

Dave Bronze (Eric Clapton, Art of Noise) on bass. The players are as adept as their leader, though Mooney's playing on the fast-paced "Fire" seems a little sluggish. As a singer, Moore lacks a voice that is as distinctive as Hendrix's (or even fellow Irishman Phil Lynott, with whom Moore played in Thin Lizzy), but there's nothing too painful here. That said, Moore handles the rockers better than ballads like "My Angel," which would have benefited from a more gentle touch (for this track, he also switches from a Fender Stratocaster to a Gibson Flying V). During three of the last four numbers, Moore brings Mitchell and Billy Cox from Hendrix's Band of Gypsies onstage to join him, handing the microphone to Cox for "Red House" and "Stone Free," while the show ends with an expansive take on "Voodoo Child (Slight Return)" with the first line-up. *Blues for Jimi* essentially serves as a showcase for Moore's prowess on electric guitar, which should please his devoted following. Sadly, both Moore (1952-2011) and Mitchell (1947-2008) have since passed away. Presented in DTS 5.1 and Dolby Digital stereo on DVD, and DTS-HD 5.1 and LPCM stereo on Blu-ray, this is recommended. (K. Fennessy)

**Giovanna d'Arco ★★★**  
(2012) 128 min. In Italian w/ English subtitles. DVD: \$29.99, Blu-ray: \$39.99. Unitel Classica (dist. by Naxos of America).

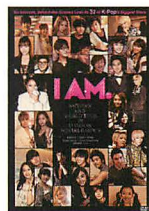


The seventh release in the *Tutto Verdi* series from Parma's Teatro Regio, compiling all of Verdi's operas, offers another rarity—a mounting of the composer's 1845 opera about Joan of Arc (here, Giovanna), which turns the martyr's life into a romance in which she's torn between her divinely inspired duty and her worldly love for France's King Carlo (Charles VII), whose throne she saves from the English. The third major character in the plot is Giacomo, Giovanna's father, who accuses his own daughter of witchcraft but saves her from execution when he hears her at prayer, allowing her to lead the French army to their final victory, although she is mortally wounded in the process. Historically, this is nonsense, of course, but Verdi's score is lovely, effective, and well conducted by Bruno Bartoletti, who draws both vigorous and sensitive playing from the company orchestra. Shining in the major roles are Svetla Vassileva (Giovanna), who exhibits a strong soprano, and Evan Bowers (Carlo), a ringing tenor. The sole drawback is veteran Renato Bruson's rather wobbly vocalism as Giacomo. Gabriele Lavia's production—featuring period sets and costumes—is highly traditional, and while the staging is a bit static at times, overall this is pleasant to the eye. Presented in DTS 5.1 (DTS-HD 5.1 on the Blu-ray version) and PCM stereo, the sole extra here is a brief introduction to the opera. Both for those collecting the entire

set and those wanting to fill a lacuna in their Verdi collections, this is recommended. (F. Swietek)

**I Am: SMTOWN Live World Tour in Madison Square Garden ★★★**

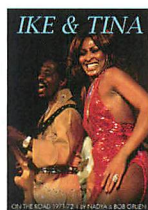
(2011) 125 min. DVD: 4 discs, \$24.99; Blu-ray: 2 discs, \$39.99. CJ Entertainment (avail. from most distributors).



Combining a concert performance with interwoven documentary footage, *I Am* presents seven K-pop (Korean pop) acts at Madison Square Garden in 2011 as part of the SMTOWN Live World Tour. Smooth moves, trendy apparel, and breezy harmonies rank high among the bands' priorities, aligning them with the Western variant of manufactured pop outfits from \*NSYNC to One Direction, although these singers seem less reliant on Auto-Tune (behind-the-scenes a cappella numbers reveal several strong singers). As influences, the performers mention Madonna, Michael Jackson, and Justin Timberlake. The women of the five-member f(x) and nine-member Girls' Generation perform hip-hop-influenced tracks that combine English and Korean lyrics, while the nine-member Super Junior and two-member TVXQ! offer an acrobatic brand of boy-band pop—the latter entering the stage suspended on wires and hidden harnesses. Other acts, including the solo artists KANGTA and BoA, incorporate metal and techno into their musical mix. Between performances, the entertainers talk about their stage names and personas; since K-pop appears to thrive on artifice, the singers have no problem admitting that they are, at least in some cases, playing roles. Fans will find the audition and rehearsal footage of special interest, since some participants were quite young when they joined the SMTOWN family; Yuri from Girls' Generation, for instance, says that she became a trainee when she was in fifth grade and joined the group six years later, indicating the degree to which SM Entertainment mirrors Hollywood's old-fashioned star-making machinery. Bundling the feature-length title documentary with the full-length concert, extras include backstage footage and a music video. Presented in Dolby Digital 5.1 on DVD and Blu-ray, this is recommended for larger music collections. (K. Fennessy)

**Ike & Tina: On the Road 1971-72 ★★★**

(1972) 81 min. DVD: \$19.95. Music Video Distributors (avail. from most distributors).



*On the Road* provides an off-the-cuff look at R&B performers Ike and Tina Turner at home, in rehearsal, and on tour. Rather than making a formal documentary,

rock 'n' roll photographer Bob Gruen and his wife, Nadya Beck, stitched together grainy (but functional) footage, alternating between color and black-and-white. The film also features a clip from *The Tonight Show* in which Ike and Tina performed with their backing band along with the singing and dancing Ikettes. Unfortunately, no onscreen text specifies where the other shows took place (except for a sign indicating the University of North Dakota), although the accompanying booklet—featuring photographs and liner notes by Gruen—fills in a few gaps. Off the road, Tina cooks for the kids, washes dishes, and talks to Nadya—who occasionally appears onscreen—about her image and her desire to write more songs. While the monaural sound can be muddy and the camerawork shaky, the performances of the full-throated Tina and live-wire Ikettes are consistently riveting, and this disc offers up 19 selections from the group's repertoire, including the signature numbers "River Deep, Mountain High" and "Proud Mary," although not all are played in their entirety. Gruen and Beck concentrate most of their attention on Tina, but Ike contributes a lengthy, psychedelic guitar solo during an intense, slow-burning version of the blues standard "I Smell Trouble." DVD extras include a slideshow. Fans are sure to welcome this release, which is recommended, overall. (K. Fennessy)

**John Cage: Journeys in Sound ★★★**

(2012) 61 min. DVD: \$24.99, Blu-ray: \$39.99. Accentus Music (avail. from most distributors).



Co-directors Paul Smaczny and Allan Miller handily make the case here that experimental composer John Cage (1912-1992) built his career around sound in all its forms. In an archival interview, Cage explains that his goal was to "open the eyes and ears" to the beauty of noise and other phenomena that don't normally qualify as music. Other interviews and performances feature John Lennon and Yoko Ono, composer Christian Wolff, and Cage's partner, choreographer Merce Cunningham. Several of Cage's pieces, played by various artists and ensembles, are interspersed throughout the film to illustrate Cage's concepts, such as chance operations, which took inspiration from the *I Ching* (in addition to his compositional skills, Cage was a Zen Buddhist, a mycologist, and a painter). *New Yorker* critic Calvin Tomkins credits Cage for freeing other composers to look beyond received wisdom about the primacy of traditional instruments. A representative from Cage's longtime publisher, C.F. Peters, even uses the word "instructions" in reference to the composer's music, since many of his compositions read like short plays or stage directions (an example being that the performer should hold a note for as long as