

**RECONSTRUCTION OF ARCHITECTURAL IMAGE IN
SCIENCE FICTION CINEMA: A CASE STUDY ON NEW YORK**

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ABSTRACT

RECONSTRUCTION OF ARCHITECTURAL IMAGE IN SCIENCE FICTION CINEMA: A CASE STUDY ON NEW YORK

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This thesis interrogates the interrelation between architecture and science fiction cinema to understand the fictional and representative power of architecture. Since cinema embraces both physical and representative aspects of architecture it is convenient to carry out the research through the mediation of cinema. To accomplish this goal science fiction genre is particularly chosen where architectural image can break its commonly acknowledged facet and can reconstruct to participate in the narrative. The architectural image is intended to be interpreted through the concept of city and architectural components in science fiction cinema.

To create a mutual language, a world wide known city – New York City – is selected as the case study subject; that the research is developed upon. Initially the study is based on the discussion over cinema architecture relationship from an architect's point of view. Subsequently architectural image in architecture and cinema is studied under several categories. Twenty four science fiction movies with various plots are chosen where all the movies are either located in

New York City or in a fictional city inspired by it. By analyzing these movies through architectural concepts it is aimed to gain understanding to key points in architectural design.

Keywords: Science Fiction Cinema, Science Fiction Architecture, Representation, Architectural Image.

ÖZ

MİMARİ İMGELERİN BİLİM KURGU FİLMLERİNDE YENİDEN KURULUMU: NEW YORK ÜZERİNE BİR ÇALIŞMA

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Bu çalışma, mimarlığın temsili ve imgesel gücünü anlamak amacıyla, mimarlık ile bilim kurgu sineması arasındaki ilişkiyi incelemektedir. Sinema, mimarlığın hem fiziksel hem de temsili yönlerini ortaya çıkardığından, bu çalışmanın sinema aracılığı ile yapılması uygun görülmüştür. Bilim kurgu sineması, mimarlığın bilinen yüzünden sıyrılıp, hikaye içerisinde kendini yeniden oluşturmasını sağladığı için bu çalışmanın amaca ulaşmasında özellikle seçilmiştir. Bilim kurgu sinemasındaki şehir ve mimari oluşum kavramları ışığında mimari imgenin yorumlanması amaçlanmıştır.

Ortak bir dil yaratmak amacıyla, dünya çapında bilinen New York Şehri, bu tezin ilerlemesini sağlayan durum çalışmasının ana teması olarak seçilmiştir. Çalışmada ilk olarak bir mimar gözüyle, mimarlık sinema ilişkisi üzerine olan

tartışmalar incelenmiştir. Daha sonra mimarlıktaki mimari imge ile sinemadaki mimari imge çeşitli başlıklar altında değerlendirilmiştir. Bu çalışma için farklı konulara sahip ancak ana mekan olarak New York Şehri'ni kullanan ya da ondan etkilenen yirmi dört film seçilmiştir. Mimari kavramlar ışığında bu filmlerin analiz edilmesi sonucunda mimari tasarımdaki anahtar noktaların anlaşılması amaçlanmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Bilim Kurgu Sineması, Bilim Kurgu Mimarisi, Temsil Etme, Mimari İmge.

To My Family,

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Problem Definition

The prosperity of an architectural design can not be evaluated only by its physical functionality but also the fictional and representative power of it. The latter feature of architecture is an important component of design both as an input and as an outcome. To understand this complexion of architecture, it is necessary to use the help of different media.

It is known that there is a close mutual relation between cinema and architecture. There are many works questioning the reason, the development and outcomes of this relation. The questions on the affects of the outcome of this interrelation on contemporary life can be answered with different approaches. While a study on “cinema in architecture” might give answers to the power and influence of cinema on contemporary life through different media, a study on “architecture in cinema” might help to reveal the fictional and representative power of architecture. Science fiction genre has a particular position in this interrelation. To narrate a story science fiction creates a fictional world which is based on scientific foundations; either it is a fact or a prediction. Even most of the plots seem like unbelievable overstatements; more often than not they take references from contemporary occurrences. Science

fiction genre collaborates with architecture to create this fictional world, concrete enough to be imaginable and imaginary enough to be efficient. To be able to analyze the interrelation between these two media, it is necessary to have brief information of their mutual history.

It is known that cinema has an important place and an impact in contemporary life. Arnold Hauser writes “The film signifies the first attempt since the beginning of our modern individualistic civilization to produce art for a mass public. As is known, the changes in the structure of the theatre and reading public, connected at the beginning of the last century with the rise of the boulevard play and the feuilleton novel, formed the real beginning of the democratization of art which reaches its culmination in mass attendance of cinemas.”¹ Like all other mass media cinema holds a great power of influence. This important feature of cinema has long been noticed and used for different purposes. As François Penz states “Architects have long been involved in the world of cinema; in particular, in the 20s and 30s when architects were trying to promote the modern movement through the pictures.”² Many documentaries had been shot during this period involving social and economical problems. After these documentaries, different types of movies came out, mostly related to the concepts of ‘city’, ‘metropolis’ and ‘modernism’.

The joint venture between architecture and cinema also resulted with promising outcomes since the similar features which allow both media to work together efficiently. As French architect and set designer Robert Mallet-Stevens observed in 1925; “It is undeniable that the cinema has a marked influence on modern architecture; in turn, modern architecture brings its artistic side to the

¹ Arnold Hauser. *The social history of art: Volume IV Naturalism, impressionism, the film age.* New York and London: Routledge, 1999. p.237.

² François Penz. “Cinema and architecture overlaps and counterpoints: Studio-made feature in the film Industry and studio-based experiments in architectural education” *Architectural Desing.* vol. 64, no.11-12, November-December 2000, pp. 38-41.

cinema. Modern architecture does not only serve the cinematographic set (*decor*), but imprints its stamp on the staging (*mise-en-scene*), it breaks out of its frame; architecture 'plays.'"³ In Dietrich Neumann's terms "Of course, for filmmakers (like Sergei Eisenstein) originally trained as architects, the filmic art offered the potential to develop a new architecture of time and space unfettered by the material constraints of gravity and daily life."⁴ Mallet-Stevens writes about the importance set design since the set presents the character even before he comes on the screen. He continues "On such occasions, the mass-medium of film can play an important role in the reception, criticism and dissemination of architectural ideas."⁵ The hope that film could adopt such a role is as old as the discussion of the medium itself. Neumann notes "After seeing *Metropolis* in Madrid in 1927, Luis Buñuel's critique culminated in a passionate plea for strong ties between film and architecture: "Now and forever the architect is going to replace the set designer. The movies will be the faithful translator of the architect's boldest dreams."⁶

Katherine Shonfield approaches this concept of space from a different angle. "What happens if we accept that architecture does tangibly exist, not as a pristine, impervious whole, but in the perception of the beholder? If fictional representations of the architecture and the city are understood as the architectural equivalent of the dream record, then their entire status can

³ Robert Mallet-Stevens. "Le Cinéma et les arts: L'Architecture" L'Herbier. 1925, p. 288.

⁴ Robert Mallet-Stevens, "Le Décor moderne au cinéma" 1929 quoted in Jean-François Pinchon, Rob. Mallet-Stevens. Architecture, Furniture, Interior Design. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1990, p. 92.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Dietrich Neumann. "Introduction" Film architecture, set designs from *Metropolis* to *Blade runner*. Munich and New York: Prestel, 1998. pg.9.

change.”⁷ Beside these experiences science fiction cinema has other things to offer. As Vivian Sobchack states “That is, enjoying particular representational freedom as a genre of the fantastic, the science-fiction film concretely 'realizes' the imaginary and the speculative in the visible spectacle of a concrete image.”⁸

In the 1970s the utopian and dystopian cities began to be created and the ideas of some futurists such as Antonio Sant’Elia began to attract attention. Besides their fear about wars and catastrophes, people began to wonder about the future. Andrew Benjamin writes ‘Where is the future? How will it be built? One way of taking up these questions would be to follow the presentation of the architecture within films that seek to project the future.’⁹

There are some architects as an example of being inspired by these movies. It is known that architects such as Norman Foster, Nicholas Grimshaw, Jean Nouvel and Future Systems are inspired by movies such as *James Bond* Series and Stanley Kubrick’s *2001: Space Odyssey* (1968). The contribution of cinema to architecture is not only by inspiring with science fiction movies futuristic architecture but also with developing technology and design concepts. Besides the inspiration and technology on computer based design, film has another side affecting the architectural works.

1.2 Aim

⁷ Katherine Shonfield. Walls Have Feelings: Architecture, Film and the City. London: Routledge, 2000. pp. 160-161

⁸ Annette Kuhn. (ed.) Alien Zone II. New York: Verso, 1999. p.76.

⁹ Andrew Benjamin. “At home with replicants: The architecture of Blade Runner,” Architectural Design, vol. 64, no.11-12, November-December 2000, pp. 22-25.

The aim of this study is to understand the fictional and representative power of architecture. Since cinema embraces both physical and representative aspects of architecture it is convenient to carry out the research through the mediation of cinema. To accomplish this goal science fiction genre is particularly chosen where architectural image can break its commonly acknowledged facet and can reconstruct to participate in the narrative. The architectural image is intended to be interpreted through the concept of city and architectural components in science fiction cinema.

1.3 Method

In this thesis the concepts will be studied through a case study in order to have a concrete discussion ground. To create a mutual language, a world wide known city – New York City – is selected as the case study subject; that the research is developed upon. Initially the study will be based on a discussion over cinema architecture relationship from an architect's point of view. Subsequently architectural image in architecture and cinema will be studied under several categories; City as an Image, City Scale, Corporeal Experiences, Movement in the City. Twenty four science fiction movies with various plots are chosen where all the movies are either located in New York City or in a fictional city inspired by it. A time interval of 80 years is covered –from 1927 until 2007 –.

It is not expected all from these movies to have an imaginary city set up since it is also important to study the representation and interpretation of contemporary architectural images in these movies oppose to real life. The movies without any information on the time of the narrative are assumed to have the same date as production of the movie.

1.4 Limits

This thesis mainly studies architectural images in cinema along with architectural images in contemporary architecture. Since “architecture and cinema” is a very broad subject, the study will cover only a small part of this interaction. The outcome of this study is expected to set a light to the interrelation between cinema and architecture by understanding the interpretation of the images of contemporary architecture in cinema. It is also expected to have knowledge of influence of cinema on architecture and vice versa. The study will be limited to New York City and science fiction movies related to the city in the last 80 years; from 1927 to 2007.

CHAPTER 2

THE REPRESENTATIVE RELATION BETWEEN CINEMA AND ARCHITECTURE

2.1 A Historical Survey on Cinema Architecture Relation

The cinema and architecture have a long history together. It is not aimed here to survey all the history of these two media but to find key stones in the history –important moments, movies and situations – which help cinema and architecture blend together. The reasons behind this union and changes through time should be interrogated to have a better understanding of the interrelation between cinema and architecture today. Although this study is based on the point of view of an architect, it is necessary to review both aspects in the historical context. Therefore, the historical survey will be carried on under two categories: Cinema for Architecture and Architecture for Cinema. In “Cinema for Architecture” it is aimed to review the reasons which lead architects to cinematic medium. In “Architecture for Cinema”, a short survey on the evolution of architectural design in cinema will be carried out.

2.1.1 Cinema for Architecture

It is known that, the popularity of cinema rose during the First World War. Andres Janser indicates that, the cinema is accepted as the new mass medium after the big war with the increasing attendance of middle and upper classes.

The rising popularity of this new mass medium has also attracted the attention of the architects since a film avant-garde arose at the same time and on the same cultural basis with architecture, leading many architectural magazines publishing articles about film.¹ This first interaction between modern architecture and cinema is explicated by Janser as, being based on propaganda and educational purposes.²

He writes:

“The growing knowledge about the importance of film as an efficient means of advertising has led to the fact that in the field of building, as well as housing too, a long series of films either planned, begun or already carried out. On one hand, such an optimistic formulation reveals that architects believed that film was a new and useful means for propaganda purposes. On the other hand it reveals that architects were inspired by an (already) existing filmic practice.”³

The cinema has “movement” and “diversity of perception” while architecture has one way perception and still photography. The movement in cinema is not only about the physical movement of camera in space but also the movement of the image in the frame; close ups, slow motion and wide angle shots. The cinema brings a new understanding to perception of space which might be an inspiration for architects. Janser mentions the architectural theorist Sigfried Giedion who commented on the houses in Pessac by Le Corbusier and Pierre

¹ Andres Janser. “Only Film Can Make the New Architecture Intelligible: Hans Richter’s Die Neue Wohnung and the Early Documentary Film on Modern Architecture.” in Francois Penz and Maureen Thomas. (eds.) Cinema and Architecture: Melies, Mallet-Stevens, Multimedia. BFI Publishing, 1997. p.34-35.

