

**RAM** RELEASING

presents

## **APP**

**A film by Bobby Boermans**

*"APP is one kick-ass thriller!"* –**Bloody Disgusting**



**Netherlands / 2013 / Thriller / Dutch with English Subtitles / 80 min**

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## **FULL SYNOPSIS**

Anna, a student at the University of Amsterdam, lives with her best friend Sophie and balances psychology classes with supporting her brother and his recovery following a traumatic motorcycle accident. She's never far from her cellphone, and after a night of partying in the dorms, Anna wakes up groggy and hung over, only to find that a new app has been inexplicably added to it. Initially helpful and clever, IRIS soon begins behaving mysteriously, answering personal questions it shouldn't know the answers to, and sending inappropriate images to her contacts. When it becomes clear she can't simply delete the unwanted evil app, Anna's efforts to confront it will set in motion a fearful series of events that will put her life, and that of her roommate and her fragile brother, in fatal danger.

*Text IRIS to 97-000 to get the app!*

## **SHORT SYNOPSIS**

Anna's never far from her cellphone, and after a night of partying in the dorms, she wakes up groggy and hung over only to find that a new app has been added to it. Initially helpful and clever, IRIS soon begins behaving in cruel, mysterious ways. When it becomes clear she can't simply delete the unwanted evil app, Anna's efforts to confront it will set in motion a fearful series of events that will put her life, and those of her closest friends, in fatal danger.

## **LOGLINE**

When Anna's cellphone mysteriously downloads a new app and it begins controlling her life in fearful ways, she'll set in motion a fatal series of events in order to remove it.

## **ASSETS**

Official trailer for sharing/embedding:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SQuWP5AsMSM>

For downloadable hi-res images please visit [www.RAMReleasing.com/press](http://www.RAMReleasing.com/press).

## **FESTIVALS AND AWARDS**

### OFFICIAL SELECTION:

Cinequest Film Festival

Fantasy Film Festival (Germany)

Strasbourg European Fantastic Film Fest

Geneva International Film Festival

## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

The notion of technology taking control of our lives is a concept that has always fascinated me. I'm a big technology addict myself. And like everybody else I use these new technologies to enrich and comfort my lifestyle. But at the same time, we have to be constantly aware of how we deal with it. What do we want to share and in what way?

Most of us general users have no idea where our personal data goes after we enter it on a computer, tablet or smartphone. It stays on some far-away, unknown dark server, probably at some vague company in a distant country, and you can bet it'll stay there forever. With that data, "they" can do whatever they want and eventually control what you see, hear or do.

This scary thought led to the idea of developing an exciting story about a ruthless smartphone *APP* that turns against our female protagonist, Anna. At the same time, I really wanted to make a film that especially would appeal to a younger audience. And since most kids these days are glued to their smartphones (yes, let's face it, even inside a movie theater), it became pretty obvious to me that we also had to develop an actual *APP*, complimentary to the movie itself. It just felt like second nature.

So we loosely based our scary antagonist entitled "*IRIS*" on the famous SIRI voice recognition system from Apple (*IRIS* is SIRI in reverse). At first, our heroine Anna thinks this *APP* that suddenly appears on her phone might be useful. But soon she discovers that the opposite is true, and she goes on a journey to find out who's behind it.

After we started writing the script, we came across this amazing second-screen patented technology from a content identification company called *Civolution*. Together with the production company *2CFILM*, they developed this amazing second screen technology where you could actually synchronize a smartphone of an audience member sitting in a movie theater directly to the movie screen. They used this technology in TV, but nobody had ever dared to do this inside a movie theater. So there was no playbook, layout or any rules of engagement we could rely on.

First we had to figure out how to use this technology and incorporate it into a story that was designed for a movie. After we figured this out, it gave us a tremendous amount of narrative storytelling opportunities to explore. The amazing fact nowadays is that everybody carries this personal screen in his or her pocket. As filmmakers, we can use that screen to tell our stories.

By using the second-screen technology, you can play around with the amount of dramatic info you want to divide between two separate screens. As a result, you sometimes know more than the main character in the film itself. You get to see

text messages, graphics, pictures or filmed scenes on your phone. While at the same time the movie itself plays on the big screen. We developed, produced and shot the film like any other normal movie.

The hardest part was the editing process. Sometimes it felt like we were editing two movies at the same time. But finally, it came down to good timing, since you don't want the audience to miss important plot-points on the big screen while watching the small one. We tested the human eye-movement extensively in post-production and we figured out a way to incorporate the technology so that it actually supplements the dramatic purpose and doesn't distract from the storyline. I think it's great because it brings this "never been done before" extra layer of excitement while watching a movie.

