

Night Will Fall

Directed by André Singer

Narrated by Helena Bonham Carter

UK, Germany, France, Israel, US, Denmark 2014, 75 mins, Cert 15

Sheffield Doc/Fest 2014: Honourable Mention

Jerusalem Film Festival 2014: Special Mention



Sergeant Oakes and Sergeant Lawrie of the Army Film and Photographic Unit.
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Opening on 19 September 2014 in cinemas nationwide

12 August 2014 – To be released by the BFI in cinemas nationwide on 19 September, ***Night Will Fall*** is a powerful new documentary about the liberation of the Nazi concentration camps and the efforts made by combat and newsreel cameramen to document the almost unbelievable scenes encountered there.

Directed by **André Singer** (executive producer of the multi-award-winning *The Act of Killing*), it uses original archive footage and eyewitness testimonies to tell the extraordinary story of the filming of the camps. He says:

"It has been an enormous privilege to talk to the soldiers who first entered the camps, the cameramen who lifted their cameras and filmed, the editors who viewed the footage, and the victims who suffered there and who were recorded on film in the first, unbelievable moments when rescue finally came."

Night Will Fall also explores how a team of top filmmakers came together in 1945 to make a documentary which would provide lasting, undeniable evidence of the Nazis' unspeakable crimes. This project – which made use of footage shot by British, American and Soviet cameramen – was led by **Sidney Bernstein**, Chief of the Film Section at the Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force (and later founder of Granada Television). He commissioned a wealth of British talent, including editor **Stewart McAllister** (acclaimed for his work with Humphrey Jennings), writer and future cabinet minister **Richard Crossman** – and, as treatment adviser, his friend **Alfred Hitchcock**. Yet, despite initial support from

the British and US Governments, the film was never finished, and only now, 70 years on, has it been restored and completed by Imperial War Museums. Entitled *German Concentration Camps Factual Survey*, it will have its UK premiere later this year.

Among the survivors, liberators and others who talk about their experiences in new and archive interviews are **Branko Lustig**, producer of *Schindler's List* who survived incarceration in Auschwitz, **Anita Lasker-Wallfisch**, renowned cellist and surviving member of the Women's Orchestra in Auschwitz, **Lt. Col. (Rtd) Leonard Berney**, one of the first British soldiers to enter Bergen-Belsen, **Sergeant Mike Lewis**, combat cameraman with the Army Film and Photographic Unit, and film editor **John Krish** who saw some of the shocking raw footage of Dachau when it first arrived in London. **Sidney Bernstein** describes the evolution of his film project, and **David Dimbleby** talks about his father, **Richard Dimbleby**, a legendary figure of public broadcasting who recorded a now famous onsite report from Bergen-Belsen.

At a time of highly charged debate about the ethics of filming the victims of atrocity, *Night Will Fall* provokes challenging questions about the nature and purpose of documentary. Absorbing, eloquent and deeply moving, it increases our knowledge and understanding of one of the most horrific crimes of the 20th century and offers an important reminder to a new generation.

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Notes to editors

- *Night Will Fall* is directed by André Singer for Spring Films and Angel TV, and produced by Sally Angel (Angel TV) and Brett Ratner (RatPac Documentary Films), with co-producers Philippa Kowarsky and Signe Byrge Sørensen. Executive producers are Richard Melman, James Packer and Stephen Frears. The BFI has supported the documentary during production through the Film Fund.
- *Night Will Fall* will be screened during the Cambridge Film Festival, on Tues 2 Sept at 18:00, followed by a Q&A.
- **BFI Southbank Preview + Discussion Weds 17 Sept, 18:20, NFT1**
Night Will Fall provokes challenging questions about the nature of documentary film. Who were these images for, what is their value? Can film ever be a pure, naïve document? What are the ethics of filming the victims of atrocity? BFI Southbank presents a preview screening of the film and welcomes director André Singer and producer Sally Angel, alongside historians Dr Toby Haggith (Imperial War Museums) and Professor David Cesarani (Royal Holloway, University of London) to explore these complex ideas.

About the BFI

The BFI is the lead body for film in the UK with the ambition to create a flourishing film environment in which innovation, opportunity and creativity can thrive by:

- Connecting audiences to the widest choice of British and World cinema
- Preserving and restoring the most significant film collection in the world for today and future generations
- Investing in creative, distinctive and entertaining work
- Promoting British film and talent to the world
- Growing the next generation of film makers and audiences

