

# IFC Films

Presents

## I AM A SEX ADDICT

A film by Caveh Zahedi

World Premiere: 2005 Rotterdam Film Festival  
U.S. Premiere: 2005 Tribeca Film Festival

USA/2005/Color

99 minutes

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## **I AM A SEX ADDICT**

Caveh Zahedi's (*In the Bathtub of the World, I Don't Hate Las Vegas Anymore*) Gotham Award Winning autobiographical comedy, *I Am A Sex Addict*, manages the difficult task of being both genuinely funny and utterly sincere. Zahedi uses re-enactments, documentary footage, and camera address to tell the real life story of his struggle with sex addiction.

The film opens with documentary footage of a 43-year-old Caveh standing in a church alcove, just before he is about to get married for the third time. Caveh explains to the audience that his past two marriages failed because of his addiction to prostitutes, a problem that he now claims to have overcome.

Caveh proceeds to narrate the story of how his addiction started, flashing back to a re-enactment of himself in his mid-twenties, walking down a street in Paris, encountering a prostitute for the first time. But then Caveh breaks the frame, telling the audience, "Actually, I wasn't able to raise enough money to go to Paris, so I'm just going to shoot it here in San Francisco, which is where I live now." What follows is the story of Caveh's sex addiction—how it started, how it spiraled out of control and destroyed all his love relationships, and how he was finally able to stop.

## ***I AM A SEX ADDICT***

### **CREDITS**

Written and directed by: Caveh Zahedi

Produced by: Greg Watkins, Caveh Zahedi, Thomas Logoreci

Executive Producer: Richard Clark

Camera: Greg Watkins

Edited by: Thomas Logoreci  
Caveh Zahedi

Animation: Bob Sabiston

Music: Hilary Soldati

### **CAST**

Caveh: Caveh Zahedi

Caroline: Rebecca Lord

Christa: Emily Morse

Devin: Amanda Henderson

French prostitute: Olia Natasha

Asian prostitute: Corinna Chan

Greg: Greg Watkins

## **I AM A SEX ADDICT**

### **BIOGRAPHIES**

#### **CAVEH ZAHEDI, Writer, Director, Producer, Co-Editor**

Caveh Zahedi began making films while studying philosophy at Yale University. After graduating, he went to Switzerland to try to work with Jean-Luc Godard, but Godard refused to meet with him after he phoned Godard at three in the morning to offer his filmmaking services. Disappointed, Caveh returned to the United States and got a job trying to teach video to autistic children.

When fellow workers started mistaking him for one of the autists, Caveh quit his job and moved to Paris to try to raise money for a film about French poet Arthur Rimbaud. He failed to raise even one centime, and soon returned to the U.S. to try to make the film in Super-8 with no money. The result was a complete disaster, and he decided to give up filmmaking and devote himself exclusively to collage-making instead.

But after several lonely months of collage-making, his desire to make films returned, and he began work on a film about the turn-of-the-century photographer Eadweard Muybridge. He moved back to France to try to interest French television in the project but failed once again. Dejected, he eventually abandoned the Muybridge project in order to devote himself to an experimental music video of a Talking Heads song. The music video, which took him two years to complete, was subsequently rejected by David Byrne.

Discouraged but undeterred, he applied for and received a modest grant from the French government for a filmic adaptation of an obscure prose poem by the French poet Stephane Mallarme. The film took him another two years to complete and when he showed the final cut to the funding committee, they voted to discontinue funding the film. Abandoning his dream of being embraced by the French film community, he applied to UCLA film school and moved to Los Angeles, in the hope of making more commercially viable films.

At UCLA, he met and began collaborating with Greg Watkins. Together, they co-directed *A Little Stiff*, an experimental narrative in which he re-enacted his unrequited love for a UCLA art student, using the real-life participants. Surprisingly, the film premiered in competition at the Sundance Film Festival, won widespread critical acclaim, and aired on both German television and the Sundance Channel.

Caveh's next film, *I Don't Hate Las Vegas Anymore*, was an attempt to prove the existence of God by means of a road trip to Las Vegas with his Iranian-born father and teenage half-brother. His premise is that if God exists, God will provide whatever events are needed to make the film compelling. But when the film doesn't seem to be going his way, Caveh resorts to plan B, which involves persuading his father and half-brother to take Ecstasy with him on film. Although virulently panned by most American critics and a box office disaster, the film won the Critics' Award at the Rotterdam Film Festival and went on to develop a cult following.

