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This is a dynamic list and may never be able to satisfy particular standards for completeness. You can help by adding missing items with reliable sources. The American online music publication Pitchfork has awarded a perfect score of 10 to more than 150 albums. Most of the scores were given in retrospective reviews of classic albums or reissues.[1] Artists who have received perfect scores on release include Radiohead, Fiona Apple, Kanye West, Bonnie "Prince" Billy, And You Will Know Us by the Trail of Dead and Wilco.[1] Compilation albums that received a perfect score on release, such as The Smile Sessions, are listed in both the "Awarded on release" and "Reissue" columns. Date awarded Title Artist Year Review author Awarded on release Reissue Sunday Review Notes Reference 16 January 1996 El Producto Walt Mink 1996 Ryan Schreiber — [2] 1 May 1996 Gay? 12 Rods 1996 Jason Josephes — [3] April 1997 Kind of Blue Miles Davis 1959 Ryan Schreiber Published undated [4] May 1997 Raw Power Iggy & the Stooges 1973 Jason Josephes [5] OK Computer Radiohead 1997 Ryan Schreiber [6][7] July 1997 Bricolage Amon Tobin 1997 [8] 1 September 1997 This Nation's Saving Grace The Fall 1985 Bruce Tiffee — [9] October 1997 Sketches of Spain Miles Davis 1960 Ryan Schreiber Published undated [10] March 1998 Odds & Sods The Who 1974 Jason Josephes [11] October 1998 The Bootleg Series Vol. 4: Bob Dylan Live 1966, The "Royal Albert Hall" Concert Bob Dylan 1998 Neil Lieberman [12] 1 July 1999 The Soft Bulletin The Flaming Lips 1999 Jason Josephes — [13] 30 September 1999 I See a Darkness Bonnie "Prince" Billy 1999 Samir Khan — [14] 25 April 2000 Animals Pink Floyd 1977 James P. Wisdom — [15] 2 October 2000 Kid A Radiohead 2000 Brent DiCrescenzo — [16] 15 October 2001 The Olatunji Concert: The Last Live Recording John Coltrane 2001 — [17] 28 February 2002 Source Tags & Codes ...And You Will Know Us by the Trail of Dead 2002 Matt LeMay — [18] 21 April 2002 Yankee Hotel Foxtrot Wilco 2002 Brent S. Sirota — [19] 9 May 2002 This Year's Model Elvis Costello & The Attractions 1978 Matt LeMay — [20] 9 July 2002 English Settlement XTC 1982 Chris Dahlen — [21] 1 November 2002 Slanted and Enchanted Pavement 1992 Chris Ott — [22] 19 June 2003 The Ascension Glenn Branca 1981 Andy Beta — [23] 9 December 2003 Marquee Moon Television 1977 Chris Dahlen — [24] 10 February 2004 No Thanks! The '70s Punk Rebellion Various artists 2004 Eric Carr — [25] 30 March 2004 Live at the Apollo James Brown 1963 Dominique Leone — [26] 26 April 2004 Music Has the Right to Children Boards of Canada 1998 Mark Richardson — [27] 21 September 2004 London Calling The Clash 1979 Amanda Petrusich — [28] 25 October 2004 Crooked Rain, Crooked Rain Pavement 1994 Mark Richardson Review of the expanded reissue Crooked Rain, Crooked Rain: LA's Desert Origins [29] 9 June 2005 Endtroducing..... DJ Shadow 1996 Chris Dahlen — [30] 26 September 2005 In the Aeroplane Over the Sea Neutral Milk Hotel 1998 Mark Richardson — [31] 18 November 2005 Born to Run Bruce Springsteen 1975 — [32] 5 May 2006 Pink Flag Wire 1977 Joe Tangari — [33] Chairs Missing 1978 — 13 June 2007 Daydream Nation Sonic Youth 1988 Nitsuh Abebe — [34] 29 October 2007 Unknown Pleasures Joy Division 1979 Joshua Klein — [35] Closer 1980 — 21 April 2008 Let It Be The Replacements 1984 Mark Richardson — [36] 9 May 2008 Otis Blue/Otis Redding Sings Soul Otis Redding 1965 Nate Ptrin — [37] 24 November 2008 Murmur R.E.M. 1983 Stephen M. Deusner — [38] 13 February 2009 Paul's Boutique Beastie Boys 1989 Nate Patrin — [39] 26 March 2009 Histoire de Melody Nelson Serge Gainsbourg 1971 Tom Ewing — [40] 16 April 2009 The Bends Radiohead 1995 Scott Plagenhoef — [41] 2 July 2009 Reckoning R.E.M. 1984 Matt LeMay — [42] 7 September 2009 In Stereo/In Mono The Beatles 2009 Mark Richardson — [43] 9 September 2009 Rubber Soul 1965 Scott Plagenhoef Reviewed as part of the In Stereo and In Mono box set reissue of the Beatles' catalog [44] Revolver 1966 [45] Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band 1967 [46] Magical Mystery Tour [47] 10 September 2009 The Beatles 1968 Mark Richardson [48] Abbey Road 1969 [49] 11 September 2009 The Stone Roses The Stone Roses 1989 Any Granzin — [50] 11 December 2009 Everybody Knows This Is Nowhere Neil Young 1969 Mark Richardson — [51] After the Gold Rush 1970 — 2 March 2010 Ladies and gentlemen we are floating in space Spiritualized 1997 Grayson Haver Currin — [52] 8 March 2010 Quarantine the Past Pavement 2010 Matthew Perpetua — [53] 30 March 2010 On Fire Galaxie 500 1989 Mark Richardson — [54] 19 May 2010 Exile on Main St. The Rolling Stones 1972 Rob Mitchum — [55] 10 June 2010 Disintegration The Cure 1989 Nitsuh Abebe — [56] 3 November 2010 Pinkerton Weezer 1996 Ian Cohen — [57] 22 November 2010 My Beautiful Dark Twisted Fantasy Kanye West 2010 Ryan Dombal — [58] 11 January 2011 Emergency & I The Dismemberment Plan 1999 Paul Thompson — [59] 27 September 2011 Nevermind Nirvana 1991 Jess Harvell — [60] 21 October 2011 Laughing Stock Talk Talk 1991 — [61] 2 November 2011 The Smile Sessions The Beach Boys 2011 Mark Richardson — [62] 18 November 2011 Hatful of Hollow The Smiths 1984 Douglas Wolk — [63] The Queen is Dead 1986 — 28 November 2011 Siamese Dream The Smashing Pumpkins 1993 Ned Raggett — [64] 7 December 2011 20 Jazz Funk Greats Throbbing Gristle 1979 Drew Daniel — [65] 9 December 2011 Tago Mago Can 1971 Douglas Wolk — [66] 11 May 2012 Isn't Anything my bloody valentine 1988 Mark Richardson — [67] loveless 1991 — 27 July 2012 Liquid Swords GZA 1995 Ian Cohen — [68] 13 August 2012 For Your Pleasure Roxy Music 1973 Tom Ewing — [69] 9 November 2012 Blue Joni Mitchell 1971 Jessica Hopper — [70] Court and Spark 1974 — The Hissing of Summer Lawns 1975 — 19 November 2012 The Disintegration Loops William Basinski 2003 Mark Richardson — [71] 20 November 2012 The Velvet Underground & Nico The Velvet Underground & Nico 1967 Miles Raymer — [72] 12 December 2012 Voodoo D'Angelo 2000 Ryan Dombal — [73] 16 January 2013 Donuts J Dilla 2006 Nate Patrin — [74] 23 January 2013 Illmatic Nas 1994 Jeff Weiss — [75] 8 February 2013 Rumours Fleetwood Mac 1977 Jessica Hopper — [76] 24 September 2013 In Utero Nirvana 1993 Stuart Berman — [77] 16 January 2014 White Light/White Heat The Velvet Underground 1968 Douglas Wolk — [78] 22 January 2014 Pink Moon Nick Drake 1972 Jayson Greene — [79] 9 April 2014 The Infamous Mobb Deep 1995 — [80] 16 April 2014 Spiderland Slint 1991 Stuart Berman — [81] 25 April 2014 Surfer Rosa Pixies 1988 Mike Powell Reviewed in conjunction with Pixies' discography [82] Doolittle 1989 12 June 2014 Led Zeppelin II Led Zeppelin 1969 Mark Richardson — [83] 