



HOW TO TALK TO GIRLS AT PARTIES

PRODUCTION NOTES

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SHORT SYNOPSIS

From the visionary minds of writer Neil Gaiman and director John Cameron Mitchell comes a story of the birth of punk, the exuberance of first love, and the universe's greatest mystery of all: HOW TO TALK TO GIRLS AT PARTIES.

LONG SYNOPSIS

It's London (well Croydon to be exact....), 1977 and our teenage hero Henry - known as Enn (Tony Award winner Alex Sharp) - and his two friends John and Vic are in search of a night to remember, uninterested in the Silver Jubilee celebrations that are going on behind the privet hedges and lace-curtained windows of quiet suburbia. Desperate to be taken seriously by local punk matriarch Boadicea and her coterie of followers they hear of a party not far away and decide to gatecrash. On arrival, nothing is quite as they expected: the house seems to be full of teenage students: exotic, foreign, unbelievably gorgeous. Know-it-all ladies man Vic identifies them as American - what else could they be? Soon Enn is in way over his head (and heart) with the beautiful, enigmatic Zan (Elle Fanning), an outsider just like him. As Enn becomes her ambassador to a brave new world of punk, partying and music, he learns that Zen has a new world of her own to share (quite literally) and over the course of twenty four hours the two will go on an adventure that is truly out of this world.

ABOUT THE FILM

A funny and delightful genre mash-up, HOW TO TALK TO GIRLS AT PARTIES focuses on Enn, a shy teenage punk rocker in 70s suburban England, and his two closest friends, Vic and John. One night they all sneak into a party where they meet a group of seemingly otherworldly girls; at first they think it's a cult, but eventually come to realise the girls are actually from another world—outer space. The leaders of these alien colonies have an ominous plan in mind, but that doesn't stop Enn from falling madly in love with Zan, one of the colonies' key members. Their burgeoning romance sets in motion a series of increasingly sensational events that will lead to the ultimate showdown of punks versus aliens, and test the bonds of friendship, family, and true love.

HOW TO TALK TO GIRLS AT PARTIES, was directed by John Cameron Mitchell (*Hedwig and the Angry Inch*, *Shortbus*), and based on a short story by Neil Gaiman (*Stardust*, *Coraline*) from his collection "Fragile Things". The screenplay has been written by Philippa Goslett (*Little Ashes*, *Mary Magdalene*) with John Cameron Mitchell. The cast is led by Elle Fanning (*Maleficent*, *Super 8*) with Tony Award winning Alex Sharp (*The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*) and Academy Award® winner Nicole Kidman (*Paddington*, *Lion*). Kidman re-united with John Cameron Mitchell who directed her Academy Award® nominated performance in *Rabbit Hole* in 2010.

Other roles are played by Golden Globe winner Ruth Wilson (*Suite Française*, *The Affair*), Matt Lucas (*Alice in Wonderland*, *Bridesmaids*) and Joanna Scanlan (*The Invisible Woman*, *Bridget Jones's Baby*). Howard Gertler (*Shortbus*, *How to Survive a Plague*) produced the film alongside Iain Canning and Emile Sherman of See-Saw Films (*Macbeth*, *Lion*), and John Cameron Mitchell.

The creative team included director of photography Frank DeMarco (*All is Lost*, *Rabbit Hole*), production designer Helen Scott (*The Selfish Giant*, *Fish Tank*), multi-Academy Award® winning costume designer Sandy Powell (*Carol*, *Cinderella*), editor Brian A. Kates (*Kill your Darlings*, *Rabbit Hole*) with original music from Nico Muhly (*Me and Earl and the Dying Girl*, *Kill Your Darlings*), Matmos, Xiu Xiu, A.C. Newman of The New Pornographers, Ezra Furman and Mitchell himself.

ABOUT THE PRODUCTION

It's perhaps unsurprising that John Cameron Mitchell chose to direct *HOW TO TALK TO GIRLS AT PARTIES*. Based on the short story by renowned author and graphic artist Neil Gaiman, the film's tone, spirit and period setting chimed perfectly with Mitchell's gleeful love of the alternative. Says Mitchell, "I usually like to originate material myself but there was something about this. It draws on Neil Gaiman's youth as a punk in Croydon and in some ways we need a punk spirit more now than perhaps we did in the 70's because of a feeling of darkness, harshness and doom that's suffusing everyone now."

It wasn't just the story's punk spirit that enticed the filmmaker to make his first film set in London; the juxtaposition of worlds represented in the story also struck a chord: "It's also a real romance between a punk and alien, it's a mixture of cultures and subcultures. Both the aliens and punks are tribes on the fringe in the normal grey 70's world of Croydon."

It was Mitchell's producing partner Howard Gertler who first brought the story to Mitchell's attention. "I read the story when it was first published in Neil Gaiman's *"Fragile Things"* and fell in love with it immediately. It took me back to when I'd read Neil's work as a teenager myself: the thrill of the unknown, the way the music you loved was the most important thing on earth, the mysteries of the human (and alien) heart, all set in a world where the line between the everyday and fantastic was blurred," says Gertler who worked with Mitchell on *Shortbus*. "I met Neil, and he gave me his blessing to figure out a way to get this made, and then I met writer Philippa Goslett, who was also a huge Neil Gaiman fan and was excited to take it on. We took it to John and he fell in love with it, too. I introduced him to Neil, and it was a match made in heaven — so we were off into developing the script."

Gaiman's inspiration was in part his own adolescence. "The adventures of Enn and his friends are autobiographical-ish. The version of Enn in the short story was me — ish. But it was very much the place that I knew and the world that I knew," explains the writer. "The title was the first thing: I thought, I don't even have to create characters, I'll just have it be me and my friends in Croydon in 1977. And I'll take those fragments and make it about the gulf between boys and girls at that age — and girls might as well be aliens. I had the idea, walked down to the bottom of the garden and wrote it in 12 hours. It took another 12 hours to clean it up and then I sent it off — it was like a

magic gift from the Gods.”

That it would appeal to filmmakers wasn’t a surprise. “It seemed very obvious how you could turn the story into a film,” says Gaiman. “What’s lovely about the story is that it has a first act and then it stops and it’s just what happens if one of the girl’s from the story follows Enn home.”

“It started as a very short short story – that is in effect the first scene in the film,” continues Mitchell. “I loved the idea of exploring where punk and pop met - like The Damned and The Ramones. Neil Gaiman was almost signed to a punk band in 1977 and always wondered what might have happened. In a way this was re-claiming the punk youth I never had and the punk stardom that Neil almost had!”

