

Is That Jazz?

Gil Scott-Heron

Basie was never really commonplace
He was always measures ahead.
Ellington was more than number one
For the music and things that he said.
Bird was the word back when tenors were heard
From Kansas right up to the Prez
And Billie was really the Queen of a scene
That keeps echoing on in my head.

What it has will surely last but is that Jazz?

Miles had a style that amazes and raises
The spirits from deep in your soul.
'Trane struck a vein of laughter and pain
Adventures the mind could explore.
Stevie and Bob talk of freedom and 'Jah'
In their own individual ways.
Playing and singing as long as its bringing
A message is all that it says.

What is has will surely last but is that Jazz?

We overanalyze we let others define
A thousand precious feelings from our past.
When we express love and tenderness
Is that Jazz? Is that Jazz? Is that Jazz? Is that Jazz?
Dizzy's been busy while Grover gets us over
With notes that go straight to the heart.
Brother Ron gets it on with a bassline so strong
That the sounds seem to glow in the dark.
I take pride in what's mine - is that really a crime -
When you know I ain't got nothing else?
Only millions of sounds picks me up when I'm down;
Let me salvage a piece of myself.

What it has will surely last but is that Jazz?