

SHORT FILM

PRESS KIT

SOPHIE COHEN

MICHAEL LINDSAY

Male entitlement gets the dance it never asked for.

## PRESS KIT

A film by  
SOPHIE COHEN  
MICHAEL LINDSAY

Starring  
HOLLY HOYLAND  
LEON OCKENDEN

# The Red Room



HOUSE OF VIXENS AND 16OZ FILMS PRODUCTION PRODUCED BY SOPHIE COHEN MICHAEL LINDSAY TAMSIN LOWER  
ASSOCIATE PRODUCER LORNA HALL DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY BRENDAN MCGINTY EDITED BY MICHAEL LINDSAY PRODUCTION DESIGNER ELFIDE OZTURK  
CASTING BY CAITLIN JOSEPH SOPHIE COHEN WRITTEN & DIRECTED BY SOPHIE COHEN MICHAEL LINDSAY

HOUSE  
OF  
VIXENS

CONTACT TAMSIN LOWER PRODUCER +44 (0) 2088020805 tamsin@16oz.co.uk

The background of the entire page is a dark red, textured mesh or grid pattern, resembling a stage curtain or a fine screen. The pattern is slightly wavy and has a subtle gradient of red tones.

## SYNOPSIS

We open this tale with the sight of a bloodied, handsome well-to-do man, staggering around East London. We close the film enjoying a rare glimpse into the everyday backstage camaraderie of women who strip for a living.

What lies between is a whodunnit without the traditional victim or perpetrator. If there is a perpetrator, it is masculine entitlement fuelled by ridiculous ideas about female bodies. The only real victim of this film is the traditional easy trope of sensationalised violence against women and our persistent societal dishonesty about sex work.

Please note, this story is not an easy conceit for the benefit of an audience to enjoy yet another male gaze romp stacked inside a neo feminist sex positive gag.

Every frame is shot from the perspective of the women who have worked, or continue to work there. There is no traditional stripper nudity. If you want that, no shame or self-flagellation needed, just go pay your money and respect the service.



# ABOUT THE PRODUCTION

*The RedRoom* is a film that is unique in its legitimate authorship within a space often fetishized or derided and frequently misrepresented. Co-writer/director Sophie Cohen's lived experience in sex work is vital for truly understanding the nuance of portraying this world accurately. Reclaiming the sex work aesthetic borrowed by pop culture and placing it within its raw human framework.

The location for the film, Browns in Shoreditch East London, is one of the last strip pubs to survive in an area of complete gentrification. Sophie was a stripper there for 13 years herself. Every pound in the pot from her years working, Sophie used to pursue and finance her artistic career. Browns isn't just a background for this story to unfold, it is also a significant part of Sophie's journey.

Shot in one day, the film features predominately a cast of genuine sex workers and punters. Some of the punters choose to sit in the shadows, but their support for the project is not undermined by their electing to be anonymous. For the directors this support was essential for baking in as many layers of truth as possible.

The film starts in the outside world full of people that are not traditionally seen as welcome in strip pubs and clubs. As the whodunnit conceit guides us inside, we glimpse an eclectic group of men sitting silent and alone on a quiet midweek lunchtime – a strange awkward diversity that lacks modern universal inclusivity.

*The RedRoom* pulls back the curtain on an often-misunderstood world, by including the real communities that operate within it and revealing the authentic experience of the women who work in this unconventional environment. Leon Ockenden playing the male lead Hugo, is the only professional actor in the project with no sex-work experience.



# TESTEMONIALS

"I felt genuinely supported by Directors Sophie and Michael, as well as Leon my co-star, who expertly guided me through the process. Despite my initial nervousness during rehearsals, their encouragement transformed my comfort level, allowing me to feel just as at ease in front of the camera as I do on stage every night at the club. I thoroughly enjoyed my involvement in **The RedRoom** project. The entire journey, from its beginning to end, captivated me, especially given my status as an untrained actor."

- **HOLLY HOYLAND**  
STRIPPER & LEADING FEMALE ACTOR

"I found being part of **The RedRoom** very refreshing. As an actress and fellow sex worker I have been in many productions that discussed sex work and sex workers, but very few or none that have consulted with sex workers let alone actually starred and featured them. It was great to be attached to something that was about the real people as well as created by them in front and behind the camera."

