

# Film & Discussion: Between Guilt, Heroism, and a Great Deal of Seductive Normality

Nazi Bystanders as Cultural Icons in Film and Television

**Activiteit van Duitsland Instituut Amsterdam**

**Datum:** donderdag 24 september 2015 om 20:00 uur

**Locatie:** Bioscoop Tuschinski, Reguliersbreestraat 26-34, Amsterdam

**Informatie:** Voertaal: Engels en Duits

**Toegang:** aanmelden via [www.niod.knaw.nl/nl/activiteiten](http://www.niod.knaw.nl/nl/activiteiten)

As part of the international conference 'The Bystander in the Holocaust History', there will be a special film and discussion evening at Pathé Tuschinski, displaying scenes from the movie 'Shoah' and with an introduction and comments by researchers Nicole Colin and Wulf Kansteiner.

'Shoah' (1985) is a documentary about the Holocaust, directed by the French filmmaker Claude Lanzmann. In this world famous documentary, Lanzmann interviews survivors, perpetrators and bystanders of the Holocaust and visits historical sites in Poland.

About the conference 'The Bystander in the Holocaust History':

Bystanders lead an ambivalent existence in Holocaust and Nazi Memory. On the one hand, they are omnipresent on the screen. The depiction of Nazi crimes with its narrative core of perpetrators, victims, and resisters seems to require a witness who acts as a sounding board and confirms the events' ethical significance through a range of emotional reactions. In this role, the bystander acts as the viewer's representative inside the narrative worlds of Nazi history. In fact, in his/her passivity the bystander reflects the passivity of the viewer in front of the TV doubling the latter's gaze. On the other hand, bystander indifference is a difficult topic to visualize and the figure of the bystander is constantly overshadowed by the symbolically more powerful screen presences of perpetrators, victims, and resisters. Or, to put a finer point to it, in the narrative universe of Holocaust memory, the bystander is always in the process of losing his/her neutrality, following the gravitational pull of perpetrators and resisters

and becoming one of them. But there is also significant push in the other direction, especially on the level of Holocaust memory. After all, victims and survivors would have loved to remain in the roles of bystanders and perpetrators constantly seek moral refuge in the vast and variegated gray zone of bystander existence.

The evening will be held in English and German; film clips partly in German, partly with English subtitles.)

Registration: [NIOD](#)

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