

history of wu tang

History of Wu Tang: The Legendary Hip-Hop Collective That Changed the Game

history of wu tang is a fascinating journey through one of the most influential and groundbreaking hip-hop groups to ever emerge from the streets of Staten Island, New York. Known for their gritty lyricism, unique sound, and martial arts-inspired imagery, Wu Tang Clan not only revolutionized hip-hop in the early 1990s but also created a cultural movement that continues to resonate worldwide. If you've ever wondered how this iconic group formed, what shaped their music, and why their legacy endures, this article dives deep into the captivating history of Wu Tang.

The Origins: How Wu Tang Clan Came Together

The history of Wu Tang begins in the early 1990s in Staten Island, often dubbed "Shaolin" by the group, drawing from the kung fu films that heavily influenced their aesthetic and storytelling. The group was formed by a collective of talented rappers and producers who shared a passion for hip-hop and martial arts culture.

Roots in Staten Island and Early Influences

Before Wu Tang Clan became a household name, the members were local artists trying to find their voice in a crowded New York hip-hop scene dominated by East Coast legends. What set them apart was their raw, unfiltered portrayal of urban life combined with a deep respect for Chinese martial arts cinema. This unique blend created an instantly recognizable style that was raw yet sophisticated.

The Founding Members

The original Wu Tang Clan consisted of nine core members:

- RZA (Robert Diggs) – The group's primary producer and visionary.
- GZA (Gary Grice) – Known for his intricate lyrics and sharp delivery.
- Ol' Dirty Bastard (Russell Jones) – The wild, unpredictable energy of the group.
- Method Man (Clifford Smith) – Charismatic and smooth, a standout performer.
- Raekwon (Corey Woods) – Storyteller with vivid narratives.
- Ghostface Killah (Dennis Coles) – Emotionally charged lyricist.
- Inspectah Deck (Jason Hunter) – Known for his sharp verses and punchlines.

- U-God (Lamont Hawkins) – Deep voice and steady flow.
- Masta Killa (Elgin Turner) – The quiet but skillful rapper.

Together, these artists created a synergy that was unprecedented, each bringing their unique style while contributing to a cohesive collective identity.

The Breakthrough: Enter the Wu Tang (36 Chambers)

The history of Wu Tang would be incomplete without discussing their landmark debut album, **Enter the Wu-Tang (36 Chambers)**, released in 1993. This album not only introduced the group's gritty sound to the world but also set new standards for hip-hop production and lyrical complexity.

Innovative Production and Sound

RZA's production on **36 Chambers** was revolutionary. Using sparse, raw beats combined with samples from kung fu movies and soul records, he crafted a sound that was dark, atmospheric, and perfect for the group's aggressive lyricism. This production style influenced countless artists and producers for decades to come.

Impact on Hip-Hop and Popular Culture

Enter the Wu-Tang (36 Chambers) was more than just an album; it was a cultural statement. Tracks like "C.R.E.A.M." and "Protect Ya Neck" became anthems, resonating with listeners who connected with the group's narratives about street life, survival, and loyalty. The album's success helped bring underground hip-hop to mainstream audiences, proving that raw, authentic voices had a place in the broader music industry.

Expanding the Brand: Solo Careers and Business Ventures

One of the unique aspects of the Wu Tang Clan's history is how the group functioned as a launching pad for highly successful solo careers. Each member was encouraged to develop their own projects, which helped expand the Wu Tang brand far beyond their collective albums.

Solo Albums That Defined Members' Individual Talents

Following the success of their debut, members released solo albums that showcased their distinct styles:

- Raekwon's **Only Built 4 Cuban Linx...** (1995) is often hailed as a hip-hop classic for its cinematic storytelling.
- Ghostface Killah's **Ironman** (1996) brought emotional depth and soulful beats.
- Method Man's **Tical** (1994) combined charisma with streetwise lyrics, earning critical acclaim.

These solo projects not only solidified their individual reputations but also reinforced the strength of the Wu Tang collective.

Entrepreneurship and Cultural Influence

Beyond music, the Wu Tang Clan has been pioneers in branding and entrepreneurship. They launched clothing lines, comic books, and even a video game, all while maintaining the group's gritty, authentic image. In recent years, the group made headlines with unique ventures like the auctioning of a single-copy album, illustrating their innovative approach to music and business.

