



ICAR

Signpost series

Films about refugees, asylum seekers
and forced migration

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Introduction

ICAR receives many requests for details of films relating to refugee and asylum issues. This signpost provides an indicative list of films that portray the experiences of refugees and asylum seekers in the UK and other settlement contexts, or provide a useful insight into the country of origin situations from which people are fleeing.

The list also includes some films relating to migrants and migration more generally where it is felt that these may shed light on the issues facing refugees and asylum seekers in settlement countries, such as working conditions, racism, or cultural identity.

This signpost features fictional films, documentaries, shorts and feature-length films. The sections are organised by settlement countries and countries of origin, and entries are duplicated where appropriate. For example, a film about Kurdish refugees from Iraq living in the UK should be found under both the 'UK' settlement context section and the 'Kurdistan – Iraqi' country of origin section. This is to aid those users seeking to identify films on a thematic basis. Descriptions of the films are provided from a number of secondary sources.

The list is by no means comprehensive and will be updated, so please email ICAR at icar@kcl.ac.uk with suggestions of other films that may be included in this signpost.

ICAR would like to thank Jason Bergen at the National Consortia Support Team for the helpful provision of information towards this work.

London Film Festival 2004

Films that were shown as part of the London Film Festival 2004 have their titles highlighted in red. Other films relating to black and ethnic minority populations in the UK were also featured in this year's festival (e.g. *Yasmin*, *Bullet Boy*) as well as series of short films on [diasporas](#), but these are not listed here. Refer to the LFF [website](#) for full details of all films.

Please note: Inclusion in this list does not imply any recommendation by ICAR of individual films. For a critical analysis of the merits of each film, we suggest identifying film reviews on the internet by using a search engine.

Countries of settlement

UK

Title: *2Be*
Year: 2003
Language: English
Country of production: UK
Running time: 31 minutes
Distributor: [Gorilla Cinema](#), e: mail@gorillacinema.co.uk

'A colourful, dynamic, documentary-musical about human rights. Filmed over a period of five months, *2Be* follows the process of writing, rehearsing, and filming a series of musical pieces based on the experiences of students from Abbeydale Range – a school where over 51 different languages are spoken. The film combines a variety of elements creating an unusually original and absorbing narrative. The experiences of the young people involved, their honesty and talent ensure that this is a truly enjoyable, intimate and powerful film.'

[Description from video]

Title: *A Place in Mind*
Directors/animators: Jane Hubbard and Leonie Sharrock
Year: 2003
Language: English
Country of production: UK
Running time: 5 minutes
Distributor: [Cinetiq](#)

This is a drawn animation (with pastels) that explores the thoughts and feelings of refugees recently arrived in this country. More information is available at <http://www.cinetiq.co.uk/comm2003.html>.

Title: *Beautiful People*
Director: Jasmin Dizdar
Language: English
Year: 1998
Certificate: 15
Running time: 107 minutes
Distributor: Fortissimo Film

'London, 13th October 1993. The day England are to play Holland in a critical World Cup qualifier. The Bosnian war is at its height, Sarajevo is besieged and the UN is preparing relief airdrops. A Serb (Dado Jeremic) and a Croat (Faruk Pruti) meet on a London bus. Recognising each other as fellow refugees from the same village in Bosnia they immediately renew their contact by . . . attempting to beat each other to a pulp. Their subsequent manic chase through the streets of central London sets the scene for the electric comedy of *Beautiful People*. Jasmin Dizdar's extraordinary debut feature film tracks the interlinked and troubled lives of four British families whose encounters with refugees from the war in former Yugoslavia helps them to see the beauty that exists in their own lives.'

[Description from

<http://www.britfilms.com/britishfilms/catalogue/browse/?id=D5FD9B420eeaf2E8F2pVsICEEA17>]

Title: *Between the Wars*
Director: Emily Woof
Language: English
Country of production: UK

Year: 2001

Running time: 12 minutes

'A poignant drama that charts the relationship between an Yugoslavian asylum seeker and a war veteran living on a council estate in London. A chance encounter enables two solitary characters, apparently very different, to discover they share a mutual understanding of surviving war.'

[Description from <http://www.channel4.com/film/reviews/film.jsp?id=127734>]

Title: *Birthday Boy*

Director: Simon Brown

Country of production: UK

Distributor: contact Stella Barnes, GYPT, e: stella@gypt.co.uk

'Nehat and Edmond are newly arrived from rural Kosovo. Alone and vulnerable in London they struggle to come to terms with their displacement and loss. The arrival of a letter on Edmond's birthday threatens to tear the brothers apart.... *Birthday Boy* was created as part of Voices, a programme of theatre and arts activities run by GYPT with young refugees and asylum seekers. It was produced in partnership with Kidbrooke School in Greenwich where GYPT has been running a drama project with students in the post 16-ESOL unit.'

[Description from video]

Title: *Bloody Foreigners*

Language: English

Country of production: UK

Year: 2001

Distributor: Channel 4

This was the two-part series on Channel 4 screened in spring 2001. One part deals with illegal working in the UK and the other is presented by the comic Omid Djalili and deals with the situation of a asylum seekers specifically.

Title: *Carla's Song*

Director: Ken Loach

Language: English

Country of production: UK/Germany/Spain

Year: 1996

Running time: 127 minutes

'Ken Loach follows his award winning *Land and Freedom* with an intimate love story set against the political background of the war in Nicaragua. Robert Carlyle, now firmly established as one of Britain's finest actors, gives a stunning performance as George, a free-spirited Scottish bus driver who takes a shine to Carla, a Nicaraguan refugee who is caught without a ticket by an inspector on his bus. A slow courtship reveals the deep psychological scars she bears and he persuades her to return to her homeland to confront her past. Ken Loach blends humour and poignancy, integrating the delicate scenes of the blossoming relationship with an uncompromising reminder of the tragic recent history of Nicaragua and the role of America within it.'

[Description from <http://www.geocities.com/Hollywood/Academy/4558/cs1>]

Title: *Colour Blind*

Language: English

Country of production: Scotland

Year: 2003

Running time: 25 minutes

Distributor: Contact Joyce Sperber at j.sperber@scfuk.org.uk

This film was made with a group of young refugees and Scottish young people from schools across Glasgow. 'After some training in drama, scriptwriting and camera work, they went about the huge task of scripting, acting, filming, producing and editing their own 25-minute film. The film, called *Colour Blind*, is about what life is like for asylum seekers who start school in Glasgow and the kind of problems that they face. It tells the story of Sherzad, a teenage boy from Iraq. It is a story of gangs, racism and love across the divide.'

[Description from

<http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/scuk/jsp/resources/details.jsp?id=1670&group=resources§ion=project&subsection=details>].

Title: Cultural Image

Director: Yilmaz Demir

Language: Kurdish with English subtitles

Country of production: Britain

Year: 2002

Running time: 5 minutes

Documentary looking at the life of the Kurdish community in Hackney.

[Details from <http://www.kurdishfilmfestival.com/kff02/documentaries.htm>]

Title: Dirty Pretty Things

Director: Stephen Frears

Language: English

Country of production: UK

Year: 2002

Running time: 97 minutes

Certificate: 15

'This is a seamy urban thriller with no obvious special effects and a weighty political dimension. It stars a little-known male lead in Chiwetel Ejiofor (admittedly playing opposite such European names as Audrey "Amélie" Tautou and Sergi López) and is set in a downbeat milieu of the dispossessed, filmed with tension and bleakness by Chris Menges. Okwe (Ejiofor) is a Nigerian man, once a doctor but now ducking sleep to pull wages on two low-paid posts in London – nightman at the seedy Baltic hotel and daytime minicab driver – with a further sideline in ministering to the STDs of his equally "stateless" colleagues. He sleeps on a couch belonging to one of the Baltic's cleaners Senay (Tautou), a Turkish immigrant working illegally. When the attentions of the immigration inspectors force her out of her job, she's ripe for victimisation. Okwe feels responsible for her but seems powerless to help. Soon they are caught at the rim of a vicious whirlpool of deprivation.'

[Description from

http://www.bfi.org.uk/sightandsound/2002_11/subfeature02_homesick_blues.html]

Title: Dispatches: Keep them out

Director: David Modell

Language: English

Country of production: UK

Year: 2004

Running time: 60 minutes

'Award-winning Dispatches director David Modell, investigates how public opinion is affecting the government's policy on asylum by travelling to Lee-on-the-Solent and revealing how this small town in the south of England reacts when threatened with an influx of asylum seekers.

[Description from http://www.channel4.com/life/microsites/K/keep_them_out/]

Title: Gas Attack

Director: Kenny Glaenaans

Language: English

Country of production: Scotland

Year: 2001

Running time: 71 minutes

Distributor: Channel 4 International, or contact Samantha Kingsley at Hart Ryan Productions at samkingsley@hartryan.co.uk

'Set amongst the high-rise estates of Glasgow, the home of many recently arrived asylum seekers as part of the government's dispersal programme. The drama begins during an apparently commonplace winter flu epidemic. But doctors are puzzled by the strange symptoms of this flu and cannot understand why it is only affecting a relatively small cross-section of the community. One asylum support unit worker is not satisfied by the flu argument and wonders if environmental health hazards are to blame. But when one man dies, the post mortem results reveal the shocking truth - the deadly germ anthrax killed him. But even in the face of this evidence, the authorities are unwilling to believe what is becoming increasingly obvious - that north Glasgow has been subject to a silent and deadly terrorist attack. Someone has deliberately released anthrax amongst the immigrant community and the panic both inside and outside the hospital is mounting fast. Central to the drama is a Kurdish refugee, Sherko, and his 12-year-old daughter, Resa. Sherko remembers the full horror of being gassed in northern Iraq by Saddam Hussein and now watches in horror as his daughter succumbs to the deadly infection.'

[Description from

<http://www.britfilms.com/britishfilms/catalogue/browse/?id=D5FD9B420eeaf2E8F5mNjJCEEBFC>]

Title: Hull's Angel

Language: English

Country of production: UK

Year: 2003

Distributor: Channel 4

This documentary about a local woman in Hull who has championed the rights of asylum seekers in the area was screened in July 2003.

Title: Injustice

Director: Ken Fero and Tariq Mehmood

Language: English

Country of production: UK

Year: 2001

Running time: 100 minutes

Distributor: Migrant Media, contact info@injusticefilm.co.uk

Website: <http://www.injusticefilm.co.uk>

'In 1969, David Oluwale became the first black person to die in police custody in Britain. Many others have died since then. None of the police officers involved have been convicted of these deaths. In this documentary, the families of these victims ask "Why not?" This is a blow-by-blow account of the relentless struggles of the families as they find out how they lost their loved ones in extremely violent deaths at the hands of police officers. Each family is met with a wall of official secrecy and the film documents how they unite and challenge this together. The documentary uses powerful exclusive footage filmed over a five-year period and witnesses the families' pain and anger at the killings. It documents the fight to retrieve the bodies for burial, the mockery of police self-investigation and the collusion of the legal system in the deaths. The film asks why an accused killer in a police uniform is not judged by the same standards as the rest of society. Injustice documents the horrific loss of life at the hands of the state and its attempts to cover up these killings. The British police have been responsible for hundreds of deaths and have walked free.'

[Description from <http://www.injusticefilm.co.uk>]

Title: In the Name of the Buddha

Signpost: Films about refugees and asylum seekers

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Director: Rajesh Touchriver
Country of production: India, UK
Year made: 2002
Distributor: Da'sai

'*In the Name of Buddha* is an epic, disturbing account of the brutal civil war in Sri Lanka. The film offers an uncompromising view of the ethnic conflict that raged in the 1980s and 90s, largely unnoticed by the outside world. During this period more than 60,000 people were killed and 900,000 fled abroad as refugees. The film tells the true story of Siva, a young Tamil doctor who seeks asylum in Britain after his family is caught up in the vicious war between the island's minority Tamils and its army and government, dominated by Sri Lanka's Buddhist Sinhalese.'

[Description from <http://film.guardian.co.uk/features/featurepages/0,4120,951795,00.html>]

Title: *In This World*
Director: Michael Winterbottom
Language: English
Country of production: UK
Year: 2002
Running time: 89 minutes
Distributor: ICA Projects

'Torn from the headlines, Michael Winterbottom's compelling new film follows Jamal, a young Afghan, as he embarks on a hazardous overland trip from the refugee camp at Peshawar through Iran, Turkey, Italy and France to Sa ngatte an d i n t o t h e h e a r t o f L o n d o n w h e r e h e b e c o m e s "M 1187511". Winterbottom and his brilliant writer Tony Grisoni have struck a fine balance between the fictional and documentary elements of the film and they give us cause to see behind the headlines at the broader political and moral concerns.'

[Description from <http://www.ica.org.uk/index.cfm?articleid=11385>]

Title: *Journeyman*
Director: Dictynna Hood
Language: English
Country of production: Wales
Year: 2002
Running time: 15 minutes
Distributor: Contact Elizabeth Morgan Hemlock (Wild Films) at emhemlock@aol.com for more information.

'Mohammed Ali is a young African refugee who arrives as a stowaway in a rundown Welsh town. It's Christmas. He is starving, lost. Finally he seeks shelter in a pub. He is thrown out by the landlord but unexpectedly touches the heart of Connie, the landlord's wife... This short film is an unusual and heart-warming fairy tale that reaches beyond its topical subject matter. Whilst entirely fictional, the story is inspired by the real story of a recent asylum seeker to Britain.'

[Description from Wild Films]

Title: *Last Resort*
Director: Pawel Pawlikovsky
Language: English
Country of production: UK
Year: 2000
Running time: 73 minutes
Certificate: 15

'A Russian woman, Tanya, arrives in England with her young son hoping to see the English fiancé she met in Moscow. When he fails to turn up at the airport, Tanya and Artiom are virtually imprisoned in an

asylum camp in a deserted seaside resort. Tanya gradually develops a relationship with an amusement arcade manager (Paddy Considine) who helps them escape. Fortified by great performances from the three lead characters, this is an amusing and fresh look at life on the fringe of modern British society.’
[Description from <http://www.bfi.org.uk/collections/catalogues/newdvds/details.php?id=59>]

Title: Millennium Transient Film Exchange films - Freedom Airways; Home Sweet Home; Lost and Found or a New Year's Gift

Director: Fahim Khurram; Autoriat Musa, Altin Musa and Arber Pllaner; Zaman Brefkani

Country of origin: UK

‘These are short films made by young people from the Millennium Transient Film Exchange [MTFE]. MTFE is a collective of young film and media artists from Afghan, Iraqi and Kosovan communities in London who have harnessed the moving image to present their London from fresh and dynamic perspectives.’

[Description from <http://www.refugeeweek.org.uk>]

Title: Missing

Director: Yesim Deveci

Year: 2003

Running time: 20 minutes

Distributor: Contact Yesim Deveci, e: ydeveci@yahoo.co.uk or trinityc@yahoo.com

‘Doulat was born in Afghanistan. When he was ten years old, his mother sent him to buy bread. By the time he returned fierce fighting had broken out near his home between the Taliban and the Northern Alliance. For two days he hid in a cellar in a house waiting for the fighting to stop. When he returned home he found the house was deserted. At just ten years old, Doulat began his long journey in search of his family’.

[Description provided by director]

Title: Mrika

Director: Blerina Bujupi

Language: English

Country of production: UK

Year: 2004

Running time: 30 minutes

Available for hire from: b_bujupi@hotmail.com

‘Imagine fleeing from home, having seen friends and family killed in a war, to arrive in a strange, new country with the awesome task of beginning your life again as a refugee. This is what happened to a student from Kosovo, now living in Barrow, whose story is being told in a new 30-minute documentary. The film follows Mrika as she fulfils her dream of putting on a fashion show.’

[Description from http://www.bbc.co.uk/cumbria/my_space/mrika/index.shtml]

Title: My Life as a Refugee

Director: Lucy Nabijou

Language: English, Pashto, Dari with English subtitles

Country of production: UK

Year: 2002

Running time: 30 minutes

Distributor: [Bijou Films](#)

‘*My Life As A Refugee* is a warm, evocative documentary portrait of Karim, a young Afghan man living in London, struggling to escape poverty and establish his life in exile against the background of the ongoing war in Afghanistan. Beyond the drudgery of working in “the pizza world”, Karim reveals another

side of himself to camera - a creative, intelligent, and compassionate person who has been through some harrowing experiences and who still faces many difficulties and dilemmas.'

[Description from <http://www.bijou-films.co.uk>]

Title: *On the receiving end*

Directors: Ekrem Rrahmani and Scott Sansom, Omni Productions

Language: English

Country of production: UK

Year: 2003

Running time: 15 minutes

Distributor: Presswise Trust, [Refugees, Asylum Seekers and the Media Project](#). Contact anna@presswise.org.uk.

'*On the Receiving End* is a 15-minute film in which refugees discuss the experience of exile and reactions to media coverage of refugees and asylum seekers in the UK. The film features Ghias Aljundi, Miwanda Bagenda, Gordon Doh Fondo, Faqir Mayvand, Nikola Medic, Nela Milic, Guy Momat, Nicolette Muzazi, Abu Bakar Shaw, Ibrahim Seega Shaw and Sandi Topic. *On the Receiving End* had its UK premiere at the Article 19 seminar on Refugees and the UK Media on 15 May.'

[Description from http://www.presswise.org.uk/display_page.php?id=462]

Title: *Rights of Passage*

Director: Simon Brown

Language: Kurdish with English subtitles

Country of production: Britain

Year: 2002

Running time: 25 minutes

'Two Kurdish friends, Nawrol and Saman, arrive at the Sangatte refugee camp in Northern France on their way to England. That night they break in to the nearby Channel Tunnel, and nearly succeed in jumping on a train. However, playing the hero, Nawrol stops to help a young kid, Mohammed...'

[Description from <http://www.kurdishfilmfestival.com/kff02/shorts.htm>]

Title: *Transient Tales*. The Dragon in the Forest – Iranian; The Lost Toys – East European Roma; The Four Oxen – Eritrean; The Pig and the Little Bird – Colombian; Bebel and Tetela – Western Kurdistan; The Chini Goat – Afghan

Director: [Connections Communication Centre](#)

Language: Original languages and music with English subtitles

Country of production: UK

Running time: Collection of shorts

Distributor: Contact Kate Thornton at info@cccmedia.co.uk or on 020 8741 1766

Transient Tales form a series of short films produced as part of a Connections Communication Centre project. The project enabled refugee children aged between eight and twelve to create a short animated film based on a story from their own country of origin.

Title: *Seeking*

Year: 2003

Country of production: UK

Distributor: [Living Archive](#), telephone 01908 322 568

Seeking is a film made by five young asylum seekers in Milton Keynes who were in the process of seeking refugee status in 2003. They wanted to make a film about their experiences but, as their stories were so personal to them, they lacked the confidence to speak directly to the camera. Instead they interviewed a range of people including a senior policeman, the local MP and the local newspaper editor. The film reflects their frustrations with the inconsistencies of the system that deals with their claims for refugee status. All the young people taking part on this film were under 19 at the time of the

shoot. Under the guidance of professional filmmaker, Chris Bradley, they took part in all aspects of the filmmaking process apart from the final edit. The ideas for the film, the people they wanted to interview and the questions they asked all came from them.'

[Description from video]

Title: See Sense

Country of production: UK

'A short film focusing on the refugee communities of the London Borough of Merton, exploring their feelings about arrival, existence and life in the capital. The contrast in the feelings of a group of elderly Tamil women - who have adapted well to their environment over 15 years - and those of a newly arrived African lady, is clearly demonstrated. The confusion and conflicts created by forced relocation, as well as a deep seated appreciation of the sanctuary offered by the city, are striking features of this original film, which has been entirely filmed and edited by refugee filmmakers.' This film was produced in collaboration with Asylum Welcome, South London Tamil Welfare Association, London Arts, Merton Borough Council and Mediam and was filmed and edited by refugee film-makers.

[Description from <http://www.refugeeweek.org.uk>]

Title: Tasting Freedom

Language: English

Country of production: UK

Year: 1994

Running time: 50 minutes

Distributor: Migrant Media, contact migrantmedia@pop3.poptel.org.uk

'*Tasting Freedom* documents the struggles of asylum seekers in Britain for recognition of their basic human rights and investigates abuses on asylum seekers in detention centres and prisons. The documentary gives a startling account of how people who have come to Britain to find freedom are instead persecuted. The film contains unprecedented interviews with detainees who speak about the abuses they have suffered under Britain's immigration laws and documents deaths in detention centres and prisons including that of Zairian asylum seeker, Omasase Lumumba, who was killed by prison officers in Pentonville in 1991. The documentary closely follows the struggles of the detainees including hunger strikes, revolts and uprisings. They give first hand accounts of how they organised themselves during these protests, and the measures used by the immigration service to suppress them. Despite being ignored by the media and isolated from the outside world, the film documents the courage and determination of people prepared to stand up for their rights even at the cost of their own lives.'

[Description from <http://homepages.poptel.org.uk/migrantmedia/docs/migrant.htm>]

Title: Voice seekers

Director: Camcorder Guerrillas

Language: English

Country of production: UK

Running time: 15 minutes

Distributor: [Scottish Refugee Council](http://www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk)

This short video provides a concise insight into the experiences of four refugees from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Kosovo, Afghanistan and Uganda, who narrate their own stories in their own words: the reasons for their flight, their situation in seeking asylum in Scotland, and their future aspirations. For more information, visit <http://www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk/publication.htm>.

Title: We Are From the Same Planet

Director: Gerry Holsgrove

Language: English

Country of production: UK, Liverpool

Year:

Running time: 10 minutes

Available from: Contact Gerry Holgrove on 0151 653 89 74.

This film describes life in Liverpool for three asylum seekers and addresses what it is like being an asylum seeker and the reception they receive from local people. It features Nadeem (Pakistan), Bland (Kurdistan) and Eduard (Kosovo). Only Bland is still in Liverpool.

[Description from 'Liverpool Asylum Seeker and Refugee Development Group']

Title: **Welcome**

Director: Lucinda Broadbent

Language: English

Country of production: UK

Year: 2004

Running time: 20 minutes

Distributor: [Camcorder Guerillas](http://www.camcorderguerillas.net)

This is a documentary detailing the experiences of three homeless asylum seekers evicted from their homes in Glasgow following failed applications, and set in the context of hundreds of other asylum seekers facing the same fate. The film includes interviews with both asylum seekers and council representatives. For more information, visit <http://www.camcorderguerillas.net/welcome.shtml>.

Title: **Welcome to Britain**

Language: English

Country of production: UK

Year: 2001

Running time: Each programme was 50 minutes

Distributor: BBC

This was a 3-part series about the asylum system in the UK that was screened in autumn 2001 on BBC 1. One episode deals with San gatte and attempts to reach the UK, one looks at the asylum determination process, detention and the role of caseworkers at IND in Croydon, and the last focuses on removals.

