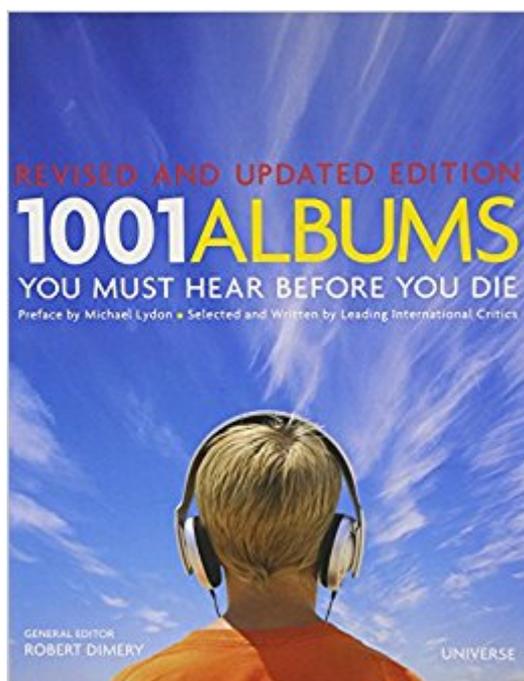


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1001 Albums You Must Hear Before You Die: Revised And Updated Edition



Synopsis

The ultimate compendium of a half century of the best music, now revised and updated. 1001 Albums You Must Hear Before You Die is a highly readable list of the best, the most important, and the most influential pop albums from 1955 through today. Carefully selected by a team of international critics and some of the best-known music reviewers and commentators, each album is a groundbreaking work seminal to the understanding and appreciation of music from the 1950s to the present. Included with each entry are production details and credits as well as reproductions of original album cover art. Perhaps most important of all, each album featured comes with an authoritative description of its importance and influence.

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Customer Reviews

Robert Dimery is a writer and editor who has worked for numerous magazines, including Time Out and Vogue. Michael Lydon was a founding editor of Rolling Stone. His books include Rock Folk, Boogie Lightning, and Ray Charles: Man and Music.

Any survey of music or movies limited to a number (in this case 1,001) is going to disappoint someone, and I would include myself in this. Being a person who listens to music most often while commuting, and who enjoys variety, and therefor listens with a good set of headphones to an iPod music library set on 'shuffle,' I nevertheless retain a fondness for albums as works of art. Being older, I still refer to CDs as albums and still own well over a thousand vinyl LPs. Before I began reading this 960-page book cover to cover, I did a quick survey of its entries, which are of course

presented in chronological order, and by decade. What I found was indeed disappointing, and yet at the same time predictable. Now albums, in the classic sense, began within the world of 75rpm records, which, because of the speed, contained a very limited amount of music per side, so they were presented as books with record sleeves instead of pages, hence the the name, "album." Longer works, as in classical music, had to be split up and spread out over several sides. Anyway, albums, as we know them today, only really got started in the early 1950s. That is to say, musicians like Frank Sinatra and Ella Fitzgerald recognized an opportunity in the new long play, or LP form that arrived with 33rpm vinyl, to present their music as a cohesive whole, or concept, rather than just a collection of unrelated singles. Those of you who know your musical history are well aware of these facts, but I am mentioning them primarily as a prelude to what I see as problematic, specifically relating to this particular volume. Of the many, many thousands of LPs and CDs released since the period when this book begins, there are a relative few, universally accepted "classics." Not everyone agrees on which ones of these they would include in a survey such as this one, but half of this book contains entries that consistently appear in "Best" lists published in books and magazines, and most of the entries "charted" and/or contained hit songs that everyone knows. These two facts alone mean that there are hundreds of really great singers, bands and albums that don't get mentioned in these pages. But beyond this observation, it gets worse: of the nearly 100 contributors writing about these albums, only around a dozen of them are women. This leads me to believe that those responsible for picking which albums would be included were also predominantly men. Hence we get a heavily male, rock and jazz oriented selection with many wonderful artists snubbed. Not only do female artists get represented in small proportion compared to male artists, but works of great sensitivity and creative artistry by male singers and bands get short shrift. True, there are exceptions: Tim Buckley, Nick Drake and Donovan get a couple of nods, and there are occasional surprises, such as one entry by the experimental and quirky Incredible String Band (although their inclusion is for "Hangman's Beautiful Daughter, one of my least favorite of their string of fascinating, often beautiful releases throughout the 1960s and 70s). Again, given an almost-certainty that whatever team was responsible for selecting this list of 1001 "essentials" was made up of men, this collection is not all that shocking. That having been said, here is a list of snubbed artists (those who failed to have even one of their albums picked): Judy Collins (at least four of her albums should have been contenders, chief among them "Who Knows Where the Time Goes" and "In My Life"), The Moody Blues (at least one of their first seven albums should have made the grade), Al Stewart (not even the peerless "Year of the Cat?"), Buffy Sainte-Marie (Little Wheel Spin And Spin and Illuminations) are both ground-breaking

