

Films suitable for showing at HMD activities

There have been thousands of films and documentaries made about the Holocaust. An increasing number of films are being produced which have later genocides as their subject.

A film showing can stimulate debate and assist with informal education as it can often be easier to empathise with characters (both historical and fictional) on screen rather than in a book. Film showings, followed by a survivor testimony or discussion, can be a useful way to mark HMD.

It is important if showing a film (rather than a documentary) to remember that it is unlikely to be fully historically accurate for reasons of artistic and time constraints. The showing of a feature film should only form part of an activity and should not become a substitute for further learning.

It is also important, if showing a film to an audience, to obtain permission from the copyright owner. For more information on how to do this contact the [Motion Picture Licensing Corporation](#) or [Filmbank](#).

Don't forget that you can view the films produced by the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust on our [website](#) as part of your activities.

Aimee and Jaguar (2001) Rated 15

In 1943, as the Battle of Berlin rages Felice Schragenheim and Lilly Wust, fall in love. Adapted from the 1998 book of the same title by Erica Fischer director Max Farberbock's *Aimee & Jaguar* tells the true story of this passionate, forbidden love affair. Felice, a beautiful Jewish woman lives constantly in danger of being apprehended by the Gestapo, working for a Nazi newspaper under a false name, feeding what she learns to underground resistance leaders. Lilly is a flowery blonde housewife living in bourgeois comfort, raising her 4 sons, passing time until her Nazi husband, Gunther, returns from the war. When the two meet, and Felice makes advances, Lilly responds, falling into total submission under Felice's spell. They nickname each other Aimee (Lilly) and Jaguar (Felice), spending every night dancing to popular 40s jazz music with Felice's eccentric lesbian friends, and every day raising the four boys who treat Felice like a second mother.

And the Violins Stopped Playing (1988) Rated 15

The moving true story surrounding a group of Gypsies in occupied Poland during WW2 and how, against a bitter and bloody backdrop, they struggle on with only their strength and courage to survive.

The Aryan Couple (2004) Rated 15

Based on the true story of a Hungarian Jew's desperate attempts to save his family from Nazi death camps. Mr. Krauzenberg (Martin Landau) is forced to hand over his vast wealth to the Nazis for the safe passage of his family out of occupied Europe, only to find his two remaining servants are left trapped in a web of deceit and danger. Their only hope for survival relies on the courage of Krauzenberg.

Arek

Created by Unison and the Sefton Holocaust Memorial Project this film tells the story of Arek Hersh who survived several concentration camps including Auschwitz-Birkenau and came to the UK at the end of the Holocaust. Copies of Arek can be obtained from Glen Williams of Sefton Unison by emailing gwilliamsunison@btconnect.com

Auschwitz: The Nazis and the Final Solution (2005) Rated 12

This documentary series follows the trail of evil from the very first origins of Auschwitz as a place to hold Polish political prisoners, through the Nazi solution for what they called 'the Jewish problem', to the development of the camp as a mechanised factory for mass murder. It interweaves exceptional testimony from camp survivors and members of the SS with archive footage and reconstructions of some of the key decision-making moments.

The series is the result of three years of in-depth research, drawing on the close involvement of the world experts on the period. It is based on nearly 100 interviews with survivors and perpetrators, many of whom are speaking in detail for the first time.

Bent (1998) Rated 18

Bent is the powerful and moving film adaptation of Martin Sherman's award-winning stage play. Set amidst the decadence of pre-war fascist Germany, *Bent* is an emotional tale of love, as three Gay men fight for survival in the face of persecution. *Bent* illustrates how the selfless love of one person for another can overcome oppression, even under the most extreme circumstances.