The Legacy: Wu Tang's Enduring Influence

The history of Wu Tang is a testament to how a group of talented individuals with a shared vision can leave an indelible mark on culture. Their influence extends far beyond hip-hop, touching fashion, film, and even business.

Influence on New Generations of Artists

Many contemporary rappers and producers cite Wu Tang Clan as a major influence. Their commitment to lyricism, storytelling, and unique soundscapes paved the way for artists who value authenticity and creativity over commercial trends. The group's blending of martial arts themes with street narratives created a blueprint that remains relevant today.

Continued Relevance in Modern Music

Despite changes in the music industry and evolving tastes, Wu Tang continues to release music, collaborate with new artists, and perform worldwide. Their ability to adapt while staying true to their roots is a key reason they remain iconic. Whether through anniversary tours or new albums, Wu Tang keeps connecting with old fans and attracting new ones.

Tips for Exploring Wu Tang's Catalog

If you're new to Wu Tang Clan, diving into their discography can be a rewarding experience. Here are a few tips:

- Start with **Enter the Wu-Tang (36 Chambers)** to understand their foundational sound.
- Explore solo projects like Raekwon's **Only Built 4 Cuban Linx...** and Ghostface Killah's **Ironman** for a deeper appreciation of individual styles.
- Watch classic kung fu films that inspired their imagery to get cultural context.
- Read articles and interviews to grasp the group's philosophy and impact on hip-hop culture.

By immersing yourself in both the music and the cultural elements that shaped Wu Tang, you'll gain a fuller appreciation of their artistry.

The history of Wu Tang continues to unfold, as the group's influence permeates every corner of hip-hop and beyond. Their story is one of resilience, creativity, and brotherhood—a true testament to the power of music to transcend time and place.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the origin of the name 'Wu-Tang Clan'?

The name 'Wu-Tang Clan' was inspired by the 1983 martial arts film 'Shaolin and Wu Tang,' reflecting the group's affinity for kung fu culture and philosophy.

When was the Wu-Tang Clan formed and who were the original members?

Wu-Tang Clan was formed in 1992 in Staten Island, New York. The original members include RZA, GZA, Ol' Dirty Bastard, Method Man, Raekwon, Ghostface Killah, Inspectah Deck, U-God, and Masta Killa.

What was the significance of Wu-Tang Clan's debut album 'Enter the Wu-Tang (36 Chambers)'?

Released in 1993, 'Enter the Wu-Tang (36 Chambers)' is considered a landmark album in hip-hop, introducing a raw, gritty sound and innovative production that influenced countless artists and helped popularize East Coast rap.

How did Wu-Tang Clan influence hip-hop culture and music?

Wu-Tang Clan revolutionized hip-hop by blending martial arts themes with gritty street narratives, pioneering unique group dynamics with individual solo careers, and innovating production techniques, which shaped the sound and business models of modern hip-hop.

What role did RZA play in the history of Wu-Tang Clan?

RZA was the primary producer and de facto leader of Wu-Tang Clan, crafting the group's signature sound, managing their projects, and guiding their artistic direction, making him a central figure in their success and legacy.

Additional Resources

The History of Wu Tang: An In-Depth Exploration of Hip-Hop's Revolutionary Collective

history of wu tang is a subject that extends far beyond the realm of music, delving into cultural innovation, entrepreneurial spirit, and the reshaping of hip-hop in the 1990s and beyond. Emerging from Staten Island, New York, Wu Tang Clan is widely regarded as one of the most influential hip-hop groups of all time, pioneering a unique blend of gritty street narratives, martial arts-inspired imagery, and raw lyrical prowess. This article explores the origins, evolution, impact, and legacy of Wu Tang, providing a comprehensive overview that underscores its enduring significance in music history.

The Origins of Wu Tang Clan

The history of Wu Tang begins in the early 1990s, a period marked by the flourishing of hip-hop culture across New York City. Founded in 1992, the group was the brainchild of Robert Diggs, better known as RZA, who envisioned a collective that would unify talented emcees and producers under a singular, distinctive identity. The group's name, "Wu Tang," was inspired by the 1983 martial arts film *Shaolin and Wu Tang*, reflecting their fascination with Eastern philosophy and kung fu cinema.