For his part, Gaiman knew immediately that Mitchell was the right person to bring the story to the screen. “John is a genius which is almost concealed by this lovely boyish persona,” he says. “You can almost forget that he’s brilliant because he’s so lovely to be with. Then you talk to him and you realise how clever and smart he is and how deeply he’s thought about things and he’s incredibly empathetic too.”

His talents are also clear to producer Iain Canning: “John has a lot of heart and it’s unsurprising that actors like Nicole Kidman want to come back and work with him. He creates such a family atmosphere on set and it’s a lovely atmosphere to be a part of. As a producer it’s a dream as everyone is enjoying themselves and having a great time.”

“John and I had wanted to work with Iain and Emile for ages, and this finally was the perfect opportunity on one of See-Saw’s home turfs,” says Gertler.

CASTING THE FILM

For the story to work, the filmmakers needed a pair of young actors who would do justice to the lead roles - Zan, the rebellious alien drawn to the punk life, and Enn, the shy punk rocker who falls for her - and have an appealing on-screen chemistry.

“Zan is a tourist although she would resent that description as she wants to be more than just a tourist,” says Gaiman. “She is there to see earth and what she sees is Croydon in 1977. She wants to see more and she's frustrated.”

The filmmakers' first and only choice for Zan was one of the U.S.'s most acclaimed young stars, Elle Fanning. “Zan is part of the Fourth Colony whose motto is “Fourth Colony Manifests Individuality”” explains Fanning. “Our colony is all about being unique and self-confident but PT Waldo, the father of the colony, is very protective and doesn't allow us to be individual. Zan is very frustrated because the colony have been touring many different places now we're humans and in London, an amazing city, and we can't do anything – we can't meet locals, we can't dance, we can't drink, all we're allowed to see is coal. How exciting! And then she meets Enn and she rebels.”

“Zan comes from a sterile world where everything is strictly regulated - even the food we're allowed to eat - so when she meets Enn, she wants to know everything about the punk world because he's this fascinating thing, wearing interesting clothes and safety pins and she wants to be a part of it and experience something new. Punk is nasty and gritty and exciting!”

Playing an alien presented Fanning with several creative choices. “Because there's so many different versions of aliens on film, I wanted to make Zan special, an individual. John obviously knew what he wanted, and we got to talk about who she is. There was a lot of choreography involved because the aliens have a different way of moving, but it was also about imagining how she would react to things on Earth. For someone who's never seen a duck, say, it would look crazy. So Zan is fascinated with every little detail, and every little vein on a person's face – even on my face, because this is not my true form. Because the script is both very funny and very serious and deep, we spent a lot of time talking about how to balance those tones.”

It also helped that because of her age, she knew nothing about punk and how it exploded in Britain the late 1970s. "I thought 'Okay, punk is the fishnets, like Vivienne Westwood, right?'" she laughs. "John knows everything so it was very overwhelming for me. But John and I talked it over and I realised Zan knows nothing about it so it was completely appropriate that I knew nothing about it too. The boys were the experts - they watched all the documentaries and read all the books - because they had to know about it to make their characters authentic."

Fanning found working with John Cameron Mitchell a rich and rewarding experience. "Knowing John's work and how incredible he is as a person and a friend, I really wanted to work with him," she says. "When he showed me his Look Book which showed how he wanted the aliens to look, I got so excited and I knew I had to be a part of the film. Because he's also an actor, he really understands actors and he explains things in a way that's almost like poetry to get you into a scene. I've never really experienced that with a director before – he's an amazing man."

Fanning was very aware of the sensitive way Mitchell approached directing his cast. "John understands that emotions aren't cut-and-dry and there are layers to everything so instead of just yelling out "Be happier" or "Be sadder", everything had a reason. He would take us on a journey through the character and he would be right there, giving you hugs and supporting you. And also having fun: he is the funnest guy!"

"Elle was 17 when we made this, the same age as the character," says Mitchell, "but although she's so young, there is something luminescent about her that lifts you and makes you smile rather than just be in awe or entranced. There's an incredible positivity even when she's bored or annoyed! Watching her is a delight – almost every take would be unbelievable and slightly different."

Fanning's raw talent certainly impressed the creative team. "Elle's glorious performance has vulnerability, humour and charm – it's perfect," says Gaiman.

"Elle brings a unique quality to the role. Through John and the film, Elle has been educating herself in the world of punk for the first time as an actor and as a character. Channeling this, we discover a Zan that is beautifully wide-eyed" says producer Iain Canning.

“Elle combines what could be paradoxical elements — a soul of indeterminate age in the form of a teenager, a being who feels they’ve seen it all and suddenly discovers the universe-shaking power of music and art and ultimately love — and creates something utterly magical,” says Gertler.

The role of Enn went to Alex Sharp, the Tony award winner for his performance in *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*. “We see the story through Enn’s eyes,” says Mitchell. “He’s a budding graphic novelist, doesn’t quite fit in, smarter than his own good. He’s not a full on punk but has something of a punk in him.”

“Enn is a great cartoonist, a great visual artist and a wannabe punk,” says Alex Sharp. “He is quiet and introverted but loves cartoons and creating them. One night when he’s out with his two best mates, he ends up at a party where he meets Zan who turns out to be extraordinary in a lot of unpredictable and bizarre ways and he falls in love.

“I hope he’s not the archetypal nerd; he’s got a lot going on. I really love him as a character because even though he’s got that teenage confusion and lack of self-confidence, in some ways he knows exactly who he is and what he wants. He is in that period of his life, coming of age, where he wants more than what he’s got so far and feels frustrated by it. And I can relate to that.”

The richness of the screenplay immediately struck a chord with the actor: “When I read it I thought it was both absolutely insane and incredibly beautiful. It’s a sci-fi, coming of age, romance, comedy, drama - all those things. It’s rare that you read a script that has that many elements to it, so I was really excited. I knew that Enn had a lot of layers so I wanted to be involved right after reading it.”

Sharp had first met Mitchell at a Tony awards event and when he was offered the role, the chance to work with the director was a powerful draw. “John has just got a brilliant mind. You can see it in his films and *Hedwig* is a perfect example. He has a unique, beautiful and empathetic way of seeing the world. He’s incredibly generous and that comes out in his work. He’s pretty fearless as well. He’s so visual and knows exactly what he wants but at the same time is completely open to changing everything at the last minute spontaneously. As an actor, he’ll leave you alone if you’re in the right zone and getting it right and maybe just nudge you in a certain direction. And if you can’t quite work out what the scene is, he’ll give you everything that you need to get it right. He’s

patient and will talk through it with you and he challenges you as well.”

Like Fanning, Sharp is too young to know much about punk but soon immersed himself completely in the world. “I started getting into punk as I started preparing for the shoot, listening to it a lot and John would always have books for me to read. Simon Stephens, the playwright who adapted “The Curious Incident”, is really into punk and he gave me loads of recommendations. It was a fun character and movie to prepare for because there is so much incredible material out there.”

