

Candidate C



International Baccalaureate

Form 6/FISOS Independent study

SUBMIT TO: EXAMINER ARRIVAL DATE: 30 APR (30 OCT) SESSION:

SCHOOL CODE: SCHOOL NAME:

- Type or write legibly using black ink and retain a copy of this form.
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SUBJECT: Film LEVEL: HL

CANDIDATE NAME: Candidate C CAND NO:

Instructions to candidates

Please tick/check to show you have included:

- Rationale
- Script
- List of sources

Number of script pages (HL 12-15, SL 8-10): 12

Title: "The Cinema Metropolis."

Cultures examined	Films studied
American French Australan Hong Kong (Chinese) German	METROPOLIS (1927), BLADE RUNNER (1981), MINORITY REPORT (2002), THE TRIPLETS OF BELLEVILLE (2003), STAR WARS EPISODES II AND III (2003 and 2005), LOST IN TRANSLATION LOST IN TRANSLATION (2003), CHUNG KING EXPRESS (1996), HANNAH AND HER SISTERS (1985), MANHATTAN (1980), ANNIE HALL (1977), THE FIFTH ELEMENT (1997).

I confirm that this independent study is my own work.

Candidate's signature:

Date: 3/12/07

I confirm that, to the best of my knowledge, the material submitted is the authentic work of the candidate.

Teacher's name:

Date: 4/2/07

Teacher's signature:

The Cinema Metropolis

Documentary Script

Independent Study

March 12, 2007

RATIONALE

This documentary seeks to examine the metropolis in cinema from 1927 to 2005, beginning with Fritz Lang's *Metropolis* and covering many disparate genres like Australian fantasy, American drama, Woody Allen comedy, and French animation. I set out to examine the connecting thread between all these different movie cities, many of which I consider to be among the most original, exhilarating, and beautiful creations in cinema. What I found was an astonishing pattern of loneliness and isolation in the metropolises of diverse films, cultures, and eras. The cinema metropolis, thrilling and modern, voices a very modern cultural trepidation.

Word Count: 97

<u>VIDEO</u>	<u>AUDIO</u>
<p>MONTAGE of shots from METROPOLIS:</p>	<p>NARRATOR V.O.:</p>
<p>Early establishing shots of city and skyscrapers, highways, the tower of Babel, the Olympic stadium scene.</p>	<p>In 1927, Fritz Lang's seminal masterpiece, Metropolis, burst onto screen in an explosion of imagery and statement. Called by some the greatest visual achievement in the history of cinema, and made the cost of 7 million marks, equivalent to \$200 million today, Metropolis represents an influential force in contemporary thought and cinema. The plot is simple and at times nonsensical: a utopia and a dystopia, segregated into two levels, in the year 2026. At the top of this society are the thinkers or planners, living in the luxurious splendor of gothic skyscrapers and enormous gardens. At the bottom it's a different world -a proletariat underclass, toiling in an industrial hell to maintain the lifestyles of the rich. Writes New Yorker critic Pauline Kael,</p>
<p>STILL: "7,000,000 marks" morphs into "\$200,000,000"</p>	
<p>MONTAGE (CONTD):</p> <p>The scene in which Maria stands beyond a fountain with dozens of thin children behind her, beckoning Frederesen.</p>	
<p>Thousands crowding and trampling as they try to get into a large, underground building.</p>	
<p>The elevator as it descends into the depths with dozens of glum faces.</p>	<p>FEMALE V.O.: Metropolis is a spectacular example of Expressionist design...with moments of almost incredible beauty and power...absurd ineptitudes...and oddities that defy analysis. It's a wonderful, stupefying folly</p>

