



Film stills from Mumbai film 'Jugaad'

How are the challenges posed by the city structure met by
its dwellers' ability to innovate and adapt?



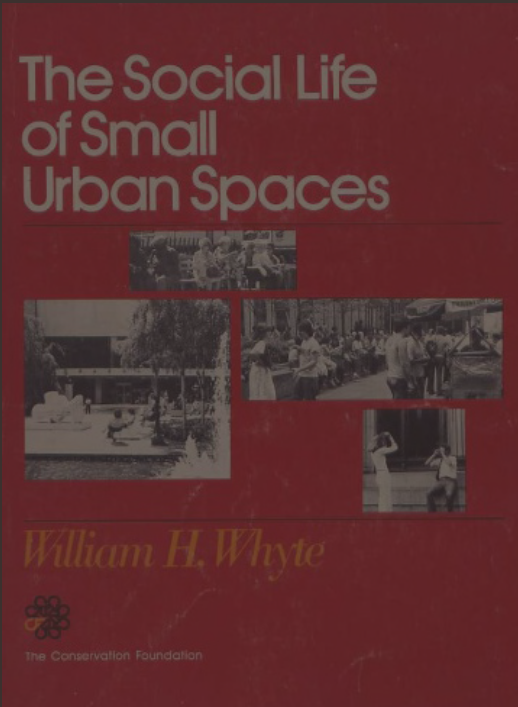


William H. Whyte
(1917-1999) | American Urbanist,
Journalist &
People-watcher

Biography:

He identified the elements that create vibrant public spaces within the city and filmed a variety of urban plazas in New York City in 1970s. After his book about corporate culture *The Organization Man* (1956) sold over two million copies, Whyte turned his attention to the study of human behaviour in urban settings. He published several books on the topic, including *The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces* (1980).

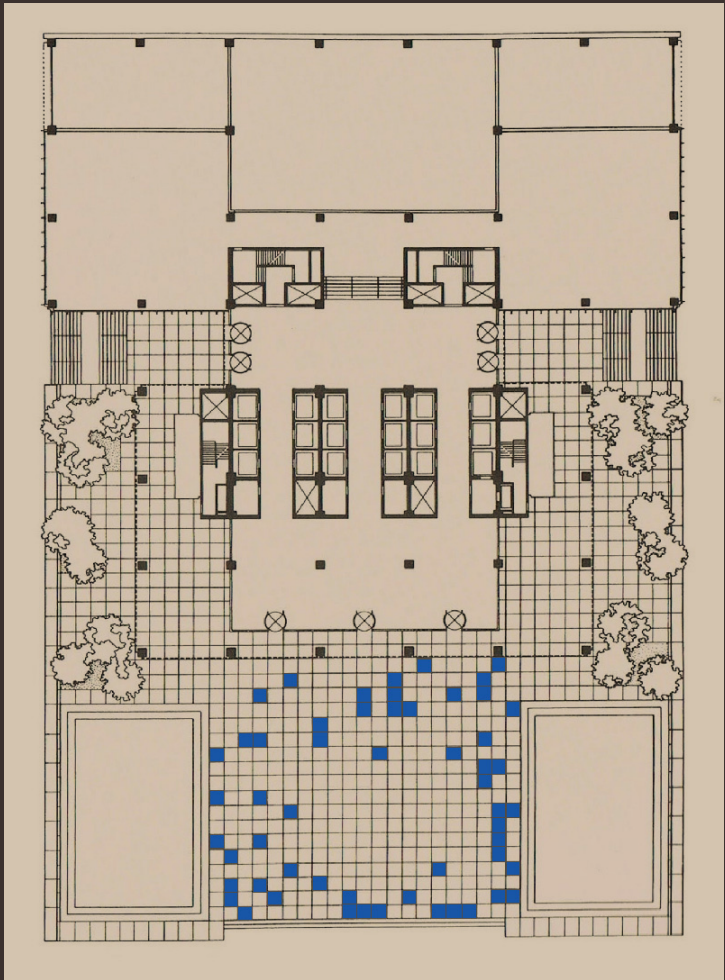
While working with the New York City Planning Commission in 1969, Whyte began to use direct observation to describe behavior in urban settings. With research assistants wielding still cameras, movie cameras, and notebooks, Whyte described the substance of urban public life in an objective and measurable way.