Getting into punk wasn’t the only unfamiliar thing Sharp was required to do. As Enn gets to know Zan, he becomes aware of her very different ways of expressing herself and showing her affection.

Fanning takes up the story. “Not being human, Zan doesn’t just shake hands,” says Fanning with a laugh. “The script just said I had to lick his cheek, which is fine. But when we’re filming John goes ‘Yeah, Elle, just lick his entire face, and keep going, keep going!’ and we’re just like ‘Oh my god!’ And my character has to be really into it. So one of the things I had to do was lick Alex’s entire face. Then I had to throw up in his mouth - it was actually just apple juice and cornflakes - then we had to make out with tomatoes and I hate tomatoes. But thank god that it’s someone like Alex, who makes you so comfortable and so in it and so willing to do it all – it’s incredible to have a partner-in-crime like that. So yeah, he’s so good. I wouldn’t want to throw up in anyone else’s mouth but Alex’s!”

Sharp took it all in his stride, as only a professional of his standing would. “Elle’s a heavyweight,” says Sharp. “She’s done 900 films already. And she’s absolutely amazing. We got along so well and she’s so much fun. We would be just laughing hysterically between takes. And I loved working with her as well. Not just in the fun, bizarre scenes where she’s licking my face or shoving a tomato in my mouth, but in the emotional scenes.”

Mitchell and the producers knew Sharp would do justice to the role but for Neil Gaiman, he was a revelation: “Alex’s performance is absolutely beautiful. He’s sympathetic and vulnerable and cocky all at the same time. You get to like him and then when you see the places he’s broken, he lets you in and any healing that happens you feel is real.”

“We were Alex’s first-ever feature film, and it was just a thrill to see him take to the process of making a movie,” says Gertler.

Playing alongside these two young leads is Hollywood heavyweight Nicole Kidman in the role of Boadicea, the outlandish owner of the local punk club. "This role runs the gamut of what she has," says Mitchell. "I've never seen her do a role like this where she's nasty and dirty – her fingers are never clean! Because she was rehearsing a play while we were rehearsing the film, she wanted the fastest way to get the character so she asked me to do the character as if I was playing her. So I did drunk, crass, explosive and tasteless and she would tell me to keep doing it. I realise it's probably the character I would have played."

Says producer Howard Gertler "Watching John and Nicole collaborate again was a total joy. She brought such fearlessness and inventiveness to set everyday to create a character who's sharp, poignant and hilarious."

Kidman did not hesitate to accept the role. "John is one of my dearest friends and I adore him. I was in London in a play and he said "I've got this cameo role for you," and I said "yes of course, I'll do anything for you – my John!" I love that he's bold and he just tries things."

She adds of her role "I play the punk mother figure and I represent the anarchy of the era. I love that John thought of me as I would have cast someone different! As soon as I met with costume designer Sandy Powell and she showed me this look she had for me and I put on the clothes I thought it was fantastic."

For Fanning, playing opposite Kidman was a dream come true. "I'd never worked with Nicole before, but it was always a dream of mine," says the actress. "Boadicea's very intimidating, and seeing Nicole in the costume, it made me gasp! I was nervous at first but she was so sweet to me and she brought real emotion to the scene we are in together where she is explaining what punk means. I really felt that we were so close to each other and it was a special moment, which I'll never forget. But of course, because it's John's writing, the scene's really emotional but it ends with one of the funniest jokes in the movie."

Kidman was bowled over by Fanning. "Elle is incredible. I can't wait to see what she does over the next ten or twenty years. She loves acting and she's so open and luminous."

Rounding out the cast are Ruth Wilson as PT Stella, Matt Lucas as PT Wain, Joanna Scanlan as Enn's

mother Marion and Edward Petherbridge as PT First.

Says Howard Gertler: "John casts in a very organic way, and it ultimately helps create a very family-like atmosphere on set, and an environment in which everyone feels supported to take risks. John met Ruth when they were both on Broadway and seeing the same physical therapist due to their demanding roles. Matt Lucas is an old friend of his and so there was a natural fit. And never having seen either of them in roles like this makes their performances extra-fun."

Matt Lucas plays PT Wain, who the actor describes as "a grumpy alien in a purple outfit. He's a bit of a killjoy and is quite stern which is a bit of a stretch for me. He likes to do things by the book and of course this film is about people thinking for themselves and following a new path, and my character is a barrier to that. I see this as a film about waking up and maybe it's time to wake up again because culturally everything's become a bit homogenous. Maybe it's time for another punk explosion."

The make up of the cast - a lot of teenagers and young twentysomethings - made the filming a joyous experience.

"There are so many kids in this I wanted it to be a good time for them," says John Cameron Mitchell. "While whipping them into shape you really want to keep that punk energy of freedom, laughter, spontaneity and improvisation. Some actors hate to improvise, but I would encourage them to do that and they found a fun tone and way of working. The British crews weren't used to all the hugging and the first week were a little suspicious, but by the second week if I didn't hug them they would get upset!"

Neil Gaiman says of Ethan Lawrence, another member of the young cast "Ethan plays John, he is socially maladroit, three nipples, incredibly intelligent, passionate about music and the third member of the three musketeers, and his performance is one of absolute delight. He gives a glorious base note, he's the ground that the other two get to tread on, Ethan's always there funny, smart and making it very very human it's a lovely performance."

THE LOOK

A filmmaker for whom the visuals have always been as important as the narrative and

characterisation, John Cameron Mitchell had firm ideas of how the film should look. The story is set in 1977 but Mitchell was keen for it not to be slavishly faithful to the period. The sci-fi aspects to the story allowed the film's behind the scenes team to let their imaginations run free.

"Neil's short story embraces grit-Brit naturalism as well as unbridled fantasy so I wanted the design to echo that combination. I generally abominate the high-res look of most modern digital cinematography and we couldn't afford 16mm film, so my DP Frank DeMarco framed for a smaller "doughnut" hole of the digital frame and used lenses to create a softer 70's style look for punk-era London. When we shot the alien party scene we used the full grain-free high-res for an otherworldly sheen. I encouraged my costume and production designers to create three looks: the dilapidated 60's brutalism dressed up in false optimistic 70's colors of suburban Croydon; the jerry-rigged found-object gray-scale collage of the punk subculture; and a supersaturated geometric rainbow-chakra aesthetic for the alien Colonies. True green was to be avoided as it plays an important story role near the end. I encouraged them to adopt classic elements of how "alien" was portrayed in the 70's, which is why Sandy's idea for slick latex costumes and Helen's for seamless sculptural set pieces made sense. The aliens' attempt to "blend in" during the Queen's Jubilee with identical Union Jack rain ponchos was a typical Sandy stroke of genius. Somehow they did it all on a strict 70's-style recession-era period budget."

