



Magnolia Pictures, Ravenser Odd and Nice Dissolve

Present

# THE FEELING THAT THE TIME FOR DOING SOMETHING HAS PASSED

Directed by Joanna Arnow

Executive Producers: Sean Baker, Adam Mirels, Robbie Mirels

2024 | U.S. | 87 minutes

## Official Selection

2023 Cannes Film Festival – World Premiere, Director’s Fortnight

2023 Toronto International Film Festival, Centrepiece Section

2023 New York Film Festival, Currents Section

## FINAL PRESS NOTES

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## **SYNOPSIS**

Filmmaker Joanna Arnow's hilarious comedy, which world-premiered in Cannes' Directors' Fortnight and is executive produced by Sean Baker, follows a 30-something New York woman (Arnow) as time passes in her long-term casual BDSM relationship, low-level corporate job, and quarrelsome Jewish family.

## **Q&A WITH JOANNA ARNOW (Writer, Director, Editor, and Actor)**

**What was the starting point for THE FEELING THAT THE TIME FOR DOING SOMETHING HAS PASSED? How is this film informed by your previous films, I HATE MYSELF:), BAD AT DANCING and LAYING OUT? What were some of the subjects and themes you wanted to explore?**

My previous project that I had gotten off the ground had been delayed, and I wanted to write something new. I've always been interested in writing concise humor that does the most with the least, so I decided to write very short scenes that drew on personal experience and wrote as many as I could. I drew on experiences that were currently happening, especially listening to everyday conversation, and also things that happened in the past few years. I like finding the humor in the way people actually talk and it was a joy to write this and find the art and comedy in everything. I also had been reading a collection of Carmen Maria Machado short stories which blew me away, and made me excited about experimenting with a different type of vignette-based form.

I began making personal films starting with "i hate myself :)", because I hoped that telling stories with vulnerability and specificity would make them relatable and funny for audiences. In these films, I've explored the humor of subjects such as loneliness, sexuality and the challenges of navigating relationships. I particularly like exploring the darker humor that shows the ridiculousness of the ways we all struggle with ourselves.

**Did you write the film knowing that you would play Ann? Can you talk about developing the character – the ways in which Ann might reflect your sensibility and experiences, but also how she evolved into a distinct and separate being?**

I did know I wanted to play Ann as I wrote this, partly because I'd cast myself in my short films and felt it had worked well. Even though the character is different from me and it's not autobiographical, the film draws on personal experience and I consider it autofiction, so the casting seemed like the best fit in light of that. The personal experience I draw on always changes in story form, especially since some elements are minimized, and some amplified in the process of creating a narrative (even one that's minimalist and experimental).

**Ann's sexuality, and specifically her BDSM desires, are at the heart of this film. What was important to you in writing and acting in a film showing BDSM? Were there stereotypes or reflexive assumptions that you wanted to counter?**

A lot of people see a film like this and automatically want to assume a woman participating in BDSM somehow doesn't have agency or they pathologize what they are seeing - which I think is outrageous. It was important to me to show Ann's character as an active participant in the planning of the BDSM sessions to counter those kinds of misconceptions and fallacies. In my experience people into BDSM have to be triply communicative and respectful, and I wanted the film to convey that. In many films,

BDSM just happens without conversation, which is unrealistic and unsafe. I think it can take an incredible amount of agency and power to be submissive, and I hope the film contributes to the onscreen representation of the submissive experience.

I don't see this as a "subversive or edgy" film in terms of its portrayal of sexuality at all - sexuality is a big part of the world and human experience and BDSM/BDSM type dynamics are fairly common. The sexuality portrayed here is essential to the story and humor of the piece and filmed in a long shot/long take style that emphasizes the absurd humor and comedy of physicality.

I was also interested in exploring the in-between space in some of these relationships that straddle the casual and the intimate.

**Ann is someone who's consciously chosen to be a submissive sexual partner; you give her agency but at the same time you don't shy away from the humor that's sort of inherent in some of these scenarios ... for example, the way Ann has to scoot herself down the bed when Allen orders her to race to the wall is very funny. Can you talk about balancing a non-judgmental depiction of BDSM with humor?**

Thank you. I think sex and sexuality are often funny, especially when you look at it from a distance. That's partly why I like a long shot, long take style for some of these scenes that emphasize contextual absurdity. Bodies and the idiosyncratic way they move often says so much, and vulnerability, people trying new experiences are all areas I liked to explore with a comic lens.

