



The Boy In The Striped Pyjamas



Notes

Vital Statistics

Director Mark Herman born Bridlington,
East Yorkshire 1954
Released 2008, Disney
Running time 94 mins
Genre - Drama

Synopsis

This haunting World War 2 drama is told from the perspective of Bruno, the eight-year-old son of the commandant at a concentration camp. Bruno has just moved with his family into a new house in the middle of nowhere, and feels imprisoned by his mother's persistent warnings never to venture beyond the garden's high walls. From what he can make of the view from his bedroom window, he thinks he must be living on a strange sort of farm where the workers seem to get straight out of bed and go to work on the fields. When his curiosity leads him through an open door and up to a vast electric fence, he meets a boy there of exactly his own age - but with a very different story to tell.

Notes

Did you know?

- Director Mark Herman says he saw hundreds of young actors for the role of Bruno, the camp commandant's son and the eventual choice, Asa Butterfield, was actually the first tape he received and the third person he saw. He thought he was fantastic but kept on searching, just because the production team wanted to make sure that no stone was unturned. In the end, they went back to him for his ability to hold the screen.
- Herman also wrote and directed 1998's 'Little Voice' starring Jane Horrocks and the 1996 film 'Brassed Off' starring Ewan McGregor.
- Although the concentration camp where the movie is set is never actually mentioned by name throughout the movie, we know it is Auschwitz because it was the only Nazi death camp with four crematoria.
- The film was nominated for six awards internationally. Lead female Vera Farmiga won the award for Best Actress at the British Independent Film Awards and the film also won the Audience Choice Award at the Chicago Film Awards.

Notes

Tasks

- Think about the task of recreating wartime Germany - what types of things might you have to source/recreate?
- Also consider the age of the young actors and the subject matter of the film, particularly the final scene, and difficulties in translating this on to film.

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