

Film Review: World Conflict is a Boy's Life For 'Winter in Wartime'

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on April 1, 2011 - 6:58pm

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CHICAGO – When life collides with history, human beings are often both the perpetrators and the victims. In the excellent film “Winter in Wartime,” a boy grows up quickly when confronted with the realities of that history and life in the last days of World War II.



Rating: **4.5/5.0**

What happens to a childhood when the serious implications of wartime becomes the wolf at the door is the main premise of the film. There are bound to be secrets, distrust, intrigue and the unfortunate tragedy. The absorbing story has all of this, and is rendered by the sincere performances of a great cast, especially the young boy at the center of the conflict.

That boy is Michiel (Martijn Lakemeier), a 13 year old boy living in a Nazi-occupied Dutch village in the last months of World War II. His father (Raymond Thiry) is the mayor of the town, and appeases the occupiers in essence to ride the war out. This rankles his adolescent son, who despises the German army presence. Tensions arise when Michiel pokes around a crashed British aircraft, but his father intervenes, leaving their relationship even more strained.

There is underground anti-occupier activity in the town, which includes Michiel's Uncle Ben (Yorick van Wageningen). Through friends, Michiel gets involved with some of that activity, and he ends up with a letter to be delivered to the town's blacksmith in case of a friend's arrest. When that arrest occurs, Michiel witnesses the blacksmith being gunned down before he can make the delivery. He decides to read the letter.

This leads him straight to a hideout of the British officer (Jamie Campbell Bower) who had piloted the crashed plane, and killed a German when he parachuted into the town. He's injured, and Michiel brings his sister Erica (Melody Klaver), who is a nurse, to care for him. Uncle Ben becomes suspicious, and the Nazis start ripping up the town to find their enemy. Relationships are about to be severely tested between Michiel, his father and his uncle, and the harboring of the pilot has implications for the entire village.

“Winter in Wartime” continues its limited release in Chicago on April 1st. Check local listings for show times and theaters. Featuring Martijn Lakemeier, Raymond Thiry, Yorick van Wageningen, Jamie Campbell Bower and Melody Klaver. Screenplay by Martin Koolhoven, Paul Jan Nelissen and Jan Terlouw, directed by Martin Koolhoven. Rated “R”



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The Battle: Martijn Lakemeier (Michiel) in 'Winter in Wartime'
Photo credit: Sony Pictures Classics

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