

Wednesday 27th November 2024
Studio 609, 7.30pm

The Zone of Interest

UK/US/Poland, 2023, 12A, 1 hr 45 mins
 German with subtitles

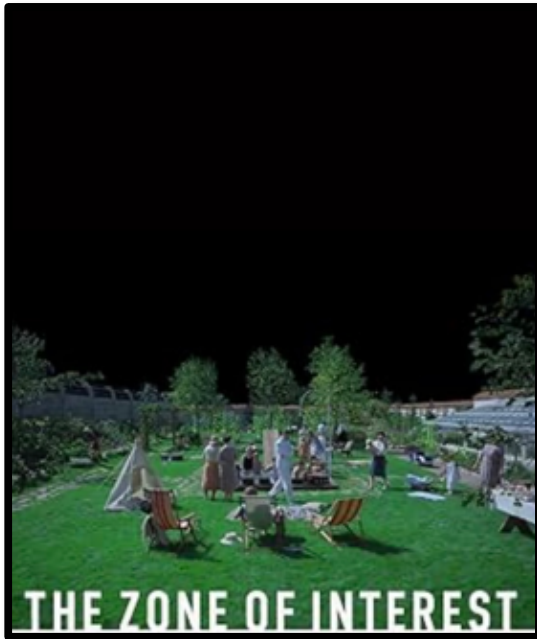
Director: Jonathan Glazer

Writer: Jonathan Glazer

Producers: James Wilson, Ewa Puszczyńska

Crime, Drama, History, War

Auschwitz commandant Rudolf Höss and his wife Hedwig strive to build a dream life for their family in a house and garden beside the camp. Best international feature film, Oscars 2024.



Cast includes:

Christian Friedel	Rudolf Höss
Sandra Hüller	Hedwig Höss
Johann Karthaus	Klaus Höss
Luis Noah Witte	Hans Höss
Nele Ahrensmeier	Inge-Brigit Höss
Lilli Falk	Heidtraut Höss
Anastazja Drobniak	} Annegret Höss
Cecylia Pekala	
Kalman Wilson	

Film Notes by David Fowler

The Höss family live in a grand house, attended by servants. Outside is a magnificent garden, cultivated by Frau Höss. The family take their children swimming or on picnics in the beautiful countryside. Herr Höss attends work meetings with colleagues.

But behind the banality of this apparently ordinary life, something doesn't add up. A high wall looms at the end of the garden. Beyond it stands a watchtower. Over the wall is Auschwitz, and Rudolf Höss and his family live here because he is the camp commandant.

The Zone of Interest asks how ordinary life can coexist alongside an atrocity like the Holocaust. How can humans lose all conscience and humanity? The Höss family seem immune to what is going on on the other side of the wall. They don't discuss it; they don't ignore it so much as not notice it. They seem to be oblivious. Reality seems to intrude only occasionally – Frau Höss's mother visits, but after initially being impressed by the family home becomes increasingly troubled.

The film is loosely adapted from a 2014 novel by Martin Amis, but pares the narrative down to focus on Höss. The camera never ventures inside the camp; instead the suffering is evoked in the viewer's imagination through sounds carried over the wall – a shout, a command, a gunshot, the sound of machinery. It's always there in the background, yet the family have tuned it out.

The Zone of Interest won the Grand Prix of the 2023 Cannes Film Festival and was nominated for five Oscars, including best director for Jonathan Glazer. It won two – Best International Feature Film and Best Sound.

Glazer used the actual wall of the Auschwitz camp, reconstructing the house close to its original site. He used unobtrusive filming techniques such as concealed cameras for scenes within the house, rather than a conventional camera crew. Sandra Hüller, recently seen in the leading role in **Anatomy of a Fall**, spoke to *Sight and Sound* magazine about the challenge of playing the role of Hedwig. "[It] goes 'against the natural impulse of an actor... we want to play interesting people and make ourselves more interesting through playing them. It didn't work here. It would have been a fatal decision to put any sort of interesting character development that people usually look for. I would say that's what I found about them – they really don't care about anything.'"

Our Next Presentations



Tuesday 10th December 2024

In the Performance Hall at 7.45pm

Wonka

UK, US, PG, 2023, 1 hr 56 mins

Dir: Paul King

Adventure, Comedy, Musical

With dreams of opening a shop in a city renowned for its chocolate, a young and poor Willy Wonka discovers that the industry is run by a cartel of greedy chocolatiers.



Tuesday 10th December 2024

In Studio 609 at 7.30pm

The Holdovers

US, 2023, 15, 2 hr 13 mins

Dir: Alexander Payne

Comedy, Drama

A curmudgeonly instructor at a New England school remains on campus during Christmas break. He soon forms an unlikely bond with a brainy but damaged troublemaker, and with the school's cook, a woman who just lost a son in the Vietnam War.



Latest Audience Film Ratings

How did you like our recent offerings? % voting "Excellent" or "Good"

