



That's For Me!

Press Kit

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That's For Me! - Short Synopsis

Zara Zimmerman (Debra Tammer) is a North London wannabe on a mission to crack the big-time at any cost, and her family will do anything to help her get there. No matter that she is utterly talentless and has been rejected by every actors' agent going: every Friday night, her equally delusional mother, failed actor father and an assortment of dysfunctional relatives conspire over chicken soup to plot her inevitable rise to stardom. But when even a celebrity life coach fails to deliver, they realize the time has come for some rather more desperate measures.

A mockumentary in the style of *This Is Spinal Tap* with a cringe factor that would make *The Office's* David Brent blush, *That's For Me!* is a biting satire on fame that will make you laugh and hide in your seats with its outrageous characters and pitiless portrayal of family values gone wrong. Featuring outstanding performances from leading British talent including Harriet Thorpe (*Brittas Empire*, *Absolutely Fabulous*) and Steve Furst (*Little Britain*), *That's For Me!* is a razor-sharp take on the *Big Brother* quest for those elusive fifteen minutes.

That's For Me! – Treatment

Zara Zimmerman is more than ready for fame: in her humble opinion she has both the “looks” and the “talent” to be a global superstar in the image of Madonna, Gwyneth or Paris. However, Zara's self-proclaimed greatness has little basis in reality: she has no talent. Nevertheless, driven by a ferocious desire to usurp her nemesis, George, the beautiful horse-loving presenter of “*Celebrity Pets*”, Zara will stop at nothing to satisfy her dream of becoming a superstar.

Her parents, Marilyn and Harvey as well as her boyfriend Adam are one hundred percent behind Zara's efforts. Marilyn sees her own beauty in the face of her daughter and has been bombarding the casting agency of the upcoming “*Bond*” film with her headshots. Harvey sees his own acting genes reflected in the glory of Zara's talent. Running his own dry-cleaning business, he has the perfect stage from which he can dazzle his customers with impressions that are at best, misguided, at worst, racist. Harvey loves the fact that genuine celebrities frequent his dry cleaners, ironically including George, Zara's nemesis. Adam is the archetypal science boffin, whiling away his hours in Harvey's dry-cleaning laboratory in a desperate and heartfelt attempt to win Zara's heart through his groundbreaking cleaning formulas. He is particularly intent on inventing a dry cleaning formula that uses only organic products.

Uncle David, struggling through a seventh marriage and a man with “connections” in the film industry is, along with Zara's brother Sasha, fully aware that Zara's talent is questionable. Sasha, a musician, is the black sheep of the family, choosing to live in a squat in Hackney with friends his parents staunchly disapprove of. They steal chemicals from Adam's lab in order to supplement their illegal drug habits. Meanwhile, Uncle David, spurred on by Marilyn's fluttering eyelashes and pleas to help Zara, arranges a meeting between his niece and a “big-shot” agent. This again proves to be embarrassing and fruitless. Zara then decides to employ the services of a life coach, Zorba Fleischman, to help boost her waning career. Zorba, the author of such seminal works as “*House of the Fearless Garden*” is full of contradictions - a Buddhist, a Jew, spiritual, but fame-loving, a George Bush fan and self-professed, name-dropping guru to the stars. The Zimmermans adore him. He feeds Zara's delusional sense of grandeur, accompanying her from one disastrous audition to the next, preaching his self-empowerment mantra, “*That's For Me!*” as he pockets the next cheque.



Despite Zorba's help, Zara is still not famous and the family are running out of ideas. Adam is hit with a flash of inspiration: Zara must return to her thespian roots and perform her pièce de résistance – Lady Macbeth! The family pounce on this idea. It is genius. Zara and Harvey will star, Sasha will write the music and Zorba pronounces himself director. Here begins a chain of events that send the family's dream hurtling into oblivion. In front of an audience packed with friends and talent-spotters, the play begins. Unbeknownst to Sasha, the play is no longer Macbeth – it has been changed to Othello - and has been butchered into a two-man show with Zara playing Desdemona and Harvey playing both Iago and Othello.... at the same time. The farce reaches a crescendo when bagpipers appear on stage in the mistaken belief that they are performing the soundtrack to Macbeth (complete with Sasha's House remix). The crowds stream out, led by Arabella, Zara's agent (despite almost being grappled to the ground by Marilyn).

