

MONO GENERATION



TRT 3:45, Color, MiniDV, 4:3, USA, Subtitles available

Stills: <http://bit.ly/2bfg9AD>

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SYNOPSIS

In 2005, Lena Dunham starred in a short video by Keil Troisi and A.W. Strouse. Endless problems plagued production—from the scatterbrained script, to the cast’s dorm-room partying, to Strouse’s seedy romance with Dunham.

Eleven years later, Troisi and Strouse have reunited to spawn “Mono Generation.” This poetic short documentary reframes their original footage into a nostalgic commentary about celebrity, the War on Terror, and mononucleosis.

CAST & CREW

Director, Producer, Editor: Keil Troisi is a filmmaker known for *Human Resources* (2015) and ongoing collaborations with the Yes Men.

Writer, Producer, Actor: A.W. Strouse is a poet who teaches medieval literature at the City University of New York. He is the author of *My Gay Middle Ages* (punctum, 2015), *Thebes* (Jerk Poet, 2015), and *Retractions and Revelations* (Jerk Poet, 2014).

Actor: Lena Dunham is the creator and star of *Girls* (HBO), the writer, director, and star of *Tiny Furniture* (2010), and the author of *Not That Kind of Girl* (Random House, 2014).

Additional cast: Chelsea Greenwood, Peter Ratzloff

FAQ

Did Strouse actually infect Dunham with mononucleosis?

Yes. And it wasn't pretty.

What was the inspiration for the video?

We made a crumby video back in art school. At that time, Greenwich Village had become a boring shopping mall, while the War on Terror bred mind-numbing conformity. Our video failed to disrupt the tedium. But, in retrospect, we wanted to do honor to our failures.

What was the process of making this video?

Over the course of one day in January of 2005, the cast improvised scenes based on Strouse's short story, "The Eskimos of Sixth Avenue." Filming took place in Washington Square Park and nearby in Troisi's apartment. The footage remained unedited until 2016, when Strouse and Troisi reframed the work as a poetic documentary.

What is a poetic documentary?

A poetic documentary uses video and narration to document the spirit of a moment.

What is the spirit of this moment?

Monotony and mononucleosis.

The story is told with a voice-over. Why did you decide to tell the story this way?

Strouse's monologue locates his experience of the footage within a particular period of cultural torpor, a maneuver that elevates his personal, careerist resentment into a commentary about a generation's missed appointment with destiny.

What format did you shoot the video on?

The video was shot in 4x3 square aspect ratio—the format of all missed appointments with destiny.

Does this video cynically exploit Dunham's celebrity, and would such exploitation constitute an anti-feminist gesture?

If that's your bag. But you might also view the video as a form of campy, working-class activism.

What do you think the essence of this movie is about?

Mono Generation is about finally resigning ourselves to the fact that this generation only has one dumb ambition: to go viral.