Sincerely,  
BOBBY BOERMANS



## A Q&A WITH FILMMAKER BOBBY BOERMANS

**Q** | *Talk about the beginnings of the idea for the film. When did it become clear you'd include the second screen content?*

**A** | I wanted to make something that was cool and refreshing. Personally, I like movies that are entertaining and push the boundaries in every way. My producer also wanted a project that would appeal to a younger audience. So I started thinking, well, what do kids do these days? They all go to the cinema with their phones in their pockets. We all sit and Facebook or instant message to each other while inside the cinema. It's just a habit nowadays, whether you like it or not. And everybody carries this amazing second screen in his or her pocket. So I said to myself: *Wouldn't it be great if we could incorporate your own phone as a part of the story itself?* So we brainstormed and came up with the idea of your own phone turning evil against you.

The basic premise was: *What if technology takes control of your life.* As a starting point, the screenwriter and I picked the iPhone personal assistant example Siri. From that point we starting thinking about a story and thought about creating a movie about an evil APP. And we flipped the name of this APP, so in our film she's called Iris (Which is Siri in reverse :-)

From that point, we knew we had to do something with a real-life app as well. Then we discovered this awesome technology called audio-watermarking, where you can synchronize your phone with the movie screen based on inaudible sound cues, like Shazam or Soundhound does, but much more frame-accurate. Because this technology was improved since its inception, we knew we could make it work inside a movie theatre as well. It's an amazing technology, because you don't need a wifi connection inside the theatre or at home. You just download the app, start the movie, press start on your device, and it just works.

This way you get so see great fun stuff during the movie itself. Exciting elements that are actually part of the story itself instead of something that's put in afterwards or has nothing to do with the story. This heightens the experience of watching APP and gives a different dynamic in the way you watch the film.

**Q** | *You have a history of web-based filmmaking. How did that influence your decision to include second screen content?*

**A** | The first film I made (*Claustrofobia*) was the first feature film in The Netherlands solely made for the web. I like to try new things and not hold on too much to traditional conventions. So I already had some experience in working in a conscious way for the web and for smaller screens. But funny enough, this didn't influence the movie-making process that much at all. Because at the end of the day you just want to make a good movie that entertains people and takes them away for an hour and a half. And maybe, if you're lucky enough the movie makes them think a bit more about the subject matter itself on an intellectual level.

**Q** | *What were the obstacles you encountered in creating this additional content? How did it influence shooting and post-production?*

**A** | It didn't influence the shooting itself that much. This sounds weird, but except sometimes you shoot things a bit with a closer lens, to be on the safe side for your smaller phone screen. But the main goal with this film was that you needed to be able to watch the movie without the second screen experience as well. So the movie needed to be able to completely stand on itself.

The real trouble came when we were in post-production and editing doing side-by-side editing with the second-screen experience. Suddenly we noticed it was sometimes very hard for the audience to focus on two things at the same time. So we had to switch things around and shuffle with it. Funny enough, your eyes can see one thing, but your ears can hear something else. We didn't want the audience to miss important plot points while watching their phones, so on purpose we had to extend some scenes and make them longer, so you wouldn't miss one story line while watching the other on your phone.

We discovered it took about three seconds for your eyes to switch from one screen to another, so we had to make sure that these three seconds were not ultimately crucial to understanding the story. It was also interesting to see and learn on how people react to certain information. You can play with what dramatic information you tell the audience or hold back. This gives a different dynamic to how the audience experiences the movie with and without the second screen. This was a real discovery for me as a filmmaker and it taught me a lot of how we watch movies and use our senses.

**Q** | *What do you say to the purists who want to keep all smartphones and tablets out of the movie-going experience?*

**A** | Good luck trying!! It's inevitable. I'm not a purist and I don't think you should be. Like Steve Jobs said, you always have to try and be bold and try new things to broaden your vision. In the 1920s, people were accustomed to watching movies without dialogue, then we switched to talking actors. Then we switched from black and white to movies with color. Then we switched to a bigger canvas and cinemascope. Then we went to 3D and 48FPS (frames per second). In short, it always takes time for us to get used to any new technology.

I'm not saying the way we used the second screen in APP is the ultimate next generation of future of filmmaking, not at all. Because I don't see this technology work in a 16th Century Keira Knightley costume drama, hopping around in a garden and suddenly your phone ring. That would be weird! But I do see this technology working in these *Minority Report*-type or Sci-Fi summer blockbusters like *Iron Man* or *The Dark Knight*.

