

JUNE 28TH, 2025

VOL 18



THE AETHER ENTERTAINMENT

BOULEVARD 

TRUST AND
PERFECTIONISM
IN ROLEPLAY

WE'RE CELEBRATING!

PRIDE



20 
INTERVIEW WITH A FOXY DJ

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GET DOWN TONIGHT.

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PRISMATICA
DISCO FEVER

JULY 25TH, 2025

8PM AEST

RAVANA - LAVENDER BEDS WARD 11. PLOT 11

<https://jjammin.com/#prismatica>

Picnics & Performances at Cottontail Cafe

By: Odsar Tuva

Cottontail Cafe, a longstanding venue based out of Primal, Exodus, only recently began its summer picnic debut; however, I found time to visit their in-person location right before their summer relocation. A bright and cheery home awaited my visit, bustling with trinkets and bakery stands just to lead into their Scion-covered basement with a humble stage and bartop nestled in the back. A feast for the eyes and soon ears as various bards took time in the limelight.

I picked a spot at the far end of the bartop to get a better lay of the land. I was greeted by Rika Sasaki, one of the hostesses of Cottontail Cafe. We talked through the ambience over one of the simple Mors and Lemon muffins. Rika's service was speedy yet very delightful, talking about the overall plans for Cottontail Cafe—more so the plans for the summer season, and we got to know each other in the meantime.



Cottontail Cafe's summer picnics aren't something to shake your finger at; they're bustling just as much as during their normal hours! The cafe is hosted out of their own FC's front lawn in Shirogane, and only recently had the quickly

growing Rage Against the Magitek playing opening night of the season, alongside up and coming A Realm Reborn. I've yet to make my way up to one of these summer picnics, but it is on my personal list to cover. However, the picnics are a hit amongst their patrons, and are some of the busiest nights.

The food service during my visit was very speedy and pleasant as Rika was attentive to not only my order, but the others around me as well! Though most were either tuned in on their own dates or the bards they had on stage at the moment, Rika always made sure she had her attention on everyone's needs. While we were talking, I mentioned how well the decor and stages were set up, making it easy to just turn in your seat and see everything! Cottontail Cafe is a good launching-off spot for bards to showcase their skills, both instrumental-wise and vocally if they so chose, which is always a nice presence to have with smaller venues.

Though I'd have liked to stay longer during my visit, I was whisked away on other obligations. I made a promise to share the venue with those around me, and one could say I'm doing such here! Overall, I do think I'd give this venue a good solid 9/10 loporrit, as they seemed to make their home very well as...security on the upstairs portions, whether or not they were invited there by the owners or someone else. If you're looking for more of a laid

back roleplay experience and happen to be in Exodus, I would highly recommend checking it out for yourself! My only real gripe is that I feel there could've been more staff overall at that time; however, I only came on one day, so it's possible other staff were out at the time. The hostess was an absolute pleasure to talk to and bounce off of in terms of conversation, and the snacks were top tier for as humble of a cafe as Cottontail is.

So, what now? As I stated, Cottontail Cafe has begun their summer picnic season, a nice outdoor seating with several bard groups making their way onto the stage every opening. The fresh sea air off of Shirogane beats the balmy air of their Mist location and the sights are enough to make me want to visit for that alone. Being a later-night venue is a plus, as I feel it's the prime time for a more relaxing and wind down era for those just getting off work or looking for something to fill the air while the clubs start to creep open. If you get a free Wednesday or Sunday night, I would highly recommend Cottontail Cafe, and give Rika Sasaki and the rest of the team there plenty of praise; they very much deserve it!



EORZEA'S GREATEST FIGHT

By Lily Lilar

A cage can represent many things. To some, it is a simple structure composed of cruel steel bars and the whispers of regret.

For the combatants of Eorzea's Greatest Fighter, a cage only means one thing: a chance to duke it out for the coveted title of "Lord of the cage". Blood sport enthusiasts gathered within the Wanderer's Respite with an appetite for action.



At the call of the announcer, Wesliaux Belletont, the contenders faced off. Lisoux, the "Snow Wolf," loomed over Ryoku, the "Silent Fang"—an imposing threat. At the bell, Ryoku darted forward, faking a right hook before landing a knee-kick followed by an elbow jab. Lisoux dodged a kidney strike, but endured the flurry of kicks as Ryoku chased him to the ring's center. Annoyed by the Fang's tail smacking his knee, Lisoux grabbed it and muttered profanities about "ankle biters." Fueled by anger and red aether, the Snow Wolf surged forward, sword leading the charge. With her tail captive, Ryoku took a slash to her side, blood spilling. She pivoted and delivered a dropkick to Lisoux's face, sending him crashing into the cage bars. The punishment only seemed to stoke his anger as he hurled himself up and jumped to the roof of the cage, using the bars to propel down with swords screaming as they tore through the air.

