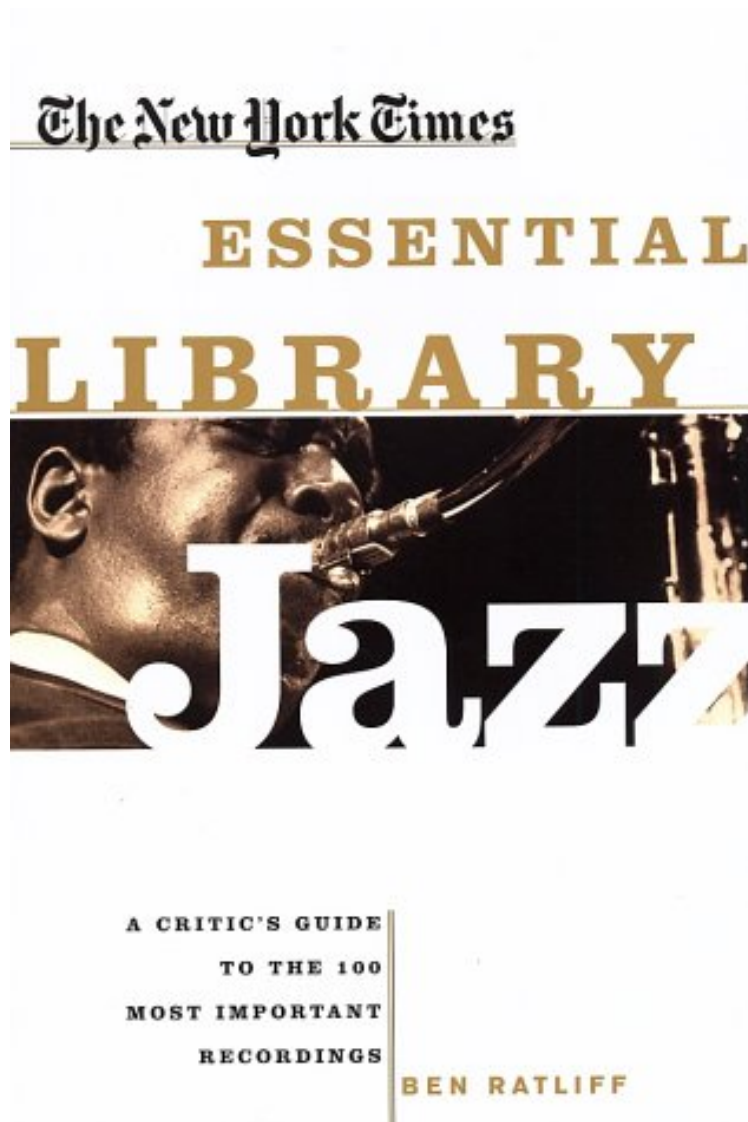


(Download) The New York Times Essential Library: Jazz: A Critic's Guide to the 100 Most Important Recordings

## The New York Times Essential Library: Jazz: A Critic's Guide to the 100 Most Important Recordings

*Ben Ratliff*

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**Ben Ratliff : The New York Times Essential Library: Jazz: A Critic's Guide to the 100 Most Important Recordings** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The New York Times Essential Library: Jazz: A Critic's Guide to the 100 Most Important Recordings:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Four StarsBy Call me IshmaelEssential if you like jazz!10 of 12

