

A Film About Sexual (Dis)orientation

FILMMAKERS

Sonja Schenk – Director/ Producer

Alexandra Komisaruk – Screenwriter / Producer

FILM SYNOPSIS

Olivia is a frustrated 27-year-old Gender Studies graduate student, angry at the porn-centric culture, who believes she's an asexual. While dating and courtship rituals fascinate her in her studies, in real life she has yet to experience sex, let alone mutual attraction.

Spurred by her academic advisor's suggestion she "live a little", Olivia accepts her friend Felisha's offer to try sex with her own boyfriend, Julian. And, with the help of a lesbian camerawoman and an encouraging roommate, Olivia sets out to film her first sexual encounter. But in this comedy of sexual disorientation, the results of "The Olivia Experiment" are completely unexpected.

FILMMAKER'S COMMENT

SONJA SCHENK: If someone had told me, when I decided to make films as a teenager, that my first feature film would be a comedy, I would have said, "You're out of your mind." I had been a dark-minded child, a "Wednesday," if you will. I spent my idyllic childhood days in the bright suburbs of southern California obsessing about death, destruction and my eventual relocation to Europe.

Luckily I grew out of this. I'm glad the first feature I directed was a comedy.

Olivia struggles with understanding her own place in the world at the most basic level: she does not know her own sexual orientation. At age 27, she is late to confront these issues. And although that is not something that most of us can relate to, it doesn't matter. Because at the heart of Olivia's "problem" is an experience in life that we all can relate to: the transition from a safe, protected child to an adult who must face the challenges of life, both good and bad.

To me, "The Olivia Experiment" is not about sex. It's about accepting your fears, understanding that life comes with risks, and stepping into the void. In short, it's a film about courage. True courage that is, not just a brash attempt to control but the courage to be yourself and accept yourself and the world around you. That may not sound very funny, but at the true heart of comedy is pain. And hopefully "The Olivia Experiment" is painfully funny.

QUOTES ON SEX IN THE PORN-CENTRIC CULTURE

"The Bleaker Sex," NY Times op-ed, Frank Bruni, April 2012

[There is] "a growing chorus of laments over what's happening on the sexual frontier, a state of befuddlement reflective in part of post-feminist power dynamics and in part of our digital culture and virtual fixations."

"People can be so available in a superficial sense that they're inaccessible in a deeper one."

"How Porn is Affecting the Libido of the American Male" - New York Magazine - from the series "Drowning in Porn," 2012

"For a lot of guys, switching gears from porn's fireworks and whiz-bangs to the comparatively mundane calm of ordinary sex is like leaving halfway through an Imax 3-D movie to check out a flipbook."

"...Men, oversaturated by porn, secretly hunger for the variety that porn offers. Women, noticing a decline in their partners' libidos, try to reenact the kinds of scenes that men watch on their computer screens. Men, as a result, get really freaked out. They don't want their real women and their fantasy women to inhabit the same body."

"US Teens and Young Adults Having Less Sex, According to Study"
[WFAA.com](#); numerous news sources

"Fewer teens and young adults are having sex, a government survey shows, and theories abound for why they're doing it less..... The findings are sure to surprise some parents who see skin and lust in the media and worry that sex is rampant."

Focus group quotes for **THE OLIVIA EXPERIMENT** (Group of adults, both genders, aged 22-27)

"Sex and the "journey" that one goes through their first time is something we all can relate to and this film told the tale through a witty and comedic lens while still maintaining the integrity of Olivia's real life emotions."

"My favorite part was definitely the story and the accessibility of Olivia's character. There is a little bit of the awkward Olivia in each of us. Additionally I think the film shed light on the expectations and pressures of sex on adolescents in our current day society."

"I could relate 100% to Olivia as an academic who would rather study life than live it. It is a hard lesson to learn to let go of the "why" and "how" of life and instead give in to impulses and let go."

"I liked that it explored issues surrounding asexuality, specifically, and women's sexuality in general. I also thought it was humorous in a clever and tasteful way."

"My favorite part was the excerpts from interviews that Olivia did – they were very genuine, quirky, relatable and interesting."