and truly daring works that I would have included. Barbra Streisand (a unique singer that should have had at least one album included -- several were good enough), Linda Ronstadt (she only gets a group effort; the *Trío* album, with Dolly Parton and Emmylou Harris; her *Hasten Down The Wind* and *Heart Like A Wheel* albums should have been included), Steeleye Span (not *Below the Salt* or *Parcel of Rogues* -- really?), Gordon Lightfoot, Jennifer Warnes, Karla Bonoff, Wendy Waldman, Glen Campbell, Bobbie Gentry, June Tabor, Greg Brown, Shawn Colvin, Dionne Warwick, Manhattan Transfer, Rickie Lee Jones, Michael Franks, Peggy Lee; the list goes on. | given the fact that some artists, from David Bowie to Tom Waits, from Velvet Underground and Talking Heads to Bruce Springsteen and Neil Young - men all -- each get several entries, at least one or two of their albums could have been sacrificed to include one each of the above-listed musicians who were ignored! Again, anyone knows that lists like this are very subjective, and couldn't possibly please all readers, but I had to question why certain albums were not judged good enough compared with others: Supertramp gets one, but no Moody Blues? Madonna gets three albums, but infinitely superior singers like Barbra Streisand or Peggy Lee aren't even mentioned? Joni Mitchell is one of the only female artists who was allowed more than a couple of entries. The nearly unlistenable *Trout Mask Replica* by Captain Beefheart is rightly lauded, but an astonishing one-off work like *Electric Storm* by White Noise, which bears up to repeated listenings, is missing. | there are many more examples of my disagreements with the final list. Another phenomenon I noticed was that artists with long and beautifully developing careers, like Joan Armatrading, Tori Amos, and Joan Baez, among others, only have a debut or one early album written about - they each topped these wonderful young efforts many times over. Finally, it comes down to personal taste, certainly. There are many heavy metal, hip-hop and alternative rock entries that wouldn't have even crossed my mind, let alone made it to any list of contenders...But all is not wasted, because in these pages are many interesting facts and stories, and most of the records discussed are important to pop music history. It is an enjoyable read, despite its flaws. I was reminded of several albums I have on vinyl that I'd never gotten around to replacing on CD. If there were more than a few others like me reading, I guess a book like this is good for the industry. In this age of downloading singles, *1001 Albums You Must Hear Before You Die* serves as a reminder of the power and majesty of great albums and the artistic genius behind their creation. This is terrific reading for the job, as it can be read a few entries at a time. It took me about a year to read *1001 Songs You Must Hear Before You Die: And 10,001 You Must Download* this way, and likewise *1001 Movies You Must See Before You Die*, so I figure it will take me about the same amount of time to get through this one. Now that I've jumped

around in the book to get an overall impression of the scope and variety contained among these pages, I am looking forward to reading about each and every album that was chosen. There are lots of great photos of singers and bands, in recording studios and on stage, included to make the experience even more pleasurable.

Very thick book. It must be 3 inches thick. The information is abundant. Great reference book as well.

Great book if you are into music, lots of wonderful albums, some I had never heard of.

Much Enjoyed!!

Great reference book! Brings back memories and warms my heart!: -)

Cool coffee table book!!

While I own over half of these albums. I have really been enjoying the trip through those which I don't.

Love this book. Like pulling the album up on Rhapsody or Google and listening to it as I read about it.

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