates across multiple sounds and catapulted him from a word-of-mouth prospect to an artist major labels were fighting over. Masked Gorilla founder Roger Gengo loved "Attachment" and signed Kanii to his label, and now the singer/songwriter is ready to continue refining his craft. Of course, he has to finish high school first.

That's the *thing* about Kanii's music, it feels like it shouldn't be possible for music this fully realized to come out of someone who's just coming into their own as a human being. Still, he manages to pull together rhythmic influences from Jersey Club and melodic trap, which add glowing texture to his otherworldly vocals, blending the magnetism of The Weeknd with the urgency of homespun artists like Dijon. The bass on "Attachment" is clearly inspired by the Jersey Club renaissance, but Kanii uses the rhythm for so much more than trend hopping. His voice dances around the bass and hits like a boxer ducking and diving jabs as he croons about love and love lost, giving the song a unique and unstoppable momentum. His voice multiplies itself and jumps into a pool of Auto-Tune—an indication of maximalist inspirations from a life spent online—but the melodic roots songs like these go further back.

Kanii has a keen pop sense that nuzzles its way into each of his songs. That can be traced back to his childhood and growing up in a house full of music. "My grandfather would play the Temptations, a lot of Motown, the Jackson 5, all of that," he recalls. "My mom was more into pop music, and she listened to a lot of newer stars like Beyoncé."

This rich tradition of vocal excellence seeped into Kanii's songwriting, updating the sounds of classic stars for the online era. Listening to his favorites, Kanii took the logical next step and asked himself: *How can I do that?* "I started writing with my friends, and then when I was 12 I made my first actual song. I've just been doing it ever since—it's who I am," he explains.

As Kanii continues to explore more sonic territories, he's aiming to shake off the Jersey Club tag that's been haphazardly pinned to him. Sure, tracks like "Attachment" and "Companion" play with the popular style, but he wants to prove how much more he can do, all of the exciting places his mind goes when he sits down to write. "I don't want people to think that just because I blew up off these Jersey songs, that's what I'm going to be doing forever," he explains. "I never have the intention of trying to replicate someone's sound. I feel like I'm in my own lane and doing something unique."

With Kanii's forthcoming Masked Records/Warner Records debut, he wants to show how he's grown as an artist in the past year. "I'm just better lyrically, melodically, and rhythmically than ever before. I'm just so excited with where I'm going," he says. "Since I started making music, signing with a label has always been a stepping stone. I'm just excited for the future, to show what I can do."