

## SYNOPSIS

Nobody noticed when thirty-eight year old Joyce Vincent died in her bedsit above a shopping mall in North London in 2003. When her remains were discovered three years later, her heating and her television were still on. Newspaper reports offered few details of Joyce's life – not even a photograph. Who was Joyce Vincent? And how could this happen to someone in our day and age – the so-called age of communication? *Dreams of a Life* is Carol Morley's quest to discover who Joyce was and how she came to be so forgotten.



Morley places adverts in newspapers, on the Internet and on the side of a London taxi to uncover Joyce's former friends, lovers and colleagues. Their testimonies, together with re-imagined scenes from Joyce's life, form a multilayered portrait of Joyce, and an insight into the world she inhabited.

*'This is a difficult film to watch in many ways... but it is also bold and compassionate. Nothing at the London Film Festival has lingered in my mind like this.'*

**Peter Bradshaw, The Guardian**

## DID YOU KNOW?

Director Carol Morley did not allow Zawe Ashton to see any of the interviews with the people who knew Joyce before she shot her parts of the film, she was only given the facts and a visual brief.

*'The point is that pretty much everyone's accounts of her are contradictory; you can't really zone into any one person's remembrances of her because they so differ. That was very clever of Carol, because as an actor that would probably have been the first thing I'd have sought out.'*

Full interview with Zawe Ashton: <http://guru.bafta.org/zawe-ashton-interview>

## CAST AND CREW

Joyce Vincent (older)	Zawe Ashton
Joyce Vincent (younger)	Alix Luka-Cain
Director	Carol Morley
Producer	Cairo Cannon, James Mitchell
Director of Photography	Mary Farbrother, Lynda Hall

## FILM INFORMATION

Website: [www.dreamsofalife.com/](http://www.dreamsofalife.com/)  
Theatrical release date: 16<sup>th</sup> December 2011  
DVD release date: April 2012  
Language: English  
Original aspect ratio: 16:9

## BOOKING INFORMATION

Dogwoof Pictures: [oli@dogwoof.com](mailto:oli@dogwoof.com)  
BFFS Booking Scheme: [bryony.bffs@googlemail.com](mailto:bryony.bffs@googlemail.com)  
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## Q&A WITH DIRECTOR CAROL MORLEY

### ***How did the film come about?***

I read an article in *The Sun* newspaper with the headline 'Woman lays dead for three years'. I was intrigued. There was no photograph of Joyce in the paper – just a photograph of the exterior of the bedsit where she died. Joyce's age was reported as 40 (though she was actually 38 when she died), which seemed too young to be so forgotten. There was no real information about who she was. I didn't know what she looked like, what her ethnicity was. No newspaper got hold of a photograph of Joyce. *The Sun* reported on how Joyce was found with her television still on and in the middle of wrapping Christmas presents. The idea that somebody could lay forgotten for three years in a busy part of London seemed really strange, but what struck me most was the potent image of the television flickering over her decomposing body for all that time. The image of the Christmas presents struck me as very powerful too, as they spoke of other people, of family, of friends. As soon as I saw *The Sun* article I thought, I'm going to make a film about this woman, I can't leave her to be forgotten. I didn't realise my quest would take me five years, but I just knew that it was my kind of destiny to make a film about her...

I met with Lynne Featherstone, who was the local MP for the area Joyce lived in. She had tried to raise Joyce's situation in Parliament and to get some answers from the Housing Association and the utility companies, but had drawn a blank. I also met up with Alison Campsie who was editor of the local paper that originally wrote about Joyce. Alison said that it was extremely difficult to find anything out about Joyce and that "it was the story that everyone wanted but nobody got". This made me even more determined to find out about Joyce and to make a film about her.

### ***Did you always know what kind of film you wanted to make?***

I always knew I didn't want to make a grim, humourless film. Even before I found out what kind of person Joyce was (often described as having a wicked sense of humour) - I wanted to make a film that would not dwell on the tragedy of Joyce's end. Someone wrote that for a woman to die at forty in her flat on her own, completely forgotten was '*the dark side of Bridget Jones*' and this really provoked me to find out who Joyce was. It seemed that it could be such a female story - one that tapped into contemporary anxieties held by women. I don't like to impose a form on a film until I've researched it more, but I hoped that I would find people that knew Joyce and film their testimonies.

### ***How did you go about finding the people that knew Joyce?***

I put adverts seeking people that knew Joyce in various London publications, *Time Out*, *Evening Standard*, *Metro* and also on Internet sites. I also put an advert on the outside of a black London taxicab. The advert was quite brief, I put what I knew about her from the newspapers, that her parents were born in the Caribbean, that she was born in Hammersmith in 1965 and that was it really. The only lead that I had, that she had maybe worked for *Saatchi & Saatchi* got me nowhere. After searching their files they said that they had no trace of Joyce. I also went to the Family Records Office and the British Library and tried to find any official records of Joyce that I could - these helped in tracking addresses and certain people down.

### ***Did you find the family?***

Yes I did. And I met one of Joyce's sisters. But the family wish for anonymity and I'm going to respect that.

Full interview: [http://goodwithfilm.com/library/ambassadors/DREAMS\\_notes\\_FINAL\\_2.pdf](http://goodwithfilm.com/library/ambassadors/DREAMS_notes_FINAL_2.pdf)

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