**The film is divided into chapters that are named for the different men Ann sleeps with or considers dating. And there's an episodic feel to the story, like we're dipping into different moments and places in Ann's life over a period of time. Can you talk about anything that might have influenced you in structuring the film and why it worked for the story you wanted to tell.**

I was interested in using short scenes and structuring the film elliptically to give an impressionistic sense of the protagonist's experience. Time can feel like it moves slower or more quickly depending on what's going on in one's life, and I wanted the film to reflect that variation of experience, giving each section its own topography and set of formal rules. Some sections are more highly elliptical and months go by between a few scenes, while others take quite a long time to cover just a few minutes. Some sections contain many different scenes and are high energy, while others land in one place for a long time in a kind of plateau. The film's narrative was intended to subvert conventional story structure in favor of a character progression in which the protagonist changes more slowly, and the changes that do happen are smaller and more jagged in nature.

The different chapters are meant to give the audience a place to take a breath and experience differentiation in the five parts. The chapters are about more than the men they are named after, but since the film focuses on relationships it seemed appropriate –

the film isn't constructed in a neat way, so I liked that the chapter titles don't perfectly match their subject matter either. Also, "Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter... and Spring" was already taken...

**What was important to you in developing the male characters (excluding Ann's father) that we see in the film? Of Ann's BDSM partners, we spend the most time with Allen, but we also get a fair idea of who Thomas and Elliot are.**

I was hoping to show different sides of BDSM with Thomas and Elliot, both in the nature of their sexuality and personalities and develop them in contrast to Allen. I wanted Ann's arc to be fairly understated and leave room for interpretation, and hope the scenes with Thomas and Elliot give some access to the way she's exploring questions about relationships and sexuality.

We filmed in quite a large number of locations around New York City, and it was important to me that both the music studio and high rise apartment where we shot these scenes reflected a lot about these characters and their respective environments.

**We also are brought into Ann's family life and her corporate workplace, so we have a fairly complete picture of her life. Can you talk about the dynamics at play in Ann's family and at her office?**

By including work, family and friends in the story as well as relationships and sexuality, I hoped the film would take a complex look at the mosaic of experience that informs who we become. Even though people can be consistent in some ways, we're also so many different people all the time - and this often changes based on who we're sitting opposite. Traditional narrative structure has to flatten people into something more consistent so that the protagonist's journey makes causal sense, but I was interested in exploring something more multi-dimensional that I hoped would resonate with the ways people question themselves and their relationships. In the fabric of the film, there is a sense of wrestling with power dynamics, relationships and communication that occurs in all the threads from the workplace to the family - sometimes the throughlines underline similarities, sometimes they contrast.

**Did you write the roles of Ann's parents knowing that your own parents would play them? And how was it acting with them and directing them?**

I did not know that they would be playing the role of the parents. However, I did a test shoot to explore the framing and pacing of the film early in the process, and they were so great in that, I thought they would be right for the role. I rehearsed with them, along with one of my acting coaches, Hye Yun Park, who is a close friend. The characters my parents play are of course fictional, but in some ways they've also been rehearsing to say these lines for quite some time and so we tried to work with that. Directing my parents had its challenges, but it was also exciting - I don't think they know how good they are as actors (in some ways I hope it stays that way, so I can book them again next time without

having to go through their agents). I wanted to cast some non-professional actors like my parents and friends to help give the story authenticity.

**Scott Cohen and Babak Tafti play key roles as Allen and Chris. Tell me about working with them and how they fleshed out the characters you wrote.**

I was so lucky to work with both Scott and Babak on this - they both knew about the autofictional element of the piece, and we talked a lot about the characters. We had a good amount of rehearsals which were incredibly helpful for me as an actor/director, to get more of a chance to prepare. I was able to film the rehearsals and think about the scenes ahead of time too. They were both so generous as actors and people, I was moved by their commitment to the work and the way they brought these characters to life. I loved the complexity they brought to the Allen and Chris roles, along with their brilliant comedic acting.

**Alysia Reiner plays Ann's sister and the two of you have a nice, spiky rapport. How did she come to be part of this project, and what did she bring to the part?**

She's struck me for a long time as an actor with an exciting and interesting presence. I was hoping to cast someone who provided a stark contrast to the Ann character, and was so thrilled when she agreed. Alysia has been incredibly supportive and a champion for this film, and brought a lot of dimension and humor to the sister character.

