Best Music Of 2010: The Complete List

Use the list below to browse NPR's best music of 2010 recommendations. Each critic's list is presented separately. Click on the article names to read our critics' comments about the albums.

NPR Music's 50 Favorite Albums Of 2010

Recommended by NPR Music Staff

Thomas Ades, Tevot

Agalloch, Marrow Of The Spirit

Aloe Blacc, Good Things

Khaira Arby, Timbuktu Tarab

Arcade Fire, The Suburbs

Erykah Badu, New Amerykah, Pt. 2: Return Of The Ankh

Big Boi, Sir Lucious Leftfoot...The Son Of Chico Dusty

The Black Keys, Brothers

Brooklyn Rider, Dominant Curve

Buke & Gass, Riposte

Carolina Chocolate Drops, Genuine Negro Jig

Regina Carter, Reverse Thread
Chancha Via Circuito, Rio Arriba

Deerhunter, Halcyon Digest

Issac Delgado, Love

Joyce DiDonato, Rossini: Colbran, The Muse

Flying Lotus, Cosmogramma

Four Tet, There Is Love In You

Vittorio Grigolo, The Italian Tenor

Gyptian, Hold You

Hilary Hahn, Higdon & Tchaikovsky: Violin Concertos

Mary Halvorson Quintet, Saturn Sings

Rita Indiana, El Juidero

Jamey Johnson, The Guitar Song

Jonsi, Go

Seu Jorge And Almaz, Seu Jorge And Almaz

King Sunny Ade, Baba Mo Tunde

Ray LaMontagne And The Pariah Dogs, God Willin’ And The Creek Don’t Rise

LCD Soundsystem, This Is Happening

Lower Dens, Twin Hand Movement

Alexander Melnikov, Shostakovich

Janelle Monae, The ArchAndroid

Jason Moran, Ten

Carla Morrison, Mientras Tu Dormías

The National, High Violet
Owen Pallett, *Heartland*

Sondra Radvanovsky, *Verdi Arias*

Josh Ritter, *So Runs The World Away*

Robyn, *Body Talk*

Kermit Ruffins, *Happy Talk*

Christian Scott, *Yesterday You Said Tomorrow*

Gil Scott-Heron, *I'm New Here*

Sleigh Bells, *Treats*

Esperanza Spalding, *Chamber Music Society*

Mavis Staples, *You Are Not Alone*

Sufjan Stevens, *The Age Of Adz*

The Tallest Man On Earth, *The Wild Hunt*

Titus Andronicus, *The Monitor*

Sharon Van Etten, *Epic*

Kanye West, *My Beautiful Dark Twisted Fantasy*

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**Top 10 Jazz Albums Of 2010**

Recommended By Patrick Jarenwattananon, *A Blog Supreme*

1. Jason Moran, *Ten*

2. Guillermo Klein, *Domador De Huellas*

3. Steve Coleman And Five Elements, *Harvesting Semblances And Affinities*

4. Bill Carrothers, *Joy Spring*

5. Maurice Brown, *The Cycle Of Love*

6. Mary Halvorson Quintet, *Saturn Sings*
7. Geri Allen, *Flying Toward The Sound*

8. Fight The Big Bull Feat. Steven Bernstein, *All Is Gladness In The Kingdom*

9. Chris Lightcap's Bigmouth, *Deluxe*

10. Mike Reed's People, Places And Things, *Stories And Negotiations*

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**Top 10 Latin Alternative Albums Of 2010**

**Recommended By Jasmine Garsd, Alt.Latino**

1. Seu Jorge And Almaz, *Seu Jorge And Almaz*

2. Carla Morrison, *Mientras Tu Dormias*

3. Rita Indiana, *El Juidero*

4. Calle 13, *Entren Los Que Quieran*

5. Alex Cuba, *Alex Cuba*

6. Chancha Via Circuito, *Rio Arriba*

7. Javiera Mena, *Mena*

8. Maneja Beto, *Escante Calling*

9. Mala Rodriguez, *Dirty Bailarina*

10. Alex Anwandter, *Odisea*

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**Top Ten Classical Albums Of 2010**

**Recommended By Tom Huizenga, Deceptive Cadence**

1. Shostakovich: *The Preludes And Fugues, Op. 87*

2. Sondra Radvanovsky: *Verdi Arias*

4. Vittorio Grigolo: *The Italian Tenor*

5. Baltic Runes: *Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir*

6. Victoire: *Cathedral City*

7. Joyce DiDonato: *Colbran, The Muse*

8. Danny Driver: *C.P.E. Bach: Keyboard Sonatas*

9. Valentin Silvestrov: *Sacred Works*

10. Steve Reich: *Double Sextet, 2x5*

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**Five Artists You Should Have Known In 2010**