² Ibid.

³ Andres Janser. “Only Film Can Make the New Architecture Intelligible: Hans Richter’s Die Neue Wohnung and the Early Documentary Film on Modern Architecture.” in Francois Penz and Maureen Thomas. (eds.) Cinema and Architecture: Melies, Mallet-Stevens, Multimedia. BFI Publishing, 1997. p.36.

Jeanneret in 1928. According to Gideon, the cinema is the medium where modern architecture can conceptualize its ideas.⁴

The classification of the movies of this era made by Janser clearly shows that these movies were not only made by or for architects but commissioned by film clubs, political parties, institutions, private clients, industrial companies, newsreels and independent producers and for a wide variety of audiences. One of the most famous films on a private building was Villa de Noailles in Hyères in the South of France, designed by Robert Mallet-Stevens which has been the protagonist of Man Ray's film-poem *Les Mystères du château du Dé* in 1928, commissioned by the owners of the house and used the guests of the house as actors. In 1926 Humboldt-Film, a small company in Berlin produced the series '*Wie wohnen wir gesund un wirtshaftlich? How to Live in a Healthy and Economical Way?*' supported by Filmausschuss für Bau- und Siedlungswesen which was "a Berlin-based organization founded in 1926 whose declared aim was 'to inform with educational and fiction films about the housing as well as the renewall of our building methods and the spirit of building.' Walter Gropius, Ernst May and Bruno Taut were among the members of this organization. In 1927 the city of Frankfurt commissioned film-maker and photographer Dr. Paul Wolff for the famous didactic trilogy *Die Häuserfabrik der Stadt Frankfurt-am-Main*, *Die Frankfurter Kleinstwohnung* and *Die Frankfurter Küche* for promoting the housing reform initiated by Ernst Mya. In 1929 the first film on urban planning '*Die stadt von morgen-Ein Film vom Städtebau*' 'The city of Tomorrow' was made. A group of architects and planners worked for the production of the movie along with planners Maximilian von Goldbeck and Erich Kotzer. USA and Britain made their first movies on urban planning in 1939. In the same year with *Die stadt von*

⁴ Andres Janser. "Only Film Can Make the New Architecture Intelligible: Hans Richter's *Die Neue Wohnung* and the Early Documentary Film on Modern Architecture." in Francois Penz and Maureen Thomas. (eds.) *Cinema and Architecture: Melies, Mallet-Stevens, Multimedia*. BFI Publishing, 1997. p.34.

morgen-Ein Film vom Städtebau, Hans Richter directed *Die neue Wohnung* which was commissioned by Schweizerischer Werkbund (SWB). It was a film praising “bright and suitable living spaces: movable or built-in furniture with clear lines, practical curtains and a compact laboratory-kitchen” and “healthy living in relation to nature. In 1930 the first film of the Amsterdam avant-garde cinema De Uitkijk, *Nederlandsche Architectuur* has been made by Mannus Franken, the Dutch delegate of CICI (Congrès International du Cinéma Indipendant). It was a survey on the state of modern architecture in the Netherlands.⁵

As Beatriz Colomina states, Le Corbusier made a film with Pierre Chenal since he thought film was the ideal medium to represent modern architecture. *L'Architectures d'aujourd'hui* is made in 1929, in which he moves from his villas of the 1920s to his plans of the city.⁶ According to Janser, if a comparison is made between *Die neue Wohnung* and the film *Architectures d'aujourd'hui* it can be clearly seen that although the starting points of the films are the same, - in both films, cinema is used as a tool for propaganda purposes for housing problems - the films develop differently, in use of light, spatial features, etc.⁷ He further expresses;

“With the help of Le Corbusier, and clinging to film impressionism, Chenal transforms identified and personalized architecture into referential

⁵ Andres Janser. “Only Film Can Make the New Architecture Intelligible: Hans Richter’s *Die Neue Wohnung* and the Early Documentary Film on Modern Architecture.” in Francois Penz and Maureen Thomas. (eds.) *Cinema and Architecture: Melies, Mallet-Stevens, Multimedia*. BFI Publishing, 1997. p.34.

⁶ Beatriz Colomina. “The Private Site of Public Memory”. *The Journal of Architecture*. V.4 Winter, 1999. p.355.

⁷ Andres Janser. “Only Film Can Make the New Architecture Intelligible: Hans Richter’s *Die Neue Wohnung* and the Early Documentary Film on Modern Architecture.” in Francois Penz and Maureen Thomas. (eds.) *Cinema and Architecture: Melies, Mallet-Stevens, Multimedia*. BFI Publishing, 1997. p.42-43.

spaces. Richter transforms ‘anonymous’ architecture – recognizable only to a professional public – into conceptual spaces, dominated by fragmentation. He uses his experience with montage and film tricks to support a thematic argument for the type and the standard, in accordance with the architects’ interest in industrialization and the *Typenmöbel*. Thus the juxtaposition of architectural and filmic concepts led to specific solutions reflecting different debates on modernity and modernisation going on in France, Switzerland and Germany.”⁸

Anthony Vidler writes about Eisenstein’s article on montage ‘Montage and Architecture’ where he contrasts two “paths” of spatial eye: “the cinematic, in which a spectator follows an imaginary line among a series of objects, through sight as well as in the mind – “diverse positions passing in front of an immobile spectator” - and the architectural, in which “the spectator move[s] through a series of carefully disposed phenomena which he observe[s] in order with his visual sense. In this transition from real to imaginary movement, architecture is film’s predecessor.”⁹ Janser further expresses “Nevertheless, interest in the cinema as a mass medium cannot be separated from the debates on the aesthetics of film: films on architecture must be seen as manifestations of attitudes towards architectural as well as filmic modernity.”¹⁰

⁸ Andres Janser. “Only Film Can Make the New Architecture Intelligible: Hans Richter’s Die Neue Wohnung and the Early Documentary Film on Modern Architecture.” in Francois Penz and Maureen Thomas. (eds.) *Cinema and Architecture: Melies, Mallet-Stevens, Multimedia*. BFI Publishing, 1997. p.44.

⁹ Anthony Vidler. “The explosion of Space:Architecture and the Filmic Imaginary” in Dietrich Neumann. *Film architecture, set designs from Metropolis to Blade runner*. Munich and New York: Prestel, 1998. p.22.

¹⁰ Andres Janser. “Only Film Can Make the New Architecture Intelligible: Hans Richter’s Die Neue Wohnung and the Early Documentary Film on Modern Architecture.” in Francois Penz and Maureen Thomas. (eds.) *Cinema and Architecture: Melies, Mallet-Stevens, Multimedia*. BFI Publishing, 1997. p.36.

Anton Kaes mentions directors like Lang, Billy Wilder, and Robert Siodmak who were known for their use of controlled lightning and visionary studio architecture which emphasis on milieu, mood, and atmosphere. They produce a visual style in contrast to Hollywood's emphasis on action and editing. In Kaes's words "It is architecture's contribution to cinema to translate these deeply felt forces into lasting images."¹¹ Colomina writes about modern architects, who have designed stage sets for movies such as Rob Mallet-Stevens, Paul Nelson and Charles Eames. According to her "One can repeatedly see a shift through the century from the representation of modern architecture in the media, to its use as a prop for the media. After the famous Shulman photographs of the Pierre Koenig Case Study house presented an ideal image of modern domestic life, the house became the stage set for over a hundred movies."¹²

2.1.2 Architecture for Cinema

Anthony Vidler writes "Obvious role of architecture in the construction of sets (and the eager participation of architects themselves in this enterprise), and the equally obvious ability of film to "construct" its own architecture in light and shade, scale and movement, allowed from the outset for a mutual intersection of these two "spatial arts."¹³ According to Vidler as a result of this intersection, architecture has become one of the fundamental elements of filmic imaginary

¹¹ Anton Kaes. "Sites of Desire: The Weimar Street Film" in Dietrich Neumann. Film architecture, set designs from Metropolis to Blade runner. Munich and New York: Prestel, 1998. p. 31.

¹² Beatriz Colomina. "The Private Site of Public Memory". The Journal of Architecture. V.4 Winter, 1999. p.355

¹³ Anthony Vidler. "The explosion of Space:Architecture and the Filmic Imaginary" in Dietrich Neumann. Film architecture, set designs from Metropolis to Blade runner. Munich and New York: Prestel, 1998. p.22.

just like cinema has become the favorable medium of modernist art of space. ‘Cinaplastics’, a term first used by art historian Elie Faure, refers to the cinematic aesthetic that binds architecture and cinema. He further gives examples of first cineplastic practices from German Expressionist films; Paul Wegener’s *Der Golem, Wie er in die Welt Kamp* (The Golem), Karl-Heinz Martin’s *Von Morgens bis Mitternachts* (From Morning Till Midnight), Robert Wiene’s *Das Cabinet Des Doctor Caligari* (The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari). All of them made just after the war, in 1920. German art critic and *New York Times* correspondent Hermann G. Scheffauer celebrates the birth of a new space in an analysis published at the end of 1920, saying that finally the space on the screen is no longer treated as dead and static but come into life, into movement and acts as part of the emotion.¹⁴ Anton Kaes emphasizes the importance of architecture’s role in the silent films since the lack of language increases the importance of the surroundings of the characters’. He quotes Deleuze’s comments for the representation of the modern metropolitan street: “... in which everything becomes semioticized precisely because there is no other way to express inner thoughts, memories, desires, and anxieties than in exteriorized form through signs. Where nobody speaks, everything speaks.”¹⁵ According to Dietrich Neumann, the films made after the success of *Caligari* were experiments in exploring new spatial formations. He writes about the silent film era in Weimar Republic and the fiery discussions on the relationship between cinema and film. It was the time some architects even hoped for “rebirth of architecture” through the new experience of space in cinema. He adds “in films such as F.W.Murnau’s *Der Letzte Mann*, Joe May’s *Asphalt*, or Fritz Lang’s *Metropolis*, imminent or distant visions of German cities and their

¹⁴ Anthony Vidler. “The explosion of Space: Architecture and the Filmic Imaginary” in Dietrich Neumann. *Film architecture, set designs from Metropolis to Blade runner*. Munich and New York: Prestel, 1998. p.15.

¹⁵ Anton Kaes. “Sites of Desire: The Weimar Street Film” in Dietrich Neumann. *Film architecture, set designs from Metropolis to Blade runner*. Munich and New York: Prestel, 1998. p.29.

architecture are variously represented as busy urban centers with hectic traffic, neon lights, and sober storefronts or as dystopian projections of a future megalopolis.”¹⁶ As a response to the dystopian image of the city of the future in *Metropolis*, the United States and Great Britain made the films *Just Imagine* and *Things to Come* which are more positive views of the urban future. Neumann writes about *The Fountainhead*, the 1948 adaptation of Ayn Rand’s novel inspired by the life of Frank Lloyd Wright which is accepted as the most remarkable attempt to bring modern architecture and its ideology to the screen. French director Jacques Tati’s films *Mon Oncle* and *Playtime* reflects the results of modern movement in 1950’s and 60’s in a comic way. Ridley Scott’s *Blade Runner*, makes references to *Metropolis*, through the dystopian city Los Angeles of 2019 and mirrors the contemporary problems such as pollution and class differences. The Gotham City in *Batman* is a modernistic nightmare.¹⁷

Arnold Hauser defines the difference between cinema and other arts as its relationship with space and time. He notes “The most fundamental difference between the film and the other arts is that, in its world-picture, the boundaries of space and time are fluid –space has a quasi-temporal, time, to some extent, a spatial character. Space loses its static quality, its serene passivity and now becomes dynamic; it comes into being as it were before your eyes.”¹⁸

2.2 Science Fiction Cinema and Architectural Design

¹⁶ Dietrich Neumann “Introduction” Film architecture, set designs from *Metropolis* to *Blade Runner*. Munich and New York: Prestel, 1998. pg.7-8

¹⁷ Dietrich Neumann “Introduction” Film architecture, set designs from *Metropolis* to *Blade runner*. Munich and New York: Prestel, 1998. pg.8.

¹⁸ Arnold Hauser. *The social history of art: Volume IV Naturalism, impressionism, the film age*. New York and London: Routledge, 1999. p.227-228.

Since the base of this study is architectural design in relation with science fiction cinema, it is necessary to interrogate the space concept and the evolution of space to have a better understanding of the spatial designs in the movies selected for this thesis. From *Metropolis* (1927) to *I am a Legend* (2007), an eighty year of spatial evolution is an important input for the analysis of architectural design concept.

