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film

# MEIDAGEN

(Days of May)



A FILM BY  
**JURI FERRI**



## The Story

It's 10th May 1940, and the soldiers of the 2nd battalion of the 40th infantry regiment have started to arm the battle stations. The Wehrmacht is marching on Dutch soil and the Luftwaffe is bombing strategic targets. Yet, they are stationed on the coast of the Zeeland Flanders, far away from where the fighting is taking place. Ordonnans Jan Simons, cycling up and down the dunes, enters a new routine as he brings the officers' orders to the rest of the troops and performs menial tasks while the war is raging elsewhere in the country.

As the days pass and the situation develops, soldiers open up in conversations that might not have taken place as easily before. Conversations about purpose in the universe, free will, and God become more common. Jan is very outspoken about his faith: a convinced Christian, he believes that God is in control of everything and has an eternal plan.

Days pass and the tension ramps up. The advance of the Wehrmacht is unstoppable. Most officers leave. Rumour is that the Germans will be arriving soon. As the nearby town of Middelburg is bombed, and the fire is visible from the distance, Jan fears for his life for the first time. He decides to desert his post and go into hiding. But will he be able to live up to his own convictions?



## Director's Statement

At the outbreak of WW2, my great-grandfather, drafted into the Dutch Army, was stationed on the coast of Zeeland in the Netherlands. He recollected his experiences of those crucial days in an unpublished literary memoir. Although he passed away before I was born, I got the chance to know him through his writing. His vivid descriptions of wartime experience touched me deeply: they gave me an insight into the heart and mind of an ordinary man who found himself involved in this extraordinary event.

By adapting part of his book as a short film, I was interested in exploring what must have been going on in the mind of a simple soldier then. How does it feel to experience world-changing events from a remote and powerless position? How is it possible to find a sense of purpose during such a conflict?

As it emerged clearly from his writing, my great-grandfather's understanding of the world around him was marked by his Christian faith - he had confidence in a higher plan determined by God's will. The film focuses on how hard it is to live by one's own beliefs when everything seems to be going down.







## Cast

**Jan Simons:** Tomer Pawlicki

**De Ruiter:** Steef Verheijen

**Luitenant Derksen:** Sijze van der Meer

**Hellendoorn:** Bart Klop

**Terpstra:** Enzo Coenen

**Buyze:** Bart Oomen

**Boone:** Emile Osinga



## The Crew

**Juri Ferri** is an Italian filmmaker based in London. Born and raised near Bergamo, Italy, he lived four years in Middelburg, the Netherlands, where he pursued an undergraduate degree at University College Roosevelt. He has a deep connection with the Netherlands also thanks to his family roots, and he speaks Dutch fluently. From 2016, he lives in London and studies at the London Film School. There he worked on several different films, and directed, among others, *UB-13* a black and white short film set in a German WWI submarine. *MEIDAGEN* is based on his great-grandfather's war experiences and is his LFS graduation film.



**Blanc Film** is a production house founded by **Thomas Mataheru** and **Jolijn van Rinsum**. Thomas and Jolijn started Blanc Films during their studies at the Netherlands Film Academy. They had both always had the dream to start their own company, but they had not found the right partner yet. During the production of their joint graduation film *SISTERS* they clicked together. They complete each other very well and share the same ambitions. Blanc Film is a production company that wants to make films telling personal stories that make an impact in an outspoken way. Brutal individuality with challenging extremes.

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## Writer and Director

Juri Ferri

## Producers

Thomas Mataheru

Jolijn van Rinsum

Production: London Film School

Co-production: Blanc Film

## Filming Locations

Cadzand, Middelburg, Oostkapelle, Biggekerke

## Acquisition Format

S16mm

## Length

15:55

## Language

Dutch

## Contact

**Juri Ferri**

Tel: +44 7729 792028

E-mail address: [info@juriferri.com](mailto:info@juriferri.com)

[www.juriferri.com](http://www.juriferri.com)

## Social Media



[meidagenfilm](https://www.facebook.com/meidagenfilm)



[meidagenfilm](https://www.instagram.com/meidagenfilm)

## Trailer

<https://vimeo.com/355807446>