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Robbie Rivera Delivers Greatness on 'Twenty,' Takes Us Track-by-Track: Exclusive

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Robbie Rivera



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until the sun comes up? [Robbie Rivera](#) is always ready, and his latest LP *Twenty* is a blast of down-and-dirty dance essentials designed to do nothing more or less than get you moving.

As a native Puerto Rican, Rivera's latest 12 tracks tap into his Latin roots with pumping, tribal rhythms and electro-house grooves that'll set your limbs on fire all night long. It's weird, wonderful, tender, soulful and, above all, super easy to dance to. Infectious melodies force your body into motion. Don't be surprised if you find yourself "woo"ing every time the beats drop.

Rivera is a real one, and when [Billboard Dance](#) asked him to give us the scoop on *Twenty*, track by track, he didn't leave out any of the juicy details. Go inside the mind of a legend, and remember: Genres are limitations artists place on themselves. Art is expression, unlimited.

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"I Can't Lie" feat. [Georgia Train](#)

On this track, I was thinking of creating a cool song with a one-note bass line and a special synth sound. I decided to use one of the electronic music arrangement templates that Apple's Logic software provides. This was the first time I used a template to compose a song. The Apple template provides about 10 tracks of authentic house music sounds and drums, so it was very exciting to work with something new. After creating the simple drums, I was picturing myself in a dark club around 3 in the morning. I ended up with a very simple yet intriguing melody and groove. I remember saying to myself, "I have something special and unique here." I finished the instrumental track, and I became a bit preoccupied about the genre under which it would be categorized. I decided to simply ignore the thought and carry on with the vocal part of the production. I needed a hook, and I decided to send it to Georgia Train in the UK. Georgia produces vocals for many artists, and she is fast. I told her I wanted a strong chorus, and in one day, she wrote and performed the vocal. I worked hard on getting the right mix so it would not sound like any other songs at the moment. I have always focused on creating new styles and not completely following current trends. I tested it over the weekend at a gig and got goosebumps as the fans experienced the power of this song.

"We Don't Care" feat. [Chris Willis](#)

I have been chatting with legendary singer-songwriter Chris Willis for a few years about a possible collaboration. Finally, I had a demo to send him. The story of how this song was created goes as follows: I sent Chris the instrumental track from a remix that I had done from my friend Bob Sinclar who was not able to release it on his label. I like how the music turned out, so I decided to delete the vocals from the arrangement and asked Willis to add his magical voice. I worked with some musicians to get the right piano groove and bass on this track. I am very happy with the organic classic house vibe and the power of the vocals on the drop. Sometimes, if a DJ is playing instrumental tracks for a while, you will notice you might need some vocals to change the vibe or to simply make someone smile. I believe that "We Don't Care" accomplishes the two.

"We Are Going Crazy"

I start my DJ sets with this track. A tribal house groove with all the effects, blips, synths and breakdowns that make it an authentic Rivera track. After producing the beats and a thick bass sound, I was unsure of what to do next. It needed a hook, and I was not going to sample one from a sample library or wait days for a singer to send me a hook. I started humming a hook, and I took my iPhone voice recorder and said the words "we are going crazy." I transferred it to my iMac, then pitched it down and added a dirty filter with a compressor and added it to the track. It's a fun club tune, and it reminds me of these three kittens that my wife rescued from the street. Cats tend to go a bit wild at night time, and it can be hilarious. For a minute there, we considered renaming it "The Cats Are Going Crazy." We discarded the idea, but we still call it that when we talk about the track.

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"Ferocious"

"This beat is outrageous" is one of the hooks of the vocals which complement my drums, inspired by the legendary Todd Terry. Many of my tracks are targeted for the clubs, (which is) why I have a wild, funky bassline and a huge breakdown with a loud siren. I have played this so many times on the road, and the fans really get down on the floor, which is always appreciated

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This is what vocal progressive house should sound like. This track can be played in a house, tech house and trance set. When I started working on this song, I wanted a dark melodic groove with an eerie vibe. I used a new software plug-in on Logic that I had never used before, and it just spoke to me with all the great leads, synths and bass sounds. You can edit them to great new sounds that nobody has used before, so I decided to think outside the box and used effects to make the sounds spookier. I sent the demo song to Georgia Train, and she wrote the song and produced the vocals with Caitlin Moss. I played this tune at Audio in San Francisco, and the response was surprisingly positive.

