

A German Life



Logline

Although Brunhilde Pomsel always described herself as just being a side-line figure and not at all interested in politics, she nevertheless got closer to one of the worst criminals in world history than anyone else presently alive. Today aged 105, Pomsel used to work as secretary, stenographer and typist for the Nazi Propaganda Minister Joseph Goebbels. Brunhilde Pomsel's life mirrors the major historical ruptures of the 20th century and German life thereafter. Nowadays, many people presume that the dangers of war and fascism have long been overcome. Brunhilde Pomsel makes it clear that this is certainly not the case. "A German Life" forces viewers to ask themselves what they would have done and whether they would have sacrificed any possible moral principles in order to advance their own careers. Her extraordinary biography and unique personal journey into the past lead to disturbing and timeless questions: Have we moved on or are we still unclear about our own morals and humanity and more importantly: Where do I stand on these issues today?

www.a-german-life.com

Synopsis

This is the first time that Brunhilde Pomsel talks about her experiences within the inner-most circle of Hitler's rabble-rouser and seducer of souls – Joseph Goebbels. Her memories of her youth are inseparably intertwined with the most terrible chapter of human history. During the Roaring Twenties in Berlin, Pomsel worked as a secretary for a Jewish lawyer, who would emigrate as of 1933. She then found work typing the memoirs of a right-wing nationalist frontline veteran. A friend who was in the Nazi party then got her a job with Berlin Radio. To take up the post, the "apolitical" Pomsel had to join the NSDAP as well. "So I joined the party," she recalls. "Why shouldn't I? Everyone was doing it." In the end she was transferred to the Ministry of Propaganda. "Only a contagious disease could have held me back," she remembers. "I was flattered. It was a reward for being the fastest typist at Berlin Radio." Pomsel describes Goebbels' considerable charm, a quality that was the direct opposite of his horrible crimes and his slavering speeches. He worshiped Hitler like a messiah, and his explosions of rage – likely the result of frustrated narcissism – were feared throughout the Propaganda Ministry. "He was unbelievably vain," Pomsel recalls. "He paid attention to every detail of his appearance." In the final days of the war Pomsel fled to the bunker underneath the Ministry of Propaganda. There she witnessed the Goebbels' final hours. Soviet troops took Pomsel herself captive in the bunker. After five years in prison, friends helped Pomsel return to the working world. She again served as a secretary to the bosses of German Radio. Today the 105-year-old lives in Bavaria.

Production Team:

Directed by: Christian Krönes, Olaf S. Müller,
Roland Schrotthofer, Florian Weigensamer

Original Script: Florian Weigensamer

Visual Director: Christian Kermer

Camera: Frank van Vught

2nd Camera: Davor Marinkovic

Additional Cinematography: Christian Krönes, Olaf S. Müller

Sound Engineers: Micha Müller, Franziska Pallaske

Editor: Christian Kermer

Sound design: heimwerk.audio: Jürgen Klohofer, Felix Sturmberger

Mastering: Martin Löcker

Produced by: Blackbox Film & Medienproduktion GmbH.

Archival Footage: Steven Spielberg Film and Video Archive
United States Holocaust Memorial Museum
Library of Congress
National Archive and Records Administration
Das Deutsche Rundfunk Archiv

Technical Details:

Runtime: 113 min.

Original Language: German

Subtitles: German, English

Shooting Format: HD

Exhibition Format: DCP

Aspect - Ratio: 1:1,85

Frames/sec: 24

Colour: Black / White

Sound Mix: AC3

Further Information:

Country: Austria

Filming Location: Germany

Time of Production: 2013 - 2016

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