Spinner [Web](#)

Search for artists, news, MP3s and more

SEARCH

Features

BEST OPENING LYRICS
 ELVIS FACT OR FICTION
 ICONIC ELVIS PHOTOS
 WORST LYRICS EVER
 BEST PROTEST SONGS
 CARTOON ROCKERS
 HOW DID THEY DIE?
 ICONIC ROCK PHOTOS
 SAD SONGS
 WOMEN BEHIND SONGS
 WORST BAND PHOTOS
 KILLER B-SIDES
 WORST ROCK JOBS
 GAY MOMENTS
 CONCERT ETIQUETTE
 MONUMENTAL FLOPS
 ROCK 'N' ROLL DOLLS
 RANK THE ROCK READERS' LYRICS
 WOMEN WHO ROCK

Hot Categories

ELVIS PRESLEY
 MP3 OF THE DAY
 NEWS
 VIDEO OF THE DAY
 I F'N LOVE THIS SONG
 SPINNER INTERVIEW
 COUNT FIVE
 AROUND THE WORLD

All Categories

3x3 (29)
 Album (122)
 Around the World (22)
 Bio-Terrorism (1)
 Bonnaroo (48)
 Book Club (4)
 Break-Ups (3)
 Canada (9)
 Celebrity (77)
 Celebrity
 Doppelganger (5)
 Coachella (20)
 Concert (147)
 Contest (11)
 Count Five (24)
 Country (16)
 DJ (49)
 DJ Mix (29)
 DVD (6)
 Electronic (113)
 Exclusive (312)
 Favorite Band Ever (For Now) (31)
 Full CDs (42)

Gypsy Caravan on the Long and Bending Road

Posted Jun 5th 2007 11:00AM by [Steve Hochman](#)Filed under: [Around the World](#)

Halfway through the new film 'Gypsy Caravan: When the Road Bends,' which documents a 2001 North American tour that brought together musicians from across the Euro-Asian Gypsy world (or, to use the preferred term, Roma), one of the participants makes a startling statement. A member of the band Fanfare Ciocarlia, known for its frenzied swirls of brass sounds, recalled the first time the group played outside its native Romania in the early '90s following the downfall of dictator Nicolae Ceausescu. "We were happy they didn't hate us," he said of the European audiences.

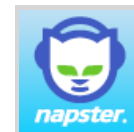
Now, he may have been talking merely about the reception of the music, which would soon allow the band to bring electricity to its village thanks to proceeds from its first CD. But there's a broader context. For Roma, simply not being treated with hatred and suspicion is often a relief. After all, the thousand-year journey of the Roma, from Northern Indian origins across Europe and beyond, has been one of great hardships, from banishments and exclusions to Nazi massacres -- leaving them a people without a nation.

Even relatively innocent impressions have been saddled with bigotry. The latter was the case when Jasmine Dellal was growing up in England. Gypsies seemed almost as mythical as leprechauns, the subject of colorful stories and legend. She recalls a clapping game with a rhyme cautioning that the Gypsies "would steal you away" -- something she thought sounded like "great fun." Years later, living in Berkeley, California, in the '90s, the legends had a less romantic, dark tone. "It was the last bastion of political correctness: People would say, 'Excuse me' if they said 'black' rather than 'African-American,'" she recalls. "But the same people would say, 'Don't get your camera stolen by the Gypsies!'"

Fortunately, the filmmaker ignored that bigotry and turned her cameras on the Gypsies. The result is a revealing documentary centered on the one thing that has been the most publicly embraced part of Roma culture -- the music. The film features colorful performances by Rajasthan music and dance ensemble Maharaja, Romanian village bands Fanfare Ciocarlia and the strings-centric Taraf de Haidouks, Macedonian icon Esmá Redžepova and the Andalusian flamenco troupe headed by dancer Antonio El Pipa and featuring the emotive singing of his formidable aunt Juana la del Pipa. It will have its U.S. premiere in New York on June 15 and Los Angeles on June 29, with other cities through North America in following weeks ([click here](#) for schedule information).

