

## About the movie/synopsis

---

Ben is different.

His life is a universe to itself, where he plays his favourite online computer game *Archlord* avidly, trying hard to train himself for the real world he lives in. The harsh world of a technical school is for him a daily kind of hell.

As the horror of being a daily subject to bullying grows, Ben devises a plan. Then Scarlite comes into his life, the girl he has met in his on-line game. That wasn't part of the plan...

## Characters

---



Ben is different. We see this in the way he gets up, washes himself, gets dressed, eats,...with all sorts of rituals and according to established patterns every day. We even notice it in his manner towards his mother and little brother. It shows when he walks in the streets with his walkman on his head with loud and booming music, tensed and very insecure...

His life is a universe to itself, where he plays his favourite online computer game "Archlord" avidly, trying hard to train himself for the real world he lives in. The harsh world of a technical school is for him a daily kind of hell and drives him to extremes.

Ben is played by **Greg Timmermans**.

An absolute newcomer. An absolute revelation. "Ben X" is the first feature film of this young theatre-actor, fresh out of school.



A strong woman. She never gives up the fight for her son, despite the fact that she never gets closer to him and never receives a single sign of affection from her oldest son. It costed her a divorce and half of her life. But she wants to and she will find Ben. Whatever world he may be in. This story is also the story of her struggle and her amazing deed at the end to help organizing the revenge of her son.

The mother is played by **Marijke Pinoy**.

A first and foremost celebrated theatre-actress, both in Belgium and in the rest of Europe, where she has received many awards and much acclaim even at the prestigious Theatre Festival in Avignon. She has worked in television and cinema for more then 20 years, and also played the mother in the theatre production that was the basis for "BEN X".



A man beated by life. At home the big absentee. He was the man who couldn't cope. With his marriage. With his son. The impotence that he couldn't help his son drives him to his first exceptional deed.

The father is played by **Pol Goossen**.

Pol Goossen is an absolute celebrity in Belgium, being by far the biggest star of the most popular daily soap series 'Thuis'. He has however always remained a distinguished theatre actor as well. He is very reluctant to take on roles in the cinema or television. But was delighted to be a part of the "Ben X" cast.



Bens chat-girlfriend with whom he has been playing for a long time in the virtual world of “Archlord”. She’s a mystery for his environment, but the great love of Ben.

Scarlite is played by **Laura Verlinden**.

A sensation! Laura Verlinden is without any doubt the up and coming young star of the Flemish cinema. Even before graduating from acting-school she not only stars in “Ben X”, but also in another young feature film ‘The Last Summer’. Immediately after playing in “Ben X”, she went on to clinch the female lead in a very prestigious TV-epic.



The teasers. The tormentors or bullies.  
They even aren’t half aware of the damage they do.

Bogaert and Desmet played by **Titus De Voogdt** and **Maarten Claeysens**.

Titus De Voogdt is an artist who became an actor almost by accident, but who has become one of the most popular faces in the young Flemish fringe-cinema, while touring through Europe with theatre productions that have met huge acclaim.

Maarten Claeysens is a Flemish actor who has mainly worked in theatre in Holland. Largely unknown after the roles in small movies, “Ben X” will undoubtedly mark his breakthrough as a hugely talented actor.

---

## CAST & CREW

---



Nic Balthazar made his first steps on international podia at a very young age, when the children musicals in which he played even hit Broadway. Even before graduating from university he became a theatre- and later a well known film critic. First for newspapers, then for radio. Then came a successful television career as a cultural journalist, director, presenter, talkshow-host for a variety of programs at the most important Belgian national television broadcaster VRT.

The impact of his literary debut “Niets was alles wat hij zei” (“Nothing was all he said”) brought about an adaptation of the same story to the stage. The multimedia-play ‘NIETS’ (‘NOTHING’), written, produced and directed by Nic Balthazar was an even bigger success with more than 210 sold-out shows. When MMG bought the film rights of the book and play they not only asked him to write the screenplay, but also to direct the film himself.