2.2.1 Space in Science Fiction Cinema

In the introduction of her book *Alien Zone II*, Annette Kuhn asked questions about spaces of science fiction cinema and its relation to the spaces inhabited by the spectators; “What, then, is distinctive about the spaces of science-fiction cinema? ...To what extent do these spaces remain separate, and to what extent - and with what possible consequences - do they leak into one another?”¹⁹ According to Kuhn, the cinematic space in classical film theory is codified in terms of diegetic space and spectatorial space. Diegetic space is the fictive world of the film while the spectatorial space is about the world the spectators live in. According to film theorists, the spectator is no longer a passive recipient but an active participant involved in the meaning and message of the film. The fictive world of science fiction cinema brings these two spaces together.²⁰ Kuhn gave examples from science fiction movies for better understanding of diegetic and spectatorial space.

“In the 1926 science-fiction feature *Metropolis*, for example, the two elements are highly imbricated. The film’s architectural and design references and its organization of diegetic space combine to produce a visible expression of the societal organization underpinning the film’s

¹⁹ Annette Kuhn. (ed.) *Alien Zone II*. New York: Verso, 1999. p.7.

²⁰ *Ibid.* pp. 6-7

fictional world. In turn, the visibly apparent social structure of Metropolis is what motivates the film's narrative. At one level, *Metropolis* inaugurates a continuing strand of cinematic science fiction in which imagined places - future cities in particular - constitute settings for narrative action.”²¹

Beside these experiences the science fiction cinema has other things to offer. As Vivian Sobchack states; “That is, enjoying particular representational freedom as a genre of the fantastic, the science-fiction film concretely 'realizes' the imaginary and the speculative in the visible spectacle of a concrete image.”²² According to Sobchack science fiction cinema is an important source to understand the history of spatial and temporal transformation of the city as it has been experienced by the spectators in USA, from the 1950's to the present, from modernism to postmodernism.²³

2.2.1.1 Evolution of Space

Sobchack writes about the changes in the designs of the science fiction spaces from the beginning of 20th century. “With these examples it is possible to read the social, economical and artistic ideals of cities (countries and people) at that time.”²⁴ Sobchack gave examples of the science fiction films of the 1930s such as *Lost Horizon* (1937) and *The Wizard of Oz* which create fictional worlds far from realistic ideals but based on the ideals of the architectural ‘modernity’ which is commended with ‘transcendent’. The cities are vertical, lofty and

²¹ Annette Kuhn. (ed.) *Alien Zone II*. New York: Verso, 1999. p.76.

²² Vivian Sobchack. “Cities on the Edge of Time: The Urban Science-Fiction Film”. in Annette Kuhn. (ed.) *Alien Zone II*

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Vivian Sobchack. “Cities on the Edge of Time: The Urban Science-Fiction Film”. in Annette Kuhn. (ed.) *Alien Zone II*. New York: Verso, 1999. pp.128-129.

aerial. The verticality and loftiness symbolizes social status.²⁵ Cultural geographer Yi-Fu Tuan is explains:

“The vertical versus the horizontal dimension? ... [A] Common response is to see them symbolically as the antithesis between transcendence and immanence, between the ideal of the disembodied consciousness (a skyward spirituality) and the ideal of earth-bound identification. Vertical elements... evoke a sense of striving, a defiance of gravity, while the horizontal elements call to mind acceptance and rest.”²⁶

Sobchack continues with the 1950s. The 1950s in science-fiction image is about the destruction of humanity. The verticality, loftiness and highness (of social status) are brought down by contemporary activity and traffic in the mise-en-scene. The city is not destructed physically but ‘emptiness’ leaves the city with a negative value as in *Five* (1950). The visions of the city of the 60s and 70s change completely from verticality to horizontality, from highness to lowness, and from emptiness to overcrowdedness, overpopulatedness and over-stuffedness. They are celebrated and aestheticized. The ruination of the city starts. Many of the period's films such as *Planet of the Apes* (1968) and *Logan's Run* (1978) imagine cities such as New York and Washington DC in ruins. By the 1980s, the ideal cities no longer exist and the citizens leave the city and go either 'off world' in outer space or in the suburbs. In 1990's the city image goes 'over the top' or 'over the edge'. The city is groundless - either physically or emotionally-. The citizens feel lost in the city as in *Dark City* (1998).²⁷ Sobchack continues to give examples for the 1990's; “Its correlations

²⁵ Vivian Sobchack. “Cities on the Edge of Time: The Urban Science-Fiction Film”. in Annette Kuhn. (ed.) *Alien Zone II*. New york: Verso, 1999. pp.128-129.

²⁶ Ibid. pp.132-135.

²⁷ Vivian Sobchack. “Cities on the Edge of Time: The Urban Science-Fiction Film”. in Annette Kuhn. (ed.) *Alien Zone II*. New York: Verso, 1999. pp.138.

between the ungrounding of urban space and the ungrounding of identity begin with *Blade Runner* and are followed by *The Terminator* (1984), *Robocop* (1987), *Total Recall* (1990), and more recently by *Strange Days* (1995) and *Twelve Monkeys* (1996).”²⁸

As Sobchack came closer to contemporary times, the city becomes not only bottomless but also, in various ways, unfathomable. As in the New York City of the mid twenty-third century in *The Fifth Element* (1997), the protagonists are literally located in mid-air. Sobchack emphasizes; “Radically different from the ordered urban airways envisioned by both *Metropolis* and *Just Imagine*, this city is a dizzying and densely layered labyrinth of architecture and motion: it has neither skyscrapers (there is no visible sky as such) nor ground. This is a city that seems to have no boundaries and yet, at the same time, is peculiarly hermetic.”²⁹

Janet Staiger asserts “One of the most immediate signifiers of the genre of science fiction is the representation of a known city in which readily distinguishable sections of today's cityscape are present while other parts are rewritten.”³⁰ She gives examples of the most known cities in science fiction cinema, Los Angeles and New York. Many fictional cities created based on New York City and Los Angeles. It is not always possible to recognize the cities since some fictional works only inspired by the city or the ideal of the city life.

2.2.1.2 Virtual Space

²⁸ Vivian Sobchack. “Cities on the Edge of Time: The Urban Science-Fiction Film”. in Annette Kuhn. (ed.) *Alien Zone II*. New York: Verso, 1999. pp.140.

²⁹ Ibid. pp.140-141.

³⁰ Janet Staiger. “Future Noir: Contemporary Representations of Visionary Cities”. in Annette Kuhn. (ed.) *Alien Zone II*. New York: Verso, 1999. p.97.

One of the arguments about space in science fiction movies is its virtuality and, for this reason, the question whether it is architectural space or not? This study is based on the assumption that architecture is not bound with physical restrictions. The aim is to understand the representative power of architecture in science fiction cinema where the whole image is the product of fiction. It is accepted as a convenient way to interrogate the concept of design.

Claudia Springer states that “The virtualities created by the screens in our lives have, for many, become more 'real' than the experience of unmediated actuality. Responses to the rise of virtuality are polarized between critics who condemn the collapse of 'reality' into simulation and celebrants who applaud what they see as a new freedom to reshape identity.”³¹ Kuhn writes about the science fiction criticism embraces social commentary and ideological analysis since the virtual space concept in science fiction provokes a comparison with the real world. According to her “ideological film criticism's key *topos* is the nature of the relationship between representations and the real world of which they are part. This relationship assumes special significance with regard to cinema, because film appears to possess a peculiar capacity to present itself as uncoded, as transparent in its (re)presentation of the 'real world'.”³² There is also virtuality in the reality of film. Shell Beach in *Dark City* is the product of the protagonist's imagination (a postcard image), where the small-town Truman lives in *The Truman Show* is the product of the reality show producer's imagination.

³¹ Claudia Springer. “Psycho-Cybernetics in the Films of the 1990s”. in Kuhn, Annette. (ed.) Alien Zone II. New York: Verso, 1999.

³² Annette Kuhn. (ed.) Alien Zone II. New York: Verso, 1999. p.147.

CHAPTER 3

UNDERSTANDING REPRESENTATIONAL LIMITS OF THE CITY: .A CASE STUDY ON NEW YORK CITY

3.1 Selection of Architectural Images from Science Fiction Movies

In this study the Science fiction movies are selected according to their involvement with New York City in different time periods. It is not expected all of these movies to have an imaginary city set up since it is also important to study the interpretation of contemporary architecture in these movies as oppose to real life. For movies without any information on the time of the narrative, this time is assumed as the same as production of the movie. Below are the selected Science Fiction Movies:

Metropolis (1927, Fritz Lang, Germany) City of Metropolis in 2026

Just Imagine (1930, David Butler, USA) New York City in 1980

King Kong (1933, Merian C. Cooper, USA) New York City in 1930

The Beast from 20000 Fathoms (1953, Eugene Lourie, USA) New York City in 1953

The World the Flesh and the Monster (1959, Ranald Macdougall, USA) New York City in 1959

The Planet of Apes (1968, Franklin J. Schaffner, USA) New York City in 3968 A.D.

Beneath the Planet of Apes (1970, Ted Post, USA) New York City in 3970 A.D.

Soylent Green (1973, Richard Fleischer, USA) New York City in 2022

Escape From New York (1981, John Carpenter, USA) New York City in 1997
Ghost Busters I (1984, Ivan Reitman, USA) New York City in 1984
Batman (1989, Tim Burton, USA) Gotham City in year in 1989
Ghost Busters II (1989, Ivan Reitman, USA) New York City in 1989
Independence Day (1996, Roland Emmerich, USA) New York City in 1996
The Fifth Element (1997, Luc Besson, USA) New York City in 2259
Man in Black I (1997, Barry Sonnenfeld, USA) New York City in year 1997
Godzilla (1998, Roland Emmerich, USA) New York City in 1998
Man in Black II (2002, Barry Sonnenfeld, USA) New York City in year 2002
A.I. Artificial Intelligence (2001, Steven Spielberg, USA) Manhattan in “Not so far future”
Equilibrium (2002, Kurt Wimmer, USA) Old New York City/Libria in “Not so far future, 21th Century”
The Day After Tomorrow (2004, Roland Emmerich, USA) New York City in 2004
Sky Captain and the World of Tomorrow (2004, Kerry Conran, USA) New York City in 1939
Immortal Ad Vitam (2004, Enki Bilal, France/Italy/UK) New York City in 2095
Batman Begins (2005, Christopher Nolan, USA) Gotham City in 2005
I am a Legend (2007, Francis Lawrence) New York City in 2012

A science fiction movie has to bind the time-frame and spatial characteristics together to create a credible base for a narrative. It is certain that science fiction movies are inspired by important events of their times such as scientific innovations, wars, economical fluctuations, sociological changes, art movements and social issues. Contemporary architecture and art affect the futuristic visions. It can be helpful to study historical, cultural, ethnic and geographical components of movies to understand perception of life and mentality of design of the times that movies are produced.

According to Dietrich Neumann, during the design process of the city of Metropolis contemporary discussion on urban planning was shaped with modern ideals of futuristic cities. It is accepted as a symbol of the “national demonstration of strength”¹. The fight between the inhuman ruler and crushed labor refers the sociological problems of its era. In *Just Imagine* although New York City in 1980 is again different than the ideals of its time, it has taken reference from the New York architect Harvey Wiley Corbett, Italian futurist Antonio Sant’Elia and the work of architectural delineator Hugh Ferriss, and achieved the goal of twentieth century urbanism in the 1930’s. The bases of the skyscrapers shape the urban space by defining streets and when they rise to the sky they act as sculptures decorating the sky.² *King Kong* (1933) stresses upon the conflicts and hardships of the depression era in USA. In *The Beast from 20000 Fathoms* (1953) New York City messed up by a beast which is not a wonder of nature but of atomic bombings. Similar plot of *Godzilla* (1998) refers to French nuclear testings. *The World, the Flesh and the Devil* (1959) presents an empty lifeless New York City where most of the population dies as a result of a man made virus. *I am a Legend* (2007) handles the same virus problem and the end of human civilization on Earth. *Planet of Apes* (1968) was produced during the political fluctuations on race problems, civil rights and out of country wars. *Soylent Green* (1973) shows concern to over population results with climate changes and reduction of food supplies throughout the world which started to be taken into consideration only recently as a contemporary topic. In *The Day After Tomorrow* (2004) the results of climate change is more drastic than reduction of food supplies; it is the arrival of Ice Age and the certain victory of nature over human beings. The apocalyptic scenario of *Escape from New York* (1981) is based upon natural disasters and the increase of crime threatening the free world. A similar topic is discussed in

¹ Dietrich Neumann. “Introduction.” Film architecture, set designs from Metropolis to Blade runner. München and New York: Prestel, 1998. pg.8.p. 96.