Title: **Welcome to Britain**

Language: English

Country of production: UK

Year: 2003

Running time: Each programme was 50/60 minutes

Distributor: BBC

This was another three-part series screen in July 2003 that looked at various aspects of the immigration and asylum system in the UK. Topics included people smuggling and the UK visa office in Ghana.

Title: **Who am I?**

Director: Afrique and Sam Bakhurst

Year: 2003

Country of production: UK

Distributor: [Living Archive](http://www.livingarchive.org), t: 01908 322 568

'Afrique is a group of five young African women aged between thirteen and sixteen who are pupils at the Sir Frank Markham Community School in Milton Keynes. This film was inspired by poems that were written by one of the girls in the group. It relates some of their childhood memories and experiences in moving, and sometimes amusing, scenes. *Who am I?* was made during weekly after school sessions in June and July 1993. It was created from their original ideas and was performed, filmed and edited by Afrique under guidance of professional film-maker, Sam Bakhurst.'

[Description from video]

Europe

Title: Anansi
Director: Fritz Baumann
Year: 2002

'Out of sheer desperation, a small group of West Africans embark on a perilous journey to find a better existence in Europe: from Ghana to Morocco, Spain and finally to Berlin. But the road to the Promised Land is strewn with obstacles... Baumann's well-researched film - winner of the One Future Film Prize, Munich 2003 - is enhanced by a specially written soundtrack by Roman Bukha and reggae star Shaggy.'

[Description from <http://www.goethe.de/gr/gla/enpfilm.htm#V3>]

Title: April Children
Director: Yueksel Yavuz
Year: 1998
Running time: 85 minutes
Distributor: Ventura Film

'Cem, Mehmet and Dilan are brothers and sisters. Their father brought them and their mother to Germany from Turkish Kurdistan fifteen years ago. Cem, the eldest, works in a sausage factory and has long been the right age to marry, according to his parents. He has been promised since childhood to a cousin who still lives in Kurdistan; however, until now, he had suppressed the thought of a final commitment. Then he falls in love with the German prostitute Kim in a Turkish night club... Cem's younger brother, Mehmet, sees his chance with his friend Arif to land "the big coup" in dealing with drugs. When Arif falls in love with Mehmet's little sister Dilan, Mehmet takes his new job even more seriously... At the same time, their parents' native village in Kurdistan is destroyed: a reason for them to begin preparations for Cem's wedding and to bring the cousin to Germany. Cem, who loves Kim, is faced by a conflict...'

[Description from http://www.german-cinema.de/archive/film_view.php?film_id=267]

Title: Bella and Real
Director: Borje Peratt
Language: Swedish and Kurdish with English subtitles
Country of production: Sweden
Year: 2002
Running time: 27 minutes

'Real, an immigrant soccer team recruits a Swedish coach, to create order. All of the players want to play centre, as their fathers also demand. Sammi, patriarch of a Kurd family has a son on the team and a daughter Bella with the impossible dream of becoming the goalkeeper.'

[Description from <http://www.kurdishfilmfestival.com/kff02/shorts.htm>]

Title: Beyond our Dreams
Director: Hiner Saleem
Language: French and Kirmanji with English subtitles
Country of production: France/ Armenia/ Italy
Year: 2000
Running time: 100 minutes

'Hiner Saleem's second feature tracks a young refugee couple's flight from Kurdistan to a hopeful sanctuary in Paris, braving travails comic and tragic on their long, serpentine path. Already struggling toward an uncertain destination at the outset, childhood sweethearts Dolovan and Zara are first seen huffing across the frozen Caucasian Mountains. Not by choice: Saying "We have no country," Dolovan is resigned to the necessity of leaving their lifelong village in Mesopotamia, where ethnic strife has

drawn a vicious line between local Kurds and their suddenly intolerant neighbours. Zara is more reluctant, and their odyssey starts very badly as her elderly parents, lagging behind, are lost to the elements.'

[Description from <http://www.riocinema.ndirect.co.uk/kff01/features.htm>]

Title: **The Boy who Stopped Talking**
Director: Ben Sombogaart
Language: Kirmanji and Dutch with English subtitles
Country of production: Netherlands
Year: 1997
Running time: 108 minutes

'Anyone who's ever experienced the upheaval and sadness that comes with leaving the place you've called home will appreciate the charm and candour of this heartfelt family tale. For young Memo, the concept of "home" is particularly significant since he's a Kurd, a minority constantly in search of a homeland and frequently dispossessed of the claims they stake. Memo is perfectly content with his village life: goofing around with his best friend Mustafa, tending the sheep and working as the local postman. But when Memo's father, Hüsni, suddenly returns from Holland, Memo's life changes forever.'

Title: **Code Unknown**
Director: Michael Haneke
Language: French, Romanian with English subtitles
Country of production: France/Germany/Romania
Year: 2000
Running time: 117 minutes
Certificate: 15

'Paris, the present. Anne (Juliette Binoche), an actress, meets Jean (Alexandre Hamidi), the younger brother of her war-photographer boyfriend Georges (Thierry Neuvic). Jean has run away from his father's farm and asks her for the new entry code to her apartment; he then discards a crumpled paper bag into the lap of Maria (Luminita Gheorghiu), a Romanian illegal migrant who is begging on the street. Amadou (Oua Lu Yenne), a teacher of deaf children, remonstrates with him. In the ensuing scuffle, policemen arrest Maria and Amadou. Maria is deported. Amadou's West African mother expresses her grief at the treatment of her son. Anne performs a scene from the thriller she is filming, in which she is imprisoned in a soundproof room by a killer.

Georges returns from Kosovo, where he has been photographing atrocities. In Romania, Maria returns to her husband Dragos (Bob Nicolescu) and her family, with whom she moves into a small flat. She is ashamed of having had to beg in Paris, although she did send money home. Jean disappears from his father's farm. His father responds by killing his livestock, telling Anne and Georges that he is unable to run the farm without Jean's help. Anne hears sounds of distress coming from an adjoining apartment but is unsure what to do. She confronts an elderly neighbour who, she believes, pushed a note through her door purporting to be from an abused child in the other apartment; the old woman denies it. Antagonised by Georges' inability to settle, Anne starts a scene with him in a supermarket, claiming that she aborted their child while he was away. Georges surreptitiously photographs passengers on the Métro. Maria pays to be smuggled back to Paris. Anne, travelling home on the Métro, is tormented by an Arab youth who spits in her face before being challenged by a middle-aged Arab man. As Maria starts to beg on the street, Georges finds the code to the apartment changed and Amadou's students perform a piece for massed drums.'

[Description from http://www.bfi.org.uk/sightandsound/2001_05/code_unknown.html]

Title: **Death in Exile**
Director: Ayten Mutlu Saray
Language: French/ German with English subtitles
Country of production: Switzerland

Year: 2002

Running time: 27 minutes

'Khalil, a Palestinian refugee who grew up in Algeria, is in prison waiting to be deported. Memories of his homeland accompany him during this long wait. The story of the film is based on the real case of Khalil Abuzarifeh who died in Zurich on 3rd March 1999 while awaiting deportation from Switzerland.'

[Description from <http://www.kurdishfilmfestival.com/kff02/shorts.htm> and http://www.swissfilms.ch/detail_f.asp?PNr=-558159860]

Title: Escape to Paradise

Director: Nino Jacusso

Language: Turkish with English subtitles

Country of production: Switzerland

Year: 2001

Running time: 90 minutes

'A Kurdish refugee family who are applying for political asylum in Switzerland are sent to an immigration centre. Their future will only be secure if they can present a convincing case. They turn to a Swiss man who claims he can supply them with the documents and stories which will convince the immigration authorities.'

[Description from <http://www.kurdishfilmfestival.com/kff02/features.htm>]

Title: Farewell Stranger

Director: Tevfik Baser

Year: 1992

Running time: 97 minutes

'Two people caught up in a spiritual crisis meet on the North Sea island of Langeness [North Germany] - Karin, an attractive woman of about 40, and a 50-year-old man seeking political asylum, whose past is marked by imprisonment and torture. The fact that they speak no common language through which they might communicate with each other merely arouses their desire to know more about each other and leads slowly to a relationship of love. Baser's film thematizes the question of asylum seekers, a subject which was at the centre of public debates in Germany after its unification.'

[Description from <http://homepages.gold.ac.uk/turkishmigranticinema/films/films/film20.htm>]

Title: Figli-Hijos

Director: Marco Bechis

Country of production: Italy

Year: 2001

Running time: 90 minutes

Distributor: [Cecchi Gori Group](#)

'From the director of *Garage Olimpo* comes a story of the past catching up with the present. Raul and Victoria Ramos' tranquil, bourgeois life is suddenly turned upside down when Rosa, a young Argentine woman, arrives at their home in Milan and claims that Javier, their son, is her long-lost twin brother. Raul, a ex-military man, is unruffled by the news, but his wife, Victoria, seems afraid of a possible relationship between Rosa and her son. Javier is intrigued by Rosa but refuses to question his family. Eventually however, Rosa drags Javier with her to search for the truth about what happened to their parents during Argentina's dirty war, and Javier faces a reality far worse than he imagined.'

[Description from <http://www.hrw.org/iff/2003/london/hijos.html>]

Title: A Handful of Grass

Director: Roland Suso Richter

Language: Kurmanji with English subtitles

Country of production: Germany

Year: 1999

Running time: 114 minutes

'Ten-year-old Kendal lives in a poor Kurdish village. His uncle, who is involved in drugs trafficking in Hamburg, takes Kendal to Germany. After his uncle is arrested, the boy is looked after by a German taxi driver, but eventually ends up in a children's home. His uncle tracks him down, and Kendal soon begins work as a drug pusher.'

[Description from <http://www.kurdishfilmfestival.com/kff02/features.htm>]

Title: Hop

Director: Dominique Standaert

Language: French and Flemish with English subtitles

Country of production: Belgium

Year: 2002

Running time: 104 minutes

'Justin and his father are Burundian refugees living "sans papiers" in Brussels. When dad is caught and slated for deportation, his son forms an unlikely alliance with an old anarchist and his girlfriend to fight the system and get his father back. Both charming and insightful, HOP is a real treat. Suitable for all ages.'

[Description from <http://www.actsofachievement.org.uk/2004/detail.php?EventID=67>]

Title: House of Hearts

Director: Elizabeth Rygard

Language: Turkish with English subtitles

Country of production: Germany

Year: 2002

Running time: 88 minutes

'A drama of separation seen through the eyes of a seven-year-old boy, Osman, whose parents leave Turkey to work in Europe. The drama is enveloped in the expressive Anatolian music, the overwhelming forces of nature and traditional poetry. Together they form some of the riches Osman carries in the suitcase that accompanies him to his new life.'

[Description from <http://www.kurdishfilmfestival.com/kff02/features.htm>]

Title: Inch' Allah Dimanche

Director: Yamina Benguigui

Country of production: Algeria/France

Year: 2001

Running time: 98 minutes

Distributor: Film Movement

'Set in the 1970s, this film depicts an example of a family impacted by France's "family reunion" law that allowed Algerian wives to rejoin their husbands who were working in France. The film follows Zouina (Deliba) as she says goodbye to her mother in Algiers, moving with her three children and mother-in-law (Moukaddem) to a strange new country whose customs she's unfamiliar with, where she also finds that her husband (Soualem) has in some ways become a stranger to her as well.'

[Description from <http://movies.yahoo.com/shop?d=hp&cf=prev&id=1808464450>]

Title: Journey of Hope

Director: Xavier Koller

Country of production: Switzerland

Year: 1990

Running time: 110 minutes

'Xavier Koller's 1990 drama concerns a Turkish family optimistically leaving a threadbare existence in its native country and setting off on a harrowing journey for better luck in Switzerland. The film is relentless in every sense, in its blow-by-blow portrayal of the characters selling their possessions, travelling an illegal route used by other emigrants, falling in with a cluster of smugglers who do not have their best interests at heart, crossing the Alps on foot (an extended sequence that quickly earned the film its must-see reputation). After all that, they still have to confront Swiss authorities. Brutal and tough going, the heart of the film is not so much the accumulating despair and misery but the strengthening relationships of the central characters. Koller's film, based on a true story, becomes more than the sum of its episodic nightmares. In an unexpected way, it becomes a beacon of true hope and humanity.'

[Description from

<http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/detail/-/6302265630/104-6299040-5214342?v=glance>]

Title: Lamerica

Director: Gianni Arnelio

Language: Italian with English subtitles

Country of production: Italy/ France

Year: 1995

Running time: 116 minutes

Two Italian racketeers come to Albania just after the fall of the communists to set up a fictive firm and pocket the grants. They need a stooge. They choose an old one in a jail: Spiro. But the youngest Italian, Gino, once alone with Spiro, encounter a few problems. Far from his roots, loosing his identity in deep Albania, he begins to change...'

[Description from <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0110299/plotsummary> and available from

<http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/detail/-/156730138X/103-8244181-0531066?v=glance>]

Title: Loin

Director: Andre Téchiné

Country of production: France

Year: 2001

Running time: 120 minutes

Distributor: UGC

'Serge is a young, confused French truck driver working for a company that moves legal and illegal goods across the borders between Spain and Morocco. Desperately in love with Sarah, a Moroccan Jew who is trying to cope with her mother's funeral and the arrival of a brother who wants her to emigrate to Canada, Serge strikes a deal with a young boy named Saïd. If Saïd can convince Sarah to heed Serge's plea, Serge promises to smuggle him to Europe. Téchiné's greatest strength is the manner in which he captures the complexity of the emotions that join his star-crossed lovers. He expertly balances their love story against the serious backdrop of smuggling and immigration in this gritty, realistic, and powerful drama.'

[Description from <http://www.hrw.org/iff/2002/london/loin.html>]

Title: Long live the bride... and the liberation of Kurdistan

Director: Hiner Saleem

Language: French and Kurdish with English subtitles

Country of production: France

Year: 1997

Running time: 96 minutes

'Set inside the 100,000-population Kurdish community in Paris. Cheto seeks a wife via videotapes while still seeing his French girlfriend, immigration office worker Christine. Cheto places an order for a beautiful girl, but he's disappointed when her sister, country girl Mina, arrives at the airport as a substitute. Family pressure forces him to marry her. Unhappy with the way she's treated by Cheto, Mina

acquires some progressive ideas from Leila and other local feminists, leading to confrontations with Cheto.'

[Description from <http://www.kurdishfilmfestival.com/kff02/features.htm>]

Title: The New Country

Director: Geir Hansteen Jorgensen

Country of production: Sweden

Year: 2000

Running time: 124 minutes

'In desperation, Iranian Massoud (40) and Somalian Ali (15) escape from the refugee camp. They join forces with blonde Louise, a former Miss Sweden who has escaped from a photosession that was taking on a more erotic direction than what was initially agreed upon. On their journey through Sweden they encounter an idealistic couple hiding refugees in their cellar, racist hillbillies, a rebellious millionaire son, a neiderly couple with a particular liking for young African boys and several other oddball characters. *The New Country* is an amusing and life-affirming road-trip through today's Sweden. The script was written by Peter Birro and Lukas Moodyson (*Show Me Love, Together*) and was shot with two hand-held DV-cameras.'

[Description from <http://www.diasporafilmfest.org/films/newcountry.html>]

Title: Otomo

Director: Frieder Schlaich

Language: German with English subtitles

Country of production: Germany

Year: 1999

Running time: 84 minutes

'A powerful film portraying institutionalized racism and police brutality, *Otomo* provides a convincing look at the everyday world of refugees, who are continuously surrounded by tension and insecurity. In the summer of 1989, a Stuttgart newspaper reported the true story of a West African asylum seeker who physically assaulted an intolerant subway ticket-taker; fled, and became the target of a citywide manhunt. *Otomo* is a sober, fictionalized reconstruction of a tale that shocked Stuttgart, and a gripping portrait of how institutionalized racism drives a disempowered individual to violence and inhumanity.

West African immigrant Frederic Otomo (Isaach de Bankole) lacks the proper papers to be hired for the most menial of jobs; he has survived for eight years with the help of a Catholic charity. Otomo is the target of verbal abuse, is thrown out of his boarding house, and even scorned by neighbourhood dogs. He feels and looks out of place. A stoic bubbling pot of wrath on the run, de Bankole's performance establishes Otomo's essence without words – language cannot express the gravity of his situation. As a ticking soundtrack counts down his fated minutes, Otomo is helped by a kind, aging hippie and her granddaughter, establishing the potential for an inclusive German society.... if it is not too late...'

[Description from <http://www.africanfilm.com/cat3.htm>]

Title: The Promise

Director: Luc and Jean-Pierre Dardenne

Language: French with English subtitles

Country of production: Belgium

Year: 1997

Running time: 93 minutes

'Igor is a 15-year-old boy living in a bleak Belgian town and who helps his bullying father Roger exploit illegal immigrants. When one of these immigrants, a man named Amidou, is accidentally killed whilst working on a building site, Igor promises to look after his wife and baby. Roger is far less generous, however. He secretly buries the body (with Igor's help) and plans to remove Amidou's wife to Germany

to prevent her from making enquiries into her husband's disappearance. Remembering his promise to Amidou, Igor turns against his father and attempts to help the unfortunate woman and her baby...'

[Description from http://frenchfilms.topcities.com/nf_La_Promesse_rev.html]

Title: Rights of Passage

Director: Simon Brown

Language: Kurdish with English subtitles

Country of production: Britain

Year: 2002

Running time: 25 minutes

'Two Kurdish friends, Nawrol and Saman, arrive at the Sangatte refugee camp in Northern France on their way to England. That night they break in to the nearby Channel Tunnel, and nearly succeed in jumping on a train. However, playing the hero, Nawrol stops to help a young kid, Mohammed...'

[Description from <http://www.kurdishfilmfestival.com/kff02/shorts.htm>]

Title: Roadblocks

Director: Stavros Ioannou

Language: Sorani with English subtitles

Country of production: Greece

Year: 2000

Running time: 98 minutes

Roadblocks tells of two Kurdish brothers, Ali and Ahmed, who die in a failed attempt to complete the journey from Turkey to safety in Europe. Mostly it is filmed in Koumoundouro Square in central Athens. The night filming in perpetual streetlight, with a digital video camera, helps convey the marginalised life of not only the Kurds in Koumoundouro square, but by extension of the many thousands of "illegal" migrants trapped in Europe's transit camps or *en route* in trucks, trains and unsafe boats.

[Description from http://www.wsws.org/articles/2001/sep2001/rev-s14_prn.shtml]

Title: Three Figures of a Mountain- Man Who Wishes he was a Seal

Director: Ibrahim Selman

Language: Kurdish and Dutch with English subtitles

Country of production: Netherlands

Year: 1991

Running time: 38 minutes

'This television drama deals with the experiences of Ibu Kordo, a Kurd. On March 16, 1988 his hometown Halabja is bombed with chemical weapons by Iraq. When he comes back from a business trip he finds all the inhabitants lying dead in the streets, among the victims his own daughter. Ibu Kordo escapes Iraq and arrives in the Netherlands.'

[Description from <http://www.kurdishfilmfestival.com/kff02/shorts.htm>]

Title: Tussenland

Director: Eugenie Jansen

Language: Dutch with English subtitles

Country of production: Netherlands

Year: 2002

Running time: 92 minutes

'Jansen's extraordinary debut film *Tussenland* is a tender tale that explores Holland's colonial past by depicting the moving relationship between an unemployed Sudanese refugee and an old ex-soldier who finds the boy sleeping in his backyard. Joined in their common sense of loss and displacement, Jakob, the crabby widower who served his country in Indonesia fifty years earlier eventually befriends Majok, who longs despairingly for his old life in his home country. Jansen uses her keen realist eye to present a

film rich in detail, skillfully accounting the emotional isolation of the characters both caught in "Tussenland," which literally translates to "between countries."

[Description from http://www.cfi-icf.ca/eu_03.html]

Title: *Winterflower*
Director: Kadir Sozen
Language: Turkish and German with English subtitles
Country of production: Germany
Year: 1996
Running time: 107 minutes

'Mehmut Umut, a Turkish immigrant whose residence permit has expired, is woken early one morning by the police and led away. He is deported from Germany the same day and sent back to Turkey. His wife and little son are left behind. Mehmet survives in Istanbul with temporary jobs as a warehouseman and waiter. He applies for an entry visa but when the application is rejected for no reason, he decides to go beyond the law and embarks on a dangerous journey.'

[Description from <http://www.kurdishfilmfestival.com/kff02/features.htm>]

Title: *The Wound (La Blessure)*
Director: Nicolas Klotz
Country of production: Belgium, France
Year: 2004
Running time: 165 minutes

'Blandine (Nœlla Mobassa) arrives at the Charles de Gaulle Airport, seeking a reunion with her husband Papi (Adama Doumbia) in Paris. Despite articulate claims for asylum, she is held in a cramped cell along with a number of fellow Africans, humiliated, mistreated and told that they can expect immediate deportation. Papi enquires of her whereabouts at Arrivals, and is met with disinterested, misleading responses. When Blandine is hurt in a skirmish on the runway as the authorities try and force her out of the country, circumstanced and a sympathetic employee of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs save her from expulsion. She is finally reunited with Papi in a communal squat, its inhabitants sharing harrowing stories of their time in France. With work, money and food scarce, and her confidence shaken by her less than warm welcome to the country, Blandine cannot find the enthusiasm to leave her damp mattress. Nicolas Klotz's poetic, poignant and compassionate film was made after three years of conscientious research by himself and scriptwriter Elisabeth Perceval. The result is a determinedly political and beautifully composed work, a convincing portrait of the injustices black immigrants face as they seek to find homes in the West.'