The aftermath leaves the family in complete disarray: Zara's career is in tatters while Uncle David has been kicked out by his wife and has moved in with Marilyn and Harvey. Sasha attempts to lighten the depressive mood by announcing his engagement to Ikeesha – his black, Muslim girlfriend. Her ethnic background has been a sore point for a while and Harvey is apoplectic with rage. Sasha storms out but not before being placated by Uncle David who promises to come to a party Sasha is holding a week later.

Meanwhile, however, Adam's toil deep in the laboratory is beginning to reap quite unexpected rewards. He has finally mastered the organic cleaning formula he has been working on for so long and rids his lab of all chemicals. This has a disastrous effect on Sasha's friends who find no drugs to steal when they break in to his lab. All the same, they decide to take a bottle of the mysterious liquid and plan to test it out at the upcoming party. When Uncle David turns up, as invited, Sasha's friends decide he is the perfect guinea pig on which to try out Adam's new formula. Uncle David is pleasantly surprised to find the drug has no hallucinogenic effects but is in fact a growth stimulant for the penis.

George drops off a dress at the dry-cleaners. For the first time, Adam – try as he might – seems to be beaten. He simply can't get the stain out of the dress so sends it off for testing. The results are alarming: it is a semen stain not belonging to a human, but a horse.

With these two discoveries, the Zimmerman's lives are changed forever. Armed with the knowledge of George's dubious sexual preferences they have the perfect ammunition to end her career for good.

Adam, guided by the hand of Uncle David, fast becomes a hero to men (and women) everywhere by completely revolutionizing the sex industry. His "Bonerfide" penis growth formula makes him and Uncle David rich beyond their wildest dreams. Zara finally becomes press worthy since she is the girlfriend of a superstar. And so she follows in a long line of famous other-halves, quickly securing a legacy shaped with her own TV show, diamonds, signature perfumes and as many autobiographies as a girl could wish for.



Andras Hamori – Executive Producer

Films produced or executive produced by Andras Hamori have been distributed in the United States by most major studios, as well as leading independent distributors around the world including Pathé in France and U.K., Kinowelt in Germany, Gaga, Nippon and Kuzui in Japan, Bac Films, UGC and Metropolitan in France, Cecchi-Gori, Filmauro and Medusa in Italy and Momentum Pictures in the U.K. His films have been nominated for two Academy Awards, three Golden Globe Awards and won several major awards at the Cannes International Film Festival as well as the Berlin, Venice and Toronto Film Festivals. His films also won a number of European Film Awards and Canadian Academy awards including Best Picture for SUNSHINE.

Hamori's films include THE 51ST STATE, starring Samuel L. Jackson and Robert Carlyle, Istvan Szabo's SUNSHINE, starring Ralph Fiennes, and David Cronenberg's EXISTENZ, starring Jude Law and Jennifer Jason Leigh. As executive producer, his credits include Lynne Ramsay's MORVERN CALLAR, starring Samantha Morton, Atom Egoyan's THE SWEET HEREAFTER and David Cronenberg's CRASH.

In 2004 Hamori produced FATELESS. The directorial debut of Academy Award nominated cinematographer Lajos Koltai was based on Nobel Prize winner Imre Kertesz' novel of the same title. FATELESS premiered in Official Selection Main Competition of the 2005 Berlin International Film Festival and was subsequently acquired for US distribution by THINKFilm.

Hamori's earlier producing credits include MAX, the directorial debut of Menno Meyjes starring John Cusack, and OWNING MAHOWNY starring Philip Seymour Hoffman, Minnie Driver and John Hurt.

MAX premiered as a Special Presentation at the 2002 Toronto International Film Festival, had its U.S. premiere at the 2002 AFI Festival and was distributed in the U.S. by Lionsgate Films. OWNING MAHOWNY premiered at the 2003 Sundance Film Festival and was selected in the Panorama Section of the Berlin International Film Festival. Sony Classics distributed it in the U.S.

