

= Winter in America =

Winter in America is a studio album by American vocalist Gil Scott Heron and keyboardist Brian Jackson , released in May 1974 on Strata East Records . They recorded the album during September to October 1973 at D & B Sound Studio in Silver Spring , Maryland . While Jackson 's piano based arrangements were rooted in jazz and the blues , their stripped down production for the album resulted in a reliance on more traditional African and R & B sounds . The subject matter on Winter in America deals with the African American community and inner city in the 1970s .

The album serves as Scott Heron 's and Jackson 's debut release for Strata East Records , following a dispute with their former label and departure . It proved to be their sole release for the independent jazz label . Upon its release , Winter in America featured limited distribution in the United States and quickly became rare in print . However , with promotional help from its only single " The Bottle " , it obtained considerably larger commercial success than Scott Heron 's and Jackson 's previous work . The album debuted at number six on Billboard 's Top Jazz Albums chart and ultimately sold over 300 ,000 copies in the United States .

While it was critically overlooked upon its release , Winter in America earned retrospective acclaim from several writers and music critics as Scott Heron 's and Jackson 's greatest work together . Along with its critical recognition , it has been noted by several critics for its influence on derivative music forms such as neo soul and hip hop music , as many artists of the genres have been influenced by Scott Heron 's and Jackson 's lyrical and musical approach on the album . On March 10 , 1998 , Winter in America was reissued on compact disc for the first time in the United States through Scott Heron 's Rumble & Gia Records .

= = Background = =

After leaving his former label Flying Dutchman Records , Gil Scott Heron signed with the New York City jazz based Strata East label in early 1973 , accompanied by jazz keyboardist and songwriter Brian Jackson , with whom he had worked with on his previous studio albums , Pieces of a Man (1971) and Free Will (1972) . While some sources allege this may have been over financial or creative differences , Scott Heron maintained the switch was due to producer Bob Thiele 's unwillingness to give Jackson co billing . By the time of their move to Strata East , Scott Heron and Jackson had achieved underground notice among R & B and soul music listeners , particularly for the political and social nature of their music 's themes , as well as Scott Heron 's emphasis on African American culture and social plight in his compositions . Their musical fusion of jazz , blues , soul and spoken word styles helped them earn some notice among less mainstream black music listeners at the time .

Social circumstances and musical events preceded Scott Heron 's and Jackson 's signing with Strata East . After the decline of popularity in traditional jazz forms and the civil rights struggle , which had sought racial equality during the late 1950s and 1960s , black pride and Afrocentric sentiment by many black Americans emerged . During 1970 to 1974 , the Black Panthers organization had been neutralized and pan Africanism came into vogue . Following the free jazz and avant garde breakthroughs of Ornette Coleman and John Coltrane , a creative stasis among most jazz musicians set in during the decade that led to an eclecticism where no style or conception of jazz maintained a zeitgeist among players . However , jazz fusion had gained mainstream notice for its stylistic adoption of rock and funk music , despite being the subject of controversy in jazz purist circles . Highlighted by the works of Roy Ayers , Herbie Hancock , and Donald Byrd , jazz funk also emerged in response to the growing popularity of funk , leading to a trend of funk rhythms among jazz musicians formerly of the hard bop tradition as an attempt to reconnect with their African American audience . This factored into the popularity of Scott Heron 's and Jackson 's work in the black underground scene , with the former obtaining a reputation as a " street poet " , while his work with Jackson served as an early recording of jazz poetry .

Scott @-@ Heron had looked to expand on his socially conscious , pro black @-@ oriented themes and independently produce a more conceptual album than his previous work had envisioned . Scott @-@ Heron 's and Jackson 's search for more creative control over their recordings prompted them to sign with Strata @-@ East Records . Established in 1971 by jazz musicians Charles Tolliver and Stanley Cowell , in response to major record companies ' lack of interest in their recordings , the Strata @-@ East label had become known for signing artists who recorded with diverse styles of jazz music with themes of social consciousness and black nationalism , as well as " minimal but eye @-@ grabbing graphic design " for its releases .