**The Social Life of Small
Urban Spaces**
(1980) | Book, 125 pages. US.
Study of Public Spaces

Book abstract:

In 1980, William H. Whyte published the findings from his revolutionary Street Life Project in *The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces*. Both the book and the accompanying film were instantly labeled classics, and launched a mini-revolution in the planning and study of public spaces. They have since become standard texts, and appear on syllabi and reading lists in urban planning, sociology, environmental design, and architecture departments around the world.



A diagram showing where people stopped to talk on Seagram Plaza in New York



Reciprocal gesture



Human Scale



Film stills from my observation in Venice

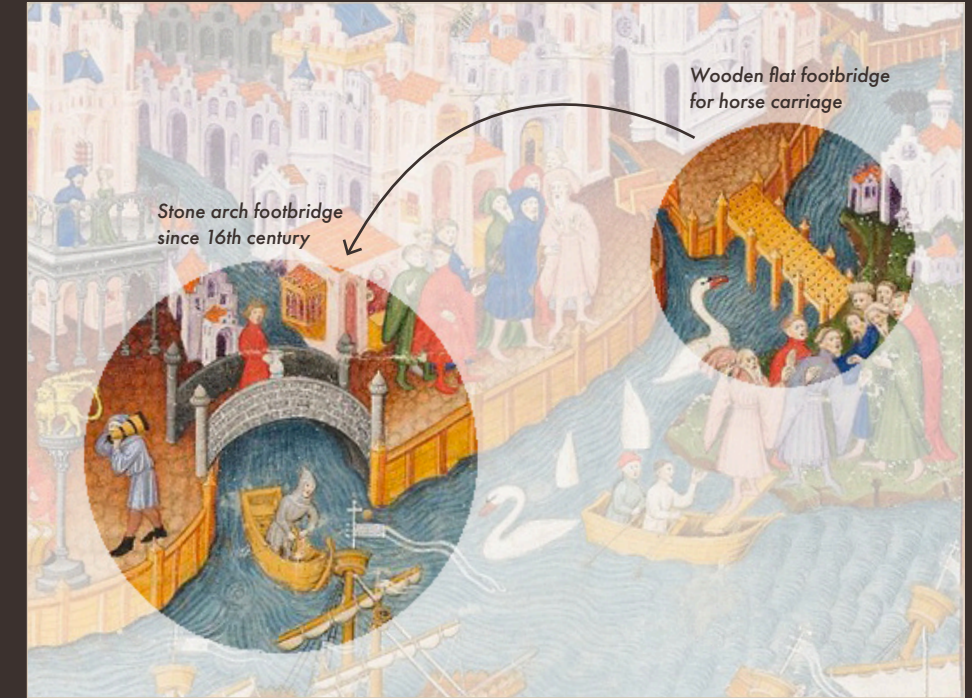
Community Scale



■ Square

■ Circulation paths

City Scale



Wooden flat footbridge
for horse carriage

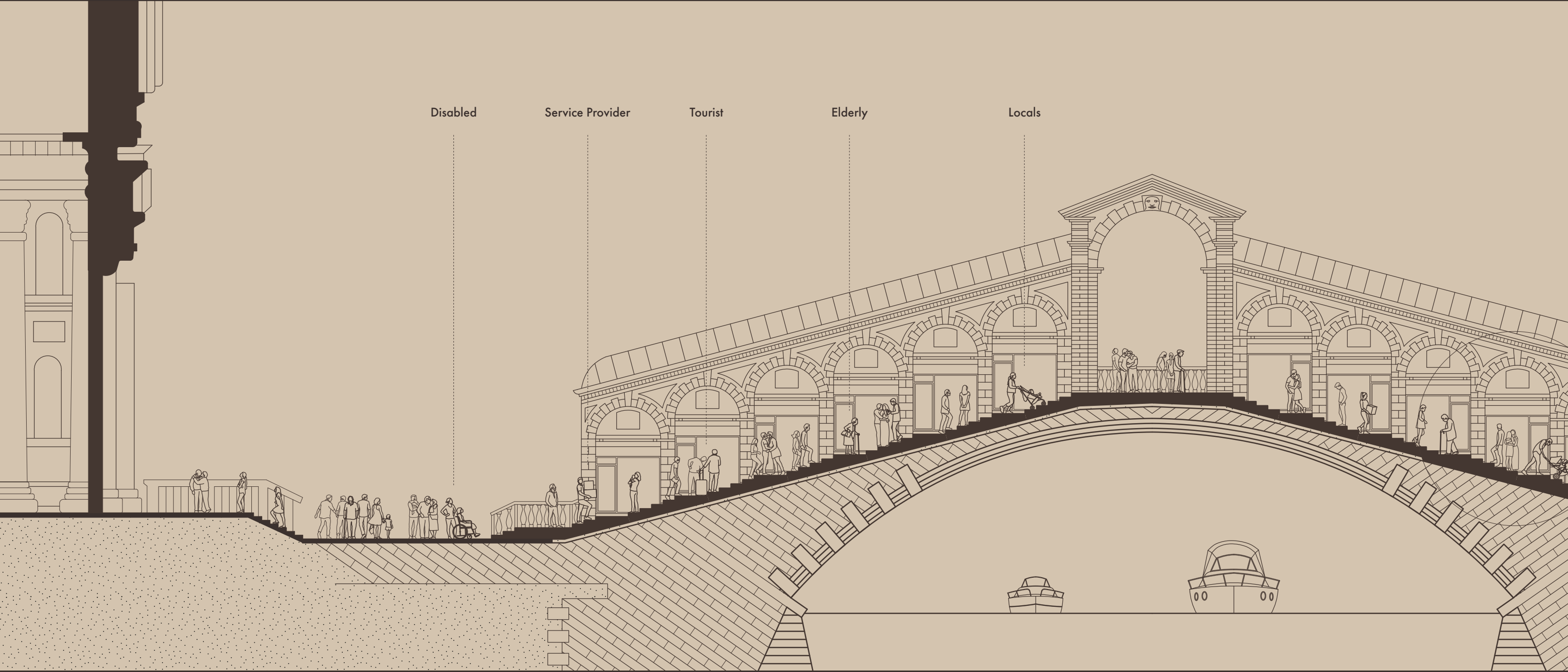
Stone arch footbridge
since 16th century

Marco Polo leaving Venice on his journey to China, 1338.

The reciprocal relationship in adaptation
(Active - Passive)



