

VPRO & PUPKIN present

24th BUSAN
International Film Festival
3-12 October 2019



BOY MEETS GUN



*All men go
through a **CRISIS**.
Most are **UNARMED**
when it happens.*

Starring EELCO SMITS
A film by JOOST VAN HEZIK

director of photography **JORIS KERBOSCH** ^{MSC} | production design **HESTER VAN NISTELROOIJ** | costume design **NEDDA NAGEL** | make-up & hair design **JUDITH VAN BELLE**
casting **SAIDA VAN DER REIJD** | editor **XANDER NIJSTEN** | sound design **TIJN HAZEN** | re-recording mixer **VINCENT SINCERETTI** | composer **CHRISTIAAN VERBEEK**
first assistant director **PAUL ZOMERHUIS** | line producer **BEN BOUWMEESTER** | co-producer **VPRO - MARTIEN VLIETMAN** | script editor **VPRO - MARIEKE MOLS**
creative producer **LAYLA MEIJMAN** | producer **PUPKIN - PIETER KUIJPERS, SANDER VAN MEURS, IRIS OTTEN** | written by **WILLEM BOSCH** | directed by **JOOST VAN HEZIK**

telefilm

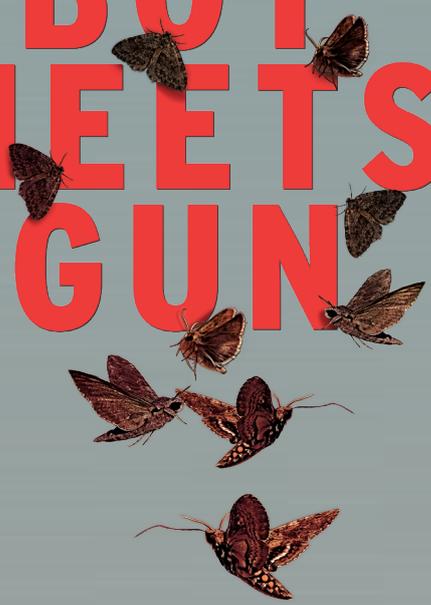
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(PUPKIN)

BOY MEETS GUN



24th BUSAN
International Film Festival
3-12 October 2019



The Netherlands - 2019, October - 84' min - Black Comedy / Crime

Production

(PUPKIN)

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Tagline

All men go through a crisis, most are unarmed when it happens.

Logline

When biology professor Maarten accidentally finds himself in possession of a gun, he decides to hold on to it. Until the gun takes possession of him.

Short Synopsis

When the bored out evolutionary biology professor Maarten Moreau gets caught up in a robbery, he accidentally gets hold of the murder weapon. Seized by a renewed appetite for life, Maarten decides to keep the gun. A true romance blossoms between the boy and the gun, not without consequences.

Synopsis:

Maarten is standing in the aisle of a supermarket, staring at an endless shelf of diapers. His life has come to a halt around forty, or so it seems. His marriage is bearable, his children healthy, and he can do his job as an evolutionary biologist at the University of Wageningen on autopilot. Does he truly exist, he wonders as he stares through the diapers into an endless void.

A gunshot tears him out of his daydream. Maarten, on aisle 4, watches the robbery go terribly wrong. A mortally wounded cashier slaps the gun out of the hands of the robber. As if the universe is trying to speak to him, the gun slides through the aisles, on its way to Maarten. There lies the shining Desert Eagle, gleaming between Maarten's trembling feet. He picks it up, feels the weight of this shining goddess in his hands. And in that moment he is certain he, undeniably, exists.

Of course, he wasn't planning to take it home, but he did it anyway. And naturally, he would return it to the police as soon as possible, but what would they think of him? He'd better hang on to it for a little while. The mere knowledge of having a gun at home, gives him strength. He finally says no to the boss, deals with the neighborhood punks and his marriage flourishes. Actually, everything flourishes. Maarten goes through a metamorphosis and becomes totally addicted to the secret lying in his drawer.

But the affair with the gun is not without consequences. Like every junkie, Maarten starts to hunger for a bigger fix. Soon, he starts to carry the gun with him, his search for adrenaline turning more grotesque. When he makes the local news, fate definitively turns against him. The true owner of the gun recognizes Maarten, and he is *not amused*. A confrontation seems inevitable. Just when Maarten realizes the gun is destroying him and gets rid of it, he needs it more than ever.



