



OFFICIAL SELECTION  
**OUT OF COMPETITION**  
FESTIVAL DE CANNES



**K A B O O M**



Why Not U.S. Productions / Desperate Pictures present  
in association with Wild Bunch and Super Crispy

# K A B O O M

A film by Gregg Araki

starring  
Thomas Dekker  
Haley Bennett  
Chris Zylka  
Roxane Mesquida  
and  
Juno Temple

Running time: 1h26 - SCOPE

## **INTERNATIONAL SALES**

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# **SYNOPSIS**

Smith's everyday life in the dorms - hanging out with his arty, sarcastic best friend Stella, hooking up with a beautiful free spirit named London, lusting for his gorgeous but dim surfer roommate Thor - all gets turned upside-down after one fateful, terrifying night.

Tripping on some hallucinogenic cookies he ate at a party, Smith is convinced he's witnessed the gruesome murder of an enigmatic Red Haired Girl who has been haunting his dreams. What he discovers as he tries to find out the truth leads him deeper and deeper into a mystery that will forever change not only the course of his young life but the destiny of the entire world.

## **DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT BY GREGG ARAKI**

At a film festival a few years ago, John Waters presented me with an award for MYSTERIOUS SKIN. While chatting backstage beforehand, he looked me in the eye and said "Y'know, 'Mysterious Skin' is great and all but I really want to see you make another old school Gregg Araki movie". I kind of laughed in response but in truth I was flattered that a bona fide icon like him would even care about what kind of movies I was making. As it turns out, I actually had been working on a script that was more of a cult type movie like DOOM GENERATION and NOWHERE - two old films of mine that fans I meet at festivals and on the street are always naming as their favorites. Not that this is meant in any way to distance myself from the last two movies I made MYSTERIOUS SKIN and SMILEY FACE. Although I didn't write their original stories, I love those movies dearly and am incredibly proud of both of them. My films really are like my children and I don't consider those two any less mine than anything I've ever done. There is however something intrinsically more personal and "me" about the movies that originated in my head - in particular that batch of small, very "free" and unhinged movies I made in the mid-90s, the Teen Apocalypse Trilogy of TOTALLY F\*\*\*ED UP, DOOM GENERATION and NOWHERE.

Not wanting to go back and repeat myself or certainly to regress artistically in any way, I was nonetheless excited about doing something as unbridled, freespirted and crazy as those earlier movies made when I was more naive and perhaps more idealistic about cinema and life in general. My starting point for KABOOM was a kind of nostalgia for those carefree days of blind youth and absolute uncertainty - when you're a freshman in university, you don't know who you are, what you're going to do or who you're going to be, your future's totally unwritten and everything in life is a question mark fraught with confusion and insecurity. The world feels so overwhelming and every choice you make, every relationship you have seems impossible and somehow doomed for catastrophe. It's a time of craziness, change, chaos, big adventures and even bigger emotions and oftentimes you feel like you might not even survive it. But in retrospect, you look back and realize those were some of the best days of your life.

Beyond this idea percolating in my head, I knew that I had always wanted to make an enigmatic and sprawling mystery like David Lynch's TWIN PEAKS. I was a very impressionable college student when that series turned American TV upsidedown and it truly rocked my world, impacting not only my work but my overall sensibility and entire life. As has been well-documented, I have always been very heavily influenced by postpunk, alternative music culture and there

was something very punk rock about TWIN PEAKS and its profound challenging of the mainstream ideal. It was fearlessly and unequivocally its own thing; it didn't care about what was expected or acceptable or even on some level, comprehensible. There was a brazen purity to it that was thrilling and new and incredibly inspiring. And while I know there's no way to create anything that can touch or compare to something so important and groundbreaking, KABOOM aspires to that show's free and pure spirit - unfettered by the restraints and insatiable demands of the mainstream and marketplace. It just wants to be its own thing, exist on its own terms and vibrate at its own anomalous frequency.

# **GREGG ARAKI - BIOGRAPHY**

Gregg Araki grew up in south California, and from a very young age was drawn to the visual arts, comics and pop music. He graduated in Film Studies from the University of Santa Barbara, and received his Masters in Film Production from USC. Araki wrote, produced and directed his first film, *THREE BEWILDERED PEOPLE IN THE NIGHT* in 1987: a love story between a video artist, her lover and her gay friend. The film won three prizes at Locarno. In 1989, he shot *THE LONG WEEKEND* (*O' DESPAIR*) in black and white, on 16mm and with a budget of \$5,000 - the same as his first film.

Garnering a strong reputation for his uncompromising, nonconformist attitude, Araki truly erupted from the underground in 1992 with *THE LIVING END*, a film about two HIV positive gay lovers which introduced a much more tragic element to his work. In 1994 he began his "Teen Apocalypse" trilogy with *TOTALLY F\*\*\*\*ED UP*; the subversion continued with *THE DOOM GENERATION*, a road movie marked by a near-despairing black comedy. Araki completed the cycle in 1997 with *NOWHERE*, which he describes as "an episode of "Beverly Hills 90210" on acid".

In 1999, Araki directed Kathleen Robertson, who had already appeared in *NOWHERE*, in the comedy *SPLENDOR*. After a period working in TV, the director was critically lauded for his treatment of the taboo subject of paedophilia in *MYSTERIOUS SKIN* (2005), an adaptation of Scott Heim's eponymous novel. Araki's film *SMILEY FACE* screened in Directors' Fortnight, in 2007.