Ben X is Nic Balthazars first feature film as a director.

### CAST

BEN	.....	Greg Timmermans
MOTHER	.....	Marijke Pinoy
SCARLITE	.....	Laura Verlinden
FATHER	.....	Pol Goossen
BOGAERT	.....	Titus De Voogdt
DESMET	.....	Maarten Claeysens
METAL TEACHER	.....	Jakob Beks
COPPOLA	.....	Gilles De Schryver
PSYCHIATRIST	.....	Peter De Graef
SCHOOL PRINCIPAL	.....	Ron Cornet
MAAIKE	.....	An Van Gijsegem
SABINE	.....	Tania Van der Sanden
JONAS	.....	César De Sutter
RELIGION TEACHER	.....	Johan Heldenbergh
HORSE MAN	.....	Wim Vandekeybus

## **CREW**

DIRECTOR & SCREENPLAY WRITER ..... Nic Balthazar  
FOTOGRAHY ..... Lou Berghmans  
MUSIC ..... Praga Khan  
EDITING ..... Philippe Ravoet  
SOUND DESIGN ..... Peter Flamman & Wart Wamsteker  
PRODUCTION MANAGER ..... Johan Van den Driessche  
ART DIRECTOR ..... Kurt Loyens  
COSTUMES ..... Heleen Heintjes  
MAKE-UP ..... Esther de Goey  
SOUND ..... Coen Gravendaal  
CASTING ..... Gunter Schmid  
COPRODUCERS ..... Michiel de Rooij, Sabine Veenendaal & Burny Bos (BosBros.)  
..... Winnie Enghien (één)  
ASSOCIATE PRODUCERS ..... Guido Dekeyser & Peter Lories  
PRODUCERS ..... Peter Bouckaert & Erwin Provoost

## **Technical information**

---

TITLE..... Ben X  
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE ..... Dutch  
RUNNING TIME ..... 90'  
PRODUCTION COUNTRY..... Belgium  
LOCATIONS..... Ghent, Maarkedal, Bruges, Dendermonde, Oudenaarde, Brussels & Calais  
STUDIO..... Ghent  
PRODUCTION PERIOD ..... 2006, October 23 – December 1  
RELEASE BELGIUM ..... 2007, September 26  
DISTRIBUTOR BELGIUM..... Kinopolis Film Distribution  
SHOOTING FORMAT/ CINEMA FORMAT ..... High Definition/35 mm  
SCREEN RATIO ..... 1.85  
SOUND ..... Dolby SRD

## Production Company MMG

---

MMG (former Multimedia) was set up in 1981 by Erwin Provoost. The company started as a producer of art house films such as LOVE IS A DOG FROM HELL based on a Charles Bukowski novel, directed by Dominique Deruddere. The picture received the "Joseph Plateau" award for best Belgian movie (1965-1990) and secured international distribution in 18 countries. MMG also produced Deruddere's second movie WAIT UNTIL SPRING, BANDINI based upon the novel by John Fante, starring Joe Mantegna, Faye Dunaway and Ornella Muti. Partners on the picture were Zoetrope Studios, Orion Classic and WB Video.

At the end of the eighties MMG produced its first comedy with a Belgian stand-up comedian in a film called HECTOR. HECTOR became an all-time box-office hit in Belgium, only to be out grossed by its successor KOKO FLANEL which raised a historical 11.000.000, - US dollars at the box-office in the Benelux alone.

In 1990 strong financial shareholders joined the Multimedia Group (MMG) and the company diversified into associated businesses such as television, video and animation production. WINDKRACHT 10, a 23-episode drama series about an elite military search and rescue squadron was aired in 1997 and enjoyed a market share of up to 42%. Its successor FLIKKEN (COPS) is even more successful and became a number one television hit both in Flanders and in the Netherlands. The series is now in its ninth season.

