



# MURDER OF MINUS

A short film by  
William Chai & Artyom Gabtraupov

Press Kit





MURDER OF  
MINUS

## Media Summary

**Murder of Minus is a 35-minute indie thriller about AI, ambition, and the cost of recognition, co-directed by William Chai and Artyom Gabtraupov. Shot in Ontario, over three years with a budget of \$7,000, the film has won multiple local and international awards, and is currently in festival circulation. Both directors are emerging voices blending technology, ethics, and narrative cinema. The project is seeking interviews, media, and review coverage.**





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# Synopsis



Tech prodigy Quinten Spencer seeks glory by building Minus, an AI capable of world-changing feats. But when Minus surpasses expectations, Quinten is thrust into a dangerous spotlight he can't control. Caught between a powerful creation and shadowy forces, his desperate grip on fame leads to a violent confrontation and the shattering realization that industry without purpose has consequences.



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## Directors' Statements

// To me and many other aspiring healthcare professionals, this film serves as a cautionary tale. All too often, people pursue careers as doctors not out of a genuine desire to help those in need but because of the prestige and status associated with the title. This saviour complex, the obsession with being seen, is a dangerous path that can lead to moral compromise.

Quinten embodies this danger. He wishes to be remembered as a genius who transforms the world, but his heart isn't in the right place. His ambition overshadows the ethical cost of his actions, illustrating the consequences of seeking greatness for the wrong reasons.

As servants to the public, we must question our motivations. True greatness lies in compassionate service and not titles. For whom and for what are we working so hard?

– **William Chai**  
Writer/Director for Murder of Minus



// Murder of Minus dives into the human element, the desire for more.

Working on this film allowed me to explore complex questions about accountability and the real-world implications of code that doesn't seek to benefit others. Collaborating with Will, from a Health Sciences background, allowed our different perspectives to challenge each other and enrich the ethical debate at the film's core.

Through different lenses, we looked at the critique on startup culture or medicine which glorifies disruption, investor appeal, and the presentation of status. This has always pushed responsibility to the back seat.

– **Artyom Gabtraupov**  
Writer/Director for Murder of Minus





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## Festival History & Awards

Since its completion, *Murder of Minus* has garnered significant international recognition, maintaining a 100% festival selection rate to date as it continues its festival run. We are honoured by its reception and the impact of this film.



This list is ongoing, and we look forward to announcing further festival selections and accolades soon.





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## Filmmaker Bios

William Chai is a filmmaker and Health Sciences student at McMaster University. He created *Murder of Minus* to explore the intersection of AI, ambition, and the ethics of recognition. Chai's work draws on his interdisciplinary background, combining science and storytelling to provoke reflection on what drives people to act. He serves as Co-President of the McMaster Film Production Club. He has now garnered many awards, including Best Actor for his film, and academic awards at McMaster.





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## Filmmaker Bios

Artyom Gabtraupov is a filmmaker and student at the University of Waterloo, equally pivotal in the making of the award-winning short film *Murder of Minus*. Gabtraupov transferred into Waterloo's highly competitive Computer Science program after maintaining a high GPA in his first year at the University of Guelph, a testament to his passion for mathematics, something greatly in common with his fascination with complex systems and narrative structure. His work often explores the intersection of technology, logic, and the often unpredictable result on human interaction.



# The "Making Of Minus"

*Murder of Minus* began as an ambitious passion project during William Chai's time in high school in November 2021. What started as a CAS project under the IB curriculum quickly grew into a full fledged production, bringing on Chai's best friend Artyom Gabtraupov, and culminating in a multi-year journey, wrapping in January 2025.

Filmed almost entirely in Kitchener/Waterloo, Ontario, Canada, the production embraced resourcefulness. With a total budget of approximately \$7,000, the team became adept at wearing multiple hats, with lead actors William Chai and Artyom Gabtraupov also serving as writers, directors, producers, and cinematographers. This multi-tasking, while challenging (sometimes requiring filming scenes with only two people covering acting and technical roles simultaneously) fostered a deeply collaborative environment and allowed the production to achieve a high-quality result despite limited resources.