Hamori recently produced BIG NOTHING, a fast-paced caper-comedy starring David Schwimmer and Simon Pegg, and OPIUM - DIARY OF A MADWOMAN directed by Janos Szasz and starring Ulrich Thomsen. He was executive producer of Jeremy Podeswa's FUGITIVE PIECES, the opening film of the 2007 Toronto International Film Festival.

Hamori recently produced Stephen Frears' CHERI starring Michelle Pfeiffer and Kathy Bates and written by Academy Award winning Christopher Hampton. CHERI is being distributed by Miramax Films in the US and by Pathé in the UK and France.



Claudia Solti – Director/ Co-Writer/ Co-producer

Claudia Solti graduated from Oxford University with an MA in English. She directed her first play, “The Love of A Nightingale”, whilst training to be an actress at LAMDA. The play received critical acclaim at the 1997 Edinburgh Festival and Claudia went on to direct “The Mad Woman in the Attic” at the Riverside Studios in 1998 and “The Duchess of Malfi” and “Uncle Vanya” at LAMDA in 1999.

In 2000 her first short film, SHOTGUN WEDDING, written by Rowan Joffe and Amit Gupta, was highly commended at the Regis London Short Film Festival and nominated at both the New York Shorts International Film Festival and Melbourne Film Festival.

In 2002, Claudia completed her second film, CHASING HEAVEN, written by Bridget Hurst and produced by Barbara Stone.

CHASING HEAVEN was selected to play in competition at numerous international film festivals, including: official selection at the Venice International Film Festival, Brisbane, Toronto, Manchester, Vermont, Palm Springs, LA Shorts Film Festival, Cleveland and the British Independent Film Festival. It also received a jury award at the New York Short Film Festival and was highly commended at the Turner Classic Movies/Regus London Film Festival.

Both SHOTGUN WEDDING and CHASING HEAVEN were selected by the British Council to represent Britain on the international film festival circuit.

In 2005, Claudia began working on THAT’S FOR ME! which she directed, co-wrote and co-produced.

Claudia is represented by the highly prestigious Sayle Screen in the UK for her commercial and music video work.

Claudia is currently in development on two features - a romantic comedy, DREAM ON, and her next feature, ISABELLA, which she co wrote with BAFTA nominated writer Rowan Joffe and Philippa Goslett. It is also being produced by Andras Hamori of H2O Motion Pictures.



Debra Tammer – Zara Zimmerman/ Co-Writer

Debra Tammer was born and bred in Leeds, West Yorkshire. She studied English at Oxford University and went on to study classical acting at LAMDA.

Her first acting job was for the now defunct TV station LIVE TV! She played a murder victim on a crime reconstruction documentary and had to hang from a tree for many hours. This entertaining start to her career inspired her to write the character of Zara Zimmerman - the talent-less actress who rises to fame in the film she co-wrote with Claudia Solti called THAT'S FOR ME! In fact, every audition and job experience was subsequently used in the story of the film.

Debra did get to use her classical training, however, when she traveled with the English Shakespeare Company for a year with a production of "The Merchant of Venice". She then went on to appear in many TV commercials, usually playing comical and slightly unhinged characters with a deep love of muesli. Debra also played the Northern skinny girl in ITV's "Fat Friends" and the obsessive anorexic friend in the film SUZIE GOLD. It was on the set of Suzie Gold that she met some of the actors that were to eventually appear in THAT'S FOR ME!

From radio plays on the BBC to narrating wildlife documentaries for the National Geographic Channel, her sultry and molten voice can be heard in varying places. In fact, when she gave acting a break to have her two children, it was voice work that kept her in pocket.

She has recently returned to the stage performing with London Bites, a cabaret style show using improvisation. She is currently writing an episodic comedy-drama designed for TV about another dysfunctional family -this time from Leeds. She is also co-writing another feature film with Claudia Solti loosely based on Shakespeare's "Midsummer's Night Dream".