Wettstreit auf der Ponte dei Pugni in Venedig, Joseph Heintz, 1673



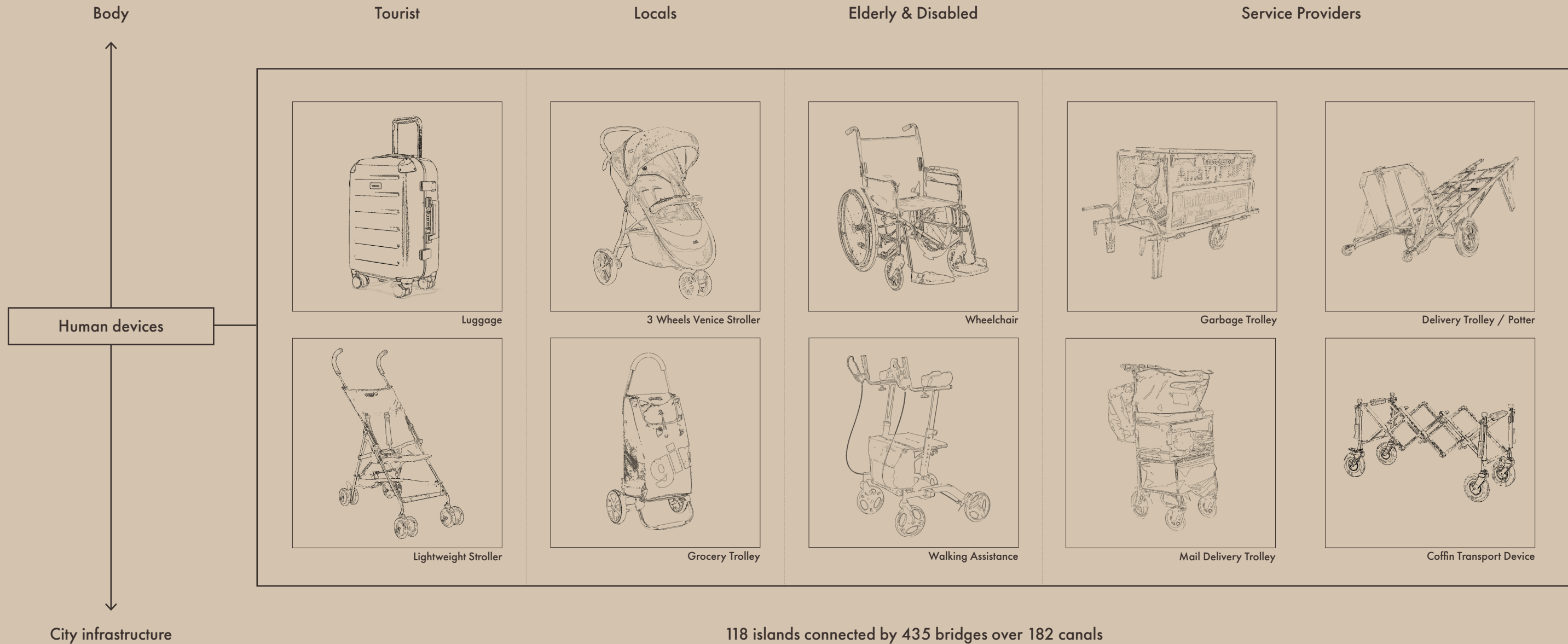
Disabled

Service Provider

Tourist

Elderly

Locals





Film stills from Venice film 'Five Year'

