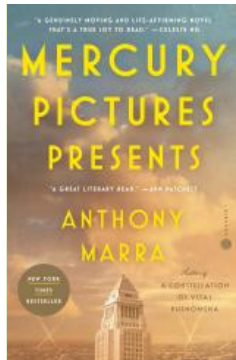


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## Discussion Questions

## Mercury Pictures Presents

by Anthony Marra

1. MERCURY PICTURES PRESENTS features a vast cast of characters --- some stars, some supporting actors. Which character did you identify with the most? Why?
2. How does the novel treat its bit players? What do you think Marra was trying to say about whose stories matter? How did he illustrate this point?
3. Themes of exile and imprisonment reoccur throughout the novel. How do different characters experience exile, both at home and abroad? How are invisible prisons different from real ones?
4. What does Annunziata's suitcase represent for her when she fills it with Italian soil and brings it to America? How does this change when she passes it to Maria? When Maria passes it to Eddie?
5. Which of Mercury Pictures's fictional films would you most like to see? Why?
6. What is at the heart of Artie and Maria's relationship? How do they balance each other out?
7. Why do you think all of the immigrants and exiles in the novel are drawn to Hollywood and the film industry?
8. Why don't Artie and Ned get along? What do you think motivated Ned to betray Artie?
9. What does the book have to say about propaganda? Do you think there's such a thing as helpful propaganda, or is it always, on some level, just a lie?
10. Giuseppe wonders, "What if confino has remade him into a person that his wife and daughter will not recognize, a person only at home in San Lorenzo?" How do you think imprisonment affected him?
11. Why do you think Inspector Ferrando lets Nino live? How are his fictionalized police reports similar to Mercury's films?
12. Both Maria and her mother keep their emotions inside. How does this help them survive? How does it hurt them?
13. "She did not know that the soul she refused to sign away would still feel worthless to her." Why does Anna Weber, the miniaturist, regret not taking the job designing for the Berlin Olympics, even though she knows the Nazis are wrong?
14. Faustian bargains are mentioned several times throughout the novel. Which characters make Faustian bargains? Is entering into a deal with the devil ever justified?
15. What elements of the book remind you of things happening in our world today?

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**Mercury Pictures Presents**

by **Anthony Marra**

**Publication Date:** June 27, 2023

**Genres:** Fiction, Historical Fiction

**Paperback:** 448 pages

**Publisher:** Hogarth

**ISBN-10:** 0451495217

**ISBN-13:** 9780451495211