

# THE CITY DARK

A documentary about light pollution and the loss of the night.



## THE CITY DARK (60' & 90')

### GENRE: DOCUMENTARY

Bathed in its glow of orange streetlights, New York, the “City that Never Sleeps” only has five stars to see. What begins as a disappointing autumn evening becomes a journey to answer a simple question: do we need the stars? In showing how artificial light affects our health and planet, The City Dark will blend cutting edge-science with real human stories, all rendered in beautiful HD cinematography. While broadening our understanding of the environmental implications of artificial light, The City Dark will feature an unprecedented portrait of the sky above our heads.

From Mauna Kea to Death Valley to Paris, THE CITY DARK explores the world after dusk, capturing a planet increasingly shrouded in light. As the film investigates the human relationship to the stars, we meet the men and women at the forefront of the science of the night:

- In Hawaii, urban development threatens the success of the world’s newest optics, where astronomers seek “killer asteroids” that could strike the earth.
- A woman who patrols downtown city streets to rescue birds that have collided with buildings after city lights disrupted their migratory route, ornithologists estimated 1 billion birds die this way each year.
- In the desert, astronomers seeking to unravel the mysteries of “dark matter”; their work is threatened by the encroaching city lights from one of America’s fastest-growing regions.
- Biologists studying hatching sea turtles whose inborn navigation systems are disrupted by excess artificial light along the coast; 20% of endangered baby sea turtles are lost to disorientation.
- A geographer who has developed a method for measuring light pollution and only a handful of places on the earth maintain truly dark skies.
- Doctors and researchers seeking to understand the most immediate risk associated with light pollution: increased rates of cancer, thought to be caused by suppressed levels of melatonin after exposure to light at night.

The principal visual component of the film is beautifully sequenced time-lapse images of the night sky; these portraits of the world above our heads will be forged from tens of thousands of high-resolution still images, strung together to show the stars wheeling above the earth. Each journey is punctuated by engaging animations, which clearly and artistically convey the story of light pollution and its myriad effects.

