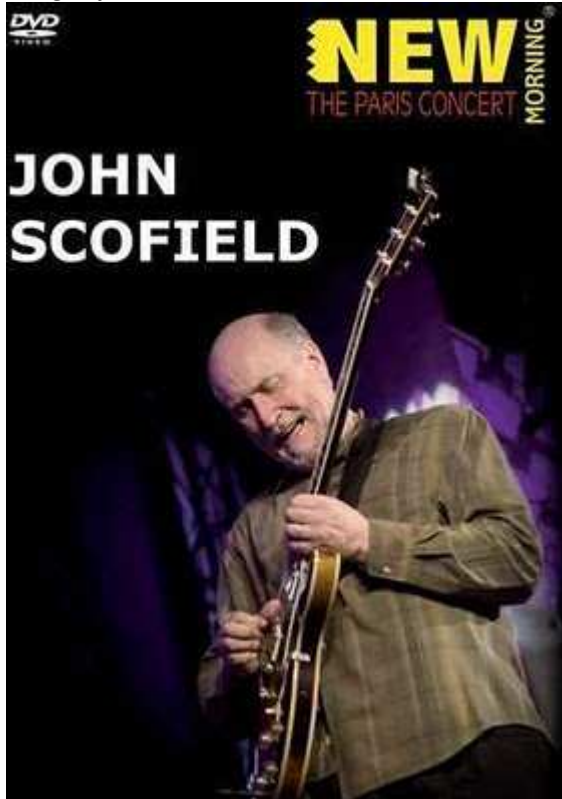


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DVD Review: John Scofield: New Morning – The Paris Concert

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Images from the Internet



John Scofield: New Morning – The Paris Concert

Produced and directed by Daniel Farhi

Inakustik / New Morning Productions, 2010

135 minutes, USD \$19.95

In-akustik.de

MVDvisual.com

New Morning is a large club in Paris, a natural venue for jazz artists like John Scofield. Ohio born-Connecticut raised Scofield celebrates his last year in his 50s by jazzing on the City of Lights, and fortunately, it was captured in High Def on April 23, 2010.

There is no preamble here, as the DVD pretty much starts as the two-hour long concert begins. There is little conversation throughout, and all pieces are instrumental, lasting on average about 10 minutes each.

John is not alone, though. Yep, he's packin'. For drums, he has Bill Stewart, who has played with him on and off for about 20 years. He also refers to Stewart is the best drummer he's ever worked with. On fretless standup bass, there's Ben Street, who's tall and gaunt, and plucks the hell outta the thing. Last is Michael Eckroth on drums, who is in Paris for the first time. A former

NYU student of Scofield, Michael is the first in this situation John has ever invited on tour, which is saying something. Despite some pretty stubby fingers, Michael is a definite piano wiz, mostly playing a Yamaha piano, and twice switching to a Nord Electro 3 organ. While Scofield is obviously in charge of this quartet, it is also apparent he is comfortable in letting the other members shine, the sign of a confident leader.

Now, while I am fond of jazz, I do have to admit that my knowledge base is a bit lower than, say, blues. Jazz is an art form where I prefer to blank my mind and just let it be, rather than trying to deuce it out. That being said, Scofield certainly doesn't stick to one style, even from one of his own compositions to another. For example, with "My Foolish Heart," which Scofield describes in one of the rare introductions as "a real beauty" from "a long time ago," the tempo is slow and moody, with swishy-sounding metal brush drumsticks, sort of a rainy day kind of jazz. Then there's "I Want to Talk About You," which has a piano opening with a romantic feeling, even through the dissonance, and Scofield's guitar part is reminiscent of "God Bless the Child." "Groove Elation," the last cut before the encore, has a more modern pacing, with a bluesy tone that makes use of the Electro 3.

His covers tell a lot as well, such as John Murtaugh's electric organ based "Slinky," Dizzy Gillespie's "Woody 'N You," and Charlie Parker's 1947 classic upbeat, "Relaxin' at Camarillo," which has a *Charlie Brown's Christmas* vibe to it (though I can hear all you Bird fans yelling at me).

It certainly is a solid couple of hours of jazz that one can just put on and close your eyes and relax, knowing you're in good hands. With a minimal amount of dialog between songs (only two have short introductions, not counting a couple of *thank yous* here and there), it's not hard to get lost in the groove.

The bonus feature is *Soundcheck Sketches*, an eight minute bits-and-pieces of the band arriving at the venue, and practicing. Scofield talks over some of this, reminiscing about his life in jazz, and describing the present band. It's a nice touch for a classy DVD.

Songlist

Ten Taken

Wood 'N You

Slinky

My Foolish Heart

Steeplechase

Hive

Lost Found & Inbetween

Chirikawa

Relaxin' at Camarillo

I Want to Talk About You

Groove Elation

The Guinness Spot