

# Synchronic (film)

***Synchronic*** is a 2019 American science fiction horror film directed and produced by Justin Benson and Aaron Moorhead. Written by Benson, the film shares continuity with other films by Benson and Moorhead, following *Resolution* and *The Endless*. *Synchronic* stars Anthony Mackie and Jamie Dornan as paramedics who investigate a series of inexplicable deaths and their connection to a new designer drug.

It had its world premiere at the 2019 Toronto International Film Festival. It was released on October 23, 2020, by Well Go USA Entertainment.

## Plot

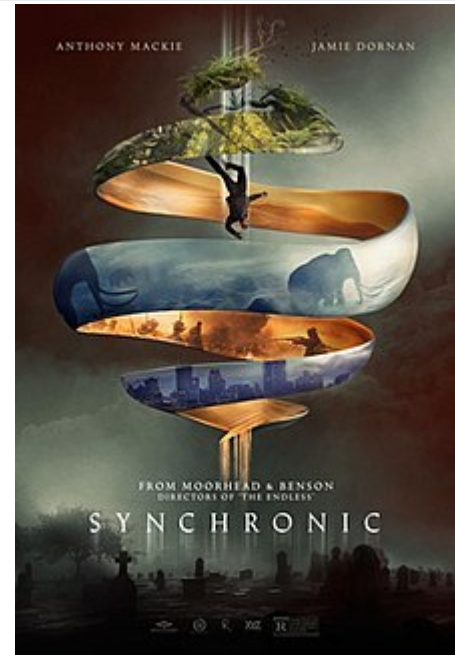
Steve, a womanizing New Orleans paramedic, and his devoted family-man partner, Dennis, face a string of horrifying deaths and incoherent victims – all linked to a new designer drug, Synchronic. When Steve is accidentally pricked by a contaminated needle during a call, tests reveal not only possible infection but also an aggressive cancer in his underdeveloped pineal gland.

Driven to uncover the truth about Synchronic, Steve tracks down the drug's creator. He learns it warps the pineal gland's perception of time, sending users backwards through history. Children experience full time travel, while adults exist only as ghost-like figures in the past.

Meanwhile, Dennis's world shatters when his teenage daughter, Brianna, vanishes. His marriage collapses under the strain, and he tragically misjudges Steve, whose declining health and painkiller use he mistakes for drug addiction. Their conflict erupts into a physical fight.

Fueled by his diagnosis and a desire to find Brianna, Steve experiments with Synchronic. He witnesses Louisiana's past, barely escaping deadly encounters with a conquistador and the Ku Klux Klan. Using his dog, Hawking, he discovers the location of pill consumption dictates the destination year. But in a heartbreaking turn, Hawking is lost in the 1920s, unable to return with Steve.

## Synchronic



Theatrical release poster

<b>Directed by</b>	<u>Justin Benson</u> <u>Aaron Moorhead</u>
<b>Written by</b>	<u>Justin Benson</u>
<b>Produced by</b>	<u>Justin Benson</u> <u>Aaron Moorhead</u> <u>David Lawson Jr.</u> <u>Michael Mendelsohn</u>
<b>Starring</b>	<u>Anthony Mackie</u> <u>Jamie Dornan</u>
<b>Cinematography</b>	<u>Aaron Moorhead</u>
<b>Edited by</b>	<u>Aaron Moorhead</u> <u>Justin Benson</u>
<b>Music by</b>	<u>Jimmy LaValle</u>
<b>Production companies</b>	<u>XYZ Films</u> <u>Patriot Pictures</u> <u>Rustic Films</u>
<b>Distributed by</b>	<u>Well Go USA Entertainment</u>

Steve deduces that physical contact with objects can anchor someone in a specific time. Returning to the park where Brianna disappeared, he encounters prehistoric tribesmen but learns Brianna might have simply wandered off before taking *Synchronic*.

Reconciling with Dennis, Steve reveals his cancer diagnosis. Joined by their colleague Tom, they review Steve's time-travel footage and rush to the cemetery where Steve's family is buried. From there, they journey back to the fateful night in the park.

<b>Release dates</b>	September 7, 2019 (TIFF) October 23, 2020 (United States)
<b>Running time</b>	102 minutes <sup>[1]</sup>
<b>Country</b>	United States
<b>Language</b>	English
<b>Box office</b>	\$1.5 million <sup>[2]</sup>

Within the chaos of the War of 1812, Steve finally locates a terrified Brianna. When a looter, mistaking Steve for a runaway slave, threatens them, Steve sacrifices himself as a distraction so Brianna can use his last pill to return to the present. Fatally injured and the looter killed by a landmine, Steve carves the word "ALLWAYS" into a boulder. This act casts him as the originator of the mysterious symbol found there in the present.

Dennis embraces a safely returned Brianna, as Steve's spectral form lingers. His journey complete, Steve bids a peaceful farewell, having gained emotional closure and a profound understanding of time's interconnectedness.

## Cast

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- Anthony Mackie as Steve Denube
- Jamie Dornan as Dennis Dannelly
- Ally Ioannides as Brianna Dannelly
- Katie Aselton as Tara Dannelly
- Bill Oberst Jr. as The Looter
- Natasha Tina Liu as Christina
- Martin Bats Bradford as Bob
- Adam J. Yeend as Kyle T. Wentworth, III
- Devyn A. Tyler as Danika
- Betsy Holt as Leah
- Shane Brady as Travis

## Production

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In September 2018, it was announced Jamie Dornan and Anthony Mackie had joined the cast of the film, with Justin Benson and Aaron Moorhead directing.<sup>[3]</sup>

*Synchronic* shares continuity with previous films by Benson and Moorhead. It is mentioned that the titular drug was synthesized from a red flower grown in the California desert, referencing the plant smoked by members of a commune in the film *The Endless*.<sup>[4]</sup>

## Release

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The film had its world premiere at the Toronto International Film Festival on September 7, 2019.<sup>[5]</sup> Shortly after, Well Go USA Entertainment acquired distribution rights to the film, announcing a 2020 release.<sup>[6]</sup> It was released in theaters on October 23, 2020.<sup>[7]</sup>

*Synchronic* was released on digital and video on demand in the United States on January 12, 2021. The movie was released on Netflix in the US on April 16, 2021.<sup>[8]</sup>

## Reception

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Review aggregator website Rotten Tomatoes reports an approval rating of 79% based on 155 reviews and an average rating of 6.8/10. The site's critics consensus reads: "*Synchronic* sets off on an intriguingly idiosyncratic journey that should satisfy fans of Aaron Moorhead and Justin Benson's earlier work."<sup>[9]</sup> Metacritic reports a weighted average score of 64 out of 100 based on 23 critics, indicating "generally favorable reviews".<sup>[10]</sup>

## References


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1. "Synchronic" (<https://tiff.net/events/synchronic>). *Toronto International Film Festival*. Retrieved August 13, 2019.
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9. "Synchronic (2019)" (<https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/synchronic>). *Rotten Tomatoes*. Fandango. Retrieved October 10, 2021.

10. "Synchronic Reviews" (<https://www.metacritic.com/movie/synchronic>). Metacritic. CBS Interactive. Retrieved November 1, 2020.

## External links

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- [Official website \(https://www.wellgousa.com/films/synchronic\)](https://www.wellgousa.com/films/synchronic) 
  - *Synchronic* (<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt9016974/>) at IMDb
  - *Synchronic* (<https://www.allmovie.com/movie/v719964>) at AllMovie
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