The blades ripped through Ryoku's back armor, exposing a potential source of power in the form of an eye-catching intricate seal. The Raen winced as she willed the Seal to empower her. It answered, emitting a strange and almost

sickly green vibrance before swirls of green mist coursed through her. Renewed with a higher focus, the Fang dashed around the Wolf and sneakily grabbed onto his cape, the scene reminiscent of an angry child tugging at the apron of a frustrated mother. The Wolf began to stumble, but he wasn't going to go down alone, and snagged a fistful of hair, yanking her down to join him on the mat, face first. The move would not be enough to secure a win; as the bell signaled the end, all points totaled to a win for The Silent Fang.

The crowd roared for more. Laraya sauntered into the ring next, fist-bumping Akiko, the next combatant, in good sport.

As the bell rang, Akiko sprang forward, wind propelling her into a spiraling attack. Her twin blades became four, spreading like a Zu's tail feathers, slashing as they zipped past. Laraya dodged, planting a boot on Akiko's back, but Akiko's floating swords slashed again, drawing blood. Laraya blocked, sacrificing unscathed arms for deep cuts, but stood firm. She countered with a body slam.

Undeterred, Akiko launched a fiery beam that singed Laraya's forearms. Laraya quipped they had not requested a hair removal service before she charged again with a fist, threatening to break her opponent. Akiko cast a slowing spell, making Laraya's fist as sluggish as a Chocobo stuck in tar. Seizing the moment, Akiko delivered an aether-charged kick to Laraya's ribs, followed by a flipping strike. Laraya lunged again but was stopped by a screeching aetheric wave, knocking her off balance. Realizing Akiko's magic outmatched her brute strength, Laraya admitted defeat, displaying true sportsmanship.



HTER: LORD OF THE CAGE

At last, as the dust settled, it was time for the final match. The Silent Fang would stand off against Akiko.

Akiko's dancing swords floated behind her, their metal flashing with warning. The Silent Fang prepared by summoning the powers of her seal's two gates. At the beckoning of the bell, Fang drove herself forward to strike her opponent square in the chest. However, clever Akiko hurled herself into a side twister aerobic spin to evade. Keeping the velocity of her fancy footwork, Akiko spun herself off the ground like a deadly ballerina and offered a spinning kick right to Fang's head.

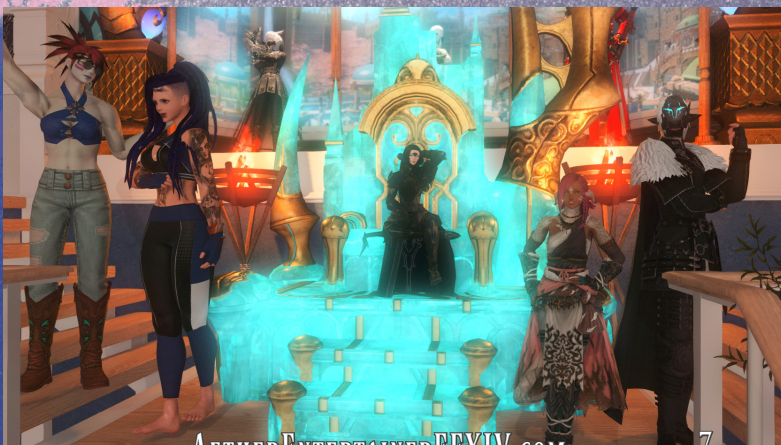


Just when it looked like boot would meet mouth, Fang parried the kick. Not feeling the sting of defeat just yet, Akiko flipped away while launching her swords. They cut through the air before meeting flesh, lashing the opponent. Ryoku decided to turn Akiko's own weapon against her and snatched one of the swords, impaling the mat before using its hilt as a launching pad for an aerial-based attack. The Fang spiraled through the air, aiming to punch her way to victory while implementing the Third Gate energy. She managed to land a powerful blow to Akiko's ribcage.

Akiko, damaged but not done, willed up a flare of aether to surround her before she implemented a burst of wind to navigate away to safety. She summoned a blast flare spell in hopes of sending it to ignite her opponent. The fiery explosion engulfed Ryoku, leaving her scorched, but standing. Determined, she charged Akiko, fists flying in a relentless exchange of strikes.

The clash was a whirlwind of blades, fists, and fury until Akiko broke away, using wind magic to ricochet back. Her kick slammed Ryoku into the cage bars. Ryoku retaliated with a powerful kick of her own—blow for blow, determination unyielding. But Akiko, her aura blazing, unleashed a surge of aetheric energy. Swords quivered behind her as she summoned a fiery beam aimed straight at Ryoku. The monk countered by summoning the Sixth Gate, shielding herself as flames consumed her. When the fire faded, Ryoku stood—charred and toasty but unbroken. Akiko wasted no time. She forged her blades into a massive aetheric weapon, delivering a final strike that flung Ryoku against the cage bars once more. The gates failed, and Ryoku succumbed to darkness.