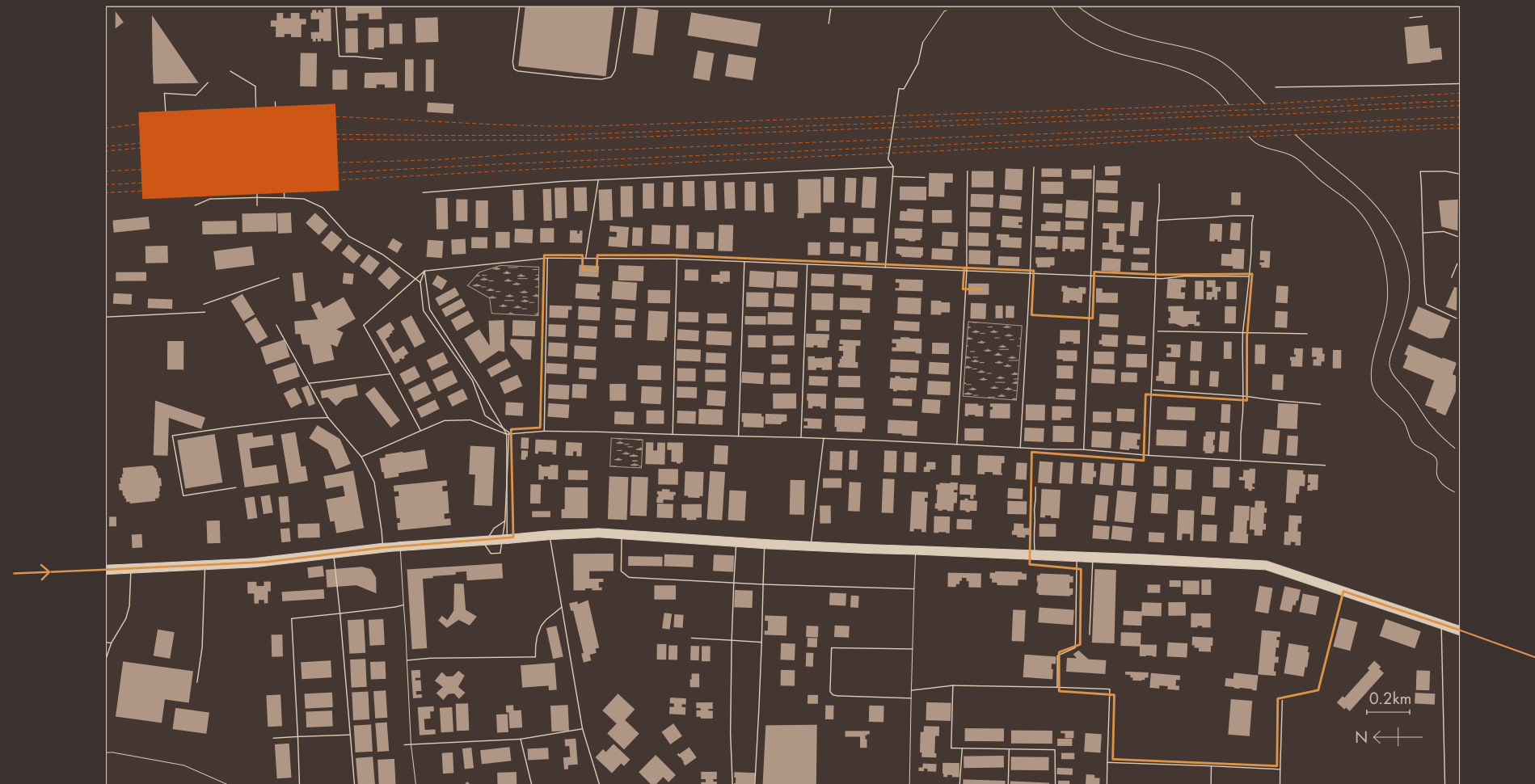


Mumbai city map



- Main traffic road (pre-planned filming itinerary)
- - - Western railway line

Goregaon neighbourhood map



- Main traffic road (pre-planned filming itinerary)
- - - Western railway line
- My actual route following different sensorial elements

Most people in Mumbai walk as a means of transportation,
less than 2 percent of the city's population travels by private car;

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73% of the national wealth generated went to the richest 1%.