² Sanders, James. “Celluloid Skyline”. London: Bloomsbury. 2001, p. 110

Batman (1989) where the Gotham City becomes a hell of crime world. *A.I.* (2001) uses a contemporary discussion topic as a base, the artificial intelligence. *Sky Captain and the World of Tomorrow* (2004) takes its reference from the 1930's. Although the Hindenburg Zeppelin has never been stationed to Empire State Building in reality, it is a known fact that the successful trips of Hindenburg Zeppelin back and forth between USA and Germany strengthen the idea of future air traffic based on dirigibles and the owners of the Empire State Building planned to build moorings for station.³

3.2 Analysis of Architectural Images in Accordance with the Concepts

In order to have a concrete discussion ground it is aimed to do an analysis of architectural images in cinema and architecture using various concepts which are relevant to both media.

3.2.1 City as an Image

The city image of New York City in science fiction cinema is based on the elements of authentic New York City and its relation with the world. The city bears more meanings than just being a metropolis hosting millions of people and finance companies. The city image will be studied in three categories; City as an Icon, City as a Collection of Landmarks and City as a Medium of Communication.

³ 'Empire State Building'. Encylomedia. <<http://www.encyclomedia.com/hindenburg.html>> 25.04.2008

3.2.1.1 City as an Icon

Regardless of their genre many films either begin or end with the images of the skyline of New York City. It is as famous as Giza Pyramids, the symbol of Egypt or the Leaning Tower of Pisa, the symbol of Italy. New York City, especially Manhattan Island, is more than a city; it is an icon by itself. It is interesting that despite its constant changing image the skyline manages to keep its status as a worldwide known icon. Even the world shocking events of bombing of Twin Towers (September 11, 2001) and their absence from the skyline silhouette did not change this fact. In his book *Celluloid Skyline* James Sanders writes “Like Big Ben or Taj Mahal, the New York skyline is one of the world’s unmistakable icons, thanks in large part to films themselves.”⁴ Then, it should not be surprising to see science fiction movies associate the idea of skyline –not necessarily the same silhouette - directly with New York City. The image of New York skyline varies; perspective of Manhattan Island from the air is used as much as various side views taken from boroughs. (Figures 1-8) The frame centers the skyscrapers and equal amount of sky and water from up and below. No humans or living things are visible and rarely any machines; cars, planes or ships. There is no way of telling if it is a ghost town or not. But still it gives the feeling of life, chaos and adventure.

Sanders states that the significance of this icon is “civic as well as national”⁵ which means it does not only represent the city but also the country and sometimes even the whole world. If nature takes its revenge from New York City this means the world is at the edge of a big catastrophe as in *The Day After Tomorrow* (2004). (Figure 9) The destroyed and flooded MAN-hattan in *A.I.* (2001) brings the question of “what happened to the rest of the world?” (Figure 10) When the city is under alien invasion this means so is the whole

⁴ Sanders, James. “Celluloid Skyline”. London: Bloomsbury, 2001, p. 87

⁵ Sanders, James. “Celluloid Skyline”. London: Bloomsbury, 2001, p. 87

world. In the movies *Planet of Apes* (1968) and *Beneath the Planet of Apes* (1970) the lost human civilization is represented by destroyed ruins of New York City at the end of forty-first century although the other three movies of the serial which take place in human civilization (twentieth and thirtieth centuries) are shot in Los Angeles (Figures 11-12).



Figure 1 Image of New York City. Aerial shot. Still from *The Day After Tomorrow* (2004)



Figure 2 Image of New York City. Aerial shot. Still from *Escape from New York* (1981)



Figure 3 Image of New York City. Aerial shot. Still from *The Fifth Element* (1997)



Figure 4 Image of New York City. Aerial shot. Still from *Batman* (1989)



Figure 5 Image of New York City. Side view. Still from *King Kong* (1933)



Figure 6 Image of New York City. Side view. Still from *The World the Flesh and the Monster* (1959)



Figure 7 Image of New York City. Side view. Still from *Godzilla* (1998)



Figure 8 Image of New York City. Side view. Still from *Immortal Ad Vitam* (2004)



Figure 9 The attack of nature to New York. Still from *The Day After Tomorrow* (2004)



Figure 10 Flooded MAN-hattan. Still from *A.I.* (2001)



Figure 11 Destroyed ruins of New York. Still from *Planet of Apes* (1968)



Figure 12 Destroyed ruins of New York. Still from *Beneath the Planet of Apes* (1970)

3.2.1.2 City as a Collection of Landmarks

Besides being an icon itself the city is also full of landmarks which turn into icons. Some of them even have given the responsibility to represent the world. It is enough to see the half buried Statue of Liberty in the sand by the shore in the *Planet of Apes* (1968) to understand the doom of the world crushed under the Ape Empire. It is not even necessary to see the statue clearly. The frame with the image of geometric ornaments of the crown from the back, a little part of the sea and the shore and the man stands in despair, shock and sadness is enough to understand the rest of the story (Figure 13). A similar image of the broken head of the statue on the ground and the alien ship in the background in *Independence Day* (1996) shows the power and glory of the aliens and the defeat of humans (Figure 14). At the end of *A.I.* (2001) the extra terrestrials excavate the world –most probably after an ice age since they excavate through ice- to find information about long lost man kind civilization. A not-even-half-excavated Chrysler Building represents the end of human existence (Figure 15).

These landmarks are being used repeatedly in science fiction cinema. But they have more significance than just being architectural objects. They have more significance than their architectural functions as buildings. They represent a city, a nation or sometimes the whole population of human kind on Earth. They symbolize civilization, power and destruction. The landmarks such as Statue of Liberty, the Empire State Building, and Chrysler Building are widely known and easily recognized since they are unique in construction and visible in sight in all movies, pictures and other visual media. But some other architectural constructions less known by the public at least the public other than New Yorkers are used constantly addressing collective memory of people. New York Public Library widely known as the main residence of the movie *The Day*

After Tomorrow (2004) serves the cinema since long time. In *Beneath the Planet of Apes* (1970), the destroyed library represents the long gone civilization of men. In *Escape from New York* (1981) it is the home of minor criminals in the open air prison of Manhattan. In *Ghost Busters* (1984) it hosts a ghost which causes the beginning of the events. (Figures 16-17) The façade of Radio City Music Hall is another less known landmark in the science fiction movies. The destroyed images of Radio City in *Beneath the Planet of Apes* (1970), and *A.I.* (2001) (under water) and nostalgic scene in the *Sky Captain and the World of Tomorrow* (2004) –just before the hostile giant robots attack the city in 1939- show that it has more significance than just being an entertainment centre. (Figures 18-19-20)

3.2.1.3 The city as a Medium of Communication

The city as a Medium of Communication bears two meanings. The first one involves communication/commercial boards. New York City, especially Manhattan is full of billboards. The bright, shiny, colorful image of these boards in Times Square at night is widely known. It is an element used continuously in science fiction cinema. However, these boards embrace more meanings in cinema than real life. The communication boards are not only advertisement tools but also control elements; they watch, they talk, they advice or warn, and they manipulate. The first examples can be seen in *Metropolis* (1927). In *Equilibrium* (2002) there are gigantic boards talking to and brain washing the crowd. There are hanging and moving boards in the *Immortal Ad Vitam* (2004) which seem like interacting directly with the inhabitants. Sometimes even buildings themselves become boards as in the *Fifth Element* (1997), The McDonalds Building. They do not necessarily have to be material boards but semitransparent lights in the air suddenly form letters and vanish all at once. (Figures 21-22-23)

The second meaning is concerned with one of the main subjects of architectural design. The buildings themselves are the medium of communication. They communicate through their designs. The city is full of eye catching designs yet each and every one of them fights for being unique. The buildings in the science fiction movies also fight for the same attraction. The main building in *Equilibrium* (2002), the tower of *Metropolis* (1927), and the Zorg Building in *The Fifth Element* (1997) are seeking uniqueness to interact through their designs. (Figures 24-25-26) They communicate with the inhabitants as the tallest, the most frightening, the most attractive, and the most powerful or through whatever meaning is meant to be given to them. The buildings speak for themselves without the boards talking. We see a similar act in real world. The companies that build skyscrapers fight for the title of the tallest or uniqueness in New York City and in the world not for the title itself but for the prestige and the advertisement that it would bring to the company.

3.2.2 City Scale

To study the city scale there are more than two inputs to confront. The life forms - humans, animals, beasts, aliens, ghosts, evil forces, robots -, the inorganic and immobile existences - architectural elements; buildings, statues, bridges, and geographical elements; earth, water, valleys, hills – and the inorganic and mobile existences – automobiles, planes, choppers, ships, all kinds of machines, commercial signs, vending machines, traffic lights – The relations between different formations have to be taken into consideration. It is not only between the city and its inhabitants anymore. In the light of all these inputs it is possible to study the city scale in three categories; Human Scale versus Beast scale, Human Scale versus Architectural Scale versus Urban Scale and Crowd Scale: Humans, Machine and Buildings.



Figure 13 Head of the Lady's crowned. Still from *Planet of Apes* (1968)



Figure 14 Head of the Lady. Still from *Independence Day* (1996)



Figure 15 Half excavated Chrysler Building. Still from *A.I.* (2001)



Figure 16 New York Public Library. Still from *The Day After Tomorrow* (2004)

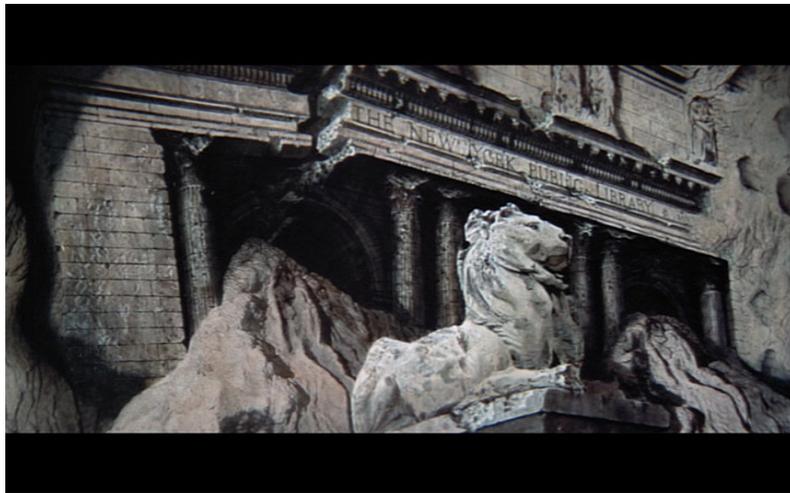


Figure 17 Ruins of New York Public Library. Still from *Beneath the Planet of Apes* (1970)



Figure 18 Ruins of Radio City Music Hall. Still from *Beneath the Planet of Apes* (1970)



Figure 19 Radio City Music Hall under water. Still from *A.I.* (2001)



Figure 20 Radio City Music Hall. Still from *Sky Captain and the World of Tomorrow* (2004)



Figure 21 Communication Boards. Still from *Equilibrium* (2002)



Figure 22 Communication Boards. Still from *Immortal Ad Vitam* (2004)



Figure 23 McDonalds Building. Still from *The Fifth Element* (1997)



Figure 24 The Main Building. Still from *Equilibrium* (2002)



Figure 25 The tower. Image from *Metropolis* (1927)

(Source: <http://www.dehora.net/journal/metropolis.jpg>)



Figure 26 Zorg Building. Still from *The Fifth Element* (1997)

3.2.2.1 Human Scale versus Beast Scale

The life in New York City takes place in two different levels; human scale and beast scale. The ground levels are for human beings. They work, sleep, walk, eat, interact, travel, live and die on the ground. They need extra equipments to associate with higher levels since the higher levels are for beasts such as King Kong, Godzilla, the beast from *The Beast from 20000 Fathoms* (1953), Stay puft marshmallow man from *Ghost Busters* (1984), Batman and aliens, ghosts, evil forces or humans with evil intentions (Zorg from *Fifth Element* (1997) – right hand of Mr. Shadow – , the death but still tyrant Father in *Equilibrium* (2002), Sigourney Weaver who turned into the wild, fierce looking dog like creature by Zuul (evil force) in *Ghost Busters* (1984), “the head” in the *Metropolis* (1927)). New York City has an inhuman scale. For architectural historian Vincent Scully Manhattan Skyline is “a city of genial giants”⁶. The beast scale where any beast from 2 meters tall (Batman) to 70 meters tall creatures (Godzilla) can easily move and hide without being seen in the city centre. Only a beast can interact with the top of the city just like King Kong. Even the scale of gigantism changes in the city. James Sanders writes about the change of the size of King Kong during production since the giant gorilla in the jungle was too small for the city⁷. So it is difficult to picture the beast, the city and the humans at the same time. The frame that can capture the whole image of the beast can hardly show humans and the city together (King Kong on top of the Empire State Building). If the frame captures a whole human, only a part of the beast and part of the city can be seen (Godzilla squashing humans running on the streets). (Figure 27-28) The human scale disturbs the balance of scales of the beast and the city.

