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'Two Lives' a Fascinating and Dark Movie

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By Sophie Braccini



Actresses Juliane Köhler and Liv Ullmann star in "Two Lives." Photo provided

Showcase in Orinda features "Two Lives" ("Zwei Leben"), which portrays the cruel destiny of people crushed by historical events beyond their control and the inhumanity of a totalitarian regime. The film, based on true events, is skillfully crafted and constructed – a noir mystery where glimpses into the past peel away layer after layer the lies that are covering a terrible truth.

The story begins during the occupation of Norway by Nazi Germany during World War II, when a Norwegian girl, Ase Evensen, falls in love on the Eastern Front. She gives birth to a little girl, Katrine, who is taken away by the occupying forces to be manipulation, betrayal, and murder,

his month's International Film raised in a Lebensborn orphanage set up by the Nazis for foreign-born Aryan children. In the 1940s, hundreds of such children were taken from their mothers, many of them ending up in East Germany behind the iron curtain. The film is set in 1990 after Germany's reunification. A law firm intent on gaining compensation for these victims of deportation seeks Katrine, who escaped East Germany and reunited with her mother in adulthood. As one young lawyer's inquest develops, an even darker picture begins to emerge.

This German drama was written with a German soldier who later dies and directed by Georg Maas, based on real facts and a novel by Hannelore Hippe. It's an unbelievable story of

and of the Stasi – the secret police agency of the former German Democratic Republic (East Germany).

The movie is gripping and played with remarkable talent, especially by the two main actors, Juliane Köhler (Katrine) and Liv Ullmann (Ase), who gives a touchingly restrained and sensitive performance. There are a few weaknesses in the plot; some elements are not well explained or completely plausible, but it is nonetheless enthralling.

The visual beauty of the movie is also worth noting. The scenes set in the 1940s are filmed in mute tones with splashes of red; the present day is filmed in a magnificent Norwegian countryside, wave-battered and windscoured, streaked with rain and snow.

The themes include guilt, resilience, the supremacy of love above all else, and the power of destiny. German filmmakers continue to courageously explore the darkest hours of their country's past, from Nazism to

"Two Lives" will open Aug. 29 for at least one week at the Orinda Theatre, the only Bay Area venue showing this year's Oscar finalist from Germany.



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Community Service

We are pleased to make space available whenever possible for some of Lamorinda's dedicated community service organizations to submit news and information about their activities. Submissions can be sent to storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com with the subject header In Service to the Community.

Two Local Blood Drives Address an **Urgent Need**

Submitted by Sara O'Brien



he American Red Cross and the Moraga Valley Presbyterian Church are partnering for a blood drive from 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 6 at Moraga Valley Presbyterian Church, 10 Moraga Valley Lane. The drive comes at a time when age. Right now blood products are and insert sponsor code Moraga925. being distributed to area hospitals almost as quickly as donations are comblood at the Second Annual City of

ing in, maintaining the urgent need.

"The need for blood is constant," said Sara O'Brien, Red Cross Northern California Blood Services communications manager. "Patients are depending on generous blood donors to roll up a sleeve and give blood to prevent a shortage." One person who counted on blood being available is Adriana Aboumrad, a senior at Saint Mary's College who had leukemia as a child and is currently in remission. Her mother, Leanne, says it was the community of donors who really helped Adriana to get through her surgery and recovery.

While walk-ins are welcome, the Red Cross has a great need for donors may save time with an apdonors to help prevent a blood short- pointment. Visit redcrossblood.org

Local residents can also donate

Lafayette Blood Drive on Monday, Sept. 15. The Red Cross blood mobile will be parked outside the city offices at Desco Plaza, 3675 Mt. Diablo Blvd. Call Administrative Assistant Dana Anderson for more information and to set up an appointment: (925)

"Without the countless number of people who donate blood, I wouldn't be graduating college this spring," said Aboumrad. "Donating blood truly saves lives and one day it could save yours."

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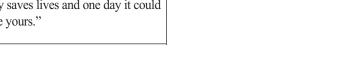
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Lafayette Little League **Hits Home Run for ALS**

Submitted by Matt Chaney



Photo provided

support the Golden West Chapter cure for this horrific disease (GWC) of The ALS Association through their national research pro-(ALSA) and a Lafayette resident with ALS, also known as Lou Gehrig's disease. The program, called Runs For the GWC also provides care services ALS, allows LLL teams and families to ALS patients and families to pledge a monetary value for each run their team scored during the regular season. The typical pledge is 50 cents per run.

erated just over \$25,000 through Runs For ALS. This year they have ALS on all fronts. raised the bar. The league has collected and is donating \$10,000. League teams, families, board of di-"There are really not enough words or ways to express the gratitude for this level of support from our com- ALS and the efforts to bring an end to munity," said GWC-ALSA board of directors member Matt Chaney. Chaney. "Together you are making a "This donation will help fund the difference."

n 2008, Lafayette Little League GWC to continue their world class began a philanthropic program to effort to find a cause, treatment and

In addition to funding research throughout 85 percent of California and is a leader in local and national advocacy efforts. The GWC was given a four star rating by Charity In the first five years LLL gen- Navigator in 2013 and continues be one of the top organizations fighting

"Thank you Lafayette Little rectors and especially Craig Bocks for the continued support of Runs For debilitating disease," said this







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