The original lineup featured nine members: RZA, GZA (The Genius), Ol' Dirty Bastard, Method Man, Raekwon, Ghostface Killah, Inspectah Deck, U-God, and Masta Killa. Each member brought a unique style and voice, creating a dynamic synergy that would set them apart from contemporaries. Their debut album, *Enter the Wu-Tang (36 Chambers)*, released in 1993, is often cited as a seminal work in hip-hop, praised for its raw production, innovative sampling, and complex lyricism.

Innovative Sound and Production

One of the defining features in the history of Wu Tang is their production style, largely credited to RZA's visionary approach. The beats combined sparse, gritty drum patterns with samples from old soul records and kung fu movie soundtracks, creating a soundscape that was both haunting and energetic. This innovative production not only distinguished Wu Tang but also influenced a generation of hip-hop producers.

Unlike other groups, Wu Tang's production embraced imperfection; distorted sounds and lo-fi aesthetics became part of their signature. This approach resonated with listeners seeking authenticity in an era increasingly dominated by polished commercial rap.

Wu Tang's Cultural Impact

The history of Wu Tang is inseparable from its cultural impact. Beyond music, Wu Tang Clan became a symbol of resilience, creativity, and entrepreneurship. Their lyrics often depicted the harsh realities of inner-city life, addressing themes of poverty, violence, and survival. Yet, they also infused their work with philosophical undertones, drawing from Five-Percent Nation teachings and martial arts allegories.

Redefining Hip-Hop Collectives

Wu Tang Clan's structure as a collective rather than a traditional group was pioneering. This approach allowed members to pursue solo careers while maintaining the group identity, fundamentally changing how hip-hop artists managed their careers. The model proved financially and creatively beneficial, allowing for a diversified catalog and expanded influence.

Entrepreneurship and Branding

Another significant aspect in the history of Wu Tang is their entrepreneurial savvy. The group's business model was revolutionary: they negotiated a unique contract that allowed individual members to sign solo deals with different record labels. This strategy maximized their exposure and revenue streams, setting a precedent for artist autonomy in the music industry.

Wu Tang's iconic logo—a stylized "W"—became a powerful brand, widely recognized beyond hip-hop circles. Merchandise, apparel, and even video games have perpetuated their cultural footprint, contributing to their longevity in popular culture.

Evolution and Challenges

Like many influential groups, Wu Tang Clan's history includes periods of internal conflict and transformation. The tragic death of Ol' Dirty Bastard in 2004 marked a poignant moment, deeply affecting the group's dynamics and fanbase. Despite this loss, members continued to produce music, both collectively and individually, maintaining relevance in an ever-changing musical landscape.

Solo Careers and Legacy

The success of Wu Tang members' solo projects played a crucial role in extending the group's influence. Albums such as Raekwon's **Only Built 4 Cuban Linx...** and Ghostface Killah's **Ironman** are considered classics, contributing to the broader narrative of the group's history. These projects

further showcased the diverse talents within the collective, each artist exploring different styles while staying true to the Wu Tang ethos.

Modern Influence and Revival

In recent years, Wu Tang Clan has experienced a resurgence, fueled by anniversary tours, new releases, and collaborations with contemporary artists. Their ability to adapt while preserving their core identity speaks to the enduring appeal of their music and message. The group has also embraced digital platforms, reaching new audiences and maintaining cultural relevance in the streaming era.

Legacy in Hip-Hop and Beyond

The history of Wu Tang is not merely a chronicle of a hip-hop group but a narrative of cultural transformation. Their influence extends beyond music into fashion, film, and even politics, reflecting their role as cultural ambassadors. The group's innovative fusion of Eastern philosophy with urban realities created a new paradigm in hip-hop storytelling.

Critical Acclaim and Influence

Critics and scholars alike recognize Wu Tang Clan as one of the most important entities in hip-hop history. Their debut album often features on "greatest albums" lists, and their lyrical complexity has been studied for its narrative and poetic depth. Moreover, many contemporary artists cite Wu Tang as a foundational influence, underscoring their impact on subsequent generations.

