



presents

# NEXT DOOR

(NABOER)

A film by Pål Sletaune



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## NEXT DOOR

### *The Story*

#### A large apartment building from 1905: Present time.

One day John meets his next-door neighbors, Anne and Kim, two beautiful women who invite him into their apartment. Their apartment is full of canned goods and jugs of water, as if they are expecting a siege. John is surprised that he has never met them before, while both women seem to know John and his ex-girlfriend Ingrid intimately. John feels uncomfortable and leaves in anger, but Anne convinces him to stay and keep an eye on Kim, who she says is her sister. Anne says Kim is sick, that the man who lived in John's apartment before assaulted her. He kept her prisoner in there, and since then Kim has not dared leave the building. That is why they have stored all the food. John agrees to keep an eye on Kim and goes back inside their apartment. Kim denies that she is Anne's sister, and claims Anne was the one who was assaulted. Kim tries to seduce John, but not until she physically attacks him and hits him in the face, does John react and defend himself. In the ensuing battle they end up having violent, bloody sex.

John is extremely ashamed afterward and leaves their apartment. He has trouble comprehending what just happened, he feels manipulated and used.

At work the following day we find out that John has not been there for two days. Peter, his colleague, asks what is wrong. John does not answer. Later he gets a phone message from Ingrid's mother. She cannot reach Ingrid and wants John to call. Does he know where she is? John seems tired and becomes unwell at the office. He tries to take some pills, but drops his pill bottle under the copier.

In a flashback we see Ingrid come get the last of her possessions. The scene progresses until John tells her he does not know what to do if she leaves him, but Ingrid leaves anyway. She has a new boyfriend now, Brig, who is waiting outside.

#### Present time: John goes to Ingrid's workplace looking for her, but she is not there.

John returns home and goes over to the neighbors again. Something is wrong. Why has he never seen or heard them before? They live right next door. Something is wrong, but he cannot put his finger on it. Anne and Kim lure him further into their apartment, which becomes more and more like a labyrinth. It seems impossible for John to get out. Suddenly he meets a man who introduces himself as Brig, Ingrid's new boyfriend. He says Ingrid is in the apartment, isn't that what John wanted? Isn't that what John had always hoped for, that Ingrid would not leave him? John panics; he is trapped in a nightmare. In the ensuing fight, he kills Brig. He searches the apartment, but fails to find Ingrid, Kim, or Anne anywhere. He returns to his own apartment and discovers to his amazement that it is also full of canned foods and water jugs. Where did they come from? He goes back out in the hall to find out, but discovers to his horror that the hall ends right after his door. There is no apartment next door.

In a continuation of the flashback with Ingrid, we see that they start fighting and John kills Ingrid. We find out that John has become psychotic after the murder and that Ingrid lies dead in the bedroom in his apartment. The women in the apartment next door were figments of his imagination, a mental attempt at explaining to himself what he has done to the woman he loved.

# NEXT DOOR

## *Director's Comments*

I have always been interested in how our mind works, and *NEXT DOOR* is a result of this interest. Although in the guise of a thriller, it is a film about how the mind of a person who has tried to block something out, to forget something that has happened, works. But nothing shapes John's experiences more than the things he has suppressed. All his experiences are versions and reflections of what he has blocked out. In *NEXT DOOR* John's fantasy world, with the apartment next door, functions as both an active partner and opponent to John's forgetfulness. It explains and confronts John with how he could commit such an act.

A study in "insanity at the time of the crime"

A story about a man who goes crazy over the loss of his love.

*NEXT DOOR* is a psychological thriller about an innocent man apparently led astray by his two beautiful and manipulative neighbors. Over time we realize that the neighbors aren't the ones with a problem, John is. We realize that the neighbors are a figment of John's imagination, a futile attempt at justifying to himself that he has killed his girlfriend.

### The characters:

**John** has been involved in a serious relationship with Ingrid for two years. A relationship that has meant everything to him. This is the first time he has dared enter into a serious relationship. He is a shy and inhibited man who for the first time has gotten seriously involved with a woman. According to himself, he has opened himself to Ingrid in ways he has never done to anyone else. The problem is that John is so fundamentally closed that when he starts opening up, it does not come in an even flow, but in bursts. He becomes too much for Ingrid, there are too many inhibitions that suddenly feel the need to be released. When these outbursts come, John is incapable of handling them. He denies that they have occurred, he "forgets" and suppresses them. They are too threatening for John, he begins denying more and more, and eventually he denies that he has killed Ingrid.

**Ingrid** loved John, but could no longer cope with his fluctuating personality. She is a woman who has been in many relationships before. She thought John's inexperience was something new, something that could offer her stability and predictability, but that turned out to be too much.

**Anne & Kim** are John's imaginary neighbors. They have been created by John's subconscious to help him come to terms with what he has done. But they are also women, temptresses who lure him through the doorway into a foreign land. Anne is the older, stricter one who dominates him. Kim is the young, the impulsive, the sexual and vulnerable.

