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| **About you** | **[Salutation]** | Lorenzo | J. | Torres Hortelano |
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| Cavalcanti, Alberto de Almeida (1897- 1982) |
| **[Enter any *variant forms* of your headword – OPTIONAL]** |
| Alberto Cavalcanti was a Brazilian-born film director and producer who made significant contributions to documentary and post-war cinema. In 1926 he made his first film, *Rien Que les Heures* (*Nothing but Time*), in Paris, which was a predecessor of Walter Ruttmann’s *Berlin: Die Sinfonie der Großstadt* (*Berlin: Symphony of a Big City*, 1927) to which he also contributed. With Rien he was creating the prototype of the modernist city symphony, with no narrative story but an internal structure, dramatizing the documentary form. He was close to the surrealist movement which helped him to delve into the dark sides of reality, as in *En rade* (*Sea Fever*, 1928). In the 1930s he joined John Grierson’s GPO Film Unit (General Post Office) and became its most modernist director through his use of formalist editing techniques. Here, he directed experimental short documentaries such as *Coal Face* (1935), based on a poem by W. H. Auden. In the 1940s he joined Ealing Studios where he made many films and mentored other directors. Of note during this stage was a collective film, *Dead of Night* (1945), a classic of the fantasy genre. After leaving Ealing he filmed two film noirs with strong social connotations: *They Made Me a Fugitive* (1947) and *For Them that Trespass* (1949). In Brazil, he was offered a position to teach cinema at the [Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo](http://mam.org.br/) and filmed one of his strongest movies, *O canto do mar* (*Song of the Sea*, 1952), which tells the story of a sertão family exodus, fleeing from drought and misery. |
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| Further reading:  (Aitken, Alberto Cavalcanti: Realism, Surrealism and National Cinemas)  (Aitken, The Concise Routledge Encyclopedia of the Documentary Film)  (Brown)  (Cavalcanti)  (Kizirian)  (Lovell)  (Paranagua)  (Tavernier)  (The Museum of Modern Art)  (Werth) |