<u>VIDEO</u>	<u>AUDIO</u>
<p>CLIP FROM METROPOLIS: Choreographed workers struggle against oversized levers in the underground factory.</p>	<p>NARRATOR V.O. : It's a film full of visual idioms: a human worker struggling against an oversized lever doesn't make a whole lot of sense when you think about it, but it functions, like so much of Metropolis, as exaggerated symbolism.</p> <p>MUSIC BEGIN: "Rhapsody in Blue" by George Gershwin</p>
<p>CLIP FROM METROPOLIS: The Robot Maria gets up and walks towards the mad scientist in her first scene.</p>	
<p>CLIP FROM METROPOLIS: The credit sequence when "METROPOLIS" is artfully painted across skyscrapers.</p>	<p>NARRATOR V.O.: Metropolis was revolutionary in the world of cinema, both as a political document and a science fiction movie. Its details have been emulated by thousands of films since, from George Lucas to Stanley Kubrick. However, one of the film's most impressive legacies is its creation of a staple of movie production design -its bold, futuristic set-piece, which signaled the start of an exhilarating love affair: movies had found the big city.</p>

<u>VIDEO</u>	<u>AUDIO</u>
<p>CLIP FROM THE FIFTH ELEMENT: Woman stares down from edge of building into infinite fall below, hovercrafts whizzing by.</p>	<p>NARRATOR V.O.: Perhaps the metropolis has such a home on-screen because the metropolis and the movie have quite a bit in common. They're both the children of technology, both growing in step with the Twentieth</p>
<p>DISSOLVE INTO</p>	<p>Century, both offering us a vision of the future -as well as an extraordinary amount to look at. No matter how it is manifested -in German</p>
<p>CLIP FROM THE TRIPLETS OF BELLEVILLE: A shot of hyperbolically extended Manhattan skyscrapers, descending from above.</p>	<p>expressionism or French animation or Woody Allen comedy-the metropolis is always a projection of our hopes and fears for the Twentieth Century. Where the science fiction metropolis imagines the City of the Future...</p>
<p>DISSOLVE INTO</p>	<p>FX: Whir of hovercraft as it races by...</p>
<p>CLIP FROM STAR WARS EPISODE II: Anakin's hovercraft flies through a nighttime alley in Coruscant.</p>	<p>NARRATOR: ...where films like Babe 2 or The Triplets of Belleville create hallucinogenic social satire, where dramas figure real-life metropolises as symbols of personal distance and loneliness, each film explores the effect that city life, past, present or future, has upon its inhabitants.</p>
<p>DISSOLVE INTO</p>	<p>SOUND FROM CLIP: WOMAN: "It's so...inorganic."</p>
<p>CLIP FROM BABE 2: Babe looks up from window-ledge for perfect view of eclectic skyline.</p>	
<p>DISSOLVE INTO</p>	
<p>CLIP FROM HANNAH AND HER SISTERS: Two women and an architect look up at the architecture of an apartment building in Manhattan.</p>	

<u>VIDEO</u>	<u>AUDIO</u>
<p>CLIP FROM BLADE RUNNER: Shot following hovercraft as it flies over pyramidal Tyrell Corporation skyscraper.</p>	<p>BEGIN MUSIC: "Time Has Come Today" by the Ramones</p>
<p>ANIMATION: Logos for Toshiba, Sega, JVC, Toyota, etc in quick montage.</p>	<p>NARRATOR: John Kenneth Galbraith once wrote, "The Metropolis should have been aborted long before it became New York, London, or Tokyo." Ridley Scott, in his 1981 triumph of production design, Blade Runner, agrees. Blade Runner explores a Los Angeles decimated by smog, poverty, and corporate oligarchy. Produced in a time when America seemed doomed to takeover by the prosperous Japanese economy, Blade Runner was one of the first films to prominently place advertisements into its mise en scène; everywhere are neon signs for Japanese corporations, glaring into the murky city. In the streets, Los Angeles looks more like Singapore than Southern California; it's been overtaken by foreign ethnicities and languages, and only in the enormous, towering skyscrapers do the rich reside. Scott envisions the future as bleak and smoggy, the concerns of the 1980s gone awry into a hellscape of bazaar street drama below and imperial affluence above.</p>
<p>CLIP FROM BLADE RUNNER: Tracking shot starting at one end of nighttime street and ending at another, steam released from every orifice and a gang of bikes riding by, ending up next to replicants.</p>	<p>SOUND FROM CLIP: Siren ring grows in intensity.</p>
<p>CLIP FROM MINORITY REPORT: Perched a mile above the city of Washington D.C., we see a police hovercraft fly by.</p>	