Steve Furst – Adam Bloom

Steve began his professional career writing for Chris Evans' "Power Up" show on BSB's Music channel in 1990. Redundancy saw him set up Britain's first ever comedy magazine "The Heckler". In 1992 he began to work as a stand-up comedian and was runner up in the "So You Think You're Funny?" competition in 1993. As a promoter he founded "The Double Six Club", "The Youth Club" and "The Regency Rooms" which spawned the character Lenny Beige. Beige's TV credits include: 16 half hour "Lenny Beige Variety Pack" shows for BBC Choice, a Channel Four special, three series of "Night Fever" for Channel 5 and well over 50 guest spots on other TV and radio shows.

In 2000 Steve began to pursue his comic acting, leaving Lenny Beige behind for a time. He appeared in the first series of "Fun At The Funeral Parlour" for BBC Choice and was part of the team for "Rumbled", a BBC hidden camera show and was a performer on the first "Lenny Henry In Pieces" sketch show which won the prestigious Golden Rose of Montreux Award. At the start of 2001 Steve starred opposite Hugh Laurie in a short film called THE PIANO TUNER that has been seen at many short film festivals worldwide.

He then appeared regularly on "The Johnny Vaughan Tonight" show on both BBC Choice and BBC 1, took part in a second series of shows called "Probe" (an exploration into improvisational character comedy) at the Soho Theatre and took his first show up to Edinburgh for three years, called "Celebrity Squares" featuring six brand new characters all somehow connected to the world of the celebrity. Steve also featured in the Jewish romantic comedy SUZIE GOLD playing the Rabbi.

In 2003, Steve was a featured support in the BAFTA award winning BBC's "Little Britain" and the Gold Arrow Award Winning "Orange Cinema" campaign working alongside Carrie Fisher, Roy Schneider and Spike Lee. He was a featured regular contributor to 5's "The Wright Stuff", BBC3's "Liquid News" and Radio 4's "Loose Ends". 2004 was even better with a further series of Little Britain (this time for BBC1) and 7 more Orange commercials (featuring Sean Astin, Patrick Swayze and Daryl Hannah). He also landed roles in BBC1's "Born and Bred", "My Dad's The Prime-Minister" and the second series of "Absolute Power" with Stephen Fry.

In the Spring of 2005 Steve was the featured character actor on BBC4's The Late Edition with Marcus Brigstocke.

He has written a book for Virgin publishing called "A History of Radio Comedy", and has contributed to many Radio 4 and Radio 2 shows (most recently "The Day The Music Died" and "Jammin'" for Radio 2).



Akbar Kurtha – Zorba Fleischman

Akbar Kurtha was born on 30th August 1970 in London. His mother and father were both born in India although his mother had grown up in South Africa.

Rather unconventionally for someone from a Muslim background, at the age of 14, Akbar decided he wanted to be an actor. After finishing his schooling Akbar choose to go to drama school instead of university and has been working professionally ever since.

Highlights included:

INDIAN INK by Tom Stoppard, MY SON THE FANATIC by Hanif Kureshi, SYRIANA and most recently HOUSE OF SADDAM.

Type casting in the current global climate has led Akbar to producing his own work, seeking out authentic voices by collaborating with new writers and consequently creating opportunities for others based on their abilities and experience rather than misinformed racial perceptions. In 2007 Akbar produced the award winning BAGHDAD WEDDING. (Soon to be made into a feature film.)

Harriet Thorpe – Marilyn Zimmerman

Harriet Thorpe came to prominence in the mid-to-late 1990s in the British television sitcom The Brittas Empire, playing Carole Parkinson, the receptionist who permanently kept her children with her, in drawers under her desk and would sometimes be seen feeding them or washing their clothes. She was also prone to depression and fits of extreme emotion.

She also played Fleur in Absolutely Fabulous, an eccentric and somewhat odd work-colleague who spoke in a very precise fashion. She has also appeared in BBC2's 'Alexei Sayle's Stuff', ITV's "Crossroads" and "Midsomer Murders", among other TV parts. She has done a lot of stage work, often playing extreme roles.

Thorpe has also appeared in a number of films mainly in minor roles, most famously in CALENDAR GIRLS as the rather patronising and superior head of the Women's Institute.