Says Neil Gaiman: "One thing I think is great is that although it's set in 1977 it doesn't try too hard to be 1977. It's a mash up between now and then. It's definitely the world of punk as seen from the early 21st Century."

Key to the look is the spirit of punk and its effects on popular culture both in the UK and around the world. It's difficult to understand now but when the Sex Pistols appeared on early evening television in 1976, the shockwaves were seismic. If their surly attitude, scruffy clothes and hair and swastika armbands weren't alarming enough, when guitarist Steve Jones called the host "You fucking rotter", it was as though civilisation had crumbled and the four horsemen were coming into view over the hilltops.

Swearing on TV was just one of the barriers broken down by punk. From music to fashion, art to politics, punk represented a breaking away from the past and a dismantling of tradition. Old ways

of doing things were out and the new way was whichever way you wanted. For Neil Gaiman, “punk means what it always meant which is that you do it. The joy of punk was that famous poster - here’s a chord, here’s another, now form a band. Just do it, find out how to do it on the way, but start doing it. Whatever you do, do it. And that glorious punk ethos was there for me when I was 16, it was there when I was 22 and becoming a writer and it's been there for me every time I've had to make the leap into the darkness and had no idea how to do it. You find a chord and just do it.”

Production designer Helen Scott included Mitchell's vision into her designs: “It's not a literal portrayal, it's very much John's world and his view of it and there's quite a strong American feel about it, so I was trying to merge the two and make a hybrid of the reality of punk in Britain in 1977 and then John's slightly more colourful New York version of the same thing.

I worked quite hard to get thematic elements for the two worlds, so for Enn we chose a certain colour palate that I wanted to be quite matt and textured and grainy. The colony house was much more simple and clean, reflective and shiny – that was the rule book that we built on.”

Sandy Powell, the three-times Academy Award® winning designer, enjoyed creating the punk costumes as much as the alien costumes. “I always pick projects for the script and the director. This script was so off the wall and I know John and his work and I thought it was not to be missed.

I definitely intended to make this as gritty and as real as possible as I think it's the only way you can make this mad story work. For us to remotely believe these people are aliens it has to be a real-world that they come into. The idea was to make the punks not like the vision people have nowadays of punk with the multi-colour hair and huge Mohicans – it's the early days punks where it's kids cutting up their school uniforms and making use of what they had. It wasn't a fashion, it was a movement.

The aliens had to look like a sub-culture, but an attractive group of young people. There had to be something about them that made them aliens, but not weird and not so strange that it would stop the traffic.”

Powell particularly relished being given the freedom to express her vision. “It's really brilliant to work with a director who knows what he wants visually and it's incredibly rare to be given a

project like this where I can just let rip, it's just bonkers and it's not often you can get out there and do the most extreme things ever with everyone saying "yes go further!"

"Besides being a genius, Sandy's having come from the London punk world and designed for the one of the greatest of the punk-influenced directors, Derek Jarman, blessed our project. I think we'll all be dressing like the aliens once the film comes out," says Howard Gertler.

For Fanning's character Zan, Powell created a palette of yellows and a signature outfit of latex shorts and top as well as a shorter, punkier version of the kilts that all the colony members wear. "It took two people to get me into the latex outfit," laughs Fanning. "They had to apply a lotion so that it would slide on easier. It was a big production".

Fanning also wears a vintage overcoat sourced from a second hand shop in Sheffield, slashed jeans with zips and a top made of woven strips of plastic bin liner for the concert scene. "It kept melting because of the lights," says Fanning. "So they had to keep repairing it and telling people not to touch it because it was so fragile"

"*How To Talk To Girls At Parties* is a British film about a British subject matter, directed by a US director," says producer Iain Canning. "As a result there is always a danger the film can feel disconnected from reality, but that's not the case here. *How To Talk To Girls At Parties* has such an authentic spirit. What's so impressive about what Sandy Powell has done on this film is that she has taken on the ideas of punk and aliens, and come up with something completely original."

THE MUSIC

Music was where the punk revolution started and it's integral to the film.

John Cameron Mitchell explains his approach "I wanted to avoid the "license the hits" trap of period films by mixing a few lesser known period gems - *The Damned*, *The Homosexuals*, dub reggae - with live songs from a fictional punk band, *The Dyschords*, created by Martin Tomlinson and Bryan Weller."

The *Dyschords* also provided score songs. Mitchell adds, "Carl Newman (of *New Pornographers*)

and Ezra Furman provided additional punky originals. Classical genius Nico Muhly created alien vocal arrangements as well as score in collaboration with organic sound maestros Matmos. My alien music brief to Matmos was to create hypnotic Krautrock-inspired loops and beats that never felt electronic: more Can than "canned". Jamie Stewart (of Xiu Xiu) and I wrote our one true movie musical song for Elle and Alex to sing live, the punk-alien hybrid "Eat Me Alive", as well as a Cocteau Twins-inspired song "Between the Breaths" with vocals by the amazing Mitski. Amber Martin and Brett Every provided the gorgeous 70's A.M. radio "hits". It was DIY all the way!"

"The Dyschords sound like a punk band that you somehow missed," says Neil Gaiman. "If some of these Dyschords songs ended up on an album from 1977 you wouldn't know that they weren't real. They are smart punk songs and yet they were written and performed for the movie and I love that the Dyschords actually went out and performed a couple of live gigs to give that live sound and feel. What they brought to the film is absolute magic."

THE ANIMATED SEQUENCES

The animated sequences in *How to Talk to Girls at Parties* represent the dreams and fantasies of Enn, a teenage boy coming of age amidst the nascent punk scene in late 70s London.

Senior Visual Effects Supervisor John Bair explains the idea behind the sequences. "They are inspired by the reveries of a teenage boy. The animated visions are, in part, strange and unformed, like thoughts and notions that haven't yet congealed. At the same time certain intense emotions, such as those involving lust, sex and rebellion, are depicted much more lucidly in the visuals.

For the look of the animation, we were inspired by much of the psychedelic and sci-fi artwork of the 1970s. Intense primary colours, cloudy and bulbous vistas, and emblematic forms and bodies all worked their way into the overall aesthetic of the animation. To help slightly ground the visual setting, it was important that some of Enn's literal world manifest itself within the fantastic environments. We feel the colourful, gelled spotlights of a dark, punk rock club echoed in our animated glass bulbs that represent both celestial bodies and some of the characters Enn meets throughout the film. Enn himself is depicted as an inky, chrome virus, an animated character that reflects both Enn's actual illustrations of himself as a young punk and his spirit as a rebellious and sexually-charged teenager."