<u>VIDEO</u>	<u>AUDIO</u>
<p>CLIP FROM THE FIFTH ELEMENT: Orange haired lady jumps off the edge of a skyscraper into the dizzying abyss. She lands in a taxi driven by Bruce Willis.</p>	<p>NARRATOR V.O.: Cinema offers us cities of competing future visions: 1997's The Fifth Element gave us the visceral street traffic of New York City, expanded a little.</p> <p>SOUND FROM CLIP: Whirring traffic sirens and honks</p>
<p>CLIP FROM MINORITY REPORT: A maglev freeway with thousands of cars going down the side of a building.</p>	<p>SOUND FROM CLIP: In background, SFX.</p>
<p>CLIP FROM MINORITY REPORT: Tom Cruise gets eye-scanned as he walks onboard a subway train.</p>	<p>NARRATOR V.O.: Steven Spielberg's 2002 neo-noir, Minority Report, imagined life in Washington D.C. in the 2050's: it establishes a world of technology run amuck, where, at the price of privacy and liberty, nearly all crime has been suppressed. Spielberg created a harrowing version of the future city, which many hailed for its potential accuracy; iris-scanning checkpoints search you for criminal warrants every time you use the subway; corporate advertisements -many of them for present-day corporations- personally incite passerby;</p>
<p>CLIP FROM MINORITY REPORT: Tom Cruise walks through a corridor of hologram advertisements, which shout out to him personally.</p>	<p>SOUND FROM CLIP: "John Anderton, you could use a Guinness right about now!"</p>

<u>VIDEO</u>	<u>AUDIO</u>
<p>CLIP FROM MINORITY REPORT: Tom Cruise and Colin Farell run into a car factory.</p>	<p>NARRATOR V.O.: Like Blade Runner and Metropolis, Spielberg weaves a contrast between wealth and poverty; he gives us shiny new offices and automated apartments at the same time we see dank tenements and leftover malls from the 90s. If there is one pervasive sentiment for every imaginary metropolis, it's that as we soar higher and brighter into the future, a lot of people are crouching down in poverty and subservience.</p>
<p>CLIP FROM MINORITY REPORT: The classic overhead shot following mechanical spiders as they wander through a hyperbolically dank apartment complex, iris-scanning various occupants.</p>	<p>AUDIO FROM CLIP: LITTLE GIRL: "Mommy, I'm scared!"</p>
<p>STILL: Movie poster for "Babe: Pig in the City"</p>	<p>NARRATOR V.O.: But movie cities aren't just from the future. Often they are just the product of a very bold imagination, like 1998's Australian gem, Babe: Pig in the City, where film-makers imagined a city skyline composed entirely of disparate landmarks -the Golden Gate Bridge superimposes the Eiffel Tower; Christ the Redeemer looks down on the Hollywood sign. On the street level, the production design is no less eclectic: the architecture ranges from Swiss to Japanese, with a Venice-like system of canals flowing in between.</p>
<p>DISSOLVE INTO:</p> <p>CLIP FROM FILM: Babe walks up to a window and looks outside -we see the rather remarkable skyline, which dissolves into its nighttime equivalent.</p>	
<p>CLIP FROM FILM: A shot of Babe and his old lady as they walk towards their hotel on a sunny day; Babe is on a leash as they cross a bridge over a canal.</p>	