Akiko stood triumphant—the Lord of the Cage. Medics tended to the fallen fighter as the crowd erupted in cheers. Akiko took her place as champion, the chants of her name echoing through the arena. Bravery and cunning marked every battle, but tonight, only one reigned supreme.



The Wanderer's Respite



chiqui creates

By: Kuro Whulu

Hello everyone and welcome back to another edition of Kuro's Merch Corner! Do I really need to give a rundown on what to expect in this article now? I don't think so! Let's just get to what you are all here for, shall we?

This month, we head back to Etsy to a shop that can only be described as gorgeous. I am not kidding that when I first came to this shop, and saw some of the designs in it, I gasped a little. Everything in Chiqui Creates is...well...creative, but also beautiful in their execution. From mugs to shirts, hoodies to keychains, to custom tote bags and cups, there is definitely something for everyone in this shop! I hope your wallet can handle it!

Enough of all that, though! You don't want to hear from me all day, do you? Nope! You came here to hear from the owner and creative mind behind the shop! So, everyone, say hello to Athena, fellow Warrior of Light, and hear what she has to say about her own creative corner!

Kuro: How did you first get into FFXIV, and what made you decide to make merch for it?

Athena: My sister mentioned FFXIV to me once or twice (she's been an active player since Heavensward) but, no joke, I finally decided to try FFXIV because of the free trial meme. I had been making merch of other games that interested me at that time, so I figured why not add FFXIV to my offerings!

Kuro: What is your creative process like when you are thinking up and crafting your items? Do you have a certain ritual you do to get you into the "creative zone"?

Athena: I usually just draw things that interest me, to be honest! That's why a lot of merch you see on my Etsy are of healers, since I am a healer, but I do try to expand to other jobs as well. I also do custom designs because I know the awesome feeling of having merch speci-

cally of my WoL, and I wanted others to have something special and custom just for them as well.

When looking for inspiration, I look at screenshots, official art, etc. and they get me plenty inspired! I also do several warm-up sketches beforehand, it helps to loosen up my drawing hand, and also I do get some cool ideas while sketching.

Kuro: Now you have a lot of cool stuff on your store from shirts to bags to mugs to art prints to wallets! There is just so much awesome! Do you have a certain product that you are most proud about and love?

Athena: Thank you! I'm super proud of my gold foil prints, especially my Seat of Azem one. I really like to think I popped off when I designed this.





Kuro: Do you have any plans to further your expand your merch and, if so, do you wanna give a sneak peek of those ideas!?

Athena: I haven't been able to design merch much recently because of time constraints, but I've had a Sage Tree of Life-inspired foil print design in the works for the longest time ever since I started maining Sage a bit more. Here's my rough sketch for it!



Kuro: Is there anyone you would like to shout out who helped you throughout this endeavor? Now is the time!

Athena: Shout-out to my sister who got me into the game! And to whoever first made that critically acclaimed meme!

As you can see, Athena is a woman of few words, but when your work is as good as hers is, you don't need fancy words to sell people on your items! Seriously, look at just the rough sketch for her next design. Even just that pops off the page and looks like something that A LOT of people are going to want to add to their own nerdy little collections!



Speaking of which, you can bet your bottom dollar that I will be adding some of her items to my own collection someday soon! That custom WOL tote bag just calls my name!

Until that time though, this has been Kuro and I hope you have enjoyed your visit to my little Merch Corner! See you all again next time!

Spend away, my friends, spend away!

Etsy - Chiqui Creates

Etsy - Chiqui Creates

Website

Instagram

AETHERENTERTAINERFFXIV.COM

Dear LGBTQAI+ Family: We LOVE You!

By: Lily Lilari

Hello Reader! Lily Lilari here, stepping outside of my cozy box to break through the wall. Normally, I am tethered to the whimsical, adventure-filled realm of Eorzea, but this message leads me to shatter my typically Migo-centric self so that I can be absolutely transparent to you. Because this message is important. Are you listening, friend? Get cozy. It can be an ugly world out there, outside of Eorzea. People may try to tell you that something is wrong with you. "Stay straight in a line, little duck. Straight in a line." Or is it straight in a lie? Love should not be hidden away, as if it is some unseemly stain that just won't be scrubbed out. Love is beautiful. It blossoms through our chest and ignites our veins. It makes us draw all the air into our lungs only to release it again in a shattering cry of desire, ecstasy, or longing. It gives us a reason to visit that one coffee shop, even if you don't like coffee. It makes us run towards the unknown, in hopes of finding that other soul that makes us feel like we are home. It makes us beg for the time to slow down until it barely ticks by, just so we can savor the feeling of those fingertips intertwining with our own. The way your heart flutters when you see them, that one special face in the crowd. Love drives us all to bliss as much as it pummels us down into dizzying confusion. Love is universal. It is worthy of celebration. And you, dear one, are worthy of that celebration, too.