16 July 2014 Heaven or Las Vegas Cocteau Twins 1990 Stephen M. Deusner — [84] 5 November 2014 The Lonesome Crowded West Modest Mouse 1997 Brian Howe — [85] 24 November 2014 The Velvet Underground The Velvet Underground 1969 Stuart Berman — [86] 25 November 2014 It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back Public Enemy 1988 Craig Jenkins — [87] Fear of a Black Planet 1990 — 24 February 2015 Physical Graffiti Led Zeppelin 1975 Mark Richardson — [88] 19 June 2015 Sticky Fingers The Rolling Stones 1971 — [89] 1 October 2015 Hunky Dory David Bowie 1971 Douglas Wolk — [90] The Rise and Fall of Ziggy Stardust and the Spiders from Mars 1972 — 4 November 2015 Loaded The Velvet Underground 1970 Stuart Berman — [91] 6 November 2015 Astral Weeks Van Morrison 1968 Stephen Thomas Erlewine — [92] 13 November 2015 People's Instinctive Travels and the Paths of Rhythm A Tribe Called Quest 1990 kris ex — [93] 25 November 2015 A Love Supreme John Coltrane 1965 Mark Richardson — [94] 22 January 2016 "Heroes" David Bowie 1977 Ryan Dombal Published as part of a series of reviews following the death of David Bowie [95] Low Laura Snapes [96] 24 February 2016 Off the Wall Michael Jackson 1979 Ryan Dombal — [97] 13 April 2016 Ride the Lightning Metallica 1984 Saby Reyes-Kulkarni — [98] 29 April 2016 Dirty Mind Prince 1980 Barry Walters Awarded as part of a series of reviews following the death of Prince [99] Purple Rain 1984 Carvell Wallace [100] 30 April 2016 Sign o' the Times 1987 Nelson George [101] 1999 1982 Maura Johnston [102] 12 June 2016 Hounds of Love Kate Bush 1985 Barry Walters First Sunday Review [103] 26 June 2016 Tonight's the Night Neil Young 1975 Mark Richardson — [104] 30 July 2016 Nina Simone in Concert Nina Simone 1964 Carvell Wallace — [105] 21 August 2016 Songs in the Key of Life Stevie Wonder 1976 Alan Light — [106] 18 September 2016 Another Green World Brian Eno 1975 Mike Powell — [107] 1 October 2016 Music for 18 Musicians Steve Reich 1978 Seth Colter Walls — [108] 30 October 2016 Blood on the Tracks Bob Dylan 1975 Jesse Jarnow — [109] 1 November 2016 Metal Box Public Image Ltd 1979 Simon Reynolds — [110] 14 November 2016 Einstein on the Beach Philip Glass 1979 Seth Colter Walls — [111] 15 January 2017 Germfree Adolescents X-Ray Spex 1978 Jenn Pelly — [112] 5 February 2017 Homogenic Björk 1997 Philip Sherburne Originally given a 9.9 rating on release in 1997 [113] 26 February 2017 Weezer Weezer 1994 Jill Mapes — [114] 7 March 2017 Either/Or Elliott Smith 1997 Matt LeMay — [115] 9 March 2017 Ready to Die The Notorious B.I.G. 1994 Matthew Trammell Reviewed to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the murder of the Notorious B.I.G. [116] 26 March 2017 Bach: The Goldberg Variations Glenn Gould 1956 Seth Colter Walls Two separate scores of two separate recordings of the same piece [117] Bach: The Goldberg Variations 1982 2 April 2017 Optimo EP Liquid Liquid 1983 Sasha Frere-Jones — [118] 4 June 2017 Supreme Clientele Ghostface Killah 2000 Jeff Weiss — [119] 16 July 2017 Appetite for Destruction Guns N' Roses 1987 Maura Johnston — [120] 3 August 2017 Taking Tiger Mountain (By Strategy) Brian Eno 1974 Douglas Wolk — [121] Before and After Science 1977 — [121] 2 December 2017 Master of Puppets Metallica 1986 Andy O'Connor — [122] 18 March 2018 Nebraska Bruce Springsteen 1982 Mark Richardson — [123] 28 April 2018 Trout Mask Replica Captain Beefheart and His Magic Band 1969 Marc Masters — [124] 2 May 2018 Exile in Guyville Liz Phair 1993 Amanda Petruisch Review focuses on box set version Girly-Sound to Guyville, which includes three tapes from Phair's Girly-Sound series [125] 3 June 2018 Live Through This Hole 1994 Sasha Geffen — [126] 10 June 2018 The Band The Band 1969 Steven Hyden — [127] 16 September 2018 Rid of Me PJ Harvey 1993 Judy Berman — [128] 23 September 2018 3 Feet High and Rising De La Soul 1989 Jeff Chang — [129] 11 October 2018 The Singles Bikini Kill 1998 Jenn Pelly — [130] 21 October 2018 Remain in Light Talking Heads 1980 Dan Brooks — [131] 13 January 2019 Spirit of Eden Talk Talk 1988 Jeremy D. Larson — [132] 3 February 2019 Journey in Satchidananda Alice Coltrane 1971 Josephine Livingstone — [133] 5 May 2019 Selected Ambient Works Volume II Aphex Twin 1994 Philip Sherburne — [134] 19 June 2019 The Complete Birth of the Cool Miles Davis 1957 Nate Chinen — [135] 11 November 2019 In the Court of the Crimson King King Crimson 1969 Ryan Reed — [136] 20 November 2019 Aja Steely Dan 1977 Amanda Petrusich Awarded as part of "Steely Dan Day" [137] 15 December 2019 The Chronic Dr. Dre 1992 Sheldon Pearce — [138] 22 December 2019 Tapestry Carole King 1971 Jenn Pelly — [139] 8 March 2020 Post Björk 1995 — [140] 5 April 2020 Head Hunters Herbie Hancock 1973 Jeremy D. Larson — [141] 17 April 2020 Fetch the Bolt Cutters Fiona Apple 2020 Jenn Pelly — [142] 23 April 2020 Fear of Music Talking Heads 1979 Jayson Greene Awarded as part of "Talking Heads Day" [143] 21 June 2020 Maggot Brain Funkadelic 1971 Dave Segal — [144] 31 October 2020 American Beauty Grateful Dead 1970 Andy Cush — [145] 8 August 2021 Born in the U.S.A. Bruce Springsteen 1984 Sam Sodomsky — [146] 19 September 2021 Look-Ka Py Py The Meters 1969 Hanif Abdurraqib — [147] 5 October 2021 Discovery Daft Punk 2001 Noah Yoo Awarded as part of a 2021 list in which Pitchfork amended the scores of 19 previously reviewed albums [148] 12 December 2021 Juju Music King Sunny Adé 1982 Will Hernes — [149] 27 February 2022 Talking Book Stevie Wonder 1972 Carol Cooper Awarded as part of "Stevie Wonder Day"[150] [151] Innervisions 1973 Craig Jenkins [152] 9 October 2022 Enter the Wu-Tang (36 Chambers) Wu-Tang Clan 1993 Dylan Green Awarded as part of a series of articles on the Wu-Tang Clan [153] 4 December 2022 Hejira Joni Mitchell 1976 Jenn Pelly — [154] 5 February 2023 Anthology of American Folk Music, Vol. 1-3 Various artists 1952 Grayson Haver Currin — [155] 2 April 2023 Warren Zevon Warren Zevon 1976 Andy Cush — [156] 23 September 2023 Tim The Replacements 1985 Jeremy D. Larson — [157] 24 September 2023 Live at the Harlem Square Club, 1963 Sam Cooke 1985 Marc Hogan — [158] 7 January 2024 Ambient 1: Music for Airports Brian Eno 1978 Grayson Haver Currin — [159] 4 February 2024 Live at the Liquid Room, Tokyo Jeff Mills 1996 Gabriel Szatan — [160] 19 May 2024 Judy at Carnegie Hall Judy Garland 1961 Harry Tafoya — [161] 17 November 2024 Wish You Were Here Pink Floyd 1975 Sam Sodomsky — [162] 15 December 2024 Solid Air John Martyn 1973 Tal Rosenberg — [163] 20 April 2025 Rain Dogs Tom Waits 1985 Mark Richardson — [164] 11 May 2025 Universal Consciousness Alice Coltrane 1971 Andy Beta — [165]