[RSS Feed](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Send News Tips](#)

ADVERTISEMENT



Free Music!

Millions of songs -- from Akon to Zero 7 -- await your ears.

Try Napster for Free

Most Commented On (7 days)

[Fire Injures Several at Austin City Limits Music Festival](#)
[New Music: Thrice, 'Fire Breather' & 'Digital Sea'](#)
[Tori Amos Sings an Ode to Britney Spears](#)
[Terrorist Wants to Behead Pop Stars](#)
[Worst Band Feuds: No. 20](#)
[White Stripes Cancel Fall Tour](#)
[Underworld Surfaces in New York City](#)
[Worst Band Feuds: No. 2](#)
[Worst Band Feuds: No. 15](#)
[Worst Band Feuds: No. 19](#)

Recent Comments

[soiso](#) on [New Music: Thrice, 'Fire Breather' & 'Digital Sea'](#)
[perfect](#) on [IFLTS: 'She Doesn't Get It,' The Format](#)
[david](#) on [New Music: Thrice, 'Fire Breather' & 'Digital Sea'](#)
[Brian](#) on [New Music: Thrice, 'Fire Breather' & 'Digital Sea'](#)
[Nick](#) on [New Music: Thrice, 'Fire Breather' & 'Digital Sea'](#)
[Nick](#) on [New Music: Thrice, 'Fire Breather' & 'Digital Sea'](#)
[loon](#) on [New Music: Thrice, 'Fire Breather' & 'Digital Sea'](#)
[Chuck](#) on [The Chum Bucket: Barry Manilow Ditches 'The View' + More](#)
[bill](#) on [New Music: Thrice, 'Fire Breather' & 'Digital Sea'](#)

Gadgets (5)
 Gettin' Paid (7)
 Holy Hell (111)
 Horrifying (8)
 Humor (125)
 I Fought the Law (33)
 I Freakin' Love This Song (134)
 Live Earth (12)
 Lollapalooza (34)
 MILF (2)
 Movies (1)
 MP3 (361)
 MP3 of the Day (94)
 New Music (335)
 New York City (10)
 News (686)
 OMG! (55)
 Other People's
 Posts (2)
 Overdose Radio (6)
 Photo (94)
 PhotoSynthesis (58)
 Podcast (36)
 Pop Culture (29)
 Potent Quotables (44)
 Premiere (31)
 R.I.P. (8)
 Rehab (20)
 Reunion (2)
 Rock Hall (16)
 RPM (2)
 Shout It Out Loud (2)
 Song (38)
 Spinner Interview (14)
 Spinner Radio (1)
 Still Awesome (39)
 SXSW (36)
 The Chum
 Bucket (101)
 The DL (394)
 The Hit List (518)
 The Interface (93)
 Tour (130)
 Toys (3)
 Trash Talk (24)
 Tribute (3)
 Twisted Tales (22)
 Video (322)
 Video of the Day (88)
 Wacked News (18)
 What's That Song? (1)
 With a Bullet (21)
 WTF? (105)

It recalls the 1993 film 'Latcho Drom,' which retraced the thousand-year journey of Roma culture from North India to Spain, and helped raise long-overdue awareness of this misunderstood culture. But where that film was only music, with no dialogue or narration, this production was beautifully shot by a team including American documentarian Albert Maysles (of 'Gimme Shelter' fame) and edited with a musical hand by Mary Myers. The film weaves the music with behind-the-scenes looks at the tour and illuminating, touching and at times heartbreaking visits to the musicians' homes (not to mention a cameo by a certain prominent pirate actor who became pals with the Taraf crew while starring in a small film with them a decade ago).

