



Swing
(France, 90 minutes, French with English subtitles)
Director: Tony Gatlif
Study Guide

Synopsis

Ten year-old Max is bored, he's looking for some fun. One day, he finds himself listening to the virtuoso guitar-playing of a gypsy named Miraldo. Max is transfixed by the unusual music: he has discovered "manouche". Like a bee to honey, he's drawn to this haunting music, heading off to the wrong side of town, where the gypsies live—a place he knows he's not supposed to visit. Undeterred, he buys a guitar and convinces Miraldo to tutor him. Soon he's discovered a whole new world—gypsy jazz and a girl named Swing. A generous, purely joyful and exuberant film that teaches the importance of delving into other cultures.

Study Questions

- What/who are the Gypsies?
- What are common misconceptions and stereotypes about Gypsies?
- How are they typically depicted on film?
- What do you know about the persecution of the Gypsies?
- How big a role does music play in your culture?

After the Film

- Did the music in the film remind you of any other music you are familiar with?
- Do you feel you have a new appreciation of Rom (Gypsy) culture?
- How is oral culture transferred from generation to generation?
- Why do you think Max felt the need to keep a journal?
- How big a role does music play in Manouche culture?
- Why do you think the Gypsies are forgotten in the teaching of Holocaust history?