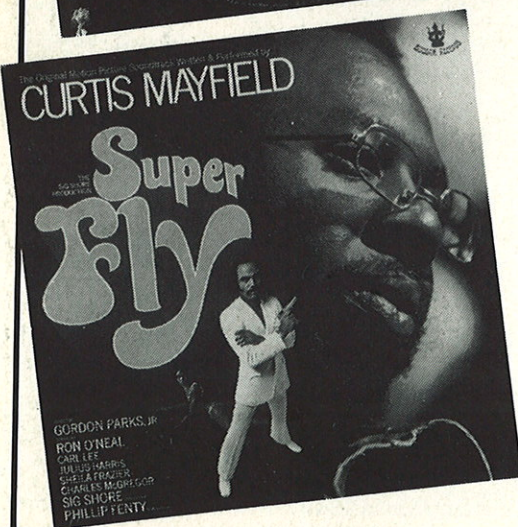
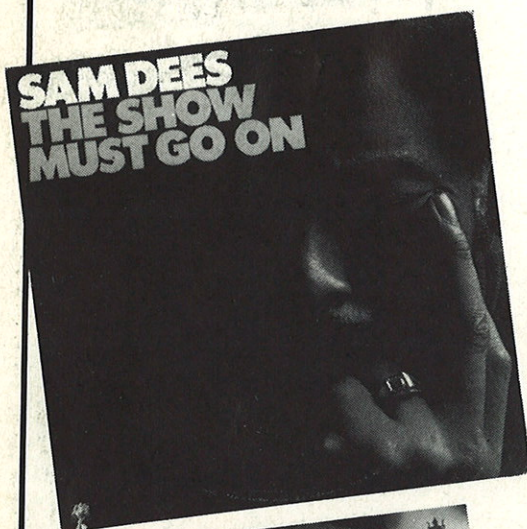


# TOP 100 LPs OF ALL TIME

In 1974 or 1975 NME ran a feature entitled "The Top 100 LPs Of All Time" or words to that effect. I think there were 5 or 6 soul LPs included which showed just how highly perceptive the magazine was. I immediately wrote an 'Outraged of Tunbridge Wells'-type letter which was printed but which did little to stem the anti-black music bias in place at that time. So here is my own listing which will no doubt annoy as many people as NME's but I'd like to think this one is at least a lot more interesting.



The rules? Only LPs conceived as LPs. Therefore Greatest Hits, Various Artists compilations and retrospective sets such as Laura Lee's "That's How It Is", Otis Clay's "The Only Way Is Up" and Irma Thomas' "Down In Muscle Shoals" are not included. It would have been even harder to compile if they were. Also, no 1989 LPs have been considered as the passage of time is not sufficient for final evaluation.

Surprises? How badly served on LP The Dramatics, The Chi-Lites, Tyrone Davis and The Four Tops are. Individually brilliant tracks by the score but very few truly consistent LPs. I also can't quite believe that there is nothing by Otis Redding, Bobby Bland or Little Milton. Still, you try and cut your own lists down to 100 - it certainly wasn't easy.

## 1 PAUL KELLY "Don't Burn Me" (1973)

A perfect LP, Kelly is the best singer anyone will ever hear, the band is a dream and the songs magnificent. No weak links at all and the years have not diminished the impact one iota.

## 2 PAUL KELLY "Hooked, Hogtied And Collared" (1974)

Another perfect LP. Probably as good as "Don't Burn Me" but something has to be number one.

## 3 SLY & THE FAMILY STONE "There's A Riot Going On" (1971)

Genius. I have played this constantly for nearly twenty years and I still hear new things each time.

## 4 THE TEMPTATIONS "Sing Smokey" (1965)

An album of such beauty it brings tears to my eyes.

## 5 AL GREEN "Gets Next To You" (1971)

If the whole LP was as good as the first four astonishing tracks this would have to be number one.

## 6 BOBBY WOMACK "Poet 2" (1984)

A pity side two is so markedly inferior as side one is probably the best complete side of an LP ever recorded. These duets with Patti LaBelle are nearly beyond belief.

