

Summary/Billing

Artist Piers Secunda uncovers the hidden history of Alderney, to reveal new evidence of atrocities committed by the Nazis on British soil during World War Two.

Slave workers from across Europe were shipped to this tiny island to build a fortress for Hitler.

Piers goes beyond the numbers to bring the names and faces of those who suffered back to life.

Synopsis

New evidence of atrocities committed by Nazis on British soil is revealed in a feature length documentary – The Ghosts of Alderney – Hitler's Island Slaves - to be released by Wild Dog Films during 2025.

Internationally renowned artist Piers Secunda has spent five years tracing stories of slave labourers sent to the tiny Channel Island of Alderney.

When Hitler's forces invaded, nobody knew just how brutal the occupation of this piece of UK Crown land would become.

Secunda has made work memorialising some of the slaves who endured random shootings, beatings and starvation.

People from all over Nazi Europe were shipped to the Channel Islands to build the Fuhrer's "fortress" against an Allied attack. It was in Alderney however where the treatment was harshest.

Intelligence reports after Liberation reveal that bodies dumped in mass graves were compared to victims of Belsen.

Using forensic testing, Secunda has established that German guards in the SS-run concentration camp on Alderney used to compete for prizes of drink and cigarettes by shooting prisoners against a wall.

Such firing squads were used in European camps such as Auschwitz but Piers believes he has proof that this killing technique was used on Alderney too.

Among those traced is the family of Ukrainian prisoner Georgi Zvoborski. His daughter Ingrid remembers her father telling them about other indiscriminate shootings.

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Project: Ghosts of Alderney - Hitler's Island Slaves



"The guards would select twelve or fifteen men. They were tied upside down to a railway truck. Then the guards started shooting at them. A bullet in your head- and you were dead. But some were hit in an arm or leg and suffered for hours."

The film also tells how the UK Government hid the real reasons why it failed to prosecute any German officers for war crimes.

"Of course there was a cover up," said Professor Anthony Glees, a security and intelligence expert.

Madeleine Bunting, historian and author, said: "This was the biggest mass murder on British soil. Yet so many questions remain."

A recent UK Government inquiry found that more than 1,100 people died on Alderney but acknowledged there are many more missing.

Piers goes beyond the numbers to bring the names and faces of those who suffered back to life.

"I'm not an historian, I'm an artist. I looked in places where nobody else has looked," he tells the film.

Families of survivors – among them French Jews deported by the Vichy Government from Paris – told him that the men who survived were scarred for ever by their time on the island.

In this, the 80th anniversary of the end of World War Two, the film is a testament to the bravery of these people.

Piers said: "The academic research deals with lists of names and adding up numbers to create a total figure of number of people who came to Alderney.

But people aren't numbers. They're human beings. They have lives, they have histories, backgrounds.

And that's the story that I want to tell."

Ends

Note to editors:

Piers Secunda has work in the collections of the British Museum, the Victoria and Albert Museum and the Ashmolean Museum. Piers has recorded the destruction of culture in Afghanistan and Iraq, the USA and Alderney.

Ghosts of Alderney – Hitler's Island Slaves is a production from Wild Dog Ltd, a British independent film maker.

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