

SHE CAN'T SEEM TO ESCAPE HER DEEPEST DESIRES AS THEY COME BULGING TO LIFE.

INNER FREAK



A FILM BY KATE MONIG AND DEREK CUNEO

PRESS KIT

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US • JUNE 2023 • 5 MINS 20 SEC • ENGLISH



LOGLINE

Gray is a socially awkward and sexually repressed 20-something chick. No matter how hard she tries to ignore it all, she can't seem to escape her deepest desires as they come bulging to life.

SYNOPSIS

Petting the cat, damning the beaver, flicking the bean. No matter what you call it, Gray just can't quite get herself to do it. In this NSFW dark comedy, Gray's life is tossed into chaos when she begins to explore her sexual desires - like her thirst for intimate luchadores and a toe-nail biting fetish. When shame and self-doubt take hold, she is confronted by her own horny hand coming to life to help her act out her deepest desires. **'Inner Freak'** brings viewers on the whacked out adventure that is the experience of sexual awakening for so many. Get ready to paddle the pink canoe into this fever dream.

BACKGROUND

The 'Inner Freak' characters and world originally came from the mind of **Kate Monig** - looking to express her experiences with sexual repression and to create something with her distinctive art style. She met **Derek Cuneo** through a filmmaking channel on social media, where he was actively looking for his next project to direct, produce, and animate. And it just so happened that he had his own experiences with sexual repression and a vision to create something that fit the late-night comedy vibe. After a few (online) meetings, it became clear this concept was something they both genuinely connected together with and they began expanding out the stories and concepts into something they were both excited for and ready to create. During the entire process of creating this film, neither had actually met in person - and they are only meeting for the first time at the Florida Film Festival for the film's debut.



MEET THE FILMMAKERS



Director | Writer | Producer | Animation Director
www.derekcuneo.com | [@derek_animates](https://twitter.com/derek_animates)

Derek Cuneo is an award-winning filmmaker and independent animator from Massachusetts. He enjoys creating short films inspired by 90s cartoons and late night animation. He currently resides in Colorado, where he spends most of his time cooped up in his home studio playing with keyframes and singing to his dogs.



Director | Writer | Producer | Art Director
www.katemonig.com | [@katemonig](https://twitter.com/katemonig)

Kate Monig is an independent illustrator and writer who loves creating surreal and colorful worlds, full of unusual, yet relatable characters. She currently lives in Los Angeles and has recently returned to university, where she double majors in Film and 2D Illustration. She likes instant coffee and making butt jokes.



DIRECTORS' STATEMENTS

Kate Monig - The inspiration for Inner Freak came from my history of dealing with sexual repression. Growing up Catholic, I was taught that “sex is sacred”. I consider Inner Freak to be my blasphemous rebellion, fueled by my personal experience. I’m not here to convince you that sex isn’t sacred, or that it isn’t special- I’m just here to point out that it can also be weird, and hilarious!

Derek Cuneo - As a queer filmmaker, stories that explore the off-beat and gray areas of sexuality are really exciting to me. When Kate first approached me with this character, Gray, I immediately saw some of myself in her “internal” struggle with her desires. And as an animator, this film was a wonderful opportunity to create something truly weird and fun.

CASTING

The casting came together relatively organically. **Steph Tolev’s** raunchy stand-up comedy and in-your-face comedic timing was the natural choice for Hand. After seeing her as Bill Burr’s opening act and as a featured comic on his Netflix special “Friends who Kill,” the directors knew they’d made the right decision to bring her on board for this character. Kate was encouraged to take on the character of Gray - as the character was her original creation and ultimately based on her. And then finally, **Yvette Green** was ready and poised to play the whacked-out Grammy.

PRODUCTION & POST-PRODUCTION

The film was created during the height of the pandemic, with both Derek and Kate working from their individual home studios. As such, this film was produced entirely remotely - with Kate working out of Los Angeles. and Derek out of Denver. Audio designer, Yannis Brown, started the audio production out of Seattle, but ultimately relocated to Australia where he finished the audio design there.



