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The old college try at U

Co. keen to keep Shadyac working with new projects

By [DANA HARRIS](#)

In a bidding war that drove the price to \$1.25 million against \$1.75 million, Mark Perez has sold his spec "Accepted" to Universal Studios for Tom Shadyac's Shady Acres Entertainment.

Universal is keen to keep Shadyac, who directed and produced U's summer hit "Bruce Almighty," in the mix with new projects.

The high-concept comedy "Accepted" follows a high school senior who finds a unique way to resist parental pressure to attend college.

"Like 'Bruce Almighty,' it had a core idea that was really explosive and relatable," Shadyac told *Daily Variety*. "It's about those fringe kids who can't get into college and create their own system."

Shadyac said he's currently choosing between one of three comedies at U to make as his next picture. As to whether that pic will include his frequent compatriot Jim Carrey, Shadyac said that would depend on the actor's availability.

"I can virtually guarantee we will work together again," Shadyac said.

Shadyac, Michael Bostick will produce. Perez and his manager, Brian Lutz, will be the film's executive producers. Both Perez and Shadyac are repped by UTA.

Perez said his script was inspired by the spirit of John Hughes films like "Ferris Bueller's Day Off" and "Weird Science." "I like the idea of a gang of guys beating the odds," he said.

U president of production Scott Stuber championed the project and will steer it with studio's senior VP of production Holly Bario and with Amanda Morgan-Palmer, Shady Acres' director of development.

The 32-year-old Perez scripted "Country Bears" for Disney and is writing "Hardy Men" for Fox 2000 and Ben Stiller, as well as "The Afterparty" for Warner Bros. Pictures, with Jamie Kennedy attached to star and Mandeville Films producing.

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