### Style:

*NEXT DOOR* is a film with an elaborate visual style. The suspense and the mood will flow out. The film will move from a fairly dark, somewhat static style in the beginning, toward an ever more flowing, moving camera as the different levels of reality begin flowing together. *NEXT DOOR* is a first-person film, 99 % of the time we are with John and see his version of the world. It also demands a scenography that is both timeless and “contemporary” to depict John’s undoing. And it moves between two levels of reality: John’s imaginary, psychotic world, as it were, where the neighbors and their apartment exist; and the “real” world, the one John tries to suppress, where Ingrid lies dead in his bedroom.

### Twin images.

The apartments and characters in *NEXT DOOR* will, during the film, begin to blend together. Since both the neighbors and their apartment have been created by John’s delusions, while he most likely in “reality” is in his own apartment most of the time, we will work with a type of “twin images”, that is images that in appearance and action resemble each other. Shots, camera angles and movements in Anne’s apartment will be repeated in John’s apartment, while he attempts to remember what has happened.

To me *NEXT DOOR* is a film about denial, shame and crossing borders. Our protagonist has crossed the ultimate border; he has killed his girlfriend out of passion. He is incapable of admitting or comprehending what he has done, so he creates a world through which he can relive parts of the murder. The story with the women in the apartment next door is an attempt by John to comprehend what he has done. Kim and Anne become two different images of Ingrid, not just mirror images, more nuanced than that. Sometimes they are the dream of how he wishes Ingrid had been, sometimes the opposite, the witch he had to kill. John is terrified to face up to what he has done. Have I done this? He has suppressed it. As so many other killers he could never admit it, that would mean the end of him as a human being. He cannot live with what he has done. Therefore the denial, therefore the phony parallel universe.

*NEXT DOOR* is a version of a classic nightmare: One day you go through a door next to yours that does not exist, and you enter a parallel world where laws and rules are turned on their head. You are both attracted to and repelled by what you find in there. You are now in a world where you can finally approach those things you most fear in the outside world. It is simultaneously the most attractive and most frightening thing you have ever experienced. *NEXT DOOR* is a journey to the most secret place on Earth, deep inside yourself.

Oslo, March 3, 2004  
Pål Sletaune

## NEXT DOOR

### *Producer's Comments*

The first time I read the script *NEXT DOOR* was taken by the thriller aspect of the story, not as a straight forward revealing of a murder history, but more like I was sucked into a universe where the thrill was that I did not know where I was heading.

I felt deeply for the main character JOHN who is completely overwhelmed and manipulated by his two beautiful neighbours, and then , bit by bit, I started to wonder (as John also does in the film)...what is actually the truth in this story? Coming to the end, I saw the film as a moving story about true love ending in tragic death, full of sentiment as we see a man losing himself as he is searching for a truth so terrible that he himself has forgotten all about it.

Seen from the producer's point of view *NEXT DOOR* moves in the landscape between David Lynch's strange, mysterious stories and more "conventional" pshycological thrillers. After working closely with screenwriter/director PÅL SLETAUNE for more than 10 years, I truly believe that his way of directing is perfect for this film. Pål's work is strongly character based, and he is well known for being a master of creating genuine universes with his art directors and directors of photography, -as in the feature *JUNK MAIL*, winning the Critics' Week in Cannes in 1997, as well as his second feature "YOU REALLY GOT ME"(2001), a dark comedy, produced by myself. "YOU REALLY.." received very good reviews, and was chosen for the Toronto Interntional Film Festival in 2001. We are currently negotiating remake of this script through our agent in Los Angeles.

As for the european and scandinavian market, I find *NEXT DOOR* as a film it is essential to make. It is very original and exciting, and far from all the romantic comedies now overflowing especially the scandinavian market. As a producer, I think it is utterly important to create films that can break some lined-up borders for filmmaking and still have true commercial potential. *NEXT DOOR* has both elements, as Pål's first feature *JUNK MAIL* also had. *JUNK MAIL* ended up being a theatrical success in Norway, was awarded in Cannes and ended up being sold for theatrical release in 40 countries worldwide. I find that one of the reasons behind this success was the universal aspect of the characters in the film , as well as a story that can play for audiences all over the world. These are two of the elements ranging Pål as one of the top norwegian screenwriters/directors.

*NEXT DOOR* has the same potential: it has a story that could happen anywhere in the world, and as audience we often want to be entertained by fear and thrill, as well as being sucked into the strong, and sometimes darker side of love and passion.

Last, but not least: screenwriter/director PAUL SCHRADER ( i.a.scripts "Taxi-driver" and "Raging Bull" for director Martin SCORSESE) was recently in Oslo . He really loved *NEXT DOOR* and told me that if I did not already have a director, he was interested in directing it himself. As a curiosity I hereby attach his very personal comment on the script.

