

World Premiere & Panel Transcript

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Edited against the source captions and a fresh transcription of the complete recording, with focused rechecks of difficult passages. Filler and repetitions are lightly reduced; names and clear caption errors are corrected. Timestamps are approximate, from the source captions. Speaker names follow explicit introductions and question-and-answer context, not biometric voice verification. Ambiguous exchanges remain unidentified. Brackets mark unclear, overlapping, or music-obscured audio; no missing dialogue has been invented. Profanity is masked as [—]. This is a best-effort edited transcript, not a certified verbatim record. Film audio is distinguished from the live panel; song vocals are not exhaustively transcribed.

Carl Jones — Host

Zane Comer — Founder & creative director, Nothing Projects Interactive

Metro Boomin — Executive Producer / Season 01 Cover Artist

SOURCE: BLUE SIRENS • 37:14

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8yeUrd8fEnM>

01 // INTRODUCTION

0:00 // Carl Jones

Woo! Are y'all ready to see one of the craziest wildest fight games in your [—] life? Yeah. Y'all in the right [applause] place. Welcome to the official ONLYHANDS panel. And I am Carl Jones. I produce shows like The Boondocks.

0:25-0:28 // STAGE / RECORDING

[cheering]

0:31 // Carl Jones

Yeah. Freaknik: The Musical. But also was the voice of Thugnificent.

0:45 // STAGE / RECORDING

[Unclear joke / overlapping speech.]

0:54 // Carl Jones

But what made The Boondocks so special wasn't just having a bunch of crazy characters and black anime. It was because we were having a real honest conversation with the culture unapologetically, right? Even if it pissed people off and got our episodes banned. Mr. Tyler Perry. [laughter] But we were also heavily inspired by music, which is why we had people like Ghostface Killah on the show and we had Lil Wayne and CeeLo and even Snoop came through when we had Beef with Grandad, you know. [laughter] And to me, ONLYHANDS as a game is bringing the same energy that we brought to The Boondocks. I mean, the artists aren't just putting their name on something. They're also really

1:43 // Carl Jones

Involved and are basically the DNA of this world. And I think that's what makes ONLYHANDS so exciting to me. And I almost said OnlyFans. That's a whole other—actually, that is not a bad idea, to see OnlyFans squabble. Okay. [Unclear aside.] I do not know. Anyways, joining me today is Zane Comer, founder and creative director of Nothing Projects Interactive, the team behind ONLYHANDS. And in a minute, we're bringing out Metro Boomin. Yes, Metro Boomin, executive producer, and season one cover artist who's helped shape the sound, characters, and the artists coming into this world. And ONLYHANDS is an original fighting game and an

2:34 // Carl Jones

Entertainment universe built from the culture, for the culture, and by the culture with the artists that are moving culture forward. And tonight, we're showing you three things for the first time. Metro's character, some real dope ass gameplay, and finally, the world premiere of the official trailer. Let's go. But before we bring that out, I say we meet his game character.

02 // CHARACTER REVEAL & DESIGN

3:18 // Reveal audio

Yeah. Let's go.

3:54-4:47 // STAGE / RECORDING

[Indistinct reveal audio; wording unclear.]

4:50 // Carl Jones

So, first of all, the graphics on this game is insane. Y'all killed it. I have to know from you, Metro: how much of your real personality, how much of you did you lend to this game? I'm assuming you got hands too, you know what I'm saying?

5:07 // Metro Boomin

Yeah, assuming so. But beyond that, I feel like Zane and the team did such an incredible job researching me and my whole life. He tripped me out. He even told me my little brother's birthday, and I was like, 'Wow.' I feel like they did an amazing—

5:24 // Carl Jones

It is a little stalkerish. [Laughter]

5:31 // Metro Boomin

You know, I feel like they did an amazing job capturing not only mine, but the true essence of each character—who they really are—into the character in the game. Yeah, man, my faith and everything, I feel like you'll see it on display in the game.