The label had also been known for carrying out the management concept of " condominium " . Originally conceived and penned by Cowell , it gave artists authority and responsibility over their recorded material independently , as well as the ability to assign the master tapes over to the label for distribution . Strata @-@ East artists had more control over their recordings than major labels at the time had offered . Music journalist Kevin Moist later wrote of the label 's " condominium " concept , " The idea was to try and develop an independent cultural space outside of the mainstream that could function self @-@ sufficiently and be genuinely participatory for its members . The goal was to live in an engaged way where art , society , spirituality , and politics could all come together holistically in an integrated existence . That (sub) cultural renewal is embodied in the kind of music midwifed by Strata @-@ East . " The label 's philosophy for artist management and recording ethic worked to the advantage of artists such as Gil Scott @-@ Heron and Brian Jackson . Scott @-@ Heron and Jackson were able to release more aesthetically personalized recordings for Strata @-@ East than most mainstream labels would allow .

= = Recording and production = =

To record the album , Jackson suggested a small studio located outside of Washington , D.C. in Silver Spring , Maryland . The sessions took place in September and October 1973 at Silver Spring 's D & B Sound Studios . According to Scott @-@ Heron , the studio 's main room was so small that when the two musicians recorded , Jackson was forced out next to the cooler , playing flute in the studio 's hallway while Scott @-@ Heron sang in the main room . However , Scott @-@ Heron felt comfortable in the small studio . Jose Williams was enlisted as the recording engineer for the album . Williams assisted Scott @-@ Heron and Jackson , who were credited for production under the title Perpis @-@ Fall Music , Inc . , with production , and he engineered the album 's recordings entirely himself .

The recording sessions served as the first production credit for Scott @-@ Heron , Jackson , and Jose Williams . As the third unofficial collaboration between Scott @-@ Heron and Jackson , the album 's recording featured more of Jackson 's input than before . Jackson recounted the experience in an interview for All About Jazz , stating " He had this way with words and I thought to myself , ' People have to hear this stuff ' . What I had to offer was the music and I figured if we can take his words and make this tribal knowledge rhythmic and musical , we can draw people to hear it . "

In contrast to their Flying Dutchman recordings and subsequent Arista recordings , Winter in America utilized a sparse production quality and small number of sessions musicians . A small supporting line @-@ up , featuring drummer Bob Adams and bassist Danny Bowens , contributed on a few cuts . Adams and Bowens , who studied with Scott @-@ Heron at Lincoln University , arrived from the Pennsylvania @-@ based college on the last day of recording on October 15 , 1973 . Scott @-@ Heron and Jackson handled most of the vocals , songwriting , and instrumentation , and they were assisted by Williams with the production .

The September 4 and 5 sessions featured only Jackson and Scott @-@ Heron playing and recording . The limited personnel during these sessions allowed them to rely mostly on traditional African and R & B sounds and influences , along with more creative and artistic control of the project . More than half of the album 's songs were co @-@ written and produced by Jackson . His input also helped solidify his partnership with Scott @-@ Heron , leading to further records together before their split in 1978 .

= = Title and concept = =

The original name of the album was intended to be Supernatural Corner , named after the cover art , but was later changed to Winter in America by Scott @-@ Heron . Both the title and the song " Supernatural Corner " were left off the album , as the name would not be understandable to people who had not seen the house to which the title was alluding . According to Gil Scott @-@ Heron , the original title referred to what appeared to him to be a haunted house in the Logan Circle neighborhood of Washington , D.C. , in which Scott @-@ Heron and Jackson moved into prior to recording in 1973 . The cover artwork features a collage @-@ type painting with oriental graphic designs and a small figure version of whom appears to be Brian Jackson . It was created by Eugene Coles , a friend and colleague of Jackson 's and Scott @-@ Heron 's from the historically black college Morgan State University . Supernatural Corner by Coles was used as the album 's cover art , as Scott @-@ Heron had originally commissioned Coles to design the collage .