Here in Eorzea—within its vibrant communities and right here at The Aether Entertainer—you are cherished. You are embraced. You are loved. Take this as a promise: you will always have a place here. In our cities, in our fields, in the skies of our adventures—your love matters. We see you. We stand with you. And when the

world feels too heavy, remember, you are not alone. Your love is lovely. So hold your head high and your heart even higher. Relish in the fact that you are seen, celebrated, and adored. Because we love you, and we are proud of you. Always. And if you're ever in doubt, just look up. The stars in Eorzea's skies shine just as brightly for you as they do for anyone else. They remind us that no matter how far apart we may feel, we are all under the same endless expanse of wonder and hope. So go, love boldly and live freely. You are extraordinary, and this world is better for having you in it.

"Let your heart spill over...with love.
Even when hatred litters the streets.
Let your heart spill over...with endurance
Even when their rocks try to shatter you.
Let your heart spill over...with pride.
Even when they point in shame.
Let your heart spill over...with all of ours.
Because our love cannot and will not be contained." By Lily Lilari.



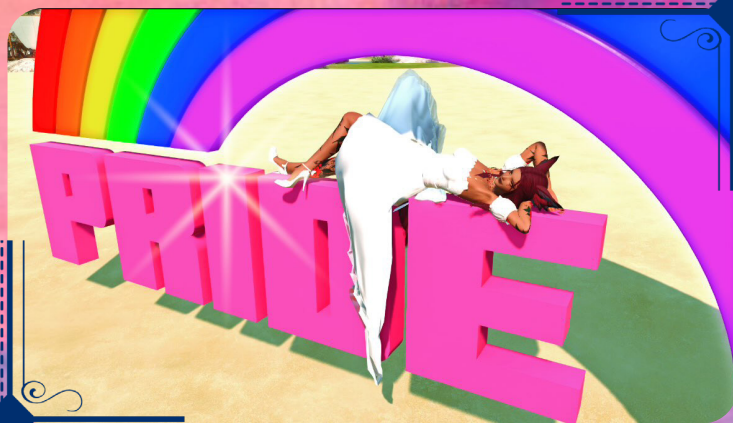
"We believe in celebrating every identity. The LGBTQAI+ community has always been a vital part of Eorzea's creative and cultural landscape, and we are proud to uplift and stand with them. AE will always be a home for expression without fear, and celebration without condition." -Scarletta Vendetta, Editor-in-Chief of The Aether Entertainer



"In times of fracture, unity is radical. When the world builds walls, we build bridges. Queerness is our rebellion, and kindness is our revolution. Boundaries are sacred but understanding and discovery is how we rise-together." -Koreina Sitnalta, Owner of Degen Magazine & Glitch



"No matter who you are or what you like, there is a right place for you. If your actual environment can't appreciate you, it's not you who is wrong, your environment is. Go find the place you own and don't stick to where you're laughed at." -Eveli Harakawa, Owner of Cheshire Cat Club



"Our world is not black and white, but when others try to make it be that way... it is up to all of us to show our colors. Let our most vibrant, brilliant and blindingly bright colors erupt from within us! The more of us that shout out 'we are PROUD of who we are,' the more we can drown out the voices of hate." Luxi Luv, Degen Magazine Writer

"Life is too short to be anyone but yourself." - Lux Amoria, random but adorable Hrothgar adventurer



A FOXY FREQUENCY

THE RISE OF DJ TWO POINTZERO

Before DJ Two Pointzero was spinning EDM sets across Eorzea and amassing thousands of Twitch followers, she was playing rock music on an indie radio station and mixing tracks in her apartment for friends. Her path to becoming one of the most beloved and recognizable DJs in the scene wasn't a straight line, but a beautiful journey shaped by happenstance and a deep love of music. Known for her foxy persona and playful energy, we're proud to feature DJ Two Pointzero, who has become a paragon of representation for trans creators and the greater LGBTQ+ community within Final Fantasy XIV.

In this interview, we dig into where it all started, her inspirations, and how she's turned late-night virtual parties into a powerful platform for fun, connection, and promoting good.

Vendetta: I read that you've worked as both an FM radio host and an electronic music producer in the past. Can you talk about those experiences? How did you end up getting started as a Twitch DJ?

Two Pointzero: Whoa! Buckle up, this will be a bit long! Time for some true 2.0 backstory then...

I started as an FM host during college for a local rock station on the graveyard shift! I was attending university for a meteorology degree. I love music, but I was overly eager to read the weather on air! Being a DJ didn't really click in my brain just yet, but this definitely set me down my path.

I dropped out of college due to financial issues and left the station. I was on my own with no family support, but I didn't really push myself as hard as I could have. If any of you are out there struggling with this, I feel you. But don't give up - **KNOWLEDGE IS POWERFUL!** While I am very happy with how things turned out in my life, I wish I had finished my degree.

WRITTEN BY: SCARLETTA VENDETTA



I started to produce electronic music around 2010, not long after a friend made me listen to deadmau5's 'strobe' and 'I remember' for the very first time. Those two tracks completely changed how I viewed electronic music and awakened something new within me. Up until then, I was very single-mindedly listening to indie and emo rock.