"It was very honest and real. I think that everyone can relate to it."

DIRECTOR'S BIO

SONJA SCHENK, director of *The Olivia Experiment*, divides her time between film-making and a serious career as an artist. She started out as a video artist and exhibited early films at several galleries across the country and also at the AFI Festival. Seeking to learn the craft of traditional filmmaking, she attended the USC School of Cinematic Arts where she received an MFA. Since then, she has worked as an editor on several feature films (*Britney Baby One More Time*; *Glee Live 3D*), documentaries (HBO, BBC, Canal+) and as a high-level producer on popular television shows such as *The Bachelor*, *The Bachelorette*, *High School Reunion* and others. She is also the co-author of [The Digital Filmmaking Handbook](#). She continues devote time to fine art, especially painting, and currently has works on exhibit

at the Vincent Price contemporary art museum in Los Angeles. *The Olivia Experiment* is her first feature film as a director.

PRODUCER / SCREENWRITER

ALEXANDRA KOMISARUK, screenwriter / producer of *The Olivia Experiment*, is a four-time Emmy nominee for editing of *The Academy Awards*. Screenwriting credits includes Lifetime's highly-rated movie *Living with the Enemy*, and comedies for ABC and Showtime. She is presently co-producing and editing the upcoming feature documentary *By the Light of a Million Fires*. She has edited numerous awards shows, and was also part of an Emmy-nominated team as visual effects editor on *Stephen King's Storm of the Century*. Other feature editing includes documentaries *Dirt! The Movie* (Sundance), *I.O.U.S.A.* (Sundance), and *Maybe Baby* (South by Southwest), as well as numerous awards shows and unscripted TV programs. She holds an MFA in film production from USC's School of Cinematic Arts.

CHARACTERS

Olivia Howell – A 27-year-old gender studies graduate student, she is convinced she is an asexual until she gets an unusual offer and decides to give sex a try.

Felisha – An undergraduate and Olivia's friend, she offers Olivia the use of her boyfriend for a weekend so Olivia can clear up some of her issues with sex.

Julian – The “loaner” boyfriend, he is available to help, and to offer some social lubricants.

Ray Dingman – A mysterious mathematician, he appears with a top-secret disk, and reappears when least expected.

James Green – Olivia's newly-out gay roommate, he helps Olivia with some friendly and realistic advice.

CJ – Olivia's friend and the lesbian camerawoman who films the weekend's experiment, and the only other person Olivia has previously made out with.

Sherri Finch – Olivia's mom, she likes excitement and creates drama wherever she goes.

Dr. Fuchs – Olivia's advisor, he pushes her to engage in more personal work, which gives her the idea to film her weekend experiment.

CAST

SKYE NOEL (Olivia Howell) – In a remarkable feature lead debut, Skye portrays Olivia with wit, sensitivity and intelligence. Her background includes an M.F.A. in Advanced theater Training at Harvard University. Prior to that she trained at American Conservatory Theater in San Francisco and at Florida Southern College, where she received her B.A. in Theater Performance. Skye can be seen in numerous commercials including True Blood, Walgreen's, UPS, Scrabble, Bedsider.org, and Cox Communications, to name a few. She has appeared in numerous theatrical performances across the country.

JEN LILLEY (Felisha) – Virginia native Jen Lilley is the newest series regular on NBC's *Days of Our Lives*. Jen previously starred as Maxie Jones on *General Hospital*. She was

also in Weinstein's critically acclaimed feature film, *The Artist*, winner of 5 Academy Awards, including Best Picture. She's also known for her comedic skills, and starred on MTV's improvised comedy series, *Disaster Date*. Other recent projects include the films *The Book of Esther*, *Turnaround Jake*, *Revelation Road*, *The Back-up Bride*, and *One Small Hitch*, as well as television appearances on *The Crazy Ones*, *Castle*, *Two and a Half Men*, *Rules of Engagement*, *Criminal Minds*, and *iCarly*.

Born in Roanoke, Virginia, Jen didn't start acting until college (University of VA) when she played the lead in an indie film called *The Loss of Life*. In addition to acting, she is also a talented singer and comedian, performing in the Upright Citizens Brigade.