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Jugaad

/dʒʊˈɡɑːd/

an innovative fix or an efficient solution that bends the rules

Commerce

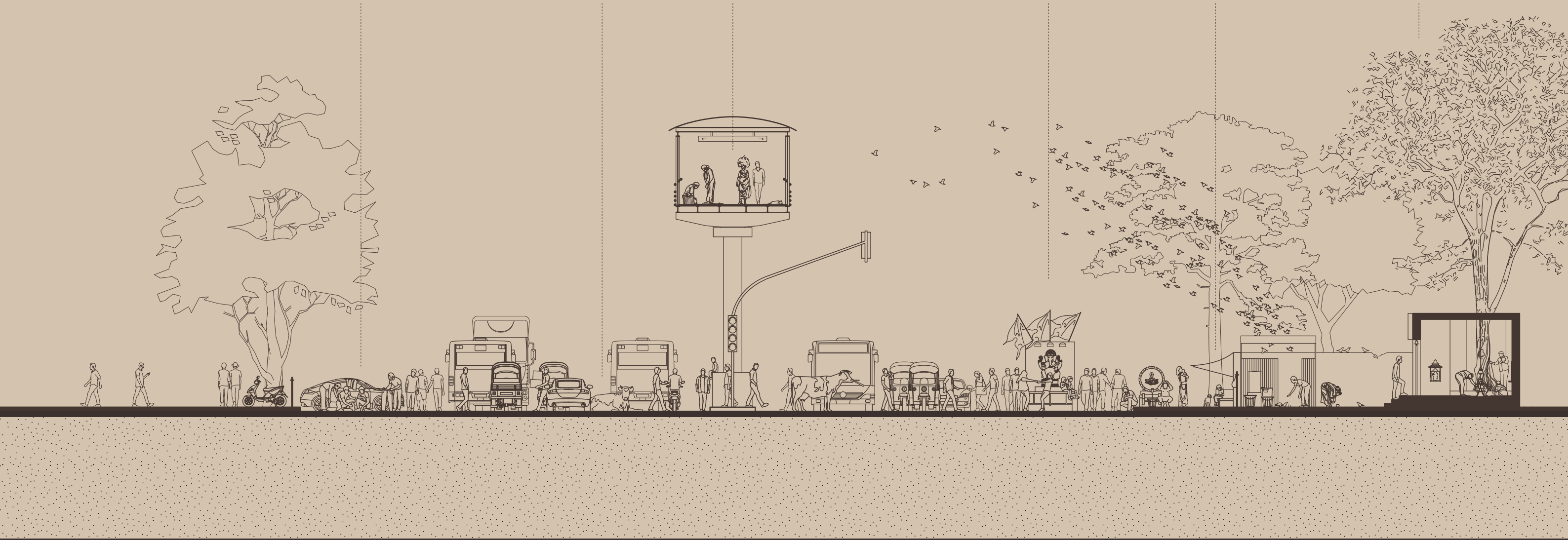
Spirituality

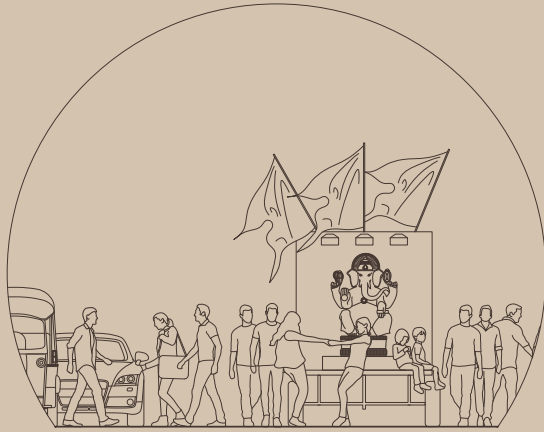
Commute

Religious celebration

Domestic space

Sacred tree





Invention
(tools or devices)

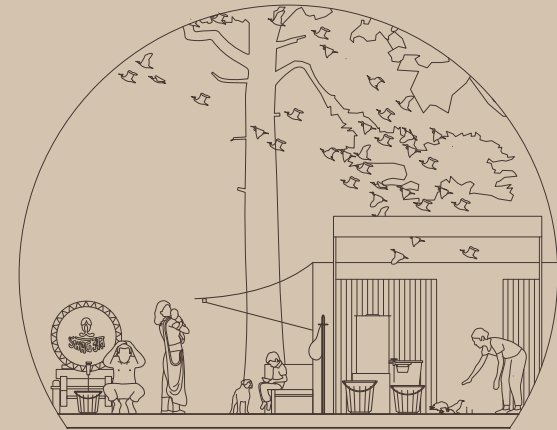


Reciprocal Movement
(humans, animals, vehicles, built environment)

Jugaad



Insertion
(extension from existing structure)



Re-appropriation
(infrastructure, objects, devices, natural elements)



Homo Urbanus Venetianus



Homo Urbanus Mumbaianus



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Johan van der Keuken
(1938-2001)

Dutch doc. filmmaker,
author & photographer

Biography:

In a career that spanned 42 years, Van der Keuken produced 55 documentary films, six of which won eight awards. He also wrote nine books on photography and films, his field of interest. For all his efforts, he received seven awards for his life work, and one other for photography.