In creating the animated scenes they paired CGI with as many real-world elements and textures as possible. Bair explains. “For the psychedelic and nebulous space environments, we began by shooting several hours of inks, paints and viscous fluids floating on water and glass. From this library of imagery, we culled together the most interesting patterns and colours to build a massive panorama. As a means to reinforce the concept that we are witnessing Enn’s visions, the animations are all seen through extremely wide-angle lenses, and creating expansive and detailed environments was critical to creating dynamic visual compositions. Even though many components of the animation were computer-generated, we tried to infuse these elements with tactile qualities by incorporating real photography and illustration in their textures and design.”

The visual effects team found working with John Cameron Mitchell a collaborative experience. Bair expands. “I’ve been fortunate to work with John on several projects throughout the years. He’s a great admirer of animation in general, and he always finds a unique and moving way to incorporate it into his storytelling. He recognizes the importance of getting animators and artists involved in his projects from the very beginning, and that allows us to freely explore a wide variety of techniques while also allowing for evolution in the story that the animation is telling. It’s a wonderful and rewarding process, and one of the reasons his films are so artistically and emotionally rich.”

FILMING

Filming took place over six weeks in Sheffield, London and Croydon and completed in December 2015.

“I didn’t realise when I read the script how funny the film was going to be,” says Neil Gaiman. “Watching it it’s funnier and more heart felt than I expected and I found myself falling in love with the characters. Falling in love with Zan is easy, she’s made to be fallen in love with, but I found myself falling in love with the incredible vulnerability of Nicole Kidman as Boadicea – this incredible tough surface and this tragic frustrated mother, with Ruth Wilson as PT Stella and with all the other characters who are so beautiful and so flawed.”

For Elle Fanning, the film was not just a joy to make but it’s a joy to watch. “It’s a love story between these two young people but it’s whacky in a fantastic John Cameron Mitchell way. It’s a huge wild ride which is completely unpredictable. But not just fun and wild but also incredibly

moving.”

Alex Sharp concurs: “It is really different and it challenges the audience. I hope people are moved by it and have a blast watching it. That’s what you’d hope from almost any film. It is unusually beautiful and I hope people watching it enjoy it as much as we enjoyed working on it.”

“It’s for John Cameron Mitchell and Neil Gaiman fans,” says Howard Gertler, “and for the people it’ll turn into John and Neil fans. It’s for the original punks and the generations whom they’ve transformed from the inside out since. It’s a wild ride and big-screen punk-show and the belief that different worlds can combine in unexpected ways to create something exhilarating and urgent and new.”

BIOGRAPHIES

CAST

ELLE FANNING - Zan

18 year old Elle Fanning has played characters ranging from a transgender boy in *About Ray* to Sleeping Beauty in *Maleficent*, to the daughter of jazz pianist Joe Albany in *Low Down*, a British teenager in 1960’s London in *Ginger & Rosa* and a revivalist preacher in the upcoming *Live By Night* for Warner Brothers and director Ben Affleck.

Elle will next be seen this December in *20th Century Women* for director Mike Mills. She stars opposite Annette Bening, Greta Gerwig and Billy Crudup. Set in 1979 Santa Barbara, the story follows three women from different eras who come together to teach a boy about life and love. The film had its world premiere at the 2016 New York Film Festival. A24 will release it in theaters in January 2017.

Also in January 2017, she will be seen in Ben Affleck and Warner Brothers’ *Live By Night*, based on the novel by Dennis Lehane. She plays Loretta Figgis, the sheriff’s daughter turned preacher opposite Chris Cooper as her father.

Also in 2017, A24 will release John Cameron Mitchell’s *How to Talk to Girls at Parties*. The movie is based on the short story by Neil Gaiman and follows two teenage boys in 1970’s London who crash a party where the girls are far more than they appear. She stars alongside Nicole Kidman, Ruth Wilson and Alex Sharp.

Elle most recently completed production on *Sidney Hall* and *Mary Shelley*. Shawn Christensen (who won an Oscar for his short film *Curfew*) wrote and directed *Sidney Hall*, a film that follows three stages in the life of the title character (played by Logan Lerman), who writes the book of his

generation before disappearing without a trace.

Mary Shelley, directed by Haifaa Al-Mansour, tells the story of the love affair between poet Percy Shelley and 18 year old Mary Wollstonecraft, which resulted in Mary writing *Frankenstein*. Elle plays Mary Shelley in this story of a young woman who refused to be constrained by society's expectations of her.

Elle was seen last year as Dalton Trumbo's daughter Nikki Trumbo in Jay Roach's biopic of the famous Black Listed writer. Elle starred opposite Bryan Cranston, Diane Lane and Helen Mirren.

Elle was most recently seen in Nicolas Winding Refn's *The Neon Demon*. In this film she stars as Jesse, an aspiring model who moves to Los Angeles and becomes the target of a group of beauty-obsessed women eager to "devour" her youth and vitality. The film had its world premiere at the 2016 Cannes Film Festival.

Elle received British Independent Film Award and Critics' Choice Movie Award nominations for her performance in Sally Potter's *Ginger & Rosa*. She won Best Actress at the 2014 Karlovy Vary International Film Festival as well as the Spotlight Award at the 2014 Mill Valley Film Festival for her performance in *Low Down*.

Elle's other films include: Alejandro González Iñárritu's Academy Award-nominated *Babel*, opposite Academy Award nominee Adriana Barraza; Tod Williams' *The Door in the Floor*, opposite Jeff Bridges, Kim Basinger, and Jon Foster; Terry George's *Reservation Road*, with Joaquin Phoenix and Jennifer Connelly; Sofia Coppola's *Somewhere*, which won the Golden Lion Award for Best Picture at the 2010 Venice International Film Festival; Cameron Crowe's *We Bought a Zoo*; J. J. Abrams' *Super 8*; Francis Ford Coppola's *Twist*; Jake Paltrow's *The Young Ones*; Disney's *Maleficent* opposite Angelina Jolie, and David Fincher's multi-Oscar-winning *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*, portraying the younger incarnation of Cate Blanchett's character, opposite Brad Pitt.

ALEX SHARP – Enn

London-born Alex Sharp graduated from Juilliard in 2014 and immediately landed the role of Christopher Boone in the original Broadway production of "The Curious Incident of the Dog" in the Night-Time. For this, his Broadway debut, he was awarded the Tony Award for Best Actor in a Play, Drama Desk Award for Outstanding Actor in a Play, and the Outer Critics Circle Award. He is the youngest winner of the Tony Award for Best Actor in a Play. Alex has since made the leap to the big screen and also stars in *To the Bone*, opposite Lily Collins.

