

Mongrel Media
Presents

The Human Scale



**A film by Andreas Dalsgaard
(77 min., Denmark, 2012)
Language: English**

Distribution



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THE HUMAN SCALE

- HOW DO WE MEASURE WHAT REALLY COUNTS?



A FILM BY ANDREAS DALSGAARD

INTRODUCTION

50 % of the world's population lives in urban areas. By 2050 this figure is expected to increase to 80 %. The megacity is both enchanting and scary. But how do we plan these cities in a way, which takes human behavior into account?

In the 20th century the struggle to provide large numbers of people with proper housing, work spaces and transport led the modernists to create gigantic systems of high-rise buildings, industrial estates and high ways. We plan our cities as a machine for living and working, where we are forced to drive a car everywhere in between. We use statistics, master plans and rational calculations of traffic flows and profit maximization. The material gains are evident. But so are the costs. Today we face oil crises, climate change and severe health issues as a result of our modern lifestyle.

THE HUMAN SCALE questions our assumptions about modernity, exploring what happens when we put people into the center of our equations.

For 40 years the Danish architect Jan Gehl has systematically studied human behavior in cities. His starting point was an interest in people, more than buildings – in what he called Life Between Buildings. What made it exist? When was it destroyed? How could it be brought back? This led to studies of how human beings use the streets, how they walk, see, rest, meet, interact etc. Jan Gehl also uses statistics, but the questions he asks are different. For instance: How many

people pass this street throughout a 24 hour period? How many percent of those are pedestrians? How many are driving cars or bikes? How much of the street space are the various groups allowed to use? Is this street performing well for all its users?

Jan Gehl made his first studies in Italy and later he inspired the planning of Denmark's capital, Copenhagen, for 40 years. His ideas inspired the creation of walking streets, the building and improvements of bike paths and the reorganization of parks, squares and other public spaces throughout this city and in many other cities in the Nordic region.

Around the world cities like Melbourne, Dhaka, New York, Chongqing and Christchurch are now also being inspired by Gehl's work and by the developments in Copenhagen.

Modern cities like Melbourne in Australia had become car-based to the extent that the inner cities were dying out. In the evenings the streets were deserted and public life had almost disappeared. The city was called "a doughnut city" because its center had become totally empty. The city authorities, together with Gehl, started developing strategies to bring life back to the center. They redesigned a network of lane ways, which utilize alleys formerly used for parking and dustbins. The alleys were opened up, filled with cafés and shops - and people. The mood of the inner city was totally transformed.



In Chongqing, China, the authorities have for the last 20 years copied the Western city model extensively and in a huge scale. But now both authorities and NGOs are starting to have doubts. Is this really the best solution? Will these cities be sustainable? The architect Kristian Villadsen, following Jan Gehl's models, surveys the streets of Shanghai with Chinese students to understand how life unfolds. The surveys provide a foundation for raising questions such as: What kind of life does actually take place in these neighborhoods? Are there some qualities here we should retain?

In Bangladesh's capital Dhaka the problems are even more pressing. Extreme city growth rate combined with enormous poverty, the option of a duplication of the modern Western city model is not even available. There are simply too many people, too few resources and not enough space. The NGO Work for a Better Bangladesh (WBB Trust) is inspired by Gehl in their own struggle to keep authorities focused on creating sustainable solutions for all people, not just those who can afford a car.

In New York Times Square has been transformed. Previously dominated by cars, the square has now given room to



pedestrianized areas and chairs, where people hang out and chat in the sun. Inhabitants are cycling down Broadway on bike lanes. A small revolution has happened, inspired by surveys made according to Gehl's ideas. They revealed that 90% of the space was taken up by cars, while 90% of the people were pedestrians. The authorities wants to test a different approach. Many locals are at first outraged by the idea, but when they see it implemented, even as a pilot program, they start enjoying the new space – and utilize it for everything from chance encounters to snowball fights.

In Christchurch, New Zealand a massive earthquake in 2011, leaves large parts of the city center completely devastated. The authorities has to start from scratch. Architect David Sim is invited to take part. A brainstorm process, in which

the whole population is invited to contribute ideas about how they wish their city to be rebuilt, not results in thousands of constructive proposals and clear priorities. It also reveals the love the citizens have for their city. The grid of memories and history connects every individual to the architecture of the city. According to David Sim, a city is not just a combination of infrastructure, but a complex dynamic living organism. And that the whole idea of a master plan is part of the problem, not the solution. All the city planners and architects can do is provide frameworks for people and allow life to take place. The people is the starting point.