⁶ Sanders, James. “Celluloid Skyline”. London: Bloomsbury, 2001, p. 94

⁷ Ibid.

3.2.2.2 Human Scale versus Architectural Scale versus Urban Scale

New York City is a metropolis for eight million people. The urban elevation changes from outer boroughs to the centre. The suburbs are full with two storey high houses with gardens, then closer to the centre there are four or five storey high apartment blocks and finally the centre has hundred storey high giant buildings. Just like the beast the frame can not capture both the human and the building completely. It is possible to say that the building has a place in the city –and this can be seen clearly- but human does not. Humans interact with these buildings on the inside or at the street level. In science fiction cinema the gigantism of the buildings are even more exaggerated but the interaction between the human and the architectural scales is planned. There are six hundred storey high buildings in *The Fifth Element* (1997) but the terrace like bridges – elevated promenades⁸ – exist at different levels (They are said to be authentic roads and streets of the 21st century⁹). The flying vehicles allow the inhabitants to reach any level easily and this result with more than one entrance beside the main entrance for each building. (Figure 29) People contact with buildings through more than one gate. Although the New York City in *Immortal Ad Vitam* (2004) has similar properties flying vehicles are limited with a cable system which transports them from one main entrance to another. So the buildings have proper entrances which the humans can interact. They also have not got terrace like bridges but actual pathways on different levels allowing transportation on foot. Therefore although the buildings are still gigantic in *Immortal Ad Vitam* (2004) they are more close to human scale at several levels than the buildings in *The Fifth Element* (1997) (Figure 30). In *Metropolis* (1927) and *Just Imagine* (1930) despite the scale of the buildings the city has ground levels (or several lower levels) for transportation of the

⁸ Sanders, James. “Celluloid Skyline”. London: Bloomsbury, 2001, p.112.

⁹ Ibid.

pedestrians. This can work as a base to make the comparison between human and building scales. (Figures 31-32) But in movies like *The Fifth Element* (1997) it is almost impossible to make a comparison since there is no base of the city.

The city of New York is not available for human perception, neither in the movies nor in real life. It needs bird's eye view, alien view (from space) even god's view. To view the city completely within a frame it is necessary to eliminate people. The scale of the city is not only a numerical measurement. It also accommodates the relationship between the inhabitants and the city and the life it provides. In New York City the city has the power over its inhabitants; it rules, it controls. In *Metropolis* (1927), the city is in charge and responsible as much as "the head". In *The Fifth Element* (1997) it can be seen that until the big threat from the Great Evil of total destruction the city is hardly affected by the Supreme Being. It can be seen in science fiction films where the people have no power or effect on what the outer forces does to the city. These are the beasts, the ghosts, the aliens, deadly viruses, atomic bombs, nature, robots and evil forces. The only thing that can overrule the power of the city on its inhabitants is 70meters tall giant beast as in *Godzilla* (1998) or a 25 kilometers long hostile alien ship which parks above the city with a highly destructive weapon as in *Independence Day* (1996) (Figure 33).

3.2.2.3 Crowd Scale: Humans, Machines and Buildings

The New York City is definitely crowded. It is crowded with buildings; it is more crowded with vehicles and machines; it is even more crowded with people. Whether the city is deserted or whole mankind is dead, it still gives the impression of a city full of people and action. This can be explained with the building crowd which shelters millions of people or the machine crowd, not

only the vehicles jammed and left in the middle of the road but also the others; telephone booths, commercial boards, ATM's, traffic lights, signs, vending machines, park meters and all other "city accessories". The buildings and the machines represent the humans when they are not in the scene. The machine crowd is almost always exaggerated in science fiction cinema. The vehicles, flying at different levels and courses in *The Fifth Element* (1997) take the place of the human crowd since the city has not a common place for people to form big crowds (Figure 34). In *The World the Flesh and The Devil* (1959) Ralph Burton, one of the few survivors, travels to New York City with the unshakeable hope that there must be somebody in the city for sure and he has hard time believing there is none until the other survivors come in the scene. He shouts at the skyscrapers for people to come out and not to hide since he knows they are there. He could not believe that these giant buildings have no inhabitants. (Figure 35)

3.2.3 Corporeal Experiences

Besides the image of the city it is necessary to study the overall characteristics of New York City in science fiction cinema which are the fundamental elements used in the movies to create a base for the story and the urban set. They are sometimes exaggerated, improved or opposed. But it is important to analyze them to understand how cinema looks at New York City and what it sees. What does New York City bring to cinema and what does it gain from that? This topic will be discussed in three categories; Verticality, Groundless City, City as a Background.



Figure 27 King Kong on top of Empire State Building. Still from *King Kong* (1933)



Figure 28 Godzilla on the run. Still from *Godzilla* (1998)



Figure 29 Flying vehicles and their entrances. Still from *The Fifth Element* (1997)



Figure 30 Main entrances. Still from *Immortal Ad Vitam* (2004)



Figure 31 Different levels of transportation for pedestrians and vehicles. Still from *Metropolis* (1927)

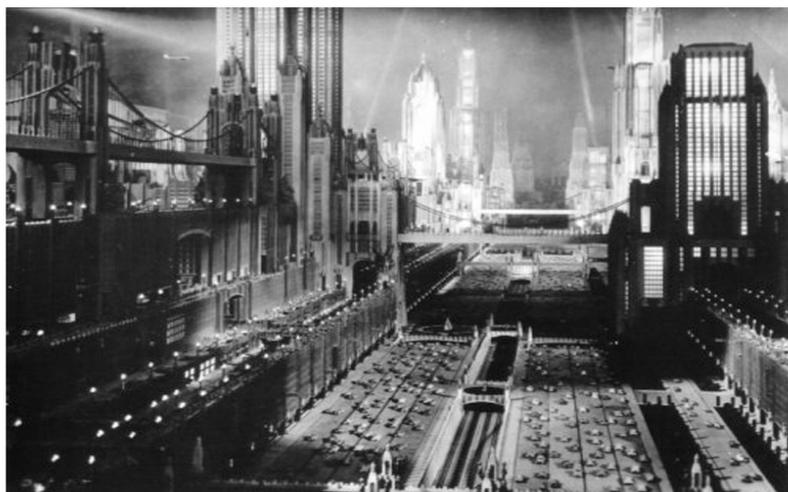


Figure 32 Different levels of transportation for pedestrians and vehicles. Image from *Just Imagine* (1930) (Source: <http://davidszondy.com/future/city/Just%20Imagine.jpg>)



Figure 33 Hostile Alien Ship above New York. Still from *Independence Day* (1996)



Figure 34 Flying vehicles. Still from *The Fifth Element* (1997)



Figure 35 Giant empty building. Still from *The World the Flesh and the Monster* (1959)

3.2.3.1 Verticality

The life in New York City is vertical both physically and lifestyle wise. One can either go up or down. The ground level is the bridge between these vacillations. This is the first thing about New York City that visitors become aware of. Even though the whole city is not build upwards this is the image that New York City can not be separated from. The life in the city runs from outer boroughs to the centre and there, goes from below to upwards. In the city buildings always block the sky. James Sanders writes about director Fritz Lang who upon seeing New York City from a ship for the first time formed Metropolis in his mind at that instant.¹⁰ The Metropolis is the impression of New York City. Each extremely tall buildings, is like a giant vertical city within itself. Many other directors are inspired by this feature of the city and developed futuristic representations based on it. David Butler's *Just Imagine* (1933) was designed after the director's visit to New York City. It is an exaggerated representation of the city but convincing enough to make believe the future New York City in the 1980s can be like this. There is a 50 year gap between the real city during production of the movie and the year it imagines to be. Although the city in the 1980s is not exactly like it was imagined in the film but still contains similar features. The city is not as high as Butler imagined but it has the same vertical image –maybe even more strong in actual 1980s since the city did not have extremely wide horizontal transportation levels but narrow streets which emphasize the verticality of the city even more. Personal airplanes as city transportation and flying traffic police do not exactly exist today but New York City has an air traffic control centre because of the personal and institutional air transportation vehicles – helicopters – flying above the city. So was that the foresight of the production team or did they create an inspiring fiction which resulted with the New York City of today?

¹⁰ Sanders, James. "Celluloid Skyline". London: Bloomsbury, 2001, p. 106.

The verticality of New York City reconstructed in science fiction cinema is not only a physical feature. Various meanings have been added to this concept since long time. According to James Sanders what Fritz Lang saw the first night from the ship was not only the lights and the skyscrapers but also “Lang had recognized something insightful about the skyscrapers of New York City: they were the tip of an iceberg, the attractive white-collar pinnacle of an enormous and far less attractive blue-collar pyramid”.¹¹ In “Cities on the Edge of Time: The Urban Science-Fiction Film” Vivian Sobchack writes about some common usage of urban elements through the history of science fiction cinema. According to Sobchack the 1930s verticality is emphasized as a symbol of developments in technology, wealth and social status and class conflicts just like in *Metropolis* (1927), *Just Imagine* (1930) and *King Kong* (1933).¹² While this is clearer in the first two movies, it is mostly hinted in *King Kong* (1933). United States was going through the Big Depression during the years of the movie. The economical differences between the labor, middle class and high class were extreme. There was the high class living in the apartment buildings surrounding the Central Park who ruled and controlled the city while the rest of the inhabitants lived actually in the park. Many of the working class and middle class consisted of immigrants just like the King Kong. The giant gorilla is taken from his home where he was the king on his mountain top and brought to the big city. There he is no longer the king so he fights. He goes up on top of Empire State Building to challenge and control the city but he loses against the dynamics of the city in the end. (Figure 36) There are many papers about King Kong. Some of them claim that the Kong represents the African American community. His relation with the blond white girl, his alienation in the city and his way up and down in the end symbolize the life of African

¹¹ Sanders, James. “Celluloid Skyline”. London: Bloomsbury, 2001, p. 107.

¹² Vivian Sobchack. “Cities on the Edge of Time: The Urban Science-Fiction Film”. in Annette Kuhn. (ed.) *Alien Zone II*. New York: Verso, 1999. pp.128-129.

Americans in the city.¹³ Sobchack continues with the 1950s. In the 50s, verticality does not symbolize the wealth and technological improvements anymore but the self destructive nature of mankind.¹⁴ The vertical cities, the image of the technological ascent, are now empty. In *The World, the Flesh and the Devil* (1959) the African American protagonist of the movie confronts with an empty New York City after surviving from a man-made epidemic disaster. His lonely image in front of giant buildings and the surprised expression on his face emphasize the incredibility of the situation. In a recent movie with a similar plot *I Am a Legend* (2007) another African American protagonist survives a plague caused by a man-made virus which wiped out most of the world's population in 2009 and lives in the nearly-empty New York City with his dog till 2012. This time, the image of the empty city is suppressed by the new life forms on the ground level; the nature – wild animals and plants and as the result of the catastrophe mutated humans – zombies. In the 60s and 70s according to Sobchack it is no longer about verticality but horizontality.¹⁵ Where the buildings go vertically, the life goes horizontally. The overcrowded cities are full of people on the streets, alleys and any empty place that exists. In *Soylent Green* (1973), the image of a person looking up to see the sky blocked by the skyscrapers now turn into the image of one looking downwards to see the city but blocked by the huge wave of people in the year 2022 (Figure 37). Sobchack continues with the 80s where the whole inner city turns into a prison; architectural symbols have fallen in ruins. The verticality of the city is now the symbol of failure of the mankind. It is not about what is going on the top of the city but what is going on in the dark alleys between the giant buildings. The verticality of the city is emphasizing the need to see what is hidden underneath

¹³ Dr. Arthur N. Levin “The Real Reel King Kong”.

<<http://www.blackwebportal.com/wire/DA.cfm?ArticleID=249>> 03.05.2008

¹⁴ Vivian Sobchack. “Cities on the Edge of Time: The Urban Science-Fiction Film”. in Annette Kuhn. (ed.) *Alien Zone II*. New York: Verso, 1999. pp.128-129.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

(in between) it. In *Escape from New York* (1981), the Snake Plissken arrives to the open air prison Manhattan from the air (in the year 1997). Then he goes down and searches the streets and all the dark corners to reach his goal. Batman stands on top of one of the tallest buildings in Gotham City in *Batman* (1989) looking downwards and watching the city to see any kind of trouble hidden in the shadows on the ground level. Sobchack says in 90s urban experience goes over the edge.¹⁶ The bonds between time and space are reduced just like the bonds between time and memory. In *The Fifth Element* (1997), New York City no longer has limits both upwards and downwards. The city has the image of infinity. A similar image of the city in *Immortal Ad Vitam* (2004) emphasizes this infinity although it has an end on the sky and on the ground, the Central Park.

