ntil now, Mike Leigh has been something of a film festival darling. In 1993, the British filmmaker won the Best Director award at Cannes for his black tragicomedy Naked. His next film, 1996's Secrets & Lies, earned him the festival's even more illustrious Palme d'Or, and the following year, he was chosen to be on the jury. In 1999, his Gilbert & Sullivan drama Topsy-Turvy was given the coveted centrepiece position at the New York Film Festival, and in 2012, he was the president of the Berlin International Film Festival jury. At its heart, says Leigh, the film explores the concept of truth. “All these people showed up in good faith,” he explains, “with a clear, honest, legitimate aspiration for their rights. That is in the spirit of truthfulness. Mike Leigh the British film director was in Zurich to receive the “A Tribute to…” Golden Eye award for the Zurich Film Festival when Caitlin Krause and Christina Fryer met with him on behalf of NewInZurich. See below the conversation that they had with the talented director who has been nominated for an Oscar seven times. When I sat down with legendary film director Mike Leigh, I knew I wanted to focus on talking with him about empathy in storytelling. Actress Sally Hawkins (in her Golden Globe acceptance speech) called him “a fearless, compassionate, passionate human being”, and his films are set in Mike Leigh's “favourite café” in Soho, London, the writer Will Self has a candid conversation with Leigh about his career as writer/director. The conversation explores his influences and thoughts, focusing on Leigh's later film work rather than his early BBC material. We are following the Connecting Conversation discussion between writer/director Mike Leigh and psychoanalyst Andrea Sabbadini on 29 June 2008. The preceding discussion can also be found on this archive. Connecting Conversations is a series of events bringing together psychoanalysis and other fields. www.connectingconversations.org. Mike Leigh's endless fascination with human behavior is palpable in every one of the films he's made. His sensitivity to rhythm, character, and setting, he extracts extraordinary moments from the flow of ordinary life. And while his preoccupations with class tensions and strained family dynamics have followed him throughout the years, his work has taken on a variety of forms, from domestic dramas like Life Is Sweet and All or Nothing to period films like Topsy-Turvy and Peterloo, which is coming to theaters this weekend.