Before I knew what was happening, I was downloading fruity loops aka FL studio (a software for making electronic music) and purchased a Numark Mixtrack Pro and drunkenly mixing DJ sets in my tiny apartment with friends. I never really had any ambition to go further than that though. I produced about 20 or so mediocre tracks and DJ'd a bunch, but always just for fun.



I'D LIKE TO THINK IT STILL COMES DOWN TO THAT TODAY. JUST PUTTING ON SOME TUNES FOR FRIENDS AND HAVING A GREAT TIME.

~

Eventually, I had to get serious with my life which led to me quitting that lifestyle to focus on my career. **VERY** long story short, life throws wrenches at you. Six or so years pass and I find myself on FFXIV during the lockdowns of the pandemic!

Turns out Eorzeans are living life to the fullest and throwing parties in their virtual houses!

I spent a good year or so venue hopping with friends which reignited my passion for music and EDM. Life was stable now and I had nothing to lose, so I decided to jump onto Twitch and start throwing some parties at my own house in FFXIV.

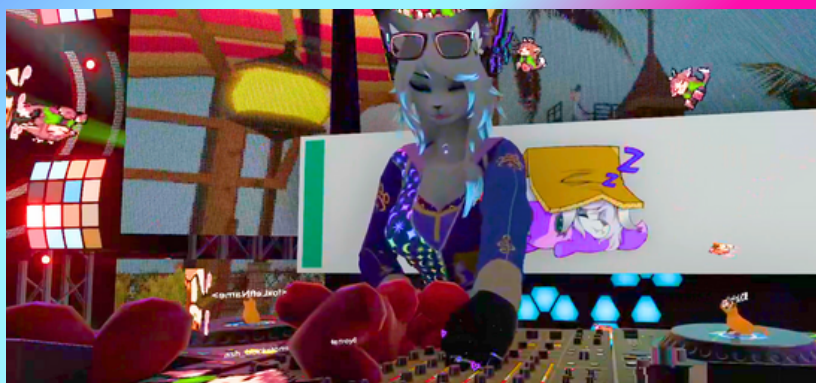
Vendetta: Who are your biggest musical influences; either from the real world or the FFXIV scene?

TwoPointzero: Currently, artists like deadmau5 and No Mana are huge inspirations to me. They make some of my favorite music, but they also create their own visuals for performances too, which is a big inspiration for how I am presenting my DJ act on Twitch.

People in the community that inspire me to do more though; Ryza Eclipse and Limit Break. They helped so much early on, not to mention they were **THE** FFXIV DJs that reignited that DJ spark in me.

Ryza always brings her best. Everytime she hits the decks, you know it's going to be a good time. And Limit Break is really big on helping the new DJs out and bringing the community together in ways no one else has done before. Djay YAMS also very much inspires me to be a better Twitch streamer; to be genuine and positive, let my personality overflow, be engaged with the community, and just have a ton of fun! He really showed me that it's okay to just have fun with it, chat, and be a party clown. **I LOVE THAT!**

Vendetta: What was your first DJ set like in FFXIV? How does it compare to your streams now?



TwoPointzero: First DJ set in FFXIV was in a discord call with friends at my house in game. Just playing random stuff late, late at night.

Back then the venues usually all closed by 11pm or 12am, but my friends wanted to keep it going... So what else is a DJ going to do? And that's what started this whole journey. So I'd say the biggest difference to me now is the audience. Being a DJ on Twitch was never the plan... It just sort of happened.

Vendetta: You've got over 8,000 Twitch followers now, did you ever imagine your DJ journey would reach this level?

TwoPointzero: No! Nope! This was not on my bingo card! What the heck!? Where did the past 3 years go!?! I am tremendously grateful that there are people out there who enjoy hanging out and listening to music as much as I do! I'm even more grateful when I inspire others to pursue their own creative outlets. Life would be boring without creativity!

Vendetta: What's the most meaningful message or feedback you've ever received?

TwoPointzero: Viewers have told me how sometimes I just choose the perfect music to help them escape or get them through a difficult time. Others have shared with me how I've also reignited their passion for music and to pick up DJing or jump into streaming too.

And then there's the trans members of the community that have confided in me about how I've helped them feel more confident in their identity and expressing themselves freely.

Vendetta: Do you still produce your own tracks and would you ever debut original music live on stream?

TwoPointzero: I do and I have! I am looking forward to producing a few new remixes and originals by the end of the year. I'd link it, but I'm kinda in a funky spot where I just decided to stop posting on my soundcloud due to their terms of service changes related to AI training.

Vendetta: As one of the most visible trans DJs in the FFXIV scene, what has that visibility meant for you personally?

TwoPointzero: You know, there's a lot of anti-trans sentiment out there in the real world. The FFXIV scene has offered me an escape from that reality, and I cannot fully express how important it has been for me; regardless of the streaming or DJ stuff. Thank you from the bottom of my foxy heart to this community for accepting me.