**Lastly, how did you come to choose the title of this film?**

It was inspired by a scene based on one in the film close to the end. I hope it's a sentiment that's relatable for others. It felt right for a film that hopes to convey the subjective experience of the way time passes. I hope there is some humor in its angstiness and length too, the producing team and I are certainly tired of typing it out...

## **ABOUT THE CAST AND CREW**

### **JOANNA ARNOW (Writer, Director, and Actor)**

Joanna Arnow is a filmmaker, actor and writer based in Brooklyn. She wrote and directed “Bad at Dancing,” a narrative short that was awarded the Berlinale Silver Bear Jury Prize and is currently streaming on the Criterion Channel paired with “Jules and Jim.”

Joanna’s most recent short “Laying Out” premiered at New York Film Festival and was selected as a festival highlight in *The New Yorker*. She also directed several other films including the personal documentary feature “i hate myself :),” a film that was named on top ten lists at *IndieWire* and *Fandor*. Her films have screened at other festivals including Rotterdam, Hong Kong International and Guanajuato. Joanna has participated in a number of workshops and development programs including Berlinale Talents, Berlinale Script Station, Gotham Week, When East Meets West, New York Film Festival Artist Academy and Brooklyn Filmmakers Collective.

In addition to making films, Joanna works as an actor and writer. As an actor, she has appeared in Aaron Schimberg's “Chained for Life,” Zach Fleming’s “Staycation,” Todd Verow's "Fucked in the Head," Kati Skelton’s “Wet Shapes,” Collins Salovaara’s “Google Ambien,” Veronica Rutlege’s forthcoming “Citizen Zero,” and Colin Healey’s “In the Cards.” Joanna also writes fiction and draws comics. Her pieces have been published in *Glimmer Train Press*, *Popula*, *Monkeybicycle*, *Crack the Spine*, *Nanoism* and *Dogzplot*.

THE FEELING THAT THE TIME FOR DOING SOMETHING IS PASSED is her first narrative feature film.

### **BABAK TAFTI (Actor)**

Babak Tafti will next be seen in a major recurring arc on the final season of “Billions.” He was most recently seen in the leading role of “Emil Michael” in the Showtime limited series “Super Pump,” opposite Joseph Gordon Levitt and Kyle Chandler. He played the recurring role of “Eduard” on Season 2 of HBO’s “Succession” and starred opposite Haley Bennett in the independent feature SWALLOW, which premiered at the 2019 Tribeca Film Festival. Other recurring and guest star credits include “The Equalizer,” “Ramy, Bull,” “Legacies,” “Murphy Brown,” “New Amsterdam,” “Quantico,” and “Instinct.” Other TV credits include “Elementary,” “Orange is the New Black,” “Nurse Jackie,” and “Blue Bloods.”

### **SCOTT COHEN (Actor)**

Cohen is recognizable from his many character portrayals in television, theater and film. Most recently he can be seen on CBS’s hit series “East New York” and in the upcoming HBO series “Girls on the Bust” and HBO’s “Boss” with Colin Farrell. His TV work has included the series “The Fix” for ABC, “The Americans” which garnered him a SAG Award nomination, “The Sinner,” “The Bold Type,” “The

Resident,” “The Equalizer” with Queen Latifah, “Power,” and “The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel,” along with the Sundance Jury Prize winner AS YOU ARE. Cohen has a loyal following for his role as Max Medina on “Gilmore Girls” and his turn as Wolf for the now cult classic “The 10th Kingdom”. Other television credits include ‘Curb Your Enthusiasm “, “Elementary”, “Person of Interest”, “Pan Am”, “Hawaii Five-0”, and “Unforgettable”.

Cohen also serves on the Film Columbia Film Festival’s Advisory Board, teaches acting at Hunter College, and sits on the Board of the NY International Children’s Film Festival. Cohen resides in New York with writer/visual artist, Anastasia Traina.

### **ALYSIA REINER (Actor)**

Award-winning Alysia Reiner is best known for her SAG award winning role in "Fig," on seven seasons of “Orange Is the New Black,” and as Agent Sadie Deever in “Ms. Marvel.” She just finished her fifth season as Sunny on “Better Things” (nominated for a Critics Choice in 2023), her second season in STARZ’s “Shining Vale” with Courtney Cox and Greg Kinnear, as well as two seasons on “The Deuce.” She has also appeared in the Oscar winning film SIDEWAYS, an Emmy Award winning episode of “Broad City,” “How To Get Away with Murder.” She just wrapped O HORIZON with David Strathairn and Maria Bakalova. Alysia conceived of, developed, produced, and starred in the Sundance feature film EQUITY, which was distributed by Sony Pictures Classics. She produced/starred in EGG which premiered at Tribeca Film Festival.

