



BORDERLINES FILM FESTIVAL

ONE LIFE (12A)

Director: James Hawes

Starring: Anthony Hopkins, Johnny Flynn, Helena Bonham Carter
UK, 2023, 1 hour 49 minutes, English

Johnny Flynn does an admirable job of depicting the stammering, quiet resilience of a younger Winton in the film's substantial flashbacks. We see him, at work in Prague, with Warriner (Romola Garai) and Chadwick (Alex Sharp), while his mother Babi (Helena Bonham Carter) oversees the operation's London branch. Director James Hawes, transitioning over from television, translates these events to screen with appropriate, ever-thrumming terror. Haunting photographs of children, whose futures rely upon paper visas and wooden train seats, stare up from paper-clipped documents. We see them wrenched from their parents, their names scribbled on pieces of card placed around their necks. - **The Independent**

Lucinda Coxon and Nick Drake's script splits its efforts between Maidenhead, 1987, and London, 1938. Tasked by his wife Grete (Lena Olin) to clear out his old things and let go of the past, the older Winton (Anthony Hopkins) — a hoarder extraordinaire — rediscovers his old scrapbook. He begins reminiscing about his pre-war efforts, when the young Winton (Johnny Flynn) visited Prague and had a life-changing experience, witnessing children in refugee camps, living in inhospitable conditions. Coxon and Drake keep things light and simple, opting for a formulaic approach heavily reliant on an emotionally stirring third act. - **Empire**

One Life finds its strength through Anthony Hopkins. An actor whom you can always depend on, Hopkins delivers a heartfelt and sincere performance, capturing the melancholic gravity behind Winton's pain, grief and regret over not accomplishing more. You feel that weight and nuance whenever he studies an old photograph or attempts to share his story with the press, making that powerful and cathartic conclusion worthwhile. Flynn is equally impressive as his younger counterpart. It's in these performances that *One Life* really comes to life. -

Empire

Shooting on location in both the U.K. and Czech Republic, helmer Hawes and his collaborators create strong period looks for each timeline, giving them each their own natural rhythm. Ace editor Lucia Zucchetti moves seamlessly back and forth between them while Volker Bertelmann's attractive piano and orchestra score is never overbearing. - **Variety**

Notes compiled by Holly Dennison

If you like ONE LIFE, you may also enjoy:

THE ZONE OF INTEREST (12A) - Loosely based on the novel by Martin Amis, this bold, surgical probe into our capacity for zoning out on genocide is chilling indeed.

OCCUPIED CITY (15) - In Steve McQueen's own words, his cinematic take on the Holocaust holds "the weight of what happened".