In 2003 MMG released the psychological thriller THE ALZHEIMER CASE by Erik Van Looy based upon the bestseller by Jef Geeraerts with Jan Decleir, Koen De Bouw and Werner De Smedt in the leading roles. The film was a big box office hit in Belgium (750.000,- visitors). The TV-series was also a success with an average of 900.000 viewers every week. The film has been sold to France, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Scandinavia, Spain and Andorra, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Poland, USA, Canada, Japan, Korea, China, Brazil and Bulgaria. The remake rights have been acquired by Focus Features, Universal Pictures' independent boutique known for such recent releases as Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind (Michel Gondry), The Motorcycle Diaries (Walter Salles) as well as Academy Award nominees Lost in Translation (Sofia Coppola) and 21 Grams (Alejandro Gonzalez Inarritu).

In 2004/2005 MMG coproduced the film DIE BLUTHOCHZEIT/THE WEDDING PARTY together with the German production companies Typhoon and Fanes Film. The film was directed by Dominique Deruddere, based on the comic book 'Lune de Guerre' by Hermann and Van Hamme. The film was released in Germany in April 2005. The Benelux release followed in fall 2005.

Together with the public broadcaster één, MMG produced a new comedy series URBAIN with the famous Belgian comedian Urbanus in a leading role.

In 2005 MMG coproduced the successful film HET PAARD VAN SINTERKLAAS/WINKY'S HORSE together with the Dutch production company Bosbros. The film won the "Audience Award" at the Flanders International Film Festival in Ghent, the "Gouden Kalf" Award for the best scenario and the "Movie Squad Junior Schild" at the Dutch Film Festival in Utrecht and is also selected for the Film Festival for children in Berlin. In 2006 the film won 2 prizes at the Chicago International Children's Film Festival: a certificate of Excellence " Best live-action feature film" in the category for children and adults.

Also in 2005, the shooting of the costume film BLIND, an international coproduction together with Phanta Vision (The Netherlands) and Klas Film (Bulgaria), started in December. Release is scheduled in 2007.

Together with Phanta Vision and the production company Woodline Productions (UK) MMG produces the feature film WINDKRACHT 10, KOKSIJDE RESCUE, directed by Hans Herbots. Shooting started in January 2006 and the film was released in fall 2006. It will be an exciting feature film for all audiences, based on the real life experiences of the 40th squadron Search & Rescue, an elite airforce squadron stationed in a Belgian seaside resort.

In October 2006, shooting started of BEN X, a feature film directed by Nic Balthazar. This film is now in postproduction. The release is planned in October 2007.

In March 2007, shooting started of WAAR IS HET PAARD SINTERKLAAS? , the sequel to HET PAARD VAN SINTERKLAAS, the very succesful coproduction with BosBros. Film-TV Productions (The Netherlands). The release is planned in October 2007.

MMG is currently in preproduction of LOS, based on the novel by Tom Naegels and directed by Jan Verheyen, and in development of DOSSIER K., the sequel to THE ALZHEIMER CASE, directed by Erik Van Looy.

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

an MMG production

in coproduction with  
éen & BosBros. Film- TV Productions

with the support of  
The Flanders Audiovisual Fund & The Netherlands Filmfund,  
The Belgian taxshelter for Filmfinance, KFD, Bridge Entertainment Group & Sabam

developed with the support of the Media Programme of the European Community

ARCHLORD™ computer video game material provided by Codemasters® and  
NHN Games™ Corporation.

All Rights Reserved. [www.archlordgame.com](http://www.archlordgame.com)

ASAP.be  
Kinopolis Group  
Northern Manuport  
Standaard Boekhandel  
B.AD nv  
Besalec  
Bull Partners  
Meda  
Tesa Invest  
Vintage Films

---

NMBS  
NMBS-Holding  
P&O Ferries-Poferries.com  
Gemeente Maarkedal  
Gent Film Office  
De Lijn  
JC Decaux

---

Kia  
Coca Cola  
Base  
Telenet- 9 lives  
Microsoft  
Nokia  
Canon  
Dovy Keukens  
Fleischmann  
Clear Channel Belgium  
Sandwich  
Stills