

## Films: Global/Cities

---

I will update this list as I receive new material, so please send me film titles, information/commentary on films, and reference material.

email: [joni.palmer@colorado.edu](mailto:joni.palmer@colorado.edu)

### General: Urban

Better Luck Tomorrow

2003; Drama; Subject: Asian-American high school students, criminal behavior

The Bourne movies are great because they use a huge variety of urban settings

Brazil

1985, Terry Gilliam

Code 46

2004; Subjects: Dystopias, social conflict, visas

Malls R Us, Helene Klodawsky, 2009

<http://icarusfilms.com/new2009/mall.html>

from the website: From impressive architectural projects to environmental and social concerns, everything you have always wanted to know about shopping malls, and more.

Megacities

2006, by Cambridge Educational (Firm)

Metropolis, 1927, Fritz Lang

Social Life of Small Urban Spaces

1988; William H. Whyte; An older film but I have found that this is something that actually works to draw students into the content.

<http://directcinema.com/dcl/title.php?id=95>

### United States

America's immigration debate

by Wilson R Ruiz; Cadec Pictures (Firm); Krafftwerk Film.; Films for the Humanities & Sciences (Firm); DVD video; Language: English  
Publisher: Princeton, NJ : Films for the Humanities & Sciences, [2005]

Bullitt

1997; 1970's San Francisco

Do the Right Thing

La Ciudad

Pleasantville (critique of suburbia)

Roger and Me

1989; Michael Moore; Subjects: Flint, MI, recession, GM  
Good for deindustrialization, rust belt, etc.

The Truman Show (critique of New Urbanism)

The Visitor

2008, Tom McCarthy

Immigration debate in US

[http://www.rollingstone.com/reviews/movie/17041831/review/20217692/rs\\_1050\\_the\\_visitor](http://www.rollingstone.com/reviews/movie/17041831/review/20217692/rs_1050_the_visitor)

When the Levees Broke. A requiem in four acts  
2006; Spike Lee's take on Katrina

### **Baltimore**

The Wire (TV show)  
Homicide (TV show)

### **Boston**

The Departed  
Gone Baby Gone

### **Detroit**

Detroit, Ruin of a City

George Steinmetz; quite compelling (if problematic in some areas) and provides a nice overview of Gramsci's conception of Fordism. It's a bit hard to get your hands on, but if you google the film or email Steinmetz you'll find it.

<http://www.detroitruinofacity.com/detroit%20home.html>

Poletown Lives!

1983; Detroit, MI; auto industry

### **Los Angeles**

Blade Runner

1999; Ridley Scott; Los Angeles, 2019

Chavez Ravine: A Los Angeles Story

Chinatown, 1999

City of Industry, 1997

Collateral, 2004

Heat, 1995

Los Angeles plays itself, 2003

Pulp Fiction, 1994, Quentin Tarantino

The Shield (television show)

The Garden, 2008, Scott Kennedy Hamilton

The film deals with issues of property development, political corruption and the displacement of farmers (primarily immigrants from Latin America) in Los Angeles. <http://www.blackvalleyfilms.com/>

### **New York**

Clockers

Dark Days

Documentary about people living in the old subway tunnels

French Connection

King of New York

Manhattan

Mean Streets

New York: A Documentary Film

a multi-part series on NYC, chock full of good stuff

New York, The world's city

by Wilson R Ruiz; Fred J Gattys; Cadec Pictures (Firm); Krafftwerk Film.; Films for the Humanities & Sciences (Firm);

DVD video / Language: English

Publisher: Princeton, NJ : Films for the Humanities & Sciences, [2005]

A short film on walking in New York at: <http://liminalities.net/4-1/spacewars.htm>

## Latin America

### Mexico

Crash

A Day Without a Mexican

Maquilapolis

On US-Mex border zones; focus is on political organizing, but a piece of the story is re the creation of border slums

Mexico City, the impossible city

by Wilson R Ruiz; Fred J Gattys; Cadec Pictures (Firm); Krafftwerk Film.; Films for the Humanities & Sciences (Firm); DVD video; Language: English

Publisher: Princeton, NJ : Films for the Humanities & Sciences, ©2005.

