

Boy Kills World

Boy Kills World is a 2023 dystopian action comedy film directed by Moritz Mohr, in his directorial debut, from a screenplay by Tyler Burton Smith and Arend Remmers, based on a story by Arend Remmers and Morithz Mohr. The film stars Bill Skarsgård, Jessica Rothe, Michelle Dockery, Brett Gelman, Isaiah Mustafa, Yayan Ruhian, Andrew Koji, Sharlto Copley, Famke Janssen and features the voice of H. Jon Benjamin. The plot revolves around a campaign of vengeance enacted by a martial arts expert, rendered deaf-mute by an attack that killed his entire family, whose thoughts are presented as an inner voice derived from a childhood video game.

Boy Kills World was premiered at the 2023 Toronto International Film Festival, and was released in the United States by Lionsgate and Roadside Attractions on April 26, 2024. A spin-off video game Super Dragon Punch Force 3 was released on April 24, 2024, with an animated series in development.

Plot

Boy, a young child, lives in a <u>dystopian</u> city with his mother and younger sister Mina. Boy and Mina often play <u>arcade games</u> and draw illustrations of their future. The city is ruled by the Van Der Koy family: Gideon, Melanie, Melanie's husband Glen and the head of the family - Hilda. Once a year, Hilda gathers 12 people from the city to participate in *The Culling*, where all twelve are killed on <u>live television</u>. Hilda gathers Boy, Mina and their mother and shoots Mina and their mother, killing them, but leaves Boy for dead, having made him deaf and mute. An unnamed Shaman finds Boy and nurses him back to health.

Years later, a fully grown Boy continues training with the Shaman in the hopes of exacting revenge and constantly hallucinates Mina. In the city, Boy sees Glen and Gideon arrive to round up the victims for that year's Culling. After being heckled by a woman in the crowd, Glen accidentally shoots a civilian, triggering a massacre at the hands of June 27, the Van Der Koy's enforcer. Boy follows them in the trunk of Gideon's car to a warehouse, where he is attacked by Glen and several of his men. Boy kills the men and befriends a captive named

Boy Kills World



Theatrical release poster

Triedirical release poster	
Directed by	Moritz Mohr
Screenplay by	Tyler Burton Smith
	Arend Remmers
Story by	Arend Remmers
	Moritz Mohr
Based on	Boy Kills World ^[1]
	by Armend
	Remmers
	Moritz Mohr
Produced by	Sam Raimi
	Zainab Azizi
	Roy Lee
	Wayne Fitzjohn
	Simon Swart
	Stuart Manashil
	Dan Kagan
	Alex Lebovici
Starring	Bill Skarsgård
	Jessica Rothe

Basho, who he interrogates Glen with. Glen reveals that Hilda hosts a party before *The Culling* every year and offers to help them, but is killed when Basho accidentally drops a bench press he is holding.

Basho takes Boy to meet the Resistance, but discovers that everybody has been killed by the Van Der Koys except one member named Benny. The three sneak into the manor and Boy makes his way to Hilda's dining room, where he unwittingly decapitates a decoy of Hilda. June 27 fights, defeats and captures Boy. Gideon reveals that he wishes to help Boy; Hilda has created *The Culling* to protect herself from the Shaman, but has been living in a bunker for years, mindlessly killing innocents even though all of the criminals have been wiped out.

Melanie takes Boy to *The Culling* and Boy uses a scalpel given to him by Gideon in secret to free himself, reuniting with Basho and Benny. A large battle ensues, during which Benny sacrifices himself to protect Boy and Basho is mortally wounded. Boy executes Melanie and makes his way to Hilda's bunker together with Basho, where Boy is so focused on killing the guards that he misses Basho succumbing to his wounds. Boy discovers Gideon, having been shot by Melanie, who gives him a key card to the elevator down to the bunker. The hallucination of Mina begs Boy not to kill Gideon, but Boy executes him and the hallucination disappears.

In the elevator, Hilda confronts Boy through a <u>camera</u> and <u>microphone</u>. Boy shows Hilda a drawing by Mina, horrifying her into ordering the guards outside to stand down. June 27 takes Boy to Hilda, where Boy sees paintings of the Van Der Koy family, which include him and Mina. Hilda reveals that Boy is her son, and that he actively participated in killing dissidents, including the Shaman's entire family. When Boy refused to shoot the Shaman and fled; the Shaman captured him, mutilated him, and used LSD and psychological torture to warp his mind, making him believe that Hilda killed his family. June 27 is revealed to be Mina, who is still alive.