- **MEGAN PRESCOTT**  
STRIPPER & ACTIVIST

"I first saw Sophie strip in Clerkenwell 17 years ago and was immediately struck by the cinematic quality she brought to the stage. I have followed her career from underground cabaret nights all the way to **The RedRoom**, the most accurate representation I have personally witnessed of what it felt like to be a client in this specialised space."

- **GARRY S.**  
PUNTER & SOPHIE'S SUPERFAN

"I was the only professional actor in this film. For everyone else it was lived experience that put them in the project. The two Directors created a process for us all that really allowed everyone to be at their supportive best, and I do hope this benefits the audience as much as it helped me."

- **LEON OCKENDEN**  
LEADING MALE ACTOR



**“EVERYTHING IN THE WORLD IS ABOUT SEX, EXCEPT SEX.  
SEX IS ABOUT POWER.”**

**– OSCAR WILDE**

## **DIRECTORS STATEMENTS**

*The RedRoom* is a reworking of a true event that happened to a friend of ours and it works perfectly as a short film. The framework of a hidden gag both drives the narrative forward, while allowing an interesting window to share a regularly misrepresented world. We get to use a glamorous cinematic grammar to drive sideways to a simple naked truth.

Even beautiful bodies are far more complex and multifaceted than the simple commercial objectifications we see all around us. Cinema loves beautiful women bleeding - just not this way.

**SOPHIE & MICHAEL**



# DIRECTORS STATEMENTS

## SOPHIE COHEN

As a storyteller, who is always mining in the shadows beneath the polite veneer we shroud our sexual lives with, it is only natural I return again to sex work. Many things are laid bare within the confines of a strip club, but ironically the most interesting thing laid bare is not women's bodies.

I fearlessly dived into sex work at the age of eighteen, not because I did not have other options but because all the available alternatives were fucking boring. Operating in the heart of what makes us human, I have used sex work from stripping, doming, to curating erotic experiences for couples as a kink concierge, which have financed and fed into my theatrical and cinematic art over the last 23 years.

By living my formative years in this parallel universe, I have absorbed a lens on the truth of being human for all its beauty and brutality. As a film maker I need to share this knowledge and understanding and challenge the worlds perspective of sex, sex work, relationships, and everything that connects us to our secret selves.

The RedRoom is a brief portal into the depths of a real strip club. The male entitlement, the normalisation of bleeding as just another work hazard to be fluffed off with cake and camaraderie. For women like us, this is a regular quiet day in the club.



# DIRECTORS STATEMENTS

## MICHAEL LINDSAY

As a director I spent too much of my career creating commercials that as well as selling beauty products also reinforced problematic ideas about gender, beauty, and sexuality. I am therefore delighted to engage with Sophie Cohen on The RedRoom. Sophie's first instinct is as a 'sex terrorist' and this story gives us a small opportunity to expressing this instinct within an amusing fun tale. I suspect she would always have been a provocateur, but her previous work life allowed her access to examining the marginalised world of sex work (from the inside). This has given her a genuinely refreshing and unique perspective/take on what it is to be human. Her lens is formed in the shadows of our sexual culture, and it sees us all with an uncomfortable and comic brutality.

As a cis man who is constantly embarrassed and disappointed by the attitude of my gender towards female bodies, I love work that challenges some of our wrongs from a fun, easy-going, non-didactic position. We need more of Sophie's co-workers to shout their truth as I feel this is the perfect antidote to men's fragile, often offensive, and painfully predictable response to any real demonstration of feminine power that is ultimately, completely indifferent to them. The attentive indifference of women working in a strip club shouldn't upset and confuse some men as much as it does and hopefully this film addresses this a little.



# KEY CREDITS

## CAST BIOGRAPHIES



### HOLLY HOYLAND

Born and raised in North London, 32-year-old Holly Hoyland has been stripping world-wide since the age of 18. After training as a professional dancer Holly set her sights on becoming an international career stripper. She met co-director Sophie Cohen in the belly of the strip club back in 2013 and they forged a creative performing relationship together, developing cabaret vignettes for House of Vixens. With a career spanning over 12 years at 20 different clubs, Holly was the perfect and only person who could embody the role of Elektra.



