

THE WHEELS OF HEAVEN

Directed by: Ben Charles Edwards

Produced by : Dessy Tenekedjieva

Production Company: Black Sea Film

Story By: Ben Charles Edwards & Dessy Tenekedjieva

Screenplay By: Mike Shilliam

Country: Bulgaria / UK

Languages Spoken: English

Year: 2024 , **Duration:** 114 minutes

Starring Mickey Rourke, Gary Stretch, Dessy Tenekedjieva, Geoff Bell, Eleonora Ivanova and Dimitar Nikolov

With special appearance by Nicky Whelan and Lee Ryan

Additional cast: Mihail Mutafov, Svetlana Yancheva, Radina Borshosh, Iliyan Stamenkov, Ovanes Torosian, Kate Nickols, Blagovest Blagoev, Natt Weller, Neli Beshirova, Dimitar Banenkin, Emil Kamenov, Katya Rose, Bistra-Ijeoma Okereke, Nadya Duke, Violeta Chelsea, Dumisani Karamanski, Dimitar Kovachev – Funky

DOP Dennis Madden

Original music: House of Noise

Production Designer and Costumes: Trinity Tristan

Art Director: Stamena Stoeva

Executive Producers: Gary Stretch, Dessy Tenekedjieva, Nelly Beshirova, Yosif Kambarev, Philip McKenzie, Kirsty Bell, Ben Charles Edwards, Kinmerly Hinnes, Ian Stack

Co-Producer: Kirsty Bell / Goldfinch Entertainment

In association with NOVA FILM and Dreamtown

Associate Producers: Emile Razpopov, Dessie Markovsky, Steffan Gemünden, Peter Popov, Never Know Production

DEADLINE

<https://deadline.com/2022/10/mickey-rourke-the-wheels-of-heaven-dessy-tenekedjieva-bulgaria-1235148716/>

FILMNEWEUROPE

<https://www.filmneweurope.com/news/bulgaria-news/item/124127-production-bulgarian-uk-the-wheels-of-heaven-starring-mickey-rourke-and-dessy-tenekedjieva-directed-by-ben-charles-edwards-enters-postproduction>

Logline:(55 words) In this coming-of-age thriller, a troubled young girl meets a charming older boy who gradually gives her the strength to stand up to her abusive stepfather. But is the boy, as he claims, The fallen angel Lucifer sent to guide Iva in her destiny to save the human race? Or deluded and dangerous young man?

Short synopsis : Sofia, Bulgaria. Iva (17) lives with her mother, MARIA, a deaf mute. Iva's stepdad, VICTOR, a low-level, abusive drug dealer, keeps Maria dosed up on heroin. Iva absorbs world politics and religious zealotry through television, her sole companion. On the tenth anniversary of her father's suicide, Iva decides to take her own life. She is saved by THE STRANGER (18), recently arrived in town. The boy claims to be the Devil himself. Over the summer, Iva falls deeper under the Stranger's spell. He ingratiates himself into Iva's life, charming her family and neighbors, PETER & PETRA. Iva questions her sanity as she willingly participates in increasingly bizarre rituals. Is the boy the fallen angel, sent to guide Iva in her destiny to save humanity? Or is he simply a delusional and dangerous cult leader? Meanwhile, Victor, in debt to violent local gangster LUKA, needs money fast. He looks to the one thing he has left to sell – Iva. Can the Stranger help Iva find strength within herself at her time of greatest need, or are his intentions more sinister? With the clock ticking, things come to a violent showdown.

Shot in beautiful locations across Bulgaria as well as LA and London, Wheels of Heaven is both a tense psychological thriller and touching coming-of-age drama.

Director's statement: The Wheels of Heaven is a tense thriller and at times a touching coming-of-age story; a love letter to the Devil. I wanted to pay heed to the ultimate fictional text of Mark Twain's The Mysterious Stranger, with both pieces examining the ambiguity of 'good' and 'evil', and exploring how these concepts relate to life as it's actually lived and the delicate balance between them. To quote the movie, 'there is darkness in the most virtuous and light in the corrupt'.

Short Director biography: Edwards, a British Director, Writer and Producer. Upon the release of Edwards' directorial debut 'Set The Thames on Fire', the BFI remarked that "Charles Edwards' has crafted distinctive, admirable work that seems to have emerged from the unseen margins of British cinema."

In 2021 Edwards produced the feature documentary Quant- The official story of fashion designer , Mary Quant. The film opened in competition at The BFI London Film Festival followed by a wide theatrical release. In 2020 Edwards produced A Bird Flew In, the first UK film to start shooting since the COVID-19 pandemic took hold. The film has been nominated and received in excess of 28 awards on its festival run worldwide.

Ben has since directed 'The Wheels of Heaven' and wrote and produced 'I'll Play Mother' starring Susanne Wuest and Shubham Saraf. 'A Mother for an Hour' starring Asia Argento and Frances Barber. Both of which are currently in post production.

Edwards is the co-founder of The Number 44 and Head of Production at Goldfinch- Who recently won the OSCAR 2023 and BAFTA 2023 for 'An Irish Goodbye'.

Short Producer biography: Dessy Tenekedjieva is a Bulgarian Actor and Producer. She was only fourteen years old when she made her film debut. Since then she has more than 35 movies. Since 2000 her production company NOVA Film and later Black Sea film have produced over 200 art projects for the international market including Feature Films, Documentaries, Shorts, TV Shows, Commercials, Music Videos & Albums. Dessy's multi-awarded movies were represented at the most critical world cinema forums and festivals. As Maria Medici in Il Mestiere Delle Armi, directed by Ermanno Olmi, she is the only Bulgarian actress representing Bulgaria at the Cannes Film Festival, with a lead role in a movie from the Official competition / Golden Palm. This multiawarded film receives 9 David di Donatello Awards, 3 Nastro d'Argento Prizes, a nomination for Palme d'Or, 3 European Film Awards, 2 Golden Globes Awards. Dessy's latest upcoming film as a Producer and one of the lead opposite Mickey Rourke, Gary Stretch and Geoff Bellis - The Wheels of Heaven, directed by Ben Charles Edwards. She can be seen in Saving my Pig where she stared opposite Gerard Depardieu, The Homecoming by Harold Pinter, Rats, opposite Ron Perlman; Eyes of Crystal, directed by Eros Puglielli - Official Selection at Venice Film Festival, etc. Since 2008, Dessy is the Founder and Chairman of the Stoyan Kambarev Art Foundation. She established THE 355 FILM AWARD in 2019 to support young filmmakers and has produced more than 30 short movies.

Production Company Information: Black Sea Film is an independent Production, Services and Post Production company based in Sofia, Bulgaria led by the international acclaimed actress and producer Dessy Tenekedjieva with more than 25 Years of Intensive personal, Business & Managerial experience on the market.

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