BRETT BAUMAYR (Julian) - *The Olivia Experiment* is Brett's feature-length debut. An avid surfer from San Diego, Brett made his first splash in Hollywood with an experimental short, *BURN*, directed by Patrick Jiely. He credits this path to the amazing support of his wife and finds inspiration from his 11-month-old son.

KYLE MORE (Ray Dingman) - Kyle was raised in Tennessee and Kentucky but spent most of his acting career in Chicago where he trained at Second City and The Chicago College of Performing Arts. After joining SAG in Chicago, Kyle took the leap out to LA and quickly began booking roles on shows such as *How I Met Your Mother*, *Nick Swardson's Pretend Time*, *Parenthood*, and more. He had a great time working with the cast and crew of *The Olivia Experiment* and can't wait to see it.

MICHELYNNE MCGUIRE (CJ) - The lovely, talented and intriguing Michelynne came to L.A. from Minnesota and was the Winner of The WB's reality series *The Starlet*, a competition to find a hot up-and-coming actress. Michelynne beat out a cast of hopefuls and was selected as the best actress of the lot by a panel that included former starlets Faye Dunaway and Vivica A. Fox. With her victory, Michelynne earned a role on *One Tree Hill* to help launch her acting career.

DAN GORDON (James Greene) - Dan plays Olivia's gay and grounded roommate. His past credits include *Scandal* (ABC); *10 Dates From Hell* (TBS); *North Palm Wrestling* (MTV); *Ratchet & Clank: A Crack in Time* (PS3 videogame). Dan's next project will be voicing and puppeteering Chris the Rabbit in a new comedy series premiering online. He performs improv at Upright Citizens Brigade Theater in Hollywood. Dan grew up in the suburbs of Philadelphia and graduated from Emerson College. He is an actor, comedian, and voiceover artist living in Los Angeles.

BARBARA LEE BRAGG (Sherri Finch) - Barbara is a Wyoming Native who escaped to NYC. A graduate of Yale Drama School, she moved to Los Angeles and booked TV, Film and Commercials. She writes and adapts her father and grandfather's western novels. She teaches Voice and Speech at NYFA/L and is thrilled to be part of this talented cast and crew. Working with Alex and Sonja was a labor of love and joy. She loved being Olivia's Mom!

REY GOYOS (Arturo) - Born and raised in Miami, FL, Rey Goyos' passion for acting began at an early age. Since his move to Los Angeles, Rey has landed several feature film supporting roles, including, *The Closer* producer, Paul Orehovec's directorial debut. Rey has worked with countless acclaimed directors including Clint Eastwood (*J Edgar*) and Christopher Nolan (*Dark Knight Rises*). Most recently, Rey played a flamboyant character in director Sonja Schenk's *The Olivia Experiment*, and also has been working locally as a voiceover actor (*Major Crimes*).

HARVEY J. ALPERIN (Dr. Fuchs) has been acting for almost 50 years. His resume includes credits from the screen - both large and small, stage, commercials, internet, live events, and much more. He has appeared on numerous television series, including "Parks and Recreation", "Entourage", "Monk", "ER", "The Young and the Restless", "Ally McBeal", and "Judging Amy." As for film, his career spans an eclectic mix from "Cocktail" through "Legion of the Dead" and "Marilyn Hotchkiss Ballroom Dancing and Charm School." Currently, he can be seen playing the Doctor in the Academy Award winning best picture of 2011, "The Artist."

