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- Books
- Clubs
- Comedy
- Dance
- Film
- Gay & Lesbian
- Kids
- Music
- Classical & Opera
- Sports
- Theater
- Summer Street Fests
- Features
- Out There
- Time In
- In & Out
- Sign Out
- Over & Out
- Student Guide
- You're Invited
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Film

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Gypsy Caravan: When The Road Bends

(NR), 110 mins, 2006, United States/Netherlands, Color

Critics' rating | Average user rating 1 review

Movie review

From Time Out Chicago

Although Gypsy strains can be heard in de rigueur indie-rock bands like Beirut or the hot jazz of countless Django Reinhardt disciples, Gypsies (or Roma, as many, but not those in this film, prefer to be called) are still an underdiscussed ethnic group. Gypsies live in a diaspora, where their minor-key musical passions have become so integral to their adopted cultures as to be indistinguishable.

This doc, inspired by the tour of the same name, brings together disparate ambassadors of Gypsy music as



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they traverse America over a six-week period. Although the throw-people-in-a-box-and-film-them story line can feel awfully flimsy at times, director Dellal treats these musicians with appropriate—and infectious—reverence.

Stunning nightly performances—especially by the ululating, cherubic Romanian diva Esma Redzepova—are intercut with visits to each performer's home. And each stop, in its own way, mesmerizes. We visit flamenco dancer Antonio el Pipa's gorgeous, sun-streaked studio in Spain; the septuagenarian violinist Nicolae Neacsu chain-smokes his way through reflections on caring for his daughters; and Queen Harish Kumar relates from India how he got his start as the lithe drag-queen dancer for the band Maharaja. And save for one middling disagreement, we see a group more fascinated by its collective identity as outsiders than as individualists. As an intelligent introduction to a lush and unappreciated culture, *Caravan* more than drives its point home.

Author: Matthew Lurie
Time Out Chicago Issue 130: August 23–29, 2007

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Cast & crew

Director: [Jasmine Dellal](#)
Producer: [Jasmine Dellal](#)
Genre(s): [Documentaries](#)

Features



Wild ride
Emile Hirsch better hold on tight—the "Into the Wild" star is about to take off.

Genius by design
Alfred Hitchcock's unsung collaborators get their due in a new exhibit at Northwestern's Block Museum.

Northern lights
Politics and pregnancy dominate this year's Toronto Film Festival.

Preservation nation
A new film festival puts movie palaces in the spotlight.

Mob mentality
David Cronenberg returns to the turf of "A History of Violence"—or does he?

Sinister Christian
Christian Bale is happy to explore the darker corners of human nature. Just don't ask him about his private life.

User reviews of this film

maria said...

I am going to see this at the music box tonight. I cannot wait. I adore Taraf De Haidouks (Nicolae is amazing) and Fanfare Ciocartia, AND Esma Redzepova too. If any of you reading this aren't familiar with the music, look it up. It is mind-blowing. Can't wait to see this documentary. Five stars, because I know that it will kick ass; Viva la gypsies.

Posted on Aug 27 2007 19:08

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