Caveh's next film, *In the Bathtub of the World*, was a one-year video diary. The idea was to record one minute of each day for an entire year, and edit the footage down to ninety minutes. The film aired on the Independent Film Channel and was released on DVD.

Caveh's latest project is *I Am A Sex Addict*.

#### **FILMOGRAPHY**

*A Little Stiff*, 83 min. (1991)

*I Don't Hate Las Vegas Anymore*, 73 min. (1994)

*I Was Possessed By God*, 25 min. (1999)

*In the Bathtub of the World*, 78 min. (2001)

*The World is a Classroom*, 14 min. (2002)

*Tripping with Caveh*, 31 min. (2004)

*I Am a Sex Addict*, 96 min. (2005)

### **GREG WATKINS, Producer**

Originally from Idaho, Greg Watkins graduated from Stanford University with a degree in Social Theory. Greg later attended UCLA film school where he co-directed, in collaboration with Caveh Zahedi, the feature film *A Little Stiff* (premiering at Sundance '91). Since UCLA, Greg's film-related work has been primarily as a cinematographer on independent features: *Jo-jo at the Gate of Lions* (Sjogren, '92), *I Don't Hate Las Vegas Anymore* (Caveh Zahedi '94), *Frisk* (Todd Verow '96). He also directed his own feature, *A Sign from God*, which premiered at Sundance in 2000. He is currently working as producer and director of another feature, *Even Now*. Greg also has a joint PhD in Religious Studies and Humanities from Stanford University, where he now works as a Lecturer.

### **THOMAS LOGORECI, Co-Producer, Co-Editor**

In addition to co-producing and co-editing Caveh Zahedi's *I Am A Sex Addict*, Thomas Logoreci shot Zahedi's recent 30 minute musical doc *Tripping With Caveh*, as well as his short films *I Was Possessed By God* and *The World is a Classroom*. Logoreci also did camerawork on experimental documentarian Jay Rosenblatt's *I Used To Be A Filmmaker* which aired on Cinemax and which will be shown on P.O.V. this summer. He also contributed his own short *9/10* to the "Underground Zero" anthology which aired on the Sundance Channel. His next project is entitled *Albania - Who Cares?* He currently lives in San Francisco.

### **BOB SABISTON, Animator**

Bob Sabiston is an independent filmmaker in Austin, TX. In recent years his interpolated rotoscoping technique—for which he wrote the software—has made waves in films like Richard Linklater's "Waking Life" and Lars von Trier's "The Five Obstructions." Since 1997 he and his company Flat Black Films have created a string of rotoscoped short films, including "Grasshopper", "Snack and Drink", and "Roadhead," which have helped popularize animation as a medium for documentaries. Bob's work stands out by bringing a painterly, hand-done approach to the traditionally mechanized and sterile world of computer graphics.

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# He's Gotta Have It

**Local filmmaker Caveh Zahedi's career was waylaid by his addiction to prostitution. Today, his sexual compulsions could be the source of his comeback.**

**BY DAN STRACHOTA**

Few mental illnesses elicit laughter, but sex addiction comes close. Tell a friend that you have a problem with sex, and he's likely to say, "Yeah, me too: My problem is I can't get enough." But for millions of Americans -- experts put the figure at 5 to 8 percent of the U.S. population -- sex is as much a destructive force as alcohol, drugs, or gambling. Like other addicts, these people are powerless to stop acting out, compulsively driven to engage in one-night stands, extramarital affairs, voyeurism, or exhibitionism. In the case of Caveh Zahedi, the problem is visiting prostitutes.

Zahedi, an acclaimed local filmmaker, doesn't fit the sex addict stereotype of a leering man with trembling hands. He's as thin as a rail, with a shy, toothy grin and a welcoming manner. When he speaks, he fixes his listener with a steady gaze, as if he were trying to communicate his every thought telepathically.