ROBERT DiTILLIO (Dan) began acting in New York City where he appeared in off-off Broadway plays, independent films, soap operas and rap music videos. In Hollywood, TV guest appearances include *Babylon 5*, *Sliders*, *Profiler*, *General Hospital* and *NYPD Blue* among others. He was a prizewinner on *America's Funniest People* for a sketch that he co-wrote. Robert's stage work in LA includes the critically acclaimed hit, *Crappie Talk*, and performing improv at LA Connection Comedy Theater and at The Comedy Store with his own improv group *Are You Talkin' Ta Me?* Robert's other film roles include Demetrius in a punk rock/goth version of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, the Sci-Fi Channel original movie *Dragon Fighter* with Dean Cain, *The Straun House* with Karen Black, and the remake *Night of the Living Dead 3D*. Robert's web series work includes a starring role in *The Rose Chronicles* for which he was nominated as Best Actor in a Comedy Web Series by the StayTunedTV.Net Awards in 2010. He can also be seen guest-starring on the web in *Martini Mom & Devil Spawn*, *Bruce Goes Hollywood*, *Mountain Man* and *Spaceships In Your Dessert*.

CREW

WILLIAM MACCOLLUM (Cinematographer) is an award-winning cinematographer who has been shooting documentary, shorts, music videos and feature films for the past 20 years. His work has been broadcast on MTV, NBC, ABC, DISNEY and shown at the Sundance, Chicago International, LA International, and La Carno International film festivals. In his spare time, he enjoys wearing a kilt when the occasion calls for it.

DONALD HEWITT (Editor) - Don is an award-winning screenwriter who has also worked in editorial on diverse projects such as the skateboard documentary *Signal Hill Speed Run* and the *Glee 3-D Concert* film. Don's screenwriting credits include the Oscar-winning animated film *Spirited Away* and Oscar-nominated *Howl's Moving Castle*. He has completed projects at Pixar, Miramax, Working Title, Disney, New Line, Fox Animation, and ABC Family.

JILLIAN MOUL (Editor) - Jillian is a Primetime Emmy Award nominee who has been editing for over a decade. Her work includes: *Fame High*, a feature documentary directed by Oscar-nominated Scott Hamilton Kennedy; Paramount Pictures feature documentary *Justin Bieber: Never Say Never*, directed by Jon M. Chu; Oscar short-listed feature documentary *On Native Soil*; the HBO doc series *Brave New Voices*; Morgan Spurlock's doc series *30 Days*; and The Sundance Channel doc series *Big Ideas for a Small Planet*, which won the Environmental Media Award in the documentary category.

ASHLEY IRWIN (COMPOSER) – Ashley is an Emmy award-winner for his work on the 1992 ACADEMY AWARDS presentation and won again in 1998 and 2003. Among his credits are conducting the orchestral and choral orchestrations of Clint Eastwood's original score for *Hereafter* and *J. Edgar*, as well as the 2010 Winter Olympics and Paul Mazursky's new stage musical comedy *Moon Over Parador*.

FACTS

Country – USA

Duration – 90 minutes

Shooting Format – Canon 5D

QUOTES

Olivia: Intercourse right now would completely derail my emerging asexuality.

Felisha: I think it really might clear up some of that stuff for you.

Olivia: A skirt can help with the transition to superficial object of male desire, but the essence of my being is basically untouchable. And I'm aware of that.

Olivia: What's important for a person to know about sex?

Ray: That it can kill you.

Ray: Prepare to die, pissant!

END CREDITS

Directed by Sonja Schenk

Written by S. Alexandra Komisaruk

Cast:

Ace #1....

Mia Antonelli

Ace #2...

Alex Saxon

Aces Group Leader....

Marlene Okner

Olivia Howell...

Skye Noel

Female professor...

Krista Eulberg

Male professor...

Sylvain Latendresse

Male Student...

Karl Josef Co

Female Student....

Hanny Tjan

Felisha....

Jen Lilley

Dr. Fuchs...

Harvey Alperin

Julian...

Brett Alexander

Ray Dingman...

Kyle More

James Green...

Dan Gordon

Arturo...

Reyniel A. Goyos

CJ...

Michelynne MacGuire

Sherri Finch...

Barbara Bragg

Julian's friend

Steve Esquivel

Dan...

Robert DiTillio

Experiment Subjects:

Judith ...

Hannah Sussman

Corey ...
Jeff ...
Molly ...
Gregory ...
Robert...
Clark...
Trevor...
Simon...
Caroline....
Marnie...
Edwina...
Mandy...
Jon...
Jurgen....
Zara ...
Jenna,...