The revised title of Winter in America was intended to represent Scott @-@ Heron 's use of the season of winter as a metaphor and concept of his view of the issues facing society during his time . The title was also meant to represent the urban sociological themes featured on the album , which had surfaced on most of Scott @-@ Heron 's previous work . Scott @-@ Heron referred to the title as the " overall atmosphere of the album " , as well as the metaphor for the overall theme of the album . Winter was conceived amid social , economic and political issues in the United States during the early 1970s , including stagflation , the 1973 oil crisis that had great effect during the winter , the 1973 stock market crash , the Watergate scandal , and urban decay . He further elaborated on the social concept of winter and Afrocentricism , as it relates to living during times such as these and how the title reflects on the time itself , in the original LP liner notes :

In a February 2009 interview with Jalylah Burrell of Vibe magazine , Gil Scott @-@ Heron discussed the album 's concept and title , as well as the social and political atmosphere at the time of Winter in America 's recording . In retrospect , he stated " We felt as though we had come across something that people did not understand or did not recognize but that 's the season that we were going into , not for three months but for an extended period of time . A lot of the folks who represented summer and spring and fall had been killed and assassinated . The only season left is winter Bobby Kennedy and Dr. King and John Kennedy , those were folks who represented spring and summer , and they killed them . So we wanted to do an album about where we were . And we weren 't trying to depress people , hell , they were living it , they already knew but we were trying to describe it and were certainly not alone ... we felt as though a part of it was the folks in charge of the political structure . They were snowmen ... "

= = Music and lyrics = =

Similar to his studio debut album Pieces of a Man , Winter in America has Scott @-@ Heron exercising his baritone and deep tenor @-@ singing abilities with some spoken @-@ word elements . The album served as a move into more conventional song structures , in contrast to the Scott @-@ Heron 's debut live album , A New Black Poet - Small Talk at 125th and Lenox (1970) , which was composed entirely of spoken @-@ word poetry , and the rapping style of his previous album Free Will . According to music writer Karl Keely , Pieces of a Man and Winter in America exhibit further departure by Scott @-@ Heron from his prominent " angry and militant poet " persona . BBC Online writer Daryl Easlea wrote that it " captures Scott Heron at a turning point , largely leaving his heavier raps behind in favour of a floating ambience , with his poetry and song being illuminated by Jackson 's superb instrumentation " . In addition , the album features more themes of social commentary , Afrocentrism and balladry than Pieces of a Man . Winter in America features a more stripped @-@ down production and melancholy mood along with songs that exceeded four minutes , as opposed to Free Will , which was criticized for its brevity and time constraints .

Scott @-@ Heron 's characteristic sound on the album is rooted in the blues , jazz , and soul music . He referred to his mellow fusion of style as " bluesology , the science of how things feel . " Scott

@-@ Heron 's and Jackson 's compositions for *Winter in America* incorporate elements of African music , heavy percussion , and chants . They also feature scene @-@ setting , spoken word intros and mystical interludes , which were influenced by the free jazz stylings of contemporary artists such as Pharoah Sanders and Abdullah Ibrahim . Jackson wrote arrangements that tended to be more straight @-@ ahead material , incorporating classic jazz bridges in his compositions . Scott @-@ Heron , as the main lyricist and vocalist , exhibited more pop sensibilities with his compositions and created indelible hooks that were influenced by the black popular music of the time . By combining their distinct approaches to composing , Scott @-@ Heron and Jackson produced a multicultural , diffused sound that evoked the afrobeat and world music style of artists such as Fela Kuti during the African music scene 's popularity .

Winter in America juxtaposes themes of nostalgic hope to the social problems of the early 1970s , particularly in the African @-@ American community and inner cities . Also a prominent theme in Scott @-@ Heron 's lyrics is people 's faith in their culture in a bleak , impoverished environment . The album features Scott @-@ Heron 's examination of maintaining one 's cultural roots in a discouraging environment . Other themes include love , fatherhood , freedom , alcoholism , and political scandal . The themes of social disillusionment and the human condition featured on the album are also depicted on the *Winter* collage , representing the grim , sullen images of poverty , decay , and death in generally urban areas and ghettos . Created by artist Peggy Harris , the collage was featured on the original LP 's inner sleeve and in the liner booklet of *Winter in America* 's CD reissue .