Big example; I was insanely nervous to bring my voice on stream for the first time. I really do not like my own voice, and I thought that this would scare people away, but I could not have been any more wrong about that. And if you're a trans streamer, it's important to be confident and visible! It's an incredible to free yourself of the self-doubting thoughts in the back of your head and just let your personality shine.





Vendetta: Tell us about your fursona! How did you come to choose a fox?

TwoPointzero: I didn't choose fox, fox chose me! Anytime there's an option to be a fox, I just naturally gravitated toward it. Perhaps there's deeper meaning to it I'm subconsciously aware of, but for me there wasn't much thought behind it. I just am fox, through and through!

Vendetta: You've raised support for impactful causes like Starlight.org and the Hurricane Relief Fund. What drives you to use your platform for charity? How do you choose which causes to support?

TwoPointzero: I've always loved volunteering IRL for organizations like Ronald McDonald House. I would go there after school every week to help out.

I'm always surprised by the overwhelming generosity. Sometimes the organizations reach out to me like Starlight, and other times it's more personal like for Trans Lifeline who helps Trans folks during these difficult times.

Vendetta: Thanks again for taking the time out to do this interview. Do you have any upcoming collaborations, events, or projects you're excited to share?

TwoPointzero: *Existence is Resistance!* This was an event hosted on Twitch benefitting Trans Lifeline that ran from June 18 to 22nd by many awesome streamers. You can donate to the cause [HERE](#).

Vendetta: Last question. Is a hot dog a sandwich?

TwoPointzero: *Is hotdog water meat tea? You decide!*



DYNAMIS - KRAKEN

EMPYREUM - WARD 12 - PLOT 30

12M -
4AM

SUNDAYS

12M -
4AM

FRIDAYS



CLUB INFINITY



BIBBY'S SECRET



COMING
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SUMMER 2025



BOULEVARD KWEH

Boulevard Kweh is a lovingly chaotic and razor-sharp parody of the Tony Award-winning musical Avenue Q, reimagined with an Eorzean lens. The show was performed live in-game on May 31st and June 1st, 2025 and broadcast via Twitch. Presented by JJ Productions, this show was objectively impressive, both in concept and execution.

JJ Productions is no stranger to ambitious projects. Their other presentations such as Hairspray, the Materia Halloween Special, and JJ Airlines have all left their mark on the community, but Boulevard Kweh may be their most polished and moving work to date.

Boulevard Kweh takes the story of a young adult seeking direction on the streets of New York and transforms it into one centered around a newly minted adventurer navigating the absurdities of Eorzean life. The protagonist, Princeton, played by the talented Bobo La'boba grapples with the frustrations of having a Blue Mage job stone and laments the struggles of the Party Finder; every beat infused with uncanny accuracy and the humor of a satire that speaks fluently in the language of Final Fantasy XIV.

A Riotous Eorzean Parody That Stuck the Landing



BALMUNG QUICK

BOU

GOLD SAU



The humor was biting and at times absurd, but it never sacrificed character depth or emotional impact. Even familiar show tunes felt new when filtered through the lens of free company drama, gil struggles, and server culture. The script kept the soul of Avenue Q intact; exploring purpose, relationships, and identity while completely rebuilding the setting and context for Final Fantasy XIV.

Like most JJ performances, Boulevard Kweh is heavily steeped in the culture of the Materia data center. As such, each musical number was stuffed with inside jokes, lore bits, and clever rewrites. Many of the parody lyrics felt like a nod to someone's real experience in-game, and that made the show deeply immersive for a FFXIV player. There were cracks about fantasia overuse, glamour addiction, gpose obsession, raiding burnout, and at one point they were even belting "The Party Finder's For Porn!" ... and yes, it was every bit as accurate as it was hilarious. Boulevard Kweh struck the perfect balance of comedy and sincerity, with sharp writing and a cast of incredible talent.

The cast, which was made up entirely of XIV players, delivered surprisingly strong performances across the board. From powerhouse solos to well-timed duets and



ensemble numbers, the singing and voice acting was genuinely impressive. Every line was delivered with personality, comedic timing, and a clear love for musical theater. As a viewer, it's easy to forget you're watching an unofficial fan show because this felt like something you could easily see at a local theater or, quite frankly, pay real money to attend.

Despite its adult themes and coarse language, Boulevard Kweh approached its edgier material with intention and sensitivity. The team provided a clear disclaimer noting that while some jokes remained for narrative authenticity, they did not reflect the values of the cast or crew. It was a smart, necessary reminder that satire isn't endorsement and a respectful way to handle the more controversial legacy of Avenue Q.

The show even broke the fourth wall in delightful ways, including a reference to our very own magazine, which we were both shocked and thrilled to see called out mid-performance!

Even new additions, like the infamous Bad Idea Chocobos, were creative twists that gave the show its own identity while paying homage to the original. The writers knew when to lean into FFXIV tropes and when to pull back for emotional weight, making the parody funny and extremely relatable.