**Recommended By Kevin Cole, KEXP**

Breathe Owl Breathe, *Magic Central*

Tame Impala, *Innerspeaker*

Macklemore x Ryan Lewis, *The Vs.*

The Capstan Shafts, *Revelation Skirts*

The Head And The Heart, *The Head And The Heart*

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**Download The Best World Cafe Sessions Of 2010**

**Recommended By David Dye, WXPN**

Beach House

Phosphorescent

Ray LaMontagne & The Pariah Dogs

Villagers

Minus The Bear
**Best Cover Songs Of 2010**

**Recommended By Michael Katzif, NPR Music**

Damien Jurado & Richard Swift, "Be Not Fearful" from *Other People's Songs*

Cee Lo, "No One's Gonna Love You" from *The Lady Killer*

Warpaint, "Ashes To Ashes" from *We Were So Turned On: A Tribute To David Bowie*

Centenai, "Sea Of Teeth" from *I Wish I Had A Horse's Head*

Peter Gabriel, "Flume" / Bon Iver, "Come Talk To Me" from *Scratch My Back*

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**5 Artists Who Transcended Jazz Standards In 2010**

**Recommended By Shaunna Morrison Machosky, WDUQ**

Pat Metheny, *Orchestriion*

Brad Mehldau, *Highway Rider*

Rez Abbasi Acoustic Quartet, *Natural Selection*

Jazz At Lincoln Center Orchestra, *Portrait In Seven Shades*

Stacey Kent, *Raconte-Moi...*

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**Stephen Thompson's Top 10 Albums Of 2010**

1. Jonsi, *Go*

2. The National, *High Violet*

3. Horse Feathers, *Thistled Spring*

4. Jeremy Messersmith, *The Reluctant Graveyard*

5. Sharon Van Etten, *Epic*
6. Eau Claire Memorial Jazz I Featuring Justin Vernon, *A Decade With Duke*

7. Titus Andronicus, *The Monitor*

8. Stars, *The Five Ghosts*

9. Regina Carter, *Reverse Thread*

10. The Heligoats, *Goodness Gracious*

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**Robin Hilton's Top 10 Albums Of 2010**

1. Lower Dens, *Twin Hand Movement*

2. Deerhunter, *Halcyon Digest*

3. Sufjan Stevens, *The Age Of ADZ*

4. Sharon Van Etten, *Epic*

5. Jonsi, *Go*

6. Sleigh Bells, *Treats*

7. The Tallest Man On Earth, *The Wild Hunt*

8. Sea Of Bees, *Songs For The Ravens*

9. Broken Bells, *Broken Bells*

10. Candy Claws, *Hidden Lands*

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**Bob Boilen's Top 10 (Really 9) Albums Of 2010**

1. Sufjan Stevens, *The Age Of ADZ*

2. Jonsi, *Go*

3. Lost In The Trees, *All Alone In An Empty House*

4. Buke & Gass, *Riposte*
5. Surfer Blood, *Astro Coast*

6. The Tallest Man On Earth, *The Wild Hunt*

7. Sleigh Bells, *Treats*

8. The Red River, *Little Songs About the Big Picture*


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**5 Best J.S. Bach Releases Of 2010**

Recommended By Brian McCreath, [WGBH](http://www.wgbh.org)

Andreas Staier: *Goldberg Variations*

John Eliot Gardiner: *Cantatas, Vol. 2*

Isabelle Faust: *Sonatas And Partitas*

Jonathan Plowright: *Piano Transcriptions, Vol. 9: British Bach Transcriptions*

Simon Preston: *The Organ Works*

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**Carrie Brownstein's Top 10 (Plus One) For 2010**

Royal Baths, *Litanies*

Kanye West, *My Beautiful Dark Twisted Fantasy*

Best Coast, *Crazy For You*

Joanna Newsom, *Have One on Me*

Deerhunter, *Halcyon Digest*

Grass Widow, *Past Time*

Surfer Blood, *Astro Coast*

Ty Segall, *Melted*
Secret Cities, *Pink Graffiti*

Rihanna, *Loud*

T.I., *No Mercy*

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**The 5 Best Genre-Defying Albums Of 2010**

Recommended by John Schaefer, **WNYC**

Clogs, *Creatures In The Garden Of Lady Walton*

The Young Scamels, *Tempest*

Laurie Anderson, *Homeland*

Sarah Kirkland Snider, *Penelope*

David Karsten Daniels & Fight The Big Bull, *I Mean To Live Here Still*

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**KCRW's Best L.A. Bands Of 2010**