Challenges and Criticism

Despite widespread acclaim, Wu Tang Clan has faced criticism, particularly regarding internal disputes and controversies surrounding some members' personal lives. However, these challenges have often been overshadowed by their artistic achievements and contributions to hip-hop culture.

- **Pros:** Innovative production, culturally rich lyrics, pioneering business model.
- **Cons:** Internal conflicts, tragic losses, occasional inconsistent group cohesion.

The history of Wu Tang remains a testament to the power of artistic innovation and cultural resilience. Their story is one of transformation—turning adversity into creativity and redefining the possibilities within hip-hop. As the group continues to influence music and culture, the Wu Tang legacy is firmly entrenched as a cornerstone of modern artistic expression.

History Of Wu Tang

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history of wu tang: *A History of Shaolin* Lu Zhouxiang, 2019-03-18 Shaolin Monastery at Mount Song is considered the epicentre of the Chan school of Buddhism. It is also well known for its martial arts tradition and has long been regarded as a special cultural heritage site and an important symbol of the Chinese nation. This book is the first scholarly work in English to comprehensively examine the full history of Shaolin Monastery from 496 to 2016. More importantly, it offers a clear grasp of the origins and development of Chan Buddhism through an examination of Shaolin, and highlights the role of Shaolin and Shaolin kung fu in the construction of a national identity among the Chinese people in the past two centuries.

history of wu tang: Encyclopedia of African American History, 1896 to the Present Paul Finkelman, 2009 Alphabetically-arranged entries from A to C that explores significant events, major persons, organizations, and political and social movements in African-American history from 1896 to the twenty-first-century.

history of wu tang: The Wu-Tang Manual The RZA, Chris Norris, 2005-02-01 The Wu-Tang Manual is The RZA's first written introduction to the philosophy and history of Hip-Hop's original Dynasty, the Wu-Tang Clan. Written in a style that is at once personal and philosophical, The Wu-Tang Manual unravels the intricate web of personalities (and alter egos), warrior codes, numerological systems, and Eastern spiritual ethics that define the Wu-Tang dynasty. Packed with information that reflects the breadth and depth of the RZA's — and rest of the Clan's — intellectual interests and passions, The Wu-Tang Manual is divided into four books of nine chambers each, for a total of 36 chambers. All together, the book provides the breakdown of essential Wu-Tang components, from basic information about each of the nine core members of Wu-Tang Clan to deeper explorations of the key themes of the Wu-Tang universe, a dictionary-like Wu-Slang lexicon, and an entire section of Wu-Tang lyrics with densely annotated explanations of what they mean. For the hardcore Wu-Tang disciple and the recent initiate alike, The Wu-Tang Manual is the definitive guide to the essence of Wu, one of the most innovative hip-hop groups of all time. The RZA's most recent book, The Tao of Wu, is also available from Riverhead Books.

history of wu tang: The History of Hip Hop Eric Reese, 2019-06-15 Rhythms of Resistance: A Journey through 90s Hip-Hop *** Author of *Rapper's Delight* essay currently archived at the Library of Congress *** *** Guest speaker of BBC2 Radio *Rapper's Delight* 40th Anniversary by DJ Trevor Nelson - September 2019 *** Immerse yourself in the dynamic world of 90s hip-hop with *The History of Hip Hop: Volume 3*. This compact yet comprehensive guide by Eric Reese travels back to a critical decade that saw the genre evolve from its roots into an art form influencing millions around the world. Journey through the crowded streets of New York City, where groups like A Tribe Called Quest and Wu-Tang Clan were changing the game, to the sun-soaked boulevards of Los Angeles, where artists like Dr. Dre and Tupac were making their mark. Reese's informative guide not only maps the geography of 90s hip-hop but also charts the cultural, political, and racial landscapes that shaped and were shaped by the genre. As the bling era dawned and hip-hop became a global business, its effects reverberated far beyond the music world, influencing fashion, film, and the broader popular culture. Key insights from this book include: East Coast vs West Coast: The legendary rivalry that defined a decade The Golden Age: An examination of hip-hop's most creative period The Birth of Gangsta Rap: How a new sub-genre changed everything The Impact of TV and Film: From Yo! MTV Raps to Boyz n the Hood The Influence of Record Labels: The rise of Death Row