NICOLE KIDMAN – Boadicea

Academy Award winning actress Nicole Kidman first came to the attention of American audiences with her critically acclaimed performance in Phillip Noyce's riveting 1989 Australian psychological thriller *Dead Calm*. Kidman has since become an internationally-recognized, award-winning actress known for her range and versatility.

In 2002, Kidman was honored with her first Oscar nomination for her performance in Baz Luhrmann's innovative musical, *Moulin Rouge!* For that role, and her performance in writer/director Alejandro Amenabar's psychological thriller, *The Others*, she received dual 2002 Golden Globe nominations, winning for Best Actress in a Musical. In 2003, Kidman won an Academy Award, a Golden Globe Award, a BAFTA Award and a Berlin Silver Bear for her portrayal of Virginia Woolf in Stephen Daldry's *The Hours*.

In 2010, Kidman starred opposite Aaron Eckhart in *Rabbit Hole*, for which she received Academy Award, Golden Globe, Screen Actors Guild and Independent Spirit Award nominations for Best Actress. The film was developed by Kidman's production company, Blossom Films. In October 2012, Kidman starred in Lee Daniel's *The Paperboy* with Matthew McConaughey, Zac Efron and John Cusack. Her performance earned her an AACTA, Screen Actors Guild and Golden Globe nomination. In 2014, Kidman was seen in *Grace of Monaco*, which earned her a SAG nomination. She was most recently seen in *The Secret in Their Eyes*, *The Family Fang* with Jason Bateman, which she also produced, and *Genius* alongside Colin Firth.

Kidman was most recently seen in *Lion* with Dev Patel, directed by Garth Davis and produced by See-Saw Films.

In television, Kidman was seen starring in HBO's *Hemingway and Gellhorn* alongside Clive Owen in 2012. Her portrayal as Martha Gellhorn earned her Emmy, SAG and Golden Globe nominations. Kidman will return to the small screen in 2017 in the limited series *Big Little Lies* alongside Reese Witherspoon for HBO (Kidman's Blossom Films and Witherspoon's Pacific Standard will produce the project) as well as the second season of See-Saw Films' *Top of The Lake* (SundanceTV/BBC Two).

In theater, Kidman made a highly-lauded London stage debut in the fall of 1998, starring with Iain Glenn in "The Blue Room," David Hare's modern adaptation of Schnitzler's "La Ronde." For her performance Kidman won London's Evening Standard Award and was nominated in the Best Actress category for a Laurence Olivier Award. In 2015, Kidman was seen on the West End stage in Anna Ziegler's "Photograph 51," for which she received a London's Evening Standard Award.

In January of 2006, Kidman was awarded Australia's highest honor, the Companion in the Order of Australia. She was also named, and continues to serve, as Goodwill Ambassador of the United Nations Development Fund for Women, UN Women, whose goals are to foster women's empowerment and gender equality, to raise awareness of the infringement on women's human rights around the world and to end violence against women. Along with her husband, Keith Urban, she has helped raise millions over the years for the Women's Cancer Program which is a world-renowned center for research into the causes, treatment, prevention, and eventual cure of women's cancer.

RUTH WILSON – PT Stella

Two-time Olivier Award-winner, Golden Globe winner, and Tony Award nominated actress Ruth Wilson has paved her way in theatre, television and film. Best known for her portrayal of the character *Alison* in *The Affair* and of *Alice* in *Luther*, and for her work on the London stage, Wilson has quickly become one of Britain's most lauded young actresses.

Wilson can currently be seen in the Netflix feature film *I Am the Pretty Thing That Lives in the House*, directed by Osgood Perkins and opposite Bob Balaban and Lucy Boynton. Wilson plays 'Lily,' a young nurse who is hired as caretaker for Helen Bloom, an elderly best-selling author of ghost stories whose home is host to a horrific ghost story of its own. The film premiered at the 2016 Toronto Film Festival and is available now on Netflix.

Wilson will next be seen in Showtime's Golden Globe winning original series, *The Affair*, for which she won a Golden Globe for Best Actress in a Drama Series. *The Affair* explores the psychological effects of an extramarital affair between a married woman Alison (Wilson) and an older married man Noah (Dominic West) in Montauk. Joshua Jackson and Maura Tierney also star in the hour-long series, which dives into the complexities of long-term relationships. *The Affair's* Season 3 will premiere on Showtime on November 20th.

Wilson recently wrapped production on the independent feature *Dark River*, directed by Clio Barnard and opposite Sean Bean. Wilson plays Alice who, following the death of her father, returns to her home village for the first time in 15 years to claim the tenancy to the family farm she believes is rightfully hers.

Last summer, Wilson was nominated for a Tony Award for her Broadway debut as *Marianne* in the critically acclaimed *Constellations*, starring alongside Jake Gyllenhaal and directed by Michael Longhurst. *Constellations*, written by Nick Payne, tells the story of one relationship with infinite possibilities, exploring the boundless potential of a first encounter, free will and friendship. This fall she will return to the National Theatre to star in the title role of *Hedda Gabler* directed by recent Tony Award winner Ivo Van Hove.

Wilson also recently starred in the cinematic dream sequence short film *Eleanor*, directed by Alex Warren and Tobias Ross-Southall. *Eleanor* premiered last April at London's Soho Revue Gallery.

In 2013, Wilson starred in three films; Disney's critically acclaimed film *Saving Mr Banks*, opposite Colin Farrell, Tom Hanks and Emma Thompson. The film, directed by John Lee Hancock, won AFI's 2014 "Movie of the Year" Award and was recognized by the National Board of Review in their "Top 10 films" and chronicles the true story of the development of the 1964 Walt Disney film *Mary Poppins*. Wilson also starred in Disney's *The Lone Ranger* alongside Armie Hammer and directed by Gore Verbinski. Wilson lent her voice as the wife of Ivan Locke (Tom Hardy) in the critically acclaimed film, *Locke*. Written and directed by Steven Knight, *Locke* premiered at the 2014 Venice International Film Festival and premiered in the Spotlight program at the 2014 Sundance Film Festival.

In 2012, Wilson starred in Joe Wright's film adaptation of Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina* opposite Keira Knightley and Jude Law as the character *Princess Betsy*.

Wilson is a mainstay on the British stage, where she has won two Olivier Awards for her performances in two Donmar Warehouse productions: Tennessee Williams' *A Streetcar Named Desire* where she portrayed the character *Stella* and *Anna Christie*, in which she starred opposite Jude Law and portrayed *Anna*. In 2010, Wilson portrayed *Karin* in an Almeida Theatre adaptation of the Ingmar Bergman film, *Through a Glass Darkly*. Wilson debuted on the London stage in 2007 in the National Theatre presentation of Maxim Gorky's *Philistines*.