people found the following review helpful. Decent introduction to jazzBy Joseph ScottThe recommendations in this book are all solid and classic. The brief essays about the recordings are fairly erudite, but I find the tone slightly pretentious at times. I agree with another reviewer in that he tends to write about himself instead of striving for a more objective description of the recordings. Obviously, a list of 100 recordings cannot begin to justice to the enormous quantity of jazz available. Ratliff's list concentrates more on established "classics" than on modern players -- you will not find Brad Mehldau, Kenny Garrett, Kurt Rosenwinkel, or Nick Payton. Nor will you find more "approachable" but great contemporary musicians such as Kurt Elling and Luciana Souza. Because of this, I do not recommend the guide to someone who wants to get an idea of where jazz is right now. It is more of a historical introduction than a guide for modern listeners. This is not meant as criticism; that is probably what Ratliff intended. Overall, this book would be a decent place to start for the jazz newbie (or even for the seasoned listener, who may have neglected some or many of these recordings).36 of 39 people found the following review helpful. UnfairBy PonchoThe reviews here have been too harsh to this book. This book is not meant by any stretch to be a replacement for the Penguin Jazz on CD Guide, but as a list and analysis of 100 very good jazz CDs it isn't bad at all. The reviews are generally insightful and informative, and the book contains a fine balance of big band, be-bop, and post-bop, with all the colours in between. (His defense of Cecil Taylor is particularly refreshing.) I might quibble with the title, but no list of 100 CDs will satisfy every reader as including all the "essentials." The main list, combined with the additional 100 CDs listed in the appendix, would provide enough listening enjoyment for a lifetime.

A connoisseur's tour through the great American art formA Love Supreme. Miles Ahead. Brubeck Time. Yardbird Suite. The Sidewinder. For newcomers just beginning their library of recordings, and for longtime fans looking to deepen their understanding, New York Times jazz critic Ben Ratliff offers an assertive, deeply knowledgeable collector's guide, full of opinions and insights on the one hundred greatest recorded works of jazz. From the rare early recordings of Louis Armstrong, through Duke Ellington, Benny Goodman's seminal Carnegie Hall concert, and the lions of the bebop era, to the transformative Miles Davis and several less-canonized artists, such as Chano Pozo, Jimmy Giuffre, and Greg Osby, who have made equally significant contributions, Ratliff places each recording in the greater context and explains its importance in the development of the form. Taken together, these original essays add up to a brief history of jazz, highlighting milestone events, legendary players, critical trends, and artistic breakthroughs.

From Library JournalRatliff, a music critic for the New York Times, presents essays on what he considers the 100 most important jazz recordings. In each, he discusses a recording's merits and shortcomings and includes a list of its performers. He seems to address the younger or potential jazz fan; otherwise, how could one explain his comparisons of mid-20th century jazz performances to those of Nirvana and Sonic Youth? Straight and to the point, Ratliff acts as an advocate for what he sees as a popular art form in need of an infusion of interest. This informative book is heavy on obvious albums by Miles Davis, Billie Holiday, John Coltrane, Ella Fitzgerald, and Charlie Parker, but the inclusion of Jeanne Lee, Bob Wills and His Texas Playboys, "Baby Face" Willette, and present-day phenomenon Jason Moran illustrates Ratliff's catholic view of the jazz genre. Also included is a list (title, main performer, date, and record label information only) of a second 100 recordings. This might not be a book that jazz fans will buy for their personal libraries—they have probably already formed their own tastes and list of favorites—but as a guide for the uninitiated it is essential for academic music libraries and public libraries large and small. It would also be most useful for collection development librarians building a well-rounded jazz CD collection. James E. Perone, Mt. Union Coll., Alliance, OH Copyright 2002 Reed Business Information, Inc. From BooklistRatliff's essential jazz-records book separates itself from the herd at once by starting its chronological listing with *The Creators of Jazz* by the Original Dixieland Jazz Band, the white outfit that ever since it recorded jazz first has been tarred for crudely ripping off black music. Ratliff defends the ODJB's music making as well as its historic importance while granting that its leader may have been the worst racist in jazz history. Later, he includes, with warm appreciation, Latin jazz players Chano Pozo, Machito, Eddie Palmieri, and Moacir Santos, who aren't even listed in some huge jazz record guides. He has smart and persuasive essays on why underrated popular jazzmen John Kirby, Ahmad Jamal, and "Baby Face" Willette deserve places in the pantheon. He even gives the nod to difficult, dissonant experimenters Cecil Taylor, Albert Ayler, Roscoe Mitchell, and Evan Parker, whom many jazz historians barely tolerate. All that, and Armstrong, Ellington, Holiday, Basie, Tatum, "Bird," Monk, Mingus, Miles, and the others everybody expects to be in on this jam, too. Damn good book. Ray Olson Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved About the Author Ben Ratliff is the jazz critic at The New York Times. He lives in Manhattan with his wife and two sons.