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EXCLUSIVE

Sex ed as art film

A new series about sex -- on Showtime this weekend -- dares to make movies for teens by teens.

By Amy Benfer

Feb. 14, 2003 |

A nonprofit company called Scenarios has created a concept that just might be the first of its kind: The sex education video as art film.

Here's how it works: Each year, Scenarios solicits screenplays for short films from students between the ages of 12 and 22. The writers of the five winning screenplays are then paired with a professional filmmaker to make their movie.

It's a project brilliant in its simplicity. The movies are relevant, because the scripts are written by teens for teens. And they are without a doubt the hippest, best-edited, most entertaining sex ed videos ever made.

The roster of directors that have worked with Scenarios, founded two years ago by Maura Minsky and Kristin Joiner, include David Frankel ("[Sex and the City](#)"), Doug Liman ("[Swingers](#)" and "[Go](#)"), Tamara Jenkins ("[Slums of Beverly Hills](#)"), and [Michael Apted](#) ("[7-Up](#)" series, "[Gorillas in the Mist](#).")

Salon talked with two teenage girls whose films have been made by Scenarios. Verena Faden, 19, worked with Frankel to make her movie "Just Like You Imagined," a story about three couples in Miami dealing with gay romance, one-night stands and HIV. Sophia Tavernakis co-wrote "Lipstick" with four other teens. The movie, which Apted directed, follows a star soccer player who is coming out to her friends. (The series airs Feb. 14, 15, and 16 on Showtime.)

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