"We shape our buildings; thereafter they shape us"
- Winston Churchill



The Director

Andreas Dalsgaard graduated from the National Danish Film School in 2009. He holds a degree in visual anthropology from Université Denis Diderot Paris VII in 2004 and a BA in anthropology from the University of Aarhus 2003. "Bogota Change" (doc, 2009, part of Cities on Speed) was selected for Reflecting Images at IDFA, among many other festivals. "Afghan Muscles" (doc, 2008) was also a big festival hit and award winner, and was sold to numerous broadcasters.

The Producer

Signe Byrge Sørensen has been a producer for 14 years. She holds an MA in International Development Studies and Communication Studies from Roskilde University, Denmark. She did Eurodoc in 2003 and EAVE in 2010. Her films include "The Kid and the Clown" (2011), "Football is God" (2010), "The Perfect Muslim" (2009) and "Everlasting Moments" (2008- fiction).

Final Cut for Real ApS

Final Cut for Real is dedicated to high-end creative documentaries for the international market. Our policy is to be curious, daring and seek out directors with serious artistic ambitions. We look for interesting stories, great characters and in-depth social analysis – often with a twist of humour.

Facts

Length: 77 min/feature length

Delivery: Winter 2012

Shooting Format: HD

Delivery Format: DCP,
Bluray

Shooting locations: Copenhagen, Los Angeles, New York, Beijing, Shanghai, Chongqing, Melbourne, Christchurch, Siena, Dhaka

Language: English

A FILM BY ANDREAS M. DALSGAARD

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

I am interested in people. I am interested in the way we organize ourselves in society. How we work, sleep, make love, fight or talk. I am interested in the constructions behind the way we live our lives. What makes us happy? What makes us sad and depressed? What makes us choose to buy two cars, rather than a raft? What is our human nature, and can we understand ourselves better?

With THE HUMAN SCALE I wanted to portray the way we live in cities today, and how our social nature and habits are connected to the physical habitat we live in. the human being within the built environment, so to speak. The Danish architect Jan Gehl and the people inspired by him work with people rather than buildings. The space between the buildings, as they call it. This is also what triggers me as an artist. People!

Architectural films usually focus on the bricks and mortar. They are beautiful and aesthetic depictions of the work of great architects. But they are also dead. I wanted this film to make the human being visible, as a creature within its habitat. Within bricks and mortar. I wanted to create a kaleidoscopic image and sound scape, where the audience can participate in a sort of meditation on modern life. The urban planners, thinkers and architects in the film make observations, ask questions about our lifestyle, and provide some possible solutions. But most of the answers are left to the audience. Who are we, how do we live, and where are we going as a species? And can we even do a damn thing about it?

- Andreas M. Dalsgaard

CV, DIRECTOR ANDREAS M. DALSGAARD

Andreas M. Dalsgaard from the National Film School of Denmark as a fiction film director in 2009. He has a degree in visual anthropology from Université Denis Diderot Paris VII in 2004 and a BA in Anthropology from University of Århus 2003.

"Afghan Muscles" (2007) was Dalsgaard's debut as a documentary director, and it became a festival hit, winning Best Documentary at AFI Los Angeles and Open Eyes Award at Rome MedFilm Festival. His most recent film, "Cities on Speed - Bogotá Change" (2009) was selected for Reflecting Images at IDFA and won the audience award at IndieLisboa in Portugal. The short film "Copenhagen" (2009, fiction - winner of the CILECT Prize 2010, awarded by the world association of film schools) was Dalsgaard's graduation film as a fiction director.

Dalsgaard recently finishing the documentary/fiction hybrid called "Traveling with Mr. T" (co-directed by Simon Lereng Wilmont – premiered at CPH:DOX in November 2012) which is also produced by Signe Byrge Sørensen for Final Cut for Real.

FILMOGRAPHY:

2012 – "Traveling with Mr. T", 93 min. documentary, -director. *Produced by Final Cut for Real ApS, co-produced by Simon Lereng Wilmont. Official Selection CPH:DOX 2012, nominated for NORDIC:DOX Award.*

2012 – "The Human Scale", 83 min. documentary, -director. *Produced by Final Cut for Real ApS. Official Selection CPH:DOX 2012, nominated for NORDIC:DOX Award.*

2009 - "Bogotá Change", 58 min. documentary, – director. *Produced by Upfront Films. Won the Audience Prize at IndieLisboa - Lisboa Intl. Independent Film Festival 2010, the Youth Documentary Award at Bergen Intl. Film Festival 2010, and the Anthropology Award at CineEco 2011. Environmental Anthropology Award. Part of the "Cities on Speed" series. Selected for IDFA 2009, Copenhagen Dox 2009, Göteborg 2010, One World 2010.*

2009 - "Copenhagen", 30 min. fiction short – writer/director. *Graduation film from the National Film School of Denmark. Won CILECT Prize 2010 for Best Graduation film from Centre International de Liaison des Ecoles de Cinema et Television. Selected for Clermont Ferrand 2010.*