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"Judy Garland: Judy at Carnegie Hall Album Review". Pitchfork. Retrieved May 19, 2024. ^ Sodomsky, Sam (2024-11-17). "Pink Floyd: Wish You Were Here". Pitchfork. Retrieved 2024-11-17. ^ Rosenberg, Tal (December 15, 2024). "John Martyn: Solid Air Album Review". Pitchfork. Retrieved December 15, 2024. ^ Richardson, Mark (April 20, 2025). "Tom Waits: Rain Dogs". Pitchfork. Retrieved April 20, 2025. ^ Beta, Andy (May 11, 2025). "Alice Coltrane: Universal Consciousness Album Revieww". Pitchfork. Retrieved May 11, 2025. Retrieved from " Movies Books Travel Food Other Sign In Every day, we measure other people’s work using our extremely specific, extremely not scientific 0.0-10 rating scale. Today, on the occasion of Pitchfork’s upcoming 25th anniversary—and this week’s launch of our Reviews Explorer tool—we decided to try to quantify some of our own. Since Pitchfork launched in 1996, we’ve published over 28,000 album reviews. (Owing to a CMS migration, only the ones published since 1999 are available on our current site). Below, we break down our reviews archive using a few key metrics.27,809MOST USED RATING7.0 (used 1,414 times since 1999)LEAST USED RATINGS (all used only once)9.91.41.10.30.1ARTISTS WITH THE HIGHEST AVERAGE SCORES (among artists with ten or more reviews)The Beatles (21): 8.9Miles Davis (18): 8.6Kanye West (13): 8.2Prince (17): 8.1Arthur Russell (14): 7.9Brian Eno (49): 7.9ARTISTS WITH THE LOWEST AVERAGE SCORES (among artists with ten or more reviews)Weezer (13): 5.6Foo Fighters (11): 5.7Coldplay (13): 5.8Eminem (10): 5.9Madonna (12): 5.9Nine Inch Nails (17): 6.2Interpol (12): 6.3Lil Wayne (18): 6.4TOP 10 MOST REVIEWED ARTISTSTOP 10 MOST READ REVIEWS (since February 2016, which is as far back as our tracking platform measures)Fiona Apple, Fetch the Bolt CuttersGreta Van Fleet, Anthem of the Peaceful ArmyKanye West, The Life of PabloRadiohead, A Moon Shaped PoolFrank Ocean, Blonde / EndlessLana Del Rey, Norman Fucking Rockwell!Kanye West, yeTaylor Swift, folkloreKanye West, Jesus Is KingTame Impala, The Slow RushALBUMS THAT RECEIVED 10s WHEN THEY WERE RELEASED: 1112 Rods, Gay? (1996)Walt Mink, El Producto (1996)Amon Tobin, Bricolage (1997)Radiohead, OK Computer (1997)Bonnie “Prince” Billy, I See a Darkness (1999)Flaming Lips, The Soft Bulletin (1999)Radiohead, Kid A (2000)...And You Will Know Us by the Trail of Dead, Source Tags and Codes (2002)Wilco, Yankee Hotel Foxtrot (2002)Kanye West, My Beautiful Dark Twisted Fantasy (2010)Fiona Apple, Fetch the Bolt Cutters (2020)SUNDAY REVIEWS AND REISSUES THAT RECEIVED 10s: 127Aphex Twin, Selected Ambient Works Volume II (1994)A Tribe Called Quest, People's Instinctive Travels and the Paths of Rhythm (1990)William Basinski, The Disintegration Loops (2002)The Band, The Band (1969)The Beach Boys, The Smile Sessions (2011)Beastie Boys, Paul’s Boutique (1989)The Beatles, Abbey Road (1969)The Beatles, Magical Mystery Tour (1967)The Beatles, Revolver (1966)The Beatles, Rubber Soul (1965)The Beatles, Sgt. Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band (1967)The Beatles, The Beatles (1968)Bikini Kill, The Singles (1998)Björk, Homogenic (1997)Björk, Post (1995)Boards of Canada, Music Has the Right to Children (1998)David Bowie, Heroes (1977)David Bowie, Low (1977)Glenn Branca, The Ascension (1981)James Brown, Live at the Apollo (1963)Kate Bush, Hounds of Love (1985)Can, Tago Mago (1971)Captain Beefheart and His Magic Band, Trout Mask Replica (1969)The Clash, London Calling (1979)Cocteau Twins, Heaven or Las Vegas (1990)Alice Coltrane, Journey in Satchidananda (1971)John Coltrane, A Love Supreme: The Complete Masters (1965)John Coltrane, The Olatunji Concert: The Last Live Recording (1967)Elvis Costello & The Attractions, This Year's Model (1978)The Cure, Disintegration (1989)D’Angelo, Voodoo (2000)Miles Davis, Kind of Blue (1959)Miles Davis, Sketches of Spain (1960)Miles Davis, The Complete Birth of the Cool (1957)De La Soul, 3 Feet High and Rising (1989)The Dismemberment Plan, Emergency & I (1999)DJ Shadow, Endtroducing… (1996)Dr. Dre, The Chronic (1992)Bob Dylan, Blood on the Tracks (1975)Bob Dylan, The Bootleg Series, Vol. 4: Live 1966: The Royal Albert Hall Concert (1998)Brian Eno, Another Green World (1975)The Fall, This Nation’s Saving Grace (1985)Fleetwood Mac, Rumours (1977)Funkadelic, Maggot Brain (1971)Serge Gainsbourg, Histoire de Melody Nelson (1971)Galaxie 500, On Fire (1989)Ghostface Killah, Supreme Clientele (2000)Glenn Gould, Bach: The Goldberg Variations (1955)Grateful Dead, American Beauty (1970)Guns N’ Roses, Appetite for Destruction (1987)GZA, Liquid Swords: Chess Box Deluxe Edition (1995)Herbie Hancock, Head Hunters (1973)PJ Harvey, Rid of Me (1993)Hole, Live Through This (1994)J Dilla, Donuts (45 Box Set) (2006)Michael Jackson, Off the Wall (1979)Joy Division, Unknown Pleasures (1979)Joy Division, Closer (1980)Carole King, Tapestry (1971)King Crimson, In the Court of the Crimson King (1969)KISS, Alive! (1975)Led Zeppelin, Led Zeppelin II (1969)Led Zeppelin, Physical Graffiti (1975)Metallica, Master of Puppets (1986)Metallica, Ride the Lightning (1984)Joni Mitchell, Blue (1971)Joni Mitchell, Court and Spark (1974)Joni Mitchell, The Hissing of Summer Lawns (1975)Mobb Deep, The Infamous (1995)Modest Mouse, The Lonesome Crowded West (1997)Van Morrison, Astral Weeks (1968)My Bloody Valentine, Isn’t Anything (1988)Nas, Illmatic (1994)Neutral Milk Hotel, In the Aeroplane Over the Sea (1998)Nirvana, In Utero (1993)Nirvana, Nevermind (1991)Pavement, Crooked Rain, Crooked Rain: LA's Desert Origins (1994)Pavement, Quarantine the Past (2010)Liz Phair, Girly-Sound to Guyville: The 25th Anniversary Box Set (1993)Pink Floyd, Animals (1977)The Pixies, Doolittle (1989)Prince, 1999 (1982)Prince, Dirty Mind (1980)Prince, Sign o’ the Time (1987)Prince / The Revolution, Purple Rain (1984)Public Enemy, It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back (1988)Public Enemy, Fear of a Black Planet (1990)Public Image Ltd, Metal Box (1979)Otis Redding, Otis Blue: Otis Redding Sings Soul (1965)The Notorious B.I.G., Ready to Die (1994)R.E.M., Murmur (1983)R.E.M., Reckoning (1984)Radiohead, The Bends (1995)The Replacements, Let It Be (1984)The Rolling Stones, Exile on Main St (1972)The Rolling Stones, Sticky Fingers (1971)Roxy Music, For Your Pleasure (1973)Nina Simone, In Concert (1964)Slint, Spiderland (1991)The Smashing Pumpkins, Siamese Dream (1993)The Smiths, Hatful of Hollow (1984)The Smiths, The Queen Is Dead (1986)Elliott Smith, Either/Or (1997)Sonic Youth, Daydream Nation (1988)The Stone Roses, The Stone Roses (1989)Bruce Springsteen, Born to Run (1975)Bruce Springsteen, Nebraska (1982)Spiritualized, Ladies and Gentlemen We Are Floating in Space (1997)Steely Dan, Aja (1977)Talking Heads, Fear of Music (1979)Talking Heads, Remain in the Light (1980)Talk Talk, Laughing Stock (1991)Talk Talk, Spirit of Eden (1988)Television, Marquee Moon (1977)Throbbing Gristle, 20 Jazz Funk Greats (1979)Various Artists, No Thanks!: The 70s Punk Rebellion (2003)The Velvet Underground, Loaded (1970)The Velvet Underground, White Light/White Heat (1968)Weezer, Pinkerton (1996)Weezer, Weezer (Blue Album) (1994)The Who, Odds & Sods (1974)Wire, Pink Flag (1977)Wire, Chairs Missing (1978)Stevie Wonder, Songs in the Key of Life (1976)X-Ray Spex, Germfree Adolescents (1978)XTC, English Settlement (1982)Neil Young, After the Gold Rush (1970)Neil Young, Everybody Knows This Is Nowhere (1969)Neil Young, Tonight’s the Night (1975)ALBUMS THAT RECEIVED 0.0s: 9Flaming Lips, Zaireeka (1997)John Frusciante, Smile From the Streets You Hold (1997)KISS, Music From the Elder (1997)Sonic Youth, NYC Ghosts & Flowers (2000)Liz Phair, Liz Phair (2003)Travis Morrison, Tranvistan (2004)Jet, Shine On (2006)Various Artists, This Is Next (2007)Robert Pollard, Relaxation of the Asshole (2005) “Ah, fuck, shit, ahhhhh,” groans Fiona Apple, flubbing a line amid the hypnotic junk-drawer clatter of “On I Go,” and maybe it’s here, with only 70 seconds to go on the last song, where her first new album in eight years finally achieves perfection. Apple is an immensely beloved figure, and an avatar for turning self-quarantined unease into ferocious transcendence, and the mid-April release of Fetch the Bolt Cutters, only her fifth full-length in a nearly 25-year career, was bound to trigger a critical rapture so intense that it has already inspired at least one think piece about the profound alienation of not liking it. But the record, in all its chaotic focus and feral tenderness, still got one unexpected reaction: It inspired the first real-time Pitchfork 10.0 review in almost a decade.“The very sound of Fetch the Bolt Cutters,” wrote contributing editor Jenn Pelly on the album’s April 15 release day, “dismantles patriarchal ideas: professionalism, smoothness, competition, perfection—aesthetic standards that are tools of capitalism, used to warp our senses of self.” Pitchfork, the most vital and polarizing rock-critic publication of its era, itself dates back to the mid-’90s, and has mutated a solid half-dozen times at least, from one-man online zine to multimillion-dollar Condé Nast publication, from disruptor to standard-bearer, its base of operations shifting from Minnesota to Chicago to its current NYC offices in One World Trade Center. But that 10.0 scale—which at the high end carries all the historical weight of five stars in Rolling Stone or five mics in The Source—remains one of the site’s signature flourishes, with its maddening and theoretically precise approach to decimal places, such that an ocean of feeling separates an 8.1 from an 8.9.The last album to earn a quote-unquote perfect 10.0 upon initial release was Kanye West’s My Beautiful Dark Twisted Fantasy, reviewed by longtime features editor Ryan Dombal in 2010, and praised as “a blast of surreal pop excess that few artists are capable of creating, or even willing to attempt.” The nearly 10-year drought that followed gives you some sense of the momentousness of this occasion, and how bizarre and vexing and fascinating this pantheon—which now bonds Apple to the likes of Radiohead, Wilco, ...And You Will Know Us by the Trail of Dead, Will Oldham, and a few luminaries from the late-’90s Minneapolis rock scene—has become. I spoke to various authors of Pitchfork 10.0 reviews throughout the site’s history, in part to track how their own deeply personal feelings helped fuel the site’s ever-volatile public canon. In the mid-2000s, Pelly tried to use Apple’s famous declaration that “This world is bullshit” as her high school yearbook quote, and settled for “Go with yourself,” from that same notorious MTV VMAs speech, instead. In her opinion, two previous Apple records, 1999’s When the Pawn… and 2012’s The Idler Wheel…, are 10.0s, as well. As always, her editors at Pitchfork made the call on the Fetch the Bolt Cutters score, which she found out about only a few hours before the review ran. But “I wrote it thinking, ‘This is a 10,’” she says now, “and tried to make the case for that as I was writing it.”Because that rating scale, flagrantly subjective and objectively silly as it might be, still matters. “Sometimes people think that the points go up and down because, like, ‘Ah, there was a really good beat on this track’ or ‘This lyric earned it another tenth of a point,’ and breaking it down really granularly like that,” Pelly says, chatting on the phone in late April. “But I think there’s something to be said for something that’s bigger-picture than that.” The site regularly tackles major reissues, and through its Sunday Reviews feature returns each week to a classic album, and thus has now doled out a 10.0 to more than 50 records altogether, most of them in retrospect. (Shout-out to late April’s Talking Heads Day.) But a real-time 10.0 still qualifies as a seismic event for the rock-critic universe as a whole. “I would say that it’s not a once-a-decade thing,” says Puja Patel, Pitchfork’s editor-in-chief since 2018. (Patel and I are friends and former colleagues at various other publications.) “I do think that its significance is lost if we overuse it, obviously. But I think that if anything, it’s a challenge for us to find music that is perfect. I think that we should be using the higher end of the scale more frequently than we have, and the lower end of the scale more frequently than we have.”The baton pass from West to Apple is fraught with symbolism all on its own, and the classic idea of perfection, as anyone who has recently slogged through the interminable Chris Rock bit on the deep cut “Blame Game” can attest, does not readily apply to My Beautiful Dark Twisted Fantasy, either. But that only binds that record tighter, in indomitable spirit, to Fetch the Bolt Cutters. “There are plenty of imperfections on the album, which is why it sounds so authentic, and that’s what we want from Fiona,” Patel says. “What we crave from her is the brazen tell-offs and the very intimate, confessional-style songwriting, and what we crave from Kanye is, like, nonsense. We care about his ego, and if that’s not present, then it’s not interesting. So, I would say it’s not that the idea of using the word perfect is for us. It’s perfect to her.”Which is why Fetch the Bolt Cutters might qualify as a dazzling evolutionary leap for both Apple and the website once again lavishly praising her. It’s the first real-time 10.0 for a female artist, and the first such review written by a woman. “If you would’ve asked