[Description from http://www.lff.org.uk/films_details.php?FilmID=571]

USA

Title: *Alambrista*
Director: Robert M. Young
Language: English and Spanish with English subtitles
Country of production: US
Year: 1978
Running time: 110 minutes

'The first solo feature by one of America's foremost independent filmmakers, *Alambrista* was groundbreaking for its portrayal of the harsh realities of Chicano life. After the birth of his first child, a young Mexican man slips across the border into the United States in search of the American dream. Seeking work to support his impoverished family back home, he finds only heartbreak and exploitation instead of opportunity. The aesthetic developed over three decades of Young's documentary filmmaking

finds its way into this poignant drama in the form of powerful handheld camerawork and a dynamic visual style. *Alambrista!* won numerous awards, including the prestigious Camera d'Or at Cannes.'
[Description from <http://www.harvardfilmarchive.org/calendars/02mayjune/closeencounters.html>]

Title: *Asylum*
Director: Sandy McLeod and Gini Reticker
Country of production: US
Year: 2003
Running time: 20 minutes

'Baba, a young Ghanaian faces the camera directly to recount how she came to get into the U.S. with a badly made fake passport. Everything was going well for her, till the day she set out to find her long lost father to seek his blessing for her imminent marriage. She finds her dad, but instead of sanctioning the union, he tries to force her to marry an older man and have her excised. Custom dictates... Baba escaped this life and spent a year in American jails in order to be recognised as a refugee and be issued a permit.'
[Description from http://www.fifdh.ch/e/programme/asylum_e.html]

Title: *Balseros*
Director: Carles Bosch and Joseph M. Domenech
Country of production: Spain
Year: 2002
Running time: 120 minutes

'In the summer of 1994, a team of public television reporters filmed and interviewed seven Cubans, and their families, beginning a few days before their risky venture of setting out to sea in homemade rafts to reach the coast of the United States. One of the balseros [rafters] was on a raft that was not seaworthy and had to return to Havana. The others made it far enough to be picked up at sea by the U.S. Coast Guard and taken to the North American naval base at Guantanamo, where the film crew caught up with them, and recorded their many months of confinement. Their families in Cuba had no news of them. When the balseros were finally allowed to go to the United States, the film crew went with them to a string of cities that included Miami; the Bronx; York, Pennsylvania; Grand Isle, Nebraska; Albuquerque, New Mexico; and a host of other places to which the lives of these immigrants carried them. Seven years later, the film crew visits them again, to discover what their destiny has been in the United States. This is a true story about some of the authentic survivors of our times, the human adventure of people who are shipwrecked between two worlds.'
[Description from http://www.bausanfilms.com/largo_balseros.htm]

Title: *Benjamin and His Brother*
Director: Arthur Howes
Country of production: UK
Year: 2002
Running time: 87 minutes

'Years of civil war and ethnic conflict in the Sudan have created a generation of young men – known as the "lost boys" – who have spent more years in refugee camps than in their home communities. From the director of *Kafi's Story* and *Nuba Conversations*, this intimate film recounts the story of Benjamin and William Deng, brothers joined in the struggle of a seemingly never-ending exile, who are then separated when one is accepted into a United States resettlement program while the other remains at a Kenyan refugee camp.'
[Description from <http://www.hrw.org/iff/2003/london/benjamin.html>]

Title: *Bread And Roses*
Director: Ken Loach
Language: English, Spanish

Country of production: UK
Year: 2000
Running time: 110 minutes
Certificate: 15

'*Bread and Roses* shows us the world of the illegal immigrants in Los Angeles who clean buildings for sub-standard wages and no benefits. Life is a daily struggle to pay the bills and put food on the table. These poor people live in fear that they will be fired without cause and turned into beggars. Often enough their worst fears are realized. They watch helplessly as their friends are demeaned, mistreated, and thrown out on the street. A union organizer, Sam, capably played by Adrien Brody, tries to organize these frightened and abused people. He meets Maya, Pilar Padilla, who works as a janitor in an office building thanks to help she received from her sister Rosa, wonderfully played by Elpidia Carrillo. Maya has recently been smuggled into Los Angeles by "coyotes," men who take advantage of poor Mexicans who want a chance at the good life in America. She still has her hopes and idealism intact and argues with her sister to help Sam deliver his message to all the janitors at the building where they work.'

[Description from

<http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/detail/-/B00005OSLC/104-6299040-5214342?v=glance>]

Title: *Chasing Freedom*
Language: English
Country of production: US
Year: 2004
Distributor: Oasis Pictures

'Inspired by true events, *Chasing Freedom* tells the story of Libby Brock and her client Meena. Libby is an ambitious corporate lawyer who is awakened to the world of bureaucracy and injustice when she reluctantly takes on the pro-bono case of a young Afghan woman seeking political asylum. Fearing for her life, Meena has escaped the oppressive Taliban regime in Afghanistan only to find herself caught in the web of INS bureaucracy. The movie depicts Libby's fight to win Meena political asylum in the United States, with a sobering depiction of the nearly insurmountable obstacles that asylum seekers face.'

[Description from <http://www.seattleactivism.org/events/event579.htm>]

Title: *El Norte*
Director: Gregory Nava
Language: English and Spanish with English subtitles
Country of production: USA
Year: 1983
Running time: 140 minutes

'This film portrays the plight of two illegal immigrants, as they flee to the U.S. from Guatemala. But this movie is much, much more than that. It cuts through all the stereotypes and attitudes the socially and economically privileged harbour against the foreigner. You need not know English or Spanish to understand this movie, because you feel everything so completely through the two main characters. Anyone with any heart at all will enjoy this movie. With typical Latin fatalism, this movie illustrates how people must sometimes bear the unbearable, because they have no other choice.'

[Description from <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0085482/>]

Title: *Lost Boys of Sudan*
Director: Megan Mylan and Jon Shenk
Language: English and Dinka with English subtitles
Running time: 87 minutes
Distributors: Contact [Actual Films](#) and Principe Productions
Website: <http://www.lostboysfilm.com>

Lost Boys of Sudan is a feature-length documentary that follows two Sudanese refugees on an extraordinary journey from Africa to America. Orphaned as young boys in one of Africa's cruellest civil wars, Peter Dut and Santino Chuor survived lion attacks and militia gunfire to reach a refugee camp in Kenya along with thousands of other children. From there, remarkably, they were chosen to come to America. Safe at last from physical danger and hunger, a world away from home, they find themselves confronted with the abundance and alienation of contemporary American suburbia.'

[Description from <http://www.lostboysfilm.com/about.html>]

Australia

Title: *The Cage House*

Director: Angela van Boxtel

Language: English

Country of production: Australia

Year: 2002

'Angela van Boxtel's short film *The Cage House* was called a "short film, big picture" by the Sydney Morning Herald (Amanda Vaughan) in January 2002, shortly before it was released. Child detainee Shayan Badraie inspired her. "In six-year-old Shayan Saeed Badraie's drawing, the stick figures of a boy and girl standing behind a razor wire-topped fence, tears streaming from their eyes as baton-wielding security guards hover menacingly in the background. From this two-dimensional, black-and-white representation of life inside the Villawood Detention Centre, came the seed for an idea that spawned *The Cage House*, a script by novice film-maker Angela van Boxtel.'

[Description from <http://members.westnet.com.au/jackhsmi/cage-house.htm>]

Title: *Woomera*

Produced by: Ska TV

Language: English

Country of production: Australia

Year: 2002

Running time: 31 minutes

'During Easter 2002, activists from around Australia converged upon Woomera Detention Centre to protest the federal government's mandatory detention of refugees. Activists coordinated with the detainees' protests from within the detention centre resulting in the mass break out of 50 refugees. Most of the escapees were returned to the detention centre, but 11 detainees achieved freedom. The activists continued to protest the inhumane treatment of refugees in detention throughout the weekend expressing their solidarity with both the detained refugees and also the people that escaped. The incident led to an increase in global awareness surrounding mandatory detention policies in Australia. This documentary tells the full story...'

[Description from <http://www.skatv.org.au/tapesales.html>]

Countries and regions of origin

Other useful sources of information on films relating to country of origin contexts include:

- Human Rights Watch Film Festival website

<http://www.hrw.org/iff>

Visit the archive at <http://www.hrw.org/iff/2004/archive.html> for details of films shown at previous festivals.

Africa

Some film descriptions are vague in attributing specific countries of origin to migrant characters from African countries, therefore these films have been subsumed under a regional subheading.

Other useful sources of information on films relating to African countries of origin include:

- Artmattan Productions website
<http://www.africanfilm.com/films.htm>
- Africa Movies
<http://www.africamovies.com/>
- List of African film information on the internet, Stanford University
<http://www-sul.stanford.edu/depts/ssrg/africa/film.html>

Title: Anansi

Director: Fritz Baumann

Year: 2002

'Out of sheer desperation, a small group of West Africans embark on a perilous journey to find a better existence in Europe: from Ghana to Morocco, Spain and finally to Berlin. But the road to the Promised Land is strewn with obstacles... Baumann's well-researched film - winner of the One Future Film Prize, Munich 2003 - is enhanced by a specially written soundtrack by Roman Bukha and reggae star Shaggy.'

[Description from <http://www.goethe.de/gr/gla/enpfilm.htm#V3>]

Title: Borders (Frontieres)

Director: Mostefa Djadjam

Language: French with English subtitles

Country of production: France/ Algeria

Year: 2001

Running time: 105 minutes

'Seven Africans, one woman and six men, decide to enter Europe clandestinely to start a new life. Together, they face dangers and obstacles, but as they get closer to Tangiers, the last stop before they reach Spain and liberty, their inter-group solidarity starts to fall apart.'

[Description from <http://www.africanfilm.com/borders.htm>]

Title: Code Unknown

Director: Michael Haneke

Language: French, Romanian (English subtitles)

Country of production: France/Germany/Romania

Year: 2000

Running time: 117 minutes

Certificate: 15

'Paris, the present. Anne (Juliette Binoche), an actress, meets Jean (Alexandre Hamidi), the younger brother of her war-photographer boyfriend Georges (Thierry Nivuc). Jean has run away from his father's farm and asks her for the new entry code to her apartment; he then discards a crumpled paper bag into the lap of Maria (Luminita Gheorghiu), a Romanian illegal immigrant who is begging on the street. Amadou (Oua Lu Y'enke), a teacher of deaf children, remonstrates with him. In the ensuing scuffle, policemen arrest Maria and Amadou. Maria is deported. Amadou's West African mother expresses her grief at the treatment of her son. Anne performs a scene from the thriller she is filming, in which she is imprisoned in a soundproof room by a killer.'

George's returns from Kosovo, where he has been photographing atrocities. In Romania, Maria returns to her husband Dragos (Bob Nicolescu) and her family, with whom she moves into a small flat. She is ashamed of having had to beg in Paris, although she did send money home. Jean disappears from his father's farm. His father responds by killing his livestock, telling Anne and Georges that he is unable to run the farm without Jean's help. Anne hears sounds of distress coming from an adjoining apartment but is unsure what to do. She confronts an elderly neighbour who, she believes, pushed a note through her door purporting to be from an abused child in the other apartment; the old woman denies it. Antagonised by Georges' inability to settle, Anne starts a scene with him in a supermarket, claiming that she aborted their child while he was away. Georges surreptitiously photographs passengers on the Métro. Maria pays to be smuggled back to Paris. Anne, travelling home on the Métro, is tormented by an Arab youth who spits in her face before being challenged by a middle-aged Arab man. As Maria starts to beg on the street, Georges finds the code to the apartment changed and Amadou's students perform a piece for massed drums.'

[Description from http://www.bfi.org.uk/sightandsound/2001_05/code_unknown.html]

Title: Journeyman

Director: Dictynna Hood

Language: English

Country of production: Wales

Year: 2002

Running time: 15 minutes

Distributor: Contact Elizabeth Morgan Hemlock [Wild Films] at emhemlock@aol.com for more information.

'Mohammed Ali is a young African refugee who arrives as a stowaway in a rundown Welsh town. It's Christmas. He is starving, lost. Finally he seeks shelter in a pub. He is thrown out by the landlord but unexpectedly touches the heart of Connie, the landlord's wife... This short film is an unusual and heart-warming fairy tale that reaches beyond its topical subject matter. Wholly entirely fictional, the story is inspired by the real story of a recent asylum seeker to Britain.'

[Description from Wild Films]

Title: Otomo

Director: Frieder Schlaich

Language: German with English subtitles

Country of production: Germany

Year: 1999

Running time: 84 minutes

'A powerful film portraying institutionalized racism and police brutality, *Otomo* provides a convincing look at the everyday world of refugees, who are continuously surrounded by tension and insecurity. In the summer of 1989, a Stuttgart newspaper reported the true story of a West African asylum seeker who physically assaulted an intolerant subway ticket-taker; fled, and became the target of a citywide

manhunt. *Otomo* is a sober, fictionalized reconstruction of a tale that shocked Stuttgart, and a gripping portrait of how institutionalized racism drives a disempowered individual to violence and inhumanity.

West African immigrant Frederic Otomo (Isaach de Bankole) lacks the proper papers to be hired for the most menial of jobs; he has survived for eight years with the help of a Catholic charity. Otomo is the target of verbal abuse, is thrown out of his boarding house, and even scorned by neighbourhood dogs. He feels and looks out of place. A stoic bubbling pot of wrath on the run, de Bankole's performance establishes Otomo's essence without words-language cannot express the gravity of his situation. As a ticking soundtrack counts down his fated minutes, Otomo is helped by a kind, aging hippie and her granddaughter, establishing the potential for an inclusive German society.... if it is not too late...'

[Description from <http://www.africanfilm.com/cat3.htm>]

Title: *The Promise*

Director: Luc and Jean-Pierre Dardenne

Language: French with English subtitles

Country of production: Belgium

Year: 1997

Running time: 93 minutes

Igor is a 15-year-old boy living in a bleak Belgian town and who helps his bullying father Roger exploit illegal immigrants. When one of these immigrants, a man named Amidou, is accidentally killed whilst working on a building site, Igor promises to look after his wife and baby. Roger is far less generous, however. He secretly buries the body (with Igor's help) and plans to remove Amidou's wife to Germany to prevent her from making enquiries into her husband's disappearance. Remembering his promise to Amidou, Igor turns against his father and attempts to help the unfortunate woman and her baby...'

[Description from http://frenchfilms.topcities.com/nf_La_Promesse_rev.html]

Title: *The Wound (La Blessure)*

Director: Nicolas Klotz

Country of production: Belgium, France

Year: 2004

Running time: 165 minutes

Blandine (Nœlla Mobassa) arrives at the Charles de Gaulle Airport, seeking a reunion with her husband Papi (Adama Doumbia) in Paris. Despite articulate claims for asylum, she is held in a cramped cell along with a number of fellow Africans, humiliated, mistreated and told that they can expect immediate deportation. Papi enquires of her whereabouts at Arrivals, and is met with disinterested, misleading responses. When Blandine is hurt in a skirmish on the runway as the authorities try and force her out of the country, circumstanced and a sympathetic employee of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs save her from expulsion. She is finally reunited with Papi in a communal squat, its inhabitants sharing harrowing stories of their time in France. With work, money and food scarce, and her confidence shaken by her less than warm welcome to the country, Blandine cannot find the enthusiasm to leave her damp mattress. Nicolas Klotz's poetic, poignant and compassionate film was made after three years of conscientious research by himself and scriptwriter Elisabeth Perceval. The result is a determinedly political and beautifully composed work, a convincing portrait of the injustices black immigrants face as they seek to find homes in the West.'

[Description from http://www.lff.org.uk/films_details.php?FilmID=571]

Title: *Who am I?*

Director: Afrique and Sam Bakhurst

Year: 2003

Distributor: [Living Archive](http://www.livingarchive.com), t: 01908 322 568

Afrique is a group of five young African women aged between thirteen and sixteen who are pupils at the Sir Frank Markham Community School in Milton Keynes. This film was inspired by poems that were

written by one of the girls in the group. It relates some of their childhood memories and experiences in moving, and sometimes amusing, scenes. *Who am I?* was made during weekly after school sessions in June and July 1993. It was created from their original ideas and was performed, filmed and edited by Afrique under guidance of professional film-maker, Sam Bakhurst.'

[Description from video]

Afghanistan

Title: *At Five in the Afternoon*

Director: Samira Makhmalbaf

Language: Dari and Farsi with English subtitles

Country of production: Iran/France

Year: 2003

Running time: 105 minutes

Distributor: [Artificial Eye Film Company Ltd](#)

"A brave and intelligent girl can make her own decisions," argues one of the characters in *At Five in the Afternoon*, a statement that becomes a question as the film unfolds. In her third feature, awarded the Grand Jury Prize in Cannes last year, Samira Makhmalbaf chooses the setting of post-Taliban Afghanistan, and tells the story of Noqreh, a young woman who believes passionately that her gender should be no bar to her becoming the president of her country. Each day, contrary to her fundamentalist father's wishes, Noqreh ditches her burka and slippers for uniform and white heels, and attends a new secular school. Starting small, by campaigning to be school president, her initial optimism and determination are uplifting to observe, but the realities and harshness of contemporary Afghanistan begin to bear down upon her spirit. Makhmalbaf's style, developed over her three features, skillfully combines social and political analysis with dramatic and poetic visuals, laying bare the contradictions facing not just one young woman, but an entire country.'

[Description from <http://hrw.org/iff/2004/london/film.html>]

Title: *Baran*

Director: Majid Majidi

Language: Farsi/Dari with subtitles

Country of production: Iran

Year: 2001

Running time: 94 minutes

'Young Lateef works on a construction site in Tehran with some Kurds and a few illegal Afghan workers. When Lateef is given heavier tasks to compensate for new Afghan worker Rahmat, he resents his displacement and treats Rahmat cruelly. After one of his pranks, however, Lateef discovers Rahmat's secret--he is a girl named Baran. Lateef's heart softens towards Baran and he shows his new affection for her by doing what he can to ease the hardships she suffers at work. When government inspectors force all Afghans to be fired from the site, Lateef discovers he cannot bear to be without her. Jeopardizing social standing and endangering his own well being, Lateef stops at nothing to save his love.'

[Description from <http://us.imdb.com/title/tt0233841/combined>]

Title: *Chasing Freedom*

Country of production: US

Language: English

Year: 2004

Distributor: Oasis Pictures

'Inspired by true events, *Chasing Freedom* tells the story of Libby Brock and her client Meena. Libby is an ambitious corporate lawyer who is awakened to the world of bureaucracy and injustice when she reluctantly takes on the pro-bono case of a young Afghan woman seeking political asylum. Fearing for

her life, Meena has escaped the oppressive Taliban regime in Afghanistan only to find herself caught in the web of INS bureaucracy. The movie depicts Libby's fight to win Meena political asylum in the United States, with a sobering depiction of the nearly insurmountable obstacles that asylum seekers face.'

[Description from <http://www.seattleactivism.org/events/event579.htm>]

Title: Delbaran

Director: Abolfazel Jallili

Language: Farsi, English subtitles

Country of production: Iran, Japan

Year: 2001

Running time: 96 minutes

Certificate: PG

Distributor: ICA Projects

'Set at a remote bus stop in a small Iranian border town, Delbaran, a small Afghani boy scrapes a living as a dogbody. Dedicated to "all children of war", it combines a political urgency with humour and the characteristic visual poetry of Jalili. Simply composed and beautifully played.'

[Description from <http://www.ica.org.uk/index.cfm?articleid=4542>]

Title: Djomeh

Director: Hassan Yektapanah

Language: Farsi with English Subtitles

Country of production: Iran

Year: 2000

Running time: 94 minutes

'Djomeh is a young Afghan man who works on a small dairy farm in the remote Iranian countryside. Every morning, Djomeh accompanies farm owner Mr. Mahmoud to nearby small villages to collect milk for resale. Unlike his older guardian and co-worker Habib, Djomeh's naïve spirit cannot be stifled because of his foreigner status. He smiles and speaks openly despite the villagers' suspicious and cold attitudes. Because of Habib's conservative personality, Djomeh does not feel comfortable turning to him for advice, even when he falls for local girl Setareh and dreams of settling down in Iran. Unfortunately, strict Iranian customs do not allow for an open courtship. Djomeh asks Mr. Mahmoud to serve as a chaperone to pursue marriage with Setareh - a bold gesture that crosses all cultural boundaries and tenderly addresses the universal issues of the difficulties of solitude and the need to be loved.'

[Description from <http://www.hrw.org/iff/2001/london/djomeh.html>]

Title: In This World

Director: Michael Winterbottom

Language: English

Country of production: UK

Year: 2002

Running time: 89 minutes

Distributor: ICA Projects

'Torn from the headlines, Michael Winterbottom's compelling new film follows Jamal, a young Afghan, as he embarks on a hazardous overland trip from the refugee camp at Peshawar through Iran, Turkey, Italy and France to Sngatte and into the heart of London where he becomes "M 1187511". Winterbottom and his brilliant writer Tony Grisoni have struck a fine balance between the fictional and documentary elements of the film and they give us cause to see behind the headlines at the broader political and moral concerns.'

[Description from <http://www.ica.org.uk/index.cfm?articleid=11385>]

Title: Jung: In the Land of the Mujaheddin

Director: Alberto Vendemmiati and Fabrizio Lazzaretti

Language: Afghani and Italian with English subtitles
Country of production: Afghanistan, Italy
Year: 2000
Running time: 114 minutes

'In this beautifully produced look at Afghanistan today, a surgeon and a war correspondent decide to join forces and set up a hospital in a country that has had to cope with various wars for the last twenty years. After the Russians, the Taliban took society firmly into their grasp. Houses and schools have been burnt down, sons killed on the battlefield and almost everybody is hungry, an Afghan woman explains from behind her veil, perforated only by a few air holes. Women are beaten up in the street if they are wearing sandals that show part of their legs, so everyone is terrified of breaking the extremely strict rules of the Taliban, another woman explains. Meanwhile, tanks have conquered the mountains, soldiers are trigger-happy and the rugged, stunning landscape is strewn with mines, which are stepped on every day by countless innocent victims. The new hospital tries to help all of these war victims, but it is banging its head against a brick wall. The Italian surgeon gets discouraged at times, because he knows that every day brings the same calamities: one after the other, people are brought in with crushed legs and skulls, and the situation is nowhere near ending.'

[Description from <http://docs.hrw.org/iff/london/jung.html>]

Title: Kandahar
Director: Mohsen Makhmalbaf
Country of production: Iran
Year: 2001
Certificate: PG
Running time: 85 minutes

'Nafas is a young Afghan journalist, who took refuge in Canada. She receives a desperate letter from her younger sister, in Afghanistan, who has decided to put an end to her life before the eclipse. Nafas fled from her country during the civil war with the Taliban, but now decides to go back to Kandahar to give her sister assistance. She tries to enter from the Iran-Afghan border...'

[Description from

http://www.festival-cannes.fr/films/fiche_film.php?langue=6002&id_film=2001861&edition=2001]

Title: Missing
Director: Yesim Deveci
Year: 2003
Running time: 20 minutes
Distributor: Contact Yesim Deveci at ydeveci@yahoo.co.uk or trinityc_c@yahoo.com

'Doulat was born in Afghanistan. When he was ten years old, his mother sent him to buy bread. By the time he returned fierce fighting had broken out near his home between the Taliban and the Northern Alliance. For two days he hid in a cellar in a house waiting for the fighting to stop. When he returned home he found the house was deserted. At just ten years old, Doulat began his long journey in search of his family'.

[Description provided by director]

Title: My Life as a Refugee
Director: Lucy Nabijou
Language: English, Pashto, Dari with English subtitles
Country of production: UK
Year: 2002
Running time: 30 minutes
Distributor: [Bijou Films](#)

'*My Life As A Refugee* is a warm, evocative documentary portrait of Karim, a young Afghan man living in London, struggling to escape poverty and establish his life in exile against the background of the on-going war in Afghanistan. Beyond the drudgery of working in 'the pizza world', Karim reveals another side of himself to camera - a creative, intelligent, and compassionate person who has been through some harrowing experiences and who still faces many difficulties and dilemmas.'

