

## Dreams of a Life

UK 2011

**Directed by**  
Carol Morley**Written by**  
Carol Morley**Cinematography**  
Mary Farbrother  
Lynda Hall**Original Music**  
Barry Adamson**Cast**  
Zawe Ashton  
Joyce Vincent  
Neelam Bakshi  
Mother  
Frances Cooper  
Joyce's sister  
Cornell John  
Father

95 min

*Our next screening...***Rust & Bone (France)**

Tue 19 March 2013

Dir: Jacques Audiard

Artfully crafted study of a  
nightclub bouncer from the  
director of *A Prophet*.

**One of two documentaries & one of three UK films in this season's line-up, once again the Film Society brings you fare that mainstream cinema won't. Films from Japan, France & Lebanon still to come!**

Five years in the making, riveting to watch and revealing to ponder long after it ends, Carol Morley's film is a documentary about a bizarre news story and an obsession. The obsession is Carol Morley's. She became fascinated with Joyce's identity, why no one had inquired about her, and what sort of society could have allowed such neglect. There are clues everywhere, but the evidence from the witnesses (including lovers) is contradictory, and there are gaps that can't be filled. It's a fascinating film, skilfully assembled, and one is inevitably reminded of *Citizen Kane* and *Rashomon*, though the films I most thought of were British, both murder stories: *The Woman in Question* (1950) and *Sapphire* (1959).

*Philip French, The Observer*

Engaging and poignant from the first shot, *Dreams of a Life* is a bold, complex approach to documentary filmmaking. Hard to recall a film that lodges in the memory quite like this. Unmissable.

*Ashley Clark, Little White Lies*

All the lonely people ... where do they all come from? Documentary filmmaker Carol Morley has focused on where one of them ended up, a modern-day Eleanor Rigby. It's a story both horrifying and heartbreaking. Reporting on this movie's premiere at the London Film festival earlier this year, I wrote that it lingered persistently in my mind, and it lingers still, like a melody of desperate sadness. Apart from having a gripping story to tell, this is a film with real questions to ask about sexual politics and the welfare state. This is a searing prose-poem on celluloid about loneliness: the kind of loneliness that can only happen in the big city. It is a terrible vision of London as a kind of emotional wasteland, a world of single people in single flats, living quiet, unhappy lives: like Schrödinger's cat, they could as well be alive or dead. A morbid thought is bound to creep into the mind of anyone watching this film: how many more Joyce Vincents are out there, alone, unloved and unremembered? *Dreams of a Life* is a painful film, a Christmas film with no feelgood message, but one which I think would in fact have interested Charles Dickens. Watching it is an almost claustrophobic experience, but a very powerful and moving one.

*Peter Bradshaw, The Guardian*Voting for *Confessions*: A-17 B-25 C-6 D-6 E-3 Attendance: 63 Rating: 70.6%