The album 's style and themes are exemplified by the bookending track " Peace Go with You , Brother " , with Scott @-@ Heron 's bluesy , jazzy vocals and Afrocentric lyrics accompanied by Jackson 's soulful piano arrangements . It features a dreamy , moody soundscape , produced by Jackson 's Rhodes electric piano , which evokes the In a Silent Way @-@ era jazz of Miles Davis . " Peace Go with You , Brother " has Scott @-@ Heron criticizing the selfishness of certain members of his generation , as well as people for forgetting their common humanity . The song continues to examine the significance of a person 's cultural roots , regardless of where they prove to blossom . " Rivers of My Fathers " is the album 's longest track and features drummer Bob Adams ' swing @-@ style drum rim shots and pianist Jackson 's wide , blocky chords , play in a blue @-@ influenced style . Scott @-@ Heron uses the water motif , a common metaphor in African @-@ American culture , to evoke feelings of home and freedom and represent faith , amid the frustrations of a modern black man . As the opening verse and chorus suggest , " Looking for a way out of this confusion / I 'm looking for a sign , carry me home / Let me lay down by a stream and let me be miles from everything / Rivers of my fathers , could you carry me home . " The narrator beseeches the " river " to deliver him home , which is revealed at the last seconds of the song as Scott @-@ Heron silently whispers " Africa " .

The melancholy , nostalgic love song " A Very Precious Time " contains an uplifting timbre of Jackson 's flute with joyful singing by Scott @-@ Heron . While his lyrics depict a requiem to innocence and first love , the song 's general message explores the concept of nostalgia as a means to remain in the present , despite the loss of hope or faith that can be brought on by the struggle of the present as opposed to the past . The tempo of the album is picked up by the opening vamp of " Back Home " , which contains the concept of family and its positive values . " The Bottle " is a commentary on alcohol abuse with a Caribbean beat and flute harmonies by Jackson . It became a popular song played at parties at the time . French music critic Pierre Jean @-@ Critin calls it " an epic song [...] whose infectious groove can still set dance floors alight over thirty years later . " The song 's dance and popular music sensibilities and social message engendered its appeal to listeners following its release as a single . Scott @-@ Heron later said of the single 's success and style , " Pop music doesn 't necessarily have to be shit . " " The Bottle " also addresses problems of drug addiction , abortion , and incarceration , and features Scott @-@ Heron on keyboards . Despite its grim observations , " The Bottle " became a concert favorite and one of Scott @-@ Heron 's most popular songs . It is followed by soulful , low @-@ tempo tracks " Song for Bobby Smith " and " Your Daddy Loves You " ; the latter is an introspective ballad and ode to Scott @-@ Heron 's daughter Gia Louise .

During the October 15 , 1973 session , drummer Bob Adams and bassist Danny Bowens contributed to the tracks " Peace Go with You " , " Rivers of My Fathers " , " Back Home " , and " The Bottle " . Adams , however , was disappointed that " H ² Ogate Blues " was to be left off the album . The song originally served as an opening monologue concerning the Watergate incident used by Scott @-@ Heron at his concerts , and it contains proto @-@ rap and talking blues elements , in which rhythmic speech or near @-@ speech is accompanied by a free melody and strict rhythm . The studio version , which was recorded during the album 's sessions , was not intended to be for the album prior to Adams ' objection , as Scott @-@ Heron said that " nobody outside of Washington seemed to know what the hell I was talking about . " Scott @-@ Heron later revisited the experience in the liner notes of the album 's 1998 reissue . On Adams ' opinion of " H ² Ogate Blues " , he wrote that " His reply was that even if people didn ' t understand the politics it ' s still funny as hell . " On the recording , Scott @-@ Heron stated :

