

**THROUGH FILM  
WE EDUCATE  
INSPIRE AND MAKE  
CHANGE**



*Human Flow, Directed by: Ai Weiwei*

Spaces of Education Film Festivalette Program:

# **Reflections on the meaning of human progress**

**April 15–18, 2019**

**Landmark Embarcadero Center Cinema**

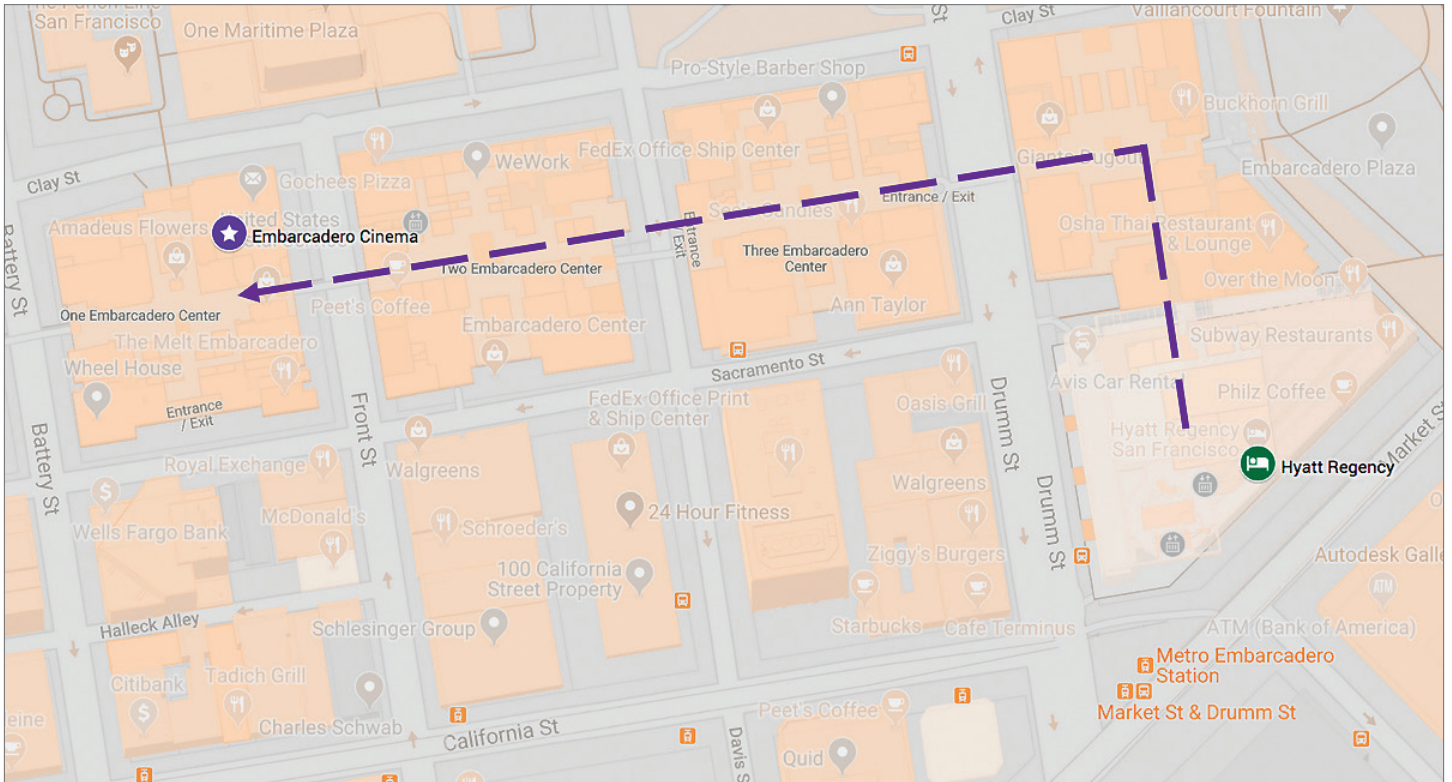
**1 Embarcadero Center, San Francisco, California**

**OPEN SOCIETY  
FOUNDATIONS**



All screenings will take place a short walk from the conference venue at:

## **Landmark Embarcadero Center Cinema 1 Embarcadero Center, San Francisco**



Map from the main conference venue, the Hyatt Regency,  
to the Embarcadero Center Cinema.

Directions: The most direct route is to exit the Hyatt Regency on Level 2 (Atrium),  
enter the Embarcadero Center, and walk through it until you reach the Cinema.

