Australian Film Finance Corporation presents

an Arenafilm production

of a Samantha Lang film

Susie Porter Kelly McGillis

THE MONKEY'S MASK

produced in association with

New South Wales Film & Television Office
Le Studio Canal +
Asmik Ace
Fandango

R 18 adult themes

Running time 90 minutes

Format Widescreen

World premiere Toronto International Film Festival 2000

Australian Theatrical Release 10th May 2001

Synopsis

Jill Fitzpatrick is a 28-year-old, street-smart out-of-work P.I., wishing she wasn't celibate.

Eager for the taste of adrenalin, she accepts a job investigating the disappearance of Mickey, a young female student.

Jill quickly strikes a spark with the seductive Diana, Mickey's poetry lecturer.

But it's not long before Mickey's body is found; she's been strangled and dumped. Distrusting the cops, Mickey's grief-stricken parents ask Jill to find her murderer.

Jill is soon hurled into a passionate liaison, and with Diana as her guide, she enters the surprisingly seamy underworld of poetry, looking for clues to the murder.

For whom did Mickey write her sexually charged poems? What's the connection between Mickey and her two favourite male poets? Who's leaving threatening messages in verse on Jill's answering machine?

Blinded by her passion, Jill is compromised in her search for the truth.... until her own life is in danger.

THE MONKEY'S MASK explores the power and the danger of infatuation, the ethics of 'knowing', the threads that entwine sex with death.

I never knew poetry was about opening your legs one minute
Opening your grave the next
I never knew poetry could be as sticky as sex

Dorothy Porter "The Monkey's Mask"

Key Credits

Directed by	Samantha Lang
Produced by	Robert Connolly and John Maynard
Screenplay by	Anne Kennedy

Based on the book “The Monkey’s Mask” written by Dorothy Porter

Co-producer	Domenico Procacci
Director of Photography	Garry Phillips
Production Designer	Michael Philips
Editor	Dany Cooper
Costume Designer	Emily Seresin
Sound Designer	Annie Breslin
Sound Recordist	Ben Osmo
Re-recording Mixer	Phil Heywood
Original Music by	Single Gun Theory
Additional Music by	Antony Partos
Music Supervisor	Andrew Kotatko
First Assistant Director	James McTeigue
Production Manager	Sam Thompson
Casting by	Ann Robinson - Mullinars Consultants
UK and USA Casting by	Leo Davis

Cast in order of appearance

JILL	SUSIE PORTER
MICKEY	ABBIE CORNISH
HAYDEN	BRENDAN COWELL
BILL McDONALD	JIM HOLT
TIANNA	BOJANA NOVAKOVIC
TONY BRACH	JEAN-PIERRE MIGNON
BARBARA BRACH	CAROLINE GILLMER
MR NORRIS	JOHN NOBLE
MRS NORRIS	LINDEN WILKINSON
DIANA	KELLY MCGILLIS
DAD FITZPATRICK	CHRIS HAYWOOD
LOU	DEBORAH MAILMAN
NICK	MARTON CSOKAS
DETECTIVE SERGEANT WESLEY	WILLIAM ZAPPA

Director – Samantha Lang

Samantha Lang's first feature film THE WELL debuted In Competition at Cannes in 1997.

THE WELL followed two dazzling short films which garnered prizes and acclaim worldwide: AUDACIOUS, a thirty minute comical challenge to male sexuality through female sexual power, and OUT, an instructional film about how not to get a date.

Samantha is a graduate of the Australian Film Television and Radio School and a graduate in photography from the Sydney College of Arts.

THE MONKEY'S MASK first review at Toronto ".. *like Lang's previous feature THE WELL (1997), it also comes to hinge on an intense, difficult relationship between an older and a younger woman, only this time an explicitly sexual one..."*
(Todd McCarthy VARIETY)

Currently Samantha is living in Paris, where she will direct her next film L'IDOL in 2001.

Origins

THE MONKEY'S MASK is based on Dorothy Porter's novel in verse, which was a publishing sensation in the world of poetry. The book has been published in Australia, Germany, Italy, UK and the USA and has also been adapted for radio and theatre.