3.2.3.2 Groundless City

In *The Fifth Element* (1997) the New York City in the year 2259 seems groundless. It is not possible to see the bottom, which is hidden underneath the fog. (Figure 38) Corban Dallas – the protagonist – dives deep in the fog with his cab to hide from the cops; it is not possible to see the end of it. It is significant that the city is clearly definite from an outside view (Figure 3) but infinite from the inside. A similar image is depicted in *Immortal Ad Vitam* (2004). The New York City in 2095 seems groundless. Both movies have similar shots regarding this concept with different implications. In *The Fifth Element* (1997) the heroin Leloo jumps from a building to run away from the cops. (Figure 39) The groundless city promises salvation and freedom. It is not expected from Leloo to hit the ground but to continue her trip to infinity until she finds a way to save herself. But in the movie *Immortal Ad Vitam* (2004) the

¹⁶ Vivian Sobchack. "Cities on the Edge of Time: The Urban Science-Fiction Film". in Annette Kuhn. (ed.) *Alien Zone II*. New York: Verso, 1999. pp.128-129.

hero Nicopol falls from the edge of a terrace accidentally. (Figure 40) His trip downwards does not promise anything positive but fear, instability and finally a very bad ending. He is saved just before crashing down and returns back to his life and to safety. Jill, the heroin of the same movie walks in a very narrow board in the air challenging the unknown ending which the groundless city offers if she falls down and finally reaches to her destination; a solid plane. In reality the city has an actual ground in both movies. In *The Fifth Element* (1997) the city is constructed two hundred stories upwards to meet the needs of the growing population and tunneled down four hundred stories downwards after the sea level reduction caused riverbeds to drain.¹⁷ In *Immortal Ad Vitam* (2004) the city seems groundless when looking down but Central Park is visible at the background where the protagonists walk later. These facts do not change the impression of being groundless in the story. Concept of groundless city embarks more meanings besides its physical feature. In the post-apocalyptic movie *The Day After Tomorrow* (2004) New York City is flooded which prevents the people to move around. This changes the balance of the relationship between the city and its inhabitants. It is not possible to interact with the city in such a condition. The flooded – groundless- city turns into a prison. Another groundless New York City in the not-so-far future of *A.I.* (2001) completely breaks the bonds between civilization and mankind. A groundless city loses its public areas. The street concept is diminished. Inhabitants lose their gathering privileges in a city without a ground. Exterior architecture converts from functional to restrictive. Estrangement and isolation give rise to violation and loss of control. The actual New York City may not be literally groundless or lacking public areas but the life in the city is in a way groundless. There are no limits for the possibilities, chances and misfortunes one can face in the city. There are no solid grounds to step on and stabilize for the rest of one's life. The city is unexpected, unstable and infinite. This is a physiological groundlessness rather than a physical one.

¹⁷ Sanders, James. "Celluloid Skyline". London: Bloomsbury. 2001, p. 112

3.2.3.3 City as a Background

What can New York City bring to mise-en-scene as a background setting? Why would one use New York City instead of a Hollywood-made set which would be easier to shoot, or any other city in the country? As David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson explain in their book, *A Film Art: An Introduction*; “setting can play a more active role in cinema than it usually does in the theatre.” They say “Cinema setting can come to the forefront; it need not be only a container for human events but can dynamically enter the narrative action. Setting can overwhelm the actors, as in Wim Wender’s *Wings of Desire* or it can be reduced to nothing, as in Francis Ford Coppola’s *Bram Stoker’s Dracula*.”¹⁸ New York City has a long history as a background setting starting from the first movies shot just after the invention of camera although it stands closer to the foreground than many other background city settings most of the time. To understand the place of New York City in science fiction cinema, it is necessary to study the reasons why it is chosen as a background setting.

First of all as it has been mentioned before, New York City is an icon itself. It addresses people’s, Americans or others, collective memory. It is one of the most known cities in the world and has a world wide known image even before the 9/11 disaster. It can stand as a representative of the world where the frame captures only the city and the rest of the world stands off-screen as in *The World, the Flesh and the Devil* (1959), *The Planet of Apes* (1968), *Soylent Green* (1973), *The Fifth Element* (1997) and *The Day After Tomorrow* (2004). Secondly, since it is a metropolis where many different ethnics live and mingle, it gives the impression of a city anyone is welcomed and anything is possible.

¹⁸ David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson. “Film Art: An Introduction”. 2008, New York: McGraw Hill International

Extraterrestrials, ghosts and beasts will not be regarded as strangers or feel out of place more than any other newcomers. Any kind of strange incidents would be accepted along with the comment “Anything can happen in New York City”¹⁹ as in *Ghost Busters* (1984) and *Men in Black* (1997). Thirdly, the architectural texture of the city is almost always an appropriate setting for any kind of – extraordinary – action; from futuristic settings to nostalgic ones, ethnic stressed settings to apocalyptic ones. Fourthly since New York City is the place for change and improvement in arts, architecture and technology, a vision of a far futuristic setting for New York City can be accepted easily. If the life is going to change in the next fifty-hundred years New York City must be one of the first places where this change can be seen.

New York City is chosen as a background setting even though it is more difficult than shooting in the studio. But the city has a genuine atmosphere and architectural texture for science fiction genre. It has the impression of a city of the future and at the same time a connection with people through collective memory. It is possible to create a futuristic image without weakening the bonds with earth and humanity. It gives science fiction genre credibility besides the scientific realism.

¹⁹ A song by Mickey Rooney, Ray McDonald, Richard Quine from the movie *Babes on Broadway*.
Album Judy Garland & Mickey Rooney Collection Box



Figure 36 King Kong falling from Empire State Building. Still from *King Kong* (1933)



Figure 37 Overpopulation in New York City in 2022. *Soylent Green* (1973)



Figure 38 Groundless New York City in 2259. Still from *The Fifth Element* (1997)



Figure 39 Leloo jumps off. Still from *The Fifth Element* (1997)



Figure 40 Nicopol falls from the edge accidentally. Still from *Immortal Ad Vitam* (2004)

3.2.4 Movement in the City

The movement in the city defines the space in the city. The moving elements are various; humans, vehicles and machines going in every direction in a three dimensional world. New York City has both vertical and horizontal movement just like other modern cities. The human movement runs vertical as much as horizontal, maybe even more. The time spent on the streets to reach from one place to another is suppressed by the time spent for living or working in huge perpendicular cities. This also adds a new indispensable company into people's life, the machinery to move in. The developments in the architectural formation in New York City resulted with people's dependence on machinery for transportation/movement. The size of the city prevents transportation on foot (except in the centre); the help of the cars, buses, trains and air vehicles is necessary. Regarding the height of new office and apartment complexes, the classical staircases step aside for machinery unless there is an emergency situation or a thrilling chase scene.

The horizontal movement in the city has gained altitude thanks to technological improvements. There are three different level of horizontal movement in the city. First one is the ground levels where both vehicles and pedestrians move from one point in the city to another, on the level of the entrances to buildings and public spaces. The second one is the middle level elevated roads for either vehicles or pedestrians used to minimize the loss of the city space where one has to go up to use and go down to rejoin the life in the city; bridges, air train tracks and like wise. The third one is the top level/air level only for vehicles. New York City has an active air traffic including personal and institutional helicopters which bring a new entrance concept –not from the bottom but from the top. They take off from and land on heliports on top of the buildings in city centre. Even in the 1930s the skyscrapers were planned to be used as stations

for air transportation. The owners of Empire State Building were planning to become a station for dirigibles.²⁰ Science fiction cinema took notice of this situation and is using it ever since. *Metropolis* (1927) and *Just Imagine* (1930) are the first known examples of different levels of movement in the city. They have ground level movement, elevated roads and air transportation. Batman lives in the Gotham City where the main transportation is an air train which first was a symbol of progress but in time turns into a less safe place. (Figure 41) *The Fifth Element* (1997) minimizes pedestrian transportation and relies upon air vehicles and high speed lifts. In *Equilibrium* (2002) the city Libria has a ground level, air train on the middle level and a zeppelin on air but it seems to be used only for propaganda purposes. In *the Sky Captain and the World of Tomorrow* (2004) it is possible to see the Empire State Building being used as a station for evacuating passengers from The Hindenburg Zeppelin. The New York City of *Immortal Ad Vitam* (2004) contains restricted air transportation; vehicles are attached to cables and elevated roads are at middle levels for pedestrians. (Figures 42-43)

²⁰ 'Empire State Building'. Encylomedia. <<http://www.encyclomedia.com/hindenburg.html>>25.04.2008



Figure 41 Air Train functions in Gotham City. Still from *Batman Begins* (2005)



Figure 42 Vehicles attached to the cable system. Still from *Immortal Ad Vitam* (2004)



Figure 43 Middle level elevated roads for pedestrians. Still from *Immortal Ad Vitam* (2004)

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSION

Throughout this research the interrelation between cinema and architecture is mentioned. Their mutual works have an affect on contemporary life indirectly but in a lasting manner. Architect's use of cinema to manipulate public's perception of design¹ works more effectively than any other media. Both media work on the "exploration of volumetric space in time"² and have similar processes for production.³ It can create the proper environment to change the concrete stand of architecture into a fictional state where the fiction can be used to decipher space.⁴ Cinema is also the medium for representing the architecture of the future.⁵ Science fiction genre serves to this purpose faithfully. It is the place where any fantasy can build a concrete image.⁶ This also helps to archive and study the spatial and temporal arguments on the city and architecture by watching the science fiction movies made throughout history.⁷ Science fiction cinema inspires and encourages the architects to

¹ Eric Hanson. "Digital Fiction: New Realism in Film Architecture," Architectural Desing. vol. 70, no.1, January 2000, pp. 62-68.

² Toy Maggie. "Editorial," Architectural Desing. vol. 64, no.11-12, November-December 2000, pp. 6-7.

³ Murray Grigor. "Space in time Filming architecture," Architectural Desing. vol. 64, no.11-12, November-December 2000, pp. 16-21.

⁴ Katherine Shonfield. Walls Have Feelings: Architecture, Film and the City.. London: Routledge, 2000. pp. 160-161

⁵ Dietrich Neumann. "Introduction." Film architecture, set designs from Metropolis to Blade runner. Munich and New York: Prestel, 1998. pg.8.

⁶ Annette Kuhn. (ed.) Alien Zone II. New York: Verso, 1999. p.76.

⁷ Annette Kuhn. (ed.) Alien Zone II. New York: Verso, 1999. p.76.

design and construct creations out of this world and out of this time. Questions relevant to these effects; how do they trigger change; in what areas they are most influential; and what the area of expansion is, are being discussed ardently. Since it is not possible to seek an answer to all these questions in this research, to narrow the area of study, it is aimed exclusively to interrogate “the reconstruction of architectural image in science fiction cinema”.

Science fiction genre constructs its stories on scientific foundations; either it is a fact or a prediction. Most of the plots seem like unbelievable overstatements but they usually take references from contemporary occurrences. The mutation of animals/humans into beasts is the result of the radiation from nuclear testing(s). *The Beast from 20.000 Fathoms* (1953) is inspired by atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. *Godzilla* (1998) refers to French nuclear testing(s). Total annihilation of human kind by man-made deadly viruses were one of the many fears appeared during Cold War. *The World, the Flesh and the Monster* (1959) and *I am a Legend* (2007) are examples of a similar plot. Sociological studies on capitalism, communism, humanism, slavery and civil rights led to many occasions for movies like *Metropolis* (1927), *Just Imagine* (1930), *the Planet of Apes* (1968) and *Beneath the Planet of Apes* (1970). Apocalyptic scenarios, overpopulation causing climate change and the reduction of food supplies – popular subjects nowadays – treated in *Soylent Green* (1973) and later in a different way in *The Day After Tomorrow* (2004). Paranormal activities are a preferred subject mostly for horror movies and science fiction comedies like *Ghost busters I* (1984) and *Ghost Busters II* (1989). Extraterrestrial existence is one of the first themes in science fiction genre. It redound its popularity in the 1950s and often used to mask unwanted/punishable criticism in delinquent matters as in *Independence Day* (1996), *Fifth Element* (1997), *Men in Black I* (1997), *A.I.* (2001), *Men in Black II* (2002) and *Immortal ad Vitam* (2004). Robots, androids and artificial intelligence become important discussion subjects recently and they have been

popular story elements as in *Metropolis* (1927), *A.I.* (2001), and *Sky Captain and the World of Tomorrow* (2004). Corruption in the government and society results with increasing crime, reduction of life quality and safety causes the appearance of unnatural heroes as in *Batman* (1989), *Escape from New York* (1981). It is certain that science fiction cinema helps creating an imaginative world to understand and analyze the results of possible scientific improvements and criticize the contemporary world and its systems.