The Counterfeiters (2007) Rated 15

This powerful and challenging film tells the story of the largest counterfeiting operation in history, which was established by the Nazis with the intention of flooding the British and American economies with fake currency. Enlisted to assist were concentration camp inmates with skills in the right department – among them master forger, gambler and playboy Salomon Sorowitsch. ‘Sally’ is a charismatic rogue who is at first energised by his new task and by the superior quarters and treatment that his status affords him. But as the war grinds on the moral frailty of Sally’s position becomes more and more apparent and he must choose which side he’s on. Read our film review <http://www.hmd.org.uk/resources/film-reviews/the-counterfeiters-2007>

Dear Kitty: Remembering Anne Frank (1999)

If it hadn’t been for Miep Gies the diary of Anne Frank would have been lost. This documentary follows the story of how Anne Frank’s diary came to mean so much to young people today. Suitable for school use. For more information about this film, please visit [Eureka Entertainment](#)

Defiance (2008) Rated 15

The year is 1941 and the Jews of Eastern Europe are being massacred in their thousands. Managing to escape certain death, three brothers take refuge in the dense surrounding woods they have known since childhood. There they begin their desperate battle against the Nazis. Daniel Craig, Liev Schreiber and Jamie Bell star as brothers who turn a primitive struggle to survive into something far more consequential – a way to avenge the deaths of their loved ones by saving thousands of others.

Downfall (2004) Rated 15

Downfall tells the fictional account of Hitler’s last two weeks in power, through an all German cast (in German with English subtitles). It is mainly set in the *Fuhrerbunker*, Hitler’s secret underground fortress in Berlin and is told through the eyes of Traudl Junge who had been one of Hitler’s personal secretaries since 1942. With Soviet troops gaining territory and encircling Berlin the story focuses on Hitler’s choice to stay in the capital and the film portrays his descent into denial and paranoia through a number of highly-charged outbursts. Read our film review <http://www.hmd.org.uk/resources/film-reviews/downfall>

Everything is Illuminated (2005) Rated 15

An adaptation of Jonathan Safran Foer's best-selling novel about a young Jewish-American writer. Mixing equal parts black comedy and poignant drama, the film follows Jonathan (Elijah Wood) as he travels to the Ukraine to solve a family secret. There he

meets his tour guides: Alex, a cosmopolitan playboy obsessed with Michael Jackson and other American icons; Alex's grandfather, a man worn down by life who seems to be losing his grip on reality; and Sammy Davis, Jr. Jr, the 'seeing eye bitch' dog who comes along for the ride. As Jonathan closes in on his goal to find the story behind the woman who saved his grandfather during the Holocaust, it becomes clear that Alex's grandfather has a dark secret of his own that needs to be, as the film suggests, illuminated. Read our film review <http://www.hmd.org.uk/resources/film-reviews/everything-is-illuminated-2005>

Into the Arms of Strangers (2000) Rated PG

In the nine months prior to World War II, 10,000 children left their families, their homes and their childhood and took a journey that would change their lives forever. Narrated by Dame Judi Dench, this moving documentary details the historic events leading up to the journey from chaos in Europe to safety in Britain. Recalling the tears, the trauma, the waiting, and in a few cases, the joyous reunion, surviving "kinder" tell their story as never told before.

KZ (2005) Rated 12

On the banks of the river Danube, surrounded by the beautiful landscape of Upper Austria, lies the picturesque town of Mauthausen. Two kilometres from its town centre is a place that attracts bikers, busloads of tourists, parties of schoolchildren, people from all over the world. Tour guides come to work here every day, while nearby the locals go about their daily lives. This is a place where thousands upon thousands of people from over 30 nations were tortured and murdered. This site is the former KZ, (short for *Konzentrationslager* – the German for concentration camp). How does it feel to be a tourist at a former concentration camp? How does it feel to work here as a guide, day in day out? How does it feel to live here as a local with the dark secrets of the past? And what of those who've chosen this town to be their new home? KZ is a groundbreaking film about facing our ultimate demons – a contemporary yet timeless piece on the horrors that we have and always will be able to inflict on one another. Evocative and radically different, KZ needs nothing more than the images and words of the inhabitants and visitors to Mauthausen to convey a powerful and haunting message which is relevant to us all today.

