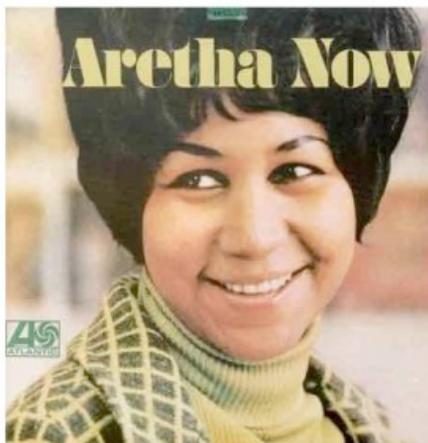


# FULL-ON R-E-S-P-E-C-T

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Watching the Queen of Soul in concert last week at Toronto's Roy Thomson Hall was like stepping into the seventh dimension. Her voice brings new meaning to the words bible belt because when the woman sings, *you just know* the angels, the saints and even the demons can hear her turn it out.

Having seen Ms. Franklin perform in various venues in New York and Chicago already, I can honestly say—without hometown bias—that the Roy Thomson's acoustics amplified every pitch, tone, texture and colour she cared to emit that night. It was gush worthy so let me gush. To get the audience filled with her amazing grace, the Hall asked Grammy winning music Professor Rob Bowman to give a mini lecture on the fabulousness that is Aretha (it's part of their 'friends first' membership — find more information [here](#)) before Lady A took to the stage.

Bowman's quick talk really honed in on why Re Re is less of singer and more of a song stylist. For example, he noted that while "Respect" may have been written and recorded by Otis Redding before she took it on, Franklin's super charged version still speaks to all the manic lust and trust issues women have to deal with today.

The actual concert was filled with the same Franklin magic Bowman preached on. When Franklin sat down at the piano and started playing it like a pro, her spirit took over. She busted out her jewel in crown hit—"Bridge Over Troubled Water"—and the audience changed from frenzied to tender in the matter of seconds. What followed after that was another touch of Aretheatrics...she threw in a hands-in-the-air traditional gospel song on the stage and transformed that concert yet again...this time into a church sermon. Even the atheist sitting beside me screamed "Jesus!"—*Elio Iannacci*