Dellal's initial goals in making the film were simple: "In lots of people's minds, the idea of a Gypsy is a very fantastical, exotic image of somebody who isn't a real person," she says. "Of course it's a real ethnicity, belonging to a group of people whose ancestors left India about a thousand years ago. So one of the main reasons I made this film was to show that Gypsies are real people." Certainly, music has been a major part of awareness, such as it is, about Gypsies, from Parisian pioneer jazz guitarist Django Reinhardt to the ubiquitous Gypsy Kings of recent years. This has accomplished only so much, though. "I think a lot of people thought they were magical people who appeared onstage, played music and disappeared into thin air," Dellal says.

The film in fact started as merely a document of the tour. Dellal was called in by the World Music Institute, which put the trek together, inspired by her previous film, 'American Gypsy: A Stranger in Everybody's Land,' a look at the Roma culture in America. But it turned out to be much more, as she herself learned more about the heterogeneity of Gypsies. That is the central theme of the first part of the film, as the differences between the various Roma cultures seem to emerge through the tentative interactions of the performers -- differences in music, in language, in lifestyle. But as the tour progresses, it becomes more and more about the commonalities and growing camaraderie among the musicians, with late-night chat and jam sessions, good-natured pranks, the sharing of stories and, of course, discoveries of ways to combine musical forces.

'Gypsy Caravan' and its accompanying soundtrack album, released by the [World Village](#) label, have the potential of being for this music what the Buena Vista Social Club project was for Cuban styles, at least aesthetically, if not commercially. But it also could be a key part of what has been a growing effort to address issues around the Roma. The year 2005 inaugurated what has been declared as the [Decade of Inclusion](#), a joint initiative by eight governments, the United Nations, financier and activist George Soros, and the World Bank to fight Roma poverty and discrimination and address the place of this worldless people in the New Europe. And the bonds formed along the course of the documented tour are mirrored in an increasing number of pan-Roma projects bringing together Gypsy artists from various locales, notably Fanfare Ciocarlia's new 'Queens and Kings' album (from the German label [Asphalt Tango](#)), featuring collaborations with Redzepova and other stars from Serbia, Bosnia, Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary and France -- plus the blurry revision of 'Born to Be Wild' heard in the satirical 'Borat' movie.

There are still plenty of bends in the road, though. In a scene toward the end of the tour, one of the musicians accidentally discovers something troubling in a logbook that was open on the reception desk at the hotel where the artists were staying. It's a warning to another hotel clerk that reads, with spelling and grammar errors intact: "Watch out for the Gypsy's. They barely speak English, and they are scary. They look at you kind of funny. I'm not sure what to think of them except, 'I'm scared.' Oh Jeezuz God save me from the Gypsy."

Read [Linking Blogs](#) | [Permalink](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) | [Email this](#) |
 Read [IM this](#) | [Share](#) |
 Read

Recent Posts

[MP3 of the Day: Athlete, 'Airport Disco' \(9/19/2007\)](#)
[Video of the Day: Bruce Springsteen, 'Radio Nowhere' \(9/18/2007\)](#)
[Eagles of Death Metal's Hughes Pens Tune for Kat Von D \(9/18/2007\)](#)
[Phil Spector Jury Unable to Reach a Verdict \(9/18/2007\)](#)
[Paolo Nutini Gets the Led Out \(9/18/2007\)](#)

add your comments

Please keep your comments relevant to this blog entry. **Email addresses are never displayed, but they are required to confirm your comments.**

When you enter your name and email address, you'll be sent a link to confirm your comment, and a password. To leave another comment, just use that password.

To create a live link, simply type the URL (including http://) or email address and

[Simon on Best Opening Lyrics: No. 25](#)

Listen to Full CDs



The Go! Team, 'Proof of Youth'
 Calvin Harris, 'I Created Disco'
 Pinback, 'Autumn of the Seraphs'
 Ani DiFranco, 'Canon'
[Hear all of this week's full CDs](#)

Spinner on MySpace



We're on [MySpace](#). Send us a friend request or we will cry.

