



WAKKA FLOCKKA

It's been a quick rise to the top for Waka Flocka Flame. The Queens-born, Atlanta-bred rapper began garnering attention in hip-hop circles after his mixtape *Salute Me or Shoot Me Vol. 1* hit the streets of Atlanta in January 2009. It featured his breakout record "O Let's Do It." The rowdy club track quickly became a fan favorite, and a year later, after he peppered the streets with more mixtapes and a guest verse on "Bingo," from Gucci Mane's 2009 LP, *The State vs. Radric Davis*, "O Let's Do It" got an official remix featuring Diddy, Rick Ross and Gucci Mane. On top of all that, the singles "Hard in Da Paint" and "No Hands," from his debut LP *Flockaveli* (released October 5), garnered him enough buzz and attention to be voted the #8 Hottest MC in the Game, his first time making the list. While Atlanta has been a hotbed of hip-hop talent for many years, a lot of artists who make a name for themselves off club records disappear as fast as they arrive. Right now, though, Waka isn't just hot in the clubs; he practically owns them.

"[Waka] put out three consistent records in a row," MTV senior producer Rahman Dukes said during the Hottest MCs roundtable. "He's coming out a region that's known for putting out one great record." Still, there are many in hip-hop who question the upstart's talent. Critics have derided him, claiming he's more flash and rowdiness (witness his shouted ad lib "Waka! Flocka! Waka! Flocka!") than lyrical substance. "He's not the most lyrical dude," MTV News senior writer Jayson Rodriguez admitted, defending Waka's place on the list. "But these joints, they're ubiquitous. You can't go places without hearing 'O Let's Do It.' You hear it everywhere." "There's always been a lane for different artists who just control that 'get drunk, get crunk, just go hard' ... and those artists usually haven't always been the most lyrical," said MTV News supervising producer Sean Lee. "Right now, he's owning that lane."