Leben Fur Leben: Life for Life: Maximilian Kolbe (1991) Rated 15

When Jan escapes from Auschwitz Concentration Camp to freedom in July 1941 the camp commandant, sentences ten men to starvation as revenge. When one of them collapses under this sentence of death, Franciscan priest, Maximilian Maria Kolbe, sacrifices his own life so that his fellow inmates may live. For more information about this film, please visit <http://www.eurekavideo.co.uk/classics/leben-fr-leben-maximilian-kolbe/>

Life is Beautiful (1997) Rated PG

Guido - a charming but bumbling waiter who's gifted with a colourful imagination and an irresistible sense of humour - has won the heart of the woman he loves and created a beautiful life for his young family. But then, that life is threatened by World War II and Guido must rely on those very same strengths to save his beloved wife and son from an unthinkable fate. You can read our film review <http://www.hmd.org.uk/resources/film-reviews/life-is-beautiful-1997>

A Love to Hide (2005) Rated 15

A Love to Hide is a stirring drama that takes place in Nazi-occupied Paris in 1942. The story revolves around a gay couple who must keep their love a secret for fear of persecution. Their lives are further complicated by the appearance of a young Jewish woman seeking refuge and the return of one of the men's brothers from prison. The resulting tale is one of love, trust, fear and betrayal.

Nicholas Winton: The Power of Good

Documentary about Sir Nicholas Winton, who saved 669 Czechoslovakian children by arranging safe passage to England.

Night & Fog (Nuit et Brouillard) (1955) Rated 15

Documentary which attempts to address the unanswerable questions relating to the Holocaust. Features film footage of the abandoned site of Auschwitz alongside archived footage filmed by both the Allied Forces and the Nazis.

Paper Clips (2006) Rated U

Paper Clips is the moving and inspiring documentary film about the Holocaust told from the perspective of students and teachers of a small school in Tennessee. *Paper Clips* captures how students responded to lessons about the Holocaust-with a promise to honour every lost soul by collecting one paper clip for each individual exterminated by the Nazis.

Paragraph 175 (2000)

Academy-award winning documentary filmmakers Rob Epstein and Jeffrey Friedman direct this harrowing, lyrical look at the persecution of Gay men during the Third Reich. German historian and member of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum Klaus Muller interviews the dozen or so surviving victims, now frail and wizened, who recount their experiences. Epstein and Friedman fashion a layered narrative consisting not only of interviews but also archival footage depicting background life in Weimar Germany.

Refugee Voices: Moments and Memories

Produced by the Association of Jewish Refugees (AJR) as part of its Refugee Voices video testimony archive, *Moments & Memories*, a film by Bea Lewkowicz, tells the stories of Jewish refugees who fled Nazism and how they rebuilt their lives in Great Britain. Exploring the lives of refugees in pre-war Europe, their escape and arrival in a new country, *Moments and Memories* highlights the contribution made by these Continental Britons. Further information about the film and Refugee Voices is available at www.ajr.org.uk/education and to order a copy of *Moments and Memories*, £7.50 including postage and packing, please email enquiries@ajr.org.uk

Schindler's List (1993) Rated 15

Based on a true story, *Schindler's List* is Steven Spielberg's epic drama of World War II Holocaust survivors and the man who unexpectedly came to be their saviour. Unrepentant womaniser and war profiteer Oskar Schindler uses Polish Jews as cheap labour to produce cookware for the Third Reich. But after witnessing the violent liquidation of the walled ghetto where the Krakow Jews have been forced to live, Schindler slowly begins to realise the immense evil of Nazism. When his employees are sent to a work camp, they come under the terrorising reign of sadistic Nazi Amon Goeth. With the help of his accountant, Itzhak Stern, Schindler creates a list of 'essential' Jews. Bribing Goeth, Schindler manages to get 1,100 people released from the camp and brought to the safety of his munitions factory in Czechoslovakia. Read our film review <http://www.hmd.org.uk/resources/film-reviews/schindlers-list-1993>