Boulevard Kweh is everything a fan parody should be; smart, hilarious, self-aware, relevant, and deeply respectful of its source material. This production felt like a love letter to the Final Fantasy XIV community, told through the universal language of musical theater. Boulevard Kweh delivers a night of musical madness that's as hilarious as it is unexpectedly moving. The incredible talent, and sheer heart behind the show make it, in my opinion, one of Eorzea's most standout theater experiences ever.

KSANDS

LEVARD

CER





There's a special corner of Eorzea nestled in a basement on Faerie where, instead of the usual crowd of Viera and Miqo'te, you'll find wall to wall Roegadyn Cand Hrothgar, muscled and bearded and handsome as you like. Kodiak is a special kind of club, one that caters to bears, cubs, the enjoyers of both, or folks just looking for a judgement free space to enjoy their night. Few places have captivated me the way Kodiak has, where I always feel comfortable and the vibes are immaculate. Little did I know this place would be a source of comfort when I first entered their unassuming doors.

I was lucky enough to sit down with the founder Ezeny (formerly Aizirni), also affectionately known as "Papa Bear", and ask him about this special venue and its role in creating a positive platform within the FFXIV community.



Q: So how did Kodiak come about in the first place?

A: Kodiak came about the way most of my in-game projects do: I knew it would make my members happy. I am the FC leader of Bears of Faerie <BEAR> first and foremost; my Cubs always come first in my XIV priorities. While not every male Hrothgar or Roegadyn is a queer Bear, there is a natural affinity. Bears, and those who love them, often gravitate toward those races. I call it "art imitating life." Many, if not most, of my Cubs enjoy the social aspect of the game. Yet there are few venues that center Hroths and Roes, and by extension, Bear culture. So I made Kodiak for them.

Q: Despite being Bear-focused, Kodiak attracts folks from across the LGBTQ+ spectrum. What's it been like building such a diverse community?

A: It has been a blast, and a beautiful exercise in growth. The Bear movement began as a space where gay men who did not fit the idealized image of gay beauty—chubby, furry, everyday men—could gather and feel not only accepted, but celebrated. That circle expanded over time to include those who were drawn to Bearish men, and eventually it widened even further. At its heart, it has always centered body positivity and affirmation. If you are cool with Bears, we are cool with you.

CLICK HERE FOR THE CARRO!



Q: A lot of venues come and go. What do you think has been the secret to Kodiak's staying power?

A: There are several reasons Kodiak has endured, and they all go back to its foundation. I created Kodiak for my Bears and Cubs, and they are the ones who run it. Every member of the staff is part of <BEAR>, and that creates a strong sense of personal investment. I do not worry about hiring, attendance, or interpersonal drama, because <BEAR> is a family. In fact, I have only one DJ, Jay Sylverheart. He's our resident DJ in the truest sense because he's a literal resident. He's one of my Officers. We get along, we cover for each other, and we communicate. Kodiak exists in our FC house; it is home. Our patrons are not just clients; they are our friends. As long as my Cubs and their friends are having fun, that is what matters most.



Q: Back in November, you offered a lot of us comfort in a very dark moment, which meant a lot to me and I'm sure many others. Did you ever think you would use the venue space for activism?



A: It was never my original intention, but I believe it was inevitable. I have been an LGBTQ civil rights activist for over 30 years. In the 1990s, I was deeply involved in ACT UP, the Empire State Pride Agenda, and GMHC, and I remain as active as I can be given the demands of life. My lived experience has taught me that queer people do not have the luxury of being apolitical. Political apathy is a privilege for those whose civil rights, whose very personhood, are not under constant threat by legislation rooted in partisan agendas. I have raised my voice in defense of our people for three decades, but one voice alone can be drowned out. We need a chorus. So I take it upon myself not only to motivate, but to support, nurture, and comfort. As a Gen-Xer, I remember when the movement fell hard on our shoulders; we spent the 1980s and 90s burying our mentors and elders. Today's Millennials and Gen Zers have me, and I will continue to stand with them, with all the strength I have.



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TRUST AND PERFECTIONISM IN ROLEPLAY - EDITORIAL

By: Nirzhi Baskal



Roleplay in FFXIV requires a balance of in-character work, communication, finesse, and dedication. After almost two years of serious, constant roleplay, I've picked up on some of the underlying issues that become evident once you entrench yourself deep enough. In this article, I'm going to focus on the concept of 'trust' and how it can be challenged by 'perfectionism' in role play. Trust, in this context, means being able to portray a character as flawed, complicated, and biased and expecting that others will understand and accept those flaws as part of the story.

RP Lite	Characters are not often 'in character' and you may go as yourself and sit in a cute bar and talk about in real life work with friends.
Heavy RP	You play a character grounded in the lore of FFXIV and are completely separate from in real life.
Immersive RP	Similar to above, but without the grounded nature of the lore; you are merely playing a character.