Director's statement Joost van Hezik

"I think we all long for personal change, in one way or another. I know I do anyway. Eat better, exercise more, meditate, fulfill my dreams, focus more on my career, or less, just be a better person in general! And this belief in endless personal evolution seems to have risen to an unquestionable and almost holy status nowadays. With this film, I wanted to question this belief. Because what are we changing into? And is that really better? Maarten finds a gun, which acts as a magic wand that turns him into a stronger person. But is that good? Can the road towards becoming someone else, someone better, actually lead us to darker places?"



In conversation with director Joost van Hezik

This is your first feature film. You already have a lot of experience as a director in theatre. How did you experience this process? Was it very different and would you like to do it again?

This being my first feature film, I definitely had a lot to learn. Coming from the theatre I am used to the stress of working towards opening night, getting everything ready for that final moment. But when shooting a film every day is opening night. Staying in shape mentally and physically, working ahead while remaining in the moment during the shoot, it was exhausting. But having an opening night every day also gives the same thrill when you succeed. The energy a crew gets from a good scene, when you all have that feeling we got something great here, that's addictive.



Willem Bosch is responsible for the script. How would you describe your collaboration?

In the first meeting between Willem and me, I instantly felt he was the right man for the job. He wrote a synopsis that very same day and hit it straight out of the park. But when it came down to writing the scenario, it took us sometime to get the tone right. This was our first collaboration and we had to talk cinema for a while to understand each other. When we finally did, Willem took it up a notch and wrote this amazing screenplay, while giving me room to add scenes and ideas I envisioned. In short, a great collaboration that definitely will happen again.

How have you experienced the casting? Why have you chosen for Eelco and Victor as lead actors?

I already knew Eelco as an outstanding theatre actor but hadn't seen him in front of a camera. He did an amazing casting and showed me a side of himself I hadn't seen before: he wasn't only a great actor, he was incredibly funny with an amazing screen presence. He took the role to a place I hadn't envisioned before, and that made it so interesting. And besides that, he is such a warm and sweet person. I'm really thankful we got him to play Maarten because he did such an amazing job.

Victor, who plays Donnie, was kind of a wildcard. I did a theatre project with him once in school, and knew he was very talented. But he had no camera experience and was relatively unknown. But he was an eager learner on set and his performance is magnificent, I think. He had a lot of hard and emotional scenes, and I was amazed how deep he went every time. He created a Donnie that was more layered than he appeared on paper, and you really feel for him.

What important message or theme was the base of this film?

The obvious theme in the movie is the lust for personal change or metamorphose; to become someone or something else. But that's not the only theme in the movie. We set out to make a black comedy within the crime genre, with stylistic twist. So, we were aiming at funny and entertaining first. But it turned out to be quite a personal film for me too. I believe everybody should decide for themselves what a movie is really about. I hope it speaks to people on a personal level, as it does for me. I think that's all you can do as a filmmaker: make something you would like to see yourself and put everything you have in it.

The film is really stylistic, where did you get your inspiration from?

The inspiration for the script was really the work of the Coen brothers. No one can take the crime genre and take it to such weird, funny and philosophical places as they can. And I think some of the cinematography also comes from their work: we never shot over-shoulders and always remained in between in the characters. But regarding the cinematography, I take a lot of inspiration from Sorrentino and his favorite DOP Luca Bigazzi. I just love cinema when it's grand and operatesk. We wanted to make a film that moved between this dry and comedic dialogue style and then go into these lyrical moments of slow motion, camera movement, etc. To me, putting the camera inside the perspective of a character is the ultimate cinema-experience. To visualize how a character feels and looks at the world, and make the audience feel that feeling, cinema is so good at that



Biographies

DIRECTOR, Joost van Hezik (1982) graduated in 2010 as a director from the Amsterdam Theatre School. While working as a repertoire theatre director, he gathered an appetite for experimenting with filming on stage. So much so that he decided to further school himself in cinema by filming short experimental promofilms for other theatre directors. Meanwhile, besides his solo career in theatre, Joost became a part of the musical theatre collective Circus Treurdier. There he made his first steps in actual film directing with their successful absurd and surreal drama series *TreurTeeVee* (*WeepTeeVee*). In 2017 he directed the short film *The Funeral of The Shy* and has now moved his focus completely to film. Joost: "Directing actors in the theatre definitely was my first love, but when I learned what the camera can add to a story and a performance, I lost my heart to film forever."