<u>VIDEO</u>	<u>AUDIO</u>
<p>CLIP FROM BABE: PIG IN THE CITY: At an airport, Babe's old lady stands at an information kiosk and tries, hopelessly, to call various hotels.</p>	<p>NARRATOR V.O.: It's a city of cities, surreal and enormous -a city from the outsider's view, in this case a country pig. The only rule, it seems, is NO ANIMALS, and in this sense the Babe metropolis takes a very common form -the unfriendly city.</p>
<p>CLIP FROM THE TRIPLETS OF BELLEVILLE: Starting at the tips of imperial skyscrapers, hyperbolically elongated, the camera dollies down, past the Statue of Liberty eating a hamburger, to the bottom of the skyline.</p>	<p>AUDIO FROM CLIP: Opera music.</p>
<p>CLIP FROM THE TRIPLETS OF BELLEVILLE: At a crowded hamburger restaurant, flanked by obese patrons on either side, the grandmother opens her wallet and a fly buzzes out. The waitress says one of the only lines in the film.</p>	<p>NARRATOR V.O.: Certainly Sylvain Chomet had that city in mind when he created Belleville for his 2003 French animated film, The Triplets of Belleville, where he used a miserable Empire State city, complete with its skyscrapers "stacked to hyperbole" and mafia undergrowth, as a canvas for satire of U.S. culture.</p>
<p>CLIP FROM THE TRIPLETS OF BELLEVILLE: The grandmother walks down a blue fluorescent-lighted hall filled with druggies and prostitutes.</p>	<p>SOUND FROM CLIP: WAITRESS: "No money no hamburgers!"</p>
	<p>NARRATOR V.O. CONTD: Writes New Yorker critic Anthony Lane,</p>
	<p>SNOOT MALE V.O.: Belleville itself is an obvious parody of New York, right down to the hamburger joint, and the film cannot bring itself to break with the stolid European belief that the city is a hellhole, populated by none but the rapacious and the obese.</p>

<u>VIDEO</u>	<u>AUDIO</u>
<p>CLIP FROM THE TRIPLETS OF BELLEVILLE: An entire theater of mafia thugs (black and monolithic) raise pistols and begin shooting at the grandmother and her son.</p>	<p>NARRATOR V.O.: Against this conurbation struggles a little old French grandmother, fending for herself against this landscape of obesity and criminality.</p>
<p>CLIP FROM HANNAH AND HER SISTERS: Woody Allen walks along a nice Upper West Side street, looking thoroughly neurotic as his voiceover progresses. He runs into passerby but does not notice.</p>	<p>AUDIO FROM CLIP: Woody Allen (V.O.): "Relax, take it easy. You're in the middle of Manhattan! You're surrounded by millions of people. Oh my God, I've got a tumor in the head the size of a volleyball!"</p>
<p>CLIP FROM HANNAH AND HER SISTERS: Michael Kane waves goodbye to a taxie which drives away outside of a bookstore.</p>	<p>BEGIN MUSIC: "Bongo Bongo Bongo (I Don't Want To Leave the Congo)" by the Andrews Sisters</p>
<p>CLIP FROM ANNIE HALL: Annie and Woody Allen pull up to a curb -Diane Keaton's parking job is terrible.</p>	<p>NARRATOR V.O.: Woody Woody Allen's New York is a starkly different jungle, infused into his personal identity as much as it's a visual backdrop. His drama unfolds in the world of intellectualist Manhattan; his films probe into the human effect of big city life -what it means to love, worry, and struggle within his own love-letter to New York. Nonetheless, the city he creates is no less imagined. It's a Manhattan with no traffic, no advertisements, ample parking, roomy apartments, and no poor neighborhoods.</p>

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<u>VIDEO</u>	<u>AUDIO</u>
<p>CLIP FROM ANNIE HALL CONTINUES</p>	<p>AUDIO FROM CLIP: "Great, we can walk to the curb from here."</p>
<p>CLIP FROM HANNAH AND HER SISTERS: From a montage sequence featuring the two women and their architect as they drive around and look at the great towers of Manhattan.</p>	<p>NARRATOR V.O.: Allen loves its architecture; in both Manhattan and Hannah and Her Sisters, he enters extensive scenes which simply show images of the gothic skyscrapers. In his first great film, Annie Hall, Allen voices a sardonic comparison between New York and Los Angeles -contrasting his own Manhattan intellectualism with his noxious vision of L.A., where people sell their souls for ease of living.</p>
<p>CLIP FROM HANNAH AND HER SISTERS: An apparently wealthy T.V. producer driving in a red convertible down Sunset Blvd.</p>	<p>When his relationship with Annie Hall ends, it is due to Annie's loss of integrity to the Los Angeles hellscape. Woody Allen films would simply cease to exist without New York City -in the film Hannah and Her Sisters, Allen investigates even more closely the effect of the metropolis on the human condition. Writes Roger Ebert,</p>
<p>CLIP FROM MANHATTAN: From the B&W opening sequence conducted to Gershwin, showing various nighttime skyscrapers.</p>	<p>NASAL MALE VOICE: "It suggests that modern big-city lives are so busy, so distracted, so filled with ambition and complication, that there isn't time to stop and absorb the meaning of things. Neither tragedy nor comedy can find a place to stand; there are too many other guests at the party. And yet, on reflection, there is a tragedy buried in Hannah and Her Sisters, and that is the fact of Mickey's status as the perennial outsider."</p>