The practical part of the research is based on the analyses of various architectural concepts used repeatedly in the selected movies. Since all twenty four movies differentiate in the plot and time but use the same location it is assumed as an effective process for interpreting the reconstructed architectural image. The concepts are grouped in four according to their relation to cinema/architecture. The first group “City as an Image” contains three subheadings; City as an Icon, City as a Collection of Landmarks and City as a Medium of Communication. “The city as an Image” interrogates the relationship between the city, its inhabitants and collective memory. The city abandons its physical appearance and its primary meaning and embraces a more abstract image. It undergoes a semantic change. It is also the result of the limitations of cinematic medium. The city becomes the symbol for more than one asset to perpetuate the narrative in a limited amount of frame (and time). Since the city fills up the frame completely, it also has to contain clues for off-screen images. In a single frame New York City can represent a person and the whole world at the same time. Individual architectural objects; skyscrapers, statues and public structures with a specific function such as libraries and theatres slip off from their functions and obtain new functions and new meanings. They have become icons just like the city itself. These architectural elements are reconstructed in the collective memory of the community. Besides known images such as The Statue of Liberty, Empire State Building and Chrysler Building (three widely-known architectural structures) less known

architectural pieces are used frequently in order to create the necessary atmosphere with the reconstruction of its image in a new environment based on its primary function and meaning laid on it. New York Public Library serves not as a wisdom castle but as a shelter for the victims of natural disaster in *The Day After Tomorrow* (2004) and shelter for criminals in *Escape from New York* (1981). The ruins of the library in *Beneath the Planet of Apes* (1970) symbolize the end of human civilization whereas in the *Escape from New York* (1981) it witnesses and/or gives a hand to the birth of a new civilization. The city is a living organism. It is the ruler and the worker. It talks with its inhabitants, answers questions and sometimes dictates.

The second group “City Scale” is based on the interaction between the city and its inhabitants. The modern city becomes larger than the sum of its components. The city does not consist of only buildings and living beings but various existences has to be taken into consideration when analyzing the city and architectural scale. The life forms – humans and animals – (the other creatures such as ghosts and extraterrestrial existences, under the title of life forms can be reduced to alien/stranger to the city whom does not know the customs and/or prefers to interact with the city in a different way than its inhabitants due to its own cultural and ethnic background.), the inorganic and immobile existences – architectural structures; buildings, statues, bridges, and geographical elements; earth, water, valleys, hills – and the inorganic and mobile existences – automobiles, planes, choppers, ships, all kinds of machines, commercial signs, vending machines, traffic lights – . The relations between different formations have to be studied. “City Scale” is discussed in three categories; Human Scale versus Beast scale, Human Scale versus Architectural Scale versus Urban Scale and Crowd Scale: Humans, Machines and Buildings. “Human Scale versus Beast Scale” is about the alienation of inhabitants to the city they live. In modern cities, the scale of the city expanding both horizontally and vertically limits the area of mobility and

forces the residents to create their own restricted environments to live and to work. “Human Scale versus Architectural Scale versus Urban Scale” is based on both physical and psychological contact of people with architectural structures. High rise and large scale structures limit the area of interaction. The residents contact only with the main entrance and the interior of a building although the interior plan causes the loss of sense of orientation. In the end the design of a single structure splits in various processes based on the limits of the interactions between the user and the structure. Contemporary architecture does not have to deal with flying cars yet but the point of admissions of the buildings rise with increasing variety of transportation vehicles; automobiles into garages, helicopters on heliports and external elevators. Psychologically the inhabitants lost the perception of the city as a whole. While a new comer to the city can grasp the city image from the outside (from the air or the sea) but can not comprehend the domesticities, the insider lost his control over the city and convicted to a life steered by the city itself. “Crowd Scale” is an important key to design since the components of the life in the city are not limited to humans and architecture but vehicles, machines and city accessorizes form a “crowd” necessary to be dealt with.

The third group “Corporeal Experiences” studies architectural structures and their reconstruction in the medium of cinema in three categories; Verticality, Groundless City and City as a Background. The structures are re-constructed from solid to abstract; functionality gives its place to representation. Skyscraper; a structure built to raise the efficiency of limited land a solution to housing problems turns into the symbol of verticality where it represents various meanings changing in time. “Groundless City” questions the concept of ground as a public area. The street concept is mostly diminished. Inhabitants loose their gathering privileges in a city without a ground. Exterior architecture converts from functional to restrictive. Estrangement and isolation give rise to violation and loss of control. The union dissolves. “City as a Background”

discusses what properties of a city – architectural, sociological and cultural characteristics – make the city eligible to change.

The fourth group “Movement in the City” discusses how movement defines the space in the city. The changes in the direction or elevation of the movement question the interrelation between the street and the building. Urban and architectural design approaches are forced to change in order to accommodate the altered movement. The discussions also involve the increasing dependence of people to machines for transportation purposes. This raise results with the increasing amount of machinery. Requirements for storage and parking lots create a new input in urban design. The usage of petroleum rises while the resources in the world begin to decrease. This fluctuation in the world pressurizes rapid changes affecting urban and architectural medium.

Since all the concepts interrogated through New York City, it should be taken into consideration that, while New York City carries the whole characteristics of a metropolis, it also has unique features which science fiction cinema use repeatedly; the geographical condition of the city, the social life, the architectural objects, the urban texture, etc. New York City is also one of the few cities which are known around the world well enough via television and cinema.

Throughout this study the interaction between science fiction cinema and New York City is used as a tool to interrogate the reconstruction of architectural images and to understand the fictional and representative power of architecture. Various architectural and urban concepts are discussed based on their representations in the narrative. Metamorphosis of these concepts; city, public space, street, entrance, point of interaction, movement, collective memory, the exterior, the interior, verticality, elevation, iconography and estrangement, is

studied in order to understand how cinema convert architectural images into representative tools in the narrative.

Architecture and cinema have similarities and differences. These variable tangents between the two media provoke the prospects of each other and inspire a non-stop change. There are continuities and discontinuities between the perception of space in architecture and cinema. It is necessary to interrogate these continuities and discontinuities affect the concept of experience since both media has different approaches to space. Architects design for everybody therefore it is possible to say that their idea of experience is ordinary. The experience in cinema is unique. The film makers do not see the architectural object in the same way as architects. Cinema has the power to transform the context of an object free from its physical features. Cinema is multi-lingual. It does not only communicate with image but also with sound, movement, animation, narrative and time. Architecture is bound with physical laws. While architecture has continuity in scale, the cinema has continuity in perception. These differences cause cinema and architecture to have different prospects. The concept of experience can also be associated with physical properties since cinema enables a virtual environment but architecture is bound with physical features. As a result of this study it is realized that the affiliation of architecture with people is the key to its representational power. Through experience, collective memory and psychological influence of space on people create the suitable circumstances to change the perception of image and space arbitrarily.

An important difference between architecture and cinema is the concept of pattern and texture in city. It is revealed through the study that cinematic city has a unique language in design. Although the buildings and other architectural objects stand as individuals they also form a certain pattern and texture in an urban context based on the narrative of the movie. The city ideal is emphasized through a compact image. Cinema works with repetitive images while

architects have to deal with individual architectural objects and it is hardly possible to develop a collective language. The cinematic city has continuity in pattern and texture. Pattern which is composed of ordinary buildings can become a unique image. Another outcome of this study can be stated as the understanding of the effectiveness of science fiction cinema on improvements and developments in architecture by providing an eligible environment where architecture can play around, experiment and speculate without hindrance.

The concept of movement in the cinema and its affects on perception of space has a great influence on architectural design. It can be useful to analyze the interrelation between space and time concepts to lead this study further in the future. Since this study only covers the reconstruction of architectural image in science fiction cinema, one further implication of this study can be interrogate the transforming influence of architectural images in cinema on contemporary architecture.

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APPENDIX A:

FILMOGRAPHY

METROPOLIS

Director: FRITZ LANG

Screenwriter(s): THEA VON HARBOU and FRITZ LANG

Based on the novel by THEA VON HARBOU

Director of Photography: KARL FREUND and WALTER RUTTMANN

Release Date: 1927

Country: GERMANY

Cast: ALFRED ABEL, GUSTAV FRÖHLICH, RUDOLF KLEIN-ROGGE

JUST IMAGINE

Director: DAVID BUTLER

Screenwriter(s): BUDDY G. DESLYVA and RAY HENDERSON

Director of Photography: ERNEST PALMER

Release Date: 1930

Country: USA

Cast: EL BRENDEL, MAUREEN O'SULLIVAN, JOHN GARRICK

KING KONG

Director: MERIAN C. COOPER and ERNEST B. SCHOEDSACK

Screenwriter(s): JAMES CREELMAN and RUTH ROSE

Director of Photography: EDWARD LINDEN

Release Date: 1933

Country: USA

Cast: FAY WRAY, ROBERT ARMSTRONG, BRUCE CABOT

THE BEAST FROM 20.000 FATHOMS

Director: EUGENE LOURIE

Screenwriter(s): FRED FREIBERGER and EUGENE LOURIE

Based on the novel by RAY BRADBURY

Director of Photography: JACK RUSSEL

Release Date: 1953

Country: USA

Cast: PAUL HUBSCHMID, PAULA RAYMOND, CECIL KELLAWAY

THE WORLD, THE FLESH AND THE DEVIL

Director: RANALD MACDOUGALL

Screenwriter(s): FERDIAND REYHER

Based on the novel by M.P. SHIEL

Director of Photography: HAROLD J. MARZORATI

Release Date: 1959

Country: USA

Cast: HARRY BELAFONTE, INGER STEVENS, MEL FERRER

THE PLANET OF APES

Director: FRANKLIN J. SCHAFFNER

Screenwriter(s): MICHAEL WILSON and ROD SERLING

Based on the novel by PIERRE BOULLE

Director of Photography: LEON SHAMROY

Release Date: 1968

Country: USA

Cast: CHARLTON HESTON, RODDY MCDOWALL, KIM HUNTER

BENEATH THE PLANET OF APES

Director: TED POST

Screenwriter(s): PAUL DEHN

Director of Photography: MILTON R. KRASNER

Release Date: 1970

Country: USA

Cast: JAMES FRANCISCUS, KIM HUNTER, MAURICE EVANS

SOYLENT GREEN

Director: RICHARD FLEISCHER

Screenwriter(s): STANLEY R. GREENBERG

Based on the novel by HARRY HARRISON

Director of Photography: RICHARD H. KLEIN

Release Date: 1973

Country: USA

Cast: CHARLTON HESTON, LEIGH TAYLOR-YOUNG, CHUCK
CONNORS

ESCAPE FROM NEW YORK

Director: JOHN CARPENTER

Screenwriter(s): JOHN CARPENTER and NICK CASTLE

Director of Photography: DEAN CUNDEY and JIM LUCAS

Release Date: 1981

Country: UK/USA

Cast: KURT RUSSELL, LEE VAN CLEEF, ERNEST BORGNINE

GHOST BUSTERS

Director: IVAN REITMAN

Screenwriter(s): DAN AYKROYD, HAROLD RAMIS

Director of Photography: LASZLO KOVACS

Release Date: 1984

Country: USA

Cast: DAN AYKROYD, HAROLD RAMIS, BILL MURRAY,

BATMAN

Director: TIM BURTON

Screenwriter(s): SAM HAMM and WARREN SKAAREN

Director of Photography: ROGER PRATT

Release Date: 1989

Country: USA

Cast: MICHAEL KEATON, JACK NICHOLSON, KIM BASSINGER

GHOST BUSTERS II

Director: IVAN REITMAN

Screenwriter(s): DAN AYKROYD, HAROLD RAMIS

Director of Photography: MICHAEL CHAPMAN

Release Date: 1989

Country: USA

Cast: DAN AYKROYD, HAROLD RAMIS, BILL MURRAY,

INDEPENDENCE DAY

Director: ROLAND EMMERICH

Screenwriter(s): ROLAND EMMERICH and DEAN DEVLIN

Director of Photography: KARL WALTER LINDENLAUB

Release Date: 1996

Country: USA

Cast: WILL SMITH, BILL PULLMAN, JEFF GOLDBLUM

THE FIFTH ELEMENT

Director: LUC BESSON

Screenwriter(s): LUC BESSON and ROBERT KAMEN

Director of Photography: THIERRY ARBOGAST

Release Date: 1997

Country: USA

Cast: BRUCE WILLIS, GARY OLDMAN, IAN HOLM

MAN IN BLACK I

Director: BARRY SONNENFELD

Screenwriter(s): ED SOLOMON

Based on the Malibu Comic by LOWELL CUNNINGHAM

Director of Photography: DON PETERMAN,ASC

Release Date: 1997

Country: USA

Cast: TOMMY LEE JONES, WILL SMITH, LINDA FIORENTINO

GODZILLA

Director: ROLAND EMMERICH

Screenwriter(s): ROLAND EMMERICH and DEAN DEVLIN

Director of Photography: UELI STEIGER

Release Date: 1998

Country: USA, JAPAN

Cast: MATTHEW BRODERICK, JEAN RENO, MARIA PITILLO

A.I.