5:50 // Zane Comer

I could add to that. This isn't just a cameo. This isn't just an endorsement. What's really important is that like Metro was saying that we are capturing the essence of these people in a way that translates into the world but also is just true and [unclear phrase] inherently interesting. But I think with Metro specifically it was kind of easy to translate his character because he has character. I think if anyone doesn't know his story, you can look it up and when we started to do the research and we go down to like a Nardwuar level like he was saying, I knew his little brother's birthday and more. But that really just comes from what I was saying about understanding

6:38 // Zane Comer

How to move with the culture in a way where we're bringing them into it and inviting them to co-create. Not just endorse it, not just come in and promote it. That's kind of the antithesis of who we are. So what else? What's the next one?

6:59 // Carl Jones

No, I think it shows, you know, and that's one of the things I noticed just like just paying attention to detail, you know, cuz like looking at Metro's design, I mean, it's it's like flawlessly him, right? So, what I'm just curious, well, from both of you, Zane, like why instead of just putting Metro in the game, why is it that you thought it would be a great collaboration with him?

7:21 // Zane Comer

Because he's an obsessive just like we are, a perfectionist just like we are. We've had a ton of conversations over the last year and a half with people potentially in this role, but it just never felt right. With Metro specifically, he fit all the criteria and hit on multiple levels. Ultimately, it was the standard at which everything should be executed against, which we really identified and agreed on.

7:54 // Carl Jones

Were there things Metro that you saw in the development phase—because I know how the development phase is where like maybe the first things they showed you like, "[—], I would not wear those shoes like you know what I mean. Like were there specific details that you wanted to ensure was in the game?"

8:03 // Metro Boomin

Funny enough, the original like mock version of my character was pretty like very different from this one. So I don't know maybe if they want to share that one day in the future, you know, I'm sure you get a laugh out of that. But that's besides the point cuz they absolutely killed this one, man. Even like with the piece with my mom, you know, it's like it's truly like you know, my source of inspiration and power. You know, not the medal, but her. And you know, you'll see in the game how that translates. So, there's just so many little things and nuances throughout the game that are inspired from real life.

8:50 // Carl Jones

Yes. Yeah. And Zane, I know we had a conversation yesterday, I think it was, and you were talking about just some of the I don't know if you able to go into this, but some of the different fighting techniques that you were inspired to put into the game, which I thought was really dope because like you're pulling from some real like, you know, some real street fighting techniques that a lot of people don't know or if you know, you know. You know what I'm saying? Like how important were those kind of details and what did you what inspired you to do that?

9:20 // Zane Comer

Again, it's the depth and like the authenticity of understanding. It's not just about this fighting caricature. It's about like what is that rooted in? And what we found was that there's a ton of undocumented American martial arts. So, you look at like the 52 Blocks, Louisiana sidestep, Brownsville style. We had to go individually to find these people, and really get the, you know, the way into it and learn what they were and then adapt them into the game. But that's just how we approach everything. I think like if there's something, you know, that has like a way to do it with a level of, you know, intuition or truth to it, we're going to find it.

10:06 // Carl Jones

You guys have quite a few artists in this game. How is it that you give each one of these artists that kind of depth? That has to be a crazy process.

10:18 // Zane Comer

Yeah, I think the way I would describe our character development process is more honestly a weeding out process. First, it's you know understanding what the criteria is. They have to be singular. They have to be distinctive [Unclear word.] Second, there has to be some inherent truth or reason to believe in them. And third, they just kind of have to fit the mold for us and it's not for everyone and that's okay. But I would say across the board, you guys get it. The MO here is: this is not just a skin. This is a moment. This is a new universe, you know, and the goal with it is to really be able to take what's happening in culture in real time and give it an arena.

11:05 // Carl Jones

I love it. I love it. Would y'all like to see some of these artists throw hands?

11:11 // STAGE / RECORDING

[applause]

03 // GAMEPLAY REVEAL

11:19 // Carl Jones

Let's roll. Okay.

11:23-12:02 // STAGE / RECORDING

[snorts]

12:09 // Gameplay audio

I want to take you to this place I found. [music]

12:28 // STAGE / RECORDING

[Music / indistinct vocal audio.]

13:01 // Gameplay audio

This that Louisiana Yeah, man.

13:28-14:16 // STAGE / RECORDING

[Music / indistinct vocal audio.]

14:40 // Gameplay audio

Oh, heat.

15:15 // STAGE / RECORDING

[Music / indistinct vocal audio.]

15:42 // Gameplay audio

Yeah. Yeah.