**Created and funded by the Open Society Foundations' Education Support Program and hosted at the Annual Conference of the Comparative and International Education Society (CIES), the 2019 Spaces of Education Film Festival will help participants reflect on the meaning of human progress. The films selected for this fifth edition of the program question our cultural values and their implications for education, exploring connections between development and emotional and intellectual engagement.**

In the context of climate change and the UN Sustainable Development Goals, we embrace the theme of this year's CIES conference, Education for Sustainability, as an invitation for idea-sharing and dialogue about ethical decisions that take into account the long-term future and wellbeing of our communities and planet. Such a process involves grasping the complexity and interconnectedness of economic, political, social, and environmental issues, and questioning the paradigms Western civilization has advanced in the name of economic progress.

Beyond examining how progress has been understood and measured in the past, we as educators need to imagine what progress might mean in a sustainable future. Ultimately, education reflects a society's values. To question those values is to question the principles and structures that frame and characterize formal, non-formal, and informal education, and how these norms could be restructured to better value and promote sustainability-focused mindsets and practices. The three documentaries, two narrative feature films, and inspirational documentary shorts chosen for this year's program are emotionally impactful, challenge the status quo, and promote debate. Furthermore, they reflect our globalized world; several filmmakers left their own national borders to film in another country or in multiple countries.

Renowned environmental education expert David Orr, who will join us as a special guest, has advocated that every student must become "ecology literate." Our program takes this mandate further by pushing for education norms that recognize that the values and paradigms at the root of sustainability issues must be disrupted and transformed.

Consumerism and globalized markets are themes explored from different angles in several films. In the documentary **China Blue (2005)**, San Francisco-based Israeli Micha Peled confronts us with how unregulated globalized capitalism and mass production in China impact teenage girls working in factories. What we really need to live well and how less could be more is explored in the American father-daughter narrative **Leave No Trace (2018)** by Academy Award nominee Debra Granik.

How we can see garbage as a resource, with San Francisco's composting program as an example, is the fresh lens of the globetrotting French hit documentary **Demain (2015)** by Cyril Dion and Mélanie Laurent.

Paths that highlight humankind's positive engagement or lack of harmony with the environment also emerge as themes. Ciro Guerra's Oscar-nominated Colombian narrative feature, **Embrace of the Serpent (2015)**, presents a stirring critique of the white man's repeated misunderstanding and destruction of nature, while Lisa Molomot's short documentary **School's Out (2013)** provides concrete examples of how more direct experiences in nature can revitalize early education.

Other selected shorts offer educational alternatives on the future of local farming, as the quality, availability, and sustainability of food product mass production has come into doubt.

Filmed in 23 countries, **Human Flow (2017)**, by acclaimed Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, addresses issues surrounding borders on a planet with increasing migration that is sometimes connected to or exacerbated by climate change.

# Festivalette program

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**All screenings are first come, first served.  
No tickets required, registration at door.  
Please bring your CIES badge.  
You may invite non-CIES guests to join you, but  
CIES members have priority access if the space is full.**

**Curated by Adriana Cepeda, MobilizArte,  
and Jorge Baxter, Universidad de los Andes.**

## Online festivalette

**For the first time, a selection of Festivalette films  
will be available to CIES members and invited  
guests online, free of charge, for one month after  
the conference (April 19–May 19, 2019).  
The available films will also include a selection  
of last year's films from Latin America.  
Find them at [www.festivalscope.com/festivalette](http://www.festivalscope.com/festivalette)**

Write to us: [films@cies.us](mailto:films@cies.us)

Facebook: [@spacesofeducationinfilmfestivalette](https://www.facebook.com/spacesofeducationinfilmfestivalette)

Twitter: [@CIESFilm2019](https://twitter.com/CIESFilm2019)





**“THIS IS AN  
UNFORGETTABLE  
FILM”**

**San Francisco Chronicle**

**Winner**

**Amnesty Human  
Rights Award**

## 1. China Blue, 2005

**Documentary, USA, Mandarin, Cantonese and English,  
with English Subtitles, Micha X. Peled [87 minutes].**

San Francisco-based Israeli filmmaker Micha X. Peled gives us clandestine access to verité day-to-day life in a jeans manufacturing factory in Shaxi city, Southeastern China. We mostly follow sixteen-year-old newcomer Jasmine who, like millions of others, has moved to a distant urban factory in the hopes of contributing to her rural family's income. "I can't let them down," she says. Some of the workers are as young as 14. The owner meets Western buyer demands with very low prices and tight deadlines that result in low wages and 24-hour shifts for the girls. Friendship and dreams sustain the girls, until they cannot stay awake anymore and are deprived of expected payments. Jasmine hopes her life there was just a bad dream, sharing, "When I wake up, I'll be back in school and playing with my friends." This film offers nuanced, sensitive, complex insight into the human consequences of globalized consumerism. It confronts us with the role we play as consumers and prompts educators to question their role in this intricate system.

