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## MOVIES

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### Gypsy Caravan



**Theatrical Release Date:** 01/01/2006  
**Rating:** NOT RATED  
**Genre:** Documentary  
**Running Time:** 110 minutes  
**Country:** United States  
**Language:** English  
**Studio:** Shadow Distribution

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Avg. User Rating:

**Critic Rating:**

A fine consolation for those of us who still kick ourselves for missing a tour that boasted such a lineup of Romani performers on a single night.

#### FILM FACTS

**Director(s):** Jasmine Dellal

[Official movie site](#)

#### Hop on 'Gypsy Caravan' for a musical ride

By John DeFore  
Austin American Statesman

A film following an impressive gathering of musicians on a kind of goodwill tour of North America, "Gypsy Caravan" aims to be "the 'Buena Vista Social Club' of gypsy music." That it doesn't quite get there is partly because of the scope of the subject: "BVSC" featured a gathering of old men on one island, but this "Caravan" draws from many points along the famously cast-to-the-wind migratory path of the Roma people.

Generously balancing concert footage (whole songs, happily, more often than not) with backstage material, interviews and field trips to the performers' home villages, the movie squeezes a lot of culture into less than two hours — even saving time for a brief appearance by Johnny Depp, who made a movie with one of these groups (the brilliant Taraf de Haidouks), and clearly relishes the memory of sharing a small trailer with them.

We meet individuals with histories both tragic and astounding — such as Esma Redzepova, the "queen of the gypsies" who, unable to bear children with her husband, adopted 47 kids over the course of a career that has lasted roughly that many years. Even the strongest personalities have little room to breathe on-screen, but the movie makes up for it in showing the diversity of global styles — we see frenzied brass bands and ragas, passionate flamenco and even a striking young man who performs a "knee dance" in drag — that trace back to a common root.

As a movie, "Caravan" is best suited for viewers already familiar with or curious about the subject, as it lacks the conceptual daring of 1993's "Latcho Drom" or the seductive pull of some Carlos Saura films. Still, it's a fine consolation for those of us who still kick ourselves for missing a tour that boasted such a lineup of Romani performers on a single night.

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