### Rio and Sao Paulo

City of God (Rio)

Elite Squad (Sao PAulo)

Favela Rising

About political organizing in a Brazilian favela; emphasis is on organizing through music, but tells the story of the making of city life

## Europe

### Paris

La Haine

by Mathieu Kassovitz; compare with Le Fabuleux destin d'Amélie Poulain

<http://www.criterion.com/films/216>

Playtime, 1967, Jacques Tati

Paris, satire on the homogeneity of modern tourism

Frankfurt the Euro-city

by Wilson R Ruiz; Fred J Gattys; Roger Williams; Cadec Pictures (Firm); Krafftwerk Film.; Aaron Goldman Productions.; Films for the Humanities & Sciences (Firm); DVD video; Language: English

Publisher: Princeton, NJ : Films for the Humanities & Sciences, ©2005.

Amsterdam Global Village

4-hour documentary showing the diversity of people living in the global city.

Liverpool, a New Dawn, 1995, 15 min.

An older movie that I love to show as it briefly covers all cycles of urban restructuring in western cities (from initial industrialization to deindustrialization/restructured economy):

**Last Summer in Berlin Mitte**

a short (about 20 min.) documentary film; English subtitles from the German original

→ It will be hosted also at the AAG Conference in Las Vegas and at the Lumpencity Conference in Toronto in March 09.

Tells the struggles of marginalized residents of an old tenement house in former East Berlin, in the midst of the gentrification boom in the surrounding area. More information and snapshots are

on: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/urbanreinventors/sets/72157604103588641/>

Alessandro Busà: [ab2792@columbia.edu](mailto:ab2792@columbia.edu)

[info@urbanreinventors.net](mailto:info@urbanreinventors.net) [www.urbanreinventors.net](http://www.urbanreinventors.net)

**Mon Oncle, 1958, Jacques Tati**

Monsieur Hulot, modern architecture, technology

**Berlin: Symphony of a Big City / Berlin: Die Sinfonie der Grosstadt, 1927, Walter Ruttmann, Director**  
one day in Berlin, starting in the morning and ending in late night

**Films on London** (thanks to Yara Evans)

1872 London: a pilgrimage

1920 Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde, John S Robertson

1929 Blackmail, Alfred Hitchcock

1929 Piccadilly

1944 Gaslight

1949 Passport to Pimlico, Henry Cornelius

1950 Night and the city, Jules Dassin

1950s Free Cinema Various

1960s London Nobody Knows, Norman Cohen, Douglas Hickox

Brick Lane

My son the fanatic

To sir with love

Shooting fish

On the buses

Career Girls, Mike Leigh

A Complete History of all my sexual failures

Oliver Twist, David Lean

Somers Town, Shane Meadows

High Hopes, Mike Leigh

It is a free world, Ken Loach

1964 A Hard Day's Night, Richard Lester

1965 The knack and how to ge, Richard Lester

1965 Darling, John Schlesinger

- 1966 Blow Up, Michaelangelo Antonioni
- 1966 Alfie, Lewis Gilbert
- 1966 Blow Up, Michaelangelo Antonioni
- 1971 Private Road, Barney Platts-Mills
- 1975 Pressure, Horace Ove
- 1981 The Long Good Friday, John MacKenzie
- 1984 1984, Michael Radford
- 1985 My beautiful launderette, Stephen Frears
- 1987 Hope and Glory, John Boorman
- 1987 The Last of England, Derek Jarman
- 1990 Life is sweet, Mike Leigh
- 1991 London kills me
- 1991 Riff Raf, Ken Loach
- 1993 Naked, Mike Leigh
- 1994 London, Patrick Keiller, BFI
- 1994 Four weddings and a funeral, Mike Newell
- 1996 Secrets and lies, Mike Leigh
- 1996 Beautiful thing, Hettie MacDonald
- 1998 Lock Stock and Two Smoking Barrels, Guy Ritchie
- 1999 Wonderland, Michael Winterbottom
- 1999 Notting Hill, Roger Michell
- 2001 From Hell
- 2001 Bridget Jones' diary, Sharon Maguire
- 2002 Dirty Pretty Things, Stephen Frears  
Follows the interactions of several immigrants in London, including their experience with the illegal organ trade. It's a very rich text for writing and discussion.
- 2002 London Orbital, Petit and Sinclair
- 2004 London: The Post-Imperial City, 26 min.
- 2005 Match point, Woody Allen

## “Asia”

### Three Seasons

Post-colonial Asian cities by Vietnamese-American director Tony Bui. Its about the post-war transition of Vietnamese cities and the loss of traditional ways of life.