### THREE SCREENINGS:

**1 Monday, April 15, 4:00–5:30PM**

**2 Tuesday, April 16, 6:15–8:45PM**

(followed by Q & A with Director Micha Peled)

**3 Wednesday, April 17, 9:30–11:00PM**

### Micha X. Peled's

documentaries have won dozens of international awards. The first installment of his Globalization Trilogy, *Store Wars: When Wal-Mart Comes to Town* (2001) won Best Documentary at the San Francisco Film Festival, and the final chapter, *Bitter Seeds* (2011), his intimate exploration of the controversy around the future of farming in rural India, won the Oxfam Global Justice Award. He's based in the Bay Area.

# Festivalette program

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## 2. Inspirational “case-study” shorts selection

[98 minutes]

These documentaries explore compelling examples of environmentally-linked school and community initiatives in the United States and Europe.

### Demain (Tomorrow), 2015

**Documentary, France. English and French, with English subtitles. Cyril Dion and Mélanie Laurent [34-minute excerpt of feature].**

This inspirational globetrotting documentary highlights solutions to environmental and social issues that scientists warn could be catastrophic. In the opening chapter, these French filmmakers aim to persuade us that small organic farms should be the future of farming by documenting three cases and interviewing experts connected to urban agriculture in Detroit; small “propaganda” gardens in Todmorden, UK; and a permaculture farm in Normandy, France. If we want to contribute to the planet’s sustainability, these filmmakers note we could “start with helping transform where we are.”

Composting can contribute immensely to protecting the environment, and a segment on the San Francisco Waste Composting Program shows how and why this program has been replicated in over 300 cities and 1,000 American universities. Through the program, locals get discounts for composting and the city sells processed compost to farmers. “Here a garbage man doesn’t see garbage, he sees resources.” [5-minute excerpt of feature].

**Cesar Award for Best Documentary Film and French Box Office Hit**



### Cultivating Kids, 2016

**Documentary, United States. English. Melissa Young and Mark Dworkin [23 minutes].**

This film showcases the inner workings of a school farm in South Whidbey Island School District, Washington State. The farm transforms teaching and learning from kindergarten through high school and uplifts the community. Children help farm, use the experience for class projects, eat what they harvest, and provide healthy food for the school cafeteria. Ultimately, the community becomes more connected to the land and the school community benefits from better nutrition.





## **School's Out. Lessons from a Forest Kindergarten, 2013**

**Documentary, Switzerland. German and English, with English subtitles. Lisa Molomot [36 minutes].**

In a Zurich suburb, families have the option to send their four-to seven-year-old children to a public kindergarten that is held in the forest every day, no matter the weather. The film follows them and some of their families over the course a year. The children climb, build with sticks in the rain, carve with knives, and go home alone – experiences contrasted with those of children in a typical American preschool. Lisa Molomot's case for outdoor, free-play learning poses questions about priorities in early schooling.

**Best Short Film Award,  
Colorado Environmental Film Festival**

### **THREE SCREENINGS:**

- 1 Tuesday, April 16, 4:00–5:45PM**
- 2 Wednesday, April 17, 7:15–9:00PM**
- 3 Thursday, April 18, 3:30–5:15PM**

# Festivalette program

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**“A FLAWLESS,  
DEEPLY  
AFFECTING FILM.”**

**The Guardian**

**Official Selection,  
Sundance Film Festival**

## 3. Leave No Trace, 2018

**Narrative Drama, United States, English,  
Debra Granik [109 minutes].**

Presented in alliance with environmental nonprofit, Bioneers.

Will, an ex-soldier suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder, and Tom, his thirteen-year-old daughter, live off the grid in a tent in the forests outside Portland, Oregon. It is illegal to live in the parks. When their hideout is discovered, they are pressured by social services to live “normally,” accumulating more and more things. Homeschooled Tom is high-achieving compared to her peers, but she must now attend a formal school. Will they find a way to return to their forest life? Has conventional contemporary living changed them? This is a beautifully realized, unique coming-of-age film that portrays the complexity of family dynamics and questions what we should be teaching our children at home and as a society.

### THREE SCREENINGS:

**1 Monday, April 15, 1:30–3:30PM**

**2 Monday, April 15, 6:00–9:00PM**

(followed by conversation with Joshua Fouts, Executive Director, Bioneers)

**3 Monday, April 15, 9:30–11:30PM**

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**Joshua Sheridan Fouts** is Executive Director of Bioneers, an innovative nonprofit organization that highlights breakthrough solutions for restoring people and planet. A globally-recognized media innovator and social entrepreneur known for his visionary work paving new inroads for meaningful understanding between cultures, Joshua is an anthropologist who has studied art and documentary film production.





