

LA LA LAND

FROM THE DIRECTOR OF WHIPLASH

**MOVIE
MOMENTS**

Nick and Carol Pollard from EthosMedia.org share thought-provoking reflections on the latest films.

The value of dreams

'That's L.A. They worship everything and value nothing.' So says Sebastian (Ryan Gosling) as he walks through the Warner Brothers' back lot with Mia (Emma Stone) in the award-winning new film *La La Land*. These two star-crossed lovers, drawn together by their shared failures, develop a beautiful and beautifying relationship as they share their distinctive dreams for the future. He seeks to restore the popularity of jazz in a world of soulless commercial music. She seeks to restore the creative role of the actress in a world of formulaic soap operas.



But what choices will they have to make as they pursue their dreams? And what impact will this have on their lives?

The Times described this film as an '*intravenous shot of joy*' and it certainly is that. But it is also more than that, as it raises questions about values and choices.

In one key scene Sebastian shows Mia how jazz musicians are spontaneous, with individual instruments suddenly taking the lead and driving the music in a different direction. In the same way, the film illustrates how life is messy as new opportunities take us in unexpected directions. But what are the core values that underpin the choices we make, and affect what we worship?

La La Land breaks the standard mould of formulaic movies. Instead of the customary three-act configuration where all is resolved in the final scenes, this has five parts – taking us beyond a conventional resolution. And the ending is deliberately enigmatic as we are left wondering about Sebastian and Mia's view of what could have been different if they had made other choices.



Whatever our perspective on life and love, *La La Land* is a bright and colourful musical extravaganza that will cause us to think about what we value and what we worship.

**ETHOS
MEDIA.org**

EthosMedia.org provides free resources to help people explore spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues through the latest feature films.