<u>VIDEO</u>	<u>AUDIO</u>
<p>CLIP FROM HANNAH AND HER SISTERS: In the middle of the night, Alvie wakes up in his lonely apartment</p>	<p>NARRATOR V.O.: Roland Barthes once called Manhattan, "a real metropolis from which man is absent by his very accumulation." This idea has become a standard of the movie city -our protagonist is shut out and unwelcome, always stuck outside a world of closed doors and closed hearts.</p>
<p>DISSOLVE INTO</p>	
<p>CLIP FROM ABE 2: A woman slams the door on Babe and his old lady</p>	<p>MUSIC BEGIN: "Eleanor Rigby" strings only.</p>
<p>DISSOLVE INTO</p>	
<p>THE WIZARD OF OZ: In front of the Emerald City, Dorothy is refused entrance by the guard scene in a hole in the wall.</p>	<p>SOUND FROM CLIP: Dorothy knocking on door.</p>
	<p>NARRATOR V.O. CONTD: We all remember the scene from The Wizard of Oz where Dorothy tries to enter the Emerald City, and the gatekeeper refuses to admit her. So many metropolises are but massive expansions of this theme, enlarging the idea of isolation and seclusion into enormous set-pieces of modern technology. In Sofia Coppola's 2004 film, Lost in Translation, her heroes</p>
<p>CLIP FROM LOST IN TRANSLATION: Scarlett Johansson sits alone beside the window of a highrise hotel room, looking out at dreary Tokyo.</p>	<p>observed Tokyo like an aquarium -they connected against the grain of a city content to understand absolutely nothing about them. There are shots where Scarlet Johanson's character looks out across Tokyo from her hotel window, the irony is clear -loneliness set directly against the presence of millions of people.</p>
<p>CLIP FROM LOST IN TRANSLATION: Billy Murray stares glumly out a taxi window, washed by reflected neon signage</p>	

<u>VIDEO</u>	<u>AUDIO</u>
<p>MONTAGE SEQUENCE: Stills from Chungking Express, Babe 2, The City of Lost Children, Lost in Translation, Minority Report, The Triplets of Belleville, Blade Runner -all with the protagonist in a position of clear and momentary loneliness.</p>	<p>NARRATOR V.O.: This leads to the greater question: why are metropolises so damn lonely? Why, in the bodies of work of Wong Kar Wai and Woody Allen, in Babe 2, The City of Lost Children, Lost in Translation, Minority Report, The Triplets of Belleville, and Blade Runner, are our protagonists so isolated and unwelcome in their landscape. In Wong Kar Wai's Chungking Express and Fallen Angels, the director explores the interface of unrelated lives and stories. Each day we walk by thousands of faces; some we may never see again and some may play huge roles in our lives -Chungking Express measures the growth of strangely-shaped relationships at the same time it gauges the distance between them all. All of this occurs within the realm of mid-nineties Hong Kong, a kinetic, labyrinthine world of restaurants, shops and loneliness. If at its core the metropolis is just an exploration of modern life's effects on the individual, then loneliness perhaps serves as an added critique of the consequences of city existence. The idea of isolation within a populous city, be it in real cities or imagined ones, is paradoxical in nature and exemplifies a larger concern of the times: as we grow more advanced technologically, are we growing farther apart emotionally?</p>
<p>CLIP FROM CHUNGKING EXPRESS: The opening of Chungking Express, when we see dozens of people walking along a sidewalk and the subtitles say more or less what the narrator is saying.</p>	
<p>CLIP FROM CHUNGKING EXPRESS: A handheld camera follows a man up an escalator in an underground subway.</p>	
<p>CLIP FROM CHUNGKING EXPRESS: A man sits completely alone in his kitchen, eating expired pineapple from cans.</p>	
<p>CLIP FROM METROPOLIS: We once again follow the marching armies of worker drones as they file into an elevator and descend into the depths.</p>	