** In the topic of trust, we will not go over RP lite because it is non applicable. This topic will only be relevant to the other types of roleplay.*

Behind every great RP story there's an arc, character growth, and a structure that helps everything come together. But whether it follows a classic arc like the Hero's Journey, Freytag's pyramid, or unfolds naturally over time, every good roleplay depends on trust and collaboration with RP partners. While some lighter forms of roleplay may not use these structures, there are role-

players who want their characters to grow, for the story to progress, and for some kind of conclusion to eventually be reached.

For these kinds of stories to take shape, there needs to be trust between players. I need to be able to trust you to interpret my character's actions as flawed or incorrect as well as understand that I know my character is not

perfect or unproblematic. And you need to trust that I have a reason behind those flawed actions and a plan to address them later; that I do not see my character as perfect, and that I don't want them to be.

When this trust is present, characters can remain flawed and incomplete for weeks, months, even a year and still experience meaningful, developmental roleplay. That's because both players know that things will

unfold in time, without needing to worry about OOC misunderstandings or negative reactions. If a character screams at another, hates them, fights them, there is that trust that they will later come around and apologize, or grow past the confrontation.

When this trust is not present, characters languish unfulfilled because they are not allowed to develop, and the plot arc that the player is aiming for is never able to come to fruition. This is disheartening at best and crushing at worst.

Of course, constant OOC communication can unintentionally seem crushing or even feel discouraging over time. That's why there also needs to be trust that if a genuine issue arises, it will be communicated about. Once that is established, regular check-ins aren't necessary unless there's been a particularly emotional or intense scene - not every day.

In practice, this means that a character with communication issues and a cold, distant exterior - *someone who rarely speaks unless spoken to* - can gradually flourish over the course of a year into a valued member of the team. And yes, I really do mean *a year*. We hardcore roleplayers that are in these plots for the long haul, and when this level of trust is established, we are able to keep riding the train of plot and growth for as long as it will go.

Nothing is more important than communication. Unfortunately, sometimes trust can be misunderstood, assumed when it's not there, or completely lost. When that happens, the more problematic parts of a character are often unfairly taken as a reflection of the player's out-of-character (OOC) views. I will highlight a real scenario to help clarify the issue.

We communicated that our characters, who got off on a severely wrong foot, were allowed to heckle and mock each other. That these characters could harass each other because it suited their personalities and the situation. This progressed over the course of a few sessions, characters slightly warming up to each other, until one character slighted the other and the session ended poorly in-character.



"Trust" did not exist between me and the other person, so instead of the expectation that we would smooth things over in character (IC) later, the person cut contact with me and ended roleplay entirely. This was in spite of my out-of-character (OOC) communications. I did not roleplay with new people for some time, feeling the whiplash of communicating one thing and receiving another.

I suspect that these occurrences are not as rare as we would hope. I suspect that the reason that these happen are out of the pursuit of perfection. We want only 'good' things to happen to our characters (or specifically curated bad things) and we want to be in control of what happens at all times: **a lack of trust.**



Some people go into roleplay expecting their characters to be treated with nothing but kindness and reverence. This could be a reasonable expectation when venue hopping, but if you join a group where there is plot and character growth, you should prepare yourself for at least one character to not like yours. It is realistic, and it is that realism that some roleplayers are aiming to achieve. Also, if your expectation is to have a perfect and powerful character, then immersive and heavy roleplay may leave you disappointed. There is no perfection in the immersive RP world of FFXIV because it is a reflection of our own imperfect and flawed world. One could say such acceptance of the imperfect is imperative, and even suggested by the themes of the Endwalker expansion.

The ultimate fulfillment in roleplay: connections. It is important that you set the foundation of a good relationship with your RP partner(s) so that your story can flourish and grow. To reach this point, you have to accept imperfection, growing pains, and open yourself up to relying on the people you're building the story with.

Allow your character to be flawed and accept that sometimes others will have the upper hand. It is this realism that some roleplayers are aiming to achieve! There will be no perfection in the world of FFXIV, because it is a reflection of our own flawed reality. One could say such acceptance of the imperfect is imperative, and even suggested by the themes of the Endwalker expansion.

I have observed that trust between players is generally lost in the current roleplay environment. People hop venues, people have one off connections, where you talk to a person one day but never reach out again. I couldn't tell you why things are this way, but I feel that if a scene isn't *unproblematic* people won't continue the story, and I suspect that this lack of knowledge about *'trust'* between roleplay partners plays a bit of a role too.



As I surge forth with my own problematic, imperfect characters in search of those few people I can involve my story with, it is my hope that anyone reading this can consider the idea of *'trust'* in their own roleplay and apply it to current and future RP relationships. It is extremely fulfilling to have a plot arc develop, wind up for a year, and then deliver with multiple parties witness.

Patience, communication, acceptance, and 'trust'



Characters are Raevyn, Vaughn, Irida, and Cyrus (Koneko clan, the latter being the two Lalafells). Karilan, Hermes, Cid, and Zera



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