

# King Vidor's 'The Crowd': A Tragic Tale of Urban Alienation

Released in 1928, King Vidor's silent masterpiece 'The Crowd' remains a powerful and haunting depiction of the struggles of the common man in the face of industrialization and urban sprawl.



## King Vidor's THE CROWD: The Making of a Silent Classic (Past Times Film Close-Up Series Book 8)

by Kevin Brownlow

★★★★☆ 4.9 out of 5

Language : English  
File size : 7086 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting: Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 178 pages  
Lending : Enabled



The film follows the story of John Sims (James Murray), a young man who moves to New York City in search of a better life. While he initially finds success, his marriage and family life soon begin to unravel under the pressures of the city.

### The Dehumanizing Effects of Urbanization

One of the most striking aspects of 'The Crowd' is its depiction of the dehumanizing effects of urbanization on the individual. John Sims is just

one of millions of people who are drawn to the city, only to find themselves lost and alienated in its vastness.



The film's use of long shots and high camera angles emphasizes the insignificance of the individual within the urban landscape. John is often dwarfed by the towering buildings around him, and his face is often obscured by the crowds that surround him.

### **Failed Dreams and Unfulfilled Aspirations**

'The Crowd' also explores the theme of failed dreams and unfulfilled aspirations. John Sims arrives in New York City with high hopes of making a better life for himself and his family, but his dreams are quickly dashed by the realities of the city.



John works long hours at a dead-end job, and he is unable to provide a comfortable life for his wife and children. His marriage becomes strained, and he eventually abandons his family in a moment of despair.

### **Isolation and Loneliness**

Perhaps the most tragic aspect of 'The Crowd' is its depiction of isolation and loneliness. John Sims is surrounded by people, but he is ultimately alone. He is unable to connect with his fellow citizens, and he feels lost and disconnected from the world around him.



John's loneliness is reflected in the film's use of long, unbroken shots that follow him as he walks through the bustling city streets. These shots emphasize his isolation and his inability to find a place where he belongs.

### **A Timeless Masterpiece**

'The Crowd' is a timeless masterpiece that has lost none of its relevance in the 90 years since its release. The film's themes of urban alienation, failed dreams, and isolation are just as resonant today as they were in 1928.

King Vidor's 'The Crowd' is a must-see for anyone interested in the history of film, the sociology of urban life, or the human condition.

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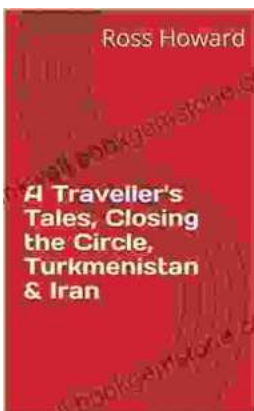
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