### LEON OCKENDEN

Leon Ockenden is an English actor, director and writer who works in TV, film, theatre and radio. He grew up in the resort town of Looe, Cornwall. He is best known for his role as Norman Jayden in Heavy Rain.

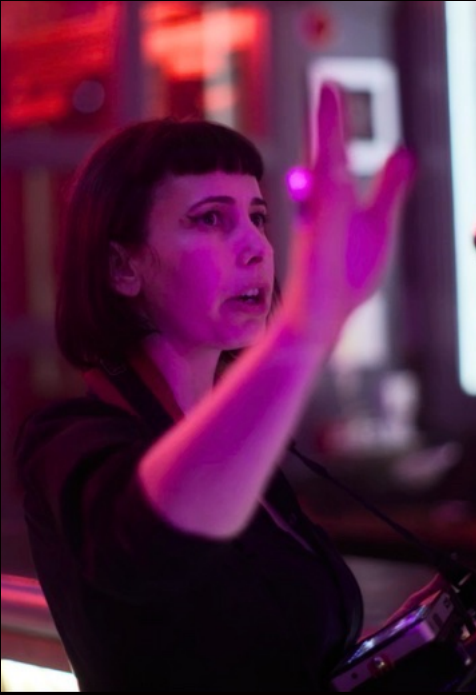
TV includes: Ancient Empires, Whistable Pearl, Why Didn't They Ask Evans?, Father Brown, Coronation Street, The Coroner, Mr Selfridge, Waterloo Road, Casualty, Open Desert, The Best Possible Taste, The Man Who Stopped World War Three, An Old Fashioned Christmas, The Runaway, Identity, New

Tricks, Secret Diary of a Call Girl, Heartbeat, Warriors: Richard the Lionheart, Tripping Over, Totally Frank, Family Affairs, Hawking, Hustle, Judge John Deed, Midsomer Murders, The Private Life of Samuel Pepys, King John.

Film includes: The Lair, The Reckoning, Ria, Across the River, The Cosmonaut, Red Tails, Dread, Mr Wright.

# KEY CREDITS

WRITER / DIRECTOR / PRODUCER  
BIOGRAPHIES



## SOPHIE COHEN

The founder and director of House of Vixens - a cult underground erotic theatre company - while simultaneously curating intimate experiences for men, women and couples as a stripper, dominatrix, and kink concierge. Sophie's work has spanned across digital art through her interactive film *La Petite Mort*, podcast producer of the wildly popular *Strippers in the Attic*, theatre director, and now fully stepping into the space of film director with *The RedRoom* and future slate of cinematic tales from her unparalleled world.



## MICHAEL LINDSAY

Michael is a commercials director and also produces title sequences for features and TV. Michael has an innate ability to get to the kernel of a story, finding its beauty and bringing a strong marriage of creative curiosity and technical expertise. He recently completed a residency as creative director at *Infringe* magazine, which explores and challenges perceptions of beauty and provided him with an opportunity to tell non-commercial stories he feels deserve to be told. Michael is the founder of 16oz Films & Studio.

# KEY CREDITS

## ASSOCIATE PRODUCER BIOGRAPHY



### LORNA HALL

Prior to her career in production, Lorna was an erotic performer for House of Vixens working with Sophie Cohen to create bespoke theatre and film productions as well as luxury live events.

She has worked on many productions from music videos to advertising campaigns and was Contracts and Events Manager at the Advertising Producer's Association. Currently, Lorna is head of the advertising department for No Sheet Music.



# KEY CREDITS

For this film we were committed to having a truly representative cast. Our first priority was to work with performers who have significant experience in this space. This is a story about sex work, set in a sex workers environment so working with people who understand, inhabit and create those spaces was imperative. We want to include them in the story being told. The knowledge they bring is crucial.

## STRIPPERS

### **TETA-MARIA STONE**

“I loved my pregnant body but in the performance world I was having to hide it, I felt it made other people uncomfortable. So when you were thrilled for me to do the job and proudly feature my pregnancy, that was a really wonderful feeling.”



### **KRYSTAL TREVILLION**

“Because strippers are so marginalised I think it makes us more accepting of diversity. I loved showing how incredibly inclusive our community is, with its lack of prejudice for people, in particular those often infantilised within a sexual space.”