### Cyclo (Hanoi)

On Borrowed Land (Phillipines) - movie shows the struggles of the urban poor over squatting on reclaimed land in Metro Manila.

## Tokyo

### Tokyo, the neon city

by Wilson R Ruiz; Fred J Gattys; Cadec Pictures (Firm); Krafftwerk Film.; Films for the Humanities & Sciences (Firm); DVD video; Language: English

Publisher: Princeton, NJ : Films for the Humanities & Sciences, ©2005.  
High and Low (postwar Tokyo)

### **Hong Kong**

Wong Kar-Wai's films set in Hong Kong. Based on his research in Hong Kong, Kris (Kris Olds, UW Madison) made a strong case for these films expressing anxieties both about HK's status as a global city and its reversion to China (some of the films were pre-1997, I believe).

Hard Boiled

The Killer

Chungking Express

In the Mood for Love

### **Singapore**

I Not Stupid

Rogue Trader

### **China**

Tank Man

on the relationship between Tiananmen Square and China's economic opening -- and eventually on the way that the market reforms have created the new Chinese cities

Manufactured Landscapes

Edward Burtynsky's cities in China with the perspective that these massive factories and environmentally destroyed areas (quarries, mines, coal fields, etc) are part of the "natural" landscape.

trailer: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jv23xwe0BoU>

The World - film by Jia Zhangke

<http://www.zeitgeistfilms.com/film.php?directoryname=world>

Up the Yangtze

Released Nov. 2008 by National Film Board of Canada

Contributor believes it is better than Discovery Channel documentary on Three Gorges Dam

### **India**

Bombay Calling

a documentary about young adults working as telemarketers in India.

Mahanagar

Meghe Dhaka Tara

Slumdog Millionaire (Mumbai)

Salaam Bombay

### **MiddleEast**

Syriana (Middle East Cities)  
Katchi Abadis, The Squatter Settlements of Pakistan.  
David Hover, Hafeez Arain; VIDOC Productions.

## Africa

Battle of Algiers  
Blood Diamond (DVD extras!)  
2007, Sierra Leone; Subjects: civil war (1991-2002), smugglers  
Constant Gardner (DVD extras!)  
2006, Kenya, human rights  
Les Temps qui changent  
By André Téchiné; with Catherine Deneuve and Gérard Depardieu; a current and  
timely classic set in Tangier: <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0399738/>

## Miscellaneous

Boiling Point: The Global Struggle for Water  
2002; Competition for freshwater is heating up. Is war inevitable, or is a peaceful  
solution possible? This program spotlights three trouble spots that epitomize the  
intensifying crisis and efforts being made to manage it: the Okavango, where a  
commission formed by Angola, Namibia, and Botswana is trying to resolve the  
conflict that is endangering the river's unspoiled waters; the Rio Grande, where  
an aging water-sharing treaty and ever-greater demands for water leave farmers  
on both sides of the divide with little hope; and the West Bank, where Palestinian  
rainwater reservoirs and the Israeli water grid are dangerous points of contention  
between the two peoples. (27 minutes)  
VHS ISBN 978-0-7365-8972-7  
DVD ISBN 978-0-7365-8973-4  
[http://ffh.films.com/id/6343/Boiling Point The Global Struggle for Water.htm](http://ffh.films.com/id/6343/Boiling_Point_The_Global_Struggle_for_Water.htm)

Flow. for love of water  
by Irena Salina; Steven Starr; Caitlin Dixon; Christophe Julien; Group  
Entertainment (Firm); Oscilloscope Laboratories.; 2008; Subjects:  
Water-supply. | Water-supply -- Moral and ethical aspects. | Water utilities --  
Deregulation  
[www.flowthefilm.com](http://www.flowthefilm.com)

Global cities immigration and the world economy  
by Wilson R Ruiz; Cadec Pictures (Firm); Krafftwerk Film.; Aaron Goldman  
Productions.; Films for the Humanities & Sciences (Firm); DVD video;  
Language: English; Publisher: Princeton, NJ : Films for the Humanities &  
Sciences, ©2004.

Global cities  
by Films for the Humanities & Sciences (Firm); DVD video; Language: English;  
Publisher: Princeton, NJ : Films for the Humanities & Sciences, 2004.