Thorpe began a run in the stage show "Cabaret" as Fraulein Kost at the Lyric Theatre in London on 22 September 2006.

On April 14, 2008 Thorpe took over the role of Madame Morrible from Susie Blake in the London production of "Wicked".



INTERVIEWS:

Claudia Solti – Director

It took three years to follow Zara’s life story, but is it perhaps more relevant now than it was then?

I think it was pretty relevant then. We are lucky that the obsession with celebrity and reality TV hasn’t died down at all.

Obviously it was a conscious decision to keep the actors in the dark and work with a skeleton script. Without this structure, how did the directorial process compare to other films you have worked on?

It was completely different from any film I have worked on before. We had a structure but I was also feeding lines to the actors as we were shooting so a lot of my job was making sure we had the right content and making sure the actors were saying the right things so we could drive the story forward. I really had to concentrate on that as well as the performances themselves and what the camera was doing.

Is the message of the film a positive or a negative one?

It’s negative but with a smile. It’s saying we celebrate the wrong things sometimes but this is not meant to be dark and dismal, it’s meant to be dark and funny.

Who is your favourite character?

I love them all... Uncle David. If I had to say one, it would be him.

All the characters are totally insane. Who is the craziest?

Difficult... maybe Zorba.

Picture “That’s For Me!: The Sequel” What are the characters doing fifteen years from now?

We actually had a story-line in which Harvey ended up finding God so, following on from that, he would probably be a Jesuit priest meets scientologist – but still doing his impressions.

Uncle David has become highly wealthy and possibly becomes a porn star.

Zara is definitely in LA. She has a TV show and has become uber plastic-fantastic. She is no longer part of the human world – she is more into the animal kingdom in terms of looks. If Adam and her are still together it is because they are a brand.

Marilyn has set up a talent-finding agency – she’s become a Sharon Osbourne type figure.



Debra Tammer – Zara Zimmerman

It took three years to follow Zara’s life story but perhaps – with the increasing obsession with celebrity – her life is more relevant now. Do you agree?

I think when we started filming it was relevant and I think it’s more relevant now so yes, I agree.

Most of the characters have achieved a level of success/ prosperity at the end. Is the message of the film a positive or negative one?

I think it’s quite negative because it’s a cynical message we are trying to send home which is that people with no talent can succeed and achieve fame.

Who is your favourite character?

Besides myself I quite like the boyfriend Adam.

Clearly Zara is perfectly sane. Which character is the craziest?

Craziness is a hard one to pin down but in my opinion the craziest is probably the father, Harvey.

What are Zara’s talents?

She has many talents. She has an unmistakable belief in herself. She has a talent for self-love, a sense of authority and she’s pretty talented at making people do what she wants.

Picture: “That’s For Me!: The sequel”: what is Zara Zimmerman doing 15 years from now?

She’s probably “living the life” in LA: pursued by paparazzi, infused with Botox, her own fashion label, her own perfume. Maybe she has brought out a terrible song. She has lots of adopted children, probably about 6 black kids, 4 Asian children.... and maybe a small sanctuary of animals.



Barbara Stone – Co-Producer

The tone of the film is irreverent, fun and madcap. Away from the camera, how did you find the ‘production’ process itself?

As the producer of the film, we had a very small crew, with many actors and locations and many moves around the city, often in the same day. As usual with a low budget film, we were working full on, but the cast and crew were mostly good-natured and worked very hard. I called in many favours and, people in general, are generous and willing to help with low-budget, no-budget independent films.

Most of the characters have achieved a level of success/ prosperity at the end. Is the message of the film a positive or negative one?

The message? If you want success badly enough you must work at it. In the end, Zara’s success was achieved through trickery and crazed ambition but whether that is positive or negative is up to the audience!

Who is your favourite character?

I like all the characters in the film. Zara’s dad, Uncle David and Zorba are probably my favourite characters.

Which character is the craziest?

No idea!

What are Zara’s talents?

She has a talent for wanting celebrity so badly that she will go to any lengths to achieve it.

In the world of That’s For Me! What is Zara doing 15 years from now?

Since her talent is so superficial, who knows... probably still presenting her television show.