

Helena from the Wedding

DISCUSSION GUIDE

1. **HELENA FROM THE WEDDING** opens with Alice and Alex in their car, exchanging many looks, but only saying two words: “What?” and “Nothing.” How does this scene help establish the film’s themes and style?
2. Director Joseph Infantolino and cinematographer Stephen Kazmierski chose a naturalistic aesthetic, opting for a handheld camera and natural or source lighting, rather than glossy studio lights and more polished camera movement. Discuss the merits of this approach. How does this particular story lend itself to naturalism?
3. Much of the “action” in **HELENA** is played out in the subtext – the words and emotions that go unspoken. For example, in an early scene between Alice and Alex, she notices the time is 11:11 and says “make a wish,” but they both simply look into the other’s eyes. What do you think they were wishing for? What other moments in the film use subtext in this way?
4. Many of the characters in **HELENA** could be considered “successful” or “well-off,” yet are apparently unhappy. Do you think the filmmakers are making a point about traditional measures of happiness? As an objective viewer, which characters seem happiest to you, and why?
5. The film also deals with the universal human experience of fading youth. Are there moments, situations or characters in **HELENA** that strike a chord with you and your experience with this life transition?
6. Infantolino describes the character of Alex as “a man who is so distracted looking back that he doesn’t see what is right in front of him.” Given this premise, why might Infantolino have chosen to set his story on New Year’s Eve?

