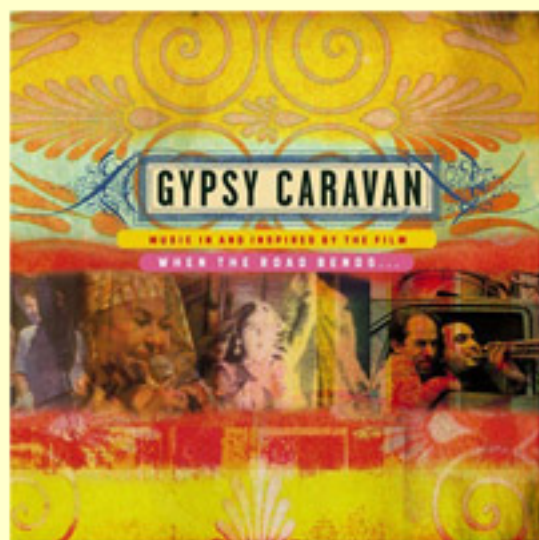


Welcome to Muzikifan



GYPSY CARAVAN

MUSIC FROM THE FILM WHEN THE ROAD BENDS ([World Village 468070](#))

No doubt you've seen Tony Gatlif's great documentary LATCHO DROM. That film completely opened our eyes to the currents of music that wend from Rajasthan to Poland, and from Egypt to Spain. Through it we discovered Taraf de Haidouks and Hameed Khan's ensemble MUSAFIR. Then we got to see them on tour and suddenly a gypsy revival was in full swing. Today these groups tour regularly, make films, win awards and hang out with Johnny Depp and other show biz types. The latest wrinkle in the gypsy trail is a return to that bright moment captured by Gatlif: Jasmine Dellal, another documentarian (who worked with Marlon Riggs), has made her version of the gypsy tale (which I have not seen yet) and this is the soundtrack album, which bodes well for the enterprise, the film, and no doubt more tours.

Gypsies, as is well know, spend their lives on the road. The gypsy caravan used to be a very romantic notion and the lore of gypsies has engaged non-Roma since George Borrow, Cervantes, and even earlier writers. The title of the film was going to be YOU CANNOT WALK STRAIGHT WHEN THE ROAD BENDS... (a Romani proverb), but marketing forces got involved and it became GYPSY CARAVAN, which is a lot less inspired. Let's hope the marketers didn't insist on anything else. Actually the first title reminds me of one of my favourite maxims, from Yogi Berra: "When you come to the fork in the road, take it!" Right from track two, when Fanfare Ciocarlia start playing live, you know this is going to be exceptionally good. Esmá Redžepova, with her clear voice, delivers "Romano horo" (apparently footage of her from 40 years ago when she was a teenager) and then after a bit of table percussion, bottle tapping, etc, and some spontaneity on accordion, we get into Taraf de Haidouks with Filip Simionov adding clarinet, doing "Carolina," now thoroughly Romanized, though of course it actually started out as the well-known Caribbean folksong, "O Carolina!" The film-maker explains she had over 50 hours of music on tape and it was an embarrassment of riches, so the film is just the bits that worked best, though there were uncaptured moments on tour -- in airports, customs detention rooms, hotel rooms after hours -- that were even more compelling, if you were there. The group called Maharajah from Rajasthan is actually a blend of the two well-known groups the Langa and the Manganyar (all are Muslim, and have the surname Khan). I recognize "Roomal" from their repertoire, but there is also an interesting dubby club mix of one of their tunes. I can't wait to see them playing at home in the Thar desert. There's an extended set of them on the CD then we get back to Esmá Red Zep, now with Fanfare Ciocarlia (from the KINGS & QUEENS album) tearing through "Nakalavishe," and Taraf de Hijinks doing their "slow" about the "Little Blossom," "Mugur Mugurel." The film was shot by legendary cinematographer Albert Maysles. For showtimes near you check [the film website](#).