



In the blood: Filmmaker Gracie Otto at home in Sydney with her actor father, Barry Picture: James Croucher

Ottos' talents not just an act

Sophie Tedmanson
Entertainment reporter

NOT many teenagers score work experience with Baz Luhrmann and Nicole Kidman. And very few pop in to visit their sister at work and walk away with a bit part in *The Lord of the Rings*.

But that is the benefit of being Gracie Otto, the daughter of the thespian Barry and half-sister to Miranda.

The 18-year-old is the latest member of the family — which includes Miranda's actor husband, Peter O'Brien — to embark on a career in the film industry.

However, Gracie's passion is behind the camera.

Last year, she graduated from high school with top marks for her Year 12 short film *Kill Blonde*, and next week she will graduate with a Diploma of Screen from the Sydney Film School.

Gracie will showcase her thesis film, a seven-minute short called *Omission*, on Tuesday

night as part of the school's annual screenings. *Omission* is based on a quote from filmmaker Quentin Tarantino — "What you leave out is as important as what you put in" — and is a three-chapter story showing what happens if you look beyond what is shown in a scene.

Along with Tarantino, Gracie said she admires the work of *La Dolce Vita* director Federico Fellini and Wong Kar Wai, the Chinese director who made the arthouse films *In the Mood for Love* and *2046*.

Gracie also has a passion for soccer.

The teenager plays in the NSW state women's indoor soccer team and earlier this year auditioned unsuccessfully for the lead role in *Finding Gracie*, an aptly-titled US version of *Bend It Like Beckham*, about teenage girls playing soccer.

Gracie still plays soccer every week, which helps keep her fit. She joked to *The Weekend Australian* while posing with her father that her legs were one of her best features.

But lately she has been benched due to missing games because of her film work, which is likely to increase next year when she aims to study filmmaking in Europe.

"I was kind of keen on acting at one stage, but now I'm more interested in the behind-the-scenes stuff, being able to make something and see the process the whole way through rather than just act in it. No offence," she said, grinning at her dad, who won a best supporting actor AFI award in 1992 for his role in *Strictly Ballroom*.

Gracie has used O'Brien in one of her short films and is working on a Tropfest entry with him, but she is yet to cast Miranda or Barry in any of her projects.

"I'm thrilled for Gracie that she's found what she really wants to do. She is pretty headstrong about what she's interested in, so I think she can get there," said Barry.

"I just hope she writes a part for me one day."