### Italy: Natural Hazards and Disasters

2002; Why do communities take hold in areas prone to flooding, volcanic eruptions, and other catastrophes? This program profiles Italian cities that have suffered from natural disasters and why habitation has continued in those places. Touring flood-plagued Florence, its Arno River dam, and a Roman-style house near Pompeii, the program presents examples of how, throughout history, environmental dangers have taken a backseat to everyday human needs, until they can no longer be ignored. A viewable/printable instructor's guide—including geographical background information, extension activities, vocabulary handouts, and more—is available online. Correlates to National Geography Standards. (25 minutes)

VHS ISBN 978-1-4213-2878-2

DVD ISBN 978-1-4213-2879-9

[http://ffh.films.com/id/12281/Italy\\_Natural\\_Hazards\\_and\\_Disasters.htm](http://ffh.films.com/id/12281/Italy_Natural_Hazards_and_Disasters.htm)

### Koyaanisqatsi: Life Out of Balance

very trippy, Philip Glass music, etc., I wouldn't recommend showing the whole thing--just pull out 20 minutes or so... you can view the trailer on YouTube:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PirH8PADDgQ>

### Life after people

written, produced and directed by David de Vries ; produced by Vincent Lopez ; produced by Flight 33 Productions for History Television Network Productions [New York, N.Y.] : A&E Television Networks : Distributed by New Video, 2008  
Subjects: Extinction (Biology), Human beings, Nature -- Effect of human beings on nature and civilization, apocalypse in motion pictures

### Liquid city

30 minutes; English, Hindi and Marathi with English Directed and produced by Matthew Gandy

The film is based on a unique collaboration between academics and film makers based in London and Mumbai and combines in-depth interviews with activists, engineers, local residents and other voices to paint a unique picture of this vibrant and fast changing city.

The film is available from the UCL Urban Laboratory, Department of Geography University College London, 26 Bedford Way, London WC1H 0AP  
<http://www.ucl.ac.uk/urbanlab>

### On the brink

A Screenscope production in association with South Carolina Educational Television ; producer, Marilyn Weiner ; director/writer, Hal Weiner.

1 videodisc (57 min.) : sd., col. with b&w sequences ; 4 3/4 in.

Narrator, Matt Damon.

This film "explores a growing national security threat throughout the world: how environmental pressures can lead to violence, terrorism and regional conflict.

Travel to areas where environmental degradation and unsustainable development



practices have had negative impacts on the quality of life for millions of people"--  
Container. Journeys to Bangladesh, South Africa, Peru, Haiti, Mexican/U.S.  
border

#### The power of place geography for the 21st century

by E Deborah Dorsey; Lance Wisniewski; Jean Louis Cros; Annie Breit;  
Micheline Paintault; Bob Burns; Katarzyna Remin; Roger Samsioe; Georges  
Combes; Joop van Reede; Hardy Stow; Kenji Tozaki; Masami Yokota; Hidetoshi  
Nakama; Terry Kay Rockefeller; Agnes Zerwetz; Jean-Louis Chaléard; Philippe  
Kimmerling; Peter Frumkin; Rebecca Marvil; Megan Reilly; Eilish McCormick;  
Nancy Caulfield; Steve Peters; Cambridge Studios (Boston, Mass.); Annenberg  
Media.; DVD video : Partial animation; Language: English; Publisher: S.  
Burlington, VT : Annenberg Media, [2006]

#### Trade.

by Marco Kreuzpaintner; Roland Emmerich; Rosilyn Heller; Peter Landesman;  
José Rivera; Kevin Kline; Cesar Ramos; Alicja Bachleda-Curus; Paulina  
Gaitan; Roadside Attractions (Firm); Centropolis Entertainment (Firm); VIP 4  
(Firm); Lionsgate (Firm); English language DVD; Santa Monica, Calif. :  
Lionsgate, [2008]; Subjects: Human trafficking -- Mexico -- Drama. | Abduction -  
- Mexico -- Drama.

#### Uprooted: Refugees of the Global Economy

2002; A compelling tale, through interviews, of how the global economy has  
forced people to leave their home countries—Maricel is one of thousands of  
women encouraged by the Philippine government to work abroad as a domestic  
worker in order to pay its international debt. Free trade destroyed Jessy and  
Jaime's family business in Bolivia. Despite their engineering degrees, they have  
worked as janitors in the US In order to reunite with their parents, their children  
had to brave a border crossing alone. In Haiti, Luckner worked for 14 cents an  
hour at a US-owned baseball factory, which moved to China in search of cheaper  
labor costs.

