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The Best Of The Blues: The 101 Essential Blues Albums



Synopsis

The blues is enjoying a strong resurgence; more people are listening to and buying blues music than ever before, and they have a lot of music now to choose from. Helping to sort out the confusion, acclaimed rock critic and blues expert Robert Santelli has compiled a list of the 101 most important blues albums, the works which are absolutely indispensable to a blues library. No one can argue with the effort and dedication with which Santelli has gone about his task. Each entry contains a thoroughly annotated discography with facts and dates, as well as meaty descriptions that place the albums in historical and artistic context.

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Customer Reviews

As soon as I saw the listing of 101 top blues recordings I knew that many people would be angry that their favorites weren't included. But the writer freely admits in the introduction that other choices could be possible. I really respect the research that he did--eventually acquiring over 1000 blues CDs, not to mention the scads of vinyl LPs that he already had. Sounds like he has listened to a lot more blues than any of the reviewers that have written here. But there is a certain inconsistency in Santelli's presentation. He sometimes sneaks in another recommendation or two under an album's description. For instance when describing "As Blue As A Man Can Be" by Robert Pete Williams, he also gives a strong recommendation to "When A Man Takes The Blues". A better organization and title for the book would have been: The 101 Essential Blues Artists. Then under each artist he could have recommended their essential recordings. Also, why the fixation with the number "101". By

firmly adhering to 101 albums he excluded several essential artists. Another complaint is that with multiple recommendations for some artists like Skip James and Big Mama Thornton, other very significant people in the blues, like Willie Dixon got skipped. And, Santelli sometimes makes the wrong recommendations. For instance, the Muddy Waters Chess Box Set has 3 CDs for a good price and is a better buy than buying "The Best of Muddy Waters" and "Trouble No More: The Singles" separately (the Box Set combines both of those CDs and more). He also gives Muddy Waters too many slots (four is too much for one artist), e.g., you don't need to buy Real Folk Singer--a sampling of that album is included in the above mentioned Muddy Waters Chess Box.

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