She loves working as a change maker: she is on the board of the Geena Davis Institute for Gender in Media and Earth Day Initiative, a member of Resistance Revival Chorus, a volunteer firefighter ( yes really), and received the Acclaimed Collaborator Award from Women in Arts and Media, a MUSE “MADE IN NY” AWARD from The Mayor’s office and New York Women in Film and Television, SARAH POWELL HUNTINGTON LEADERSHIP AWARD, VOICE OF A WOMAN AWARD, the PIONEER IN FILMMAKING AWARD, and the FOUNDERS AWARD FOR SUPPORT.

### **BARBARA WEISERBS (Actor)**

Barbara Weiserbs taught Early Childhood and Special Education at Kingsborough Community College for almost 40 years. Through this experience, she learned to question, listen, observe and discuss broad ideas and important details about teaching and learning with her students.

### **DAVID ARNOW (Actor)**

David Arnow has played the role of a Computer Science professor and intermittent campus activist in an ongoing series at Brooklyn College for the past 42 years.

### **BARTON CORTRIGHT (Director of Photography)**

Barton Cortright is a cinematographer whose work has screened at festivals such as Sundance, Cannes, Venice, Tribeca, SXSW, Berlinale, New York Film Festival and many others. Recent credits include THE CATHEDRAL, which screened at the Venice



Film Festival and Sundance in 2022. *THE CATHEDRAL* went on to win the John Cassavetes Award at the 2023 Film Independent Spirit Awards.

In addition to *THE FEELING THAT THE TIME FOR DOING SOMETHING HAS PASSED*, this year he also worked on *DOWNTOWN OWL* directed by Hamish Linklater and Lily Rabe and starring Ed Harris, Vanessa Hudgens, Henry Golding and Finn Wittrock, which will premiere at Tribeca. Bart graduated from Carnegie Mellon University with a BFA in lighting design and one class short of a photography minor.

**GRACE SLOAN (Production Designer)**

Grace Sloan is a production designer, filmmaker, and props person based in NYC. She has designed eleven features, including *THE CATHEDRAL* (Ricky D'Ambrose) which received the John Cassavettes prize at the 2023 Indie Spirit awards. Other recent work includes *WE'RE ALL GOING TO THE WORLD'S FAIR* (Jane Schoenbrun, Sundance 2021), *PREMATURE* (Rashaad Ernesto Green, Sundance 2019), and *THE GREAT PRETENDER* (Nathan Silver, Tribeca 2018). She also designed *FOURTEEN* (Dan Sallitt, 2019) which received a Gotham Award and was entered into the Criterion collection. As a filmmaker, her short abstract and narrative films have screened at Telluride, Fantasia, and Hollyshorts film festivals. In addition, she is assistant props for *SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE* (2014-2023).

**NELL SIMON (Costume Designer)**

Nell Simon is a costume designer who lives in Brooklyn and works in film, television, theater, and branded content. Work includes *BAD THINGS* by Stewart Thorndike (Tribeca US Narrative Competition 2023), *THE CATHEDRAL* by Ricky D'Ambrose (Sundance 2022, Indie Spirit Award Winner 2023), *INSPECTOR IKE* by Graham Mason (New Orleans Film Festival - Winner: Jury Award), *BOOGER* by Mary Dauterman, *CHESTNUT* by Jac Cron, and *THE FRENCH ITALIAN* by Rachel Wolther.

