Cities on Speed

Global Visions for an Urban Future
A documentary project of four films
on the challenges posed by megacities

Tuesdays in February 2012
3:30 PM
Foster Hall, room 103
1130 East 59th Street

Shanghai: Space
Tuesday, February 7th

Discussed by Jin Yan
Graduate Student, Department of Sociology
The University of Chicago

“Shanghai is not just a city - it’s an explosion of 4,000 skyscrapers, thousands of miles of highway, millions of citizens and thousands of government planners. Vast communities need to be expropriated to make way for new skyscrapers, roads, and industries. The government tries to control it, the citizens try to use it, but Shanghai is beyond control.”

Cairo: Garbage
Tuesday, February 14th

Discussed by Noha Forster
Arabic lecturer in Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations
The University of Chicago

“Previously only 12 million people lived in Cairo and the city was neat and tidy. Today Cairo has a population estimated at 20 million with six giant Garbage Villages that have evolved into towns within the city. Nobody can keep up with the speed at which the city is growing and their garbage piles up in the streets.”

Mumbai: Traffic
Tuesday, February 21st

Discussed by Prof. Sanjeev Vidyarthi
Assistant Professor, Department of Urban Planning & Policy
University of Illinois at Chicago

“Urban planning can be tough in the world’s largest democracy! Mumbai is growing like it was on steroids and a collapsing infrastructure could put an end to economic growth. Public trains are filled to the bursting point, traffic is nearing a complete gridlock. An eight lane high-way is being built in the sea to try to compensate for the threatening collapse.”

Bogota: Improving Civic Behavior
Tuesday, February 28th

Discussed by Paola Castaño
PhD Candidate, Department of Sociology
The University of Chicago

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In the early 90s, in Bogotá, kidnappings were the order of the day and the city had the world’s highest homicide rates. However, in 1993, Antanas Mockus, a university president, became mayor and turned the city into one big social experiment. Under his leadership community watch groups were formed, homicides fell 70%, traffic fatalities dropped by over 50%, and many citizens voluntarily paid an extra 10% of taxes!”

Co-sponsored by the Center for Latin American Studies, the South Asia Language and Area Center, the Committee on Southern Asia Studies, the Center for Middle Eastern Studies, the Center for East Asian Studies, the Human Rights Program, and the Center for International Studies.

Persons with disabilities who may need assistance should contact 773 702 8420. Assistive Listening Devices are available upon request with advance notice.