

# **THANKS, MR. BELL**

A FILM BY MZIMASI NDZOMBANE

# Thanks, Mr. Bell

South Africa | 2022 | 16 Min | English with subtitles | 1.66:1 | 2K | Digital | Colour | Dolby 2.0

**Directed & Written by:** Mzimasi Ndzombane

**Co-Producers:** Mzimasi Ndzombane, Julie Aarts

**Director of Photography:** Tom Radford

**Edit:** Mzimasi Ndzombane

**On-set Sound Recorders:** Lemuela Coetzee, Rebekah-Breeze Johnson

**Art Direction, Wardrobe:** Julie Aarts

**Music:** Richard Gauld

**Final Mix:** Raymond Finn

**1st AC:** Dane Brunner

**2nd AC:** Riaan du Toit

**Special FX:** Fanjan Combrink

**Visual FX:** Steven Joff Carter

**Poster Art:** Chelsea Gardner

**Additional Art:** Werner Breytenbach

## Cast

Lwethu Tenge

Jessie Crichton

Robyn van de Merwe

Riaan du Toit

Erin de Swardt

Tina Lerato

Zuzakhe Nojoko

Werner Breytenbach

Loyiso Ndzombane

Taylor-Rose Strydom

Jason-Lee Hill

Athenkosi Ndzombane

Litha Lizwe

## Production Company

Developing Agency

Port Elizabeth,

South Africa

## Gear Provided by

Rooftop Africa

## World Sales

Aspect Ratio Films

Jordan Mattos

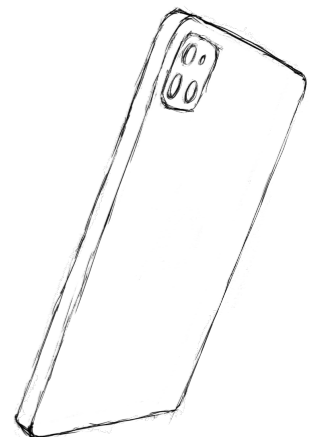
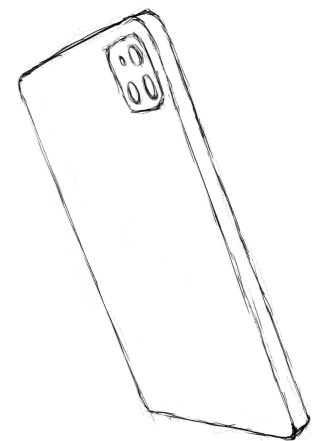
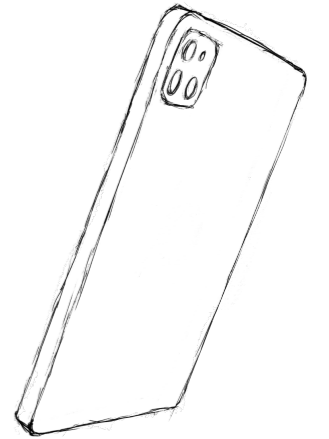
aspectratiofilms@gmail.com

Filmed on location in Port Elizabeth, South Africa



# Synopsis

People grapple to be heard and understood in a world where they can only converse with another through their mobile phones – unless they've chosen to live without them, but over dependence on mobile communication has made this nearly impossible.





# Director's Note

The constant ability to stay in contact is a massive benefit to society, and has brought an immeasurable amount of good to modern life. Family, friends and assistance is only the press of a button away, but communication as we know it has changed forever. As humans, we've grown more dependant on mobile phones. We now don't have to suffer the consequences of our actions/words immediately. Instead, we can hide behind our devices. We can be a totally different person each time we use our phones and this has lead us to not truly understand ourselves and our neighbour.

The title *THANKS, MR BELL* is in relation to the creator of the first practical telephone, Alexander Graham Bell, which is in no way a poke at the astonishing technological advancements he made to shape the world into the connected version of itself we find ourselves in today, but rather explores the issue of miscommunication we have been faced with during the growth of telecommunication.

Nowadays people are unknowingly trapped from being able to experience life as it should be, and communication has taken a hit because of this. We are unable to express ourselves away from social posts, texts, emojis and phone calls – as we fear judgement and isolation from groups and society as a whole.

This protagonist of this film is the mobile phone - something all of our characters need in order to communicate with another person. We visit characters at different stages of their life, experiencing their own journey. Some have grown fed up with the current state of communication, while others have embraced it in a healthy way and find themselves at a point in their lives where they can leave *that* life behind them. Some people in the world of *THANKS, MR BELL*, struggle to breakaway and find themselves confused at seeing others who now manage to converse by speaking to one another in person.

The themes in this piece are depicted in a world that I like to call *Relatable Unfamiliarity* as it takes place in a world unfamiliar to us, but the actions of the characters are relatable enough for us to draw similarities to them.

I would like to thank the entire crew for getting on board with something that is very personal to me, and facing the reality of a topic that many people do not want to face. The entire crew is from small Port Elizabeth and each and every one of them showed incredible character to work hard at making this project a reality.

I love you all.

*Mzimasi Ndzombane*

# Director and Producer

## Mzimasi Ndzombane

Born on February 9th 1995 in Port Elizabeth, South Africa. THANKS, MR BELL is his debut project.

He studied Software Development at the Nelson Mandela University. During his studies he realised his dormant love for art and pursued cinematography, taking up writing in his free time. His project THE STORY OF A THORN was selected as part of the Durban Film Mart Access Program and Jumpstart in 2021 and is currently in development.

## Julie Aarts

Julie Aarts is a qualified photographer working in the academic, fine art and fashion industries. With experience in production for international campaigns and TVC's, she has ventured into art directing for film.