# KEY CREDITS

## STRIPPERS



### DEMI NOIRE

“When I walk away from doing a Vixen’s gig, I just think ‘oh my god, I am FINE!’ We are all beautiful, wonderful women, happy embracing our sex as it were; and I don’t mean gender, I mean actual sex! I always come home feeling a bit flirty, a bit kinky... after doing a powerful intense art piece. Again in *The RedRoom*, like always when working with Sophie, I just walked away feeling like I was hot shit.”

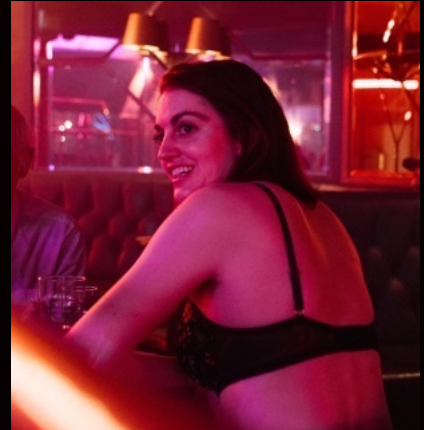
### MEGAN PRESCOTT



### KATIE GROARK



### CHARLOTTE SILVEY



### AMY KITTS

“Being part of *The RedRoom* project felt like a celebration of something that is often misunderstood in film and media. It wasn’t assuming, it wasn’t mocking, It was just real and as a sex worker myself I could relate.”



# KEY CREDITS

Once again with our strip club punters, we were able to cast a number of professional actors and men who were both Sophie and Holly's long-time clients, with whom they created great professional relationships over the years. These people understand the space and bring another layer of truth to our set and our story, which was invaluable for the film.

## PUNTERS



# TECHNICAL INFO

<b>TITLE</b>	<b>The RedRoom</b>	<b>ASPECT RATIO</b>	2.39:1
<b>COUNTRY OF PRODUCTION</b>	United Kingdom	<b>DELIVERY FORMAT</b>	@ 24p 4096x1716 with DCP / Matted UHD MXF/QT @ 25fps
<b>DATE OF COMPLETION</b>	January 2024	<b>SOUND FORMAT</b>	5.1with DCP / Stereo
<b>SHOOTING FORMAT</b>	8K R3D	<b>RUN TIME</b>	8 minutes 42 seconds @ 24fps
<b>CAMERA</b>	Red Monstro, Red Raptor	<b>LANGUAGE</b>	English
<b>LENSES</b>	Arri Signature Primes, TLS Canon Dream		

## LOG LINE

A bloodied man unravels in masculine entitlement as we delve into a diverse world of women who defy the traditional narrative that surrounds sex work.

## ONE LINER

Male entitlement gets the dance it never asked for.

# CONTACT DETAILS

**WRITER / DIRECTOR / PRODUCER** Sophie Cohen  
sophie@houseofvixens.com + 44 (0) 7739 171 336  
Michael Lindsay  
michael16oz@me.com +44 (0) 7961 359 897

**PRODUCER** Tamsin Lower  
tamsin@16oz.co.uk +44 (0) 20 8802 0805

**PRODUCTION COMPANY** 16oz Ltd



House of Vixens

# DOWNLOADABLE LINKS

## BEHIND THE SCENES STILLS

[HTTPS://DRIVE.GOOGLE.COM/DRIVE/FOLDERS/1FSNOKATXZ88U2JHWP55BKVOG9MVL26B?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1FSNOKATXZ88U2JHWP55BKVOG9MVL26B?usp=sharing)

## BEHIND THE SCENES VIDEO

[HTTPS://DRIVE.GOOGLE.COM/DRIVE/FOLDERS/1R5IYKEN9DY1CZ5DPG-K4UN-GXQ-BXEW5?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1R5IYKEN9DY1CZ5DPG-K4UN-GXQ-BXEW5?usp=sharing)

## PROMOTIONAL STILLS

[HTTPS://DRIVE.GOOGLE.COM/DRIVE/FOLDERS/15WFD7DXYZYH-J4DMUQZ0ZBKKSUJMBXT?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/15WFD7DXYZYH-J4DMUQZ0ZBKKSUJMBXT?usp=sharing)

## FILM POSTER

[HTTPS://DRIVE.GOOGLE.COM/DRIVE/FOLDERS/1RWKNXJ6VVEFR\\_LCJP-5APEPO-S12MS-A?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1RWKNXJ6VVEFR_LCJP-5APEPO-S12MS-A?usp=sharing)