me in high school if Fiona Apple’s a genius, I would say yes, unequivocally,” Pelly says. “And if you would’ve asked the staff of Pitchfork in 2005 if they would’ve said, ‘Fiona Apple’s an unequivocal genius—she’s narrating teenage girl pain across the world,’ I don’t know if they would’ve agreed with that. And I’m glad to be participating in culture at a time when people understand that Fiona Apple is a genius.” And her fellow geniuses, presumably, are glad to finally have some company. “I liked that it felt kind of scientific without any actual science to it,” is how Pitchfork founder Ryan Schreiber explains the 10.0 scale to me now. “That kind of absurdity was really funny to me.”Schreiber, who left Pitchfork in early 2019 three years after selling it to Condé Nast, started the site as a teenager in mid-’90s Minneapolis, though he initially called it Turntable and used an even more byzantine review scale. “There were ratings from day one, but they started out as percentages, like instead of 6.7, the score would be 67 percent,” he writes in an email. “A year later, I realized that metric was too abstract to be very useful.”But by then his fledgling publication had already doled out its first two, uh, 100 percents—to 12 Rods’s Gay? and Walt Mink’s El Producto, both from 1996, both noisy and ambitious local rock bands made good. “Walt Mink and 12 Rods were probably the two best bands in Minneapolis, and to see these normal kids in my town putting out records I loved, playing packed rooms, and getting played on college radio—it was kind of the coolest thing in the world to me,” Schreiber says. “I was really struck by the idea that there was this whole subculture in music that was kind of for misfits, and those guys made it feel real because it was happening right around the corner from me. That gave me the push to carve out my own space.”Like much of Pitchfork’s earliest writings from Schreiber and others—including 10.0 reviews for the likes of the Flaming Lips’ The Soft Bulletin and Amon Tobin’s Bricolage—those reviews have since been scrubbed from the official site, though they live on via the Wayback Machine, and reflect the site’s initial identity as more of a labor-of-love personal blog than a voice-of-god institution. “I have stumbled, quite absentmindedly, upon one of the best albums I’ve ever heard,” is how Schreiber’s El Producto review begins.“A lot of zines from those years read like early Pitchfork—reviews were a paragraph long, interviews were directionless chats, no one took anything at all seriously,” Schreiber says now. “It was totally effortless, and that was part of what made it so fun. I was writing for a hyper-niche audience on a platform nobody understood yet. That this stuff would ever be widely read wasn’t even a thought.”I would say it’s not that the idea of using the word perfect is for us. It’s perfect to her.Puja PatelNonetheless, early Pitchfork got a few kids into El Producto, and also got a few El Producto fans into Pitchfork, including a college-radio music director named Brent DiCrescenzo. “So yeah, there was just this kid in Minnesota, and he did an interview with the Wrens, and he had a 10.0 review of Walt Mink,” he recalls to me now. “I was like, ‘Whoa, this guy totally fits my profile, fits my vibe.’” By 2000, DiCrescenzo, by then one of Pitchfork’s most prominent writers, had relocated from Atlanta to join Schreiber in Chicago, and found himself painstakingly downloading, via “Limewire or Napster or whatever,” each individual track off Radiohead’s Kid A. And then he sat on a futon and wrote what is still very likely Pitchfork’s single most famous review, a 10.0 rave (“Comparing this to other albums is like comparing an aquarium to blue construction paper”) that in March got its own Billboard 20th-anniversary retrospective that credited it with changing rock criticism forever. Specifically, in Billboard’s view, he “managed to capture the historical awe of that moment with some of the most flamboyantly earnest, absurdly effusive, and borderline nonsensical bits of prose to ever be published in a legitimate music publication.” Indeed, what was revolutionary about that Kid A review was not so much the scoring system, which DiCrescenzo cheerfully found absurd, too: “The nuance between a 7.4 and 7.5 is obviously—it’s just a joke, it’s stupid.” Nor was it the praise for Radiohead specifically: Starting with 1997’s OK Computer—another early, archived Pitchfork 10.0 from Schreiber—worshipping the band was by then an international pastime. But the intensity of DiCrescenzo’s writing is as close as anyone’s ever gotten to the loopy, unembarrassed rapture of being an intense young person communing, intensely, with Radiohead. “I wanted to make someone feel, when they read my review, the way the record would make me feel when I listened to it,” says DiCrescenzo, now an editor at Weigel Broadcasting. And from a startled reader’s perspective, a line like, “The experience and emotions tied to listening to Kid A are like witnessing the stillborn birth of a child while simultaneously having the opportunity to see her play in the afterlife on Imax” still holds up two decades later precisely because of how outlandish it’s willing to be.Wilco’s Yankee Hotel Foxtrot, officially released in April 2002 after an infamous deluge of music-industry bullshit, was another instance of a critically adored band dropping an instantly mythic record. And the Pitchfork 10.0 that greeted it, written by Brent S. Sirota, likewise rose to the momentousness of the occasion. “And as anyone who’s seen the mixed-bag crowd at Wilco shows knows,” Sirota wrote, “it will find a home in the collections of hippies, frat boys, acid-eating prep schoolers, and the record store apparatchiks of the indiocracy. No one is too good for this album; it is better than all of us.”“It wasn’t something that we had to sell or endorse or give a big platform to,” says Sirota, now a history professor at NC State. “But we did it to say, like, ‘Yes, these are great stories, and there’s a kind of mythology to this. But by the way, this is a fantastic fucking record.’”At this point in Pitchfork’s history, a 10.0 was not yet a hallowed historical mile marker that involved a lot of internal debate. (“I can’t remember if it was email—maybe it was Instant Messenger, Jesus Christ,” Sirota says with a laugh, recalling his conversations with Schreiber at the time. “I probably just said, ‘I’m giving it a 10.0,’ and he probably said, ‘That’s fine.’”) But that era—the rise of Pitchfork as a cultural force, a hypothetical indie-rock kingmaker, the host of an annual three-day Chicago music festival, and the center of the larger rock-critic universe—was coming soon.I wanted to make someone feel, when they read my review, the way the record would make me feel when I listened to it.Brent DiCrescenzo“We were definitely trying to entertain people, we wanted to be funny, and we wanted to be a little irreverent,” DiCrescenzo says. “Because everything else was establishment. There was Spin, and I loved it—any of us would’ve killed to write for them, of course. But we were just these nobodies trying to be something on a pretty nascent format. And because of that, it was just a lot snottier. And as it got bigger and bigger and bigger, it became the establishment.” And soon even that objectively silly 10.0 scale would be freighted with significance, and something very much like consequence.