<u>VIDEO</u>	<u>AUDIO</u>
<p>CLIP FROM STAR WARS EPISODE 3: Padme stands crying, set against a nighttime Coruscant skyline.</p>	<p>NARRATOR V.O.: The more we succumb to the modern life, the more we industrialize and progress, the more we are personally distant. This is the metropolis' question for the 20th Century: in this contemporary world, is everyone a stranger?</p>
<p>DISSOLVE INTO</p>	<p>MUSIC BEGIN: "New York, New York," by Frank Sinatra</p>
<p>CLIP FROM THE CITY OF LOST CHILDREN: A high-angle shot of a lonely street</p>	
<p>DISSOLVE INTO</p>	
<p>CLIP FROM THE BIG LEBOWSKI: A tumbleweed aimlessly passes over a freeway in Los Angeles</p>	
<p>DISSOLVE INTO</p>	
<p>CLIP FROM ANNIE HALL: Woody Allen and Diane Keaton driving recklessly on a freeway on the way to the coast</p>	<p>NARRATOR V.O.: Cinema has given us some of its most exhilarating images and moments via the metropolis, many of which are as unforgettable as anything ever filmed. The metropolis, however, gives us more than an aesthetic production design: it has the potential for larger commentary, satire, parody, examination, or tragedy. More than any other set-piece in cinema, the metropolis makes us look into our own practices, and begs the question, What does it mean to be a man in the modern world?</p>
<p>DISSOLVE INTO</p>	
<p>CLIP FROM MINORITY REPORT: Tom Cruise jumping from maglev to maglev on a vertical freeway</p>	
<p>DISSOLVE INTO</p>	
<p>CLIP FROM METROPOLIS: The tower of Babel shining elegantly above the other towers.</p>	

Works Cited

Barthes, Roland. "Roland Barthes Quotes." *BrainyQuote*. 2007. 11 Mar. 2007

<<http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/r/rolandbart141622.html>>.

I borrowed a gobbet from Barthes for my discussion of New York.

Davis, Mike. *Beyond Blade Runner: Urban Control and the Ecology of Fear*. Open Media, 1992.

Davis' discussion is on the sociological vision behind the film, *Blade Runner*, and how it derived from prevalent fears in Los Angeles in the 1980s. I used his synthesis in my discussion of *Blade Runner* and, to a degree, *Minority Report*.

Denby, David. "The Current Cinema: the Triplets of Belleville." *The New Yorker* 1 Dec. 2003: 117-118.

A positive review of the film that is critical of its anti-American subtext, which Denby finds to be too often the general European view. I used a quotation from the review in my discussion of *The Triplets of Belleville*.

Ebert, Roger. "Hannah and Her Sisters." *The Chicago Sun-Times* 7 Feb. 1986. 1 Apr.

2006

<<http://rogerebert.suntimes.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/19860207/REVIEWS/602070303/1023>>.

In a four-star review of *Hannah and Her Sisters* from 1986, Ebert posits the view that the film is, most powerfully, an expression of distraction and exile in the big city. I cited a quotation from this review in my documentary narrative.

Emerson, Jim. "The Vatican Movie List" *www.cinepad.com*. 2 Apr. 2006

<<http://www.cinepad.com/vatican.htm>>.

This compilation of quotations by Jim Emerson, editor for *rogerebert.com*, listed several quotes by Roger Ebert and Pauline Kael on *Metropolis*, one of which is cited in the documentary narrative.

Galbraith, John K. "John Kenneth Galbraith." *Wikiquote*. 2 May 2006. 11 Mar. 2007

http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/John_Kenneth_Galbraith>.

I used a Galbraith quote about the metropolis as a preface to my discussion of *Blade Runner*.

"Metropolis (1927)." *The Internet Movie Database*. 3 Mar. 2007. 11 Mar. 2007

<<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0017136/>>.

I used this as a reference for character names, production costs, and dates of release. One figure, 7 million marks, is in my narrative.