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Banks engaged by 'Barb'

Actress to star in and produce comedy

By [DIANE GARRETT](#)

Elizabeth Banks is hitched to the pitch for "What About Barb."

Banks will star in and produce the Universal romantic comedy, about a socialite who must allow her uncouth cousin to be maid of honor so her nouveau riche uncle will pay for the wedding.

"Accepted" scribe Mark Perez is writing the pic, based on the story of the same name by Jill Bernheimer and Keetgi Kogan. Mary Parent and Scott Stuber are producing for their U-based Stuber/Parent shingle. Max Handelman, Bernheimer and Kogan will also exec produce.

The "Seabiscuit" star, who next appears in "Spider-Man 3," has a lead role in "Fred Claus" and was recently cast in "Starship Dave," directed by Brian Robbins. She is also producing "The Surrogates," Jonathan Mostow's adaptation of the graphic novel for the Mouse House.

Perez has several other projects in development: He's rewriting "Cellmates," a story about college pals who befriend an inmate, which he will direct for Regency Enterprises in the fall. He also recently penned a draft of "Hardy Men," the Fox project with Tom Cruise and Ben Stiller attached.

Stuber/Parent has put a series of projects into development lately, including "Devil in the Junior League" for Jennifer Garner to produce and possibly star in and a feature about youth soccer club the Fugees.

Banks is repped by UTA. Brian Lutz manages Perez, who is repped by CAA.

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