



NEW RELEASES

How to Have Sex

How to Have Sex

Directed by: Molly Manning Walker
©: Balloon Heaven, Channel Four Television Corporation, the British Film Institute
Production Companies: Wild Swim Films, Heretic
In co-production with: Umedia
Presented by: Film4, BFI
In association with: MK2 Films, Head Gear Films, Metrol Technology
International Sales by: MK2
Executive Producers: Farhana Bhula, Ben Coren, Kristin Irving, Giorgos Karnavas, Nathanaël Karmitz, Fionnuala Jamison, Phil Hunt, Compton Ross
Produced by: Emily Leo, Ivana MacKinnon, Konstantinos Kontovrakis
Line Producers: Marie-Elena Dyche, Kostas Sfakianakis
Production Manager: Takis Papadopoulos
Production Co-ordinator: Aspa Thrasivoulou
UK Production Coordinators: Amelia Deering, Tidza Karup
Chief Financial Controller: Richard Juneman
Production Accountant: Paul Hills
Supervising Location Manager: Pavlos Svoronos
Post-production Supervisor: Verity Wislocki, René Taylor
1st Assistant Director: Denia Safari
Script Supervisor: Anna Patrikiou
Casting Director: Isabella Odoffin
Casting Director (Greece): Romanos Argyropoulos-Ioannou
Casting Associate: Joanna Sturrock
Written by: Molly Manning Walker
Director of Photography: Nicolas Canniccioni
Gaffer: Babis Kalterimitzis
Key Grip: Sotiris Ioannidis
Stills Photographer: Nikos Nikolopoulos
Visual Effects by: Absolute
Editor: Fin Oates
Additional Editing: Nina Annan
Edit Consultant: Mick Audsley
Production Designer: Luke Moran-Morris
Supervising Art Director: Lisa Tsouloupa
Set Decorator: Giorgos Mavredakis
Graphic Designer: Panagiotis Zachoulitis
Props Buyer: Elias Dakovanos
Prop Master: Yiannis Milonas
Costume Designer: George Buxton
Costume Supervisor: Nancy Kane
Hair and Make-up Designer: Natasha Lawes
Hair & Make-up Artists: Sophia Voulala, Dominique Desveaux, Marta Wozniak, Leanne Burrows
Main & End Titles Design: Dylan Kendle
Title Design: Elliot Shields
Colour and Finish by: Company 3
Composer: James Jacob
Music Supervisor: Catherine Grieves
Music Consultant: James Jacob
Sound Designer: Steve Fanagan
Sound Recordist: Nikos Konstantinou
Supervising Dialogue & ADR Editor: Levi Mercurio
Stunt Co-ordinator: Sotiris Kraniotis
Dialect Coach: Mary Howland
Cast:
Mia McKenna-Bruce (*Tara*)
Lara Peake (*Skye*)
Samuel Bottomley (*Paddy*)
Shaun Thomas (*Badger*)
Enva Lewis (*Ern*)
Laura Ambler (*Paige*)
Anna Antoniadou (*airport announcer*)
Eleni Sachini (*hotel receptionist*)

Tara is 16 and heading to the Cretan coastal town of Malia with her best friends Skye and Em. They've finished their exams and are all set for a rites-of-passage holiday full of boozing, clubbing and hooking up. For Tara, the trip holds extra importance – she is desperate to lose her virginity before they head home. Staying in the apartment across from the girls is a group of lads. Amongst them, Tara identifies a couple of potential candidates... Manning Walker accurately captures the giddy freedom of a coming-of-age summer, and a very distinct British youth culture. However, among the buzz and nostalgia, she unpacks some the joys and horrors of the teenage-girl experience. Mia McKenna-Bruce (*The Dumping Ground*), is sensational as Tara, her facial expressions telling us all as Tara's holiday becomes formative, but not in the way she wished for.

Kimberley Sheehan, Film and Events Programmer

Origins and development of 'How to Have Sex'

How To Have Sex took Molly Manning Walker by surprise. After training as a DOP at the National Film and Television school, going on to lens work across TV and commercials including the TV mini-series 2021's *Mood* and the 2023 World Cinematic Grand Jury Prize winner at Sundance, *Scrapper*, Walker knew it was time to take on her feature debut.

After her first short film *Good Thanks, You?* was selected to play in the 2020 Critics' Week sidebar in Cannes, Film4 offered the filmmaker the chance to write a treatment for consideration.

Inspiration came to Walker at a wedding, surrounded by school friends and reminiscing about a party holiday at a Mediterranean resort: a rite-of-passage vacation British teenagers yearn for, a spiritual sibling to a spring break, albeit – deliberately – tackier, sweatier, grimmer, and, if possible, even more sexually uninhibited. Walker thought she had imagined some of the events of that one girls trip – 'I was talking about a blow job that had happened on stage at a club, half convinced I must have imagined it, but everyone remembered it the same way.'

