

# Hip Hop North of the 49th Parallel: A Journey Through Canadian Rap Music



Hip hop, a genre born on the streets of the Bronx in the 1970s, has since spread to every corner of the globe, inspiring countless artists and captivating millions of fans. Canada is no exception, with a thriving hip hop scene that has produced some of the most talented and influential rappers in the world.

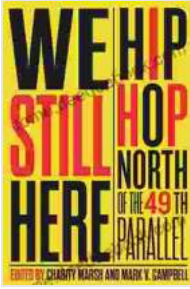
## We Still Here: Hip Hop North of the 49th Parallel

by Tami Flather

★★★★★ 4.5 out of 5

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In this article, we will delve into the rich history of Canadian hip hop, exploring its origins, key figures, and cultural impact. We will also take a look at the current state of the scene and discuss some of the challenges and opportunities facing Canadian hip hop artists today.

## **The Early Years**

The roots of Canadian hip hop can be traced back to the early 1980s, when DJs and breakdancers began organizing parties in major cities across the country. These parties provided a space for young people to express themselves creatively and connect with others who shared their passion for hip hop culture.

One of the first Canadian hip hop songs to achieve national recognition was "The Heat Is On" by Maestro Fresh Wes, which was released in 1989. The song was a critical and commercial success, and helped to put Canadian hip hop on the map.

## **The Golden Age**

The 1990s saw the emergence of a number of talented Canadian hip hop artists, who helped to establish the country as a force to be reckoned with

on the global hip hop scene.

Some of the most notable artists from this era include:

- **K-os**: A Juno Award-winning rapper and producer known for his socially conscious lyrics and innovative sound.
- **Michie Mee**: A pioneering female rapper who was one of the first Canadian hip hop artists to achieve international success.
- **Rascalz**: A Toronto-based hip hop group that released several critically acclaimed albums in the 1990s.
- **Swollen Members**: A Vancouver-based hip hop group that has been releasing albums since the mid-1990s and is known for its unique blend of hip hop, rock, and reggae.

## **The Current State of Canadian Hip Hop**

The Canadian hip hop scene continues to thrive today, with a new generation of artists emerging to build on the legacy of those who came before them.

Some of the most popular Canadian hip hop artists today include:

- **Drake**: A Toronto-based rapper who is one of the most successful hip hop artists in the world.
- **The Weeknd**: A Toronto-based R&B singer and songwriter who has also achieved global success.
- **Tory Lanez**: A Toronto-based rapper and singer who is known for his melodic flow and catchy hooks.

- **NAV:** A Toronto-based rapper who is known for his dreamy and introspective lyrics.

## **Challenges and Opportunities**

While the Canadian hip hop scene is thriving, there are still a number of challenges facing Canadian hip hop artists.

One of the biggest challenges is the lack of support from mainstream media. Canadian hip hop artists often struggle to get their music played on radio and television, and they often have to rely on social media and online platforms to reach their audience.

Another challenge is the perception that Canadian hip hop is not as good as hip hop from the United States. This perception is often based on stereotypes and ignorance, and it can make it difficult for Canadian hip hop artists to gain recognition and respect from fans and critics.

Despite these challenges, there are also a number of opportunities for Canadian hip hop artists.

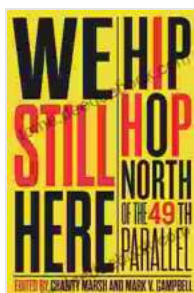
The internet has made it easier than ever for Canadian hip hop artists to reach a global audience, and there are a number of online platforms that are dedicated to supporting Canadian hip hop music.

Additionally, there is a growing awareness of the quality and diversity of Canadian hip hop, and more and more fans are starting to support Canadian artists.

Canadian hip hop is a vibrant and diverse genre that has produced some of the most talented and influential rappers in the world. From the early days

of Maestro Fresh Wes to the global success of Drake and The Weeknd, Canadian hip hop has come a long way.

While there are still challenges facing Canadian hip hop artists, there are also a number of opportunities for them to succeed. With its rich history, talented artists, and passionate fans, the future of Canadian hip hop is bright.



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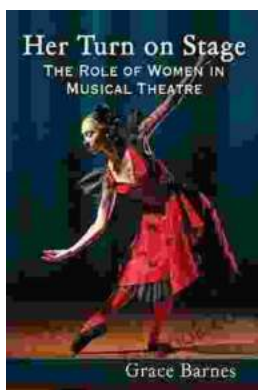
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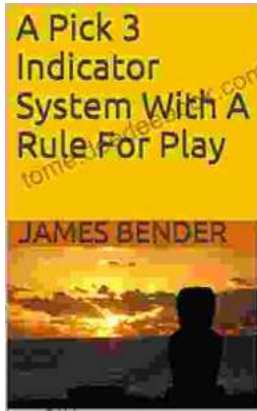
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