The resulting track features sharp criticism by Scott @-@ Heron of then @-@ US president Richard Nixon and his vice @-@ president Spiro Agnew , among other politicians involved in the scandal ; the Watergate incident had yet to reach its conclusion when the song was recorded . Scott @-@ Heron introduces the song with a short speech discussing the blues and referencing current events : " But lately we had Frank Rizzo with the ' Lie Detector Blues ' / We done had the United States government talkin bout the ' Energy Crisis Blues ' " . The final chorus line directly references Nixon and the scandal : " And there are those who swear that 've seen King Richard / Beneath that cesspool ? Watergate " . His lyrics range from humor to critical diatribes of political corruption and social issues . It shares lyrical similarities to Stevie Wonder 's anti @-@ Nixon song " You Haven ' t Done Nothin ' " (1974) . The album concludes with a reprisal of the opening track . Music writer Karl Keely said of its significance , " The return of the refrain from ' Peace Go with You Brother ' adds a sense of wholeness to end the record , an idea that the album has travelled through Gil Scott @-@ Heron 's worries , fears , pleasures , hopes , and finally , his pronounced disliking of Richard Nixon , before returning to the opening statement , in the hopes that the record may have made that selfish brother think more about his world and those in it , instead of moving along in a self @-@ imposed bubble . "

The title track , which was not featured on the original LP , was recorded after the album 's release at the suggestion of Peggy Harris , the artist who designed the Winter collage for the inner sleeve of the LP . Initially , Scott @-@ Heron and Jackson meant for Winter in America to lack a title track , which contrasted their previous label 's trend of having their work include title tracks . The album title 's purpose meant only to describe the general theme of Winter in America 's songs . According to Scott @-@ Heron , a title track " separates from the rest of the lyrics , better , or worse or different . " The studio version of " Winter in America " was released on his following album , The First Minute of a New Day (1975) , while a live version , recorded in 1982 at Washington , D.C. ' s Black Wax Club , was included on the 1998 CD reissue of Winter in America . The song features Scott @-@ Heron 's poetic references and lyrics that portray America in a dystopian state where " democracy is rag @-@ time on the corner " , " the forest is buried beneath the highway " , " robins are perched in barren treetops " , and , in conclusion , " no one is fighting because no one knows what to say . "

= = Release and reception = =

Upon its original stereo LP release in May 1974 , the album had a short supply and distribution due to the Strata @-@ East label 's independent distribution policy of their artists ' releases . Consequently , Winter in America became considered by many fans to be the great " lost " Gil Scott @-@ Heron album , before a proper reissue on compact disc thirty years following its original issue . The album served as the first of their collaborations to have Jackson receive co @-@ billing for a release . Unlike Scott @-@ Heron 's previous albums , Winter in America experienced some commercial success with the help of promotional resources in the form of underground music deejays and club promoters , in spite of the album 's limited distribution . While it did not chart on the U.S. Billboard Pop Albums chart , the album charted on the Top Jazz Albums chart and peaked at number six . Winter in America entered the Top Jazz Albums on June 29 , 1974 and remained there

for 40 weeks , until March 29 , 1975 . According to a 1990 Los Angeles Times article on Scott @-@ Heron , the album ended up selling more than 300 @,@ 000 copies .

Winter in America 's only single release , " The Bottle " , soon became an underground and cult hit following its issue . Despite its underground reputation , the song became one of Scott @-@ Heron 's most successful singles , as it reached the number 15 spot on the R & B Singles Chart . According to an article on Scott @-@ Heron for a November 1974 issue of Billboard , the success of the single " has made his most recent album , ' Winter in America ' , a national best @-@ seller and heralds his wide @-@ ranging appeal . " The success of " The Bottle " also helped lead to Jackson 's and Scott @-@ Heron 's following recording contract with Arista Records , which had been established in late 1974 , the label at which they would enjoy further success and a larger amount of commercial notice . Upon signing them , Arista executive Clive Davis said of Scott @-@ Heron in an interview with Rolling Stone , " Not only is he an excellent poet , musician and performer ? three qualities I look for that are rarely combined ? but he 's a leader of social thought . " Along with approval from Arista executives , Winter in America was well received by the underground music scene , in which Scott @-@ Heron earned the majority of his fan base , and added to Scott @-@ Heron 's reputation as a socially aware and conscious artist .