PRODUCTION CREDITS

WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY:
KATE MONIG AND DEREK CUNEO

STORY BY:
KATE MONIG

ART DIRECTOR:
KATE MONIG

ANIMATION DIRECTOR:
DEREK CUNEO

GRAY:
KATE MONIG

HAND:
STEPH TOLEV

GRAMMY:
YVETTE GREEN

AUDIO DESIGN:
YANNIS BROWN

INNER FREAK THEME BY:
ANDREW RDESINSKI, JUSTIN HOPF, SCOTT BLAYDON, AND MICHELLE HARVEN

PRODUCED BY:
DEREK CUNEO

PRODUCED BY:
KATE MONIG

FAQS

1. How were you able to fund the project?

The total budget for this project was \$1000. Kate and Derek funded the entire film out of pocket. They wrote, illustrated, animated, and directed the entire film in late hours after work and spare time between classes. “We did everything we could to get this project across the finish line within our budget and under 2 years,” said Derek. “There was a point during the animation process where I was evacuated from my house due to the Marshall Fires in Colorado. I ended up doing a lot of animating from a laptop in a tiny hotel room. Not ideal, but it ended up being totally worth it.”

For the parts of the film they couldn't do on their own, they got scrappy. Kate found friends to help with voice acting at no cost and Derek connected with peers he'd previously worked with to complete the audio-design for a low rate.

2. What was the inspiration for the film?

Sex is weird, but feeling weird about sex is weirder. The inspiration for 'Inner Freak' came from Kate and Derek's separate experiences with just that. Kate's experience with growing up in a religious household wrought with sexual shame fueled the inspiration for the creation of the story's main characters. And Derek's history wrestling with his bisexuality allowed him to immediately connect with the concept.

Aesthetically, the duo was inspired by the absurdity of early adult swim shows and the wild leaps that some modern adult animations have taken in storytelling. They looked to shows like Aqua Teen Hunger Force, Bojack Horseman, and Big Mouth as examples of the weird and bold storytelling they aspired to create.

3. I really enjoyed the film, but I don't completely understand it?

You don't get it? Derek and Kate aren't offended. When Derek showed the film to his mother-in-law, she called it disturbing and his dad said it “invokes an odd sensation of repulsiveness.” While Derek and Kate wanted to create a bizarre, sometimes stomach-churning story designed to address the mental distress sexual repression can cause, they intentionally left the interpretation up to the audience.

Has Gray's hand actually come to life or is it in her imagination? Will my hand come to life if I don't relieve myself when the mood strikes? The creators can't say.

4. How long did the project take?

The initial story and screenplay took about 4 months to write. Pre-production lasted about 6 months. The animation, illustration, and voice acting (with editing for animation) took another 9 months to produce. Sound and music recording and editing took another 4 months. From the start of the screenplay to the completion of the film took just under 2 years.

FAQS CONTINUED

5. Tell me about the illustration and animation process?

Both the illustration and animation processes were a joint effort, with Kate leading as the Art Director and Derek leading as the Animation Director. While Kate was creating the characters, expression sheets, and color palettes, Derek was creating the character rigs, mouth shapes, and planning a general workflow for production. While Derek was in the throes of animation, Kate was creating the backgrounds, props, and any other necessary illustrated assets for the production.

6. What is your goal for the film?

The main goal of the film was to entertain audiences with a story and premise that was equal parts weird and cathartic. Both Derek and Kate understand how tumultuous sexual repression can be and they wanted to create this film for people to enjoy, laugh at, and relate to - whether that be someone questioning their sexuality, someone raised to feel shame about sex, or anyone who has ever felt like a “freak” for their attractions.

This film was also created to show off Kate’s ability to illustrate wild characters and Derek’s ability to bring them to life.

7. What was your favorite part of the production?

They both really loved the collaborative effort. Neither Derek nor Kate could have created a film like this without the other - and there were many times where this collaboration gave them both the chance to explore the depths of illustration and animation and grow from it.

8. What are your hopes for distribution?

Kate and Derek hope this film serves as a springboard to help meet other creatives and connect with the filmmaking community. They’ve also written and prepared ‘Inner Freak’ as a multi-part series - with the ultimate goal being to get funding to produce more episodes and, hopefully, tell the full story.