## 7 MARVIN GAYE "What's Going On" (1971)

I can't believe anything more needs to be (or can be) said about this masterpiece.

## 8 SLY & THE FAMILY STONE "Stand" (1969)

Totally different to "Riot" but brilliant all the same. Amazing life and energy.

## 9 SWAMP DOGG "Total Destruction To Your Mind" (1970)

A wonderful set of songs from a real maverick. He can't sing like some but he has tremendous presence.

## 10 DON COVAY "Super Dude I" (1973)

The best proof that this man is a true giant of soul. "Leave Him" is one of the great unsung tracks but all of this is superb.

## 11 ETNA JAMES "Tell Mama" (1968)

One of Muscle Shoals' finest moments and Etta has never sounded better than she did here.

## 12 JIMMY LEWIS "Totally Involved" (1974)

Like Swamp Dogg, Lewis is a one-off and it is a great shame that this marvellously personal LP remains his only excursion at 33 rpm.

## 13 MILLIE JACKSON "Caught Up" (1974)

Millie has got hopelessly caught up by her own image but here she had the whole world at her feet.

## 14 SWAMP DOGG "Have You Heard His Story?" (1974)

Amazing LP. I always wholeheartedly admire someone who has the self-confidence to go his own way.

## 15 Temptations "Temptin' Temptations" (1965)

This set includes "Since I Lost My Baby". That in itself would almost warrant inclusion but the other tracks are excellent anyway.

## 16 SAM DEES "The Show Must Go On" (1975)

An unknown LP.

## 17 PAUL KELLY "Dirt" (1972)

Not quite up to "Burn" or "Hooked" but essential nevertheless.

## 18 BILL WITHERS "Live At Carnegie Hall" (1973)

Best 'live' LP ever. Withers has a great warmth and seems like a really good bloke and although I'm not convinced it's all live it still takes some doing to make a flawless double album.

## 19 BOBBY WOMACK "Home Is Where The Heart Is" (1976)

This was actually a magnificent return to form at the time by Womack who had just released "Safety Zone", one of the most over-produced records ever made. But back down to Muscle Shoals and the magic flowed all over again.

## 20 AL GREEN "I'm Still In Love With You" (1972)

Much softer than his earliest Hi work but absolutely irresistible. No wonder he turned to God when he realised what a voice he had been given.