Such a need for communication makes sense in light of his career. Over the past decade, Zahedi has become an icon of autobiographical underground cinema, a figure both heralded for his bald honesty and criticized for his unwavering self-obsessiveness. In his first feature, *A Little Stiff*, he recreated a past love triangle in which the woman he was infatuated with wanted nothing to do with him. In his second film, *I Don't Hate Las Vegas Anymore*, he took his real-life father and surly half brother on a trip to Nevada on Christmas Eve and plied them with drugs and money in the hopes of capturing art. Last year's documentary *In the Bathtub of the World* was Zahedi's most revealing work yet, chronicling 12 months of crying jags, drug trips, and odd dance moves.

But the movie that's closest to Zahedi's heart -- as well as other parts of his body -- has yet to be completed. For nearly 10 years, the artist has been trying to make *I Am a Sex Addict*, the story of his struggle with prostitution. During that long decade, Zahedi watched his footing in the film world slip. Once regarded as a promising newcomer on a par with Richard Linklater and Todd Haynes, the 41-year-old is now considered a cult figure. *I Am a Sex Addict* may be his best and last hope for commercial success -- as well as a dangerous flirtation with his unhealthy past.

Caveh Zahedi had a relatively normal childhood, although he moved around quite a bit. Born in 1960 in Washington, D.C., he lived in New York and Los Angeles until he was 9, when his parents shipped him off to a Swiss boarding school. His earliest memory of anything sexual is from age 8, when his mother found out about his father's mistress and took Zahedi with her to yell at the woman. Zahedi remembers not being sure what sex was, but understanding that "my father had had it, and it was bad."

In 1977 Zahedi headed off to Yale, where he acquainted himself with the era's "free love" ideology, as well as the ideas of Hegel, Marx, and Nietzsche. He began making films while completing his B.A. in philosophy, after which he migrated to Paris, intent on working with his hero, Jean-Luc Godard. Wandering around the city, upset with his lack of cinematic success, he began chatting up prostitutes. "I was flirting with them every day," he says from the window seat of his sparsely decorated Inner Sunset apartment. "I would be going somewhere and would just get off the Metro to go talk to them. I'd be hours late for whatever I was doing."

His first official visit to a hooker was done on a lark. "I thought it would be something pleasurable," he says with a sheepish grin. "But it was a very negative and traumatic experience, and I remember thinking, 'That was horrible. I'll never do that again.'"

Still, the seed was planted. A couple of years later, Zahedi returned to Paris, deep in the throes of an unhappy marriage. When he tried breaking up with his wife, she attempted to kill herself; rather than leave her, he procured the services of another prostitute. Soon after, he told his wife about the transgression, but instead of divorcing him, she just stopped having sex with him.

By the time Zahedi relocated to Los Angeles to go to film school at UCLA in 1986, his compulsive behavior had ballooned, in much the same manner as other addictions. "The thing about sex addiction is that it has an escalatory quality about it -- the more you do it, the more you need to do it," Zahedi says. "You always up the ante."

His marriage ended in 1987, and Zahedi continued to cruise the prostitutes on Sunset Boulevard, often for four hours a night. (Like many sex addicts, he also had a heavy drug dependency, needing to get stoned every day.) Eventually, he began cruising gay bathhouses and checking out more outré forms of sex. "At one point, the prostitutes weren't enough anymore. So for a time, it was transsexuals, and that seemed very exciting," Zahedi says, seeming uncomfortable for the first time in the interview. "Once you've gone past a point, the thing that you find a turn-on keeps receding -- like a mirage. It seemed to me at one point that there was no end to it."

Like many addicts, Zahedi functioned well in everyday life. In 1990 he even finished his first feature-length movie, *A Little Stiff*, although, like many of his fellow students, he needed a small push from the UCLA administration in order to graduate (he'd been there longer than the allotted three years).

Zahedi says he hit rock bottom in 1991, when he toured European festivals with *A Little Stiff*, which had gotten raves at Sundance. He traveled with his then-girlfriend, who'd told him she had no problem with his need for prostitutes. "I was trying to stop," he recalls, "but I thought maybe if I got her to watch, it would become this joint thing and wouldn't be a thing I was doing in secret apart from her. If I didn't feel guilty, I wouldn't want to do it anymore."

He took his girlfriend to a brothel in Germany, but the night didn't go as planned. According to Zahedi, the woman got raging drunk and caused a scene. "We broke up very soon after," he says. "I just felt like I was never going to be able to be in a relationship with anyone, and I felt like I would be alone all my life." But in thinking about the woman's drinking, he saw a connection between her need for alcohol and his need for sex. When he returned to Los Angeles, his latest therapist suggested that he go to a Sex Addicts Anonymous meeting. "It was really eye-opening. I totally related to everything everyone said, and I had a big shift in perspective in that meeting."