Records and Bad Boy Records Social and Political Impact: How hip-hop gave a voice to the voiceless Dive deep into the complex narratives of an era that redefined musical expression, pioneering a sonic revolution that resonates to this day. From legendary artists like Notorious B.I.G., Nas, Queen Latifah, to influential groups like Public Enemy and De La Soul, explore the golden age of hip-hop and its enduring legacy. The History of Hip Hop: Volume 3 chronicles a remarkable decade of creativity, diversity, controversy, and above all, timeless music. Experience the beat, the rhythm, and the resistance that made the 90s hip-hop scene a cultural touchstone. 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this day in rap history, the history of gangsta rap, history of rap, history of rap book, rap oral history

history of wu tang: *Hidden History of Staten Island* Theresa Anarumo, Maureen Seaberg, 2019-04-29 Take the ferry to this New York City borough and discover its colorful secrets, in a quirky history packed with facts and photos. Staten Island has a rich and fascinating cultural legacy that few people outside New York City's greenest borough know about. Chewing gum was invented on the island with the help of Mexican general Antonio López de Santa Anna. Country music legend Roy Clark got his start as a virtuoso guitar player on the Staten Island Ferry. Anna Leonowens, who worked with the king's children in the Court of Siam and was the basis for *The King and I*, came back to Staten Island to write about her experiences and run a school for children. Join native Staten Islanders Theresa Anarumo and Maureen Seaberg as they document the hidden history of the borough with these stories, and many more

history of wu tang: *Hip-Hop Is History* Questlove, 2024-06-11 This is a book only Questlove could have written: a perceptive and personal reflection on the first half-century of hip-hop. When hip-hop first emerged in the 1970s, it wasn't expected to become the cultural force it is today. But for a young Black kid growing up in a musical family in Philadelphia, it was everything. He stayed up late to hear the newest songs on the radio. He saved his money to buy vinyl as soon as it landed. He even started to make his own songs. That kid was Questlove. Now, in this landmark book, Questlove traces the creative and cultural forces that made and shaped hip-hop, highlighting both the forgotten but influential gems and the undeniable chart-topping hits-and weaves it all together with the stories no one else knows. It is at once an intimate, sharply observed story and a sweeping theory of the evolution of the great artistic movement of our time. Questlove approaches it with both the encyclopedic fluency of an obsessive fan and the unique expertise of an innovative participant. Hip-hop is history, and also his history.

history of wu tang: *The Cambridge History of China: Volume 9, The Ch'ing Dynasty to 1800, Part 2* Willard J. Peterson, 2016-04-07 Volume 9, Part 2 of *The Cambridge History of China* is the second of two volumes which together explore the political, social and economic developments of the Ch'ing Empire during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries prior to the arrival of Western military power. Across fifteen chapters, a team of leading historians explore how the eighteenth century's greatest contiguous empire in terms of geographical size, population, wealth, cultural production, political order and military domination peaked and then began to unravel. The book sheds new light on the changing systems deployed under the Ch'ing dynasty to govern its large, multi-ethnic Empire and surveys the dynasty's complex relations with neighbouring states and Europe. In this compelling and authoritative account of a significant era of early modern Chinese history, the volume illustrates the ever-changing nature of the Ch'ing Empire, and provides context for the unforeseeable challenges that the nineteenth century would bring.

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history of wu tang: *The Economic History in Qin and Han Dynasty* Li Shi, The book is the volume of “The Economic History in Qin and Han Dynasty” among a series of books of “Deep into China Histories”. The earliest known written records of the history of China date from as early as 1250 BC, from the Shang dynasty (c. 1600–1046 BC) and the Bamboo Annals (296 BC) describe a Xia dynasty (c. 2070–1600 BC) before the Shang, but no writing is known from the period The Shang ruled in the Yellow River valley, which is commonly held to be the cradle of Chinese civilization. However, Neolithic civilizations originated at various cultural centers along both the Yellow River and Yangtze River. These Yellow River and Yangtze civilizations arose millennia before the Shang. With thousands of years of continuous history, China is one of the world's oldest civilizations, and is regarded as one of the cradles of civilization. The Zhou dynasty (1046–256 BC) supplanted the Shang and introduced the concept of the Mandate of Heaven to justify their rule. The central Zhou government began to weaken due to external and internal pressures in the 8th century BC, and the country eventually splintered into smaller states during the Spring and Autumn period. These states became independent and warred with one another in the following Warring States period. Much of traditional Chinese culture, literature and philosophy first developed during those troubled times. In 221 BC Qin Shi Huang conquered the various warring states and created for himself the title of