“I saw them play a show at the Knitting Factory where they trashed everything and yelled at us,” is how Matt LeMay, a New York City teenager in the early 2000s, now describes a formative experience with the Austin garage-rock band ...And You Will Know Us by the Trail of Dead. “And I knew precious little about rock music history for somebody who was writing for Pitchfork at the time. And to me, that still felt so cool and exciting and dangerous to whatever extent.”For the record, neither DiCrescenzo nor Sirota regrets their respective 10.0 reviews 20 years or so later, nor has Pelly reconsidered her feelings for Fetch the Bolt Cutters after a few weeks to reflect. (“My love of it has only grown,” she says. “I still feel pretty overwhelmed by it, in the best way.”) As for Schreiber, “The only thing I might change is that there aren’t more of them,” he says now. “We considered the rating for a lot of albums over the years, and I think we’d have been on the right side of history with most of them.”But LeMay, now an author and tech-world consultant, has a more complicated relationship with Trail of Dead and his 10.0 review for the band’s brash and cacophonous 2002 major-label debut, Source Tags & Codes, which “will take you in, rip you to shreds, piece you together, lick your wounds clean, and send you back into the world with a concurrent sense of loss and hope,” he wrote at the time. “And you will never, ever be the same.”We were definitely trying to entertain people, we wanted to be funny, and we wanted to be a little irreverent. Because everything else was establishment.Brent DiCrescenzoThat last part is the truest. “If you look at a 10.0 as a personal evaluation of quality in the moment, then yes, I gave it the score that I felt it deserved at the time,” LeMay says now. “If you look at it as a marker of cultural significance that one would expect to extend beyond the moment of evaluation, I think it’s fair to say that it was not a great call.”This is, of course, debatable; that debate, both in the heat of the moment and in retrospect, is the whole point of assigning albums random numbers in the first place. (Full disclosure: In 2002, I got a speeding ticket on an Ohio freeway whilst rocking out too hard to Source Tags & Codes. It must’ve been either “How Near, How Far” or “Days of Being Wild.” I regret basically nothing.) But the Source Tags & Codes review was one among a dramatic series of turning points in the site’s influence. Trail of Dead had parlayed the notoriety of their instrument-trashing live show and the underground success of their 1999 Merge Records album Madonna into a deal with Interscope, still a fraught leap for a young rock band in the early 2000s. No publication ever truly “discovers” any artist, but it was a big deal for Pitchfork to hail a band far less established than Radiohead with Radiohead-type extravagance, just as Trail of Dead themselves, with their string sections and interludes and audacious bombast, were reaching for Radiohead-type significance.In 2003, LeMay wrote a scathing 0.0 denouncement of Liz Phair’s self-titled pivot toward mainstream pop, itself a famous review that he later dismissed, in a thoughtful 2019 Twitter thread, as “condescending and cringey.” (Pitchfork’s meanest and most career-devastating reviews constitute their own separate, terrifying pantheon.) At the time, among critics, Phair and Trail of Dead and all other artists of their prominence were relentlessly plotted and replotted on that fraught spectrum: indie vs. major, rock vs. pop, “good” ambition vs. “bad” ambition. “Because this was February of 2002, I was a senior in high school, so also, nobody should have taken anything I said seriously, least of all myself,” LeMay tells me. “But I think if you look at my two most notorious reviews, which were this 10.0 and the 0.0 that ran the following year, I think it really speaks to this pre-poptimism moment when there was a culture war of sorts between indie rock as an aesthetic and as a vaguely connected cultural thing, and pop music that was the evil lowbrow force that I think was—it’s hard to even describe that moment, how different this moment is.”Another vexing question is what a 10.0 Pitchfork review means, at any given moment, to the lucky artist involved. “I mean, in 2002, it was still kind of a fringe website,” says founding Trail of Dead member Jason Reece, chatting on the phone amid self-quarantine home-schooling, the tour for the band’s 2020 album X: The Godless Void and Other Stories long since postponed. “If we got a 10, whatever, 10 years ago or whatever, in 2010, yeah, it would definitely greatly affect the band. But we were kind of too early for Pitchfork’s influence.” In the early 2000s, then, a rave from the site was more of a curiosity, albeit a flattering one. “A lot of music nerds were definitely—that’s where they went to go find, I guess, whatever was cool at the time,” Reece says. “So my opinion was generally more like,”—he breaks into a deadpan—“‘Well, it’s cool. Thanks a lot, Pitchfork.’” He might’ve been far less comically nonchalant a few years later when the site greeted the band’s next album, Worlds Apart, with a dismissive and disappointed review whose exact score, 4.0, Reece can still recite, unprompted, from memory. “Pitchfork wasn’t, I don’t think, anywhere as huge or as influential as they were like maybe in 2005, when Worlds Apart came out and they totally dogged it,” he says. “And then, that had more of an impression, because that fucked everything up for us in the States. … We saw the effect. I mean, people listen to Pitchfork, so they were like, ‘Yeah, these guys suck.’ Whereas in Europe that actually opened more doors for us. People were more receptive to that album—we were traveling to more places and playing bigger shows than ever. In Europe. Whereas in America, it went the opposite direction.”Reece has long since made his peace with that, of course. “I mean, I try not to care,” he says. “I guess that’s the best way to make music, and not let it get you down when certain albums aren’t perceived well. But again, if Pitchfork writes something about Trail of Dead, we always hear about it.”If we got a 10, whatever, 10 years ago, yeah, it would definitely greatly affect the band. But we were kind of too early for Pitchfork’s influence.Jason ReeceFor the record, the site liked this year’s The Godless Void quite a bit. (It got a 7.8!) Also for the record, Schreiber wonders now whether the 10.0 for Source Tags & Codes accidentally did the album a disservice.“We started to understand the gravity of the 10.0 beyond what it meant just to us,” he tells me. “A lot of the conversation around those albums became more about the score than about the music. That rating can mean a lot of things to different people, so if the conditions aren’t exactly right, you might be starting the dialogue from a place of incredulity or saddling the record with expectations it may not be able to live up to. I found it often had a negative effect on how these records were perceived by readers, and I thought in the case of Source Tags & Codes, maybe it wasn’t given a chance to come into its own because people were so put off by that statement.”There was no concern, in 2010, with overburdening Kanye West’s My Beautiful Dark Twisted Fantasy with expectation. His G.O.O.D. Fridays promo strategy of doling out one free track a week (shout-out to the “Power” remix) stands now as quite possibly the last tolerable album rollout in history, from anybody, but for West especially. “It’s just, kind of, ‘We’re all figuring this out together,’” Pitchfork’s Dombal recalls now. “He’s using social media to have fun. I guess there was this kind of innocence about the whole thing that really quickly calcified to what we know now. It’s even hard to imagine that Twitter could’ve been a fun place.”What’s most impressive about Dombal’s 10.0 review of the album in retrospect is that both the critical analysis and the pop psychology hold up well regardless of what you think of West’s various antics, sonic and otherwise, in the decade since. “Over the past few months, Kanye has intermittently tried to flush away his rep as a boorish egoist in interviews and on Twitter, which is, fortunately, impossible,” he wrote, soon adding, “In his public life, he exhibits vulnerability and invincibility in equal measure, but he’s just as apt at villainy—especially here.”The result is vigorous praise for the Kanye West of that exact moment that does not attempt to predict, or for that matter sanction, anything Kanye West might do in the very next moment. And it was Pitchfork’s first real-time 10.0 in the better part of a decade. As Trail of Dead’s Reece points out, the site’s influence exploded as the 2000s went on, and the records and artists it championed, from Broken Social Scene to Arcade Fire to Animal Collective, often plotted along that Ambitious Indie Rock axis. But all of those bands’ most beloved albums stalled out somewhere in the 9.0 range, and by the dawn of the 2010s, rap and/or R&B and/or pop stars from West to Beyoncé to Kendrick Lamar to Frank Ocean started sucking up most of the critical oxygen.That hesitance to dole out another perfect score, meanwhile, only grows with time. “As Pitchfork got bigger, just like with anything, once you get bigger, it’s a little scarier to take those big swings, because you feel like you have more to lose, right?” Dombal says. “But by the time it’s 2010, there’s just a lot more people reading the site. I think you get a little bit gun-shy. Then once you do let that time elapse without pulling out the 10, it does just mentally get a little bit harder to do.” But there’s a danger in that stasis, too: “We’re always making efforts to use more of the scale, as far as the point system. Just because, if you don’t, it kind of loses some of its meaning if everything is around the same score.” Published in October, the site’s 200 Best Albums of the 2010s list thusly consists of My Beautiful Dark Twisted Fantasy (at no. 2) and 199 other records that in many cases almost, but did not quite, merit a 10.0, including Lana Del Rey’s 2019 phenomenon Norman Fucking Rockwell!, which got a 9.4 review written by Pelly herself. There is not, nor has there ever been, any particular science to what cost LDR that six tenths of a point. But there’s nonetheless an acute awareness of the pantheon, and what it means for Fiona Apple to enter it. “We had the existential Pitchfork conversation,” Patel explains, “where it was like, ‘Let’s take a look at everything that’s gotten a 10. What does it mean for Pitchfork to make this a 10? What does it mean for the future of our lists? When we do our Best Albums of the 2020s, do we feel like this will age well? Will we care about this a year down the line? What does this mean for the rest of her discography? Do we think that this is her best album ever?’ So, it’s a lot of kind of contextualizing it against itself.”Which sounds exhausting, but it’s worth it, especially when the end result is a puncturing of the dudeliness of the 10.0 club as it has historically stood. (“I think that you would very easily, naturally puncture the dudeliness of it,” Patel says, “if you were being open-minded.”) It is critically useful, and if you’re so inclined maybe even fun, to muse as to how Fetch the Bolt Cutters will hold up a year or even a decade from now. But it’s enough for the moment to know that Fiona Apple, for many, is the perfect artist for this misbegotten spring of 2020, and that she deserves her enshrinement whatever your opinions of the shine, and that all further raucous debates about the past are best left, for now, to the future. Rob HarvillaRob Harvilla is a senior staff writer at The Ringer and the host/author of ‘60 Songs That Explain the ’90s,’ though the podcast is now called ‘60 Songs That Explain the ’90s: The 2000s,’ a name everyone loves. He lives with his family in Columbus, Ohio, by choice. We think the Rolling Stones’ Exile on Main St is one of rock’s most perfect albums. So it was no surprise that Pitchfork crowned the reissue with the coveted 10.0 rating, a rarity for a site so critical its top-rated album of 2009, Animal Collective’s Merriweather Post Pavilion, only scored a 9.6.We couldn’t remember the last time an album was so highly rated by Pitchfork, so we scoured their archives to put together a list of the 10 most recent album releases and re-releases to earn a 10. Mostly, we found reissues that were at least 15 years old, recorded by such unknown artists as The Beatles and Neil Young. And that makes

