

Awards Box Office Reviews Interviews Festivals



Angelina Jolie  
Tops Forbes'  
Highest Paid ...



CNN Producing  
Doc on Hillary  
Clinton to Be ...



TV Mavens, Check  
Out 'The Writers'  
Room,' ...



In the Works:  
Details Emerge  
from Joe  
Swanberg's ...



New York Film  
Festival to Open  
with Paul ...

10

12

## 'Two Lives' Stars Liv Ullman in Unbelievable True Story: Stony Brook Film Festival Review (TRAILER)

FESTIVALS

BY JOHN ANDERSON  
JULY 29, 2013 1:44 PM  
0 COMMENTS

Like 20

1

9



Juliane Köhler in 'Two Lives'

All too often, "based on a true story" is just a cop out for a lame narrative ("Don't blame us it's true!"). Sometimes, though, it's a way of couching the incredible in a way that prepares the audience for a plotline that's too far out to be fiction.

The latter applies to "Two Lives," which German director Georg Maas, after 10 years of scripting and casting, brought to the Stony Brook Film Festival Saturday and a crowd that gives short shrift to the overly arty or the preciously contrived. They all said 'Wow.' Which is a testament to Maas, because the story is byzantine:

During the Nazi occupation of Norway, women who consorted with German soldiers were ostracized, and their children taken away. Raised in East Germany, Katrine (Juliane Kohler) has made a new life for herself in Norway with her husband, daughter and the family matriarch, played by the great Liv Ullmann. When a lawsuit seeking reparations against the Germans and Norwegians for the child-confiscation scheme ropes Katrine into its case, a "web of secrets," as they say in the festival catalogues, begins to unravel.

Maas has told at least one audience that he what he was seeking with his film was an "active" rather than "passive" audience, and that's precisely what he gets: The convolutions of the story are so elegantly laid out, the viewer kept so off balance, and the intrigues so compounded, that the result is a film of multiple layers and multiple mysteries (among them, why the film doesn't yet have U.S. distribution).



Liv Ullmann in 'Two Lives'

Ullmann is wonderful, which is no surprise, but the rest of the cast is first-rate and the casting itself something fairly wondrous: Set in 1990, it regularly flashes back, and unlike in so many films "Two Lives" features actors playing younger versions of particular characters – Klara Manzel, for instance, who plays the younger Katrine – who match up precisely with their co-stars, not just in face but in body language. The result is a utterly fantastical story rendered utterly plausible, and gripping.



FESTIVALS

GET EMAIL UPDATES

Email

SUBSCRIBE

MORE: [Festivals](#), [Reviews](#), [Liv Ullmann](#) Like 20

1

9



You might also like:



10 Actors Hollywood Tried And Failed To Make Happen



Good Times, Bad Times: Watch The First Trailer For David O. Russell's 'American Hustle'



Watch: Bradley Cooper, Christian Bale, Jennifer Lawrence and Amy Adams Do the 70s Proud in Trailer for David O. Russell's 'American Hustle'



Watch: Ben Stiller Imagines a Better World (And an Oscar?) for 'The Secret Life of Walter Mitty'



'The Canyons' Director Paul Schrader Calls Out SXSW Film Festival, Defends Lindsay Lohan at Lincoln Center World Premiere