Director: STEVEN SPIELBERG

Screenwriter(s): STEVEN SPIELBERG

Based on the Short Story by BRIAN ALDISS

Director of Photography: JANUSZ KAMINSKI

Release Date: 2001

Country: USA

Cast: HALEY JOEL OSMENT, JUDE LAW, FRANCES O'CONNOR

MAN IN BLACK II

Director: BARRY SONNENFELD

Screenwriter(s): ROBERT GORDON

Based on the Malibu Comic by LOWELL CUNNINGHAM

Director of Photography: GREG GARDNER

Release Date: 2002

Country: USA

Cast: TOMMY LEE JONES, WILL SMITH, LARA FLYNN BOYLE

EQUILIBRIUM

Director: KURT WIMMER

Screenwriter(s): KURT WIMMER

Director of Photography: DION BEEDE

Release Date: 2002

Country: USA

Cast: CHRISTIAN BALE, EMILY WATSON, TAYE DIGGS

THE DAY AFTER TOMORROW

Director: ROLAND EMMERICH

Screenwriter(s): ROLAND EMMERICH and JEFFREY NACHMANOFF

Director of Photography: UELI STEIGER, ASC

Release Date: 2004

Country: USA

Cast: DENNIS QUAID, JAKE GYLLENHAAL, IAN HOLM

SKY CAPTAIN AND THE WORLD OF TOMORROW

Director: KERRY CONRAN

Screenwriter(s): KERRY CONRAN

Director of Photography: ERIC ADKINS

Release Date: 2004

Country: USA/UK/ITALY

Cast: GWYNETH PALTROW, JUDE LAW, GIOVANNI RIBISI

IMMORTAL AD VITAM

Director: ENKI BILAL

Screenwriter(s): ENKI BILAL and SERGE LEHMAN

Based on the comic by ENKI BILAL

Director of Photography: PASCAL GENNESSEAU

Release Date: 2004

Country: FRANCE/ITALY/UK

Cast: LINDA HARDY, THOMAS KRETSCHMANN, CHARLOTTE
RAMPLING

BATMAN BEGINS

Director: CHRISTOPHER NOLAN

Screenwriter(s): CHRISTOPHER NOLAN and DAVID S. GOYER

Director of Photography: WALLY PFISTER

Release Date: 2005

Country: USA

Cast: CHRISTIAN BALE, MICHAEL CAINE, LIAM NEESON,

I AM A LEGEND

Director: FRANCIS LAWRENCE

Screenwriter(s): MARK PROTOSEVICH and AKIVA GOLDSMAN

Based on the novel by RICHARD MATHESON

Director of Photography: ANDREW LESNIE

Release Date: 2007

Country: USA

Cast: WILL SMITH, ALICE BRAGA, DASH MIHOK

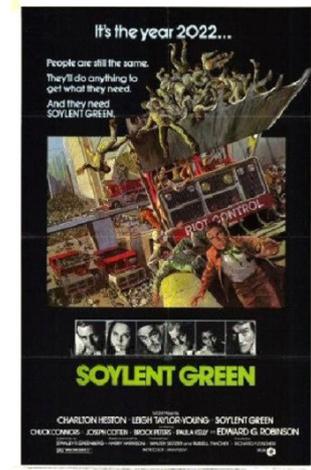
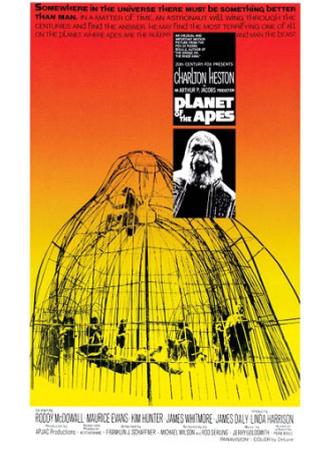
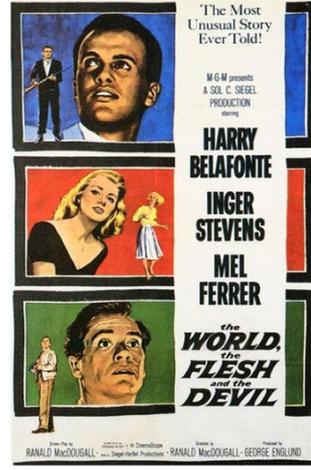
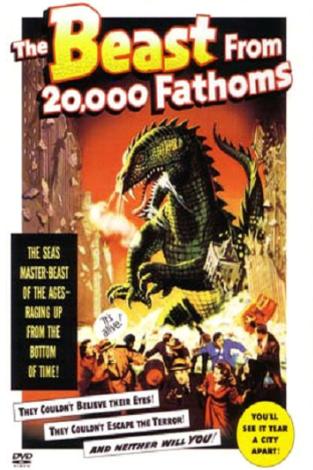
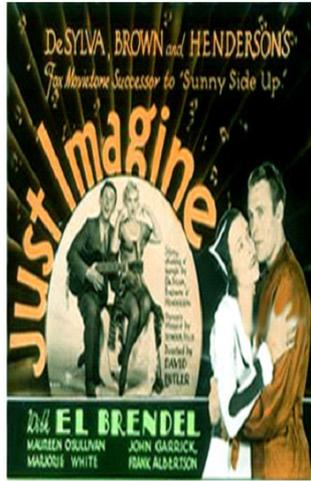
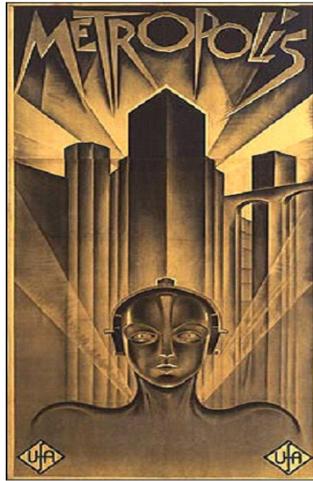


Figure 44. Posters of the movies. (Source : <http://www.wikipedia.com>)

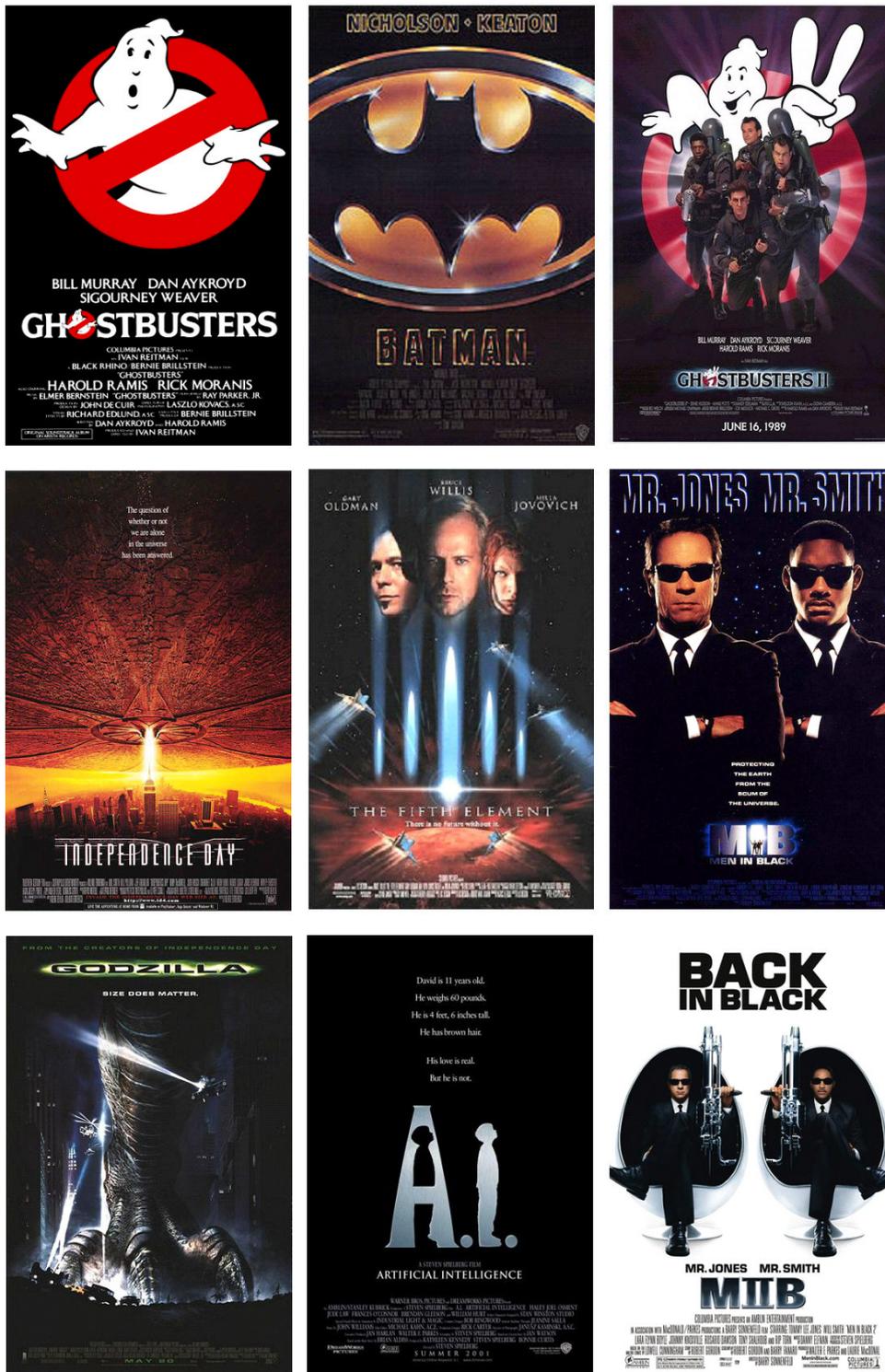


Figure 45. Posters of the movies. (Source : <http://www.wikipedia.com>)

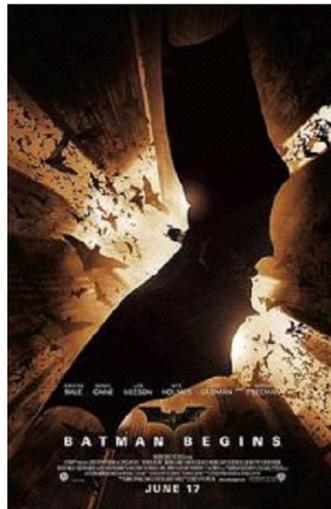
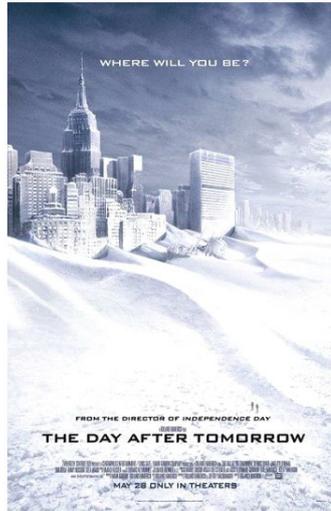
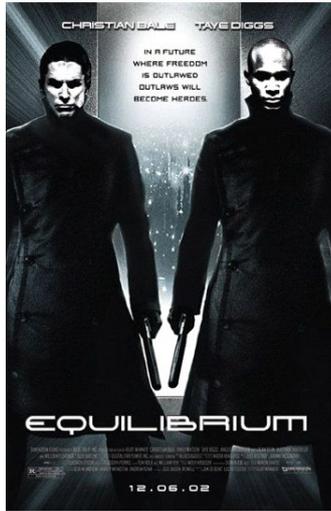


Figure 46. Posters of the movies. (Source : <http://www.wikipedia.com>)