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John Scofield - New Morning: The Paris Concert

Score: **80%**

Rating: **Not Rated**

Publisher: **MVD Entertainment Group**

Region: **A**

Media: **DVD/1**

Running Time: **135 Mins.**

Genre: **Documentary/Live Performance/Independent**

Audio: **Dolby Digital 5.1 Surround**

Features:

Behind the Scenes Interview with John Scofield
Before the Gig: Rehearsal Footage

Scofield is one of my most favorite modern guitarists, and has been for some time. His work with Joe Lovano was what originally captured my attention, but Sco' has been a fixture in the scene for a long time, playing with many as a sideman and bandleader. **New Morning: The Paris Concert** captures a session performed with a project band that Scofield put together, playing a smallish club to a packed French audience. The other veteran in the band is Bill Stewart, also an alumni of the Scofield/Lovano period. Stewart's work is always solid, swinging interspersed with touches of a harder rock feel, but he plays a fairly subdued set on this DVD. This may have to do with the relatively young pianist and bass accompanying Stewart and





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Scofield on this outing. Ben Street and Michael Eckroth both appear dependable, and Eckroth displays some fantastic piano technique. It seems a weird thing to say, but Eckroth has a unique sense of articulation on the keyboard, very staccato and punctuated lines.




The gig is a mix of originals and standards, the latter not being something Scofield necessarily recorded much of during his collaborations with other artists. His sense of harmony and weaving unique melodic lines makes him one of the more interesting jazz composers, away from what he's accomplished on the electric guitar. Whether bringing out a version of his own tune "The Guinness Spot" or playing ultra-traditional songs like "My Foolish Heart" and "Woody'n You," Scofield manages to bring his unique phrasing and sound to bear. We're more interested in the originals, but it's a nice compromise to play through some songs where the audience can hum along. It's interesting to hear Scofield's mastery of bop songs like "Steeplechase" and "Relaxin' at Camarillo," plus these are areas where Eckroth's style shines. Street seems to be less of a virtuosic soloist and more of the dependable anchor for the group. Stewart solos a few times, but his playing style is already a constant murmur of counterpoint to Scofield, much as one came to expect from drummers like Roy Haynes.


The audience is relaxed, a bit more sedate than one might expect in the states. The mood is focused, and the band appeared to be enjoying its time on-stage. Scofield pulls out some of the most expressive "guitar faces" you'll ever see, to the point that it's almost a distraction from the music at times. Close your eyes, open up your ears, and just enjoy it.

-Fridtjof, GameVortex Communications AKA Matt Paddock

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