In fact, Zahedi felt so liberated that he decided to write a screenplay about his newly named addiction. His first move? Hire a prostitute to have sex with him so he could capture it on audiotape. Old habits die hard.

Sex addiction is a relatively new concept, a term coined by Patrick Carnes in his groundbreaking 1983 volume *Out of the Shadows* (which didn't really take off until Carnes ditched its original title, *The Sexual Addiction*). In his volume, Carnes explained how and why sex could become destructive -- and how a program based upon the 12-step approach of Alcoholics Anonymous could help to alleviate the problem. The book caused a sensation in therapeutic circles and led to the formation of numerous organizations, including Sex & Love Addicts Anonymous, Sexaholics Anonymous, Sexual Compulsives Anonymous, Sexual Recovery Anonymous, and Sex Addicts Anonymous. All the programs follow the 12-step guidelines, but some are stricter than others. SA, for instance, discourages both masturbation and homosexual sex, while SLAA focuses on "love addiction," defined as "a pattern of painful or obsessive romantic relationships."

Sex Addicts Anonymous, the program Zahedi joined, takes a more open approach, offering to help anyone -- gay or straight, male or female -- who wants to learn to abstain from "bottom-line behaviors" such as compulsive viewing of Internet porn, obsessive masturbation, peeping, flashing, or frequenting prostitutes. What makes SAA different from treatment programs like Alcoholics Anonymous or Narcotics Anonymous is that attendees are allowed to use the thing that makes them ill. SAA members practice what they call "abstinence," differentiating between what is "bad sex" and what is "good sex" and then abstaining from the former while taking part in the latter. The philosophy has its critics, who compare it to telling an alcoholic he can have a bottle of beer but not a pint of whiskey, but thousands of people swear by it.

Many therapists argue that what SAA commonly refers to as addiction is actually compulsion, an "irresistible urge to perform an irrational sexual act," as Dr. Al Cooper, director of the San Jose Marital Sexuality Centre, puts it. In order for the illness to count as a true addiction -- listed as such in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, the bible of psychological diseases -- doctors would need to show that it causes a permanent chemical change in the body. While there's no current proof that sex addiction causes a biological alteration, researchers at Vanderbilt University Medical Center are engaged in a five-year study of the electrical activity in the brains of self-

proclaimed sex addicts to see if there is such a transformation. (Results won't be available for several years.)

Regardless of the controversy, the therapeutic community has embraced the model of sex addiction. There's a peer-reviewed medical journal called *Sexual Addiction and Compulsivity: The Journal of Treatment and Prevention*; an educational body, the National Council on Sexual Addiction and Compulsivity, based in Atlanta; and a growing number of in- and outpatient facilities across the country.

But back in 1991, when Zahedi attended his first SAA meeting, sex addiction was still relatively unknown. "What was kind of shocking was that there wasn't any vocabulary for [sex addiction]," he says. "The whole discourse among guys was a discourse of freedom or nature: Guys just need to do this."

Zahedi spent two years writing the script for *I Am a Sex Addict*, while attending weekly SAA meetings. Eventually, however, his visits grew more infrequent, until he stopped going altogether. "I thought I was cured; I thought I had a handle on it," he says. "The actual reality was the emotional turmoil was more than I could handle."

When he began shopping the completed screenplay in 1993, he got little interest. Written as an epic saga that followed him to Germany and Paris, the movie was budgeted at \$2 million, a pittance by Hollywood standards but a heck of a lot for an untested director/star with what one critic called "an ugly face." Then there was the subject matter, which wasn't exactly Disney fare. "There was too much sex, it was too edgy, the ending was too preachy," Zahedi says. "The truth of the matter was I didn't have the experience to pull off a movie of that magnitude."