15:46 // STAGE / RECORDING

[applause]

15:49 // Carl Jones

Man, that [—] got me so hyped.

15:53 // STAGE / RECORDING

[Unclear joke about a character appearing in the game.]

15:57 // Carl Jones

I mean, let me fight the Booty Warrior or something. I do not fight with my hands. I fight with [unclear].

16:08 // STAGE / RECORDING

[laughter]

16:10 // Unidentified panel voice

[Overlapping joke about the Booty Warrior throwing cheeks; exact words and speaker split unclear.]

16:18 // Carl Jones

So Zane, walk us through what from a player's perspective, walk us through what we just watched.

16:25 // Zane Comer

So essentially, from the beginning, it was app opening. We saw the mirror room, into Play Now, into the home screen, character select, and then into the fight. The thing to note here is that we weren't interested in making something that felt like a fighting game. We were interested in something that felt like an actual street fight, putting people into that internal psychology—the anxiety, the momentum swings—and actually being able to feel that in real time. If you notice, there's no HUD, no life bar, no timer. It's like real life: there's no life bar or timer in a street fight. How do we translate that in the most compelling way possible, but

17:11 // Zane Comer

Strip away everything that didn't matter? The core configuration probably took us a year and a half, two years at this point, to get it right. At the end of the day, the gameplay just has to speak for itself. When it's in your hands, you'll get it. That's a full PvP fight, meaning that was two humans on two different machines in real time. And yeah, that's it.

17:41 // Carl Jones

You should throw a couple podcasters in there from time to time. I know there's a lot of rappers that would love to [—] up some podcasters.

04 // MUSIC & CREATIVE DIRECTION

17:55 // Carl Jones

Now, Metro, you did the soundtrack for Spider-Man: Across the Spider-Verse.

18:04 // STAGE / RECORDING

[applause]

18:06 // Carl Jones

So tell us: what can the music do here that you couldn't do with a traditional soundtrack?

18:13 // Metro Boomin

It's crazy. I feel like there's so many more opportunities with this, especially like the whole street fighting aspect. The things you can do with sound and music, you know what I'm saying? I feel like doing a soundtrack for a feature, like, you know, the film is set, the story is set, you know, all these things versus a game, which is pretty much the possibilities of what can happen during gameplay. It's like pretty much limitless. So, I feel like that gives me a lot more room to paint, throw stuff at the board, you know.

18:44 // Carl Jones

Now, do you do you get more fun out of actually like scoring versus like creating beats or is it kind of like a or do you do use like beats to score like you know what I mean?

19:00 // Metro Boomin

A mix. They're separate. I love making beats as well as scoring. And with scoring sometimes I can implement certain beats I have or strip certain parts of beats and you know this melody might be cool in here on this part. But I love scoring just like I love making albums because it's taking a bunch of singular ideas and like making this huge beautiful collage of things you can step back and look at.

19:26 // Carl Jones

Right. Right. And I mean there's so much dope [—] about this game. So I'm I'm curious to know like what is the thing that gets you the most excited about it out of everything?

19:36 // Metro Boomin

Oh man, there's so many great things. I mean the fight mechanics look incredible. They are incredible. They feel incredible. But I feel like most of all just the fact, you know, going by seasons and everything, how you could constantly like, you know, update it, you know, add more characters, add more gear, add more you know, venues. It's just like

19:59 // Unidentified panel voice

It's limitless. I love it. Kodak Black might be my favorite so far. [Speaker split unclear.]

20:06 // Carl Jones

So, so we love Kodak. And so Zane, so tell us, are there any other things that the characters can do outside of fighting? Like what how is this world open up?

20:17 // Zane Comer

We started with the story. That's what drove the entire thing from the beginning. That's what we really wanted to do. Everything else was a byproduct of that, or is there to enhance or support it. There is an in-depth story mode. Apart from that PvP, there's seven different channels within the app that are different points of distribution. We literally have a whole TV network with hours of content specific to the world. [Brief closing exchange.]

21:04 // Carl Jones

And Metro, you're the first cover artist and executive producer for season one. You spent your career building worlds through music. What made you want to help build one people can actually step their foot into, this virtual

21:20 // Carl Jones

World? Are you a gamer? Are you into the space?

