

Go!

- [Home](#)
- [About](#)
- [Contact](#)
- [Subscribe](#)
- [AAAMC Home](#)

---

## The Paris Concert

October 12th, 2007



Title: [The Paris Concert](#)  
Artist: Gil Scott-Heron & Amnesia Express  
Format: Color, DVD-Video, Live, NTSC  
Label: Inakustik (Dist. by [MVD Visual](#))  
Catalog No.: INAK6465  
Date: 2007

To begin, this is [Gil Scott-Heron](#) we're talking about. Author, poet, musician. If you don't know anything about Gil Scott Heron, watching the DVD is not going to mean much to you, so reading this review will mean even less. Reaching for anything of Gil Scott-Heron's is not the best choice if you're looking for something idle. I liken him to John Coltrane, in that I would never put Trane's "Interstellar Space" on while driving in my car to satisfy a need for background music, or Penderecki's "Dies Irae" for that matter. As in Coltrane or Penderecki, the words of Gil Scott-Heron are rich in.....well, richness.

Encouraged by [Langston Hughes](#), Chicago born Scott-Heron is one of the models of Afro-centrism, which would explain why I subconsciously associated him with saxophonist Joe Henderson long before I knew what Afro-centrism was. The sometimes centerpiece of controversy, Scott-Heron speaks about many themes in his works including the surface appearance of television and mass consumerism, social issues birthed during the Civil Rights Era, the hypocrisy of Black revolutionaries, and homophobia. Sometimes done through spoken-word, sometimes through singing, his message always comes across and points directly to the heart of whatever issue he is attacking at that particular moment.

In terms of style, Scott-Heron's music can be described as pure, unadulterated groooooove. His band, Amnesia Express, covers the gamut of styles from jazz, blues, latin, vamping drones, and fusions of all the aforementioned. Every track will get your foot tapping involuntarily. The deception in these seemingly laid-back genres is in the lyrical content of his songs. Thirteen tracks comprise this offering by Scott-Heron, and the track titles themselves show the diversity in themes that he is known for: "Work for Peace," "Angel Dust," "There's a War Going On," and "The Bottle." Again, the experience of watching a Gil Scott-Heron concert is best maximized by first familiarizing yourself with some of his earlier works. His poetry collection, [So Far, So Good](#), and his 'best of' studio recording [Evolution \(and Flashback\)](#) are good starting places (in that order, by the way).

This live set, recorded in Paris at the New Morning on July 23, 2001, finds Scott-Heron in his older years, but proving he's still got the integrity that made him popular in Afro-centric circles. Joining Scott-Heron on this performance are members of his band Amnesia Express. The down-side, and critical point of this DVD, is that the credits are terrible. For example, we get the full names of all four guys who stood behind a camera and filmed the gig, but nothing in terms of who was on stage performing the music. Scott-Heron announces the members a few times throughout the set, but their names are unclear and so the mystery of giving credit where credit is due remains.

Overall, *The Paris Concert*

is recommended to people who are familiar with Gil Scott-Heron's earlier work. Newcomers using this DVD as a starting place will get a false representation of what this artist has accomplished up to this point. I dare to say they might write it off as merely "some old man playing folk tunes for a couple of hours." In terms of face value, the groove he lays down in *The Paris Concert* is good enough to satisfy those who are merely searching for something to tap their foot to. The tragedy though, is that underneath the groove, is the REAL treasure of Gil Scott-Heron, and he is a man worth exploring.

Posted by Francisco Raul Dean

Review Genre(s): [Rap and Hip-Hop](#), [Jazz](#)

[Trackback this post](#)

---

## Calendar

October 2007

**M T W T F S S**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

8 9 10 11 [12](#) 13 14

15 16 17 18 19 20 21

22 23 24 25 26 27 28

29 30 31

[« Sep](#)

### ***Most Recent Posts***

- [Welcome to the October Issue](#)
- [Respect Yourself: The Stax Records Story](#)
- [Never Forget: A Journey of Revelations](#)
- [Scene of the Crime](#)
- [Singing for Life](#)
- [Another Dance](#)
- [Keep Reachin' Up](#)
- [Ethiogroove](#)
- [Good Girl Blues](#)

© Copyright 2007 blackgrooves.org. All rights reserved.

[Blix Theme](#) by Sebastian Schmieg. Icons by [Kevin Potts](#). Powered by [WordPress](#). [Login](#)