Sincerely  
Turid Øversveen  
Producer

# **NEXT DOOR**

## ***Full Cast & Crew***

Directed by:

Pål Sletaune

Writing Credits:

Pål Sletaune

Cast: (in credits order)

Kristoffer Joner	...John
Cecilie Mosli	...Anne
Julia Schacht	...Kim
Anna Bache-Wiig	... Ingrid
Michael Nyqvist	...Åke
Øystein Martinsen	...Peter
Odd Arno Midtsjø	...Old man in elevator
Magne Kippersrud	...College

Produced by:

Turid Øversveen	Producer
Anna Anthony	Co-Producer
Ib Tardini	Co-Producer
Hans Bitch	Co-Producer
Ågot Skjeldal	Associate Producer
Hugo Føsker	Associate Producer
Håkon Øverås	Executive Producer
Marius Holst	Executive Producer
Lars Jönsson	Co-executive Producer
Peter Aalbæk Jensen	Co-executive Producer
Bent Rognlien	Line-producer

Original Music by:

Simon Boswell

Director of Cinematography :

John Andreas Andersen

Film Editing by:

Darek Hodor

Dramatic Adviser

Mette M. Bølstad

Casting by:

Ellen Michelsen

Production Design:

Jack van Domburg

Costume Design:

Ingvild Eiring

Makeup Department:

Veslemøy Fosse Ree

Makeup artist & special effects

Linda Sande

Makeup consulting

Dugg / Stine Monsen

Hair

Adam&Eva / Erik Thorsen

Hair

Production manager:

Bjørn Fjærestad

Art Department:

Karen Søndrol

Head of Decor

Andrè Henriksen

Decor

Olivier Marcoullier

Decor

Anne Karin Omsted

Decor

Ann Kristin Talleraas

Decor assistant

Dagny Kleiva

Models

Tom Gammelsrød	Studio Manager
Geir Opheim	Construction Manager
Rolf Kise	Carpenter
Pål Tohje	Carpenter
Kristian Lie	Carpenter
Bjørn Grønnerød	Carpenter
Andrè van Domburg	Assistant
Kari Skjolden	Property master
Øyvind Grev Møgster	Set- property master
Åsmund Stemme	Pops
Marius Haugan	Props assistant
Tom Haller	Animals - Pigeon

Sound department:

Christian Schaanning	Sound designer
Hans Møller	Production sound mix
Roy Fenstad	Dialog editing / Foley
Gunnar Meidell	Foley
Hugo Ekornes	Foley editing
Geoff Foster	Recording music and mix
Terry Davies	Conductor
The Czech Film Orchestra by Zdena Pelikanova	Orchestra

Stunts:

Jeppe Beck Laursen	Stunt coordinator
Trine Sneisen	Stunts

Other crew:

Erik Settemsdal	1. AD
Aslaug Konradsdottir	Script
Eirik Holst Aagård	First assistant camera
Kristoffer Aamot	Assistant camera

Anders Eide	Key grip
Nicholas Messel	Gaffer
Karsten Heidar	Electrician
Richard Berby	Electrician
Iver Bolstad	Electrician
Kim Berg	Electrician
Jon Arne Jørgensen	Electrician
Ad Stoop	Sound recording
Christian Siebenherz	Director assistant
Cecilie Windt	Wardrobe assistant
Mette Waaberg	Production secretary
Tone Belden Haver	Production assistant
Linn Landewall	Production assistant
Ingvild Evjemo	Production assistant
Karl Kristian Meidell	1.AD assistant
Andres Søndersrød	Catering
Christian Siebenherz	Editing Assistant
Linn Landewall	Research Postproduction
Andrzej Kiwala	Color timer
Ann-Karin Aasgård	Negative cutter
Thor Ole Aagedal	Negative cutter
Toxic	Graphics/Text
Agnete Bruun	Still photographer
Kjerand Nesvik	Still photographer
John Andreas Andersen	Still photographer
Kjerand Nesvik	Graphic design
Ziffer v/Cecilie Koller Tenenti	Account department
Grimsrud & Co	Auditor

**MUSIC:**

**"Slow Builder"**

performed by  
MADRUGADA  
Courtesy of EMI

**"Billy Bob Jackson"**

(Wibe/Kjølsrud)  
performed by  
ANIMAL ALPHA

**"Fluxus"**

performed by  
SALVATORE  
Courtesy of Racing Junior

**"Athmosphere"**

av  
Trond Bjerknæs  
Courtesy of Paradox

Distribusjon Norge

Columbia Tristar Nordisk Film AS

Markedssjef Tom Erik Kolåsæter

PR Siw Skjervold

Ulf Jahr

Internasjonalt salg

Nordisk Film International Sales

Klipp og produksjon av trailer, TV-spots

Nostromo

Gregers Dohn

Joakim Dahl

TEKNISKE LEVERANDØRER

Nordisk Film Post Production AS  
v/Espen Skjetne

Kodak Norge AS

Norsk Filmstudio AS

ScanCam AS

Mainstream

NEXT DOOR is part of the TLA Releasing label