Shake Hands with the Devil (2005) Rated 15

In 1994, word began to spread around the globe of an incomprehensible tragedy unfolding in the small African nation of Rwanda. In a period of just 100 days, the country's Hutu extremists had executed more than 800,000 Tutsis with ruthless efficiency. Genocide had once again blighted the world. *Shake Hands With The Devil* recounts this unconscionable series of events through the eyes Canadian Lieutenant General Roméo Dallaire, the man tasked by the United Nations Security Council with maintaining peace in the beautiful, yet volatile, nation. Valiantly leading ill-equipped, untrained troops who did not want to be there and desperately pleading each worsening day with the UN for reinforcements and revised rules of engagement, Dallaire was rendered powerless by his superiors in New York. The inevitable failure of the peacekeeping mission haunts him to this day. The mental anguish of reliving of the horrors he witnessed more than once drove him to attempt to end his own life. Following Dallaire's emotional journey, 10 years later, back to Rwanda, the film is an resolute and gut-wrenching indictment of a UN administration that had the opportunity to stop the killing, yet let it play out with devastating consequences. Dallaire's story must be told and its lessons must be learned.

Shoah (2007)

Shoah is Claude Lanzmann's landmark documentary meditation on the Holocaust. Assembled from footage shot during the 1970s and 1980s, it investigates the genocide at the level of experience: the geographical layout of the camps and the ghettos; the daily routines of imprisonment; the inexorable trauma of humiliation, punishment, extermination; and the fascinating insights of those who experienced these events first hand. For more information on this film, please visit [Eureka Entertainment](#).

Shooting Dogs (2007) Rated 15

In April, 1994, the aeroplane of the Hutu President of Rwanda crashes and Hutu militias slaughter the Tutsi population. In the Ecole Technique Officielle, the Catholic priest Christopher and the idealistic English teacher Joe Connor lodge two thousand and five hundred Rwandans survivors in the school under the protection of the UN Belgian force and under siege of the Hutu militia. Read our film review <http://www.hmd.org.uk/resources/film-reviews/film-review-shooting-dogs-2005>

Sometimes in April (2005) Rated 15

Sometimes in April depicts the story of Rwanda's genocide, not only as it occurred in 1994 but also as the country was still experiencing healing and justice in 2004. The story follows two Hutu brothers – Augustine and Honore – through the genocide. The film begins with Augustine as a school teacher in April 2004, 10 years after the genocide began, teaching his class about the atrocities. We also learn that Honore is being tried by the International Crimes Tribunal for his role as an influential radio personality, encouraging and inciting Hutus to murder Tutsis and moderate Hutus. Most of the film is told as flashbacks, focusing on the stories of Augustine, his wife and two sons in Kigali, and a teacher in a Catholic school who is trying to protect Augustine's daughter and the other students. Read our film review <http://www.hmd.org.uk/resources/film-reviews/sometimes-in-april-2005>

Sophie Scholl – The Final Days (2005) Rated PG

Sophie Scholl is a heartbreaking drama, based on real life events and the activities of The White Rose resistance group. Munich, 1943. Twenty-one-year old Sophie Scholl and a group of young men including her brother Hans distribute leaflets denouncing Hitler these at the University. They seem to have achieved their task safely until Sophie showers leaflets over the atrium as the bell for recess rings. As Sophie and Hans try to escape, the caretaker denounces them. At Gestapo headquarters Sophie is interrogated, ultimately crushing evidence is presented and, though forced to confess,

Scholl fights to save the lives of her brother and friends. Read our film review <http://www.hmd.org.uk/resources/film-reviews/sophie-scholl>

Sunshine (1999) Rated 15

Sunshine is the story of the rise and fall of a Jewish Hungarian family during major events of the 20th century. The film follows the story of a number of family members through their lives, deaths, marriages, careers and relationships. The family name Sonnenschein – which means ‘sunshine’ in Hungarian – plays a central role to the film and provides its title. Read our film review <http://www.hmd.org.uk/resources/film-reviews/sunshine-1999>