**“ ONE OF THE  
MOST SINGULAR  
CINEMATIC  
EXPERIENCES  
YOU COULD  
HOPE TO HAVE.”**

**The Playlist**

**Oscar Foreign  
Language Nominee**

## **4. El Abrazo de la Serpiente (Embrace of the Serpent), 2015**

**Narrative, Drama/Adventure, Colombia. Multiple languages, with English subtitles. Ciro Guerra [125 minutes].**

Presented in alliance with environmental nonprofit, Bioneers.

Filmed in mesmerizing black and white, *Embrace of the Serpent* immerses us into the heart of the Amazon in a dreamlike adventure. Inspired by the diaries of two real botanists, this fictional story intertwines two journeys guided by Karamakate, a wise Indian shaman, the last of his tribe. He travels with German Theo in 1909 and with American Evan in 1940, in search of a rare sacred plant the explorers hope will heal them. When Evan claims, “I devote my life to plants,” Karamakate replies, “That’s the most reasonable thing I’ve ever heard a white man say.” Their voyages paint an unforgettable critique of the white man’s disrespect for native culture and destruction of nature for the sake of profit. To reverse this ruinous story that repeats itself, Karamakate challenges us to radically transform our cosmovision and be “re-educated” as we listen to the Amazon through his perishing ancestral wisdom.

### **THREE SCREENINGS:**

**1 Tuesday, April 16, 9:15–11:30PM**

**2 Wednesday, April 17, 1:30–3:45PM**

**3 Thursday, April 18, 6:00–9:00PM**

(followed by conversation with sustainability educator David Orr,  
facilitated by Joshua Fouts, Executive Director, Bioneers)

**David W. Orr** is a renowned American educator and entrepreneur focusing on sustainability. He has authored multiple books, including *Ecological Literacy: Educating Our Children for a Sustainable World* and *Earth in Mind: On Education, Environment, and the Human Prospect*, and is the winner of multiple awards. As a professor at Oberlin College, he founded the Oberlin Project to create a sustainable community in Oberlin through a college–town partnership.

# Festivalette program

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**“THE CAMERA SHOWS A WORLD IN WHICH, STEP BY STEP, CRISIS BY CRISIS, BORDERS HAVE BECOME BY TURNS ABSURD & IMMATERIAL.”**

NY Times

Human Rights Award,

Venice International Film Festival

## 5. Human Flow, 2017

**Documentary, Germany. Multiple languages, with English subtitles. Ai Weiwei [145 minutes].**

For this stunning epic, internationally-acclaimed Chinese artist and activist Ai Weiwei filmed for a year employing technologies such as drones, iPhones, and cameras to immerse us in an odyssey spanning 23 countries. We witness the plight and dignity of thousands of “refugees” from the global South fleeing climate change, poverty, and war, most making their way slowly up to Europe. Some of the children live for years in camps without access to formal education. Weiwei was himself forced into exile within China as a child and had almost no access to formal education, so he is able to intimately connect us to the humanity of people on the move who should have the right to access schooling and to a livable place on our planet. How can education contribute to shaping cultures where their dignity and rights are respected?

### THREE SCREENINGS:

- 1 Tuesday, April 16, 1:00–3:30PM
- 2 Wednesday, April 17, 4:15–6:45PM
- 3 Thursday, April 18, 12:30–3:00PM

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# Screening Schedule

SUNDAY APRIL 14 **No screenings**

MONDAY APRIL 15	TUESDAY APRIL 16	WEDNESDAY APRIL 17	THURSDAY APRIL 18
<b>1.30–3.30PM</b> <b>Leave No Trace</b>	<b>1.00–3.30PM</b> <b>Human Flow</b>	<b>1.30–3.45PM</b> <b>Embrace of the Serpent</b>	<b>12.30–3.00PM</b> <b>Human Flow</b>
<b>4.00–5.30PM</b> <b>China Blue</b>	<b>4.00–5.45PM</b> <b>Inspirational Shorts</b>	<b>4.15–6.45PM</b> <b>Human Flow</b>	<b>3.30–5.15PM</b> <b>Inspirational Shorts</b>
<b>6.00–9.00PM</b> <b>Leave No Trace</b> & discussion with Bioneers Director Joshua Fouts	<b>6.15–8.45PM</b> <b>China Blue</b> Q&A with Film Director	<b>7.15–9.00PM</b> <b>Inspirational Shorts</b>	<b>6.00–9.00PM</b> <b>Embrace of the Serpent</b> & discussion with Sustainable Educator David Orr
<b>9.30–11.30PM</b> <b>Leave No Trace</b>	<b>9.15–11.30PM</b> <b>Embrace of the Serpent</b>	<b>9.30–11.00PM</b> <b>China Blue</b>	



PLEASE RECYCLE  
THIS PROGRAM