"The Stars" feat. Dreamfreak

Some producers always ask me: How come you change your style all the time? I don't change my style. To me, my style is whatever I produce or compose, because I am the one doing it. I produce electronic dance music, and I produce what I am feeling at the moment. I think people are way too hung up on the need to categorize everything and not allowing artists to just be creative. It's that group-think mentality which I hate. It is so limiting. I love this song, because it has a lot of emotion, and I love the chords and melodies. It may sound a bit retro or indie, and that is good, because that was my intention. I tried to produce a balance between indie dance with deep house basslines and '80s melodies. The name of the band who composed and performed the vocals is DreamFreak. They are very talented and unique artists.

"Everything"

Once upon a time, there was a genre called "speed garage" that became very popular and introduced by a few great producers like Armand Van Helden. I did not want to produce a speed garage track. However, as I was composing the drums, I found a bass sound that was thick, deep and loud. I played the melody just once, and I could not help but hear the speed garage influence. On this single, I also incorporate a vocoder on the looped vocal hook and add a lead synth that can become a bit annoying at some point but not on the dance floor. It is a hypnotic track that takes you on a musical ride.

"Tribal Man"

I was born and raised in Puerto Rico, and Latin house is in my blood. As a young producer and DJ, I was heavily influenced by tribal and Latin house producers the likes of [Robert Clivillés](#) from [C&C Music Factory](#), [Little Louie Vega](#), [David Morales](#), [Kenny Dope](#), [Armand Van Helden](#), [Roger Sanchez](#), [Todd Terry](#), [Erick Morillo](#), [Junior Vazquez](#), Shep Pettibone and Justin Strauss. "Tribal Man" is very representative of my live sets. I like timbales, congas, toms, snare and horns. I added a one-note bassline to drive the track, and then included a horn melody to take it to the next level. My friend from London, Steve Burton, produced the cool vocals.

"Losing Track of Time"

I love the chorus of this song. If you are a long time fan of my work, you will notice these vocals were previously used on an old track I released in the early 2000s. I got together with Chriz Samz who is a young artist from Medellin, Colombia, to recreate the music. I wanted a dark melodic mood with electro sounds blended with the vocals. I think the new generation will love this version. I changed the title, because I feel like it is completely new. I did not want to call it a remix. If you own your music, you can do whatever you want with it. I learned this the hard way.

"Magical World"

This was the last track I produced, and I think it's the most imaginative one. The original version of this song was a piano-driven, full-vocal song. After one week of pondering upon the vocals, I decided to discard them and start from scratch. I found a hook in the song which says "In this magical world, I got so much love to share." I just needed it to sound different. I decided to add a vocoder to the vocal and just have a bass line groove with classic electro synth sound, like [Daft Punk](#) but with more house beats. It definitely has a French house, disco groove to it.

"I'm a DJ"

If you go to Shazam and search my name, you will find a rare track called "Main Room Part One." This instrumental progressive track was played by [Carl Cox](#) so many times and was used on one of his massive compilations. For some reason, fans have Shazam'd the track, and it has reached almost half a million hits. I wanted to create a followup track with a similar style and emotion, but with more tech house basslines. This one is for the morning hours, and the breakdown is very long and dreamy. I love it.



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house track with some acid electro sounds and a deep techy bass. This track is strictly intended for big rooms and festivals, because the breakdown is heavy, and the climax is intense. Long time supporter [Fatboy Slim](#) has been loving this one since I sent it to him this summer. I don't usually name drop, but Norman Cook is a cool and very talented dude who loves the funky acid tunes, like this one.

Twenty is out now on Rivera's Juicy Music. Dance to it all night long below.



Twenty
Robbie Rivera



1	I Can't Lie	3:45
2	We Don't Care	3:13
3	We are going crazy	3:22
4	Ferocious	2:41
5	Be Electric	2:46
6	The Stars	3:11
7	Everything	3:00
8	Tribalman	2:49
9	Losing Track of time	3:14
10	Magical World	3:13
11	I'm a DJ	2:46
12	In my Soul	3:12