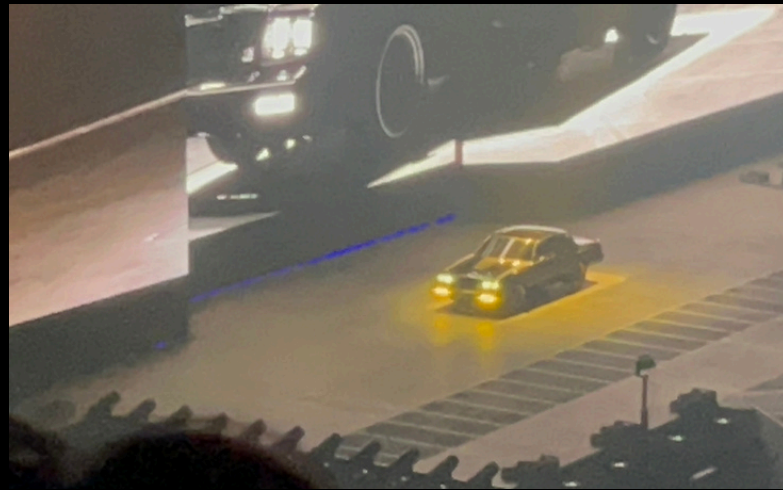




THE GNX TOUR HITS DALLAS

KELVIN KATELY, EDITOR IN CHIEF

Kendrick Lamar and SZA brought the Grand National Tour to the AT&T Stadium on Saturday, April 26th. The tour has garnered high publicity from Lamar's album, titled "GNX", which followed his culture shifting rap battle with rapper and former collaborator Drake. Fans filled the sold out stadium to celebrate the rapper's victory lap. If you were expecting a standard hip hop concert, you got way more than you expected. This was not the run of the mill rap/r&b act. This was a production.



We started with the opening of the GNX album with Wacked Out Murials. Kendrick paints the picture of wanting to take us through the streets of L.A. At a certain line it becomes clear that he wants us to experience the ride with him. The line of "Ridin' in my GNX with Anita Baker in the tape deck" became the focal point of his entire performance. With the rest of his portion of the concert serving as the backdrop to the environment around him. Songs like "Squabble Up" and "Man in the Garden" provided more context into what he wanted the audience to take away from his artistic view.

Not to be outdone, SZA captivated the audience with a unique blend of visuals to match her sultry voice and charm. I'm a sucker for great live singing, and I had never seen SZA live. So, I was nervous because I am a fan of her music. That being said, I wasn't let down. Her voice may be better in person. That's a rarity in today's music. It's even more rare when you add her performance and choreography. The ladies in attendance were right there with her all night. But, the highlight of the night for me, was her performance of "Saturn". The beauty of the set matched the beauty of the song and her performance. It was absolutely breathtaking.





This was an event I'm happy I got to cover. I've been to plenty rap/r&B concerts. Never have I gone to one with a production as high quality as this one. This was an expression from two artists operating on an extremely high level. Yes, there were subliminal shots aimed at Drake. There was a deposition parody going all night that led up to "Not Like Us". But paying attention to that felt secondary. The art around it was, and should have been, the primary focus. It was beautiful. It was something I highly recommend that you attend, provided it's near you. You most definitely get your money's worth.