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Quick Flicks By Kevin Wierzbicki

Ike & Tina Turner - On the Road 1971-72

At first look this film is shambolic. Shot by famed rock photographer Bob Gruen and his wife, *On the Road* is 81-minutes of what amounts to home movie quality footage of Ike and Tina on and off stage shot entirely in black & white.

The film shows the effects of laying around for 40-years, edits are herky-jerky and some segments, like an overly-lengthy shot of Tina at home cooking steaks for dinner while talking to an unidentified person off-camera, try the viewer's patience.

There is no narration so for the performance shots you don't know, in most cases, where the film was shot. In the offstage footage no one is identified so if you want to know who anyone beyond Ike and Tina are you're out of luck.

In essence *On the Road* has everything stacked against it.

On the other hand, the filmmakers are well aware of this. *On the Road* is a case of, "here's what we've got, have a look" and as such, despite the warts, will delight [students](#) of rock'n'roll, especially fans of Tina's who've read the books and are hungry for anything else they can find on their idol.

The film begins with a shot of Ike and Tina being driven somewhere, sitting in the backseat of a car involved in an argument where Tina is the aggressor but a bit playfully so, while Ike is clearly put out.

In about the only effort here by the filmmakers to make a statement, the film ends with another backseat shot with the pair singing together blissfully; juxtaposed with the opening shot the footage presents a clever commentary on the well-known rollercoaster of a relationship the pair endured.

What lies in between is a hodgepodge of performance, backstage, studio, at home and on the road footage that presents a good snapshot of what life was like for touring musicians before the era of chartered jets, plush hotel suites, cell phones and ridiculously-lavish band riders, let alone promotional tools such as MTV and the Internet.

The personalities of both husband and wife come through loud and clear; Ike is predictably gruff and stand-offish while Tina is buoyant and positive. And of course the onstage footage shows Tina and the Ikettes shaking their tail feathers to "Proud Mary," "River Deep, Mountain

High," "I Want to Take You Higher," "Respect" and fifteen others.

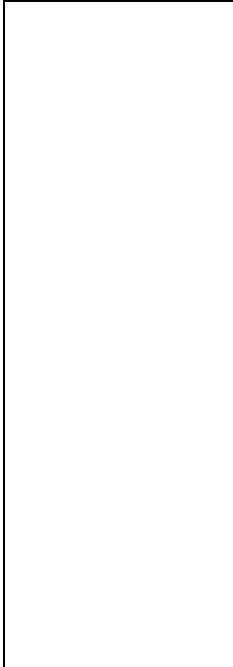
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