“What would life be without movies? Unendurable, di ba?” says Madame, a barely disguised gloss of the former Filipino First Lady Imelda Marcos in Jessica Hagedorn’s 1990 novel *Dogeaters* (224). Through an examination of cinema spectatorship in transnational fiction, I argue that movie going provides an apt conceptual model for imagining the disruptions, incongruities and creative opportunities of what I call global moments. Global moments are instances of interpretative uncertainty, where multiple and often incongruous frames of reference apply, and in which the transnational subject forms a strategy for producing meaning that allows for, contains or erases these contradictions. Rather than being a moment of unity, the global moment is a moment of translation, confrontation, and crisis. Extending Clifford Geertz’s view of culture as “webs of significance,” representations of cross-cultural spectatorship in the cinema provide particularly fitting instances of cultural webs being crossed, tangled or knotted during intense transcultural exchanges. *Dogeaters* and Arundhati Roy’s *The God of Small Things* (1997), among many other novels, offer detailed descriptions of their characters’ local experiences in the movie theater, calling for a consideration of both the transnational production and consumption of narrative. These novels of globalization also represent the cinema as having the potential to awaken impulses in the audience to produce and perform what Appadurai calls “imagined lives.” Hollywood films such as *All That Heaven Allows* and *The Sound of Music* provide the novels’ postcolonial characters with new schemata or models of behavior that are creatively incorporated into their everyday lives. While also acknowledging the stultifying and oppressive aspects of global mass media, I contend these transnational narratives also open up for their characters the possibility for meaningful action through imaginative interpretation of cinematic images, and offer models of resistance to homogenization by appropriating scripts from Hollywood to serve personal and communal interests.