

AZ Insider: Phoenix Chef in Movie

Written by Written by Kathy Shayna Shocket

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Kathy Shayna Shocket has the inside scoop on the stories that make headlines.



Kathy dishes on the movie directed by Mike Myers.

Chef **Mark Tarbell** has hit another milestone to his successful career (one which boasts being the only winning competitor on the 5th season of *Iron Chef America*).

Mark's in the movie *Supermensch* directed by **Mike Meyers**. The film, just released in theaters across the country highlights the crazy career of talent manager **Shep Gordon**.

The extremely candid documentary reveals how the friendship between Myers and Shep began in 1991 when the **Austin Powers** star was seeking to use a song by **Alice Cooper** (one of Shep's earliest clients) for the *Wayne's World* movie. Woven into that storyline is the influence Shep had on Alice Cooper's career. Between managing the careers of those such as **Luther Vandross** and many of his clients' drug scene, Shep invented the "celebrity chef." The now billion dollar industry grew from Gordon's anger of how chefs were treated.



(a young Alice Cooper with Shep Gordon)

Enter Mark Tarbell, Shep wanted to represent Mark, but was turned down by the Phoenix chef who also owns The Oven in Denver. Although Mark is listed officially in the credits of the *Supermench* movie as a client, he never was.

"Shep gave me "The Speech", explains Mark referring to the speech Shep's given to his potential clients since the death of his clients **Jimi Hendrix** and **Janis Joplin**. It went something like this:

"Shep to Mark: (taking off his glasses) "Now you need to listen and listen carefully, this is not a joke". "If I take you as a client and do my job I will ruin your life, you will be an alcoholic, on drugs and or divorced. If I do my job perfectly and I will, you'll be dead"

Shep gave the "speech " to Mark in 1999 at The Mark Hotel in NYC when he cooked for the **Dalai Lama** with whom Gordon was friendly. "I thought about Shep's offer over night and said ... no," adds Mark.



Mark adds that, "For years I thought I made a mistake by saying no... but I realized that my life is my life and good...And Shep is one of my best friends which means more to me than any fame."

That 1999 chance for Mark to cook for the Dali Lama is also a scene in the movie. Mark also has a cameo with Shep in the movie , featuring the two enjoying a glass of wine and toasting on the top of a roof in Soho.

Shep's story is told by his clients , former clients and friends including **Michael Douglas**, **Willie Nelson** and **Raquel Welch** and chef **Emeril Lagasse**.

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Mark co-hosted a screening of the film with Concert Promoter **Danny Zelisko**, filling the Harkins Camelview in Scottsdale, AZ, with many curious guests standing or sitting in the aisle. Following the screening, some of the moviegoers partied at Tarbell's restaurant in Phoenix. **Alice** and **Sheryl Cooper** showed up for the after party. Although Mike Myers wasn't at Tarbell's, there was a lot of the Austin Powers' "I'm not worthy" imitations going on.

Congratulations Mark Tarbell!



Kathy Shayna Shocket is a freelance writer based in Phoenix, AZ. She's a former TV reporter who has also written for **TIME** Magazine, **PEOPLE** Magazine, **The Hollywood Reporter**, and **The New York Times**. You can reach her at redkarpetgirl@aol.com