## FILM TRAILER

[HTTPS://DRIVE.GOOGLE.COM/DRIVE/FOLDERS/18ESUGM9SERG70GJ0Q60YGH5EGW8EWM5P?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/18ESUGM9SERG70GJ0Q60YGH5EGW8EWM5P?usp=sharing)

# FULL CREDITS

STARRING

**HOLLY HOYLAND & LEON OCKENDEN**

WRITTEN AND DIRECTED

**SOPHIE COHEN & MICHAEL LINDSAY**

STRIPPERS

**DEMI NOIRE . MEGAN PRESCOTT . KATIE GROARK  
TETA-MARIA STONE . AMY KITTS . CHARLOTTE SILVEY KRYSTAL  
TREVILLION . SASHA WEERA . JADA FIERCE  
. DANIELLE ANDREAN .**

PUNTERS

**JIMMY D. PARASKEVOPOULOS . IFFY AFZAL  
ARTHUR WOODARD . KEITH HEPPENSTALL . TONY KONG  
KRISH RAM . JAY BHASIN . MAURO CARRERO  
JOE MACK . LEX MILCZAREK . JOEL MARCUS**

BAR STAFF

**DEBBIE COSTELLO . ALEXANDRA MONTEIRO**

PRODUCED BY

**SOPHIE COHEN . MICHAEL LINDSAY . TAMSIN LOWER**

**ASSOCIATE PRODUCER . . . . . LORNA HALL  
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY . . . . . BRENDAN MCGINTY  
PRODUCTION DESIGNER . . . . . ELFIDE OZTURK  
EDITOR . . . . . MICHAEL LINDSAY  
SOUND DESIGNER . . . . . ELLIOT JEFFRIES  
1ST ASSISTANT DIRECTOR . . . . . SERKAN NIHAT  
2ND AD, ASSISTANT PRODUCER . . . . . RITA ROSA MONTEIRO  
ADDITIONAL PHOTOGRAPHY . . . . . CHARLIE PERERA  
FOCUS PULLER . . . . . FELICE GOIA  
CAMERA ASSISTANT . . . . . EMMA JANSON  
GAFFER . . . . . TOM BRYAN**

# FULL CREDITS

SOUND RECORDIST . . . . . **AYKUT EVIN**  
BOOM OPERATOR . . . . . **OZKAN COSGUN**  
ART DEPARTMENT ASSISTANT . . . . . **HAIYAN XUE**  
HAIR STYLIST . . . . . **KIERON WEBB**  
MAKEUP ARTIST . . . . . **JO SUGAR**  
PRODUCTION ASSISTANT . . . . . **HASADRI FREEMAN**  
SET PHOTOGRAPHER . . . . . **PANOS DAMASKINIDIS**  
BTS VIDEO . . . . . **ARCHIE THOMAS**  
CASTING . . . . . **CAITLIN JOSEPH & SOPHIE COHEN**  
COLOURIST . . . . . **MICHAEL LINDSAY**

## STREET PICK UP DAY

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT . . . . . **ALEX SCAGLIA**  
WARDROBE ASSISTANT . . . . . **FLO PAWLEY**

## STREET PEDESTRIANS

**VIVIAN NGUYEN . IVY TRAN . MATT SKULLY**  
**KAZ KANE . CASSIE BOEHME . LILY DAWSON**  
**MARIE MØLLER KRISTENSEN . GARRY STRUTT . ESIN NIHAT**

## MUSIC

**KLEZMER STEP . . . BOB BRADLEY**  
**YOU WANT MY . . . LOTTY LUSH**  
AND ADDITIONAL MUSIC PUBLISHED BY AUDIO NETWORK

## SPECIAL THANKS

**SERKAN NIHAT . NADIDE NIHAT . CONNIE HENDERSON**  
**VIOLA WYSZYNSKA . TRAVIS HEFFEREN . BORIS MEISTER**

## DENISE

. FOR ALLOWING US TO FILM AT BROWNS .

## 160Z STUDIO

. FOR ALL CAMERAS, LENSES, LIGHTING AND POST-PRODUCTION .

## GUILTFREE

. FOR THE 5.1 SOUND MIX .