[Be Spinner's Friend on MySpace](#)

Interface Podcasts



This Week: Vox Trot Austin five-piece Vox Trot introduces new tracks from their first full-length release.
[Download the podcast.](#)

Subscribe for a new download each week, and catch up with shows you missed below.

Editors
[John Vanderslice](#)
[Tegan and Sara](#)
All Interface Podcasts

3x3



Watch three live videos from [The Klaxons](#), [Datarock](#) & [Joakim](#).



Who: Interpol
What: Interpol rocked out in our Sessions studio.
Highlights: Chilling performances of 'The Heinrich Maneuver' and 'Mammoth' from their new album, 'Our Love to Admire.'

[Watch Interpol's live performance](#)
 Get behind the scenes footage from other Sessions alums.



we will make it a live link for you. You can put up to 3 URLs in your comments.
Line breaks and paragraphs are automatically converted — no need to use <p> or
 tags.

New Users

Name

E-mail

Your site's URL

(optional):

Current Users

E-mail:

Password

Remember Me

E-Mail me when someone replies to this comment

Add your comments:

Blogroll

*Sixeyes
 3 Sight Photo
 A Deeper Shade of Soul
 A Socialite's Life
 Aquarium Drunkard
 Best Week Ever
 Black Voices Newswire
 Both Sides of the Mouth
 Brooklyn Vegan
 Buzz Sugar
 Buzzgrinder
 Central Village
 Chromewaves
 Cinematical
 Clicky Clicky Music
 Coolfer
 Crunk and Disorderly
 Culture Bully
 Defamer
 Dlisted
 Earfarm
 Engadget
 For the 'records'
 Free Indie
 Gawker
 Gizmodo
 Golden Fiddle
 Gorilla vs. Bear
 Hate Something Beautiful
 I Don't Like You in That Way
 I Guess I'm Floating
 I Rock Cleveland
 IF:MV
 Indieblogheaven
 IndieHQ
 Just Jared
 KEXP
 Large Hearted Boy
 Lat34
 Live Music Blog
 Mollygood
 More Cowbell
 Music for Kids Who Can't Read Good
 Music for Robots
 Music Glob
 My Old Kentucky Blog
 New Now Next
 Paper Thin Walls
 Pink Is the New Blog
 Pitchfork
 Pop Candy
 Pop Eater
 Pop Matters
 Pop Sugar
 Popbytes
 Product Shop NYC
 Queersighted
 Queerty
 Rockdirt
 RS Daily
 Scenestars

[So Much Silence](#)
[SOHH](#)
[Some Velvet Blog](#)
[Sound on the Sound](#)
[Stereogum](#)
[Switched](#)
[ThaBombShelter](#)
[The A.V. Club](#)
[The Hype Machine](#)
[The Modern Age](#)
[The Music Slut](#)
[The Onion](#)
[Thus Spake Drake](#)
[TixGirl](#)
[TMZ](#)
[TVSquad](#)
[Twangville](#)
[Underrated](#)
[Water Cooler Gossip](#)
[WFMU's Beware of the Blog](#)
[Wired Listening Post](#)
[Wolf Notes](#)
[Yeti Don't Dance](#)
[You Ain't No Picasso](#)

Download and listen to free music, Internet radio and MP3s; or watch free music videos, concerts and live performances. Use the music search function and read the blog to find information on new, established and indie rock recording artists. Get free music downloads on the MP3 blog and more on Spinner.

[African-American Culture](#)

[Autoblog](#)

[Engaget](#)

[Games](#)

[Joystiq](#)

[Money](#)

[Movies](#)

[Music](#)

[Online Radio](#)

[Shoutcast](#)

[Television](#)

[Winamp Media Player](#)

Spinner.com © 2007 AOL LLC. All Rights Reserved.

[Terms of Use](#) | [Privacy Policy](#)

[show-post](#)