

Kissing frogs

From Steven Spielberg to Nora Ephron, Amy Adams has been recruited by some hot-shot directors in her time. But fired by a frog? That was certainly a first for the actress.

Apparently, it was a video message from Jason Segel — star, writer and co-producer of new film *The Muppets* — and our old friend Kermit that prompted this far-from-conventional piece of casting.

"Jason put it together," explains Amy. "On it he sings to Kermit about me and then they 'teaser' I'm watching the video. Kermit says, 'Oh hi Amy, we're getting ready to make a movie and we want you to join us on the journey.' I was instantly hooked."

"You don't have to be a Muppet to want Amy Adams in your movie. Since playing Giselle, an ingenuite Disney princess transported to modern-day New York in 2007's *Enchanted*, the 31-year-old has become a household name in the States, with three Oscar nods to her credit — for the 2005 indie hit *Juno*; 2008's *Doubt* alongside Mary Steenburgen; and lastly as the tough barmaid girlfriend of Christian Bale's boxer in *The Fighter*.

Five minutes with the effervescent actress and you want her as your friend. As well as being in touch with her dark side (she has a self-confessed "wicked" sense of humor), Amy is fun, adorable and full of enthusiasm.

"Fozzie Bear was my favourite Muppet when I was little," she offers, while we discuss her latest film. "I like that he told jokes and nobody thought they were funny. For some reason, I really identified with that. I used to walk around the house going, 'Waka waka waka...' But I don't think anyone thought it was as cute as I did."

It's been 12 years since we last saw Miss Piggy, Fozzie and friends on the big screen and, this time, they are feeling the recession. In a bid to raise millions to save their old studio from bankruptcy, Mary (Adams), Gary (Segel) and a new Muppet, Walter (pictured below right), help Kermit reunite the gang. There are a few changes — Miss Piggy is now a plus-size fashion editor at Paris Vogue, while Animal has checked into a Californian clinic for anger management — but plenty of nostalgic charm, big splashy numbers and surprise cameos along the way, including a 90-year-old Mickey Rooney.

"This is my first family film since having a daughter," says Amy of the movie, which is already a huge box-office hit in the States. "The Muppets were such a big part of my childhood. Every day I felt I was missing that, only this time I had a child, myself, and that felt really special."

A childhood fan of Kermit and the gang, actress Amy Adams jumped at the chance to star with the Muppets in her new film, as Tiffany Rose reports

Amy has a 21-month-old daughter, Adara, with her actor fiancé Darren Le Gallo. The couple, who met at drama class a decade ago, named her after Amy's favourite place on the planet, Adara in Italy.

"I never would have imagined a little person could change your world so much," says Amy. "Before it was all about me and my career, but now I could be waking around with baby sick down my dress and I wouldn't even know. I'm definitely not one of those women who make it look easy — I'm constantly tired and I'm always running late — but I'm more patient than I ever thought I would be, and I'm not hard on myself any more."

Amy certainly comes across as self-deprecating when she talks about her past. The fourth of seven children born to American parents in Vicenza, Italy, she grew up in Colorado when the family relocated (her father was a US serviceman). Initially, she was raised as a Mormon, but when she was 11 Amy's parents divorced so they left the church.

Growing up, Amy dreamed of becoming a ballerina, but soon set her sights on musical theatre when she realised she wasn't good enough to make it as a dancer. "I thought New York is where you go if you are extremely talented and LA is where you go if you are really beautiful," she recalls. "Since I never saw myself in those categories, I didn't make the move as I couldn't handle the rejection. I could keep talking about it, but then this will turn into a therapy session..." she says, before dissolving into laughter.

Luckily, Amy had a change of heart at 24, moving to LA and landing her film debut in the 1999 comedy noir *Deep Blue Sea*. And her profile exploded

as Leonardo DiCaprio's lover in Steven Spielberg's 2002 hit, *Catch Me If You Can*.

Amy is currently filming as Lois Lane in the new Superman movie *Man of Steel* and later this year she will appear in *On the Road*, an adaptation of the Jack Kerouac novel with Viggo Mortensen. Being in such demand must do wonders for her confidence but the actress admits that it isn't helping her wedding plans.

"I'll casually say to Darren, 'What do you think of May?' and he'll say, 'May. Ha, ha. You just let me know.' I am putting more pressure on myself now that we have Ai, but I'll figure it out soon."

"I'm a very lucky lady to have someone like my fiancé in my life," she adds. "He is very supportive of my career and he's sacrificed a lot to spend time with me on locations. I hope I get the opportunity to do the same for him one day."

The Muppets is out in cinemas on Friday.



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