



Left Lara Cox is hoping her latest feature film will screen in her hometown, Canberra.
Below On the set of *The Dinner Party*, written and directed by local boy Scott Murden.
Bottom In a scene with co-star Ben Seton.



Photo Emma Reed

Stills from *The Dinner Party*

from teen idol TO ACTION HERO

BY NATALIE CAVALLARO

It was a shaky start to a career in front of an audience for actress Lara Cox. 'I was the town crier in a school play and I was awful,' the former Canberra girl laughs. 'I had one line and I whispered it. I felt sorrier for my mum though, who was watching me in the audience.'

'It was not something I ever wanted to do as a career.'

All that changed when Lara found herself at the auditions for the popular 1990s ABC TV show *Heartbreak High*. Lara landed the role of Anita Scheppers, which she played for three years alongside actors such as Callan Mulvey and Ada Nicodemou.

'It was a fantastic show to be a part of,' Lara said. 'A lot of people from *Heartbreak High* have gone on to do great things.'

And that includes Lara. After spending time working in Los Angeles, Lara is now based in Sydney where she works 'as consistently as I can'.

Her latest project was a Canberra reunion of sorts; the new feature film *The Dinner Party* was written and directed by local boy Scott Murden, shot in Canberra last year, and received financial support from numerous ACT businesses.

In the film, Lara plays Angela, the unstable girlfriend of Joel (Ben Seton) who plans to kill Joel and herself in a



Lara plays the unstable and manipulative Angela in her latest offering, *The Dinner Party*.

It was really interesting to play a character whose sanity could be questioned

murder/suicide after a dinner party. The film premiered on 29 May at the Dungog Film Festival in the NSW Hunter Valley.

‘It was really interesting to play a character whose sanity could be questioned,’ Lara said. ‘I’m studying a psychotherapy degree and that was really helpful when it came to understanding Angela.’

In a display of diversity, Lara will next be seen in an American action film which she says ‘takes the top spot of my favourite jobs from *Heartbreak High*’.

‘We filmed in Thailand and I did all of my own basic stunts which was cool. My mum came to visit and I was so bruised she thought it was makeup. I felt so tough,’ she laughs.

Lara said she hopes *The Dinner Party* will be screened in Canberra soon.

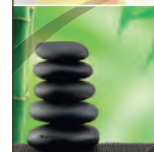
‘I don’t get a chance to come home very often and when I do, it goes very quickly.

‘Hopefully we can bring it to Canberra so I get a good excuse to come home for a visit.’

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