“Film has it’s origins at the Fair and that should stay that way.”



The eye above the well
(1988)

Documentary, 35mm, Colour, 94 min.
Kerala, India.

Film abstract:

A poetic depiction of life and ritual in the south Indian state of Kerala. We see how knowledge is passed down from generation to generation: within the family, through the village economy, and especially from teachers to students. Performance footage shows how song, dance, martial arts, and religion constitute the building blocks of a culture.





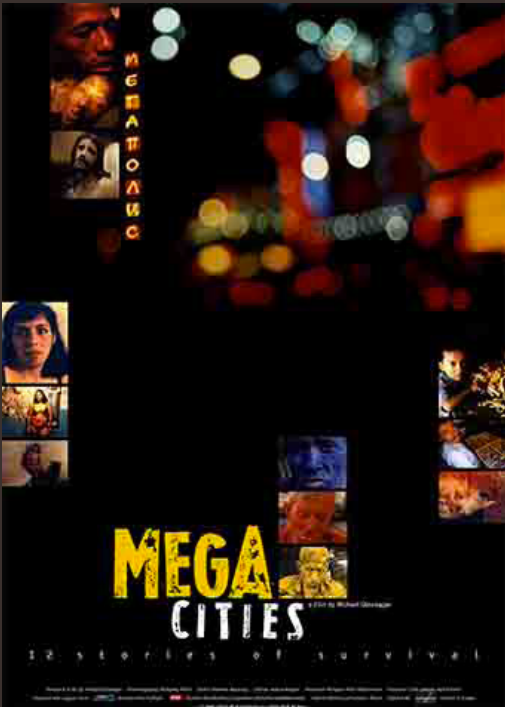
Michael Glawogger
(1959-2014) Austrian film director,
screenwriter & cinematographer

Biography:

From 1981 to 1982 Glawogger studied at the San Francisco Art Institute, and from 1983 to 1989 at the Vienna Film Academy. Like fellow Austrian director Ulrich Seidl, with whom he collaborated several times, he was mainly known for his documentary films, such as *Megacities* (1998), *Workingman's Death* (2005) and *Whores' Glory* (2011). In 2008 he was a member of the jury at the 30th Moscow International Film Festival.

Four days after incorrectly being diagnosed with typhus, he died from malaria on 22 April 2014 shortly before midnight in Monrovia, Liberia during a movie production.

In February 2015, a book of stories entitled *69 Hotel Zimmer* was released. The stories used hotel rooms Glawogger had visited (or in some cases only heard about in passing) as a departure for stories that reflect the visual richness for which his films are celebrated.

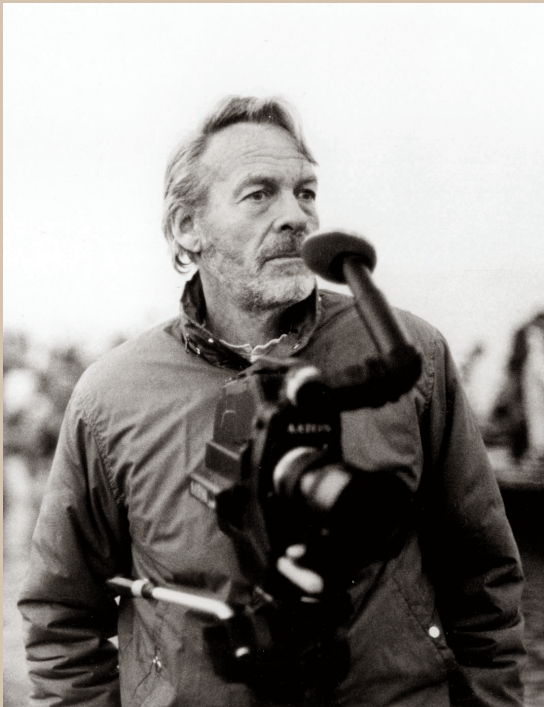


Mega-cities
(1998) Documentary, 16mm, Colour, 90 min.
Mumbai, New York, Mexico City, Moscow

