Forget what you think you know.

Not a Toy is NOT a band. It is a collective of four creatives, Branson Hoog [lead vocals], Jeremy Marmor [guitar], Benji Spoliansky [drums], and TJ Wessel [violin, keys].

Not a Toy does NOT fit into a genre. Rather, the quartet crafts whatever it wants and goes where the music takes them.

Not a Toy does NOT just make music. These four creatives also make their own clothes, artwork, and videos.

Not a Toy is NOT playing around. No, they have big and bold ambitions on their 2020 Fearless Records debut EP.

This is NOT A TOY.

“Not a Toy is not just a band; it’s a lifestyle of art and creation,” affirms Branson. “We’re not the first to combine different genres of music, but we’re also actually blending other artforms—from streetwear to art shows. We’re a snapshot of this generation’s tattooed youth and bedroom beatmakers. We’re just creating, and there are no rules to creation.”

The members of this collective initially met in high school and cut their teeth in various projects together before launching Not a Toy in 2020. Operating out of a shared house in Denver, the group’s synergy results from the sum of its parts. Classically trained and on the violin from a young age, TJ additionally plays a slew of other instruments, addinga variety of textures and productionto the sound. Jeremy not only rips on guitar, but he also *“makes trap beats so quickly it’s ridiculous*.*”* Benji holds down the groove as the drummer and acts as an *“overarching producer*.*”* Meanwhile, Branson pens the majority of the lyrics and plays guitar and piano. Based on a background in graphic design and painting, he *“brings the art to the project*.*”*

If Kanye West and Pharrell joined forces to produce a rock group co-fronted by Jesse Rutherford and Lana Del Rey, it might sound something like Not a Toy.

“We complement each other like Yin and yang,” adds Benji. “The four of us are so passionate about writing music. We all add different ingredients.”

They introduce this signature style on their first single “J Cash.” Acoustic guitar, kick, and snare conjure a dusty twang from the onset before the momentum swings towards electric distortion and an 808 boom.

“We were in this dingy basement, and we just found out we were getting signed to Fearless,” recalls Branson. “So, the lyrics are super true, but they’re also projecting where we’re going. It’s a bit of a cocky song. We felt like we had *‘made it*,*’* even though we were still in the basement,” he laughs.

“We really tried to keep everything as minimal as possible with most of this one,” states TJ. “It starts off with that acoustic southern grit, but then it really sits back, and this piano comes in that feels equal parts hip-hop and western saloon.”

On the other end of the spectrum, the follow-up single “Quit Quitting” simmers with a dreamy California vibe. Over ethereal synths and D.I.Y. beatcraft, Branson probes, *“Do you really want to know what the future has in store?”*

“It’s the insecure side of the changes going on in our lives right now,” Branson continues. “The whole song is asking questions. The answer is, it’s all about the journey and the grind from where we started.”

In the end, this is NOT what anyone expected, but might be precisely what they need…

“We’d love for the music to resonate,” Branson leaves off. “We’re dissecting all corners of human emotion. Dive into yourself. Whatever the song provokes, walk away with that. Hopefully, you want to follow the art.”