Our society changes. The way we use our screens changes. Who knows - maybe in twenty years we all have screens implemented in our eye-lenses or Google glasses. Imagine what you could do with that for a cinema experience.

**Q** | *What do you think is next in the continued marriage of filmmaking and technology?*

**A** | Because of our changing technological society, I think movie exhibitors are going to be forced to evolve in a few years. It will not take that long is my guess, only a decade or so. In a few years, everybody will have his or her own projectors and big-ass theatrical screen at home with this amazing Dolby Surround System. So why would we go to see a movie inside a movie theatre then? If you can also have the same experience at home? Call up a few friends and make some popcorn.

That's why I'd like to make a movie someday where your chairs move like crazy, where things get thrown at you, and you get twisted and turned around in all the craziest ways. Like a ride in an amusement park. Wouldn't it be great if every major city in the world would at least have one affordable movie theatre like that? So you can have the choice in how you want to experience a movie, like 3D & 2D now. Or just like IMAX, but then better. I think theater exhibitors will ultimately be forced (out of financial reasons) to at least start to think like this. Especially now with all the piracy concerns and high speed internet access across the globe.

I think 4D initiatives like that will help you get a more immersive experience of the movie itself and ultimately will help create profitable box office results. I would love to do a big summer blockbuster like that one day. To go inside a theater, strap myself up in my seat and experience a good movie in 4D like that.



## APP – as featured at FastCoCreate.com

March 15, 2013 | By Paula Bernstein | [Full Article](#)

*The new Dutch thriller App incorporates a synchronized second-screen application into the story line.*

It's rare that moviegoers are encouraged to fiddle with their smartphones during a film, but that's the case with App, the new Dutch movie directed by Bobby Boermans.

Before going to see the film, moviegoers are asked to download a free app (available for Android and iPhone) to enhance the plot, which involves a 21-year-old psychology student who becomes addicted to her smartphone following a tragic accident.

The App app uses SyncNow, a digital audio watermarking technology originally developed by Civolution to prevent illegal downloads.

"The technology uses the entire audio spectrum and embeds watermarks in it. The watermarks also drive the app that goes with the film. It talks to the speaker of your phone. Human beings can't hear it, but your phone will," explains Kees Abrahams, CEO of Imagine Nation, the global media company that created 2CFilm, the company that produced App and developed the app in partnership with Service2Media.

After deciding to incorporate the synchronized second-screen application, the filmmakers adapted the script, adding additional content and bits of story line for the app. But the team emphasizes



that the app isn't essential in order to enjoy the film, which will be released in the Netherlands on April 4.

"The movie works perfectly without the second screen. It's a well-paced thriller, but there are 35 moments in the movie when you can get additional information or content that will enrich the experience," says Robin de Levita, chief creative officer, Imagine Nation.

Moviegoers will be advised to leave their devices on their laps during the film. When additional content is available on the second screen, audience members will be notified by their vibrating phones.



The second screen content will rely on visuals rather than audio. "For example, there could be two people in a room with a bomb ticking, only they don't know about it," says de Levita. "On the second screen, the audience

would know how much time is remaining."

Abrahams offers another example of how the app will enhance the experience of App: "You see people at a party on the screen and the characters are text messaging. You'll be able to see their texts on the second screen."

Until now, when we've talked about the "second screen experience," we think television. But if App succeeds, that could change.

"It started in the middle of the '90s with people being able to vote on TV shows," says Abrahams, who was formerly president of International TV Production at Sony Pictures Television and cofounder and former CEO of the company that owned rights to Who Wants to be a Millionaire?

The concept of experimenting with adding layers to the moviegoing experience harkens back to the 1950s when Hollywood tried to compete with the new lure of television by introducing new technological gimmicks, such as 3-D and Smell-O-Vision. Only time will tell whether the second screen experience will be embraced in the theater as it has been in the living room (most filmmakers would likely shudder at the thought).

"If this works, and we're hopeful, I think we will be approached to do other projects and we may do other projects ourselves," says Abrahams, who emphasizes that the second screen "has to make sense from a content perspective."

The app, which features the trailer and other promotional material, will also be used as a marketing tool. Then after the film ends, the app will provide bonus materials.

It's annoying enough when fellow moviegoers fiddle with their phones during a movie. Won't the two-screen experience be distracting?

"We were skeptical a bit ourselves, but it's much less disruptive than you would think," says de Levita. "The film is about how communication has changed our lives completely--maybe even for the worst. Even if it is distracting, it's sort of what the movie is about."