us wonder whether any of the new music kids are making these days will ever measure up to the classics, even in the eyes of critics roughly their own age. Do you agree with Pitchfork, or do you think they've overlooked more recent perfect albums?1. Galaxie 500 – On Fire Originally released in 1989, this laid-back album from short-lived late-'80s/early-'90s band Galaxie 500 was reissued this year by Domino Records."When new bands play guitar music heavy on reverb and slow in tempo — a combination that drapes tunes in a sublimely druggy dream-pop haze — I can be slow to embrace them. It's not that there isn't plenty of good music in this vein being made. It's that one band, 20 years ago, did this sound so well and with so much personality, they set a difficult standard for newcomers to meet."2. Pavement – Quarantine the Past Pavement's retrospective, released this year, Quarantine the Past combines some of the band's well-known hits with rarities, B-Sides and remastered songs."The first-ever Pavement retrospective compilation… [provides] a cheap and easy entry point to the band that represents the breadth of their songbook… Fans of the band may look over the tracklisting and wonder why some of their favorites didn't make the cut, but every song on this thing is an unimpeachable gem, and the collection presents a well-rounded summary of their distinct and varied body of work."3. Spiritualized –Ladies and Gentlemen We Are Floating in Space Spiritualized's third album, 1997's Ladies and Gentlemen, was hailed by Pitchfork as the band's "lone masterpiece" when re-released last year in a limited-edition collector's box set."Bolder than the term Britpop might suggest, more focused than the term psychedelic might imply, Ladies and Gentlemen is one of the great triumphs of the 70-plus-minute CD era. Alternately chaotic and meticulous, thundering and quivering, Ladies and Gentlemen finds power in conflict — between restraint and excess, addiction and isolation, and ultimately, love and hate."4. Neil Young – Everybody Knows This Is Nowhere/After the Gold Rush In 2009, the Canadian rocker re-released his first four albums in two limited-edition box sets."Everybody Knows was a sort of big bang for Young, a dense moment of creative explosion that saw possibilities expanding in every direction. So its follow-up was anything but a retread. With his newfound confidence, Young was poised to stretch, and After the Gold Rush sounds a bit like an overview of the Great American Songbook but with one guy writing almost all the songs… There's a reason why it's the favorite Neil Young album for so many."5. The Beatles – Rubber Soul When The Beatles remastered their entire catalog, Pitchfork reviewed all 14 albums individually. Unsurprisingly, many of the band's albums earned perfect scores. But, according to Pitchfork, their earliest taste of perfection was 1965's Rubber Soul ."[Rubber Soul is] arguably the most important artistic leap in the Beatles' career — the signpost that signaled a shift away from Beatlemania and the heavy demands of teen pop, toward more introspective, adult subject matter. It's also the record that started them on their path toward the valuation of creating studio records over live performance. If nothing else, it's the record on which their desire for artistic rather than commercial ambition took center stage — a radical idea at a time when the success of popular music was measured in sales and quantity rather than quality."6. The Beatles – Revolver The Beatles' seventh studio album, Revolver saw the beginnings of a shift in the Fab Four's sound. Featuring influences from the Far East and more musical and lyrical allusions to the drug experience, this record showcased the band's newfound versatility."Revolver in the end is the sound of a band growing into supreme confidence. The Beatles had been transformed into a group not beholden to the expectations of their label or bosses, but fully calling the shots — recording at their own pace, releasing records at a less-demanding clip, abandoning the showmanship of live performance. Lesser talents or a less-motivated group of people may have shrunk from the challenge, but here the Beatles took upon the task of redefining what was expected from popular music."7. The Beatles – Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Heart's Club Band One of the only Beatles releases not to produce a number one single, this pioneering concept album Sgt. Pepper is nonetheless one of their most significant."The record's reputation and sense of ambition ushered in the album era. Its influence was so pervasive and so instructional regarding the way music is crafted and sold to the public that this is still the predominant means of organizing, distributing, and promoting new music four decades later, well after the decline of physical media."8. The Beatles – Magical Mystery Tour Magical Mystery Tour is one of The Beatles' most experimental albums, oscillating between popular favorites like "All You Need Is Love" and the lesser-known psychedelic jam "Flying.""Few of them are anyone's all-time favorite Beatles songs, only one had a prayer of being played on the radio, and yet this run seems to achieve a majesty in part because of that: It's a rare stretch of amazing Beatles music that can seem like a private obsession rather than a permanent part of our shared culture."9. The Beatles – Abbey Road The Beatles' final studio album Abbey Road was the band's twelfth in less than 10 years. For those counting at home, that makes five Beatles full-lengths that score 10.0 on the Pitchfork meter."The Beatles' story is so enduring in part because it was wrapped up so perfectly. Abbey Road shows a band still clearly in its prime, capable of songwriting and recording feats other groups could only envy. Working for the first time exclusively on an eight-track tape machine, their mastery of the studio was undeniable, and Abbey Road still sounds fresh and exciting 40 years on (indeed, of the 2009 remasters, the improvements and sonic detail here are the most striking)."10. Radiohead – Kid A The most recent album on this list, Radiohead's Kid A: Special Collector's Editionmakes them the only band of this millennium to rank among classic-rock gods like The Beatles and The Stones. (The album also scored a Pitchfork 10.0, and earned one of music criticism's most epically rapturous reviews of all time, when it was originally released in 2000.)"The samples, loops, and beats of Kid A were more than just the patronizing dalliance of a bored band, they were tools used to service the album's even deeper exploration of OK Computer's thesis on identity loss in computerized society. It was, unashamedly, a complete album, one where everything from production to arrangements to lyrics to album art were carefully crafted towards a unified purpose."