



REEL DIALOGUE

ENGAGING WITH FILMS
WITHOUT DISENGAGING
YOUR FAITH



Enjoy the film. Afterwards, here are some discussion questions that might help you engage with others on the topics from the film. Enjoy the time engaging with the film, your faith and friends.

FILM: LA LA LAND

La La Land brings together an aspiring actress and a jazz pianist who both pine for the future, but keep their feet standing squarely in the past. Mia (Emma Stone) desires to get out from behind the counter of the local coffee shop, but gets knocked back with every audition. While Sebastian (Ryan Gosling) aspires to own his own jazz club, but finds it hard for people to capture his musical vision. When these two come together, it is like the fusion of two worlds that should not mix, because their attraction brings out the best and worst in their lives.

This fascinating love affair is conveyed through song, dance and a well choreographed script that is set within the beauty of the multi-layered aspects of the Hollywood landscape.

QUESTIONS

1. Did you enjoy the film, and why or why not? Was it what you expected? If you have seen *Whiplash*, writer-director Damien Chazelle's other film, how did *La La Land* compare?
2. What do Mia and Sebastian want from their lives in LA? What drives each of them to pursue their respective dreams? What does LA represent to them, and how do they experience the city?
3. According to *La La Land*, what draws people to become artists? Do you think there is any truth to the idea of the 'artistic temperament'? Why does society need artists?
4. What draws Mia and Sebastian together initially, and what is it that begins to drive them apart? In your view, should they have tried to compromise in order to stay together? When should a personal passion or a dream be prioritised over a relationship?
5. What did you think of the film's perspective on success and satisfaction? Is *La La Land* trying to say anything significant in this respect, or does it knowingly present a fantasy? To what extent is it possible to be truly satisfied by career or creative success?
6. How did you feel about the way the story ended? What emotions were you left with, and do you wish it had been a more conventionally happy ending? Why do you think the filmmakers chose to end it in this way?
7. As Christian viewers of this film, how did you respond to the version of success portrayed on screen? Discuss how the Bible defines success and how society views it. How do they differ?