



Who's The Top Among Female Vocalists

Anita Baker, Mariah Carey and Whitney Houston

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Staff

Who is the top female vocalist of today (in terms of talent and not in record sales)? When asking this question, Anita Baker, Mariah Carey and Whitney Houston come to my mind. To try and make a legitimate and fair comparison between the three, I've chosen several different areas to critique. Five points is the highest score for each category with the highest possible score being thirty.

Voice Strength: (Ability to hold notes and switch tones.)

Anita-5— Time and time again Anita shows this talent. With songs like, "Sweet Love" and "Just Because" she has proven that her voice is among the best.

Mariah-5— When "Vision of Love" was released she immediately established herself as a strong vocalist. Definitely a perfect score, she can make transitions between chords like nobody's business.

Whitney-5— "Greatest Love of All," "One Moment in Time," "You Give Good Love," need I say more?

Voice Range: (How high and how low a note can be reached?)

Anita-3— Without a doubt this is Anita's weakest area. She is not equipped to hit the higher notes like her counterparts, but she can go low with the best of them.

Mariah-5— Sometimes, Mariah showcases her ability too much. In "All in Your Mind" she hits a pitch that dogs can understand. She can also reach down deep to lower

tones as well.

Whitney-5— Ever since she was conceived Whitney has had a strong voice range. She has her mother Sissy to thank for that blessing.

Voice Compatibility: (Does the artists' voice go well with the music?)

Anita-5— This has to be her strongest area. Anita's smooth, silky voice coupled with a jazzy, relaxing background make for many enjoyable nights with that special someone.

Mariah-5— Mariah also does a good job in this field. There's never a time that her music undermines her voice or vice versa.

Whitney-4— Whitney's voice, more often than not, overshadows the music she sings over. An ex-

ample of this would be in "I Wanna Dance with Somebody Who Loves Me." It is strictly her voice that carried that song.

Artistic Ability:

Anita-5— Of the many top ten songs Anita has had, she has written most of them. "Sweet Love," "Giving You The Best That I Got" and "Fairy Tales" were all composed by Anita. She is also the executive producer on each of her four albums. This means she has total control on what final changes can be made on a song.

Mariah-5— Of the eleven songs written on her debut album, Mariah wrote each one of them. As a fellow artist or as a music fan, you've got to respect the talent she has.

Whitney-3— It's not Whitney's fault she was not blessed with the ability to write or compose, but as it stands now she has a limited say in her career direction. For the most part, she just shows up and sings and lets her producers do the

comes out, we won't necessarily know if she has a sound to identify with. But judging from the first, she has found her little niche.

Whitney-3— It may seem like I'm being hard on Whitney but think about her albums. With each one comes something new just when we were getting used to her old ways. I also think her songs have a tendency to sound alike. Off the top of my head I think back to her "remake" of "All at Once," in the form of "Didn't We Almost Have It All."

Originality/Style

Anita-5— Anita is in a class of her own. The way she incorporates jazz into her style and her willingness to try something new from time to time makes this woman dynamic.

Mariah-3— Mariah can be cloned as a Whitney Houston type. I must admit the first time I heard, "Vision of Love," I thought it was Whitney. They both use some of the same oohs and mms. Mariah

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dirty work. This is the reason she came out with a second album full of 'pop smoch' and it's also the reason she has still not found a style that says "Whitney."

Sound: (Consistency of the artists' "sound" without it being the "same" time and again.)

Anita-5— Anita continues to have a jazz sound, but does not make the mistake of letting her music overlap to become the same song over and over.

Mariah-4— This might be an unfair category in which to rate Mariah. Until her second album

will probably "come into her own" with a second LP.

Whitney-3— Her style is too mainstream to be original. But when she matures more as far as the business side of the industry is concerned, she'll have her own identity.

The totals are in: Anita Baker-28, Mariah Carey-27, and Whitney Houston-23. Anita Baker is the best vocalist on the planet today. Of course this argument can never be settled for real but I'd like to think I did my part in helping to settle anybody's dispute.

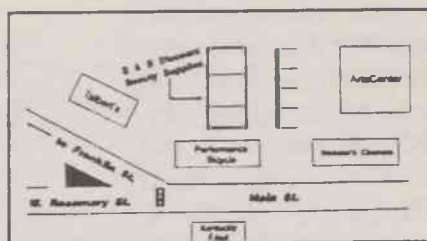
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