



TOP 10 SOUL ALBUMS OF 2003



2003

By ROB CLARK / *The Dallas Morning News*

1 - TERENCE TRENT D'ARBY, *Wildcard!* (Sananda Records): Eight years between albums was far too long for Terence Trent D'Arby (who actually goes by Sananda Maitreya now). *Wildcard!* is as fine a comeback as you'll hear, meshing his lovely pop style with soul, funk and rock. What a shame that it hasn't caught on. It's a fantastic piece of work.

2 - JOSS STONE, *The Soul Sessions (S-Curve)*: Talent so good, it's scary. The 16-year-old Brit is a stunning vocalist, oozing soul well beyond her years. This covers collection is a fine first step. An original disc will be hotly anticipated.

3 - CALVIN RICHARDSON, *2:35 PM (Hollywood)*: The North Carolina native steps out from his backup role with Raphael Saadiq and Angie Stone with this impressive effort. "Keep on Pushin'" – a dead-ringer tribute to Sam Cooke's "A Change Is Gonna Come" – is a terrific track, as are "I've Got to Move" and "More Than a Woman."

4 - ERYKAH BADU, *Worldwide Underground (Motown)*: Experimentation is a beautiful thing. Erykah Badu is knee-deep in it. *Underground* didn't aim for the charts, but something much higher instead. The twists and turns – psychedelia, funk, soul, jazz, just about everything – makes it a risky move that pays off.

5 - ALICIA KEYS, *The Diary of Alicia Keys (J Records)*: There's a lot for the young star to live up to after the tremendous success of her debut album. She manages this follow-up with grace. Get used to it. She'll be around a loooong time.

6 - DONNIE, *The Colored Section (Motown)*: Comparing any young soul artist to Stevie Wonder isn't fair. No one's

gonna live up to that. But this album's pure ambition calls that sort of young, intellectual artist with a socially conscious agenda to mind. His voice is a close cousin of Stevie's as well. That can't be a bad thing.

7 - MUSIQ, *Soulstar (Def Soul)*: The former Musiq Soulchild has some guts. On his last album, he covered the Beatles' "Something." Now he takes on the Rolling Stones' "Miss You." He manages to make just about anything sound good, though the Monopoly-inspired "Womanopoly" lays it on a little thick.

8 - KELIS, *Tasty (Star Trak)*: The power of the Neptunes is never more clear than on "Milkshake," an irresistible slice of 'tunes- flavored retro rap and soul. One listen and it'll stick in your head for days. The rest of *Tasty* is pretty delicious as well, including Kelis' fine duet with Andre 3000 on "Millionaire."

9 - BEN HARPER, *Diamonds on the Inside (Virgin)*: Another stirring album from the immensely talented singer-songwriter. He's a master at mixing soul, rock, reggae and folk, but now he brings the funk on ... uh ... "Bring the Funk."

10 - BEYONCÉ, *Dangerously in Love (Sony)*: OK, OK, we give. Resistance to Beyoncé was futile this year. Love established her as a major star and proved that she can break away from the *Destiny's Child* routine. Even when she dips into poppy fluff, her charisma carries her.