

## Instagram comes back again with Boomerang

Instagram's Boomerang adds new life to posts

by Michael Blickstein

Instagram is an app that just about every student uses every day, whether it's viewing friends' photos, posting something from your weekend, or looking at professional posters to see what's trendy.

On Oct. 22, Instagram released an app called Boomerang to add a small animation effect to photos. Each post made by Boomerang is a four second video that plays backwards and forwards to create the implied "boomerang" effect.

Using the app is simple. You open the app, take a short video, and once it's finished, you can review and post it to either Instagram, Facebook or save it to your device. It's quick and simple and nothing that anyone should be making a big deal out of.

Boomerang is the third of Instagram's external app offerings. Instagram released Hyperlapse in August 2014 and Layout, an app that lets you build collages for Instagram, in March 2015.

Just like the other two apps, the function is simple and meant to enhance your profile.

Beyond the banner ad during release week, Instagram hasn't been ostentatious about the app's release. There's no watermark on the bottom or anything that denotes that the product was made with Boomerang, which I really like because it makes the product look pure.

Boomerang has just one problem: it is essentially the same thing as Phhphoto, another app that makes moving photos, except it posts to its own platform with the option to save or post to Instagram.



Boomerang is listed on both the App Store and Google Play Store | Instagram

Boomerang clearly copies Phhphoto's style and as an extension of Instagram, clearly gives them an edge over Phhphoto. Phhphoto users now have a legitimate reason to stop using the smaller and less popular platform and use Boomerang instead.

This isn't the first time Instagram has added features that take functionality from other platforms. In June 2013, Instagram added video support to compete with Vine, which launched in January 2013, and Snapchat, which added video in December of 2012.

Despite these additions being almost blatant stealing, they do give Instagram an edge over most other social media. These features help users express themselves in more ways and make their whole user experience much more seamless and enjoyable. Boomerang is no exception to this trend.

What you can get out of Boomerang is simple. Some people think you can't do a whole lot with four seconds, but it can be really fun to use.

One of my favorite videos was a simple shot from a high building, where a seagull just happened to be flying in the frame.

With Boomerang, you see the bird flying back and forth. It's nothing too special, but the effect added more life to the post.

Boomerang is a lot of fun to use and a great addition to Instagram's feature set. It's simple to use, simple to apply, and looks beautiful.

Boomerang highlights the best developments of Instagram's interface. It's only been out for half a month at the time of publishing, but I can see people making more interesting posts with it.

## Best Dressed Trevs



## Too much gore killing off "American Horror Story" audience

"AHS" takes on a darker side in its new season, "Hotel."

by Maya Kowitz  
and Joey McAtamney

The series, "American Horror Story" has gotten a lot of hype from horror fanatics, providing a glimpse into a series of equally petrifying and disturbing worlds.

This season, "American Horror Story Hotel" has taken an odd yet far more ominous route.

In previous seasons of the widely popular show, fans loved "AHS" because of its clever focus on just slightly terrifying its viewers.

Junior Nora Day claimed her personal ratings for the show have gone down incredibly due to some of the raw scenes this season.

"Honestly, this season is disgusting. The episodes are just too much for me. The other seasons gave just enough of a 'horror movie' vibe that I could watch before bed, but this season has become so gory and disturbing that I can't even stomach most of the scenes," Day said.

Not only has this season disappointed teenage girls at New Trier, but it seems as though the wider audience has been in agreement. This season of "AHS" has received low ratings, including critics at 55%, and



Kathy Bates plays a receptionist at "Hotel Cortez" in season 5 of "American Horror Story" | "AHS" Website

the public at 66%, possibly concluding that it's not just teens who believe "AHS" has crossed boundaries.

The creator of the show, Ryan Murphy, has always liked to disturb people in a variety of ways. With each season as its own self-contained story, he created uniquely unsettling and horrifying environments, with his goal seeming to leave his viewers feeling off-balance by the end of each episode.

I feel that this season has become so graphic and horrifying that it has lost all the aspects of why "AHS" was such a brilliant 'taste of horror.'

This season, "Hotel" poses

an unusual "AHS" framework, in which the story line is based on chilling events and unsolved murder mysteries, which have occurred in a real Los Angeles hotel, The Cecil Hotel. Sounds pretty close to "Hotel Cortez," which is the fictional name "AHS" has given its prime spot of horror this season.

I was originally intrigued to hear that "AHS" was exploring a more realistic world and murders which have actually taken place. Little did I know that infamous serial killers such as John Wayne Gacy and Jeffrey Dahmer would make equally unsettling and sinister appearances.

programs that are advertised to include these explicitly violent scenes.

In previous seasons of "AHS," I have enjoyed the minor psychological thrill and the horror-film style which it portrays. "Hotel" is a whole new genre of images of torture and death, which are brutal and intense, lingering in my mind long after an episode ends.

"I honestly have always loved the plot of 'American Horror Story,' but if you can't stomach guts, gore, or immensely disturbing situations, then this season isn't for you," junior Julia Bosco said.

Don't get me wrong, the plot of this season is amazing and unlike anything "AHS" has ever put on before, but it's unsatisfying to see Evan Peters portrayed as a bloodthirsty sicko, when he has been the heartthrob of all seasons prior.

This season is not considered over the top because Evan Peters is in a more disturbing role, but because Ryan Murphy has managed to take this show to levels of disturbance and fear that haven't been explored yet.

"American Horror Story" has always been known for showcasing actions and ideas considered too risqué or explicitly sexual for common television, but you may just have to decide for yourself if the limits have been reached in the new season. Be warned: It's not for the squeamish or faint of heart.

Some emotionally terrifying images that this season explores include graphic scenes of repulsive forms of murder, seemingly never-ending moments of rape and torture, and the perplexing visualization of drug, alcohol, and sex addictions among the characters.

It's hard to watch, and I can no longer have Wednesday Sushi Night, due to the show's impressive ability to trigger one's gag reflex.

I feel that the appeal of "American Horror Story" has died down this season. If I wanted to be horrified or disturbed to these levels, I would watch "Saw" or "Dexter."