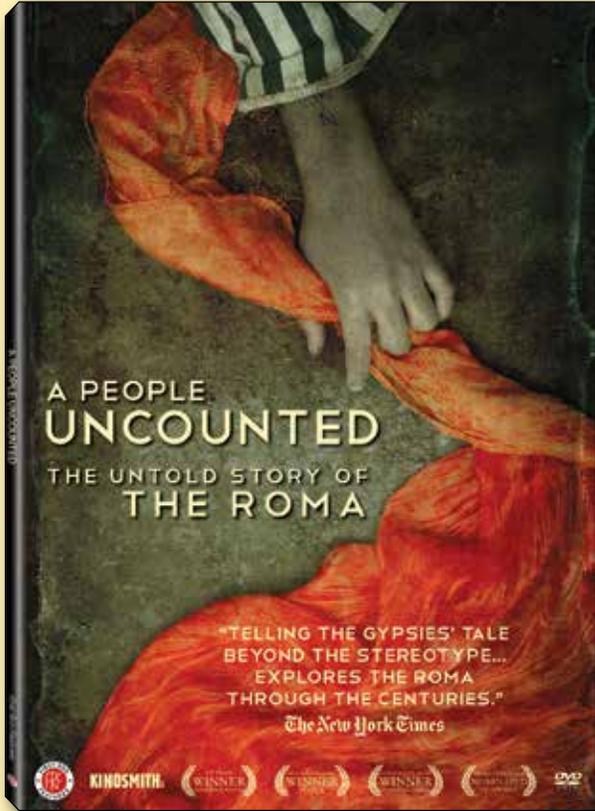




FIRST RUN FEATURES PRESENTS



“TELLING THE GYPSIES’ TALE BEYOND THE STEREOTYPE... ‘A PEOPLE UNCOUNTED’ EXPLORES THE ROMA THROUGH THE CENTURIES.”

The New York Times

“AN ENLIGHTENING, GLOBE-TROTTING DOCUMENTARY THAT BRINGS THIS LITTLE-KNOWN STORY TO LIGHT IN POWERFUL FASHION.” - THE HOLLYWOOD REPORTER

“PROFOUNDLY UNSETTLING AND DEEPLY MOVING.” - THE VILLAGE VOICE

Journey into the world of the Roma – a people who through the ages have been both romanticized and vilified in popular culture, politics and art, and who have endured centuries of intolerance and persecution.

Visiting 11 countries and interviewing dozens of Roma artists, historians, musicians and Holocaust survivors, this revealing film documents their culturally rich but often difficult lives, taking us back to ancient times and forward to the little-known story of Roma genocide at the hands of Nazis during World War II. As we watch the incredible story of the Roma unfold, both the people and their history come to life through the interplay of their evocative music and poetry, interwoven with true stories told by the survivors of the camps. As intolerance is on the rise in European politics, this remarkable film reminds us that ethnic minorities all too often fall prey to racism and genocide.

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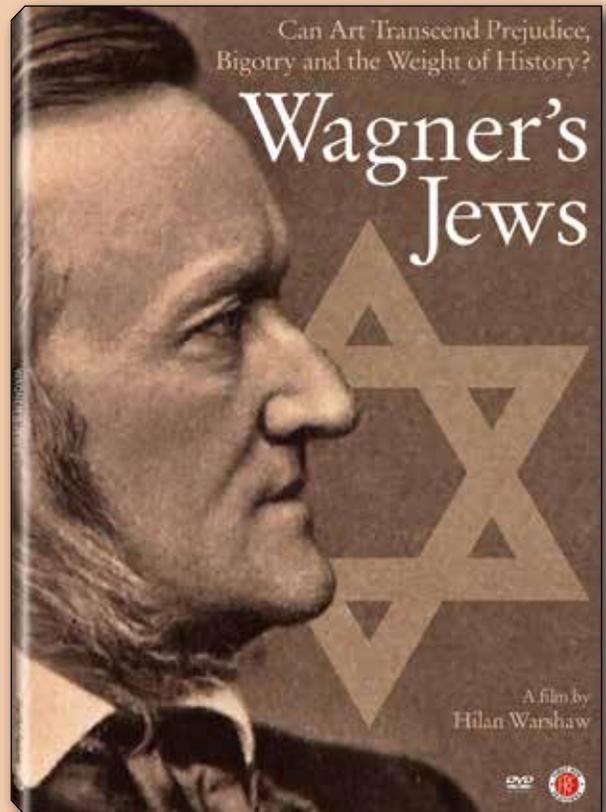
Can Art Transcend Prejudice, Bigotry and the Weight of History?

German composer Richard Wagner was notoriously anti-Semitic, and his writings on Jews were later embraced by Hitler and the Nazis. But there is another, lesser-known side to this story. For years, many of Wagner’s closest associates were Jews – young musicians who became personally devoted to him, and provided crucial help to his work and career.

They included the teenaged piano prodigy Carl Tausig; Hermann Levi, a rabbi’s son who conducted the premiere of Wagner’s Parsifal; Angelo Neumann, who produced Wagner’s works throughout Europe; and Joseph Rubinstein, a pianist who lived with the Wagner family for years and committed suicide when Wagner died. Even as Wagner called for the elimination of the Jews from German life, many of his most active supporters were Jewish.

Why were they drawn to him? And how could Wagner even accept their embrace? These questions are at the heart of WAGNER’S JEWS, the first film to focus on Wagner’s complex personal relationships with Jews. Filmed on location in Germany, Switzerland, and Italy, WAGNER’S JEWS reveals this remarkable story through archival sources, re-enactments, interviews, and performances of original musical works by Wagner’s Jewish colleagues – the first such performances on film.

Featuring Zubin Mehta and Leon Botstein among others, the film also explores the ongoing controversy over performing Wagner’s music in Israel. The same questions asked in Wagner’s time still resonate today: is it possible to separate the art from its creator? Can sublime music transcend prejudice and bigotry, and the weight of history?



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