Film abstract:

Megacities is both fascinating and shocking at once – a contradiction the inhabitants of Bombay, New York, Mexico City, and Moscow must live with day in and day out. The film is a tale in twelve episodes about people struggling to survive with resourcefulness, humor, and dignity, and yet there is one illusion they all share: the dream of a better life. A film about human beauty.





Robert Gardner
(1925-2014)

American academic,
anthropologist
& ethnographic filmmaker

Biography:

Starting in 1950s, he is known for his work in the field of visual anthropology and films like Dead Birds, and Forest of Bliss.

After graduating with a Bachelor of Arts degree from Harvard University in 1947, he became an assistant to the founder of the Byzantine Institute of America, Thomas Whittemore at Harvard's Fogg Museum. This led to travels to Anatolia, Fayum and London working with Coptic textiles and restoring Byzantine art. Next, he started teaching medieval art and history at the College of Puget Sound in Washington state. Here, he took to writings of anthropologist Ruth Benedict and he ended up post doing MA in anthropology from Harvard. It was during his graduation period that he took part in an expedition on Kalahari Desert Bushmen, for which he took photographs, films and carried out elementary research work. Thereafter he founded The Film Study Center, a production and research unit at the Peabody Museum at Harvard in 1957. Here it made documentary films till he left the centre in 1997.



Forest of Bliss
(1986)

Documentary, 35mm, Colour, 90 min.
Benares, India

Film abstract:

An atypical documentary about customs concerning death in Benares, India. Gardner's "impressionistic travelogue" is virtually free of commentary and constant dialogue. His camera observes the rituals along the Ganges riverbank, where families mourn their dead while, nearby, dogs chew on floating corpses. Often labeled an ethnographic filmmaker, Gardner worked at Harvard University as the director of the Film Study Center from 1956 to 1997, while making films that investigated subjects like the Kwakiutl people of the Pacific Northwest and the Hamar tribe of Ethiopia.

Ethics & Position:

While depicting unfamiliar cultures and cultural practices, the filmmaker is aware of the challenges and inadequacy in his earlier documentary film, Dead Birds (1964), which reveals more about the his own assumptions and his own culture. In 'Forest of Bliss', he takes on a much distant and discrete position as an observer of the other culture.

Dealing with subjects & Approach:

When dealing with the subjects, he is almost invisible within the community, with no commentary nor engagement with the subjects shown in the film, where the subjects rarely address directly to the filmmaker nor the camera. Although he did not give the subject voice or tell the audience how they feel, the film requires the audience to actively observe while allowing enough space for their own interpretation.

Structural unity & Organisation:

There is one key event and location within the whole film – the rituals concerning death along the Ganges riverbank – which tie all the fragmented footages together along with an opening quote just before the film title is shown. Rather than structuring the observations in a linear way, the film starts with multiple seemingly unrelated subjects simultaneously. Those fragmented footages and brief transitional scenes act as a background knowledge of their overall culture, which build up the audiences' overall impression of the place and create the "stage" for which the main event in the film is presented on.

Aesthetic & Techniques:

Sensory Ethnography – Making use of its medium, he captured the sensory elements of culture and communicated through the visual narration of editing, such as the juxtaposition of two images, the repetition of elements or rhythm of editing. Rather than a well-crafted image or a language, the primary goal of the film is to bring the viewer to an encounter with the rough, brute, unpredictable, and tense state of present reality. Evoking the complex experience from the audience of being present within that culture.