21:20 // Metro Boomin

Yeah, that's where I was going to start. I grew up a gamer, still play games. Even from young, I've always had it on my long sheet of goals and aspirations to be involved with video games at some point. I love gaming. I love this concept. [Question restart.]

21:52 // Carl Jones

What's your favorite game right now?

21:55 // Metro Boomin

Right now, I ain't been gaming like that lately. I really restarted Red Dead 2 just to

22:03 // STAGE / RECORDING

[cheering]

22:06 // Unidentified panel voice

Now it's only hands, right? Now it's only hands.

22:08 // Carl Jones

That's what it is. All right. Now this question is for both of you guys. What is the thing that you the one important thing that you want everybody to leave this panel knowing about the game? Go first.

22:23 // Metro Boomin

Yeah, man. I feel like through every layer of the game and every aspect of the game, I feel like there's three main principles that we've gone by and you know there's intent, you know, there's truth and there's authenticity. So, like everything with this game, like on the surface, yes, it appears to be a fighting game, but as you play the game, as you get more in depth with the characters, you'll see that it's way more than that. Just a fighting game, you know, and everything here is authentic. Like I said before, even through all the characters and, you know, the way that they react and their strengths and their weaknesses, it's all come from a real

23:02 // Metro Boomin

Place. It's not like, you know, pulled out of the air or some kind of caricature or exaggerated thing like, you know, it is what it is. Wow.

23:13 // Zane Comer

I think for me, [unclear opening phrase]. It is: look close. Every element, every detail, every piece of graffiti is placed with intention and purpose across the board. So that's I think that's what I'll say. Just look close. Look close. Listen closer.

23:40 // STAGE / RECORDING

[clears throat]

23:42 // Carl Jones

So, and Metro, I'm I'm curious. I know like you've always you've had your hand in some really major music moments, right? And historical albums, and I'm not going to bring up some of the most recent ones, but because I don't want to bring up any controversy, but I will say but I will say that you've always been at the forefront of culture and you've had your finger on the pulse. Is that something that you're like conscious of? Meaning like even with a game like this or a project like this, is this is it a feeling thing? I mean like how like what is your creative process like and when you choose to work with an artist or work with a team and someone like Zane, like what do you go off of?

24:20 // Metro Boomin

That's a great question actually. But I always got to feel it, man. It's always in my gut, in my heart. I've always got to feel it. I don't care how big or small the opportunity is. You know, it could be the biggest artist, the smallest artist, the biggest opportunity, the smallest opportunity. I got to feel it, bro. I can't fake it when it comes to this and everything I do in around music, entertainment, outside of that business, everything. I can't fake it. You know, like I like to know who I'm dealing with. What kind of people are they? Like, you know, Zane and the team, what we both saw in each other is, you know, as they could tell from listening to my music and everything I've done over the years that

24:58 // Metro Boomin

Some people say I'm some sort of a perfectionist or something, you know, and they've got the same B, you know, and I feel like that's why this marriage works so great.

25:10 // Unidentified panel voice

[Name unclear], he's over there, the co-creator. [Acknowledgments and short exchange; exact speaker split unclear.]

25:14-25:18 // STAGE / RECORDING

[Acknowledgment; wording unclear.]

25:20 // Unidentified panel voice

Thank you. Yeah. What's next?

25:26 // STAGE / RECORDING

[laughter]

25:28 // Unidentified panel voice

He's serious. Like, what's next?

25:31 // Carl Jones

All right. No. So this is another thing I was I was curious about. Now, when we were doing the boondocks, there was a lot of like cultural nuances and specifics that sometimes didn't translate correctly to the artist. So, a lot of times I would have to act stuff out, right? So like even when we had like Thugnificent Ghost riding the whip like I had to film myself doing that. So when you were designing this game and actually like doing the doing the fight moves and stuff like that. Were you actually a part of that process Metro or how Oh no fight moves now.

26:05 // Metro Boomin

You know they hit the streets. They got you know they got with the pros. Gotcha. Gotcha. Gotcha. If they had got my fight moves, it might have been a disservice to the game.

26:16 // STAGE / RECORDING

[laughter]

26:18 // Carl Jones

I hear that. All right. Well, I mean, look, would you want to give them a sneak peek at the trailer?