## 21 LATIMORE "Good Time Man" (1985)

## 22 MIRACLES "Going To A Go-Go" (1965)

## 23 SOUL CHILDREN "Friction" (1974)

## 24 ANN SEXTON "The Beginning" (1977)

## 25 DORIS DUKE "I'm A Loser" (1970)

## 26 DELLS & DRAMATICS "Dells Vs Dramatics" (1974)

## 27 JOHNNY ADAMS "After All The Good Is Gone" (1978)

## 28 MILLIE JACKSON "Still Caught Up" (1975)

## 29 SOLOMON BURKE "Proud Mary" (1969)

## 30 DJ ROGERS "On The Road Again" (1976)

## 31 LUTHER INGRAM "Do You Love Somebody" (1977)

## 32 JAMES GOVAN "I'm In Need" (1987)

## 33 BOBBY WOMACK "Understanding" (1972)

## 34 SHIRLEY BROWN "Woman To Woman" (1974)

## 35 JAMES BROWN "King Of Soul" (1968)

## 36 IMPRESSIONS "This Is My Country" (1968)

## 37 SOUL CHILDREN "Genesis" (1972)

## 38 DONNY HATHAWAY "Live" (1972)

## 39 EDDIE HINTON "Very Extremely Dangerous" (1978)

## 40 ASHFORD & SIMPSON "Gimme Something Real" (1973)

## 41 TEMPTATIONS "Sky's The Limit" (1971)

## 42 CURTIS MAYFIELD "Superfly" (1972)

## 43 BOBBY WOMACK "Womagic" (1986)

## 44 WAR "The World Is A Ghetto" (1972)

## 45 ARETHA FRANKLIN "I Never Loved A Man" (1967)

## 46 BUNNY SIGLER "Keep Smilin'" (1974)

## 47 NEW BIRTH "Coming Together" (1972)

## 48 CHARLIE JONES "Love, Life And Reality" (1983)

## 49 NOLAN "Nolan" (1972)

## 50 OLLIE NIGHTINGALE "Sweet Surrender" (1973)

## 51 SOUL CHILDREN "The Soul Children" (1969)

## 52 LATIMORE "Getting Down To Brass Tacks" (1980)

## 53 JOHNNIE TAYLOR "Wall To Wall" (1985)

## 54 NEW BIRTH "Behold The Mighty Army" (1977)

## 55 ISLEY BROTHERS "Brother, Brother, Brother" (1972)

## 56 GREG PERRY "One For The Road" (1975)

## 57 JOHN EDWARDS "Life, Love And Living" (1976)

## 58 DELLS "The Second Time" (1988)

## 59 LUTHER INGRAM "If Loving You Is Wrong" (1972)

## 60 LITTLE BEAVER "Joey" (1972)

## 61 O'JAYS "Family Reunion" (1975)

## 62 AL GREEN "Explores Your Mind" (1974)

## 63 CURTIS MAYFIELD "Back To The World" (1973)

## 64 PHILLIP MITCHELL "Devastation" (1987)

## 65 CHARLES BRIMMER "Soulman" (1976)

## 66 DAVID PORTER "Sweat And Love" (1973)

## 67 JOE TEX "Bring A Book" (1969)

## 68 NORMAN FEELS "Norman Feels" (1974)

## 69 ISLEY BROTHERS "Live It Up" (1974)

## 70 MANHATTANS "There's No Me Without You" (1973)

## 71 WILSON PICKETT "The Sound Of" (1974)

## 72 AL GREEN "Call Me" (1973)

## 73 NEW BIRTH "Ain't No Big Thing But It's Growing" (1971)

## 74 MASQUERADERS "Everybody Wanna Live On" (1975)

## 75 ARETHA FRANKLIN "Lady Soul" (1968)

## 76 ISLEY BROTHERS "3+3" (1973)

## 77 CLARENCE CARTER "Loneliness And Temptation" (1975)

## 78 O'JAYS "Ship Ahoy" (1973)

## 79 SANDRA FEVA "Savoir Faire" (1981)

## 80 TYRONE DAVIS "It's All In The Game" (1973)

## 81 STAPLE SINGERS "Soul Folk In Action" (1968)

## 82 ANN PEEBLES "I Can't Stand The Rain" (1974)

## 83 MARVIN GAYE "Let's Get It On" (1973)

## 84 O V WRIGHT "A Nickel, A Nail And The Ace Of Spades" (1972)

## 85 AL GREEN "The Belle Album" (1977)

## 86 HAROLD MELVIN & BLUE NOTES "To Be True" (1975)

## 87 FUNKADELIC "Let's Take It To The Stage" (1975)

## 88 SPINNERS "New And Improved" (1975)

## 89 JOHNNY ROBINSON "Memphis High" (1970)

## 90 DON COVAY "Hot Blood" (1975)

## 91 CANDI STATON "Stand By Your Man" (1970)

## 92 JOE TEX "I've Got To Do A Little Bit Better" (1966)

## 93 LATIMORE "It Ain't Where You Been" (1976)

## 94 STAPLE SINGERS "Be Altitude: Respect Yourself" (1972)

## 95 TED TAYLOR "1976" (1976)

## 96 DICKY WILLIAMS "Red Negligee, White Whiskey And Blue Lights" (1986)

## 97 MODULATIONS "It's Rough Out Here" (1975)

## 98 JOHNNIE TAYLOR "Who's Making Love" (1969)

## 99 ROBERT WINTERS AND FALL "Magic Man" (1981)

## 100 OHIO PLAYERS "Fire" (1974)

**Results and conclusions:**  
16 from the 1960's; 72 from the 1970's and 12 from the 1980's. The years 1972-1975 are obviously a golden age for me whereas 1979 and 1982 (nothing at all from either year) were clearly not good vintages. JL

