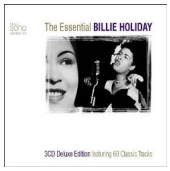
The Essential Billie Holiday [2002]



Disc 1
1. I can't give you anything but love
2. Loverman
3. Back in your own backyard
4. Your mother's son-in-law
5. Miss Brown to you
6. On the sunny side of the street
7. I love my man "Billie's blues"
8. I wished on the moon
9. Twenty-four hours a day
10. What a little moonlight can do
11. No more
12. He's funny that way
13. Nice work if you can get it
14. My man "Mon homme"
15. Lover, come back to me
16. I must have that man
17. Easy living
18. All of me
19. You go to my head
20. Strange fruit

Disc 2
1. God bless the child
2. I'll get by
3. Them there eyes
4. Some other spring
5. These foolish things
6. Don't explain
7. Yesterdays
8. Any old time
9. I gotta right to sing the blues
10. My last affair
11. Moanin' low

12. That ole devil called love
13. I cried for you
14. The way you look tonight
15. Pennies from heaven
16. I cover the waterfront
17. A sailboat in the moonlight
18. Long gone blues
19. This year's kisses
20. Carelessly

Disc 3
1. They can't take that away from me
2. The man I love
3. Fine and mellow
4. The mood that I'm in
5. Mean to me
6. I can't get started
7. Ghost of yesterday
8. Swing brother swing
9. Did I remember?
10. I'll never be the same
11. I'm gonna lock my heart
12. No regrets
13. A fine romance
14. Who loves you?
15. I'll get by (alternate take)
16. Trav'lin light
17. Solitude
18. I've got my love to keep you warm
19. Good morning heartache
20. These 'n' that 'n' those

These days albums like this get overlooked; the modern generation don't even care to wonder "who is Billie Holiday?" as they clamour for the newest releases by Lady GaGa, Beyonce, and Britney Spears, practically squealing for anything with a (albeit annoying) beat and a catchy tagline rather than any music with real meaning, class or soul.

Those who know Billie's work, this album is definately THE essential (although definately not completed) collection of some her most profound and earliest works. For those who do not

know the music of the legendary "Lady Day", it is worth knowing that the measley few pounds this album will cost would be well spent for your musical education.

Billie Holiday struggled through more hardships than any woman should ever have to face in her tragically short life. Depression, drugs, alcoholism, rape, questionable paternity, poverty, prostitution, spousal abuse, and finally a very early death at the young age of 44.

It has always felt that perhaps it is due to all these things, that her voice carried with such resonance, and why the lyrics can carve a way into you right down to the bone. With every tiny warble, with every sweet high note, with every soft low rasp, Billie Holiday takes you on a powerfully emotional journey with her. Although much of the songs in this collectin are slightly soft, sad and bluesy, there are several up-beat tracks to tap your toes to, and bring a little whimsical smile to your lips. She will teach you what love is, what heartache is, what happiness and joy are, and most importantly, teach you that the life of a woman was just as complicated then as it is now.

Not only are the vocal performances on this album stunning, but the music itself is truly incredible - dating from the mid 1930's to the 40s, it is some of the finest examples of the music of the swing era I've heard to date.

One of my favourite things from this collection is that all the songs remain intact and while are distinctly clear, they're not overly digitally remastered. These CD's sound like you're playing them in an old record player, they have that soft muted tone 1930's sound about them. Closing my eyes, I could almost imagine being right there in the era, hearing it right then on a record player. I think just the way they were always intended to be heard.

A wonderful album, wonderful music to chill out and de-stress to, and great value for money as you get 60 songs in this set. This is a GREAT starter to someone who is just becoming a fan of the legend herself. --- Dismal Angel "Ash" (Scotland)

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