*KABOOM* marks Gregg Araki's second selection in Cannes.

# **GREGG ARAKI - FILMOGRAPHY**

## **SMILEY FACE (2007)**

SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL – Official Selection  
CANNES FILM FESTIVAL – Directors' Fortnight  
DEAUVILLE AMERICAN FILM FESTIVAL  
TORONTO FILM FESTIVAL

## **MYSTERIOUS SKIN (2005)**

INDEPENDENT SPIRIT AWARD NOMINEE - Best Director  
ROTTERDAM FILM FESTIVAL - Young Cinema Jury Prize,  
SEATTLE INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL - Best Director and Best Actor

## **SPLENDOR (1999)**

SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL – Official Selection  
SXSW FESTIVAL  
TORONTO FILM FESTIVAL

## **NOWHERE (1997)**

SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL – Official Selection  
SXSW FESTIVAL  
DEAUVILLE AMERICAN FILM FESTIVAL

## **THE DOOM GENERATION (1995)**

SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL – Official Selection  
SXSW FESTIVAL  
VENICE FILM FESTIVAL  
TORONTO FILM FESTIVAL

## **TOTALLY F\*\*\*ED UP (1994)**

TORONTO FILM FESTIVAL – Official Selection  
NEW YORK FIM FESTIVAL  
SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL

## **THE LIVING END (1992)**

SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL – Official Selection  
BERLIN FILM FESTIVAL  
NEW YORK NEW DIRECTORS/NEW FILMS FESTIVAL

## **THE LONG WEEKEND (O' DESPAIR) (1989)**

LA Film Critics' Prize - Best Independent Feature  
LOS ANGELES AMERICAN FILM FESTIVAL

## **THREE BEWILDERED PEOPLE IN THE NIGHT (1987)**

LOCARNO FILM FESTIVAL - Bronze Leopard, Critics' Prize & Young Cinema Jury Award



# CAST

## Thomas Dekker

Thomas Dekker began his acting career at the age of 5, and played the lead in John Carpenter's VILLAGE OF THE DAMNED in 1995. Brought to the attention of a wide audience by his role as John Connor' in the TV series "Terminator: The Sarah Connor Chronicles", Dekker has recently finished shooting WASKA (Gaby Dellal) and Samuel's Beyer's remake of the Wes Craven classic A NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET. Notable credits include his role Nick Cassavetes' MY SISTER'S KEEPER, where he appeared alongside Alec Baldwin and Cameron Diaz. Thomas Dekker recently wrote, directed and starred in his third film as director, WHORE.

## Haley Bennett

After making her on screen debut opposite Drew Barrymore and Hugh Grant in the Marc Lawrence hit MUSIC AND LYRICS, Haley appeared opposite Owen Wilson and Jennifer Aniston in the hugely successful MARLEY AND ME.

Still only 22, the young star has recently worked with Phedon Papamichael on ARCADIA LOST, and Shekhar Kapur in his short film, PASSAGES, which premiered to critical acclaim at the Venice Film Festival, as well as Joe Dante's THE HOLE.

## Roxane Mesquida

Born in Marseille, Roxane Mesquida currently lives in Los Angeles.

She began her career in Manuel Pradal's MARIE BAIE DES ANGES (1998), also appearing the same year in Benoit Jacquot's L'ECOLE DE LA CHAIR (THE SCHOOL OF FLESH), which screened In Competition in Cannes, 1998.

Catherine Breillat offered Roxanne her first starring role in À MA SOEUR! They continued their collaboration in SEX IS COMEDY which opened Directors' Fortnight in 2002. In 2006, Roxane took the female lead in SHEITAN, by Kim Chapiron, before reuniting with Catherine Breillat for LA VIEILLE MAITRESSE, which screened In Competition in Cannes, 2007.

Her most recent credits include RUBBER by Quentin Dupieux (Cannes - Directors' Fortnight 2010) and Frédéric Da's THE HOLE IN THE WALL.

## Juno Temple

Juno Temple is the daughter of English director Julien Temple and producer Amanda Temple, and currently lives in Los Angeles. In just a few years she has established herself as an actress of enormous talent and versatility, appearing in films as diverse as MR NOBODY (Jaco Van Dormael), Harold Ramis' THE YEAR ONE (alongside Jack Black and Michael Cera), Justin Chadwick's THE OTHER BOLEYN GIRL and Joe Wright's ATONEMENT.

# **CAST**

Smith

Thomas Dekker

Stella

Haley Bennett

Thor

Chris Zylka

Lorelei

Roxane Mesquida

London

Juno Temple

Rex

Andy Fischer-Price

Red-Haired Girl

Nicole LaLiberte

Hunter

Jason Olive

The Messiah

James Duval

Oliver

Brennan Mejia

Nicole

Kelly Lynch

## **CREW**

Written and Directed by

Gregg Araki

Produced by

Andrea Sperling  
Gregg Araki  
Why Not U.S. Productions

Executive Producers

Sébastien K. Lemerrier  
Pascal Caucheteux  
Jonathan Schwartz

Co-producer

Pavlina Hatoupis

Associate Producer

Beau J. Genot

DP

Sandra Valde-Hansen

Production Designer

Todd Fjelsted

Costume Designer

Tracye Gigi Field

Original Music

Ulrich Schnauss  
Mark Peters  
Vivek Maddala  
Robin Guthrie

Music Supervisor

Tiffany Anders

Casting

Johanna Ray, C.S.A.,  
Jenny Jue, C.S.A.

wild bunch