[Source](#)



## CREW BIOGRAPHIES

### **Bobby Boermans, Director**

At 15, Boermans received the MTV Home Music Video Award, and his filmmaking career had begun. He attended the Dutch Film Academy (NFTA), where he studied editing, and went on to attend the prestigious American Film Institute (AFI), studying directing under the guidance of Michael Mann, David Fincher, Luc Besson, Christopher Nolan, and George Lucas. In 2011, he directed *Claustrofobia*, the first Dutch feature film made especially for an online release. He's also won a MOBO Award for best Urban Video. His combined music video work has gained more than 50 million hits to date on YouTube.

## CAST BIOGRAPHIES

### **Hannah Hoekstra (Anna)**

Hoekstra is a Dutch actress who is best known for her work in the film *Heaven*, where she took the title role and received in 2012 a Golden Calf (Grand Prize at the Dutch Film Festival) for her work. She graduated from the Amsterdam Theater & Cabaret College in 2010 and has been a member of the National Theater, the largest Dutch theater company, since 2013.

### **Credits**

*APP* (2013)

*Freddy, a life for the brewery* (2013)

*According to Robert* (2013)

*Sunday Baby* (2012)

*Heaven* (2012)

*Reasonable doubt* (TV series) (2012)

*Mees Kees* (2012)

*Mixed Up* (2011-2012)

*Manslaughter* (2012)

*Cops Maastricht* (2011)

*Mama* (2010)

*Heaven, in between* (2010)

### **Isis Cabolet (Sophie)**

Cabolet is a Dutch actress living in Amsterdam. In 2011, she completed her studies at the Maastricht Theatre Academy and since 2012 she has been a member of a new theater company called *Bouillabaisse*. Previously, she was at Amsterdam Theatre Group. In 2004, at age eighteen, Cabolet made her debut on Dutch television in the soap opera *The Glass House*, where she had a supporting role. The same year, she also portrayed Floor van Zandt in the soap opera *On The Way To Tomorrow*. Cabolet was featured in the 2013 drama *Penoza*, where she played the role of Joyce, a girl who is admitted to a mental hospital after attempting suicide.

## **Robert de Hoog** (Tim)

De Hoog is a Dutch actor known for his work in both films as well as TV series including *Zeeland Girl*, *Keyzer & De Boer Lawyers*, *Court of Joosten* and *Rusty*. In 2011, he starred in the movie [Nova Zembla](#) and in 2013 was also seen in [Feuten](#), and as a guest in the English detective series *Crossing Lines*.

### **Credits**

*App* (2013)

*Black Out* (2012)

*The Domino Effect* (2012)

*Love Eternal* (2012)

*Nova Zembla* (2011)

*War Horse* (2011)

*170 Hz* (2011)

*Zieleman* (2011)

*Me & Mr. Jones* (2011)

*HOP* (2011)

*Mowgli and Fidel* (2010)

*Twilight* (2010)

*Life Is Beautiful* (2010)

## **Matthijs Nicolaas van de Sande Bakhuyzen** (Daan)

Van de Sande Bakhuyzen is a Dutch movie and television actor, and former child actor, born in Amsterdam, the son of movie director Willem van de Sande Bakhuyzen. His big break was in 1999, when he got the role of Erik in the VPRO television series *De Daltons*. He later played small roles in several films directed by his father, including *Cloaca* (2003) and *Leef!* (2005). In 2006, he got his first big role in a movie when he beat 4000 other for the role of Jordi in the movie *Afblijven*, a teen-oriented film based on a novel by Carry Slee.

## **CREDITS**

### **CREW**

**Director**  
**Screenwriter**  
**Director of Photography**  
**Production Design**  
**Editing**  
**Sound Design**  
**Costume Design**

**Casting**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Screen Technology**  
**Visual Effects**  
**Executive Producer**  
**Line Producer**  
**Co-Producer**  
**Producers**

Bobby Boermans  
Robert A. Jansen  
Ezra Reverda  
Paula Loos  
Brian Ent  
Michael Sauvage  
Marion Boot  
Marian van Nieuwenhuyzen  
Kemna Casting  
Betty Post, Houdijn Beekhuis  
Service2Media & Civolution  
Storm Postproduction  
Edvard van 'T Wout  
Felice Bakker  
Eric de Groot  
Robin de Levita  
Kees Abrahams  
Edvard 't Woot

### **CAST**

**Anna**  
**Sophie**  
**Tim**  
**Stijn**  
**Daan**  
**Henry**

Hannah Hoekstra  
Isis Cabolet  
Robert de Hoog  
Alex Hendrickx  
Matthijs van de Sande Bakhuyzen  
Patrick Martens