[Description from <http://www.bijou-films.co.uk>]

Title: Osama
Director: Siddiq Barmak
Country of production: Afghanistan/Ireland/Japan
Year: 2003
Running time: 90 minutes
Certificate: 12A
Distributor: MGM
Website: <http://www.osamamovie.com>

'Siddiq Barmak's film is not - as its title might suggest - a documentary about the world's most wanted man, Osama Bin Laden, but a politically astute drama following a family of women in Taliban-controlled Afghanistan. Left destitute by years of war and repression and without a single male relative to protect them from the misogynist policies of the local religious leaders, the family of 12-year-old Spandi (Golbarhari) resort to desperate measures to feed themselves. Unable to work because they're women, Spandi's mother and grandmother hatch a plan to send their daughter out to work, cutting her hair short and dressing her in trousers so that she looks like a boy. Out on the ravaged streets of Kabul, though, Spandi's act becomes increasingly difficult to maintain as the Taliban round up all available male children for religious classes. Finding friendship in young Espandi (Herati) - the only boy who knows her secret - Spandi takes the name Osama in a desperate attempt to conceal her true identity.'

[Description from <http://www.channel4.com/film/reviews/film.jsp?id=127443>]

Title: Silent Scream
Director: Zab Chughtai
Year: 2002
Running time: 44 minutes
Distributor: BBC

'An extraordinary story of resistance, rebellion and struggle by the women of Afghanistan. Women have been absent and silent in much of the mainstream coverage on the war in Afghanistan. RAWA, the Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan, have been fighting for women's rights in their country for several years. The video camera has been one of their strongest weapons against the Taliban and others who have abused the rights of women. *Silent Scream* shows some of RAWA's footage taken clandestinely over the years and allows these women to tell their stories.'

[Description from <http://www.hrw.org/iff/2002/london/silent.html>]

Title: **Stray Dogs**
Director: Marziyeh Meshkini
Country of production: Iran
Year: 2004
Running time: 93 minutes

'With their mother in prison, young brother and sister Gol Ghoti and Zahed visit her every night to sleep with her in her cell. However, when these 'night prisoners' are suddenly refused entry, they take to the streets of Kabul to get themselves arrested in order to return to her side. With a small dog they rescued from a group of children as their companion, the pair venture into an adult world that they must understand fast in order to survive. Marziyeh Meshkini, wife of director Mohsen Makhmalbaf and mother of film-makers Samira and Hana, follows her feature debut *The Day I Became a Woman* with a child's-eye odyssey that's by turn colourful, comic, tragic and wise. Shot in Afghanistan in 2003 and set on the

second anniversary of 9/11, the film is based on real-life situations that Meshkini encountered while scouting locations for her daughter's film *At Five in the Afternoon*. Visually striking and graced by such surreal images as a 'house' that is little more than a TV set inside an abandoned car, the film brings to the screen a unique world that constantly surprises the resilient child-characters and audience alike. One choice scene makes explicit the link between contemporary Iranian cinema and Italian neo-realism, just one of many neat touches in this beautiful, memorable film.'

[Description from http://www.lff.org.uk/films_details.php?FilmID=536]

Algeria

Title: *Algiers Beirut*

Director: Merzak Allouache

Year: 1999

Running time: 90 minutes

'Set in the worn tornd districts of Beirut, *Algiers-Beirut* centres around Rachid, an ex-journalist from Algeria who has fled his homeland in search of self-reconciliation. He is tormented by his betrayal of a colleague whose fate at the hands of Islamic extremists, has left Rachid with psychological scares and a deep sense of guilt which he drowns daily in glasses of whisky. Throughout his stay in Beirut, Rachid is haunted by nightmares and flashbacks of his colleague's murder. An old friend enters the fray, a French woman of Lebanese origin whose chance meeting with Rachid kindles a brief love affair which ends suddenly when Rachid decides to return to Algeria to overcome his feelings of remorse.'

[Description from <http://www.middleeastuk.com/culture/film/Algiers-beirut.htm>]

Title: *Bab el Oued City*

Director: Merzak Allouache

Language: Arabic with English subtitles

Year: 1994

Running time: 93 minutes

'Boualem is a young man who works the local bakery's graveyard shift in the Bab El-Oued district of Algiers. One morning, shortly after the bloody riots of October 1988, he commits an unthinking act which jeopardizes the entire district: unable to stand the noise from one of the many rooftop loudspeakers broadcasting the propaganda of a local fundamentalist group, he rips the speaker out and throws it away. The extremists, led by Saïd, regard this act as deliberately provocative and aim to make an example of the culprit. Merzak Allouache's exposure of the inherent dangers in the recent rise of Islamic fundamentalism in Algeria has attracted considerable attention, winning both a Fipresci (International Film Critics) prize and a Prix Gervais when it was screened in the Un Certain Regard section of the 1996 Cannes Film Festival.'

[Description from <http://www.arabfilm.com/item/17/>]

Title: *The Battle of Algiers*

Director: Gillo Pontecorvo

Year: 1965

Running time: 136 minutes

'Few fictional films look more like documentary than Gillo Pontecorvo's *The Battle of Algiers*, and very few indeed which have this kind of socio-political structure and recount old, half-forgotten conflicts have achieved such lasting fame... *The Battle of Algiers*, however, remains the basis of Pontecorvo's fame - a model of how, without prejudice or compromise, a film-maker can illuminate history and tell us how we repeat the same mistakes. In fact, this study of the Algerian guerrilla struggle against the French colonialists in the 50s ought to be looked at not just as pure cinema, but also as a warning to those who seek by force to crush independence movements. We know, of course, that Algeria was eventually liberated from the French, but Pontecorvo relegates that to an epilogue. He concentrates instead on the

years between 1954 and 1957 when the freedom fighters regrouped and expanded into the casbah, only to face a systematic attempt by French paratroopers to wipe them out. His highly dramatic film is about the organisation of a guerrilla movement and the methods used to decimate it by the colonial power.... The film, which won the Golden Lion at the Venice Festival, was banned in France for some time and the torture scenes were cut from versions distributed in Britain and America.'

[Description from http://film.guardian.co.uk/Century_Of_Films/Story/0,4135,345300,00.html]

Title: Inch'Allah Dimanche
Director: Yamina Benguigui
Country of production: Algeria, France
Year: 2001
Distributor: Film Movement
Running time: 98 minutes

'Set in the 1970s, this film depicts an example of a family impacted by France's "family reunion" law that allowed Algerian wives to rejoin their husbands who were working in France. The film follows Zouina as she says goodbye to her mother in Algiers, moving with her three children and mother-in-law to a strange new country whose customs she's unfamiliar with, where she also finds that her husband has in some ways become a stranger to her as well.'

[Description from <http://movies.yahoo.com/shop?d=hp&cf=prev&id=1808464450>]

Angola

Title: **The Hero**
Director: Zézé Gamboa
Country of production: Angola, Portugal
Year: 2004
Running time: 97 minutes

'Vitorio, a 35-year-old soldier, is discharged from the Army after stepping on a landmine and losing his leg. Returning to Luanda a hero after 20 years of fighting, he finds himself homeless and penniless in a city still littered with memories of the war. He sleeps rough in the war-torn streets of Luanda whilst searching for a job. He dreams of having a family of his own but can only find comfort with the local prostitutes. One night while sleeping he is robbed of his prosthetic leg and his war medal. While waiting for a replacement at the hospital he meets Joanne, a flirtatious school teacher who has connections with the government. Vitorio begins to believe that his dreams may have come true. Gamboa's film is a subtle exploration of the tormented social and economic political situation of a country ravaged by 27 years of war, where some 70,000 of his countrymen are believed to have lost limbs as a result of landmine explosions and many more have lost and are still looking for their loved ones. The Senegalese actor Oumar Makena Diop is exceptional in the leading role with a fine music track by David Linx and Diederik Wissels.'

[Description from http://www.lff.org.uk/films_details.php?FilmID=460]

Argentina

Title: **Captive (Captiva)**
Director: Gastón Biraben
Year: 2003
Running time: 113 minutes

'As members of the country's Fascist Junta presented the Argentinian football team with the World Cup in 1978, the ticker tape celebrations masked the deeply disturbing fact that the dictatorship were ensuring that many of the football stars' fellow countrymen and women were becoming the 'disappeared'. Gastón Biraben's compelling political thriller is set 16 years after that event, when

Christina Quadri (a fine performance from Barbara Lombardo, the centre of every scene) is just celebrating her 15th birthday, studying hard at her catholic school and asking all the awkward questions of her parents a girl her age might have. Unexpectedly, she is taken out of school and presented with the theory that she had been 'appropriated' by the people she thought were her parents while Argentina was under fascist rule. Hurt and confused, she begins the search for her true identity. Based on real life experiences, Biraben's script has been recognised by The Sundance Institute and the Argentinian Film Board (INCAA), and the film itself has picked up several awards at festivals around the world. It's easy to see why; it's a taut, creditable directorial debut from a film-maker to watch out for.'

(Description from http://www.lff.org.uk/films_details.php?FilmID=420)

Title: Figli-Hijos

Director: Marco Bechis

Country of production: Italy

Year: 2001

Running time: 90 minutes

Distributor: [Cecchi Gori Group](#)

'From the director of *Garage Olimpo* comes a story of the past catching up with the present. Raul and Victoria Ramos' tranquil, bourgeois life is suddenly turned upside down when Rosa, a young Argentine woman, arrives at their home in Milan and claims that Javier, their son, is her long-lost twin brother. Raul, an ex-military man, is unruffled by the news, but his wife, Victoria, seems afraid of a possible relationship between Rosa and her son. Javier is intrigued by Rosa but refuses to question his family. Eventually however, Rosa drags Javier with her to search for the truth about what happened to their parents during Argentina's dirty war, and Javier faces a reality far worse than he imagined.'

[Description from <http://www.hrw.org/iff/2003/london/hijos.html>]

Burundi

Title: Hop

Director: Dominique Standaert

Language: French and Flemish with English subtitles

Country of production: Belgium

Year: 2002

Running time: 104 minutes

'Justin and his father are Burundian refugees living "sans papiers" in Brussels. When dad is caught and slated for deportation, his son forms an unlikely alliance with an old anarchist and his girlfriend to fight the system and get his father back. Both charming and insightful, HOP is a real treat. Suitable for all ages.'

[Description from <http://www.actsofachievement.org.uk/2004/detail.php?EventID=67>]

Chile

Title: La Frontera

Director: Ricard Larraín

Language: Spanish

Country of production: Chile

Year: 1991

Running time: 120 minutes

'Powerful and allegorical Chilean drama about a schoolteacher, Patricio Contreras, exiled from Santiago for speaking out about the disappearance of a colleague. Banished to the south, he arrives in a village where the effects of a tidal wave 25 years before are still being felt by the locals.'

[Description from <http://www.channel4.com/film/reviews/film.jsp?id=103650>]

Title: *The Pinochet Case*
Director: Patricio Guzman
Country of production: Belgium, Chile, France, Spain, and UK
Year: 2001
Running time: 110 minutes
Distributor: [First Run/Icarus Films](#)

'Guzmán's film documents the proceedings prior to the Chilean ex-dictator's arrest in January of this year. Covering the events from the moment Pinochet's plane touches down on English soil, to when he is placed under house arrest in Chile; the filmmaker presents a scrupulously balanced argument by including footage of pro and anti-protesters. Pinochet's Chilean victims give harrowing accounts of how they were subjected to horrific torture and interrogation in the regime's secret prisons, and of the way loved ones mysteriously disappeared. *The Pinochet Case* is a powerful insight into human suffering and survival.'

[Description from <http://www.hrw.org/iff/2002/traveling/pinochet-index.html>]

Colombia

Title: *War takes/Tomas de Guerra*
Director: Patricia Castano and Adelaida Trujillo
Language: Spanish and English with English subtitles
Country of production: Colombia/England
Year: 2002
Running time: 78 minutes
Distributor: [Faction Films](#)

'For more than four years, three Colombian filmmakers turned their cameras on themselves, using personal stories to expose the tough reality in their violent, war-ravaged country. According to these filmmakers, Colombia has been functioning for many years in the grey area between legalism and lawlessness. Their portrayal does not aim to confirm the outside world's image of Colombia as a hotbed of excessive political violence and drug traffic, but instead draws out the beauty and warmth amidst the larger turmoil within their homeland. The humour borders on surreal as the film moves between conversations in the jungle with guerrillas to elegant dinner parties with society's elite. *War Takes* allows the real lives of its heroes, forever changed by war, to break through the stereotypes. It forces us to rethink our own conceptions, or misconceptions, of the beliefs and values by which these Colombians live.'

[Description from <http://hrw.org/iff/2004/london/film.html>]

Cuba

Title: *Balseros*
Director: Carles Bosch and Joseph M. Domenech
Country of production: Spain
Year: 2002
Running time: 120 minutes

'In the summer of 1994, a team of public television reporters filmed and interviewed seven Cubans, and their families, beginning a few days before their risky venture of setting out to sea in homemade rafts to reach the coast of the United States. One of the balseros [rafters] was on a raft that was not seaworthy and had to return to Havana. The others made it far enough to be picked up at sea by the U.S. Coast Guard and taken to the North American naval base at Guantanamo, where the film crew caught up with them, and recorded their many months of confinement. Their families in Cuba had no news of them. When the balseros were finally allowed to go to the United States, the film crew went with them to a

string of cities that included Miami; the Bronx; York, Pennsylvania; Grand Isle, Nebraska; Albuquerque, New Mexico; and a host of other places to which the lives of these immigrants carried them. Seven years later, the film crew visits them again, to discover what their destiny has been in the United States. There is a true story about some of the authentic survivors of our times, the human adventure of people who are shipwrecked between two worlds.'

[Description from http://www.bausanfilms.com/largo_balseros.htm]

Former Republic of Yugoslavia

Title: *Birthday Boy*

Director: Simon Brown

Country of production: UK

Distributor: contact Stella Barnes, GYPT, at stella@gypt.co.uk

'Nehat and Edmond are newly arrived from rural Kosovo. Alone and vulnerable in London they struggle to come to terms with their displacement and loss. The arrival of a letter on Edmond's birthday threatens to tear the brothers apart.... *Birthday Boy* was created as part of *Voices*, a programme of theatre and arts activities run by GYPT with young refugees and asylum seekers. It was produced in partnership with Kidbrooke School in Greenwich where GYPT has been running a drama project with students in the post 16-ESOL unit.'

[Description from video]

Title: *Beautiful People*

Director: Jasmin Dizdar

Country of production: UK

Language: English

Year: 1998

Certificate: 15

Running time: 107 minutes

Distributor: Fortissimo Film

'London, 13th October 1993. The day England is to play Holland in a critical World Cup qualifier. The Bosnian war is at its height, Sarajevo is besieged and the UN is preparing relief airdrops. A Serb (Dado Jeremic) and a Croat (Faruk Prutić) meet on a London bus. Recognising each other as fellow refugees from the same village in Bosnia they immediately renew their contact by . . . attempting to beat each other to a pulp. Their subsequent manic chase through the streets of central London sets the scene for the electric comedy of *Beautiful People*. Jasmin Dizdar's extraordinary debut feature film tracks the interlinked and troubled lives of four British families whose encounters with refugees from the war in former Yugoslavia helps them to see the beauty that exists in their own lives.'

[Description from

<http://www.britfilms.com/britishfilms/catalogue/browse/?id=D5FD9B420eeaf2E8F2pVsICEEA17>]

Title: *Between the Wars*

Director: Emily Woof

Language: English

Country of production: UK

Year: 2001

Running time: 12 minutes

'A poignant drama that charts the relationship between a Yugoslavian asylum seeker and a war veteran living on a council estate in London. A chance encounter enables two solitary characters, apparently very different, to discover they share a mutual understanding of surviving war.'

[Description from <http://www.channel4.com/film/reviews/film.jsp?id=127734>]

Title: Good Husband, Dear Son
Director: Heddy Honigman
Country of production: The Netherlands
Year: 2001
Running time: 50 minutes
Distributor: Ideale Audience

'In the hills near Sarajevo, is the village of Ahatovici. During the war in Former Yugoslavia, the village fell into Serbian hands. Almost all men were captured and brutally murdered. The village was burnt to the ground. Only the women and children were spared. The face of Ahatovici changed completely. This intimate documentary is the story behind this forgotten genocide. The murdered men are commemorated in the stories of their wives, mothers and daughters, and through the few remaining photographs and personal belongings. A memory is attached to each object, but that someone was a good husband does not appear from a photograph, but from the way his wife, talking about him, caresses the picture and presses it against her chest. In this thick layer of grief, the film looks for the beauty of the memory and of love.'

[Description from <http://www.hrw.org/iff/2002/london/good.html>]

Title: Mrika
Director: Blerina Bujupi
Language: English
Country of production: UK
Year: 2004
Running time: 30 minutes

Available for hire from: b_bujupi@hotmail.com

'Imagine fleeing from home, having seen friends and family killed in a war, to arrive in a strange, new country with the awesome task of beginning your life again as a refugee. This is what happened to a student from Kosovo, now living in Barrow, whose story is being told in a new 30-minute documentary. The film follows Mrika as she fulfils her dream of putting on a fashion show.'

[Description from http://www.bbc.co.uk/cumbria/my_space/mrika/index.shtml]

Title: No Man's Land
Director: Danis Tanovic
Country of production: Belgium, France, Italy, UK, and Slovenia
Year: 2001
Running time: 98 minutes
Distributor: Momentum Pictures
Website: <http://www.unitedartists.com/nomansland/>

'Ciki and Nino, a Bosnian and Serb, are soldiers stranded in no man's land - a trench between enemy lines during the Bosnian war. They have no one to trust, no way to escape without getting shot, and a fellow soldier is lying on the trench floor with a spring-loaded bomb set to explode beneath him if he moves. With the two men stuck in a bizarre predicament, a frustrated UN sergeant tries to help, despite orders to remain at his post. When a journalist waylays the sergeant while pushing for an exclusive scoop, she affects the unfolding of events and turns a news story into an international circus. With the world's press waiting for an outcome, no one willing to take action (lest they accept responsibility), and a soldier stuck with a bomb beneath him, Ciki and Nino try to keep their humanity amidst the insanity of war.'

[Description from <http://www.hrw.org/iff/2002/london/nomans.html>]

Title: Pretty Village, Pretty Flame
Director: Srdjan Dragojevic
Language: Serbo-Croatian with partial subtitles
Country of production: Greece, Serbia
Year: 1995

Running time: 129 minutes

Certificate: 18

'A close, cross-border friendship is threatened in this unsentimental portrayal of the Bosnian war, with strong characterisations and a welcome dash of humour. It couldn't really get much worse for two childhood friends: Halil (Pejakovic) is a Muslim, while Milan (Bjelogric) is a Serb, both growing up in a small town between the two Yugoslav cities, Belgrade and Zagreb. At the start of the Bosnian war they find themselves on opposing sides, heading towards a potentially violent confrontation. This visually confident, lyrical film deftly cuts between three time frames: 1980, when Halil and Milan were best buddies; 1992, the outbreak of the Bosnian war; and 1994, when a contemplative Milan lies wounded in a Belgrade hospital ward, reflecting on the events of the past 14 years. Nikola Pejakovic and Dragan Bjelogric provide impressive performances that balance boldness, vulnerability and humour. The flashbacks are so raw and believable they can sometimes be mistaken for actual footage, making the narrative wholly involving. During the early days of playing and laughing together, we thoroughly believe the two friends' joy, and later, during the war, we share their profound anger and sadness.'

[Description from <http://www.channel4.com/film/reviews/film.jsp?id=107253>]

Ghana

Title: *Asylum*

Director: Sandy McLeod and Gini Reticker

Country of production: US

Year: 2003

Running time: 20 minutes

'Baba, a young Ghanaian faces the camera directly to recount how she came to get into the U.S. with a badly made fake passport. Everything was going well for her, till the day she set out to find her long lost father to seek his blessing for her imminent marriage. She finds her dad, but instead of sanctioning the union, he tries to force her to marry an older man and have her excised. Custom dictates... Baba escaped this life and spent a year in American jails in order to be recognised as a refugee and be issued a permit.'

[Description from http://www.fifdh.ch/e/programme/asylum_e.html]

Guatemala

Title: *El Norte*

Director: Gregory Nava

Language: English and Spanish with English subtitles

Country of production: USA

Year: 1983

Running time: 140 minutes

'This film portrays the plight of two illegal immigrants, as they flee to the U.S. from Guatemala. But this movie is much, much more than that. It cuts through all the stereotypes and attitudes the socially and economically privileged harbour against the foreigner. You need not know English or Spanish to understand this movie, because you feel everything so completely through the two main characters. Anyone with any heart at all will enjoy this movie. With typical Latin fatalism, this movie illustrates how people must sometimes bear the unbearable, because they have no other choice.'

[Description from <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0085482/>]

Iran

Title: *The Apple*

Director: Samira Makmalbaf
Language: Farsi with English subtitles
Country of production: Iran
Year: 1998
Running time: 81 minutes

'*The Apple* is the haunting first feature by Samira Makhmalbaf, the 17 year-old daughter of the Iranian filmmaker, Mohsen Makhmalbaf. Based on a true incident and using the family involved, the film tells a bizarre but engaging story. In Tehran, two twin daughters live as virtual prisoners of their poor father and blind mother, locked behind bars for all of their 12 years. The father's argument is that: "My daughters are like flowers. They mustn't be exposed to the sun or they would soon fade...". A social worker tries to persuade the father to give them the freedom to explore the world beyond the gates of their home.'

[Description from <http://homepage.mac.com/vanvdo/apple.htm>]

Title: *A Time for Drunken Horses*
Director: Bahman Ghobadi
Language: Farsi and Sorani with English subtitles
Country of production: Kurdistan/ Iran
Year: 2000
Running time: 80 minutes

'In Iranian Kurdistan, very near the border with Iraq, five brothers and sisters live at subsistence level. The younger boy has a serious illness. The medicine he takes is expensive, and the doctor says he has to be operated on soon to have a chance of surviving. Despite the efforts of the eldest brother who takes on lots of odd jobs, the family is unable to pay for the operation. So, the elder sister accepts to marry an Iraqi who is prepared to give them financial help for the operation. However, the future spouse's family refuses to let the sick boy cross the border.'

[Description from <http://www.riocinema.ndirect.co.uk/kff01/features.htm>]

Title: *Baran*
Director: Majid Majidi
Language: Farsi/Dari with subtitles
Country of production: Iran
Year: 2001
Running time: 94 minutes

'Young Lateef works on a construction site in Tehran with some Kurds and a few illegal Afghan workers. When Lateef is given heavier tasks to compensate for new Afghan worker Rahmat, he resents his displacement and treats Rahmat cruelly. After one of his pranks, however, Lateef discovers Rahmat's secret--he is a girl named Baran. Lateef's heart softens towards Baran and he shows his new affection for her by doing what he can to ease the hardships she suffers at work. When government inspectors force all Afghans to be fired from the site, Lateef discovers he cannot bear to be without her. Jeopardizing social standing and endangering his own well being, Lateef stops at nothing to save his love.'

[Description from <http://us.imdb.com/title/tt0233841/combined>]

Title: *Bemani*
Director: Mehrjui
Country of production: Iran
Year: 2002

'Three young girls' love for life, which can be socially cruel and which takes them to the threshold of a deadly fall. Bemani, who is forced to marry an old man because of unbearable poverty, watches the agony and self-burning of her close friends, young girls like herself. They are the victims of paternal and

fraternal prejudices and violence. But Bemani does not surrender to her fate. Instead she rebels against the insecurities and cruelty which surround her.'

