V/H/S (out now in limited release from Magnet) doesn't end on its wraparound. Instead, after you've been shocked, and jolted your way through the found footage visions of a panel of established genre filmmakers, the new kids—Radio Silence—take it home. Rousing, energetic and a whole lot of fun, the viral video collective's jump to the big screen is classic Anthology material. A house of horrors and the four gentleman who mistakenly enter it, "10/31/98" is sending viewers out buzzing.

FANGORIA spoke with the directors, writers and stars of "10/31/98", separately Tyler Gillett, Justin Martinez, Matt Bettinelli-Olpin and Chad Villella, but better known as Radio Silence.

FANGORIA: Where did this big house of horrors tale come from?

MATT BETTINELLI-OLPIN: The energy, just to start broad, is something we always try to do because we come from the internet. On the internet you have a minute, two minutes to capture somebody. And so, we really had to learn from the start how to make it grab people.

JUSTIN MARTINEZ: If you don't, they'll let you know online.

TYLER GILLETT: Our style is forged in a very anonymously honest world. That is the most honest world, where people can have an opinion and not get any flak for it. There's a proving ground there that we really cut our teeth in. Everything that we make from now on will be in some way, shape or form, an example of that.

CHAD VILLELLA: Plus, we want it to be big. We want the piece to be fun, to be action-packed, character driven and for people to have a good time with it, like a lot of the stuff we do.

GILLETT: And that was really a fun challenge for us, to make something that once it starts, it just goes. It's sort of relentless in its pace, once things twist in the middle of our piece. We wanted it to just go, go, go. That was a real fun challenge with this style, because you don't get to cut away, you don't get to have that scene hours later, where everybody's trying to figure out what happened. It all has to happen in real time and that was a really fun storytelling challenge; to block it and create a story that allowed for all of those nice breaths and nice moments, but to all have it be happening continuously. It's fun, super fun.

FANG: How much of this story was in your head already and how much of it was, "Here's our parameters, let's create something out of that."

GILLETT: I think we were the last ones brought on. They wanted us to come in and do something upbeat and action-y, you know? No CG blood and they wanted some humor, or lightness. So, the idea was something we'd kind of been kicking around for a long time and then this fit perfect. We just kind of ran with it. It's funny, we wrote this script and then when we found the house that we shot in, we laid that down as a blueprint and rearranged in real time, walking through the house.

FANG: That house is something else.

GILLETT: We could not have found a better location. Every moment that we could've dreamed of creating was all in one location, which I think is an impossible thing to find. We found it.

MARTINEZ: We also found it three days before we were shooting.

VILLELLA: It was the week before. Were in desperate need of a house and we started looking around making some phone calls, we found that one.

GILLETT: We walked in and "Bohemian Rhapsody" was just playing on a radio for no reason. I remember scouting and hearing shit moving in the walls. The place is obviously infested with rats. There was some kind of animal living in the wall, so if you were still and not speaking for two seconds, it was just really awesome and scary.

MARTINEZ: And we used almost the entire house.



FANG: Was there a significance in setting the film in 1998?

BETTINELLI-OLPIN: It kind of started out as a joke. Then we thought, "why not, it'd be cool." It solved problems with technology and then the camera we sent everything through was a camera that I had in college in the 90s. We knew this camera existed in 1998, because I had it in 1998.

GILLETT: One of the things that we really wanted to achieve was that really shitty analog look. We talk about this all the time, but so many videos are shot the consumer, HD camera now that that is the style people are used to now and we have very specific associations with that. We wanted it to look very different than that, we wanted it to feel like it had its own identity. Putting it through that analog process is what did it. It really took it out of the present of what's commonly seen and into something strange and authentic.

FANG: Had any of you previously been a "Nanny Cam" for Halloween? Such a great idea.

GILLETT: We have now [laughs]. We actually shot before Halloween and I wore that costume. We had so many conversations of, "What the fuck is this costume gonna be? What's a funny way to make this memorable, but not present at all times?"

VILLELLA: We thought about a tripod [laughs].

MARTINEZ: We went through military, skydiver with a camera on his head. Then we also wanted to get the comedy in there, too, with having a furry hand all bloody, reaching for help.

BETTINELLI-OLPIN: I still think the third leg joke for the tripod... [laughs] I remember watching a rough cut of the movie and seeing Dave Bruckner's—the first segment—and he puts those spy glasses on and I was just like, "Oh no! We're not the only headcam!"

FANG: And they're such great bookends. Now, is there a larger mythology that you want to play with here, at some point?

GILLETT: We have a whole built-out mythology. We have a whole world that exists and this is like one little sliver of it. We know what happens before, what happens after. The concept of their fuck-up is a really fun world that we've been exploring in our minds.

BETTINELLI-OLPIN: I think what works great about a lot of these movies is the suggesting of a world beyond what we see. I think what's great about most movies is you have this big world problem that's being solved in a real, simple way by just a few, relatable characters.

GILLETT: I think that works really well with found footage because there's the illusion of it being real, which makes your imagination run free in what happens outside of what you see.

FANG: Were you guys previously interested in horror, as fans or filmmakers?

BETTINELLI-OLPIN: I think that if you go back and watch any of our old stuff, there's always horror elements. There's a definite influence there.

GILLETT: The thing that we joke about is we started doing comedy and that comedy instantly became incredibly dark. Then it became too honest.

FANG: Do you think that's rooted in the intimate, visceral nature of something like YouTube?

VILLELLA: Yea, if you look at it that way, most of our stuff is kind of found footage. It's so intimate and so personal.

GILLETT: Even our conventional stuff, though, has always been a mix of comedy and the irony of how life sort of plays out for people. I think that we also know that there's comedy in that darkness, and so horror and comedy are such a great mix because of that. You have people right there on the edge of their seat and then you get to give them a reaction, whether it's a laugh or a scare. It's such a fun parallel. They're similarly emotive. We've had a really good time figuring out how to mix those two things.

VILLELLA: Especially with the characters, we try to keep them incredibly grounded. Keep them real, relatable whether something funny happens to them, or something horrific happens.

BETTINELLI-OLPIN: Or both!

FANG: So how does this inform what you do next?

BETTINELLI-OLPIN: I think a big thing that we get, coming from where we come from, is the idea of doing everything ourselves.

The Video-ed Dead: Radio Silence on "V/H/S"

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GILLETT: And then having things not be diluted because of that, having everything be specifically ours. People will know when a movie is our movie. Not to say we're auteurs, but I think we have a very specific voice and approach.

BETTINELLI-OLPIN: I almost think there's a bit of naiveté in it. We're like, "Well, why can't we do that?"

GILLETT: I think great solutions are born out of that approach. Everything we've written, there's always the desire in us to challenge ourselves, so we always write ideas that we haven't seen before or that we're maybe afraid to do, because we're not necessarily sure how we're going to do it. Then, we get to figure out how. I think that we've created some originality because of that challenge.

BETTINELLI-OLPIN: And hanging out with the other filmmakers has been super inspiring for us, because they all pretty much have the same attitude.

VILLELLA: Just do it

BETTINELLI-OLPIN: You should write that down somewhere!

For much more on V/H/S see our <u>review</u>, our talks with <u>Adam Wingard & Simon Barrett</u> and Glenn McQuaid

, and pick up FANGORIA #317 for words with David Bruckner, Joe Swanberg and Ti West.