In shock, Boy cannot give Hilda any signs of affection and she orders June 27/Mina to kill him only for her to stab Hilda in the head with one of her hatchets. Brother and sister battle their way through the remaining guards before being confronted by the Shaman. The three have a lengthy and brutal fight before

	Michelle Dockery Brett Gelman Isaiah Mustafa Yayan Ruhian Andrew Koji Sharlto Copley H. Jon Benjamin
Cinamata ayan bu	Famke Janssen
Cinematography	Peter Matjasko
Edited by	Lucian Barnard
Music by	Ludvig Forssell
Production companies	Nthibah Pictures Hammerstone Studios
	Raimi Productions
	Vertigo Entertainment
Distributed by	Lionsgate Roadside Attractions (United States) Empire Entertainment (South Africa) Capstone Global (International)
Release dates	September 9, 2023 (TIFF) April 26, 2024 (United States)
Running time	111 minutes ^[2]
Countries	Germany South Africa United States
Language	English
Box office	\$3.1 million ^{[3][4]}

Boy forces the Shaman's sharpened necklace into the Shaman's neck, killing him. Boy and Mina, both bleeding profusely, exit the bunker. A flashback shows the two playing the arcade game, where the voice announces *Player 2 Has Entered the Game*.

In the post-credits scene, Boy and Mina are revealed to have survived and are shown eating cereal together.

Cast

- <u>Bill Skarsgård</u> as Boy, a deaf-mute man seeking revenge against the Van Der Koys. Mohr, the director, occasionally questioned his decision to make the character a deaf-mute amidst other challenges but ultimately had no regrets and was grateful for the outcome. [5]
 - H. Jon Benjamin as Boy's "inner voice"
- Jessica Rothe as June 27, an enforcer working for the Van Der Koys
- Michelle Dockery as Melanie Van Der Koy, Hilda and Gideon's sister
- Brett Gelman as Gideon Van Der Koy, Hilda and Melanie's brother
- Isaiah Mustafa as Benny, a resistance member
- Andrew Koji as Basho, a resistance member
- Famke Janssen as Hilda Van Der Koy, the matriarch of the Van Der Koy family
- Sharlto Copley as Glen Van Der Koy, Melanie's husband
- Yayan Ruhian as Shaman, Boy's mentor
 - François Chau as Shaman's voice

Production

Director and story writer Moritz Mohr pitched *Boy Kills World* with a short and previsualization reel to <u>Sam Raimi</u> and <u>Roy Lee</u>, of Raimi Productions and <u>Vertigo Entertainment</u> respectively, who were impressed and subsequently agreed to produce alongside Nthibah Pictures and Hammerstone Studios. <u>Orion Pictures</u> was initially involved at one point, but dropped out following the <u>COVID-19 pandemic</u>.

The film was announced on October 7, 2021, with <u>Bill Skarsgård</u>, <u>Samara Weaving</u>, and <u>Yayan Ruhian</u> joining the cast. In a statement, Nthibah CEO Simon Swart said the film would combine "real-world themes with a stylized look that is fresh, cool, and original, borrowing from the best of graphic novels." On October 28, 2021, <u>Isaiah Mustafa</u> joined the cast. In January 2022, <u>Andrew Koji</u> was added to the cast, and <u>Jessica Rothe</u> replaced Samara Weaving, who dropped out of project due to scheduling conflicts. Filming began in <u>Cape Town</u>, South Africa, on February 14, 2022. In March 2022, <u>Famke Janssen</u>, <u>Brett Gelman</u>, <u>Sharlto Copley</u>, Quinn Copeland, twins Cameron and Nicholas Crovetti, and Michelle Dockery were confirmed to star.

In August 2023, Swedish composer Ludvig Forssell was announced to compose the film's soundtrack. [15]

Release

The world premiere for *Boy Kills World* was held at the 2023 Toronto International Film Festival on September 9, 2023. [16]

In January 2024, <u>Lionsgate Films</u> and <u>Roadside Attractions</u> acquired U.S. distribution rights to the film and set it for an April 26, 2024 theatrical release. [17]

A spin-off video game, *Super Dragon Punch Force 3*, based on the in-universe arcade game of the same name from the film, was released on April 24, 2024. A spin-off animated television series of the film, written by Mario Carvalhal and Judd Fitzjohn, is in development as of April 2024. [18]

Reception

Box office

In the United States and Canada, *Boy Kills World* was released alongside <u>Unsung Hero</u> and <u>Challengers</u>, and is projected to gross \$2–3 million from 1,993 theatres in its opening weekend. The film made \$819,000 on its first day, including \$500,000 from preview screenings. It went on to debut to \$1.6 million.

Critical response

On the <u>review aggregator</u> website <u>Rotten Tomatoes</u>, 58% of 145 critics' reviews are positive, with an average rating of 5.5/10. The website's consensus reads: "Bolstered by Bill Skarsgård's all-in performance, *Boy Kills World* may offer just enough action thrills to offset its thinly written characters and predictable plot." Metacritic, which uses a <u>weighted average</u>, assigned the film a score of 47 out of 100, based on 26 critics, indicating "mixed or average" reviews. Audiences polled by <u>CinemaScore</u> gave the film an average grade of "B—" on an A+ to F scale, while those polled by <u>PostTrak</u> gave it a 71% overall positive score, with 50% saying they would definitely recommend it.

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