## CREDITS

The Feeling That the Time For Doing Something Has Passed

Written, Directed and Edited by  
Joanna Arnow

Produced by  
Graham Swon  
Pierce Varous

Scott Cohen

Babak Tafti

Joanna Arnow

with  
Michael Cyril Creighton

and  
Alysia Reiner

Peter Vack  
Parish Bradley  
Rushi Birudala  
Barbara Weiserbs  
David Arnow  
Armand Reiser

Shuchi Talati  
Kent Bassett  
Ronda Swindell  
Ava Eisenson  
Brian McCarthy  
Keith Poulson  
SJ Son  
Chris Wells  
Graham Swon  
Kaija Matiss  
Josh Luxenberg  
Andrew Butler  
Jeff Ryan

Bingham Bryant  
Eleanore Pienta  
Jay Giampetro  
Leah Giampetro  
Eileen Hanley  
Jason Grisell  
Martha Shane  
Lenore Marks  
Michael Miranda

Executive Producer  
Sean Baker

Executive Producers  
Robbie Mirels  
Adam Mirels

Co-Producers  
Daniel Ryniker  
Mila Matveeva

Associate Producers  
Ross Saxon  
Adam Kersh  
Nicola Smith

Cinematographer  
Barton Cortright

Casting by  
Charlotte Arnoux

Production Designer  
Grace Sloan

Costume Designer  
Nell Simon

Hair and Makeup Artist  
Dawn Campbell

Acting Coaches  
Esy Casey  
Hye Yun Park

Sound Mixers  
Maxwell diPaolo  
Matt Liebowitz  
Edwin Diagon

Assistant Director  
Coren Helene-Gitomer

Line Producer  
Daniel Ryniker

Production Manager  
Nicholas Santos

Gaffer  
Kevin Pastor

Key Grip  
Benjamin Rummans

Additional Gaffer  
Denver Milord

Art Director  
Tommy Mitchell

Set Decorator  
Andrea Rummans

Art Production Assistant  
Hannah Fear

Additional Cinematography  
Michael Kohlbrenner

Experimental Film Cinematographer  
Charlotte Hornsby

Composer  
Robinson Senpauroca

Locations Manager  
Aldo Vassallo

Location Scouts

Dara Bruselovsky  
Jacob Hodes  
Ella Murray  
David White  
Miles Emanuel

Key Production Assistant/Driver  
Rob Morgan  
Robert Downey

Production Assistants  
Gabriella Arica  
Robert Enriquez  
Miles Emanuel  
Brigette Lopez

Additional Set Costumer  
Tucker Jahoda

Costume Consultant  
Zoe Koke

Archival Research  
Mackenzie Lukenbill

Script Breakdown  
Eva Doherty

Dating App Designer  
Jonathan Stieglitz

Re-Recording Mixer  
Eli Cohn

Colorist  
Joseph Mastantuono

Post Sound Studio  
Nocturnal Sound

Sound Editor  
Jack Sasner

DI Facility  
Nice Dissolve

Worldwide International Sales  
Loco Films

PR

Fusion Entertainment  
Emma Myers  
Sierra Slaughter

Legal Counsel  
George Rush

Production Services  
The Flies Collective

Production Consultants  
Willy McGee  
Ana Fernandez Perez

COVID Testing Provided by  
Project Indie Hope

Covid Compliance Officer  
Nicholas Santos

Associate Producer  
Charlie Phoenix

Co-Executive Producer  
Gerry Pass

"Dancing Dancing"  
Composed by Monica Hyde  
ISWC: T-010.204-953-5  
Published by De Wolfe Ltd.  
Courtesy of De Wolfe Ltd.

"A Love Letter to You"  
Composed by Andy Quinn  
ISWC: T-300.010.983-7  
Published by De Wolfe Ltd.  
Courtesy of De Wolfe Ltd.

"Rollercoaster"  
Performed by Mighty Moon  
Composed by Jay Giampietro  
Courtesy of Mighty Moon

"Cottage Garden"  
Composed by David Tate  
ISWC: T-307.366.501-3  
Published by Synctracks Ltd.  
Courtesy of De Wolfe Ltd.

"Menagerie"  
Composed and Performed by  
Robinson Senpauroca

"Songe"  
Performed by Good Intentions  
From the Album "Devotion Comes Easy to Me"  
Composed by Gregg Belisle-Chi  
Courtesy of Good Intentions

"O Holy Night"  
Composed by Christopher Herald  
ISWC: T-312.744.741-6  
Published by Hudson Music Co. LTD  
Courtesy of De Wolfe LTD

"J'amerais Partir Avec Toi"  
Lyrics by Christophe Andreani  
Music by Robinson Senpauroca  
Performed by Eileen Hanley & Jason Grisell

"Solidarity Forever"  
Lyrics by Ralph Chaplin  
Composition Traditional  
Performed by David Arnow

"The Prisoner of Azkaban"  
Composed by Joanna Arnow

"In the Act"  
Composed and Performed by  
Robinson Senpauroca



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