



Third Coast: OutKast, Timbaland, and How Hip-Hop Became a Southern Thing

By Roni Sarig

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Typically, more than half the top rap songs in the country are the work of Southern artists. In a world still stuck in the East/West coast paradigm of the '90s, Southern hip hop has dominated the genre-and defined the culture-for years. And the South's leading lights, most notably OutKast, Timbaland, and more recently, crunk superstars like the Ying Yang Twins and Lil Jon, have expanded the parameters of hip hop. *Third Coast* is the first book to deal with Southern hip hop as a matter of cultural history, and the first to explain the character and significance of down South rapping to fans as well as outsiders. It tells the story of recent hip hop, marking how far the music has come sonically and culturally since its well-documented New York-centered early years.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Though most casual fans know the story of hip-hop's birth in the ashes of the South Bronx, the story of the South's entry into the modern rap scene remains relatively unknown. Here, author and music writer Sarig (*The Secret History of Rock*) provides the "Dirty South" its first complete history, an ambitious tale featuring Southern industry luminaries like Pharrell Williams and Jermaine Dupri, as well as the acts mentioned in the subtitle. Sarig's chronicle boasts remarkable depth and breadth, covering every aspect of Southern hip-hop, including dozens-if not hundreds-of acts. Moving away from historical documentation to analysis can lead Sarig to make some questionable generalizations ("it's easy to observe that, today, the blues is almost entirely the province of middle-aged white people"), but his attention to the music itself reaches some dizzying pinnacles-as in deconstructing crunk lyrics to reveal connections to 11th century working-class Saxons. Throughout, Sarig is informative and entertaining, keeping an eye on the big picture while managing this huge swath of uncollected music history; though the necessary surfeit of details may wear out casual readers, Sarig ably connects the stories of record shops, roller discos and street corners from Houston to Miami to Virginia Beach.

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From [Booklist](#)

Rap has become mainstream, and Sarig limns some of its most important performers by adopting a regional focus on what may at first seem an unlikely place, the American South. Like the Allman Brothers in the 1970s, Timbaland, OutKast, and others have created an identifiably southern style. Different sensibilities and a refreshing noninvolvement in rap's infamous East-West contretemps mark the irrepressible enthusiasm of many southern rappers. From *Southernplayalisticadillacmuzik* in 1994 onward, the playful OutKast (Andre 3000 and Big Boi, aka Andre Benjamin and Antwan Patton) has exhibited an adventurous approach that earned huge sales, and Timbaland (ne Timothy Z. Mosley) is a noted producer and composer as well as performer. All southern hip-hop, aka Dirty South Hip Hop, is probably a cipher to those for whom rap genres and performers all sound alike, but Sarig may help even them differentiate and appreciate this complex, fun, less-threatening relative of gangsta rap. A good introduction to its subject and appreciation of an important movement in pop music. *Mike Tribby*

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Review

"Excels...Clear-headed: an essential document of the last two decades." -- *Paste*, May 2007

"Overflows with these kinds of minute details that... coalesce into a richer portrait of a scene and a culture." -
- *Playboy Online*, 5/17/07

"Takes its cues directly from the music...when the beat is hot, so is the narrative...Fascinating." -- *Orlando Weekly*, 5/3/07

"The most thorough, definitive and well-researched exploration of Southern hip-hop's history that we have."
-- *URB Magazine*, 3/29/07

"To pull together so much material in such an engaging manner is remarkable." -- *The Wire*, (UK) 6/1/07

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Benjamin Chambers:

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