Huangdi or emperor of the Qin, marking the beginning of imperial China. However, the oppressive government fell soon after his death, and was supplanted by the longer-lived Han dynasty (206 BC – 220 AD). Successive dynasties developed bureaucratic systems that enabled the emperor to control vast territories directly. In the 21 centuries from 206 BC until AD 1912, routine administrative tasks were handled by a special elite of scholar-officials. Young men, well-versed in calligraphy, history, literature, and philosophy, were carefully selected through difficult government examinations. China's last dynasty was the Qing (1644–1912), which was replaced by the Republic of China in 1912, and in the mainland by the People's Republic of China in 1949. Chinese history has alternated between periods of political unity and peace, and periods of war and failed statehood – the most recent being the Chinese Civil War (1927–1949). China was occasionally dominated by steppe peoples, most of whom were eventually assimilated into the Han Chinese culture and population. Between eras of multiple kingdoms and warlordism, Chinese dynasties have ruled parts or all of China; in some eras control stretched as far as Xinjiang and Tibet, as at present. Traditional culture, and influences from other parts of Asia and the Western world (carried by waves of immigration, cultural assimilation, expansion, and foreign contact), form the basis of the modern culture of China.

history of wu tang: The History of Gangster Rap Soren Baker, 2018-10-02 Journalist Soren Baker's *The History of Gangster Rap* takes a deep dive into this fascinating music subgenre. Foreword by Xzibit Sixteen detailed chapters, organized chronologically, examine the evolution of gangster rap, its main players, and the culture that created this revolutionary music. From still-swirling conspiracy theories about the murders of Biggie and Tupac to the release of the film *Straight Outta Compton*, the era of gangster rap is one that fascinates music junkies and remains at the forefront of pop culture. Filled with interviews with key players such as Snoop Dogg, Ice-T, and dozens more, as well as sidebars, breakout bios of notorious characters, lists, charts, and beyond, *The History of Gangster Rap* is the be-all-end-all book that contextualizes the importance of gangster rap as a cultural phenomenon. "History has so often been written by the victors, that you very rarely ever get the real story behind anything. So it's really important to hear from the people that were there, which is exactly what Soren Baker shares in this book. He writes about it and he's honest about it." —The D.O.C.

history of wu tang: The 100 Greatest Bands of All Time David V. Moskowitz, 2015-11-10 This one-of-a-kind reference investigates the music and the musicians that set the popular trends of the last half century in America. Many rock fans have, at one time or another, ranked their favorite artists in order of talent, charisma, and musical influence on the world as they see it. In this same spirit, author and music historian David V. Moskowitz expands on the concept of top ten lists to provide a lineup of the best 100 musical groups from the past 60 years. Since the chosen bands are based on the author's personal taste, this two-volume set provokes discussion of which performers are included and why, offering insights into the surprising influences behind them. From the Everly Brothers, to the Ramones, to Public Enemy, the work covers a wide variety of styles and genres, clearly illustrating the connections between them. Entries focus on the group's history, touring, membership, major releases, selected discography, bibliography, and influence. Contributions from leading scholars in popular music shed light on derivative artists and underscore the overall impact of the performers on the music industry.

history of wu tang: A History of Film Music Mervyn Cooke, 2008-09-25 This book provides a comprehensive and lively introduction to the major trends in film scoring from the silent era to the present day, focussing not only on dominant Hollywood practices but also offering an international perspective by including case studies of the national cinemas of the UK, France, India, Italy, Japan and the early Soviet Union. The book balances wide-ranging overviews of film genres, modes of production and critical reception with detailed non-technical descriptions of the interaction between image track and soundtrack in representative individual films. In addition to the central focus on narrative cinema, separate sections are also devoted to music in documentary and animated films, film musicals and the uses of popular and classical music in the cinema. The author analyses the varying technological and aesthetic issues that have shaped the history of film music, and concludes

with an account of the modern film composer's working practices.