Recommended by Jason Bentley, **KCRW**

Best Coast

Flying Lotus

Autolux

Fitz & The Tantrums

Ozomatli

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**5 New African Bands That Ruled In 2010**

Recommended by Jon Kertzer, **KEXP**

SMOD
Nneka
Burkina Electric
Razia
Tamikrest

The Best Album Covers Of 2010
Recommended by Michael Katzif, NPR Music

Broken Bells, Broken Bells
S. Carey, All We Grow
Philip Selway, Familial
Suuns, Zeroes QC
Owen Pallett, Heartland
Lower Dens, Twin Hand Movement
Agalloch, Marrow Of The Spirit
Kanye West, My Beautiful Dark Twisted Fantasy
The Besnard Lakes, The Besnard Lakes Are The Roaring Night
Land Of Talk, Cloak And Cipher

'All Songs' Listeners Pick The Best Albums Of 2010

1. Arcade Fire, The Suburbs
2. The Black Keys, Brothers
3. The National, High Violet
4. Mumford & Sons, Sigh No More
5. Broken Bells, *Broken Bells*

6. LCD Soundsystem, *This Is Happening*

7. Vampire Weekend, *Contra*

8. Sufjan Stevens, *The Age Of Adz*

9. Beach House, *Teen Dream*

10. Kanye West, *My Beautiful Dark Twisted Fantasy*

11. Gorillaz, *Plastic Beach*

12. Sleigh Bells, *Treats*

13. Jonsi, *Go*

14. Local Natives, *Gorilla Manor*

15. Band Of Horses, *Infinite Arms*

16. The Tallest Man On Earth, *The Wild Hunt*

17. Deerhunter, *Halcyon Digest*

18. Spoon, *Transference*

19. Yeasayer, *Odd Blood*

20. Ray LaMontagne and The Pariah Dogs, *God Willin' and the Creek Don't Rise*

21. The New Pornographers, *Together*

22. Broken Social Scene, *Forgiveness Rock Record*

23. Joanna Newsom, *Have One On Me*

24. Cee Lo, *The Ladykiller*

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**5 Best American Contemporary Classical Albums Of 2010**

Recommended by Daniel Gilliam, APM
Finisterra Piano Trio, *Daron Hagen: Complete Piano Trios*

Florestan Recital Project, *Complete Songs Of Daniel Pinkham, Vol. 1*


Da Capo Chamber Players, *Luminous Spirals: Chamber Music of Chinary Ung*

Imani Winds, *Terra Incognita*

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**The 5 Best Side Projects Of 2010**

**Recommended by Rita Houston, WFUV**

Fistful Of Mercy, *As I Call You Down*

Junip, *Fields*

Black Dub, *Black Dub*

Maximum Balloon, *Maximum Balloon*

She & Him, *Volume Two*

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**5 Songs The Current Couldn't Stop Playing**

**Recommended by Mark Wheat, The Current**

Trampled By Turtles, "Wait So Long" from *Palomino*

Dessa, "Dixon's Girl" from *A Badly Broken Code*

Jeremy Messersmith, "Violet!" from *The Reluctant Graveyard*

Mumford & Sons, "Winter Winds" from *Sigh No More*

OK Go, "This Too Shall Pass" from *Of the Blue Colour of the Sky*

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**Egon's 5 Favorite Reissues Of 2010**
Recommended by Egon, Funk Archaeology

Omar Khorshid, Guitar El Chark (Guitar Of The Orient)

Syl Johnson, Complete Mythology

Various Artists, The World Ends: Afro Rock And Psychedelia In 1970s Nigeria

Various Artists, California Funk: Rare Funk 45s From The Golden State

Pastor T.L. Barrett And The Youth For Christ Choir, Like A Ship (Without A Sail)

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5 Jazz Reissues That Put 2010 To Shame

Recommended by Nick Francis, Jazz24

Miles Davis, Bitches Brew 40th Anniversary Legacy Edition

Various Artists, CTI Records: The Cool Revolution

Tito Puente, The Complete 78s, Vols. 1 and 2

Wes Montgomery, Boss Guitar

Stan Getz and Kenny Barron, People Time: The Complete Recordings

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The Top 5 Chopin And Schumann Albums of 2010

Recommended by Robin Gehl, WGUC

Kirill Gerstein: Liszt, Schumann, Knussen

Angela Hewitt, Schumann: Kinderszene/Davidsbundler Tanze/Sonata In G Minor

Rafal Blechacz and The Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Chopin: The Piano Concerto

Stephen Hough, Chopin: Late Masterpieces

Louis Lortie Plays Chopin, Vol. 1