

may be the fault of conductor Iván Fischer, whose tempo choices are erratic—from a fairly brisk overture to some rather slow arias in the second act, where a bit more effervescence might have been warranted. On the whole, however, the performance holds together nicely and does justice to Mozart's (and librettist Lorenzo Da Ponte's) brilliant confection. Boasting superb sound (with DTS and LCPM stereo options) and camerawork, DVD extras include interviews with Hytner and Fischer, a behind-the-scenes featurette, and a cast gallery. Highly recommended. Aud: C, P. (F. Swietek)

The Donovan Concert: Live in L.A. ★★★

(2007) 60 min. DVD: \$19.95. Music Video Distributors (avail. from most distributors).

Well, here's an odd couple: filmmaker David Lynch (of dark and twisted cinematic visions fame) introduces '60s flower child troubadour Donovan in this January 2007 concert at Los Angeles' Kodak Theatre—a PBS-aired 13-song benefit performance for the...um...David Lynch Foundation for Consciousness-Based Education and World Peace. Aside from a few references to transcendental meditation (which Donovan discovered with the Beatles in India), this is a low-key trip down memory lane, as the songwriter sings and plays guitar (and occasionally harmonica) on a string of hits—including "Catch the Wind," "Sunshine Superman," "Season of the Witch," and "Hurdy Gurdy Man," as well as the timely Buffy Sainte-Marie-penned "Universal Soldier"—backed by Tom Mansi on standing bass and Stewart Lawrence on percussion. The hits are both well-presented and fun to revisit, although songs such as "Jennifer Juniper," heard here some 40-plus years after it was penned, remind us that—superficial similarities aside—Donovan was not Dylan. In between songs, Donovan provides amiable (though not terribly insightful) musings about his travels during the '60s, while images of the artist as a young man are projected on a wall behind him. At the close, guest stars Mike Love of the Beach Boys and Donovan's daughter Astrella Celeste join the singer for a rousing rendition of his signature "Mellow Yellow." Presented in Dolby Digital 5.1 and stereo, DVD extras include four bonus songs. Recommended. Aud: P. (R. Pitman)

Eric Clapton: Crossroads Guitar Festival 2007

★★★
(2007) 2 discs. 269 min. DVD: \$29.99. Rhino Entertainment (avail. from most distributors).

Johnny Winter looks like death warmed over, and his playing isn't exactly lively. Sheryl Crow is a

perfectly respectable artist, but what she's doing at a concert devoted to great guitarists is anybody's guess. And after, oh, two to three hours of primarily blues and blues-derived rock, even the most devoted axe-heads may find themselves reaching numbly for the fast forward button. So, Eric Clapton's *Crossroads Guitar Festival 2007* falls short of perfection. Still, there's a lot of superb music to be heard sprinkled throughout this 35-plus-song double-disc set. Staged in suburban Chicago in July 2007, the concert features several of the same players who were at the first *Crossroads* gig (2004, in Dallas), including Robert Cray, Buddy Guy, B.B. King, John Mayer, Vince Gill, John McLaughlin, Robert Randolph, and, of course, Clapton. They're all in fine form—Clapton in particular has a way of rising to the occasion, and even if his reunion with ex-Blind Faith mate Steve Winwood doesn't generate much heat, his soloing is genuinely passionate and exciting. And then there's Jeff Beck, who has been the least commercially successful of the Holy Trinity of former Yardbirds guitarists, but is arguably a more original and adventurous player than either Clapton or Jimmy Page ever were (his version of Stevie Wonder's "Cause We've Ended as Lovers," featuring a solo by the startlingly talented young bassist Tal Wilkenfeld, is maybe the single most stirring performance here). Other highlights abound, courtesy of Derek Trucks, Los Lobos, and the amazing country picker Albert Lee, to name three. And even if, in the end, one might wish there had been more good songs, as opposed to scaffolding for extended soloing, this great-looking, superb-sounding show (with DTS 5.1 and PCM stereo tracks) is recommended. Aud: P. (S. Graham)

Greek ★★★

(1990) 81 min. DVD: \$32.98 (booklet included). Arthaus Musik (dist. by Naxos of America).

Mark-Anthony Turnage's edgy, musically eclectic opera transposes the Oedipus story from Sophocles' plague-ridden Thebes to a Thatcher-era England wracked by social disintegration and violence. Enthusiastically received at its 1988 premiere, *Greek* reached a wider audience thanks to this 1990 BBC filmed version. The libretto transforms the tragic Greek hero Oedipus into Eddy, a thug thrown into the street by his clownish adoptive parents. After killing a diner owner in a quarrel, Eddy marries his widow, only to later discover that she's actually Eddy's mother (earlier, Eddy achieved popular hero status by defeating the Sphinx, here a destructive grotesque monster with two female heads). The transpositions aren't always logical (two-headed beasts were not commonplace in Thatcher's England), and some will bristle at the verbal vulgarity, but there's no denying the sophistication

and energy of the music, which veers from harshly dissonant percussive patches, to a brilliantly stylized battle between Eddy and his true father, to a hilarious parody of a music-hall song for his adoptive mum and dad, with lyrically soaring moments thrown in as well. The performance is a definitive one—featuring the four original multi-role singers—nicely refashioned for the screen, with visual and audio qualities (in PCM stereo) that are adequate (this is, after all, a nearly two-decades old TV production). Recommended. Aud: P. (F. Swietek)

Kool & the Gang: Videology ★★★

(2007) 107 min. DVD: \$14.99. Universal Music Group (avail. from most distributors).

An optional "trivia track" subtitle feature on Kool & the Gang's *Videology* provides a wealth of historical detail and band-related trivia, including the fact that in the U.S., Kool & the Gang have sold as many albums as the Beatles. The pop/funk band's phenomenal success is celebrated in this compilation of 24 videos spanning the group's reign from 1973 to 1987, a period that produced 25 top-10 hits (not all of which are represented here), including signature songs such as "Celebration," "Jungle Boogie," and "Ladies Night." Arranged chronologically with a viewer "playlist" option, the DVD serves a dual purpose as both an audiovisual history of Kool & the Gang's anthology (which included many songs about hope and togetherness) and a fascinating (and sometimes quaintly amusing) survey of the evolution of music videos in general. Since most of these clips hail from the pre-MTV era, they consist primarily of filmed performances, but the later entries transition into the modern music video. Kool & the Gang's most devoted fans will notice a couple glaring omissions (such as "Funky Stuff" and "Rhyme Time People"—presumably some hits never had accompanying videos), but it's a safe bet that few will be disappointed by this DVD, which also features four live performance clips from the vintage '70s TV show *Don Kirshner's Rock Concert*. DVD extras include band interviews and the complete nine-minute short-film version of the hit song "Misled." Recommended. Aud: P. (J. Shannon)

Mariah Carey: The Adventures of Mimi

★★★
(2006) 2 discs. 80 min. DVD: \$19.99. Stonewinner (avail. from most distributors). ISBN: 0-9793794-0-7.

Minimalist outfit of black bra, panties, and high heels notwithstanding, resurrected diva Mariah Carey has precious little stage presence in this October