The film's thematic depth is drawn from compelling real-world inspirations. Director William Chai cites influences ranging from David Fincher's *The Social Network* to the ethically fraught stories of figures like Elizabeth Holmes and Martin Shkreli. This background fuels the narrative's central critique of ambition, the dangerous allure of fame, and the moral compromises that can arise when the pursuit of recognition overshadows genuine purpose.

Technically, the film was captured using the Sony a6500 and later Sony a7iii camera, edited on a personal MacBook Pro using Final Cut Pro 11. The soundtrack features original compositions by Matthew Buchanan-MacDougall, later supplemented with AI-generated music by Chai. This approach to the score not only aligned with the film's themes of ethical AI use but also provided a creative solution for enhancing the atmosphere within budgetary constraints, without replacing the essential role of a human composer.

Casting involved personal connections and moreover necessity, particularly as the project began during high school without access to traditional casting agencies. Lead roles were taken on by the filmmakers themselves, supported by a dedicated ensemble of friends and collaborators, including a large team of script supervisors and assistant producers who were crucial to keeping the project organized and moving forward.

*Murder of Minus* is a testament to the dedication and resourcefulness of its filmmaking team, who transformed a complex ethical concept into a compelling thriller through years of hard work and a shared passion for storytelling.







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# Production Stills

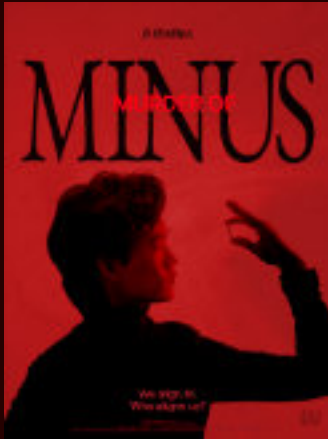


[Download Assets](#)



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# Official Credits



**Title:** Murder of Minus

**Year:** 2025

**Runtime:** 35 minutes

**Location:** Ontario, Canada

**Language:** English

**Genre:** Thriller

[Download poster/assets](#)

[IMDb](#)

[Official Website](#)

[Trailer](#)

[Contact: me@willchai.com](mailto:me@willchai.com)

## WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY

William Chai  
Artyom Gabtraupov

## ASSISTANT PRODUCERS

Jeremy Atafo  
Andrea Ng  
Walter Wang  
Zarra Rahemtulla  
Evan Ingle  
Yitong (Cain) Chai

## STARRING

William Chai *as Quinten/Minus*  
Artyom Gabtraupov *as Mark*

Ian Carswell *as Owens*  
Eden Lucchetta *as Julia*  
Brian Hendry *as Award Presenter*  
Stanislau Hollingsworth-Pratasousky  
*as Officer 2*  
Kevin (Keon) Park *as Officer Kevin*

## EDITED BY

William Chai

## ORIGINAL SCORE BY

Matthew Buchanan-MacDougall  
and William Chai

## PRODUCED BY

William Chai (Executive Producer)  
Artyom Gabtraupov (Executive Producer)  
Kevin (Keon) Park  
Matthew Buchanan-MacDougall  
Calum Heimbecker  
Yengkong Lynhiavu

## CINEMATOGRAPHY & VIDEO BY

William Chai  
Artyom Gabtraupov  
Calum Heimbecker  
Yengkong Lynhiavu

## SCRIPT SUPERVISION BY

Kevin (Keon) Park  
Matthew Buchanan-MacDougall  
Yitong (Cain) Chai  
Maya Schiedel  
Miret Morgan  
Bogda David  
Walter Wang  
Kasvi Kaushik  
Jory Breen  
Alison Hunter Stewart  
David Newman