Instead, he shot *I Don't Hate Las Vegas Anymore*, an inside look at the dynamics among Zahedi, his father, and his half brother. Whereas *A Little Stiff* adhered to the standard "boy meets girl, boy obsesses over girl, girl falls for drummer" story structure, *Las Vegas* was an extended postmodern riff on creating art and surviving family. Throughout, Zahedi filmed himself during the kind of warts-and-all moments usually reserved for journal entries and late-night drunken confessions: apologizing to everyone for his insensitive behavior, complaining that his sound person (the ex-girlfriend from the brothel episode) had gotten drunk during the shooting and forgotten to turn on the tape recorder, and pushing his father to take a drug that could affect his heart's condition. While *Las Vegas* received a critic's prize at the 1994 Rotterdam Film Festival and a prestigious North American premiere at the S.F. International Film Festival, it had many vocal detractors. A judge for the influential New York Film Forum theater reportedly watched five minutes of it before suggesting that the print be returned to the director -- immediately. The movie played for two weeks in select theaters nationwide and then disappeared.

"I don't think his work is for everyone," says local filmmaker Jay Rosenblatt, a friend and collaborator of Zahedi. "He makes a choice that he's going to offend some people, and he's going to push some people's buttons. I think he sees that as a function of art."

After *Las Vegas*, Zahedi didn't release another movie for six years. When he wasn't trying to finance his film about sex addiction, he was acting out his sex addiction, cruising prostitutes and strip clubs and flirting with strangers. As marriage No. 2 stumbled to a close, Zahedi headed back to Sex Addicts Anonymous.

But for all the help the program offered, Zahedi never fully bought into the SAA methodology. "I was a mediocre 12-stepper," he admits. "It didn't really make sense to me -- it made sense intellectually, as a concept, but I never really understood what the steps meant. One said to go to everyone you'd hurt and apologize. How am I supposed to do that? Everyone I've ever hurt in any way? Do I give money to runaway shelters? Do I give money to prostitutes on the street?"

In the end, it wasn't SAA that changed Zahedi's life. "I started appreciating the advantages and virtues of being with someone in a healthy way," he says. "I wanted it so much that when I did meet someone, I tried really hard to make it happen."

Zahedi met his current girlfriend in 1997, and he claims he hasn't been with a prostitute since. Although he gave up attending SAA meetings around that time, he borrowed many of the program's ideas to get himself straight. "Anything that's uplifting is an antidote to acting out," he says. "So I do things now that are uplifting, from yoga to meditation to making art."

Immersing himself in work, Zahedi shot a documentary, *I Was Possessed by God*, about a mushroom trip he had; acted in several independent films; and co-edited and co-starred in *A Sign From God*, a comedy of errors by *A Little Stiff's* co-director, Greg Watkins. In *Sign*, Zahedi plays a movie director who remains certain of divine intervention, even as his car, apartment, and girlfriend get carted away. In one particularly rueful scene, Zahedi meets with film producers and pitches several ridiculous projects, including a dwarf version of *Little Women* and a teenage comedy about Adolf Hitler. But even with a score by renowned musician Jonathan Richman and a screening at Sundance in 2000, *A Sign From God* proved less than a miracle at the box office.

Following a move to San Francisco in summer 1998, Zahedi recorded his *magnum opus*, *In the Bathtub of the World*. Filmed over the course of an entire year, the documentary distills Zahedi down to his essence, capturing all his neuroses and eccentricities at their most vivid. Adhering to director David Lynch's belief that the best scenes are the most embarrassing, Zahedi documents his tear-filled fights with his girlfriend, his bleary-eyed mushroom and Ecstasy trips, and his nervous upset stomach following an interview with alt-rock icon Frank Black. But Zahedi is interested in more than just titillation; he finds the poetic in the banal. At one point in the movie, he explains that he feels addicted to *starting* to read books, always hoping that the next one will provide him with the meaning of life.

"It's a really honest and really moving movie," says Joel Shepard, film and video curator for Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, which premiered *In the Bathtub*.

While the film may have shown that Zahedi was capable of wringing art out of a walk around the block, movie executives were less impressed. Of the 50 festivals to which Zahedi submitted the film, only five -- Los Angeles, Tiburon, Olympia, Athens (Ohio), and Infinity in Italy -- accepted it. The picture never received a full theatrical run, although it should be released on video by summertime.

"It's an indictment of the state of the indie scene when *In the Bathtub* is turned down by festivals," says director Richard Linklater, who cast Zahedi in his 2001 picture *Waking Life*. "There should be a fund to let Caveh do whatever he wants to do."

