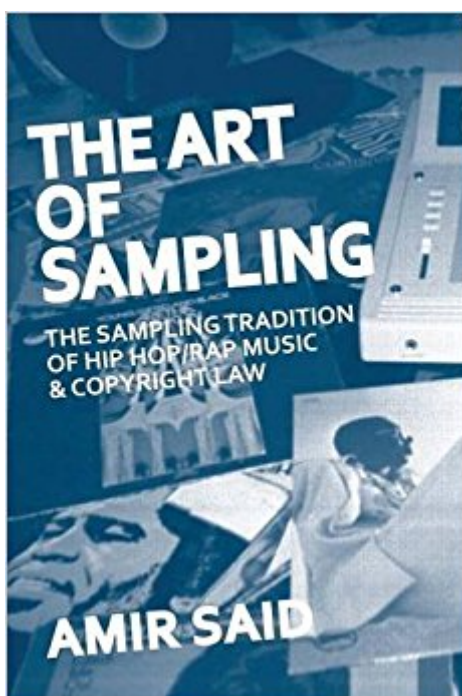


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The Art Of Sampling: The Sampling Tradition Of Hip Hop/Rap Music And Copyright Law



Synopsis

The art of sampling one of the most innovative music processes to emerge in the late-twentieth century stands today as both a celebrated art form and a cultural activity within the hip hop/rap music tradition and beyond. 'The Art of Sampling' (Amir Said, author of 'The BeatTips Manual'), examines this complex and controversial music process, and presents a study that illuminates the history, creative mechanics, and philosophy of sampling, while also exploring the implications that it holds for copyright law. Divided into three primary parts, including an in-depth History part, a robust Instruction (how-to) part, and a highly comprehensive Copyright Law part, 'The Art of Sampling' is detailed, sharply informative, and engaging. Astute and intensely thought-provoking, it is the definitive book on sampling in the hip hop/rap music tradition and copyright law, and one of the most striking and poignant music studies to come along in years.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Amir Said is a writer, publisher, musician, and father from Brooklyn, NY. In addition to writing and managing the BeatTips Network of music education websites, Said also runs Superchamp Books. He is the founder of BeatTips, the leading resource for beatmaking/hip hop production education; and he has written a number of books, including 'The Truth About New York,' 'The BeatTips Manual,' 'The Art of Sampling,' 'Ghetto Brother,' and 'The Truth About Paris' (co-written with John McNulty). His new novels, 'Going Down to the Bungalow Bar' and 'Feed the Meter,' are forthcoming in 2016 and 2017 respectively.

As someone who works in hip-hop I've spent countless hours tracking down sample sources and defending sampling from its many detractors, and so when I started reading "The Art of Sampling" I was excited to get a deeper look at the history and execution of the art form. To be clear, the book more than delivers in that regard. Sa'id offers up a very clear trajectory of hip-hop production and sampling, from Kool Herc to the current trap music trend, that will help hip-hop lovers understand how their favorite genre has grown and changed over the years. But what truly blew my mind open and inspired me to write this review was the book's closing third, when Sa'id breaks down the current state of fair use and copyright law. On its surface it sounds like a dry topic, but Sa'id's writing really helped me understand just how dramatically copyright's original purpose has been hijacked by big business, and how copyright and fair use is now intertwined with all of our lives. Case in point, while I was finishing reading this book I saw that a judge had ruled that the "Happy Birthday" lyrics, which had previously been copyrighted, should actually be in the public domain, and I had such a deeper understanding of what that meant thanks to "The Art of Sampling." So if you're a beatmaker and music lover I feel confident saying that you'll get a lot out of this book, but in many ways it's also a must read for anyone interested in art, business and free speech in the digital age.

While The Art Of Sampling is essentially a hip-hop textbook, breaking down one of the genre's most important pillars, sampling, Amir Sa'id's 30-plus years of experience and gives this book a much more detailed, close and alive feel than any textbook; learning from someone who is actively engaged in a complex topic themselves, not merely studying it from a distance, is the best way to learn. Not only does Sa'id break sampling down to its most basic forms - breaks, loops and scratches - but he also widens his lens to explore the legal side of sampling, explaining the often confusing world of copyright law and fair use in ways the average person can understand. If you are an artist, producer, in the music industry or simply a fascinated observer, The Art Of Sampling has something for you. I'm more of a hip-hop history buff than a beatmaker, so I was more fascinated by the parts of the book detailing the history of sampling than the middle section, which delved into very specific and technical detail around creating samples. By the same token, I can see how someone more interested in learning and mastering the craft of sampling could find those sections very valuable, but might not be as ready to dive into the sections on history or copyright law. Ultimately, by making the book so comprehensive Sa'id has created a great resource for anyone in the sampling world, and I'm looking forward to continuing to dive deeper into it as the year, and my knowledge of sampling, unfolds.

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