05 // TRAILER PREMIERE

26:26 // Unidentified panel voice

You guys want to get a trailer?

26:32 // STAGE / RECORDING

[applause]

26:36 // Trailer audio

And we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against the evil, wickedness, and principalities in high places.

26:48-28:49 // STAGE / RECORDING

[music]

28:53 // Trailer audio

Blood on my hand.

28:57-30:24 // STAGE / RECORDING

[Music / indistinct vocal audio.]

30:30 // Trailer audio

All forms of violence are a quest for identity. When you live out on the frontier, you have no identity. You're a nobody. Therefore, you get very tough. You have to prove that you are somebody. [music] And so you become a very violent person. And so identity is always accompanied by violence. This seems paradoxical to you. But ordinary people find the need for violence as they lose their identities. [music] So it's only the threat to people's identity that makes them violent. They are determined to make it somehow to get counted, to get noticed. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood. I don't know what's real. I don't know who's [—] feeding me. Is it synthetic data from somebody's [unclear] coding mechanism, or is it real [—] wood and bark? I don't [—] know anymore.

31:28 // Trailer audio

[Continuation of trailer dialogue; wording unclear.] I see myself.

31:46-31:52 // STAGE / RECORDING

[music]

32:03 // Trailer audio

Yeah, that's what it got to be, brother. Spiritual warfare. [Short phrase unclear.] Fighting off the demons.

32:57-33:11 // STAGE / RECORDING

[Music / indistinct vocal audio.]

33:18 // Trailer audio

[Reaction partly obscured by music; wording unclear.]

33:32 // STAGE / RECORDING

[applause]

33:37 // Unidentified panel voice

That was Denzel Curry. His design looks crazy. [Overlapping reactions; speaker split unclear.] That's my [—] too. Y'all make some noise for this.

33:53 // STAGE / RECORDING

[applause]

06 // FUTURE VISION & CLOSING

33:58 // Carl Jones

Man, yo, I honestly I've never seen anything like that before in my life, bro. Like, that is really looks really really incredible. I just I want to ask because this world seems so massive, right? Like you're setting the you're fertilizing this ground to grow some really amazing things even outside of the game, I'm assuming. Do you want to speak a little bit both of you guys just to talk about maybe what the future plans are or just to even think or just to talk about like outside of outside the gameplay like what are some things that you would love to see happening with this world

34:38 // Zane Comer

I think I think really just the players coming into it making their own creating the history of it and pushing it forward. I mean, that's what it's made for. The goal here is to create an actual cultural asset, an IP that lives beyond the 3, five, seven plus year mark. That's an actual entertainment universe. So, think of like you have the Marvel people over there, boring, dude. [laughter] This is real life and real people in a real way. It's not just another like institutional property trying to like leverage or they don't give a [—] dude there's a difference coming from a different place that's where it's going to stay and I think the intention here is just that it's

35:41 // Metro Boomin

Intent man we keep saying it intent you know this is world building So building community, you know, it's online and community, culture, you know, how can this bleed outside of just in the game, you know, we were just talking about even like with songs that are like, you know, how sometimes they do soundtracks or game soundtracks or things and all the music and sound songs sound like just some leftover [—] Like, you know what I'm saying? Like, no, I'm talking about like real bangers that live in and outside of this game. You know what I'm saying? Just striving to do things that haven't been done. Like I want you to hear a song in this game and be like, "Yo, why isn't this on the album or why is this so and so single?" Like what are you just, you know, and it's a blessing. It's just our

36:23 // Metro Boomin

Opportunity to, you know, flex and do what we love.

36:26 // Carl Jones

I love it. And I mean, honestly, even with Spiderverse, I mean, I think you did the same thing. There was so many songs on that soundtrack.

36:32 // Metro Boomin

[Short phrase unclear.] Thank you.

36:36 // STAGE / RECORDING

[applause]

36:38 // Unidentified panel voice

Yeah, I know. I've definitely been wanting to live vicariously through Kodak Black for a long time. So, I'd love to kick Boosie Badazz in the chest as Kodak Black. Yes.

36:50 // STAGE / RECORDING

[laughter]

36:51 // Carl Jones

I think that is all we have time for. If you guys please put your hands together. [Closing continuation unclear.]

37:04-37:12 // STAGE / RECORDING

[applause]