2007 - "Afghan Muscles", 58 min. feature documentary – director. *Won the Jury Grand Prix for Best Documentary at the AFI FEST in Los Angeles, 20/20 AFI world tour 2008, Jury Prize DokumentArt European Film Festival 2007, Special Mention Pärnu International Film Festival a.o. Sold to TV in 14 countries. Selected for Copenhagen Dox 2006, Vision du Reel 2007, Hamburg Filmfest 2007 a.o. Produced by Haslund Film and Nimbus Film.*

2004 - "L'Homme de Paris", 14 min. Documentary– director. *Won Best West Danish Film 2004. Selected for Århus Filmfestival, St. Petersburg Filmfest, NUFF (Tromsø) and Sehnsüchte (Berlin). Danish Television premiere 2005*

2004 - "Road Home", 25 min. Short film– director. *Selected for Odense Filmfestival 2005.*

2002 - "Girl Talk", 58 min documentary– director and producer. *Danish Television premiere 2003.*

2006 - "The Italian Doctor", 23 min. documentary – producer. *Sold to TV in 9 countries and selected for 15 international film festivals.*

CAST & CREW

Cast (in order of appearance)

Jan Gehl
Iqbal Habib
A K M Abul Kalam
Jiangyan Wang
Bob Parker
Ruhan Shama
He Dongquan
David Sim
Lars Gemzøe
Janette Sadik-Khan
Jeff Risom

Mark Gorton
Paul Steely White
Kristian Villadsen
Rob Adams
Robert Doyle
Helle Sørholt
Khondker Neaz Rahman
Dr. M. Mostafa Zaman
Abu Naser Khan
Hugh Nicholson
Coralie Winn

Written and Directed by
Andreas M. Dalsgaard

Producer
Signe Byrge Sørensen

Cinematographers
Heikki Färm, F.S.C
Adam Philp, DFF
Manuel Claro, DFF
René Strandbygaard
Casper Høyberg, DFF

Editors
Søren B. Ebbe
Nicolas Servide Staffolani

Composer
Kristian Selin Eidnes Andersen

Assistant Director
Simon Lereng Wilmont

Additional Editor
Mikael K. Ebbesen

Sound
Lars Rasmussen
Per Dybdal Jensen

Supervising Sound Editor
Kristian Selin Eidnes Andersen

Sound Facilities
Mainstream

Production Manager
Maria Kristensen

Researcher
Katinka Schyberg

Production Assistant
Michelle Bernth

Associate Producers
Andreas M. Dalsgaard
Anne Köhncke
Monica Hellström
Maria Kristensen

Coordinator & Co-Researcher
Vannesa Ahuactzin

Distribution and Marketing Coordinators

Maria Stevnbak Andersen
Monica Hellström

Graphic Design
Nicolas Servide Staffolani

Motion Graphics Artist
Emil Thorbjørnsson

Online Assistants
Daniel Alban
Martin Schmidt

Colourgrading
Lasse Marcussen – Cameo Film

Online
Cameo Film

Translators
Li Li
Debra Efroymson
Maruf Rahman
Xiaoyue Sun

Accounting
Hans Lolk
Korthe Lund Barfod
Jan Arildslund, Beierholm

Insurance
Jens-Georg Hansen – Media Insurance
Brilliant Insurance

CHINA UNIT
Cinematographer
Heikki Färm, F.S.C

Production Managers
Lesley Dong & Amber Huang - China International Communications Co. Ltd
Li Li

Sound
Wu Yanbo

NEW YORK UNIT
Cinematographer
Adam Philp, DFF

Production Manager
Alessio Giorgetti - Centro-Films, Ltd.

Sound
Max Presta

LOS ANGELES UNIT
Cinematographer
Adam Philp, DFF

Production Manager
Lena Lenchik

Sound
Chris Howland

SIENA UNIT
Cinematographer
Heikki Färm, F.S.C

Production
B&B Films Rome

MELBOURNE UNIT
Cinematographer
Heikki Färm, F.S.C

Production Manager
Steve Jablonski

Sound
Steven Bond

DHAKA UNIT
Cinematographer
Adam Philp, DFF

Production Manager
Gazi Mahtab Hassan

Sound
Nahid Masud

CHRISTCHURCH UNIT
Cinematographer
Heikki Färm, F.S.C

Location Manager
William de Friez

Sound
Paul Skelton

COPENHAGEN UNIT
Cinematographers
Heikki Färm, F.S.C
Adam Philp, DFF

Sound
Kjetil Mørk

Additional Camera
Adam Wallenstein
Nadim Carlsen

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