In retrospective reviews , Winter in America was well received by critics , who cite it as one of Scott @-@ Heron 's best albums . Uncut magazine 's Barney Hoskyns praised the album , calling it an " introspective seasonal offering from black poet @-@ singer and collaborating pianist " . He also lauded its critical content and called it " a masterwork of ghetto melancholia and stark political gravitas " . Ron Wynn of AllMusic wrote of Scott @-@ Heron 's performance , in that he was " at his most righteous and provocative on this album " , while acknowledging Jackson 's contributions as well . BBC Online 's Daryl Easlea called the album " an affecting work " and wrote that its title track " should be played as standard on all modern history courses as a snapshot of the stilted hopes and aspirations in the post Watergate and Vietnam War mid 70s America " . The Washington Post 's Richard Harrington cited " The Bottle " and " H ² Ogate Blues " as " classic Scott @-@ Heron works " in a review of its reissue . Los Angeles Times writer Mike Boehm viewed that its title track " sounded a sad death @-@ knell for ' 60s hopes of transforming change " , while calling it a " wonderful mood piece , capturing what it 's like to feel oppressed in your soul by outer @-@ world events that seem out of control " . Danny Eccleston of Mojo called it an " alloy of Rhodes @-@ laden souljazz with [Scott @-@ Heron] ' s razor @-@ sharp beat @-@ poetry " and quipped , " Anger , radicalism , humour and funk from the proto @-@ rapper , thankfully restored to health and liberty . "

Dream magazine columnist Kevin Moist stated that the album " further jazzified his mixture of street poetry , soulful spirit , political commitment , and Black cultural expression . " He also noted the history of the Strata @-@ East label , and summed up Winter in America 's significance , stating " Radically charged but musically mostly stark and low @-@ key , melodic and soulful as hell , sometimes full band flow while at others just voice and piano , all hanging tight under a melancholy cloud of belatedness [...] Thematically , the album reaches back even further than its predecessors in drawing on Black cultural energy as a source of power for facing down the coming political / cultural Ice Age in America . But Scott @-@ Heron was never a one @-@ dimensional rantier , and his pen is as double @-@ edged here as it ever was , slicing into the growing self @-@ destructiveness and sell @-@ out / buy @-@ in tendencies that were fragmenting the Black community , as incisively as it stabs at the jowls of evil in the White House . As badass as it is understated , and really hasn ' t dated just a little bit . " The Observer called the album a " jazz fusion pillar stone , with a social conscience to boot " . Music writer Karl Keely praised Scott @-@ Heron 's vocal maturity from his previous work , and noted Jackson 's influence for improving and expanding the music 's melodic content . Keely commented that it demonstrates " the evolution of Scott @-@ Heron from politicised poet to soulful singer " .

However , Houston Press writer Paul J. MacArthur expressed a mixed response towards its production quality and called Winter in America the " most dated " of the Scott @-@ Heron reissues . Robert Christgau said with the exception of the danceable " The Bottle " , Scott @-@ Heron " had a better beat and just slightly less melody " when he was reciting in spoken word . In a 1975 article

for The Village Voice , he commended the album 's title track as " an evocation of our despondency that is as flawless as it is ambitious " .

= = Legacy and influence = =

Winter in America has been recognized by music writers as one of the prominent examples of early rap , along with the early work of The Watts Prophets and The Last Poets . " The Bottle " was covered by latin soul musician Joe Bataan for his album Afrofilipino (1975) . Recordings featured on the album , along with other Scott @-@ Heron / Jackson compositions , were sampled by hip hop artists . This further expanded Scott @-@ Heron 's legacy as one of the progenitors of hip hop . The diverse sound and mellow instrumentation featured on the album , referred to by Scott @-@ Heron as bluesology , later inspired neo soul artists in the 1990s and helped solidify Scott @-@ Heron 's and Jackson 's legacy in the genre . On Jackson 's legacy , All About Jazz described him as " one of the early architects of the neo @-@ soul " , while citing his early work with Scott @-@ Heron as " an inspirational and musical Rosetta stone for the neo @-@ soul movement " . Pierre Jean @-@ Critin of the French music magazine Vibrations wrote of Scott @-@ Heron and the album , stating " As an artist who conceives his albums as newspapers and similar testimonies , Gil Scott @-@ Heron is one of America 's finest observers and commentators of social reality as well as being one of the most creative and influential figures in African @-@ American music , and this landmark album announced his arrival . "

