

# Under The Apple Tree (a badtime story)

Written and directed by Erik van Schaaik

Short film • 18 min 25 sec • Stop-motion Animation, Comedy, Horror • Age 9+

*Completed September 2015*

## Logline

A deceased farmer is buried by his hated brother, the vicar. Worms inhabit the corpse, discovering they've full control over it. The dead farmer awakens...

Trailer: <https://vimeo.com/126910252>

Official website: <http://www.undertheappletree-movie.com>

Social media: <http://www.facebook.com/undertheappletree.movie>

## Technical Details

Language: English

Subtitles: EN, ES, NL, FR

Picture format: Color

Aspect ratio: 1.78 (16x9 VIDEO)

Exhibition format: DCP / .MOV (Quicktime), ProRes, H264

## Awards and nominations

- Netherlands Film Festival 2015, Utrecht  
Golden Calf Best Short Film, Festival Favourite
- Third prize Animfest Athens 2016
- First prize Animated Fantasy, Dragon Con Independent Short Film Festival Atlanta 2016
- First prize Professional Film, Festival Stop Motion Montréal 2016

## Synopsis

Two brothers, an apple farmer and a priest, live next to each other as neighbors. Unfortunately, they can't get along very well. The priest is fed up with his peasant brother and his ugly apple orchard, dropping thousands of rotten apples in his neat little graveyard. The farmer is a gawky fellow, drunk on homemade cider, and deeply unhappy. The apple trees are rotten and the apples full of worms. He is bankrupt, desperate and loathed upon by his heartless brother. One stormy night the farmer hangs himself from the branch of one of his apple trees. At that very moment we meet Aber, a homeless worm, desperately seeking for shelter from the rain and thunder. All apples appear to be occupied by worms. Nobody let's him in, not even his brother Crombie. Suddenly Aber discovers the dead farmer, dangling between the branches like a huge apple. Delighted with his new, spacious house Aber crawls inside the corpse. Soon Aber discovers he has full control over the farmer's dead body, just by shouting commands. A movable house, great fun! After some practice Aber yells 'Hands up!' and the hands of the dead farmer shoot up from the grave...

Strolling around the churchyard in his 'mobile home' Aber discovers the priest has cut down all apple trees. He is shocked, and starts searching for his family: The dead farmer comes knocking on the priests door, and horrifyingly funny events unfold.

The secret of zombiedom. Now you know.  
Us worms control the brain of the dead.  
And when you're old and you have to go,  
we are the voice inside your head...

## Erik van Schaaik

Writer/director Erik van Schaaik has been fascinated by horror stories from an early age. His love of thunderstorms, fluttering curtains and long dark corridors has brought him to the south of Belgium, where he lived in a castle and started writing 'Under The Apple Tree'. In the vein of Poe, Wilde and Dahl, it's an amusing little horror fable that satirically sketches the similarities between man and worm, resulting in the unification of the two: the walking dead.

Apple Tree is a movie full of contradictions: Bizarre but touching. Story about animals but human drama. Staged as a feature film but dialogue in rhyme. It's all about the inner world, literally and figuratively.

'I enjoy mist, rain, thunderstorms, cold and mud. From a comfortable, warm couch that is, with beer and pretzels. It's a challenge to have your puppets walk through fog or rain, soaking wet and covered in mud. These are all things that are extremely difficult to animate in stop-motion. But this is exactly what we are going to do! Animators will hate me for it, but this is going to be a deliciously dirty, wet movie.' (Erik)

After creating multiple television series for children and three award winning animated short films [Vent](#), [The Phantom Of The Cinema](#) and [Pecker](#), Erik is currently working on the feature length animated film Hieronymus.

Erik collaborates closely with his wife Anita van Dalen, co-producer and marketing director for Under The Apple Tree.

[www.erikvanschaaik.com](http://www.erikvanschaaik.com)

## Pedri Animation

A studio specializing in Stop motion animation. Founders Peter Mansfelt and Paul Mathot, together with freelance specialists, work to create high quality productions and to educate new talent.

For more than a decade Pedri Animation has been delivering high quality animation for commercials, children series, leaders, corporate productions and short films, broadcasted worldwide. Two well-known examples are the children series 'Miffy and Friends' and 'Animal Shelf.'  
[www.pedri-animation.com](http://www.pedri-animation.com)

## Beast Animation

Beast Animation is an animation / production company specialized in stop motion animation. They are responsible for the (co) productions of all types of animations, series and commercials, entirely or partially carried out in stop motion.

[www.beastanimation.be](http://www.beastanimation.be)

## Racoon

Under The Apple Tree features the song 'Fun We Had' from the famous Dutch band Racoon. Racoon is well known for hits such as Love You More (2005), No Mercy (2011) and Oceaan (2012). The music and lyrics - reminiscing about all the fun we had with people that already passed away - fit beautifully with the story and provides the movie with an upbeat but melancholic ending. Score composer Miguel Boelens is also saxophone player in Racoon.

## Funders

This movie is supported by

Netherlands Film Fund

Flanders Audiovisual Fund (VAF)

Productiefonds Oost Nederland

In addition crowdfunders from [Cinecrowd](#) supported Under The Apple Tree generously.

## Cast & Credits

writer, director, editor - Erik van Schaaik

producers - Peter Mansfelt, Paul Mathot

executive producers - Thomas Hietbrink, Anita van Dalen, Koen Vermaanen

co-producers - Anita van Dalen, Ben Tesseur, Steven De Beul

associate producers - Dorothe van Dalen, Henry Wichert, Harro Presser

voices - Tim Gunther, Claire King

### *Dutch crew*

director of photography, set and prop supervisor - Peter Mansfelt

production design - Erik van Schaaik

lead animator - Sergio Lara Jimenez

animator - Erik van Schaaik

puppet supervisor - John Craney

armature designer - Paul Mathot

armature builder - Annelous van der Wal

wardrobe - Anneloes van Holten

moulds and casts - Xander Forterie, Henry Brummelman

set and puppet painter - Willeke Smid

setbuilder - Henry Brummelman, Sebastian Doerman, Anna Schroots

puppet maintenance, set dresser, grip - Peter Mansfelt, John Craney, Anneloes van Holten

studiomanager - Thomas Hietbrink

light consultant - Marc de Meijer

trainees - Iris Frankhuizen, Wendy Wever, Naomi Martopawiro

### *Belgian crew*

director of photography - Steven Frederickx

animator - Rosanne Janssens, Maarten Van Rooy

lead animator - Steven De Beul  
studiomanager - Dorien Schetz  
puppet maintenance, set dresser, grip - Anna Heuinck

compositing, grading, visual effects - Gatze Zonneveld / RocknRoll Animation

music - Miguel Boelens  
lapsteel and trombone - Joost Buis  
additional piano - Philipp Rüttgers  
choir - Lavalu, Sanderijn Crombach, Miguel Boelens, Erik van Schaaik

sound design, surround mix - Rinus Aarts / Speakerfood Music & Sound  
Foley sound - Erik van Schaaik, Rinus Aarts  
surround mastering - Jeroen Nadorp / Bob Kommer Studio's

DCP mastering - Haghefilm-Digitaal

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