

Thirteen Lives

Thirteen Lives is a 2022 biographical survival film, based on the Tham Luang cave rescue, directed and produced by Ron Howard and written by William Nicholson. The film stars Viggo Mortensen, Colin Farrell, Joel Edgerton, and Tom Bateman.

Thirteen Lives was released in select theaters on July 29, 2022, by United Artists Releasing, and began streaming on Prime Video on August 5, 2022. The film received generally positive reviews from critics.

Plot

On June 23, 2018, twelve boys of the junior football team "Wild Boars" and their assistant coach Ekkaphon Chanthawong leave practice to explore the Tham Luang cave. When the team fails to arrive at a birthday party organized by their parents, their families head to the caves, only to find them flooded and the boys missing, their bikes left at the entrance. The parents immediately alert emergency services.

Royal Thai Navy SEALs, led by Captain Arnont, arrive to search for the missing boys, but find the dive too difficult to locate the team. Vernon Unsworth, a local British caver, shares his extensive knowledge of the complex and dangerous cave and suggests the authorities get in touch with the British Cave Rescue Council. British cavers Rick Stanton and John Volanthen travel to Thailand and attempt the dive, finding the boys and coach four kilometres from the entrance. During an attempt to deliver air tanks to the boys to keep them alive in preparation for the rescue, former Thai Navy Seal Saman Kunan drowns.

Meanwhile, as hundreds of volunteers try to mitigate poor weather conditions, a water technician from Bangkok gains the permission of local farmers to divert water from the mountain onto their fields, destroying their crop.

Realising the boys will have to be removed through the cave, via a 6-hour dive, knowing what the risks are, Stanton and Volanthen contact Dr. Richard Harris, plus supporting divers Chris Jewell and Jason Mallinson. With permission from the regional governor and minister, the divers sedate the boys and, with one diver per boy, carry each member out of the cave safely. The coach is removed last.

Thirteen Lives	
 <div>Promotional release poster</div>	
Directed by	Ron Howard
Screenplay by	William Nicholson
Story by	Don Macpherson <div>William Nicholson^[1]</div>
Produced by	Brian Grazer <div>Ron HowardKaren LunderWilliam M. ConnorP.J van SandwijkGabrielle Tana</div>
Starring	Viggo Mortensen <div>Colin FarrellJoel EdgertonTom Bateman</div>

The end scene is the boys celebrating the birthday party that was supposed to happen on the day they went into the cave. The end credits reveal that the coach and three of the boys, who were all stateless, are given Thai citizenship.

The film is dedicated to Saman Kunan, the Thai Navy Seal who died on July 6, 2018, during the rescue operation, and Beirut Pakbara, a Thai Navy Seal who later died from a blood infection.^[2]

Cast

- [Viggo Mortensen](#) as [Richard Stanton](#)
- [Colin Farrell](#) as [John Volanthen](#)
- [Joel Edgerton](#) as [Richard Harris](#)
- [Tom Bateman](#) as [Chris Jewell](#)
- [Pattarakorn Tangsupakul](#) as [Buahom](#)
- [Sukollawat Kanarot](#) as [Saman Kunan](#)
- [Teerapat Sajakul](#) as [Captain Arnont](#)
- [Sahajak Boonthanakit](#) as [Governor Narongsak Osatanakorn](#)
- [Vithaya Pansringarm](#) as [General Anupong Paochinda](#)
- [Teeradon Supapunpinyo](#) as [Ekkaphon Chanthawong](#)
- [Nophand Boonyai](#) as [Thanet Natisri](#)
- [Thira Chutikul](#) as [Kiat](#)
- [Popetorn Soonthornyanakij](#) as [Kan](#)
- [Paul Gleeson](#) as [Jason Mallinson](#)
- [Lewis Fitz-Gerald](#) as [Vernon Unsworth](#)
- [Peter Knight](#) as [Police Captain Bas](#)
- [U Gambira](#) as [Kruba Boonchum](#)
- [Josh Helman](#) as [Major Hodges](#)
- [Natvara Hongsuwan](#) as [Preeya](#)

Production

It was announced in April 2020 that [Ron Howard](#) was to direct the film, with [William Nicholson](#) writing the screenplay.^[3] [Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer](#) acquired the rights to the film the following month.^[4] In March 2021, [Viggo Mortensen](#), [Colin Farrell](#) and [Joel Edgerton](#) were among the cast announced to star in the film.^[5] Filming began on March 29, 2021, mostly done in [Queensland](#) with the support of Queensland and Gold Coast governments.^[6] Scenes depicting [Chiang Rai Province](#) were shoot at lush tropical tree-lined roads, hotels and golf courses across [Mudgeeraba](#), [Yatala](#), [Numinbah Valley](#) and [Carrara](#) in Queensland.^[6] Two warehouses in Yatala were sourced for the production offices, as well as the construction of a custom-built water tank and cave interiors.^[6] The hospital scene was filmed at [Griffith University Logan Campus](#).^[6]

Cinematography	Sayombhu Mukdeeprom
Edited by	James D. Wilcox
Music by	Benjamin Wallfisch
Production companies	Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Bron Creative Imagine Entertainment Storyteller Productions Magnolia Mae Films
Distributed by	United Artists Releasing Amazon Studios
Release dates	July 29, 2022 (United States) August 5, 2022 (Prime Video)
Running time	147 minutes
Countries	United States United Kingdom Canada
Languages	Thai English Northern Thai
Budget	\$55 million



Director and co-producer Ron Howard

The film's original score was composed by Benjamin Wallfisch.^[7]

Release

Thirteen Lives was released by United Artists Releasing in select theaters on July 29, 2022, before streaming on Amazon Prime Video on August 5.^[8] The film was originally scheduled for a fully theatrical release by United Artists Releasing on April 15, 2022,^[9] and was then postponed to November 18 in response to the best test scores in MGM's history.^[10] In May 2022, however, the film was brought to its current release date due to Amazon's acquisition of MGM in March.^[11]

Music

When Howard approached his usual collaborator Hans Zimmer for the score, the latter strongly recommended his protégé Benjamin Wallfisch for the job.^[12] Wallfisch had a 20-minute suite ready before Howard had started shooting in Thailand.

Reception

On the review aggregator website Rotten Tomatoes, the film has an approval rating of 86% based on 178 reviews, with an average rating of 7.3/10. The website's consensus reads, "Steadily helmed by director Ron Howard, *Thirteen Lives* offers an incomplete but still gripping dramatization of an incredible true story."^[13] On Metacritic, the film has a weighted average score of 66 out of 100 based on 40 critics, indicating "generally favorable reviews".^[14]

Accolades

Award	Date of ceremony	Category	Recipient(s)	Result	Ref.
<u>London Film Critics' Circle</u>	February 5, 2023	<u>British Actor of the Year</u>	<u>Colin Farrell</u> ^[a]	Nominated	^[15]
<u>San Diego Film Critics Society</u>	January 6, 2023	<u>Best Cinematography</u>	<u>Sayombhu Mukdeeprom</u>	Nominated	^[16]
<u>Visual Effects Society</u>	February 15, 2023	<u>Outstanding Supporting Visual Effects in a Photoreal Feature</u>	Jason Billington, Thomas Horton, Denis Baudin, Michael Harrison, <u>Brian Cox</u>	Won	^[17] ^[18]

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Notes

- a. Also for *After Yang*, *The Banshees of Inisherin* and *The Batman*

External links

- *Thirteen Lives* (<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt12262116/>) at IMDb
 - Official screenplay (<https://deadline.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Thirteen-Lives-Read-The-Screenplay.pdf>)
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