<http://www.akpress.org/2002/items/uprootedrefugeesofglobaleconomy>

#### Slum Cities

2006; Each week, in countries around the globe, nearly a million people say  
goodbye to their homes in impoverished rural regions—and move to even worse  
conditions in cities. This program explores the tragic results: illegal slums filled  
with some of the poorest people in the world, lacking water, sanitation, and other  
resources needed to support exploding populations. Viewers are shown the lives  
and homes of those who struggle in the slums of Mumbai, India, and Rio de  
Janeiro, Brazil, and who face the threat of eviction, the spread of disease, and  
rampant drug dealing and gang violence on a daily basis. Slum residents, as well  
as those who have broken out of the cycle of poverty, share their personal insights  
and frustrations regarding this urgent international issue. (46 minutes)

VHS ISBN 978-1-4213-8272-2

DVD ISBN 978-1-4213-8273-9

[http://ffh.films.com/id/15135/Slum\\_Cities.htm](http://ffh.films.com/id/15135/Slum_Cities.htm)

#### Water for the Cities

2003; This program takes a hard look at the mounting challenge of providing millions of people in urban areas with potable water and adequate disposal of waste water. To highlight the difficulties, segments focus on the water problems of the megalopolis, cities with populations of over ten million people, such as Lagos, Jakarta, and Mexico City. The massive logistics that enable Las Vegas to prosper in the middle of a desert are also explored. (27 minutes)

VHS ISBN 978-0-7365-8990-1

DVD ISBN 978-0-7365-8991-8

[http://ffh.films.com/id/6330/Water\\_for\\_the\\_Cities.htm](http://ffh.films.com/id/6330/Water_for_the_Cities.htm)

#### Some other films that might be useful:

Whale Rider (New Zealand)

Rabbit Proof Fence (Australia)

Rashomon (World Regions: Japan)

Kekexili Mountain Patrol (World Regions: Nepal/Himalayas)

Hotel Rwanda (World Regions: Sub-Saharan Africa)

The Band's Visit (World Regions: Arab/Israeli Relations)

Hard Rock and Water (North American Geog: Economic development in Newfoundland and Iceland)

Kitchen Stories (Research Methods)

#### Further Resources

*Cities of the world: world regional urban development* / 4th ed.; edited by Stanley D. Brunn, Maureen Hays-Mitchell, and Donald J. Zeigler ; cartography by Ellen R. White. Lanham : Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2008.

call number: HT151 .C569 2008

→ Each chapter is written by a team of urban geographers who specializes in the region, and they include a list of suggested resources, including films and websites.

*The Cinema of Globalization: A Guide to Films About the New Economic Order* by Tom Zaniello. a catalogue of loads of movies and i have found it to be a very useful resource.

#### Icarus Films

Urban Studies: [http://www.icarusfilms.com/subjects/urban\\_st.html](http://www.icarusfilms.com/subjects/urban_st.html)

Gary Crowds, Director of Marketing and Publicity

Email: gary@IcarusFilms.com

Brooklyn, NY 11201

Phone: (718) 488-8900

Fax: (718) 488-8642

*London in Cinema: The Cinematic City Since 1945* by Charlotte Brunson, available from the BFI: <http://www.bfi.org.uk/filmtvinfo/researchers/mirr/researcher/252>

*London Film Location Guide*, by Simon R H James

**PLACES IN FILMS:** Documentary films for regional geography courses

Dr. Dmitrii Sidorov, Department of Geography, CSU Long Beach

\*This is a fabulous resource!!

[http://csulb.edu/~dsidorov/Places\\_in\\_Films.html](http://csulb.edu/~dsidorov/Places_in_Films.html)

A few years ago, **Planners Network** produced an extensive list of urban planning related films that may be useful for you - you can find them inside the Disorientation Guide on the website: <http://www.plannersnetwork.org/publications/disorientation.html>

**Worldcat Search** ... on global cities.

[www.worldcat.org](http://www.worldcat.org) select DVD and you're ready to go.

→ Great way to find films by subject (etc.) and to find out if films are available at libraries in your region.