[Description from http://www.festival-cannes.com/films/fiche_film.php?langue=6002&id_film=3100492]

Title: **Blackboards**

Director: Samira Makhmalbaf

Language: Sorani with English subtitles

Country of production: Iran, Italy, Japan

Year: 2000

Running time: 80 minutes

Certificate: PG

'Iranian Kurdistan, near the border with Iraq. A group of itinerant teachers wander in search of pupils. After using their blackboards, which they carry on their backs, to take cover from an army helicopter, the group split up. One teacher, Saïd (Saeed Mohamadi), encounters an old man who asks him to read a letter from his son. Another, Reboir (Bahman Ghobadi), meets a party of boys carrying contraband stolen goods to be smuggled across the border; he tries to persuade them to accept him as a teacher.'

[Description from http://www.bfi.org.uk/sightandsound/2001_01/blackboards.html]

Title: **The Day I Became a Woman (Roozi Khe Zan Shodam)**

Director: Marziyeh Meshkini

Language: Persian

Country of production: Iran

Year: 2000

Running time: 78 minutes

'For her first film, *The Day I Became a Woman*, Marziyeh Meshkini, the wife of Iran's most prominent filmmaker, Mohsen Makhmalbaf, has crafted a mystical three-part allegorical vision of the treacherous cycle in which Iranian women are robbed of their freedom and dignity. In the first episode, a girl is informed on her ninth birthday that she can no longer play with or speak to boys and must begin to wear the traditional head-to-toe black body covering worn by Iranian women. In the second, a young woman feverishly competes in a visually stunning all-female bicycle race while pursued on horseback by her husband, family, and clan members, urging her to return to her responsibilities and duties, and eventually taking her bicycle from her. The protagonist in the final episode is a crippled old woman, lost in delusional fantasies, who hires a young child to assist her in buying all of the things that she lacked throughout her long and difficult life. While the plots are simple, the interweaving visual and conceptual motif of a life cycle of deprivation and humiliation creates a reflexive and elegant elegy to the struggles and poetic dignity of the Iranian woman.

[Description from

http://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/day_i_became_a_woman/about.php]

Title: **Delbaran**

Director: Abolfazl Jalili

Language: Farsi, English subtitles

Country of production: Iran, Japan

Year: 2001

Running time: 96 minutes

Certificate: PG

Distributor: ICA Projects

'Set at a remote bus stop in a small Iranian border town, Delbaran, a small Afghani boy scrapes a living as a dogsbody. Dedicated to "all children of war", it combines a political urgency with humour and the characteristic visual poetry of Jalili. Simply composed and beautifully played.'

[Description from <http://www.ica.org.uk/index.cfm?articleid=4542>]

Title: *The Hidden Half*
Director: Tahmineh Milani
Language: Farsi with English subtitles
Country of production: Iran
Year: 2001
Running time: 108 minutes

'A female death row prisoner in Iran is making a final attempt at clemency. Her strong left wing ties to the 1979 revolution were a contributing factor to her incarceration when she was imprisoned shortly after the overthrow of the Shah. Only days before she is to be executed a political appointee, Khosro (Mohammad Nikbin), is sent to hear her final appeal. When Khosro arrives, he discovers that his wife (Niki Karimi) left him a long letter divulging a radical political past and asking that her husband be understanding in hearing this political prisoner's plea. An exploration of unknown pasts, this morality tale gained international attention when director Tahmineh Milani was imprisoned by the Iranian government for her depiction of a young girl's love of an older man before marriage, part of the confession that Khosro's wife sends with him.'

[Description from <http://movies.yahoo.com/shop?d=hv&cf=info&id=1808428350&intl=us>]

Title: *Iran, Veiled Appearances*
Director: Thierry Michel
Country of production: Belgium
Year: 2002
Running time: 90 minutes

"'They were laughing when they drew their last breath': the culture of martyrs is about the only thing that survived the Iran-Iraq war, sprouting from its many graves. Fundamentalism is everywhere in Iran, but it is one of many strands that make up Iranian society, and from which veteran filmmaker Thierry Michel weaves an astonishing tapestry. "Michel is one tough filmmaker, unafraid of taking on subject matter that is not so much controversial as explosive," notes the Film Society of Lincoln Centre. Even more courageous is the youth who states, "Our society is in freefall"; the coded dancers who express hopelessness ["Our lives are suspended"]; young women learning the freedom of hang gliding; families who gather outside the prison where men are tortured for their beliefs; democracy advocates who gather in ever larger crowds. The Iranian revolution took one kind of courage; outliving it requires quite another.'

[Description from <http://www.hrw.org/iff/2003/london/iran.html>]

Title: *Medium Of Love*
Director: Elli Safari
Country of production: Iran

'Imagine Robert De Niro as an Iranian cleric. In a floor-length robe and a white turban, Ali Afsahi stands in the front of an Islamic university lecture room in Iran's holy city of Qom, showing a video of Oliver Stone's *Natural Born Killers*. With Woody Harrelson on the rampage with a gun and Juliette Lewis screaming - enough blood to make western audiences squeamish - religious students and clerics watch impassively. Afterwards, Afsahi analyses the film as a morality tale: the failure of love results in unbridled brutality... In any other country, Afsahi's critiques of western auteurs, such as Martin Scorsese, Stanley Kubrick, the Coen brothers and Jim Jarmusch, among others, would not be unusual. In Iran, it is an offence that could lead to jail. His remarkable story is the subject of Elli Safari's documentary, *Medium of Love*. Safari's documentary was shot in eight days, with some scenes filmed in secret through a curtained car window. After she and the crew had been spotted and arrested by a secret policeman near the University of Tehran's campus, she pleaded that she was only filming "positive" images of Islam. Before she and the crew were released, a drug addict was beaten up in front of them. Safari, who lives in Holland, remembers the clear message it sent: "If you do something wrong, this could happen to you."

[Description from <http://www.guardian.co.uk/iran/story/0,12858,891309,00.html>]

Title: *The Red Ribbon*
Director: Ebrahim Hatamikia
Language: Iranian with English subtitles
Country of production: Iran
Year: 1999
Running time: 108 minutes

'Mahbube is a young woman who tries to return to her home on a farm in southern Iran, where she hopes to lead a peaceful existence. But Quasem, who is commissioned to defuse the mines planted in the region during the war, won't let her go back to her previous home. The major theme of Hatamikia's work has been the Iran-Iraq war, where the 40-year-old director began his filmmaking career shooting on the frontlines.'

[Description from <http://www.ufilm.org/fest/2000/movies/html/ribbon.html>]

Title: *Smell of Camphor, Fragrance of Jasmine*
Director: Bahman Farjami
Country of production: Iran
Year: 2000
Running time: 93 minutes

'For the past two decades, Bahman Farjami, a 55-year-old film director, has been forbidden by the post-revolutionary censor board to make a film in Iran. He is depressed. The death of his wife and other cineastes of his generation like Sohrab Shahid-Saless, Bahram Reypour and Ali Hatami, together with his own heart condition, make Farjami feel that he too is at the end of his career, if not of his life. Out of desperation, he decides to make a film about his own funeral. His research into Iranian funeral rites and contemporary Iranian society takes him on an emotional roller coaster that leads to his death -- maybe. "*Smell of Camphor, Fragrance of Jasmine* is the product of the liberal political atmosphere of the past couple of years, and that is why I have tried to make my film a mirror that reflects what is happening to us. It is a bitter film, but not without hope.'

[Description from http://www.cinemairan.com/movieview_2.cfm]

Title: *Two Women*
Director: Tahmineh Milani
Language: Farsi with English subtitles
Country of production: Iran
Year: 1999
Running Time: 103 minutes

'A bold, dramatic attack on the treatment of women in post-revolutionary Iran by the country's most important and outspoken feminist filmmaker. The story follows the friendship of two university students. While one is able to find a good job and a happy marriage, the other is subjected to the most severe inequities of the male-dominated, fundamentalist society. She is pursued by a stalker who commits an act of violence, but her "improper" independence is also blamed for the attack. Her father commits her to an arranged marriage in which her past liberties are denied and her spirit is broken. Government censors held up Milani's script for seven years, but the film became a major success with audiences.'

[Description from <http://www.1worldfilms.com/iran/twowomen.htm>]

Title: *The Wind Will Carry Us*
Director: Abbas Kiarostami
Language: Kurdish and Farsi with English subtitles
Country of production: Iran
Year: 1999
Running Time: 118 minutes

'A man from Tehran named Behzad drives with a camera crew to a remote Kurdish village clinging to the sides of two mountains. There, they secretly wait for an ailing 100-year-old woman named Mrs. Malek to die, apparently planning to film or tape the exotic traditional funeral ceremony they expect to take place afterward, during which some women mourners scratch and scar their faces. Behzad spends most of the movie biding his time in the village, circulating a false story, involving buried treasure, about the reason for his presence and chatting with a few locals – mainly a little boy named Farzad (Farzad Sohrabi), the old woman's grandson, who serves as his (and our) main source of information about the village.'

[Description from <http://www.kurdishfilmfestival.com/kff02/features.htm>]

Title: *Under the Skin of the City*
Director: Rakhshan Bani-Etemad
Language: Farsi with English subtitles
Country of production: Iran
Year: 2001
Running time: 93 minutes

'Affecting family drama from Rakhshan Bani-Etemad centers on the put-upon matriarch (Golab Adineh) of a working class Iranian family. After toiling all day long in a factory in Tehran, Adineh comes home and must deal with a pregnant daughter trapped in an abusive relationship, a teenage son who's also a political radical, and an older son with plans to move to Japan, all while caring for her disabled son.'

[Description from http://www.moviesunlimited.com/musite/browse_list.asp?cid=fo&dept=IRAN&media=v]

Iraq

Title: *Daily Baghdad*
Director: Romain Goupil
Year: 2004
Running time: 100 minutes

'What is daily life in Baghdad like for the average Iraqi family, a year after the beginning of the war that ousted the oppressive regime of Saddam Hussein but replaced it with an occupation by U.S. troops? Romain Goupil chronicles the daily life of the family of Abbas ad Roubay, a former member of Saddam's Republican Guard who now struggles to make a living as a deliveryman, and his wife Yasmine and their children. Made over a period of several weeks, the film records the family's daily routine, listens to their discussions about everything from the brutalities of Saddam's repressive regime and the current terrorist bombings to the electricity and water shortages, and reveals the uncertainties of life in post-war Baghdad, as well as the family's occasional moments of leisure. Instead of violent scenes of bombings and gunfire so familiar from the evening news broadcasts, the film reveals the simple realities of everyday life -- the breakfasts, getting the children ready for school, dealing with traffic jams, the markets, neighbours and the struggle to earn a living. As a result, *Daily Baghdad* offers us a rarely seen view of Iraq today, as the family shares their vision of the war, their life today, and their vision of the future for themselves and their country.'

(Description from <http://www.frif.com/new2004/dai.html>)

Jewish populations

Title: *The Boat is Full*
Director: Markus Imhoof
Country of production: Switzerland
Year: 1981
Running time: 101 minutes

Distributed by: [First Run Features](#)

'In 1942 Switzerland declared that it had more than enough refugees, and according to Swiss law Jews fleeing the Nazis were to be sent back. They explicitly were not considered political refugees, who were eligible for a asylum, as were soldiers deserting from the German army. The only exceptions were children under the age of six, along with their parents, and the elderly. *The Boat Is Full* is a drama of five Jews who escape from Germany and attempt to elude deportation by posing as a family that qualifies to stay in Switzerland. The five are both protected and betrayed by a rural innkeeper and her husband, who respond to the strangers in their midst with a shifting mix of suspicion, resentment, humanity, compassion and doubt. The refugees' story ultimately unravels, and small-minded Swiss bureaucrats carry out the letter of the law.

[Description from http://www.jhvc.org/video_library/index.php?film_id=86]

Title: *Divided We Fall*
Director: Jan Hrebjek
Country of production: Czech Republic
Year: 2001
Running time: 122 minutes
Distribution: Metrodome
Certificate: PG

'Right from the start of the film, *Divided We Fall* makes clear its title and the serious point it has to make. Escaped from a "re-settlement" camp, a young Czech Jew, David asks his former neighbour Herr Šimáček for help and protection. Šimáček is terrified of the consequences of harbouring a Jew and immediately tries to report the man to a German patrol. Everyone is looking after their own concerns, it is every man for themselves and no one can be trusted, be they friends, neighbours or fellow countrymen. As the film's title suggests [even more explicitly in Czech, '*Musíme Si Pomáhat*' literally means '*We Must Help Each Other*'], this division is what keeps the people repressed and defeated.

One couple is brave enough to take the risk to protect David. Josef and Marie Cizek keep David locked up in their hidden storage room, but every knock on the door, every visit from prying neighbours brings the terror of being discovered... To avoid suspicion, the Cizeks appear to co-operate with the occupying German forces, causing their neighbours to mistrust them even further - the same people who refused to risk their own necks to help their Jewish neighbours.... The film was nominated for Best Foreign Film at the 2001 Academy Awards.'

[Description from <http://www.dvdtimes.co.uk/content.php?contentid=5239>]

Title: *The Double Crossing*
Year: 1992
Running time: 29 minutes
Distributed by: Ergo Media Unc.

'On May 13, 1939, the luxury liner St. Louis sailed from Hamburg, Nazi Germany, with over 900 Jewish refugees on board, bound for freedom in Havana, Cuba. At first they felt that they were on a vacation cruise into freedom. However, their happiness was short-lived. The Cuban government reneged on its promise and refused them entry into the country. Although 734 of the refugees held quota numbers for eventual admission into the United States, the effects of the Great Depression, isolationism, and anti-Semitism all contributed to a n anti-immigrant mood here, and permission to enter here was refused. Archival footage, plus numerous interviews with survivors of the St. Louis, educate us about the past as well as sensitise us to the plight of all refugees, wherever they may be.'

[Description from <http://fcit.coedu.usf.edu/holocaust/resource/videoaf.htm#d>]

Title: *Into the Arms of Strangers*
Director: Mark Jonathon Harris
Language: English

Country of production: USA
Year: 2000
Running time: 117 minutes
Certificate: PG
Website: <http://www2.warnerbros.com/intothearmsofstrangers/>

Using archive footage and individual testimonies, this documentary feature offers an account of the transportation of Jewish children out of Germany and its occupied lands to Britain just before World War II and its impact on the children involved.

Title: **Nowhere in Africa**
Director: Caroline Link
Language: German and Swahili with English subtitles
Country of production: Germany
Year: 2002
Running time: 141 minutes

'A love story spanning two continents, *Nowhere in Africa* is the extraordinary true tale of a Jewish family who flees the Nazi regime in 1938 for a remote farm in Kenya. Abandoning their once comfortable existence in Germany, Walter Redlich, his wife Jettel and their five year old daughter each deal with the harsh realities of their new life in different ways....winner of the 2002 Best Foreign Language Film Oscar as well as five 2002 German Film Awards...'

[Description from <http://www.zeitgeistfilms.com/film.php?directoryname=nowhereinafrica>]

Title: **One Day Crossing**
Director: Joan Stein and Christina Lazaridi
Language: Magyar with English subtitles
Country of production: US
Year: 2000
Running time: 25 minutes
Website: <http://www.onedaycrossing.com/>

'Set in Budapest, Hungary on October 15, 1944, at a time when the Hungarian Nazi movement led by the anti-Semitic fascist Arrow Cross Party, is growing stronger. Through the eyes of Teresa, a young woman who poses as a Christian to protect her family, and a boy who suddenly enters her life, *One Day Crossing* expertly renders the struggle to maintain identity and extend compassion in times of oppression and horror.'

[Description from <http://www.hrw.org/iff/2002/london/one.html>]

Title: **Out of the Forest**
Director: Yaron Kaftori, Limor Pinhasov, Ben Yosef
Country of production: Israel
Year: 2003
Running time: 91 minutes

'In contrast to the majority of Holocaust documentaries dealing with the horror experienced by survivors and its repercussions for second and third generation descendants, *Out of the Forest* focuses instead on the role of the allegedly passive witnesses, and the cumulative effect these events had on them.

"Friday July 11th, 1941, the weather is nice with some warm wind blowing. Only a few clouds are in the sky. Shots were heard coming from the forest."

These are the opening words from the diary of Kazimierz Sakowicz, a Pole living in the Lithuanian village of Polnar where, between 1941-44 more than one hundred thousand people, mostly Jews, were exterminated. Through the guidance of Sakowicz's diary, *Out of the Forest* tells the story of the people

living with this terrible past - the woman who herds her cows on the open grave fields, the one forced to cook for the murderers, the man who traded in clothes of the dead. Restrained but direct, inviting comparisons with the films of Claude Lanzman, the film is as much a psychological document as it is an historical one, its powerful exploration of denial and resignation forcing us to address the present as well as the past.'

[Description from http://www.lff.org.uk/films_details.php?FilmID=513]

Title: The Pianist
Director: Roman Polanski
Language: English
Country of production: France, Poland, Germany, and UK
Year: 2002
Running time: 149 minutes
Certificate: 15
Distributor: BAC
Website: <http://www.thepianist-themovie.com/>

'Adrien Brody gives the performance of his career as brilliant pianist Wladyslaw Szpilman, a Polish Jew, who miraculously survived the aftermath of the Nazis' relentless takeover of the Warsaw ghetto, where he hid for years and ultimately the only surviving member of his doomed family, at the height of WWII in Europe. Filmmaker Roman Polanski delivers his most intimate and compelling work in years [Polanski himself is a Holocaust survivor who experienced intense loss] filtering his own life experiences into his dogged protagonist with a ll-too painful and assertively unflinching portrait of an exceptionally gifted musician in an unending nightmare replete with graphic violence that comes without warning, hope in the least likely forms and ultimately triumph in the face of evil. One of the best films about the Holocaust and one of the best films of the year as well.'

[Description from <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0253474/>]

Title: Sobibor, October 14, 1943, 4pm
Director: Claude Lanzmann
Country of production: France
Year: 2001
Running time: 95 minutes

'At the heart of this extraordinary new documentary from Claude Lanzmann, director of *Shoah*, is an interview the filmmaker conducted in 1979 with a Holocaust survivor about the uprising at a Nazi concentration camp. Invariably tough-minded and rigorous, Lanzmann draws from the man's memory, reconstructing the past with questions remarkable for their journalistic acuity and lack of sentimentalism, then sets the interview against images of modern Poland and models of the camp. Lanzmann originally slated the interview for *Shoah* but decided that the subject was too important to fold into the larger work. He was right. The new film isn't just an epilogue to that landmark documentary; it's a rebuttal to the dominant mythology of Jewish acquiescence and martyrdom, and as such, a critique of turning history into the comforts of fiction.'

[Description from <http://www.hrw.org/iff/2002/london/sobibor.html>]

Kurdistan – Iraqi

Other useful sources of information on films relating to Iraqi Kurdistan include:

- o London Kurdish Film Festival
2002 <http://www.riocinema.ndirect.co.uk/kff02/index.htm>
2001 <http://www.riocinema.ndirect.co.uk/kff01/introduction.htm>

Title: A Breath of Death

Director: Lina Abdulkarim & Dilek Boztas
Language: English
Country of production: Britain
Year: 2002
Running Time: 7 minutes

'A brief informative piece which explains the basics of chemical bombing and what happened to the Kurdish village of Halabja in 1988.'

[Description from <http://www.kurdishfilmfestival.com/kff02/shorts.htm>]

Title: Beyond our Dreams
Director: Hiner Saleem
Language: French and Kirmanji with English subtitles
Country of production: France/ Armenia/ Italy
Year: 2000
Running time: 100 minutes

'Hiner Saleem' s second feature tracks a young refugee couple's flight from Kurdistan to hopeful sanctuary in Paris, braving travails comic and tragic on their long, serpentine path. Already struggling toward an uncertain destination at the outset, childhood sweethearts Dolovan and Zara are first seen huffing across the frozen Caucasian Mountains. Not by choice: Saying "We have no country," Dolovan is resigned to the necessity of leaving their lifelong village in Mesopotamia, where ethnic strife has drawn a vicious line between local Kurds and their suddenly intolerant neighbours. Zara is more reluctant, and their odyssey starts very badly as her elderly parents, lagging behind, are lost to the elements.'

[Description from <http://www.riocinema.ndirect.co.uk/kff01/features.htm>]

Title: The Boy who Stopped Talking
Director: Ben Sombogaart
Language: Kirmanji and Dutch with English subtitles
Country of production: Netherlands
Year: 1997
Running time: 108 minutes

'Anyone who's ever experienced the upheaval and sadness that comes with leaving the place you've called home will appreciate the charm and candour of this heartfelt family tale. For young Memo, the concept of "home" is particularly significant since he's a Kurd, a minority constantly in search of a homeland and frequently dispossessed of the claims they stake. Memo is perfectly content with his village life: goofing around with his best friend Mustafa, tending the sheep and working as the local postman. But when Memo's father, Hüsnü, suddenly returns from Holland, Memo's life changes forever.'

Title: The Burning Paradise
Director: Araz Rashid
Language: Sorani with English subtitles
Country of production: Sweden
Year: 1999
Running Time: 80 minutes

'A young veterinarian tries to help a wounded boy who has been shot by the Iraqi police as he tries to draw a swastika on Saddam Hussein's poster. They flee from the city to the liberated area. The veterinarian falls in love with the local mayor. This starts a conflict with her family. The conflict goes on until the Iraqi Army attacks the village.'

[Description from <http://www.riocinema.ndirect.co.uk/kff01/features.htm>]

Title: Cultural Image

Director: Yilmaz Demir
Language: Kurdish with English subtitles
Country of production: Britain
Year: 2002
Running time: 5 minutes

Documentary looking at the life of the Kurdish community in Hackney.
[Details from <http://www.kurdishfilmfestival.com/kff02/documentaries.htm>]

Title: Gas Attack
Director: Kenny Glanaans
Language: English
Country of production: Scotland
Year: 2001
Running time: 71 minutes
Distributor: Channel 4 International, or contact Samantha Kingsley at Hart Ryan Productions at samkingsley@hartryan.co.uk

'Set amongst the high-rise estates of Glasgow, the home of many recently arrived asylum seekers as part of the government's dispersal programme. The drama begins during an apparently commonplace winter flu epidemic. But doctors are puzzled by the strange symptoms of this flu and cannot understand why it is only affecting a relatively small cross-section of the community. One asylum support unit worker is not satisfied by the flu argument and wonders if environmental health hazards are to blame. But when one man dies, the post mortem results reveal the shocking truth - the deadly germ anthrax killed him. But even in the face of this evidence, the authorities are unwilling to believe what is becoming increasingly obvious - that north Glasgow has been subject to a silent and deadly terrorist attack. Someone has deliberately released an anthrax amongst the immigrant community and the panic both inside and outside the hospital is mounting fast. Central to the drama is a Kurdish refugee, Sherko, and his 12-year-old daughter, Resa. Sherko remembers the full horror of being gassed in northern Iraq by Saddam Hussein and now watches in horror as his daughter succumbs to the deadly infection.'