Melissa Strom
Will Boddington
Amanda Jones
Kevin Barrett
Ben Caron
Bryce Durfee
Daniel Romer
Billy Magnussen
Adrienne Rusk
Mhairi Morrison
Christina L Mason
Elizabeth Ann Carder
Bart Voitila
Leandro Sorice
Sarah Dubrovsky
Sandra McCurdy

Aces:

Mikaela Bennett
Damien Burke
Stephen Espinoza
Conrad Gifford
Fanny Veliz

Students:

Levi Dertner
Toru Fujisaki
Cornelia Genee
Hiroyuki Haga
Sarana Mehra
Stephen Nigro
Shirley Palomino
Seth Taft

Bus Patrons:

Jason Hampton
Alex Komisaruk
Stephen Nigro

Voice of Death Squad March.... Matthew Moul
Dancing Man.... William MacCollum

Produced by S. Alexandra Komisaruk and Sonja Schenk

Cinematographer...
Camera Operator...
Camera Operator...
1st Assistant Camera:

William MacCollum
William MacCollum
Paquita Parks
Ryo Saitoh

2nd Assistant Camera: Hiroyuki Haga
Martin Gradek
Bryan Carberry

Gaffer: Fady Hadid
Grip: Levi Kaminkowitz

Costume Design... Sarana Mehra

Art department... Anna M. Bethe

Makeup Hanny Tjan
Frances Ferris
Shane Bell
Alison Bryan

Casting by Lisa Pantone and Cambria Hankin
Special thanks – Tracy Curtis

Production Sound:

Rob Ellenberg
Matthew Schwartz
Eugene Thompson
Nicole Zweiren
Michael A Colton

First Assistant Director Jason Hampton
Production Assistants: Stephen Nigro
Giovanni Peña

Editors:

Donald H Hewitt
Jillian Moul
Sonja Schenk

Assistant Editors:

Sean Galera
Morgan Gross
Larissa James
Terry Dawson

Title design... Foreing Film Graphics
Animation.... Greg Schenk

Supervising sound editor... Robert Jackson
Mixer.... Gabe Serrano

Composer... Ashley Irwin
Music supervisor... Stephanie Jacobson
Music consultant... Robert Show

"PATTERNS"

PERFORMED BY ATLANTIC PACIFIC

WRITTEN BY JOHN HERGUTH, GARRETT KHLAN & IAN LOVE

COURTESY OF ATLANTIC PACIFIC

"BOOM BOOM"

PERFORMED BY THE GRANNY SMITHS

WRITTEN BY MORGAN COOK

COURTESY OF THE GRANNY SMITHS

"C.O.C.O"

PERFORMED BY C.O.C.O

WRITTEN BY CHRISTOPHER SUTTON & OLIVIA NESS

COURTESY OF K RECORDS

"LILY"

PERFORMED BY THE DODOS

WRITTEN BY LOGAN KROEBER & MERIC LONG

COURTESY OF THE DODOS

Our sincere thanks to:

Krista Eulberg
Stephen Esquivel
Melissa Roth
Tracy Fullerton
Ben Long
Regina Saisi
Susan Cooper
Douglas Wellman
Tom Provost
Mark Stolaroff
Susan Brashear

Our Sincere Thanks To (CONT.):

Dawn Dagucon
Heather Cantrell
Greg Schenk
Dawn Chenette
Alan Renshaw
Judith Weston
Christopher Plourde
Peter Broderick
Jeff Becko
Marti Bercaw
Rayna Saslove
Amy Sommer

Jed Donahoe
Annie Seaton
Jacqui Barcos
Carolina Barcos
Eugene Rosow
Nurit Avesar
Betzi Richardson
Mary Hawes
Julia Grove
Michael Shoob
Michael Kowalksi
Mike Leshay
David Roberson
Sebastian Twardosz
Glenn Reynolds
Dawn Dagucon

Extra special thanks to Mark DiStefano

Equipment provided by Alpha Worldwide Productions and On The Mark Media

Special thanks to the Screen Actors Guild

The Olivia Experiment
A Mansfield Films Production