

Everything is Illuminated
2005/Certificate 15

Synopsis of the film

Everything is Illuminated is a film about Jonathan, a young American Jewish man, who goes on a journey to find the woman who saved his grandfather during the Holocaust. The journey is centred on a small Ukrainian town called Trachimbrod where the town and the community was wiped off the map when the Nazis invaded Eastern Europe. He has two guides: a cranky grandfather accompanied by his deranged Border collie, Sammy Davis Jr. Jr., and his over-enthusiastic grandson. But what starts out as a comedy tour turns into a meaningful journey, with an unexpected series of revelations that will change all of their lives.

When it was made and where

The film was made in 2005 and adapted from the novel by Jonathan Safran Foer. It was filmed in Prague, Czech Republic and Odessa, Ukraine.

HMDT Review

Please note that the review may act as a spoiler for the film.

We are recommending this film because it specifically relates to HMD 2011 and links to the theme **Untold Stories**.

It's about individual journeys, lost communities, towns and villages which were wiped off the face of the earth and the discovery of what remains of the individuals and their stories within those communities.

Issues to be aware of

This is not a film that fits into the mould of other films which look at the Holocaust. Who'd have thought that you could get a hip hop loving Ukrainian break dancer and a 'seeing eye' dog and the Holocaust in one film? It makes you question whether you should laugh or cry and takes you on a rollercoaster of emotions. You should note that there is humour, not particularly about the Holocaust, but there are funny characters and some swearing.

You can use HMD resources to find out more about lost communities <http://education.hmd.org.uk/case-studies/the-untold-stories-of-lost-communities> and the HMD 2011 theme **Untold Stories** <http://www.hmd.org.uk/resources/theme-papers/hmd-2011-untold-stories> . The HMD 2010 short film <http://www.hmd.org.uk/resources/films/hmd-2010-the-legacy-of-hope> may also be helpful in exploring some of the issues raised by this film.