[Description from <http://www.britfilms.com/britishfilms/catalogue/browse/?id=D5FD9B420eeaf2E8F5mNjJCEEBFC>]

Title: Good Kurds, Bad Kurds
Director: Kevin McKiernan
Country of production: USA
Year: 2001
Running time: 81 minutes
Distributor: Kevin McKiernan

'A war of national liberation or a war against terrorism? Filmmaker and acclaimed freelance journalist Kevin McKiernan poses this question at the outset of this stirring, provocative film by legendary cinematographer Haskell Wexler. It's all in how you define "good" and "bad": "Good Kurds" are those in Iraq; they're Saddam Hussein's victims whom we want to help. "Bad Kurds" are those waging an armed insurrection against US ally Turkey; they're at the receiving end of US weapons. McKiernan went to northern Iraq to cover the uprising against Saddam. Just a few miles away, no one was covering the hidden war in Turkey, so he decided to bring out the story. *Good Kurds, Bad Kurds* brings sharp clarity to a complicated history while providing disturbing insight into both US immigration and foreign policy.'

[Description from <http://www.hrw.org/iff-00/kurdsindex.html>]

Title: A Handful of Grass
Director: Roland Suso Richter
Language: Kirmanji and German with English subtitles
Country of production: Germany
Year: 1999

Running time: 114 minutes

'Ten-year-old Kendal lives in a poor Kurdish village. His uncle, who is involved in drugs trafficking in Hamburg, takes Kendal to Germany. After his uncle is arrested, the boy is looked after by a German taxi driver, but eventually ends up in a children's home. His uncle tracks him down, and Kendal soon begins work as a drug pusher.'

[Description from <http://www.kurdishfilmfestival.com/kff02/features.htm>]

Title: **Jiyan**

Director: Jano Rosebiani

Language: Kurdish/ English subtitles

Country of production: Iraqi Kurdistan

Year: 2002

Running time: 99 minutes

Certificate: 12a

'Five years after the infamous chemical and biological bombing of Halabja, Diyari, a Kurdish/American Samaritan, returns to his homeland to build an orphanage in what is left of Halabja. During the course of his stay, he meets a colourful bunch of townsfolk, many of whom remain physically and/or psychologically marked with the effects of the chemical agents. Among them is Jiyan, a ten-year-old orphan. A strong bond between the two ensues and later he names the orphanage after her.'

[Description from <http://www.kurdishfilmfestival.com/kff02/features.htm>]

Title: **Kurdistan off the Map**

Director: Antonis Kioukas

Language: Greek with English subtitles

Country of production: Greece

Year: 2002

Running time: 19 minutes

'This timely short documentary focuses on the plight of Kurdish people in Iraq during the aftermath of the Gulf war. It shows the brief euphoria felt by Kurds and how their hopes of independence were dashed when US failed to support their uprising.'

[Description from <http://www.kurdishfilmfestival.com/kff02/documentaries.htm>]

Title: **Long live the bride... and the liberation of Kurdistan**

Director: Hiner Saleem

Language: French and Kurdish with English subtitles

Country of production: France

Year: 1997

Running time: 96 minutes

'Set inside the 100,000-population Kurdish community in Paris. Cheto seeks a wife via videotapes while still seeing his French girlfriend, immigration office worker Christine. Cheto places an order for a beautiful girl, but he's disappointed when her sister, country girl Mina, arrives at the airport as a substitute. Family pressure forces him to marry her. Unhappy with the way she's treated by Cheto, Mina acquires some progressive ideas from Leila and other local feminists, leading to confrontations with Cheto.'

[Description from <http://www.kurdishfilmfestival.com/kff02/features.htm>]

Title: **Marooned in Iraq**

Director: Bahman Ghobadi

Language: Kurdish with English subtitles

Country of production: Iran

Year made: 2002

Running time: 110 minutes
Distributor: Menemsha Films Inc.

'An aging Kurdish singer, Mirza, persuades his two grown musician sons to accompany him on a mission into Iraq to locate his ex-wife, who, rumour has it, needs him. The journey takes them through a lawless land of bombs and bandits where the only policemen they encounter are handcuffed and in underwear. The film portrays the Kurds living on the border of Iran and Iraq not only as victims, but also as people who love music, life and children, and have a wicked sense of humour that enables them to survive persecution. Winner of the Best Film award at the Chicago Film Festival, although director Bahman Ghobadi turned down the award after the US authorities refused him an entry visa.'

[Description from <http://www.kurdishfilmfestival.com/kff02/features.htm>]

Title: Rights of Passage
Director: Simon Brown
Language: Kurdish with English subtitles
Country of production: Britain
Year: 2002
Running time: 25 minutes

'Two Kurdish friends, Nawrol and Saman, arrive at the Sangatte refugee camp in Northern France on their way to England. That night they break in to the nearby Channel Tunnel, and nearly succeed in jumping on a train. However, playing the hero, Nawrol stops to help a young kid, Mohammed...'

[Description from <http://www.kurdishfilmfestival.com/kff02/shorts.htm>]

Title: The Riverside
Director: Ibrahim Selman
Country of production: Iran
Year: 2004
Running time: 80 minutes

'Whilst traveling through no man's land near the Iran-Iraq border a Kurdish bride steps on a landmine. By fear as much as by necessity, she remains frozen mid-step whilst her new husband runs to a nearby village to get help. Her terrible, but rather absurd plight is the focus for a series of other Kurdish characters each escaping the vicissitudes of political and social turmoil; including an old woman with her two young orphaned grandchildren, a mourning father carrying his son's body, and a displaced woman travelling with her only remaining possession, a cow. Each of the characters who cross her path are survivors in their own way, and although sensitive to her plight, are preoccupied with their own problems and personal safety. Set in the recent past during the US-led invasion of Iraq, Amini's film shows not only the aftermath of Coalition attacks, but also the devastating long term effects of Saddam Hussein's policy toward the Kurds. Clearly sympathetic to the Kurdish cause Amini paints a compelling, tense and visually striking portrait of a beleaguered people.'

[Description from http://www.lff.org.uk/films_details.php?FilmID=528]

Title: Roadblocks
Director: Stavros Ioannou
Language: Sorani with English subtitles
Country of production: Greece
Year: 2000
Running time: 98 minutes

'Greek documentary maker Ioannou's feature film tells the story of the desperate attempts of Kurdish refugees to cross Europe in a documentary fashion. In the opening scene, Huseyin from Iraqi Kurdistan crosses a river and minefield on his way across hostile Turkey to find his brother, Ahmet, who has vanished in Greece. Learning he left for Italy by an overcrowded rubber raft, Hussein calls his father and

asks him to sell their house in the village to finance his search. The film does not "feature" actors who portray the truth of others' lives but rather follows unknown faces in their real adventures.'

[Description from <http://www.riocinema.ndirect.co.uk/kff01/features.htm>]

Title: A Silent Traveller
Director: Ibrahim Selman
Language: Kurdish with English subtitles
Country of production: Netherlands
Year: 1994
Running time: 92 minutes

'Conceived in Kurdistan, written in Holland and filmed in Greece, *A silent traveller* tells the story of life in a Kurdish village in South Kurdistan (Iraq), where the endless war between official forces and those fighting for a free Kurdistan leads to divided loyalties, killing and grief, even within families.'

[Description from <http://www.kurdishfilmfestival.com/kff02/features.htm>]

Title: Three Figures of a Mountain- Man Who Wishes he was a Seal
Director: Ibrahim Selman
Language: Kurdish and Dutch with English subtitles
Country of production: Netherlands
Year: 1991
Running time: 38 minutes

'This television drama deals with the experiences of Ibu Kordo, a Kurd. On March 16, 1988 his hometown Halabja is bombed with chemical weapons by Iraq. When he comes back from a business trip he finds all the inhabitants lying dead in the streets, among the victims his own daughter. Ibu Kordo escapes Iraq and arrives in the Netherlands.'

[Description from <http://www.kurdishfilmfestival.com/kff02/shorts.htm>]

Title: **The Riverside**
Director: Ibrahim Selman
Country of production: Iran
Year: 2004
Running time: 80 minutes

'Whilst traveling through no man's land near the Iran-Iraq border a Kurdish bride steps on a landmine. By fear as much as by necessity, she remains frozen mid-step whilst her new husband runs to a nearby village to get help. Her terrible, but rather absurd plight is the focus for a series of other Kurdish characters each escaping the vicissitudes of political and social turmoil; including an old woman with her two young orphaned grandchildren, a mourning father carrying his son's body, and a displaced woman travelling with her only remaining possession, a cow. Each of the characters who cross her path are survivors in their own way, and although sensitive to her plight, are preoccupied with their own problems and personal safety. Set in the recent past during the US-led invasion of Iraq, Amini's film shows not only the aftermath of Coalition attacks, but also the devastating long term effects of Saddam Hussein's policy toward the Kurds. Clearly sympathetic to the Kurdish cause Amini paints a compelling, tense and visually striking portrait of a beleaguered people.'

[Description from http://www.lff.org.uk/films_details.php?FilmID=528]

Title: To Stay or Go
Director: Resul Gultutan
Language: Kurdish with English subtitles
Country of production: Switzerland
Year: 2001
Running time: 23 minutes

'War often drives families from their homelands. Children are often able to adapt to their new lives quickly unlike their parents who have difficulties in coping with many aspects of their new lives. But what really happens to the older members of the family?'

[Description from <http://www.kurdishfilmfestival.com/kff02/shorts.htm>]

Kurdistan - Iranian

Title: A Time for Drunken Horses

Director: Bahman Ghobadi

Language: Farsi and Sorani with English subtitles

Country of production: Kurdistan/ Iran

Year: 2000

Running time: 80 minutes

'In Iranian Kurdistan, very near the border with Iraq, five brothers and sisters live at subsistence level. The younger boy has a serious illness. The medicine he takes is expensive, and the doctor says he has to be operated on soon to have a chance of surviving. Despite the efforts of the eldest brother who takes on lots of odd jobs, the family is unable to pay for the operation. So, the elder sister accepts to marry an Iraqi who is prepared to give them financial help for the operation. However, the future spouse's family refuses to let the sick boy cross the border.'

[Description from <http://www.riocinema.ndirect.co.uk/kff01/features.htm>]

Title: Blackboards

Director: Samira Makhmalbaf

Language: Sorani with English subtitles

Country of production: Iran, Italy, Japan

Year: 2000

Running time: 80 minutes

Certificate: PG

'Iranian Kurdistan, near the border with Iraq. A group of itinerant teachers wander in search of pupils. After using their blackboards, which they carry on their backs, to take cover from an army helicopter, the group split up. One teacher, Saïd (Saeed Mohamadi), encounters an old man who asks him to read a letter from his son. Another, Reboir (Bahman Ghobadi), meets a party of boys carrying contraband stolen goods to be smuggled across the border; he tries to persuade them to accept him as a teacher.'

[Description from http://www.bfi.org.uk/sightandsound/2001_01/blackboards.html]

Title: The Wind Will Carry Us

Director: Abbas Kiarostami

Language: Kurdish and Farsi with English subtitles

Country of production: Iran

Year: 1999

Running time: 118 minutes

'A man from Tehran named Behzad drives with a camera crew to a remote Kurdish village clinging to the sides of two mountains. There, they secretly wait for an ailing 100-year-old woman named Mrs. Malek to die, apparently planning to film or tape the exotic traditional funeral ceremony they expect to take place afterward, during which some women mourners scratch and scar their faces. Behzad spends most of the movie biding his time in the village, circulating a false story, involving buried treasure, about the reason for his presence and chatting with a few locals – mainly a little boy named Farzad (Farzad Sohrabi), the old woman's grandson, who serves as his [and our] main source of information about the village.'

[Description from <http://www.kurdishfilmfestival.com/kff02/features.htm>]

Kurdistan – Turkish

Other useful sources of information on films relating to Turkish Kurdistan include:

- London Kurdish Film Festival
2002 <http://www.riocinema.ndirect.co.uk/kff02/index.htm>
2001 <http://www.riocinema.ndirect.co.uk/kff01/introduction.htm>
- London Turkish Film Festival
2003 <http://www.riocinema.ndirect.co.uk/tff03/index.htm>
2002 <http://www.riocinema.ndirect.co.uk/tff02/introduction.htm>
2001 <http://www.riocinema.ndirect.co.uk/tff01/introduction.htm>
- Turkish Migrant Cinema in Europe Database
<http://homepages.gold.ac.uk/turkishmigrantcinema/>

Title: *Bella and Real*

Director: Borje Peratt

Language: Swedish and Kurdish with English subtitles

Country of production: Sweden

Year: 2002

Running time: 27 minutes

'Real, an immigrant soccer team recruits a Swedish coach, to create order. All of the players want to play centre, as their fathers also demand. Sammi, patriarch of a Kurd family has a son on the team and a daughter Bella with the impossible dream of becoming the goalkeeper.'

[Description from <http://www.kurdishfilmfestival.com/kff02/shorts.htm>]

Title: *The Boy who Stopped Talking*

Director: Ben Sombogaart

Language: Kirmanji and Dutch with English subtitles

Country of production: Netherlands

Year: 1997

Running time: 108 minutes

'Anyone who's ever experienced the upheaval and sadness that comes with leaving the place you've called home will appreciate the charm and candour of this heartfelt family tale. For young Memo, the concept of "home" is particularly significant since he's a Kurd, a minority constantly in search of a homeland and frequently dispossessed of the claims they stake. Memo is perfectly content with his village life: goofing around with his best friend Mustafa, tending the sheep and working as the local postman. But when Memo's father, Hüsnü, suddenly returns from Holland, Memo's life changes forever.'

Title: *Cultural Image*

Director: Yilmaz Demir

Language: Kurdish with English subtitles

Country of production: Britain

Year: 2002

Running time: 5 minutes

Documentary looking at the life of the Kurdish community in Hackney.

[Details from <http://www.kurdishfilmfestival.com/kff02/documentaries.htm>]

Title: *April Children*

Director: Yueksel Yavuz

Year: 1998

Running time: 85 minutes

Distributor: Ventura Film

'Cem, Mehmet and Dilan are brothers and sisters. Their father brought them and their mother to Germany from Turkish Kurdistan fifteen years ago. Cem, the eldest, works in a sausage factory and has long been the right age to marry, according to his parents. He has been promised since childhood to a cousin who still lives in Kurdistan; however, until now, he has suppressed the thought of a final commitment. Then he falls in love with the German prostitute Kim in a Turkish night club... Cem's younger brother, Mehmet, sees his chance with his friend Arif to land "the big coup" in dealing with drugs. When Arif falls in love with Mehmet's little sister Dilan, Mehmet takes his new job even more seriously... At the same time, their parents' native village in Kurdistan is destroyed: a reason for them to begin preparations for Cem's wedding and to bring the cousin to Germany. Cem, who loves Kim, is faced by a conflict...'

[Description from http://www.german-cinema.de/archive/film_view.php?film_id=267]

Title: Escape to Paradise

Director: Nino Jacusso

Language: Turkish with English subtitles

Country of production: Switzerland

Year: 2001

Running time: 90 minutes

'A Kurdish refugee family who are applying for political asylum in Switzerland are sent to an immigration centre. Their future will only be secure if they can present a convincing case. They turn to a Swiss man who claims he can supply them with the documents and stories which will convince the immigration authorities.'

[Description from <http://www.kurdishfilmfestival.com/kff02/features.htm>]

Title: Farewell Stranger

Director: Tevfik Baser

Year: 1992

Running time: 97 minutes

'Two people caught up in a spiritual crisis meet on the North Sea island of Langeness [North Germany] - Karin, an attractive woman of about 40, and a 50-year-old man seeking political asylum, whose past is marked by imprisonment and torture. The fact that they speak no common language through which they might communicate with each other merely arouses their desire to know more about each other and leads slowly to a relationship of love. Baser's film thematizes the question of asylum seekers, a subject which was at the center of public debates in Germany after its unification.'

[Description from <http://homepages.gold.ac.uk/turkishmigrantcinema/films/films/film20.htm>]

Title: The Game

Director: Sehran Sahin and Burcu Sahinyavuz

Language: Kurdish and Turkish with English subtitles

Country of production: Turkey

Year: 2002

Running time: 26 minutes

'The life stories of two young men who lost their lives on opposite sides of the same conflict are told by their grief-stricken mothers through the computer game Counter Strike.'

[Description from <http://www.kurdishfilmfestival.com/kff02/documentaries.htm>]

Title: Good Kurds, Bad Kurds

Director: Kevin McKiernan

Country of production: USA
Year: 2001
Running time: 81 minutes
Distributor: Kevin McKiernan

'A war of national liberation or a war against terrorism? Filmmaker and acclaimed freelance journalist Kevin McKiernan poses this question at the outset of this stirring, provocative film by legendary cinematographer Haskell Wexler. It's all in how you define "good" and "bad": "Good Kurds" are those in Iraq; they're Saddam Hussein's victims whom we want to help. "Bad Kurds" are those waging an armed insurrection against US ally Turkey; they're at the receiving end of US weapons. McKiernan went to northern Iraq to cover the uprising against Saddam. Just a few miles away, no one was covering the hidden war in Turkey, so he decided to bring out the story. *Good Kurds, Bad Kurds* brings sharp clarity to a complicated history while providing disturbing insight into both US immigration and foreign policy.'

[Description from <http://www.hrw.org/iff-00/kurdsindex.html>]

Title: A Handful of Grass
Director: Roland Suso Richter
Language: Kurmanji with English subtitles
Country of production: Germany
Year: 1999
Running time: 114 minutes

'Ten-year-old Kendal lives in a poor Kurdish village. His uncle who is involved in drugs trafficking in Hamburg, takes Kendal to Germany. After his uncle is arrested, the boy is looked after by a German taxi driver, but eventually ends up in a children's home. His uncle tracks him down, and Kendal soon begins work as a drug pusher.'

[Description from <http://www.kurdishfilmfestival.com/kff02/features.htm>]

Title: Hejar/ Buyuk Adam, Kucuk Ask
Director: Handan Ipekci
Language: Turkish and Kurdish with English subtitles
Country of production: Turkey
Year: 2001
Running time: 120 minutes

'This controversial – and recently banned – film was unanimously nominated to represent Turkey at the Academy Awards in the Best Foreign Film category. At the film's heart is the relationship between a nationalist, authoritarian judge [Sukran Gungor] and a five-year-old Kurdish orphan [Dilan Ercetin]. The judge, who is the girl's neighbour, takes her in following a botched police raid that results in the death of her guardian. *Hejar* was the winner of several awards, including Best Picture, at Turkey's prestigious Golden Orange Film Festival [2001]. Also stars veteran theatre and film actress Yildiz Kenter.'

[Description from <http://www.kurdishfilmfestival.com/kff02/features.htm>]

Title: House of Hearts
Director: Elizabeth Rygard
Language: Turkish with English subtitles
Country of production: Germany
Year: 2002
Running time: 88 minutes

'A drama of separation seen through the eyes of a seven-year-old boy, Osman, whose parents leave Turkey to work in Europe. The drama is enveloped in the expressive Anatolian music, the overwhelming forces of nature and traditional poetry. Together they form some of the riches Osman carries in the suitcase that accompanies him to his new life.'

[Description from <http://www.kurdishfilmfestival.com/kff02/features.htm>]

Title: **Innowhereland**

Director: Tayfun Pirselimoglu

Language: Turkish with English subtitles

Country of production: Turkey/Germany

Year: 2001

Running time: 94 minutes

'Forty year old Sukrun tries to keep her only son Veysel away from the political activism in which her late husband was involved, and which has brought the family so much suffering. But one day Veysel disappears and Sukran's attempts to find him meet only with silence from the authorities.'

[Description from <http://www.kurdishfilmfestival.com/kff02/features.htm>]

Title: **Journey of Hope**

Director: Xavier Koller

Country of production: Switzerland

Year: 1990

Running time: 110 minutes

'Xavier Koller's 1990 drama concerns a Turkish family optimistically leaving a threadbare existence in its native country and setting off on a harrowing journey for better luck in Switzerland. The film is relentless in every sense, in its blow-by-blow portrayal of the characters selling their possessions, travelling an illegal route used by other emigrants, falling in with a cluster of smugglers who do not have their best interests at heart, crossing the Alps on foot (an extended sequence that quickly earned the film its must-see reputation). After all that, they still have to confront Swiss authorities. Brutal and tough going, the heart of the film is not so much the accumulating despair and misery but the strengthening relationships of the central characters. Koller's film, based on a true story, becomes more than the sum of its episodic nightmares. In an unexpected way, it becomes a beacon of true hope and humanity.'

(Description from

<http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/detail/-/6302265630/104-6299040-5214342?v=glance>)

Title: **Journey to the Sun [Gunese Yolculuk]**

Director: Yesim Ustaoglu

Language: Turkish and Kurdish with English subtitles

Country of production: Turkey, Netherlands, and Germany

Year: 1999

Running time: 104 minutes

'Yesim Ustaoglu has crafted a beautiful, touching film that deals with the heady [and taboo] subject of Turkish oppression of the Kurds. Without resorting to sentimentality or polemic, she's created tender characters who are not mere stand-ins for a political idea. Mehmet's gradual realization of the Kurdish reality in his own country starts out with his own stint in the police station [when he gets taken for a Kurd because of his dark looks] and ends with an actual journey to the eastern part of the country where he witnesses firsthand the devastation that the government's "undeclared" war has wrought on the largely Kurdish peasant population. The film is beautifully shot and despite its heavy subject matter, it is a joy to watch the largely unprofessional cast against the bustling cityscape of Istanbul, and the plain beauty of the barren hills of South-eastern Anatolia.'

[Description from <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0188653/>]

Title: **The Land**

Director: Kasim Oz

Year: 1999

Running time: 27 minutes

'The story of an old Kurdish man, who insists on not leaving his village, from which the people are forced by the Turkish army, to migrate. The only thing left from the former active life is a dead silence and places full of memories.'

[Description from <http://homepages.gold.ac.uk/turkishmigrantcinema/>]

Title: Lelya Zana

Director: Kudret Gunes

Language: Turkish and French with English subtitles

Country of production: France

Year: 2002

Running time: 51 minutes

'Leyla Zana, the first woman Kurdish MP to be elected to the Turkish Parliament in 1992, was imprisoned in 1994 for 15 years for speaking in Kurdish in the Parliament. Kudret Gunes' personal look at the life of Zana takes her to her birthplace, friends and exiled husband.'

[Description from <http://www.kurdishfilmfestival.com/kff02/documentaries.htm>]

Title: Long live the bride... and the liberation of Kurdistan

Director: Hiner Saleem

Language: French and Kurdish with English subtitles

Country of production: France

Year: 1997

Running time: 96 minutes

'Set inside the 100,000-population Kurdish community in Paris. Cheto seeks a wife via videotapes while still seeing his French girlfriend, immigration office worker Christine. Cheto places an order for a beautiful girl, but he's disappointed when her sister, country girl Mina, arrives at the airport as a substitute. Family pressure forces him to marry her. Unhappy with the way she's treated by Cheto, Mina acquires some progressive ideas from Leila and other local feminists, leading to confrontations with Cheto.'