The Grey Zone (2001) Rated 15

The film is based on actual events in Auschwitz-Birkenau. It tells the story of the twelfth *Sonderkommando*, the penultimate group of special squads who were forced into helping exterminate their fellow prisoners in exchange for material privileges and prolonged life. When the group is due to be killed and replaced, an uprising is planned. As the revolt is about to start, a 14 year old girl is found barely alive after she has miraculously survived the gas chambers. The men face the dilemma of choosing to save her life even though it may threaten an uprising which could save thousands more. Read our film review <http://www.hmd.org.uk/resources/film-reviews/the-grey-zone-2001>

The Pianist (2002) Rated 15

Wladyslaw Szpilman, a Jewish gifted classical pianist living Poland during the Nazi occupation manages to escape deportation to a concentration camp and goes into hiding. For the next few years Wladyslaw eludes capture and lives in the ruins of the Warsaw Ghetto. Based on the memoirs of Wladyslaw Szpilman this film won several Academy Awards including Best Actor for Adrien Brody’s portrayal of Wladyslaw.

The Reader (2008) Rated 15

Based on the book by Bernard Schlink, *The Reader* opens in post-WW2 Germany when teenager Michael Berg becomes ill and is helped home by Hanna, a stranger twice his age. Michael recovers from scarlet fever and seeks out Hanna to thank her. The two are quickly drawn into a passionate but secretive affair. Michael discovers that Hanna loves being read to and their physical relationship deepens. Hanna is enthralled as Michael reads to her. Despite their intense bond, Hanna mysteriously disappears one day and Michael is left confused and heartbroken. Eight years later, while Michael is a law student observing the Nazi war crime trials, he is stunned to find Hanna back in his life - this time as a defendant in the courtroom. As Hanna's past is revealed, Michael uncovers a deep secret that will impact both of their lives. *The Reader* is a story about

truth and reconciliation, about how one generation comes to terms with the crimes of another. Kate Winslet won the Academy Award for Best Actress in a Leading Role for her role as Hanna.

The Relief of Belsen (2007) Rated 15

Channel Four's feature length drama *The Relief of Belsen*, uses eyewitness accounts to piece together the unfolding events following the liberation of the concentration camp by British troops in April 1945. The extraordinary story is told through dramatisation, testimony and news footage; forming a very human account of such an inhuman horror. When an ambulance crew are sent to what they believe is a prisoner of war camp to assist with a medical emergency, the group are completely unprepared for the devastation they find. As an outbreak of typhus spreads through Belsen, Lt Col James Johnston and his men struggle to cope with the immense task before them.

The Wave (2008) Rated 15

In an attempt to engage his students in politics, a high school teacher takes the controversial decision to turn the classroom into a Nazi-style dictatorship. But what starts out as an innocent social experiment ends in tragedy when the roots of fascism begin to take hold of the students. Before long, notions of discipline and community give way to more sinister methods of intimidation and violence as the movement grows in power. Can the teacher quell the wave before it engulfs the entire school? Based on actual events, *The Wave* is a gripping drama that delves deep into the fascist mindset, exposing all its flaws and contradictions through the characters' newly-adopted behaviours and attitudes. Read our film review <http://www.hmd.org.uk/resources/film-reviews/the-wave-2008>

Films to watch for background information

If you are organising a HMD activity, you may wish to find out more information about the genocides which HMD covers. We suggest a number of films which will be helpful, but are not necessarily suitable for showing at your activity.

Armenia

We recommend watching *The Betrayed* which is available on google films, a 40 minute BBC documentary which explores some of the issues surrounding the Ottoman Empire's attempt to destroy its Armenian population.

<http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=-7833166317264817428#>

Cambodia

The Killing Fields made in 1984 tells the story of survivor Dith Pran. It is a very informative film but has dated over the years.

Rwanda

Many people show *Hotel Rwanda* at their HMD activities. This is a very good film however, some Rwandan survivors have expressed that this film has caused them some distress. If you have a Rwandan survivor speaking at your HMD activity, do ask them if they are happy for you to show this film.

Darfur

You can view clips of *Sand and Sorrow* online. Please note that these clips do contain disturbing images. <http://www.sandandsorrow.org/viewclips.html>