This gave Walker the beating heart she needed to write the story. 'I hadn't realised how much sexual influence it had had on my life, but also on everyone I spoke to at that wedding,' Walker says, these party holidays 'are worlds built around sexual pressure, which is such a strange thing.'

What started as a treatment snowballed into 58 pages – once Walker cracked open those memories, the story of these girls, girls we've either been or known, just flowed. All the writer and director had to do was follow its path. Film4 agreed. Walker used photos as her compass, recalling the world of garish resorts – like Malia, Magaluf, Ibiza – and über-cheap nightclubs bunched together on one single road akin to an adult Disneyland and dubbed the 'strip'.

Ivana MacKinnon and Emily Leo from Wild Swim joined Walker on *How To Have Sex* in the development stages, absorbed by the energy of her writing and the psychic proximity to these young girls. 'Molly had created a deceptively simple world and a story, but which touched on huge, very complex questions that can be difficult to speak about.'

Anna Antoniadis (*female club rep*)
Elliot Warren (*male club rep*)
Guy Lewis (*Tom from London*)
Eilidh Loan (*Fi*)
Finlay Vane Last (*Josh*)
Eric Manaka, Matilda Rowe,
Elizabeth Matthews (*Fi's friends*)
Daisy Jelley (*Gemma*)
Konstandina Rousohatzaki (*Leah*)
voice of Tara's mum (*Brady, Olivia*)
UK/Greece/Belgium/France 2023
98 mins
Digital

A MUBI release

IN PERSON & PREVIEWS

23 Seconds to Eternity + BFI DVD & Blu-ray launch + Q&A with director Bill Butt

Mon 6 Nov 18:10

Preview: The Eternal Daughter + Q&A with writer-director Joanna Hogg and actor Tilda Swinton
Fri 10 Nov 19:00

Exhibition: The Red Shoes: Beyond the Mirror
From Fri 10 Nov to Sun 7 Jan

Matthew Bourne's production of The Red Shoes

+ Q&A with Matthew Bourne and Ashley Shaw
Sat 11 Nov 15:00

Preview: Is There Anybody Out There? + Q&A
with director Ella Glendining, hosted by Jack Thorne

Sat 11 Nov 17:45

Preview: The Red Shoes

Sun 12 Nov 15:30

Preview: Typist Artist Pirate King + Q&A with director Carol Morley, cast Monica Dolan, Gina McKee and Kieran Bew, producer Cairo Cannon, composer Carly Paradis and editor Alex Mackie

Mon 13 Nov 17:55

Journey to Italy Viaggio in Italia + extended introduction by Jeremy Cooper and Ben Rivers
Mon 13 Nov 20:40

Joanna Hogg in Conversation

Wed 15 Nov 18:30

Preview: Rustin + Q&A with director George C. Wolfe. Hosted by David Olusoga

Tue 21 Nov 18:15

Talk: The Creative Worlds of Powell + Pressburger

Sat 25 Nov 12:00-17:00

TV Preview: Vigil + Q&A with cast Suranne Jones, Romola Garai, Dougray Scott and writer Tom Edge

Mon 27 Nov 18:15

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SIGHT AND SOUND

How To Have Sex was accepted into the Cannes Next Step 7th Session workshop, run by Semaine de la Critique, which is when the penny dropped: thanks to Cannes, and the symbolic timeline between her successful short film and upcoming feature, Molly Manning Walker knew her film was finally going to get made.

Good Thanks, You? charts the aftermath of a rape, and gave Walker the tools to explore what happens next – how the conversation about sexual assault is often choked by silence, with consent misunderstood and manipulated at all ages. 'People are suffocated by the subject,' Walker says. 'I've been affected directly by this, and I feel passionate about it – I didn't feel I was finished talking about it.'

Walker hoped that the conversation and attitudes might have evolved in the years since her girls' holidays, but the filmmaker had to know whether that hope bore out. The director and her team conducted focus groups across the UK, focusing on key cities including Manchester, Nottingham and London to map how young people feel about sex today.

The young people Walker and her team spoke to were separated into male and female groups and invited to read parts of the script for *How To Have Sex* and share feedback. 'They would read the first assault scene and be like, "Oh, this isn't assault", and at one point a girl even said, "Girls need to take responsibility, and not get so drunk." So at the end, we were even more sure this was an important film to make,' says Walker.

Leo was shocked when a number of the girls and boys started talking about their own assaults, 'sometimes for the first time, because there was a safe space in which to do so – and because they could see it was a shared experience.' Making the film became about capturing the 'subtlety of the social pressures around sex', admitting ourselves 'a product of that environment' and finding a path forward with new solutions for the next generation to feel less alone.

Production notes

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