WRITER, Willem Bosch (1986) is screenwriter of the BNN series *Penzoa*, *Feuten* and *GodforSaken* (the episode 'Ghost statue' was nominated for a Golden Calf in 2011) and the cinema films *Bellicher: Cell* and *Feuten het Feestje*. In 2012 he debuted with the novel *Op Zwart*. In 2015 he directed his first short film *Weg met Willem* which won several prizes internationally. Most recently Willem made his feature length television debut as a director with *Afterlife*, which won several prizes internationally.





Cast

Eelco Smits (Maarten) has been a member of ITA (formerly Toneelgroep Amsterdam) since 2005. He played in plays such as *May We Be Forgiven* (which got him a nomination for The Netherlands' most important theatre prize: Louis d'Or), *Song From Far Away* (a theatre monologue written for Eelco by Simon Stephens), *Roman Tragedies*, *The Glass Menagerie* (nomination Arlecchino), *Angels in America* and recently *A Little Life*. In October 2018 Eelco received de prestigious Paul Steenbergen-penning from actor Jacob Derwig. Besides his work for theatre, Eelco is also seen on television in series like *KLEM*, *Lijn 32* and *Bloedverwanten*.

Victor IJdens (Donnie) graduated in 2016 from the Amsterdam Theater Academy. In 2017 and 2018 Victor appeared in theater plays *The suffering of the young Werther* and *Geluk* (De Toneelschuur) and *The inspector and the dead girl* (Suburbia). Recently he played in *Revolutions* by Het Nationale Toneel and *Convoy* (Orkater).

Pupkin

Boy Meets Gun was produced by Pieter Kuijpers, Sander van Meurs, Iris Otten and Layla Meijman for Pupkin, one of the leading production companies in The Netherlands.

Pupkin has a strong and exciting track record of discovering and developing new talent and has been commissioned by Netflix to produce the first Dutch Netflix Original Series *ARES*, which will be released on the platform worldwide in 2020. Other recent Pupkin productions include the festival favorites *TAKE ME SOMEWHERE NICE* by Ena Sendijarević, *QUALITY TIME* by Daan Bakker and *BOYS* by Mischa Kamp, as well as the debut feature film *PARADISE DRIFTERS* by Mees Peijnenburg set to be completed later this year.

After producing Joost van Hezik's acclaimed comedy series *TreurTeeVee*, his debut feature film *BOY MEETS GUN* will premier at the prestigious Busan International Film Festival.

Cast includes Eelco Smits, Victor Ijdens, Mara van Vlijmen, Helen Kamperveen, Phi Nguyen, Peter Bolhuis, Charlie Chan Dagelet, Ellen Parren.

Crew

Director: Joost van Hezik
Screenplay: Willem Bosch
Producer: Pupkin - Pieter Kuijpers, Sander van Meurs, Iris Otten
Creative Producer: Layla Meijman
Co-producer: VPRO – Martien Vlietman
Line Producer: Ben Bouwmeester
Director of photography: Joris Kerbosch, NSC
Production Designer: Hester van Nistelrooij
Costume Designer: Nedda Nagel
Casting: Saida van der Reijd
Hair & make-up artist: Judith van Belle
Production sound mixer: Sander den Broeder
Film Editor: Xander Nijsten
Sound Designer: Tijn Hazen & Vincent Sinceretti
Composer: Christiaan Verbeek

Technical details

Screening Format:	DCP, HD files	Sound:	5.1, stereo
Shooting Format:	Arri Alexa	Spoken language:	Dutch
Budget:	€800.000	Subtitles:	English
Aspect Ratio:	16:9	Colour:	Colour

Original / English title: Boy Meets Gun
Country: The Netherlands
Length: 84' min
Completion: 2019, October
Genre: Black Comedy / Crime