[Description from <http://www.kurdishfilmfestival.com/kff02/features.htm>]

Title: Mem and Zin

Director: Umit Elci

Language: Turkish with English subtitles

Country of production: Turkey

Year: 1991

Running time: 90 minutes

'During Kurdish New Year, Nowruz, two brothers and two sisters go to the celebrations. Mem and Zin fall in love and exchange rings without ever knowing whether they will meet again. This story of two tragically separated lovers is also an allegory for the tragic fate of the Kurds, separated and denied.'

[Description from <http://www.kurdishfilmfestival.com/kff02/features.htm>]

Title: The Photograph

Director: Kazim Oz

Year: 2000

Running time: 66 minutes

'An imaginatively shot and revealing film following the stories of two young men travelling to Turkish Kurdistan by bus. They sit next to each other, each of them hiding the reason for his journey from the other. Who are they? Where are they going? And why? A strange kind of proximity and warmth develops between the two of them. The road, the cigarettes and the discomfort they have shared leaves a trace that will reverberate after their paths have separated.'

[Description from <http://homepages.gold.ac.uk/turkishmigrantcinema/>]

Title: Roadblocks
Director: Stavros Ioannou
Language: Sorani with English subtitles
Country of production: Greece
Year: 2000
Running time: 98 minutes

'Greek documentary maker Ioannou's feature film tells the story of the desperate attempts of Kurdish refugees to cross Europe in a documentary fashion. In the opening scene, Huseyin from Iraqi Kurdistan crosses a river and mines field on his way across hostile Turkey to find his brother, Ahmet, who has vanished in Greece. Learning he left for Italy by an overcrowded rubber raft, Hussein calls his father and asks him to sell their house in the village to finance his search. The film does not "feature" actors who portray the truth of others' lives but rather follows unknown faces in their real adventures.'

[Description from <http://www.riocinema.ndirect.co.uk/kff01/features.htm>]

Title: Siyabend And Xace
Director: Sahin Gok
Language: Turkish with English subtitles
Country of production: Turkey
Year: 1993
Running time: 120 minutes

'This film tells the love story of Xace and Siyabend. Siyabend is young and rebellious, a orphan brought up by his aunt. He leaves home and wanders around Kurdistan until he comes across Xace. Watch out for Yilmaz Erdogan in his first film role as Xace's brother.'

[Description from <http://www.kurdishfilmfestival.com/kff02/features.htm>]

Title: A Song for Beko
Director: Nizamet Aric
Language: Kurdish with English subtitles
Country of production: Germany
Year: 1992
Running time: 110 minutes

'Nizamet Aric made his directorial debut and also starred in the film, one of the first in Kurdish. Beko begins his long pilgrimage, in search of his brother, in Kurdish areas of Turkey, where he escapes arrest. Fleeing into Syria, this modern-day Odysseus then makes his way into the serenely beautiful highlands of the Kurdish areas of Iraq. Here, in a nomadic community caring for refugee children, Beko finds himself and a homeland.'

[Description from <http://www.hrw.org/iff-97/filmae/aricsong.html>]

Title: To Stay or Go
Director: Resul Gultutan
Language: Kurdish with English subtitles
Country of production: Switzerland
Year: 2001
Running time: 23 minutes

'War often drives families from their homelands. Children are often able to adapt to their new lives quickly unlike their parents who have difficulties in coping with many aspects of their new lives. But what really happens to the older members of the family?'

[Description from <http://www.kurdishfilmfestival.com/kff02/shorts.htm>]

Title: Tirej
Director: Halil Uysal

Language: Kurdish with English subtitles
Country of production: Kurdistan
Year: 2002
Running time: 50 minutes

'A film written, directed and acted by real life guerrillas and based on a true story, this is perhaps the first feature made entirely by guerrillas. It tells the story of a clash with the Turkish army. After fierce fighting, two guerrillas survive and are encircled by the Turkish army. The war is seen from the perspective of the guerrillas. Will they survive? Will other guerrillas come to their rescue? What are their thoughts when they are fighting, and what will go into the diary of one of the guerrillas?'

[Description from <http://www.hrw.org/iff-00/kurdsindex.html>]

Lebanon

Title: In the Battlefields

Director: Danielle Arbid
Country of production: Belgium, France, Lebanon
Year: 2004
Running time: 90 minutes

'This courageously blunt, sincere and magnificently moving film is the first feature by young Lebanese director Danielle Arbid one of Arab cinema's rising stars. Set in 1983 in Beirut, in the midst of the civil war, 12-year-old Lina is spending most of her time on her own or with her old auntie's maid, who lives upstairs. Siham is 18, and from neighbouring Syria. Their friendship and complicity is based on shared moments of secrecy, fear, tenderness and cruelty. An accomplice to Siham's clandestine love affairs, Lina witnesses the physical and psychological decline of the world of the adults, in the chaos of war, and mostly her own family's fall, with the degeneration of the father into a violent and an inveterate gambler. This is a film about cruelty, and how perversity can mix with innocence. It is also about the bittersweet awakening of the senses, and the coming of age. The fantastic casting, the forthright and delicate description of the young girls' awakening to sensuality, the helplessness and the fall of the characters, all give it an air of authenticity.'

[Description from http://www.lff.org.uk/films_details.php?FilmID=468].

Nicaragua

Title: Carla's Song
Director: Ken Loach
Language: English
Country of production: UK, Germany, Spain
Year: 1996
Running time: 127 minutes

'Ken Loach follows his award winning *Land and Freedom* with an intimate love story set against the political background of the war in Nicaragua. Robert Carlyle, now firmly established as one of Britain's finest actors, gives a stunning performance as George, a free-spirited Scottish bus driver who takes a shine to Carla, a Nicaraguan refugee who is caught without a ticket by an inspector on his bus. A slow courtship reveals the deep psychological scars she bears and he persuades her to return to her homeland to confront her past. Ken Loach blends humour and poignancy, integrating the delicate scenes of the blossoming relationship with an uncompromising reminder of the tragic recent history of Nicaragua and the role of America within it.'

[Description from <http://www.geocities.com/Hollywood/Academy/4558/cs1>]

Nigeria

Title: *Dirty Pretty Things*
Director: Steven Frears
Language: English
Country of production: UK
Year: 2002
Running time: 97 minutes
Certificate: 15

'This is a seamy urban thriller with no obvious special effects and a weighty political dimension. It stars a little-known male lead in Chiwetel Ejiofor (admittedly playing opposite such European names as Audrey "Amélie" Tautou and Sergi López) and is set in a downbeat milieu of the dispossessed, filmed with tension and bleakness by Chris Menges. Okwe (Ejiofor) is a Nigerian man, once a doctor but now ducking sleep to pull wages on two low-paid posts in London – nightman at the seedy Baltic hotel and daytime minicab driver – with a further sideline in ministering to the STDs of his equally "stateless" colleagues. He sleeps on a couch belonging to one of the Baltic's cleaners Senay (Tautou), a Turkish immigrant working illegally. When the attentions of the immigration inspectors force her out of her job, she's ripe for victimisation. Okwe feels responsible for her but seems powerless to help. Soon they are caught at the rim of a vicious whirlpool of deprivation.'

[Description from

http://www.bfi.org.uk/sightandsound/2002_11/subfeature02_homesick_blues.html]

Palestine/Israel

Title: *Behind the Fence*
Director: Inigo Gilmore
Country of production: UK
Year: 2003
Running time: 45 minutes
Distributor: BBC Correspondent

'In June 2002 Israel began construction of a 115-kilometre-long security fence along or near the "green line" separating the West Bank from Israel proper. Dubbed by its critics "The Berlin Wall of the Middle East" and the "Wall of Apartheid" it is being built at the cost of \$1 million per kilometre. The aim, the Israeli government has stated, is to prevent Palestinian "terrorists" from infiltrating into Israel. For many Palestinians however it is nothing more than a sinister ploy to grab more of their land and further reinforce the occupation through the "ghettoisation" of their communities. At the same time many Israelis and Palestinians wonder if it could turn out to be the borderline for a future Palestinian state.'

[Description from <http://www.hrw.org/iff/2003/london/behind.html>]

Title: *Bethlehem Diary*
Director: Antonia Caccia
Country of production: UK
Year: 2001
Running time: 60 minutes
Distributor: [First Run Icarus Films](#)

'It's Christmas in Bethlehem, 2000. In this final year of the 20th century, the town was expecting five million visitors to celebrate the end of the millennium, but the streets are deserted, the hotels are shut, and shops are empty. The Israeli army has closed off Bethlehem since the second Intifada began the previous September. Areas of the town have been heavily shelled and ruins are everywhere. *Bethlehem*

Diary focuses on two Palestinian families and a human rights lawyer during this tumultuous period. We witness their lives amidst extraordinary events - through moments of despair, confusion and anger - and the ubiquitous presence of the Israeli army. The intimate, surreal, and humorous stories they tell help us to understand how violence and uncertainty affect both their public and private family lives.'
[Description from <http://www.hrw.org/iff/2002/ny/bethlehem.html>]

Title: Citizen Bishara
Director: Simone Bitton
Country of production: France
Year: 2001
Running time: 52 minutes
Distributor: Cineteve

'*Citizen Bishara* is a portrait of the most emblematic Palestinian citizen of Israel: Azmi Bishara, a member of the Knesset and a man about to stand trial for his opinions, following the decision to revoke his parliamentary immunity. Bishara, a brilliant thinker and political figure, leads the struggle for the equality of Arab citizens - who comprise 20% of the Israeli populace - and their recognition as a national minority. From April 1999 to February 2001, director Simone Bitton followed Bishara through his parliamentary work, his electoral campaigns, and the dissemination of his ideas about citizenship and democracy.'
[Description from <http://www.hrw.org/iff/2002/ny/citizen.html>]

Title: Death in Exile
Director: Ayten Mutlu Saray
Language: French/ German with English subtitles
Country of production: Switzerland
Year: 2002
Running time: 27 minutes

'Khalil, a Palestinian refugee who grew up in Algeria, is in prison waiting to be deported. Memories of his homeland accompany him during this long wait. The story of the film is based on the real case of Khalil Abuzarifeh who died in Zurich on 3rd March 1999 while awaiting deportation from Switzerland.'
[Description from <http://www.kurdishfilmfestival.com/kff02/shorts.htm> and http://www.swissfilms.ch/detail_f.asp?PNr=-558159860]

Title: **The Door to the Sun**
Director: Yousry Nasrallah
Country of production: Egypt, France
Year: 2004
Running time: 278 minutes

'Yousry Nasrallah's odyssey of a Palestinian family, in two parts, is first set in the late 40s, when the long dreaded climax of Zionist colonization resulted in the twin phenomena of the establishment of Israel by force of arms, and the displacement of the Palestinian inhabitants from a score of towns, when some 400 villages were destroyed. In the process thousands of Palestinians were killed, and 60% of the Palestinian population were rendered homeless. The story is told through Younes, a young resident, who takes refuge in Lebanon to continue his fight underground. His wife Nabila, to whom he is married from the age of 12, stays, but escapes the burning villages, and they meet secretly somewhere in the north, in the Bab el Chams cave. In the second part, set in the 70s, Younes is in hospital in Beirut, taken care by Dr Khalil, in love with Chams, a young woman executed by her fellow militants. These are bitter times, of opportunism and madness, when the different Lebanese and Palestinian fractions are engaged in internal conflicts. Nasrallah's adaptation of Elias Khoury's book is not a straightforward historical account but a sort of Palestinian 'Exodus', a baroque fresco, a geographical, political and emotional wandering. With its pan-Arab cast, it follows the transformation of the protagonists, from

before their diaspora, through glimpses of life, into the harsh reality, where one is to face the emotional and intellectual challenge of escaping the past.'

(Description from http://www.lff.org.uk/films_details.php?FilmID=442)

Title: Like Twenty Impossibles

Director: Annemarie Jacir

Country of production: Palestine

Year: 2003

Running time: 17 minutes

Distributor: Philistine Films

'In a landscape now interrupted by military checkpoints, a group of Palestinian filmmakers attempt to reach Jerusalem. When they decide to avoid a closed checkpoint by taking an unused side road, the landscape unravels, and the passengers' certainties are slowly taken apart by the mundane brutality of military occupation. *Like Twenty Impossibles* is both a visual poem and a narrative film, questioning the politics of art and resistance and the space between fiction and reality.'

Description from <http://hrw.org/iff/2004/london/film.html>

Title: Paradise Lost

Director: Ebtisam Mara'ana

Language: Arabic and Hebrew with English subtitles

Country of production: Israel

Year: 2003

Running time: 56 minutes

Distributor: [Zygote Films Ltd](#)

'Paradise, a picturesque fishermen's village overlooking the Mediterranean, is one of the few Palestinian villages remaining on Israel's coastline after the war in 1948. When the director sets out to investigate the secrets of her village, she is warned to be careful, lest her fate be that of Suaad — the mythical "bad girl" who broke the village's political norms, became a PLO activist, served a long prison sentence, and after her release, left the country. The film follows the director to the UK, where she finds Mrs. Suaad George, a Doctor of Law, who despite her self-fulfilment is still haunted by her village and her past. The encounter with Suaad causes the director to wonder whether in spite of the generational gap between them, their destiny is one outside of Paradise. This is a story about recreating a lost history and about defining modern womanhood within a traditional Arab village.'

[Description from <http://hrw.org/iff/2004/london/film.html>]

Title: Route 181: Fragments of a Journey in Palestine-Israel

Director: Eyal Sivan & Michel Khleifi

Language: Arabic and Hebrew with English subtitles

Country of production: France, Belgium, UK, Germany

Year: 2003

Running time: 270 minutes

Distributor: [Momento!](#)

'*Route 181, fragments of a journey in Palestine-Israel* follows the borders drawn up by the UN in 1947 to separate Palestine into two states — one Jewish and one Arab. The film is divided into three chapters, *The South*, from the port city of Ashdod to the frontiers of the Gaza Strip; *The Centre*, from the Jewish-Arab city of Lod to Jerusalem; and *The North*, from Rosh Ha'ayn, near the new separation wall, to the Lebanese borders. Renowned filmmakers Michel Khleifi and Eyal Sivan are convinced that the situation in the Middle East is an ideological/pathological construct made by men, which cannot therefore be unmade by them. No appointments were organised beforehand, no personalities contacted, no official interlocutors. Armed only with authorizations to film, they stopped and filmed anonymous Israelis and Palestinians who speak of their lives, their experiences, their situations, their personal memories and understandings of what is happening around them today.'

[Description from <http://hrw.org/iff/2004/london/film.html>]

Title: Thirst

Director: Tawfik Abu Wael

Country of production: Israel, Palestine

Year: 2004

Running time: 110 minutes

'This first feature by the 28-year-old Palestinian director Tawfik Abu Wael, which won the FIPRESCI award at this year's Cannes Film Festival, has lived up to the promise shown in the 1999 short *Diary of a Male Prostitute*, and *Waiting for Saladin* in 2001. Having titled *hais-clos*, the film is like a Modern 'Antigone', dominated by the authoritative and hard working figure of the father Abu Shukri (played beautifully by a non-professional actor) and his family in a totally isolated place, a strange no man's land. Set near to where the director and most of the cast live, the location is in reality on lands confiscated during the 1968 Arab-Israeli war, which later became a military zone. The characters are physically and mentally isolated by their silent struggle to survive the past. Their self-sufficient existence is governed by unwritten laws and haunted by impending tragedy. The film is full of metaphors and mysteries, and the enemy, the threat, is not seen or named. This is in contrast with many straightforward Palestinian films, where the oppressors and the victims are clearly described. Nevertheless the presence of the enemy, whether within or outside oneself, hangs like a dark cloud. This is a film that questions not only paternal authority, but all authority.'

[Description from http://www.lff.org.uk/films_details.php?FilmID=541]

Roma populations

Title: Gadjó Dilo

Director: Tony Gatlif

Year: 1997

Running time: 100 minutes

Distributor: Celluloid Dreams

A Parisian man is looking for the Roma singer Nora Luca, whom he heard on his father's favourite cassette. His quest takes him to Valachie, in the heart of the countryside of the Lutaris, 'gypsy musicians', where he falls in love.

Title: Latcho Drom

Director: Tony Gatlif

Country of production: France

Year: 1993

Running time: 103 minutes

'This majestic, French-made film wishes viewers a "latcho drom" – a safe journey – as it follows the roots of the Rom, travelling people better known as Gypsies. Stunning and evocative, it transcends language and culture, bringing together the best elements of *National Geographic*-style documentary and music video in a kind of anthropological MTV. Using only music and image, without any steady characters or plot, award-winning director Tony Gatlif [himself of Rom descent] tells a compelling story of Roma migrations from Northern India to Europe and the rest of the world. Beginning with a gathering of lavishly dressed nomads singing across the harsh deserts of Rajasthan, viewers are transported through the lush oases of Egypt into the ghettos of Turkey, from the muddy lanes of Eastern Europe through lush French fields to the windswept coastal cities of Spain. Every step of the way, there are hypnotic reminders of the harshness and beauty of the Rom lifestyle: the rhythms of labour pounding into vibrant dance, the songs of Turkish flower sellers merging with the plaintive political satires of a grey-haired Romanian violinist.'

[Description from <http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/detail/-/6304263198/102-1882978-0731306?v=glance#product-details>]

Rwanda

Title: *After Years of Walking*
Director: Sarah Vanagt
Language: Kinyarwanda and French with English subtitles
Country of production: UK
Year made: 2003
Running time: 37 minutes
Distributor: [National Film & TV School](#)

'After the genocide of 1994, the Rwandan government temporarily suspended history from the school curriculum. The characters in *After Years of Walking* — children, teachers, genocidal killers, students and historians — all find themselves in an uncertain zone between the grip of history and the need to forge new beginnings. The filmmaker discovered an historical film made in 1959 by Belgian missionaries and took this film back to Rwanda in 2002, using it to probe contemporary Rwandan understandings of the country's tumultuous and tragic past. Her film captures their reactions and the complexities of collective memory.'

[Description from <http://www.hrw.org/iff/2004/london/RWANDA>]

Title: *Gacaca, Living Together Again in Rwanda?*
Director: Anne Aghion
Language: Kinyarwanda with English subtitles
Country of production: France/US
Year: 2002
Running time: 55 minutes
Distributor: [Doc and Co](#)

'In 1994, decades of politically motivated ethnic scapegoating by Rwanda's Hutu-led government culminated in a wholesale slaughter of the country's Tutsi minority, along with many Hutu moderates. More than 800,000 lives were taken, and the country was left in a state of devastation. Today, under a new government, Rwanda is rebuilding its physical and administrative infrastructure, but its most difficult task is to deal with the emotional trauma and to foster reconciliation between the Hutu and Tutsi. *Gacaca, Living Together Again in Rwanda?* follows the first steps in one of the world's oldest experiments in reconciliation: the Gacaca (Ga-CHA-cha) Tribunals, a new form of citizen-based justice, aimed at unifying this scarred nation.'

[Description from <http://www.hrw.org/iff/2003/london/gacaca.html>]

Title: *In Rwanda we say: the family that doesn't speak dies*
Director: Anne Aghion
Language: Kinyarwanda with English subtitles
Country of production: France/US
Year: 2004
Running time: 57 minutes
Distributor: [Doc and Co](#)

'Award-winning filmmaker Anne Aghion's influential 2002 film, *Gacaca, Living Together Again in Rwanda?* captured the feelings of both survivors and alleged killers in the remote community of Ntongwe, Rwanda just as the government was announcing the Gacaca (ga-CHA-cha), a new system of citizen-based justice intended to handle the cases of over 100,000 genocide suspects languishing in detention. *In Rwanda We Say...* returns two years later as several thousands of these suspects, still untried, are released across the country: having confessed to their crimes, and served the maximum sentence the Gacaca could impose, these perpetrators are sent home to plough fields and fetch water alongside the people they are accused of victimizing. *In Rwanda We Say...* focuses on the release of

one suspect, and the effect of his return on one tiny hillside hamlet. While the government's message of a "united Rwandan family" infiltrates the language of the community, reactions to this imposed co-existence reel from numb acceptance to repressed rage. Violence seems to lurk just below the surface. What unfolds, however, is an astonishing testament to the liberating power of speech: little by little, people begin to talk in a profound and articulate way — first to the camera, and then to each other — as these neighbours negotiate the emotional task of accepting life side by side.'

[Description from <http://www.hrw.org/iff/2004/london/film.html#RWANDA>]

Title: *The Last Just Man*

Director: Steven Silver

Country of production: Canada

Year: 2001

Running time: 70 minutes

Distributor: [Barna-Alper Productions](#)

'It was the worst massacre since the Second World War. In just 100 days, 800,000 Rwandans were killed by machete and machinegun – and it all happened on the watch of Canadian Gen. Romeo Dallaire. *The Last Just Man* shows a haunted Dallaire still questioning if he could have done more to try and stop the 1994 genocide. Dallaire, the leader of a United Nations peacekeeping mission, only saw the best when he arrived in Rwanda in 1993. A peace treaty between warring tribes had been signed and he was preparing to put a peacekeeping force in place to ensure calm. But in just a few months, peacekeeping would turn into an offensive. Dallaire tried frantically to tell the United Nations, and the world, what was about to happen. In the end, Dallaire failed to persuade the United Nations and others to intervene in time. As a result, Dallaire and the survivors of the genocide are forced to live with the memory of what could have been. Using a combination of intense interview footage and subtle scenes from Rwanda, Silver succeeds in recreating the tension of those months and the emotions that flooded Dallaire's mind as he attempted to stop a catastrophe of unimaginable proportions.'

[Description from <http://www.hrw.org/iff/2003/london/last.html>]

Romania

Title: *Code Unknown*

Director: Michael Haneke

Language: French, Romanian with English subtitles

Country of production: France/Germany/Romania

Year: 2000

Running time: 117 minutes

Certificate: 15

'Paris, the present. Anne [Juliette Binoche], an actress, meets Jean [Alexandre Hamidi], the younger brother of her war-photographer boyfriend Georges [Thierry Neuvic]. Jean has run away from his father's farm and asks her for the new entry code to her apartment; he then discards a crumpled paper bag into the lap of Maria [Luminita Gheorghiu], a Romanian illegal migrant who is begging on the street. A madou [Ona Lu Yenke], a teacher of deaf children, remonstrates with him. In the ensuing scuffle, policemen arrest Maria and A madou. Maria is deported. A madou's West African mother expresses her grief at the treatment of her son. Anne performs a scene from the thriller she is filming, in which she is imprisoned in a soundproof room by a killer.

