

# CRAIN'S

## NEW YORK BUSINESS

### New York, New York: Real to reel for new filmmaker

By Emily DeNitto

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The city has ordered Staten Island's Stapleton Studios to close, but in its short life, it got at least one intriguing film career off to a start. Max & Grace, the first feature directed by **Michael Parness**, just finished filming at the renovated port.

Mr. Parness' life may soon be a movie itself. Dustin Hoffman recently asked the founder of investor site Trendfund.com to write a screenplay based on his story. The script goes something like this:

Mr. Parness, 39, dropped out of school when he was 16 and lived on subways and in Prospect Park. Once he pulled himself together, he became one of the largest baseball card dealers in the country. But after selling his business for half a million dollars, he lost the money because of bad investment advice. This propelled him to try his own luck in the market, where he succeeded nicely. He has written a book called Rule the Freakin' Markets, and his site's membership jumped 300% to 45,000 subscribers in the past year.

However, Mr. Parness' real dream is making movies-something he has aspired to since he was 5. "Watching movies was my way of escaping and looking at life a little bit differently," he says.

Max & Grace, a \$2 million film that Mr. Parness funded himself, stars Lorraine Bracco and Rosanna Arquette. Mr. Parness plans to take it on the festival circuit next year.