In 2013, Wilson made her directorial debut and starred in one of Eugene O'Neil's earliest works, *The El. Train* a series of three, short, one-act dramatic plays of destitution and despair (The Web, Before Breakfast and The Dreamy Kid.) Wilson directed *The Dreamy Kid* and starred in all three. Performed at Hoxton Hall, one of London's oldest music halls.

From 2007 – 2013, Wilson starred in various British Television films and miniseries including *Miss Marple: Nemesis*, BBC's *Capturing Mary*, *Small Island*, *The Doctor Who Hears Voices*, *The Prisoner* and the Emmy®-nominated and Golden Globe®-winning crime drama, *Luther*. Both *Luther* and *Small Island* aired on PBS in the US. From 2010 to 2013, Wilson appeared in the UK psychological police drama *Luther* as recurring character *Alice Morgan*, a research scientist and highly intelligent sociopath. *Luther* has been nominated for eight Prime Time Emmy Award nominations.

In 2006, Wilson starred in the title role in her breakout performance in the BBC miniseries, *Jane Eyre*, receiving a BAFTA nomination for "Best Actress," along with a Golden Globe nomination for "Best Actress – Miniseries or Television Film" and a Satellite Award nomination for "Best Actress." Wilson debuted on UK television in 2006 in the situation comedy, *Suburban Shootout*.

Wilson studied history at the University of Nottingham, graduating in 2003. While at Nottingham, she was also involved in student drama at New Theatre (Nottingham). She later graduated from the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art in 2005.

Wilson currently resides in London.

MATT LUCAS – PT Wain

Matt first came to prominence in *Shooting Stars* with Vic Reeves and Bob Mortimer. Together with David Walliams, he reaped massive success with the smash hit series *Little Britain*. The three BBC series and two Christmas specials won nearly every award for which they were nominated including three Baftas. *Little Britain Live* was one of the world's largest comedy tours ever and ran for over two years in the UK and Australia. This was followed by *Little Britain USA* for HBO in the U.S. and BBC1 in the UK, and *Come Fly with Me* for BBC1 which was the most viewed TV comedy that year.

Matt also completed two series of *The Matt Lucas Awards* for BBC1, and his latest series *Pompidou* recently aired on BBC2 and NETFLIX. Matt has played Tweedle Dee and Tweedle Dum in

both Disney *Alice In Wonderland* films. He also played Gil in *Bridesmaids* and appeared in the hit adaptation *Paddington*. He has appeared on a number of US comedies including *Community*, *Portlandia* and *Fresh off the Boat*. Last year, Matt starred in the *Doctor Who* 2015 Christmas episode and recently as Bottom in a BBC adaptation of Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Matt will return as Nardole in this year's *Doctor Who* Christmas Special, airing on the BBC and BBC America in the US. He fulfilled a lifetime ambition to appear in *Les Misérables*: he played Thenardier in both the 25th Anniversary Concert at the O2 Arena, and for a run in the West End's Queens Theatre.

CREW

JOHN CAMERON MITCHELL – Director and Writer

John Cameron Mitchell directed the film *Rabbit Hole* starring Nicole Kidman (Academy Award nomination for Best Actress) for which he was nominated for the Independent Spirit Award for best director. He directed, wrote and starred in the film *Hedwig and the Angry Inch* (2001), for which he received the Best Director and Audience Awards at the Sundance Film Festival. He was also nominated for a Golden Globe as Best Actor. He was executive producer of the Jonathan Caouette's documentary *Tarnation* (2004). His improv-based film *Shortbus* was released in 2006. The Broadway production of *Hedwig and the Angry Inch* received the Tony Award for Best Revival of a Musical (2014) and in 2015 John was honored with a Special Tony Award for his return to the lead role.

PHILIPPA GOSLETT – Writer

Philippa actively enjoys and excels at working and collaborating with directors - and her two most recent collaborations – *How To Talk to Girls at Parties* and *Mary Magdalene* pay testimony to that and is why she is much in demand as a writer.

Philippa's first feature, *Little Ashes*, starred Robert Pattinson as Dali and explored the intense relationship between Dali and Lorca. *Mary Magdalene*, also produced by See-Saw Films is currently in post and was directed by Garth Davis (*Lion*) and stars Rooney Mara, Joaquin Phoenix and Chiwetel Ejofor. . Other film projects in development include a feature for Pulse/Film4.

Philippa is also currently writing pilot television scripts for Tiger Aspect/C4 and The Forge/Pinewood.

HOWARD GERTLER – Producer

Oscar-nominated producer Howard Gertler's credits include David France's *How to Survive a Plague*, which premiered in competition at Sundance 2012 and was released by IFC Films/Sundance Selects; in addition to the Academy Award nomination, the film collected New York Film Critics' Circle, Peabody, IFP Gotham, IDA and GLAAD Media Awards. He's both an IFP/Gotham and Film Independent Spirit Award winner, the latter of which he won for producing John Cameron Mitchell's *Shortbus*, which premiered in the official selection in Cannes and was released worldwide. In 2014, he produced the feature doc for EPIX *To Russia With Love*, traveling

to Sochi, Moscow and St. Petersburg during the 2014 Winter Olympics to profile the impact of Putin's anti-LGBT law on both LGBT Russian citizens and global Olympians. Producer of the feature doc *Do I Sound Gay?* (directed by David Thorpe), it premiered at Toronto 2014 and opened DOC NYC that same year, followed by a theatrical release by IFC Films/Sundance Selects.

IAIN CANNING and EMILE SHERMAN - Producers

Academy Award®-winning producers Emile Sherman and Iain Canning founded See-Saw Films in 2008. See-Saw is a British and Australian company specialising in international Film and Television.

See-Saw's recent productions include and the critically acclaimed drama *Lion* directed by Garth Davis and starring Dev Patel, Academy Award®-winner Nicole Kidman and Academy Award®-nominee Rooney Mara as well as *Mr Holmes* (Bill Condon) starring Ian McKellen and Laura Linney; *Macbeth* (Justin Kurzel) starring Michael Fassbender and Marion Cotillard; *Life* (Anton Corbijn) starring Robert Pattinson and Dane DeHaan; *Slow West* (John Maclean) starring Kodi Smit-McPhee and Michael Fassbender; and *Banished*, a series for television written by Jimmy McGovern.

In 2010, See-Saw produced the multi-Academy Award®-winning *The King's Speech* (Tom Hooper) starring Colin Firth, Geoffrey Rush and Helena Bonham Carter; following this with Steve McQueen's award-winning *Shame*, starring Michael Fassbender and Carey Mulligan and *Tracks* (John Curran) starring Mia Wasikowska, which premiered in competition at the Venice Film Festival in 2013. See-Saw's first television series, Jane Campion's *Top of the Lake*, starring Elisabeth Moss and Holly Hunter was nominated for eight Emmy's and two Golden Globe Awards.

