

Soderbergh Casts Sasha Grey

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(Ben Child guardian.co.uk, Thursday October 16 2008 13.28 BST) Kevin Smith recently cast the porn stars Traci Lords and Katie Morgan in his forthcoming comedy Zack and Miri Make a Porno. Now Steven Soderbergh has gone one "better": his new film The Girlfriend Experience will feature adult actor Sasha Grey in the lead role, Variety reports.

Grey will play a high-class call girl in the low-budget feature, which looks like it might be one of the Oscar-winning filmmaker's frequent journeys into experimental territory. The screenplay has been penned by Ocean's Thirteen writers Brian Koppelman and David Levien.

Twenty-year-old Grey professes herself to be a lover of the films of Jean-Luc Godard, Bernardo Bertolucci, and Catherine Breillat, and has already signed on for appearances in two other mainstream movies that will debut in 2009, Dick Rude's independent film Quit and the Canadian horror Smash Cut. She was recently awarded the Adult Video Network's (AVN) female performer of the year award and has no plans to leave the industry as yet.

The Girlfriend Experience is the second in Soderbergh's six-picture deal with billionaire entrepreneurs Mark Cuban and Todd Wagner. Each will be shot on high-definition video and released simultaneously in cinemas, on DVD and television.

The release model caused consternation in Hollywood when it was announced, with studio bosses decrying what they saw as an attempt to undermine the pre-eminence of cinemas in terms of release schedules. In the end, Soderbergh's first film in the series, Bubble, performed poorly all round. Since then, no one's been quite so worried.

"To have the opportunity to work for an Academy Award-winning auteur is truly a great honour," Grey told AVN. "I've been an admirer of Soderbergh's films for years, and I am elated that I have been given a leading role in a character-driven film."

Rumours suggesting George Clooney is in talks to play a hunky plumber who turns up to mend Grey's loo could not be confirmed at the time of publication.

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