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R & B: The Essential Album Guide With CD (Audio) (Musichound Essential Album Guides)



Synopsis

The Definitive guide to the genre. MusicHound R & B reviews the works of 877 individual artists and groups, including Anita Baker, Babyface, Ray Charles, Bo Diddley, Aretha Franklin, Marvin Gaye, Otis Redding, and Snoop Doggy Dog, includes 100 portraits of classic and contemporary R & B performers. A special resources section brings fans information on books, magazines, Web sites and festivals.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This includes a disproportionately hefty dose of hip-hop and rap albums, which makes sense, considering the intense recent cross-pollination of hip hop with cheesy quiet storm "soul" (which is also heavily emphasized in this volume). However, the emphasis is clearly more contemporary than historical -- for example, the reference sidebars are entitled "Word Up!", which seems tacky as well as rather dated. Modern artists such as Bobby Brown, Sheena Easton, and Toni Braxton get equal -- if not superior -- billing with soul music touchstones such as Otis Redding, Sam Cooke, and the Stax/Volt and Motown crowds. Very few pre-rock artists are included -- Cab Calloway and Big Joe Turner make it in, for example, but not Buddy Johnson or Floyd Dixon, and several classic 60s soul stars such as Garnett Mimms are also omitted. Finally, while most of the big-name blues shouters such as Wynonie Harris, Amos Milburn and Louis Jordan have entries, practically none of their great gospel counterparts are included. This really is a disgrace, as well as a short-sighted, culturally

revisionist nod to contemporary tastes (which do not embrace the preachin' and shoutin' religious side of African-American music). Rest assured that without Bessie Griffin, Clara Ward, the Soul Stirrers, or Rev. James Cleveland, there would never have been a BeBe Winans, Mariah Carey or Aretha Franklin -- much less a Parliament, Lauryn Hill or KRS-1. As with other MusicHound books, this also provides useful appendices, including fan sites, etc., and the companion CD is a nice (if stingy) sampler of some of gems from the Mercury Records catalog. But if Wu Tang or Billy Oceans are not your "R&B" thing, you may wish to be wary of this tome.

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