"Dorothy Porter has combined two barely-related genres, and created an unusual heroine, and she has done so with breathtaking innovation. Her poems are short, powerful, beautiful and sometimes brutal. Each poem is a portrait, a sensation, a short story, a joke, or a reflection in itself..." **The Times**

Screenplay Writer

Anne Kennedy is the author of the novels A BOY AND HIS UNCLE, MUSICA FICTA and 100 TRADITIONAL SMILES. She was the co-writer of Alison Maclean's film CRUSH, which was In Competition at Cannes in 1992, and has also written several television dramas, including JEWEL'S DARL (directed by Peter Wells).

Lead Cast

Susie Porter

Susie Porter graduated from the National Institute of Dramatic Art (N.I.D.A.) in 1995 and has been caught up in a "whirlwind of work" ever since.

Her theatre credits include SOUTHERN STEEL and AFTERSHOCKS, DARKNESS for the Sydney Theatre Company and most recently SWEET PHOEBE for the Griffin Theatre.

Television credits include HOUSEGANG, CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL, WATER RATS and AFTERSHOCKS.

Susie has worked with some of Australia's finest directors including Bruce Beresford on PARADISE ROAD and Stephan Elliott on WELCOME TO WOOP WOOP and some talented new directors such as Gregor Jordan, TWO HANDS, Davida Allen, FEELING SEXY, Dein Perry BOOTMEN and Jonathan Teplitzky, BETTER THAN SEX.

For her role in BETTER THAN SEX, Susie was nominated for Best Actress at the 2000 AFI Awards.

"Porter builds an engaging and rich performance that wonderfully expresses many aspects of Jill's wary, outsider-looking-in status... her intriguing combo of guardedness and quiet assertiveness, obvious flaws and strong self-knowledge, and marginal standing that in certain instances allows her to burrow in where standard procedures would never permit, contributes to a shrewdly updated take on the Hammett/Chandler maverick private detective that never for a moment seems contrived or trendy..." **(Todd McCarthy, VARIETY)**

Kelly McGillis

Kelly McGillis has worked with some of the most talented and interesting directors in the industry. At the start of her career, she was nominated for a Golden Globe for her performance in WITNESS for director, Peter Weir, then soared to even greater heights in Tony Scott's TOP GUN and THE ACCUSED, directed by Jonathan Kaplan. She has also worked with Alan Rudolph, Rob Reiner, Abel Ferrera and Irwin Winkler to name a few.

Kelly has done extensive television work, including GRAND ISLE which was produced by her own production company. She has won numerous awards for her work in theatre, including the Helen Hayes award for Best Actress for TWELFTH NIGHT, and has long been part of The Shakespeare Company in Washington D.C.

"McGillis's character is the sexy, powerful spider lady familiar to us all from countless 40s film noir..." **(Christine Cremen, THE AUSTRALIAN)**

Producers

Arenafilm is a partnership between producers Robert Connolly and John Maynard. THE MONKEY'S MASK is their second collaboration.

Robert Connolly is a graduate of the Australian Film Television and Radio School, and was recently selected by Variety magazine as one of the top ten young producers in the world. With partner John Maynard, Robert produced the award-winning film THE BOYS, which premiered In Competition in the 1998 Berlin International Film Festival. Robert has also directed a number of award winning short films including MR IKEGAMI'S FLIGHT and RUST BUCKET and in 2000 has directed his first feature film THE BANK.

John Maynard is one of Australia's most experienced producers, with the unrivalled record of three films in competition at Cannes: Vincent Ward's VIGIL and THE NAVIGATOR: A MEDIEVAL ODYSSEY and Jane Campion's SWEETIE. John co-produced, with partner Bridget Ikin, Jane Campion's AN ANGEL AT MY TABLE (winner of the Special Jury Prize at the Venice Film Festival). John also produced Gerard Lee's ALL MEN ARE LIARS. His most recent success was THE BOYS which he produced with his Arenafilm partner, Robert Connolly and in 2000 he produced THE BANK, Robert's directorial feature film debut, starring David Wenham and Anthony LaPaglia.

International sales

International Sales Agent Le Studio Canal + has sold THE MONKEY'S MASK into most world territories including USA, United Kingdom, France, Italy, Japan, Germany, Spain, Scandinavia, Switzerland, French speaking Canada, Benelux, Netherlands, Iceland, Greece, Romania and Israel.