history of wu tang: *From the Streets of Shaolin* S. H. Fernando Jr., 2021-07-06 This definitive biography of rap supergroup, Wu-Tang Clan, features decades of unpublished interviews and unparalleled access to members of the group and their associates. This is the definitive biography of rap supergroup and cultural icons, Wu-Tang Clan (WTC). Heralded as one of the most influential groups in modern music—hip hop or otherwise—WTC created a rap dynasty on the strength of seven gold and platinum albums that launched the careers of such famous rappers as RZA, GZA, Ol' Dirty Bastard, Raekwon, Ghostface Killah, Method Man, and more. During the '90s, they ushered in a hip-hop renaissance, rescuing rap from the corporate suites and bringing it back to the gritty streets where it started. In the process they changed the way business was conducted in an industry known for exploiting artists. Creatively, Wu-Tang pushed the boundaries of the artform dedicating themselves to lyrical mastery and sonic innovation, and one would be hard pressed to find a group who's had a bigger impact on the evolution of hip hop. S.H. Fernando Jr., a veteran music journalist who spent a significant amount of time with The Clan during their heyday of the '90s, has written extensively about the group for such publications as Rolling Stone, Vibe, and The Source. Over the years he has built up a formidable Wu-Tang archive that includes pages of unpublished interviews, videos of the group in action in the studio, and several notepads of accumulated memories and observations. Using such exclusive access as well as the wealth of open-source material, Fernando reconstructs the genesis and evolution of the group, delving into their unique ideology and range of influences, and detailing exactly how they changed the game and established a legacy that continues to this day. The book provides a startling portrait of overcoming adversity through self-empowerment and brotherhood, giving us unparalleled insights into what makes these nine young men from the ghetto tick. While celebrating the myriad accomplishments of The Clan, the book doesn't shy away from controversy—we're also privy to stories from their childhoods in the crack-infested hallways of Staten Island housing projects, stints in Rikers for gun possession, and million-dollar contracts that led to recklessness and drug overdoses (including Ol' Dirty Bastard's untimely death). More than simply a history of a single group, this book tells the story of a musical and cultural shift that started on the streets of Shaolin (Staten Island) and quickly spread around the world. Biographies on such an influential outfit are surprisingly few, mostly focused on a single member of the group's story. This book weaves together interviews from all the Clan members, as well as their friends, family and collaborators to create a compelling narrative and the most three-dimensional portrait of Wu-Tang to date. It also puts The Clan within a social, cultural, and historical perspective to fully appreciate their impact and understand how they have become the cultural icons they are today. Unique in its breadth, scope, and access, *From The Streets of Shaolin* is a must-have for fans of WTC and music bios in general.

history of wu tang: *Comparativism in Art History* Jas Elsner, 2017-07-05 Featuring some of the major voices in the world of art history, this volume explores the methodological aspects of comparison in the historiography of the discipline. The chapters assess the strengths and weaknesses of comparative practice in the history of art, and consider the larger issue of the place of comparative in how art history may develop in the future. The contributors represent a comprehensive range of period and geographic command from antiquity to modernity, from China and Islam to Europe, from various forms of art history to archaeology, anthropology and material culture studies. Art history is less a single discipline than a series of divergent scholarly fields ? in very different historical, geographic and cultural contexts ? but all with a visual emphasis on the close examination of objects. These fields focus on different, often incompatible temporal and cultural contexts, yet nonetheless they regard themselves as one coherent discipline ? namely the history of art. There are substantive problems in how the sub-fields within the broad-brush generalization called 'art history' can speak coherently to each other. These are more urgent since the shift from an art history centered on the western tradition to one that is consciously global.

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Essays focus on the diagnosis, treatment and cultural implications of madness and mental illness and explore the complex trajectory of the medicalization of the mind in shifting political contexts of Chinese history.

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