The album also marked the transition of Scott @-@ Heron from beat poet to singer @-@ songwriter with a full @-@ scale band . He further developed this melodic approach with his following work with Brian Jackson , The First Minute of a New Day (1975) and From South Africa to South Carolina (1976) . While the album did not have a direct impact on the black music scene at the time , it proved to become one of the Strata @-@ East label 's most successful LP releases , in terms of sales and appeal to their target audience . While serving as Scott @-@ Heron 's and Jackson 's only album for the independent label , Winter in America helped Strata @-@ East Records achieve considerable notability among other New York City distributors of soul and jazz music during the 1970s , while the latter genre had been viewed by many jazz purists to be in a period of creative confusion and decline . In describing the label and its issued musical works , Dream magazine 's Kevin Moist stated " The diversity and experimentation of the music , plus the great quality of many of those experiments , make it seem like more like a creative golden age in which the dominant idea was new ideas mixing and blending cultural styles and artistic genres or pushing existing styles into new extremes . " According to Nick Dedina of Rhapsody , Winter in America had impact elsewhere , stating " this deeply felt (and sometimes deeply funky) album helped break the pioneer of protest jazz @-@ soul and rap to the general public with hit single ' The Bottle ' " .

The album was re @-@ released with previously unreleased bonus material by Scott @-@ Heron 's Ruml @-@ Gia label in 1998 , following a reissue project headed by Scott @-@ Heron after he had received ownership of his 1970s recordings . The record 's significance and influence in music has led to much retrospective favor of it among music writers and critics , as shown in Winter 's rankings in several " best of " publication polls . Winter in America was ranked number 67 on New Nation 's June 2004 list of The Top 100 Black Albums . The album was also listed in the music reference book 1001 Albums You Must Hear Before You Die (2006) . " The Bottle " was later ranked number 92 on NME magazine 's list of The Top 150 Singles of All @-@ Time and was included in Q magazine 's 1010 Songs You Must Own ! publication . The title track was included on music writer Bruce Pollock 's 2005 list of The 7 @-@ 500 Most Important Songs of 1944 @-@ 2000 , and it was ranked number 82 on Blow Up 's list of 100 Songs to Remember .

= = Track listing = =

1998 compact disc reissue bonus tracks .

= = Personnel = =

Credits for Winter in America adapted from liner notes .

= = = Musicians = = =

Gil Scott @-@ Heron ? vocals , electric piano
Brian Jackson ? electric piano , acoustic piano , flute , vocals
Danny Bowens ? fender bass
Bob Adams ? drums (traps)

= = = Production = = =

Perpis @-@ Fall Music , Inc . ? producer
Jose Williams ? engineer
Malcolm Cecil ? remastering
Vera Savcic , Adam Shore ? reissue exec. producer
Dan Henderson ? manager
Eugene Coles ? cover painting
Peggy Harris ? liner collage
Monique de la Tour / Rimal @-@ Gia , David Lau ? reissue art direction
Scott Townsend ? reissue design
Tony Cerrante , Gary Price ? liner photos

= = Charts = =

U.S. Billboard Music Charts (North America) ? Winter in America
1974 : Top Jazz Albums ? # 6
U.S. Billboard Music Charts (North America) ? " The Bottle "
1974 : Top R & B Singles ? # 15

= = Release history = =

Winter in America was originally released as a 12 " vinyl record , in stereo format only . Released in May 1974 with a limited supply , the record remained out of print for nearly twenty five years in the United States until 1998 , when Scott @-@ Heron acquired ownership of his recordings , with the exception of his material for the Flying Dutchman label . Afterwards , he initiated a reissue project through his own Rimal @-@ Gia label , which had obtained a distribution deal with TVT Records . The compact disc reissue contains bonus tracks , including the live version of the title track , and the original and new liner notes written by Gil Scott @-@ Heron . Prior to this , a German release of Winter in America was issued in 1992 as was a remastered LP in 1996 . However , they did not include these features . Other remasters were also released in Europe , as listed below .