George's returns from Kosovo, where he has been photographing atrocities. In Romania, Maria returns to her husband Dragos [Bob Nicolescu] and her family, with whom she moves into a small flat. She is ashamed of having had to beg in Paris, although she did send money home. Jean disappears from his father's farm. His father responds by killing his livestock, telling Anne and Georges that he is unable to run the farm without Jean's help. Anne hears sounds of distress coming from an adjoining apartment but is unsure what to do. She confronts an elderly neighbour who, she believes, pushed a note through her

door purporting to be from an abused child in the other apartment; the old woman denies it. Antagonised by Georges' inability to settle, Anne starts a scene with him in a supermarket, claiming that she aborted their child while he was away. Georges surreptitiously photographs passengers on the Métro. Maria pays to be smuggled back to Paris. Anne, travelling home on the Métro, is tormented by an Arab youth who spits in her face before being challenged by a middle-aged Arab man. As Maria starts to beg on the street, Georges finds the code to the apartment changed and Amadou's students perform a piece for massed drums.'

[Description from http://www.bfi.org.uk/sightandsound/2001_05/code_unknown.html]

Russia

Title: Last Resort

Director: Pawel Pawlikovsky

Language: English

Country of production: UK

Year: 2000

Running time: 73 minutes

Certificate: 15

'A Russian woman, Tanya, arrives in England with her young son hoping to see the English fiancé she met in Moscow. When he fails to turn up at the airport, Tanya and Artiom are virtually imprisoned in an asylum camp in a deserted seaside resort. Tanya gradually develops a relationship with an amusement arcade manager [Paddy Considine] who helps them escape. Fortified by great performances from the three lead characters, this is an amusing and fresh look at life on the fringe of modern British society.'

[Description from <http://www.bfi.org.uk/collections/catalogues/newdvds/details.php?id=59>]

Title: Lilya 4- Ever

Director: Lukas Moodysson

Country of production: Sweden

Year: 2002

Running time: 109 minutes

'Set in a dismal suburb somewhere in the former Soviet Union (possibly Estonia, where it was filmed), this is the story of a teenage girl named Lilya (Akinshina) whose best friend is a glue-sniffing street urchin, Volodya (Bogucharsky), and whose mother has recently run away to live in America, abandoning her. Eager to start a new life, Lilya is excited when her new boyfriend, Andrei (Ponomarev), asks her to move to Sweden with him, but she doesn't get what she bargained for when she gets there, in this bleak story mired in the gloom of deceit, prostitution, rape and suicide.'

[Description from <http://movies.yahoo.com/shop?d=hv&id=1808443656&cf=info&intl=us>]

Sri Lanka

Title: Against the tide

Director: Sudath Devapriya

Country of production: Sri Lanka

Year: 2004

Running time: 90 minutes

'Award winning film-maker Sudath Devapriya's new film is set in the rural Sri Lanka of 1989. The civil war is raging, but it hasn't yet touched the life of nine-year-old Sirimal, who lives an idyllic life with his mother and his boatman father, helping him ferry passengers over to their island every day. Sirimal is adored by his dad who is easily softened by his son's beaming smile. One day his father is requested to ferry a group of strangers with guns over to the island, and they are shortly followed by the army. Gun

battles and arrests soon ensue and Sirimal's world is changed forever by his father's disappearance. As their local society descends into anarchy and bloodshed Sirimal and his mother desperately hang on to hope, setting out on a quest to find the missing parent.'

(Description from http://www.lff.org.uk/films_details.php?FilmID=410)

Title: Buongiorno Italia – In Search of Mille Lire

Director: Boodee Keerthisena

Year: 2000

Running time: 140 minutes

'The story revolves around a group of young musicians, rock'n rollers who venerate Bob Marley and wish to become a famous band. But their lives on the lowest rungs of Sri Lanka society, with its poverty and violence, offer them little if no opportunities. Friends returning from Italy talk about the money to be made. But the journey there is not straightforward because it's not legal. The film follows them on their dangerous journey with all its hazards, its comradeship, its tears and laughter. And also death. On returning to Sri Lanka, somehow they seem to be better equipped to survive either in Sri Lanka, or to return to Italy, this time as legal immigrants.'

[Description from <http://www.asiaticafilmmediale.it/2001/uk2001/database/millesoya.html>]

Title: Death on a Full Moon Day

Director: Prasanna Vithanage

Language: Tamil with English Subtitles

Country of production: Sri Lanka, Japan

Year: 1998

Running time: 72 minutes

Certificate: PG

'Initially banned by the Sri Lankan government and now seen as a modern day classic of Sinhalese Cinema, the film deals with the brutal 16 year war between the Sri Lankan state and the Tamils living in the North of the Island. On the day of a full moon, Vannihamy (Joe Abeywickrama) is presented by the army with the remains of his son. Facing pressure from his neighbours to accept the compensation offered by the army, the elderly blind man retains clarity of vision that reaches far beyond what the eye can see. Refusing to sign the compensation papers he insists that his son is still alive. Influenced by Satyajit Ray, this impassioned and impartial neo-realist film uses a spare style and little music, focusing instead on the excellent performances and the pathos and understanding emanating from Vithanage's script.'

[Description from <http://www.bfi.org.uk/showing/tours/beyondbollywood/fullmoon.html>]

Title: In the Name of the Buddha

Director: Rajesh Touchriver

Country of production: India, UK

Year: 2002

Distributor: Da'sai

'*In the Name of Buddha* is an epic, disturbing account of the brutal civil war in Sri Lanka. The film offers an uncompromising view of the ethnic conflict that raged in the 1980s and 90s, largely unnoticed by the outside world. During this period more than 60,000 people were killed and 900,000 fled abroad as refugees. The film tells the true story of Siva, a young Tamil doctor who seeks asylum in Britain after his family is caught up in the vicious war between the island's minority Tamils and its army and government, dominated by Sri Lanka's Buddhist Sinhalese.'

[Description from <http://film.guardian.co.uk/features/featurepages/0,4120,951795,00.html>]

Sudan

Title: Benjamin and His Brother
Director: Arthur Howes
Country of production: UK
Year: 2002
Running time: 87 minutes

'Years of civil war and ethnic conflict in the Sudan have created a generation of young men – known as the "lost boys" – who have spent more years in refugee camps than in their home communities. From the director of *Kafi's Story* and *Nuba Conversations*, this intimate film recounts the story of Benjamin and William Deng, brothers joined in the struggle of a seemingly never-ending exile, who are then separated when one is accepted into a United States resettlement program while the other remains at a Kenyan refugee camp.'

[Description from <http://www.hrw.org/iff/2003/london/benjamin.html>]

Title: Lost Boys of Sudan
Director: Megan Mylan and Jon Shenk
Language: English and Dinka with English subtitles
Running time: 87 minutes
Distributors: Contact [Actual Films](#) and Principe Productions
Website: <http://www.lostboysfilm.com>

'*Lost Boys of Sudan* is a feature-length documentary that follows two Sudanese refugees on an extraordinary journey from Africa to America. Orphaned as young boys in one of Africa's cruellest civil wars, Peter Dut and Santino Chuor survived lion attacks and militia gunfire to reach a refugee camp in Kenya along with thousands of other children. From there, remarkably, they were chosen to come to America. Safe at last from physical danger and hunger, a world away from home, they find themselves confronted with the abundance and alienation of contemporary American suburbia.'

[Description from <http://www.lostboysfilm.com/about.html>]

Title: Tussenland
Director: Eugenie Jansen
Language: Dutch with English subtitles
Country of production: Netherlands
Year: 2002
Running time: 92 minutes

'Jansen's extraordinary debut film *Tussenland* is a tender tale that explores Holland's colonial past by depicting the moving relationship between an unemployed Sudanese refugee and an old ex-soldier who finds the boy sleeping in his backyard. Joined in their common sense of loss and displacement, Jakob, the crabby widower who served his country in Indonesia fifty years earlier eventually befriends Majok, who longs despairingly for his old life in his home country. Jansen uses her keen realist eye to present a film rich in detail, skillfully accounting the emotional isolation of the characters both caught in "Tussenland," which literally translates to "between countries."

[Description from http://www.cfi-icf.ca/eu_03.html]

Tibet

Title: **What Remains of Us**
Director: Kalsang Dolma, Hugo Latulippe, François Prévost
Country of production: Canada
Year: 2004
Running time: 77 minutes

'Forced to seek refuge in India, and still viewed by China as a threat to national security, for 50 years the Dalai Lama had never returned to Lhasa, or spoken directly to Tibetans inside the country. A small portable video recorder broke that silence, when in 1996 Kalsang Dolma, a young Tibetan refugee resident in Canada, travelled across the Himalayas carrying a concealed videotaped message recorded by the spiritual and political leader. In the farthest corners of Tibet, we see families gather around the tiny screen, transfixed, and for one of the first times the voices of this fragile people reach us across the distance. Filmed without the knowledge of the Chinese authorities, *What Remains of Us* is a uniquely moving document of life under occupation. The courage and devotion of the Tibetan people is as humbling as the international indifference to their situation is shaming. The film-makers were careful to do everything they could to preserve the safety of those being filmed, who were putting themselves at risk simply by participating.'

[Description from http://www.lff.org.uk/films_details.php?FilmID=561]

Turkey

Other useful sources of information on films relating to Turkey include:

- Turkish Migrant Cinema in Europe Database
<http://homepages.gold.ac.uk/turkishmigrantcinema/>
- London Turkish Film Festival
2003 <http://www.riocinema.ndirect.co.uk/tff03/index.htm>
2002 <http://www.riocinema.ndirect.co.uk/tff02/introduction.htm>
2001 <http://www.riocinema.ndirect.co.uk/tff01/introduction.htm>
- London Kurdish Film Festival
2002 <http://www.riocinema.ndirect.co.uk/kff02/index.htm>
2001 <http://www.riocinema.ndirect.co.uk/kff01/introduction.htm>

Title: **After**

Director: Metin Yegin

Language: Turkish with English subtitles

Country of Production: Turkey

Year: 2001

Running Time: 24 minutes

Documentary about the longest hunger strike against F-type prisons in Turkey. To date, 74 people have died and hundreds of prisoners have become disabled as a result of contracting Wernerico-Korsikoff disease.

[Description from: <http://www.kurdishfilmfestival.com/kff02/documentaries.htm>]

Title: **April Children**

Director: Yuesel Yavuz

Year: 1998

Running time: 85 minutes

Distributor: Ventura Film

'Cem, Mehmet and Dilan are brothers and sisters. Their father brought them and their mother to Germany from Turkish Kurdistan fifteen years ago. Cem, the eldest, works in a sausage factory and has long been the right age to marry, according to his parents. He has been promised since childhood to a cousin who still lives in Kurdistan; however, until now, he had suppressed the thought of a final commitment. Then he falls in love with the German prostitute Kim in a Turkish night club... Cem's younger brother, Mehmet, sees his chance with his friend Arif to land "the big coup" in dealing with drugs. When Arif falls in love with Mehmet's little sister Dilan, Mehmet takes his new job even more

seriously...At the same time, their parents' native village in Kurdistan is destroyed: a reason for them to begin preparations for Cem's wedding and to bring the cousin to Germany. Cem, who loves Kim, is faced by a conflict...'

[Description from http://www.german-cinema.de/archive/film_view.php?film_id=267]

Title: Escape to Paradise
Director: Nino Jacusso
Language: Turkish with English subtitles
Country of production: Switzerland
Year: 2001
Running time: 90 minutes

'A Kurdish refugee family who are applying for political asylum in Switzerland are sent to an immigration centre. Their future will only be secure if they can present a convincing case. They turn to a Swiss man who claims he can supply them with the documents and stories which will convince the immigration authorities.'

[Description from <http://www.kurdishfilmfestival.com/kff02/features.htm>]

Title: F
Director: Metin Yegin
Language: Turkish with English subtitles
Country of production: Turkey
Year: 2001
Running time: 64 minutes

'Documentary about the experiences of prisoners who survived the 19th December 2000 operation by the Turkish Security forces during the hunger strike against F-type prisons.'

[Description from <http://www.kurdishfilmfestival.com/kff02/documentaries.htm>]

Title: Farewell Stranger
Director: Tevfik Baser
Year: 1992
Running time: 97 minutes

'Two people caught up in a spiritual crisis meet on the North Sea island of Langeness [North Germany] - Karin, an attractive woman of about 40, and a 50-year-old man seeking political asylum, whose past is marked by imprisonment and torture. The fact that they speak no common language through which they might communicate with each other merely arouses their desire to know more about each other and leads slowly to a relationship of love. Baser's film thematizes the question of asylum seekers, a subject which was at the center of public debates in Germany after its unification.'

[Description from <http://homepages.gold.ac.uk/turkishmigrantcinema/films/films/film20.htm>]

Title: The Game
Director: Sehran Sahin and Burcu Sahinyavuz
Language: Kurdish and Turkish with English subtitles
Country of production: Turkey
Year: 2002
Running time: 26 minutes

'The life stories of two young men who lost their lives on opposite sides of the same conflict are told by their grief-stricken mothers through the computer game Counter Strike.'

[Description from <http://www.kurdishfilmfestival.com/kff02/documentaries.htm>]

Title: Good Kurds, Bad Kurds
Director: Kevin McKiernan

Country of production: USA
Year: 2001
Running time: 81 minutes
Distributor: Kevin McKiernan

'A war of national liberation or a war against terrorism? Filmmaker and acclaimed freelance journalist Kevin McKiernan poses this question at the outset of this stirring, provocative film by legendary cinematographer Haskell Wexler. It's all in how you define "good" and "bad": "Good Kurds" are those in Iraq; they're Saddam Hussein's victims whom we want to help. "Bad Kurds" are those waging an armed insurrection against US ally Turkey; they're at the receiving end of US weapons. McKiernan went to northern Iraq to cover the uprising against Saddam. Just a few miles away, no one was covering the hidden war in Turkey, so he decided to bring out the story. *Good Kurds, Bad Kurds* brings sharp clarity to a complicated history while providing disturbing insight into both US immigration and foreign policy.'

[Description from <http://www.hrw.org/iff-00/kurdsindex.html>]

Title: *A Handful of Grass*
Director: Roland Suso Richter
Language: Kurmanji with English subtitles
Country of production: Germany
Year: 1999
Running time: 114 minutes

'Ten-year-old Kendal lives in a poor Kurdish village. His uncle, who is involved in drugs trafficking in Hamburg, takes Kendal to Germany. After his uncle is arrested, the boy is looked after by a German taxi driver, but eventually ends up in a children's home. His uncle tracks him down, and Kendal soon begins work as a drug pusher.'

[Description from <http://www.kurdishfilmfestival.com/kff02/features.htm>]

Title: *Hejar/ Buyuk Adam, Kucuk Ask*
Director: Handan Ipekci
Language: Turkish and Kurdish with English subtitles
Country of production: Turkey
Year: 2001
Running time: 120 minutes

'This controversial – and recently banned – film was unanimously nominated to represent Turkey at the Academy Awards in the Best Foreign Film category. At the film's heart is the relationship between a nationalist, authoritarian judge [Sukran Gungor] and a five-year-old Kurdish orphan [Dilan Ercetin]. The judge, who is the girl's neighbour, takes her in following a botched police raid that results in the death of her guardian. *Hejar* was the winner of several awards, including Best Picture, at Turkey's prestigious Golden Orange Film Festival [2001]. Also stars veteran theatre and film actress Yildiz Kenter.'

[Description from <http://www.kurdishfilmfestival.com/kff02/features.htm>]

Title: *Innowhereland*
Director: Tayfun Pirselimoglu
Language: Turkish with English subtitles
Country of production: Turkey/Germany
Year: 2001
Running time: 94 minutes

'Forty year old Sukrun tries to keep her only son Veysel away from the political activism in which her late husband was involved, and which has brought the family so much suffering. But one day Veysel disappears and Sukran's attempts to find him meet only with silence from the authorities.'

[Description from <http://www.kurdishfilmfestival.com/kff02/features.htm>]

Title: Journey of Hope
Director: Xavier Koller
Country of production: Switzerland
Year: 1990
Running time: 110 minutes

'Xavier Koller's 1990 drama concerns a Turkish family optimistically leaving a threadbare existence in its native country and setting off on a harrowing journey for better luck in Switzerland. The film is relentless in every sense, in its blow-by-blow portrayal of the characters selling their possessions, travelling an illegal route used by other emigrants, falling in with a cluster of smugglers who do not have their best interests at heart, crossing the Alps on foot [an extended sequence that quickly earned the film its must-see reputation]. After all that, they still have to confront Swiss authorities. Brutal and tough going, the heart of the film is not so much the accumulating despair and misery but the strengthening relationships of the central characters. Koller's film, based on a true story, becomes more than the sum of its episodic nightmares. In an unexpected way, it becomes a beacon of true hope and humanity.'

[Description from

<http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/detail/-/6302265630/104-6299040-5214342?v=glance>]

Title: Journey to the Sun [Gunese Yolculuk]
Director: Yesim Ustaoglu
Language: Turkish and Kurdish with English subtitles
Country of production: Turkey, Netherlands, and Germany
Year: 1999
Running time: 104 minutes

'Yesim Ustaoglu has crafted a beautiful, touching film that deals with the heady (and taboo) subject of Turkish oppression of the Kurds. Without resorting to sentimentality or polemic, she's created tender characters that are not mere stand-ins for a political idea. Mehmet's gradual realization of the Kurdish reality in his own country starts out with his own stint in the police station [when he gets taken for a Kurd because of his dark looks] and ends with an actual journey to the eastern part of the country where he witnesses firsthand the devastation that the government's "undeclared" war has wrought on the largely Kurdish peasant population. The film is beautifully shot and despite its heavy subject matter, it is a joy to watch the largely unprofessional cast against the bustling cityscape of Istanbul, and the plain beauty of the barren hills of Southeastern Anatolia.'

[Description from <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0188653/>]

Title: Lelya Zana
Director: Kudret Gunes
Language: Turkish and French with English subtitles
Country of production: France
Year: 2002
Running time: 51 minutes

'Leyla Zana, the first woman Kurdish MP to be elected to the Turkish Parliament in 1992, was imprisoned in 1994 for 15 years for speaking in Kurdish in the Parliament. Kudret Gunes' personal look at the life of Zana takes her to her birthplace, friends and exiled husband.'

[Description from <http://www.kurdishfilmfestival.com/kff02/documentaries.htm>]

Title: Life in a Drop of Water
Director: Umit Elci
Language: Turkish with no subtitles
Country of production: Turkey
Year: 2002
Running time: 72 minutes

'The treatment of prisoners and prison conditions in Turkey has resulted in regular hunger strikes in the last 20 years. This documentary focuses on the 1996 hunger strikes against the use of isolation cells in F-type prisons. It includes interviews with strikers, writers and activists like Ercan Kanar, Eren Keskin, Celal Baslangic and Oral Calislar. The film takes its name from the water pipe that was used to moisten the strikers' lips.'

[Description from <http://www.kurdishfilmfestival.com/kff02/documentaries.htm>]

Title: The Land

Director: Kasim Oz

Year: 1999

Running time: 27 minutes

'The story of an old Kurdish man, who insists on not leaving his village, from which the people are forced by the Turkish army, to migrate. The only thing left from the former active life is a dead silence and places full of memories.'

[Description from <http://homepages.gold.ac.uk/turkishmigrantcinema/>]

Title: Mem and Zin

Director: Umit Elci

Language: Turkish with English subtitles

Country of production: Turkey

Year: 1991

Running time: 90 minutes

'During Kurdish New Year, Nowruz, two brothers and two sisters go to the celebrations. Mem and Zin fall in love and exchange rings without ever knowing whether they will meet again. This story of two tragically separated lovers is also an allegory for the tragic fate of the Kurds, separated and denied.'

[Description from <http://www.kurdishfilmfestival.com/kff02/features.htm>]

Title: The Photograph

Director: Kazim Oz

Year: 2000

Running time: 66 minutes

'An imaginatively shot and revealing film following the stories of two young men travelling to Turkish Kurdistan by bus. They sit next to each other, each of them hiding the reason for his journey from the other. Who are they? Where are they going? And why? A strange kind of proximity and warmth develops between the two of them. The road, the cigarettes and the discomfort they have shared leaves a trace that will reverberate after their paths have separated.'

[Description from <http://homepages.gold.ac.uk/turkishmigrantcinema/>]

Title: A Song for Beko

Director: Nizamet Aric

Language: Kurdish with English subtitles

Country of production: Germany

Year: 1992

Running time: 110 minutes

'Nizamettin Aric made his directorial debut and also starred in the film, one of the first in Kurdish. Beko begins his long pilgrimage, in search of his brother, in Kurdish areas of Turkey, where he escapes arrest. Fleeing into Syria, this modern-day Odysseus then makes his way into the serenely beautiful highlands of the Kurdish areas of Iraq. Here, in a nomadic community caring for refugee children, Beko finds himself and a homeland.'

[Description from <http://www.hrw.org/iff-97/filmae/aricsong.html>]

Title: Tirej

Director: Halil Uysal
Language: Kurdish with English subtitles
Country of production: Kurdistan
Year: 2002
Running time: 50 minutes

'A film written, directed and acted by real life guerrillas and based on a true story, this is perhaps the first feature made entirely by guerrillas. It tells the story of a clash with the Turkish army. After fierce fighting, two guerrillas survive and are encircled by the Turkish army. The war is seen from the perspective of the guerrillas. Will they survive? Will other guerrillas come to their rescue? What are their thoughts when they are fighting, and what will go into the diary of one of the guerrillas?'

[Description from <http://www.hrw.org/iff-00/kurdsindex.html>]

Title: *Winterflower*
Director: Kadir Sozen
Language: Turkish and German with English subtitles
Country of production: Germany
Year: 1996
Running time: 107 minutes

'Mehmut Umut, a Turkish immigrant whose residence permit has expired, is woken early one morning by the police and led away. He is deported from Germany the same day and sent back to Turkey. His wife and little son are left behind. Mehmet survives in Istanbul with temporary jobs as a warehouseman and waiter. He applies for an entry visa but when the application is rejected for no reason, he decides to go beyond the law and embarks on a dangerous journey.'

[Description from <http://www.kurdishfilmfestival.com/kff02/features.htm>]

Title: *Yol (The Way)*
Director: Serif Goren
Country of production: Switzerland
Year: 1982
Running time: 114 minutes

'The penal system in Turkey allows for certain prisoners to go home on leave, promising to return by a strict deadline. We follow five such prisoners as they take the long-awaited leave, having been granted seven days. Their anticipated return to prison dwells in each man's mind as they disperse, rushing to salvage remnants of their shattered lives. Yilmaz Guney, himself a political prisoner in Turkey, wrote the screenplay from his jail cell and collaborated with Serif Goren to direct the film. Guney eventually escaped to Switzerland, where he finished the post-production of the film. Serif Goren and Yilmaz Guney won the Golden Palm from the Cannes Film Festival for their collaboration on *Yol* [tied with *Missing* 1982]. *Yol* was also nominated for a Golden Globe for Best Foreign Film [1983].'

[Description from <http://www.1worldfilms.com/Turkey/yol.htm>]