

# Migos: Culture II

SC [spectrumculture.com/2018/02/04/migos-culture-ii/](https://spectrumculture.com/2018/02/04/migos-culture-ii/)

Daniel Bromfield

February 4, 2018

One thing about Migos' *Culture II*: it's long. 106 minutes, to be exact. To use a Beatles comparison, as is so often done with this group that's roughly the length of George Harrison's *All Things Must Pass*. But while that album aimed for operatic sweep and earned every minute of its runtime even as it devolved into jamming in its final stretch, Migos' latest is really just *Culture* but twice as long. There's no artistic reason for that length but there is a financial one: the new laws governing "album-equivalent units" stipulate that 1,500 streams of any given song equal one album sale—so the more songs on your album, the higher it charts.



The last album worked because it took no prisoners and had the good fortune to become a big hit just as pop culture cycled back around to Migos. But *Culture II* is a classic example of expending art for profit. Its runtime is a steel trap around its best songs, and the album taunts us with a wealth of music that is all but inaccessible to anyone not willing to spend the better part of an afternoon wading through it.

Take any 12 songs at random and you'll have an album as good, if not better, than *Culture*. For its first half, *Culture II* barrels forward relentlessly, one great song after another. But after the posse cut "White Sand," which crams six rappers into a dizzying three-and-a-half-minute song, the album starts to lose steam. It's a plus that the music's pleasant in the background, because by the one-hour mark it all becomes ambient noise, and when lead single "MotorSport" finally shows up, you'd be forgiven for not realizing what you were listening to until you hear the Cardi B verse.

There are only two bad songs on the whole thing: the plodding "Open It Up," which evokes the similarly leaden "Deadz" from the previous album, and the outro "Culture National Anthem," where the Migos sound exhausted. By comparison, there are great songs galore. "Stir-Fry" is the group's best concession yet to pop. The Cassius Jay-produced "Made Men" is practically an Isaac Hayes song. "White Sand" is one of the best posse cuts in ages. By all definitions of the word, this is an uncommonly consistent album. It really is the package that's the problem.

*Culture II* really isn't worth listening to more than once in full. Here's the thing, though: the runtime really isn't that unbearable. It feels shorter than either of Drake's last two albums. This is a 106-minute album that feels like 77 minutes. But who wouldn't rather have a 50-minute one that feels like 30 minutes? The Beatles' last quote on record was "I hope we passed the audition." Migos have certainly passed the audition. But their latest also brings to mind the

final words of the Sex Pistols: “Ever get the feeling you’ve just been cheated?”

- Label:  
Quality Control/Motown/Capitol
- Release Date:  
January 26, 2018