

# R.I.P. Coolio



Rapper Coolio died Wednesday, September 28th at age 59 of cardiac arrest. Coolio became famous in the '90s after recording "Gangsta's Paradise" for the *Dangerous Minds* soundtrack. The song famously sampled Stevie Wonder's "Pastime Paradise" and the video became a staple of MTV's playlist. It was the number one single of 1995 in the United States and topped international charts in 13 European countries. Coolio won the 1996 Grammy Award for Best Rap Solo Performance for "Gangsta's Paradise." He also had success with "Fantastic Voyage" and "1,2,3,4, (Sumpin' New)." Artis Leon Ivey Jr. was born in Monessen, Pennsylvania but was raised in Compton,

California. His rap career started solo in 1987 with the single "Whatcha Gonna Do?" but by 1991 he joined the group WC and the Maad Circle. In 1994, he signed to Tommy Boy Records and returned to being a solo artist. He had several television cameos in the '90s and minor film roles. Coolio and his antler-looking braids became a pop culture meme before the term was associated with the internet in the 2010s.

In the 2000s he became known to new generations of rap fans because of television appearances on the UK's *Celebrity Big Brother* and the Food Network show *Rachael Vs. Guy: Celebrity Cook-Off*. In 2019 he appeared on Irish rap group Versatile's single "Escape Wagon." Coolio gave an interview in July where he revealed that he was working on new music with Irish singer Christy Dignam. His last and eighth studio album *From The Bottom 2 The Top* was released in 2009.