In addition *To How To Talk To Girls At Parties*, See-Saw's prestigious line up of upcoming film projects are *Mary Magdalene* starring Academy Award®-nominees Rooney Mara and Joaquin Phoenix and *Widows* starring Academy Award®-nominee Viola Davis.

NEIL GAIMAN – Writer

Neil Gaiman is the New York Times bestselling author of books, short stories, films and graphic novels for readers of all ages. He is listed as one of the Top Ten Living Post-Modern Writers by the Dictionary of Literary Biography. His books have been translated into thirty languages and have sold close to seven million copies overseas.

Some of his most notable titles include the novels *American Gods* (for which he received the Hugo, Nebula, Bram Stoker and Locus awards, and sold half a million copies in the UK alone), *The Graveyard Book* (the first book to ever win both the Newbery and Carnegie medals), and *The Ocean at the End of the Lane*, which was named the UK's National Book Award 2013 Book of the Year. *American Gods* is currently being adapted for television in the US and is expected to debut in 2017 on the Starz network.

Gaiman is also the creator of the hugely popular *Sandman* comics series, which was the first comic book to ever receive literary recognition when it won the World Fantasy Award for Best Short

Story. The latest installment of the series, *Sandman Overture*, was named Amazon Best Graphic novel of 2015.

Also recently published were his New York Times bestselling non fiction collection, *VIEW FROM THE CHEAP SEATS* and #1 bestselling enchantingly reimagined fairy tale, *The Sleeper and the Spindle* (with illustrations by UK Children's Laureate, Chris Riddell).

Born in the UK, he now lives in the US with his wife, the musician and writer, Amanda Palmer, and their son Anthony.

FRANK DEMARCO – Director of Photography

Frankie DeMarco (Frank G. DeMarco) is a talented cinematographer whose honors and accolades include three Independent Spirit Award nominations for his work on: J.C. Chandor's *All is Lost*, starring Robert Redford; Larry Fessenden's *Habit*; and John Cameron Mitchell's *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*.

His recent work includes: the feature film *A Good Marriage*, starring Joan Allen, Anthony LaPaglia and Kristen Connolly, based on the Stephen King short story; television movies *The Outlaws* and *Fatrick*; the pilot for TV series *Secrets & Lies*; and episodes of director Lisa Cholodenko's adaption of the hit Australian TV series *The Slap*.

Throughout his career, DeMarco has moved freely between genres, working on documentaries, features, TV shows, commercials, industrials and music videos. His other notable television work includes: the CBS telefilm *The Ordained*, directed by R.J. Cutler and starring Emmanuelle Chriqui, Sam Neill and Hope Davis; first-season episodes of AMC/Lionsgate's *Mad Men*, created by Matthew Weiner; and NBC's *Kings*, executive produced and directed by Francis Lawrence. DeMarco also lensed *Lady Dior London* and L.A.-dy Dior, TV spot/webisodes starring Marion Cotillard, which garnered international attention.

In 2010 DeMarco shot J.C. Chandor's *Margin Call*, starring Kevin Spacey, Jeremy Irons and Zachary Quinto. In the same year he completed his third collaboration with John Cameron Mitchell, *Rabbit Hole*, starring Nicole Kidman, Aaron Eckhart and Dianne Wiest.

Other film credits include *Beerfest* and *The Babymakers*, both directed by Broken Lizard's Jay Chandrasekhar; Jessica Yu's *Ping Pong Playa*, an Independent Spirit Award nominee; John Cameron Mitchell's controversial *Shortbus*, a 2006 Cannes favorite; Tom DiCillo's *Delirious*, with Steve Buscemi and Michael Pitt; Jay DiPietro's *Peter and Vandy*, starring Jason Ritter and Jess Weixler; James C. Strouse's *The Winning Season*, starring Sam Rockwell, Emma Roberts and Rooney Mara; and Ryan Shiraki's *Spring Breakdown*, starring Amy Pöhler, Rachel Dratch and Parker Posey.

Bitten by the film bug after working on a TV spot (while studying writing in Florence, Italy), DeMarco returned home to Baltimore to earn his B.A. in modern languages.

He began his career on commercials, documentaries and John Waters films shot in the area. Upon moving to New York, he served as director of photography on numerous features and documentary films including *Theremin: An Electronic Odyssey*

HELEN SCOTT – Production Designer

Helen Scott has worked extensively with director Andrea Arnold in the cinema. She designed her debut short film, *Dog*, in 2001, followed by the Oscar-winning short *Wasp* (2003) and multi-award-winning feature films *Wuthering Heights* (2011) *Fish Tank* (2009) and *Red Road* (2006). For director Clio Barnard Helen has designed *The Selfish Giant* (2013) and more recently (2016), *Dark River* with Ruth Wilson in the lead.

In television drama she has designed among others 'Some Dogs Bite', for director Marc Munden, BBC three-part drama 'Public Enemies' for director Dearbhla Walsh, 'The Politician's Husband' for director Simon Cellan-Jones, 'The Great Train Robbery' for directors Julian Jarrold and James Strong, and 'The Lost Honour of Christopher Jefferies' for director Roger Michell, for which she received an RTS Nomination. She is currently designing *The Strike Mysteries*, an adaptation of JK Rowling's Galbraith novels about detective Cormoran Strike for HBO and the BBC.

As Art Director, Scott's feature credits include Mike Leigh's *Topsy-Turvy* (1999) and *Career Girls* (1997).

SANDY POWELL – Costume Designer

Winner of three Academy Awards® for her work on *The Aviator*, for Martin Scorsese, *Shakespeare in Love*, for director John Madden and *The Young Victoria*, for Jean-Marc Vallée had also been nominated nine more times, for her work on *Carol*, *Cinderella*, *Hugo*, *The Tempest*, *Mrs. Henderson Presents*, *Gangs of New York*, *Velvet Goldmine*, *Wings of the Dove*, and *Orlando*. She also won the BAFTA Award for *The Young Victoria* and for *Velvet Goldmine* and been nominated a total of ten times. Other awards include honors from the Evening Standard for her work on *Orlando* and *Edward II*.

Powell studied at London Central School of Art and began her career in film collaborating with Derek Jarman, working on *Caravaggio* with the director. Other credits include *The Wolf of Wall Street*, *Shutter Island*, *The Departed*, *Far from Heaven*, *The Other Boleyn Girl*, *Interview with the Vampire*, *Michael Collins*, *The Butcher Boy*, and *The End of the Affair*, all with director Neil Jordan. She is currently working on *Mary Poppins Returns*.