In the absence of such a fund, Zahedi's career may come down to a single film -- one that banks on the lurid appeal of the director's own sex life. For Zahedi to be mentioned in the same breath as peers like Haynes and Linklater -- not to mention his idols, Godard and John Cassavetes -- he needs *I Am a Sex Addict* to be a big success.

On a warm Saturday afternoon in March, Caveh Zahedi and his crew -- a cameraman, a sound recordist, a production manager, and a still photographer -- shoot scenes for *I Am a Sex Addict*. Due to a limited budget, the crew needs to film without permits in out-of-the-way places, where the process won't be interrupted by traffic or onlookers. Unfortunately, the red brick warehouses in the Bayshore District they've chosen to stand in for Paris in the early '80s sit next to a ship-repair factory. When the evening shift lets out, the workers dillydally by their cars, sneaking peeks at the cast, which consists of a half-dozen actresses made up to look like prostitutes. One woman wears a blouse as sheer as saran wrap; another sports shiny leather from head to toe. At one point, an actress in a skimpy red tube top and a wide-brimmed hat walks back from her car, her short skirt riding up to reveal her panties. It doesn't seem like the best atmosphere for a recovering sex addict.

"Who's next?" Zahedi calls. He films himself wandering by the prostitutes one at a time, asking them how much their services cost. While each woman has a different look -- haughty, sultry, uninterested, coy -- Zahedi shows no preference while in character, walking on without procuring any. But on two occasions after the digital video recorder comes to a stop, he lets down his guard, complimenting them on their performances.

At around 5 p.m., Zahedi's girlfriend shows up on the set. He kisses her hello, asks how her day was, and then returns to the task of re-creating his solicitations. She watches for a moment, before heading across the street to sit among the actresses waiting for their turns.

Zahedi asks one of the performers he'd complimented to change and go through a scene again. The woman wanders over to her car and slips free of her clothes -- right out in the open.

"Oh, my," Zahedi's girlfriend exclaims, "that girl's practically ... huh, well." She stops herself.

Zahedi lingers nearby, his steady gaze revealing nothing. Down the block, two workers from the ship-repair plant set up folding chairs to watch the filming. Apparently Zahedi's found a subject with broad appeal.

Last fall, Zahedi finally secured funding for *I Am a Sex Addict*, receiving \$100,000 from the same individual who financed *A Sign From God* (and who wishes to remain anonymous). While the amount isn't nearly what Zahedi had hoped for, he's rewritten the script to reflect the smaller scope and budget, and has already shot a third of it. He's also altered the scenario to reflect the hard-won knowledge he's gained since 1993. He admits that he wrote the first version of *Sex Addict* as an attempt to out-transgress rivals like Haynes, whose shock-intensive 1991 film *Poison* was a favorite of critics.

"The first draft was kind of hostile," he recalls. "The humor would've appealed to angry twentysomethings. Back then, I had a kind of antagonistic relationship with the audience. Now I'm less angry or bitter and less interested in acting it out on screen."

As he continues to shoot, the pressure mounts. The deadline for acceptance of first-cuts for next year's Sundance Festival, a necessity for indie directors, is September 2002. Meanwhile, the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts has chosen him for an artist residency in spring 2003, an honor that requires him to show a completed version of *Sex Addict*. (Past recipients of the residency have included filmmaker Charles Burnett, *Village Voice* critic Jay Hoberman, and documentarian Ellen Bruno.) Such pressures used to send Zahedi running for a woman in a short skirt and high heels.

To make matters worse, Zahedi continues to struggle with his problem, fighting his desire to procure prostitutes, visit porn Web sites, and flirt with strangers. He's given up smoking pot, but he hasn't cast aside mushrooms just yet. Junk foods like pizza, potato chips, and candy bars -- which Zahedi feels are as indicative of unhappiness as his sexual transgressions -- still sneak into his diet.

But his art thrives on drama; perhaps he needs to keep imbalance in his life. After all, how do you make a living mining your own life if you have little worth mining? Certainly, his problems with sex constitute the most scintillating plot line he's had. In the end, the difficulties that helped scuttle his career may now raise it to the next level. Of course, Zahedi's version of sex isn't exactly regular Hollywood fare -- but at least it's honest.

"Most people," Yerba Buena's Joel Shepard says, "when they make films about themselves, it's a bunch of lies -- and his aren't."