

‘Doctor Strange’ Eyes ‘Hannibal’ Star Mads Mikkelsen to Play Villain (EXCLUSIVE)



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“[Hannibal](http://variety.com/t/hannibal/) (<http://variety.com/t/hannibal/>)” star [Mads Mikkelsen](http://variety.com/t/mads-mikkelsen/) (<http://variety.com/t/mads-mikkelsen/>) is in early talks to play one of the villains in Marvel’s “[Doctor Strange](http://variety.com/t/doctor-strange/)” (<http://variety.com/t/doctor-strange/>)” opposite [Benedict Cumberbatch](http://variety.com/t/benedict-cumberbatch/) (<http://variety.com/t/benedict-cumberbatch/>), *Variety* has learned exclusively. While sources say no offer has been delivered, one is expected shortly. Marvel had no comment on Mikkelsen’s involvement.

Tilda Swinton and Chiwetel Ejiofor are on board to co-star. Scott Derrickson is directing the comic book movie from a script by Jon Spaihts. Marvel’s Kevin Feige will produce.

Cumberbatch will play Stephen Vincent Strange, a former neurosurgeon who becomes the next Sorcerer Supreme and primary protector of Earth against magical and mystical threats. Marvel Comics artist Steve Ditko created the character in 1963. Swinton will play Strange’s mentor, the Ancient One, while Ejiofor will appear as Baron Mordo, who also studies magic under the Ancient One in the comic books, before becoming Doctor Strange’s nemesis.

Mikkelsen’s exact role remains under wraps, but sources say he will be another antagonist to Cumberbatch’s titular sorcerer.

“Doctor Strange” will debut on Nov. 4, 2016, with production set to start late this year.

Marvel has been interested in Mikkelsen for some time, at one point courting him for the villainous Malekith in “Thor: The Dark World,” until Mikkelsen won the role of the titular cannibal in NBC’s “Hannibal” and was no longer available. The Malekith role eventually went to Christopher Eccleston.

If accepted, this would be Mikkelsen’s second high-profile role in the wake of “Hannibal’s” cancellation — he’ll also appear in “Star Wars: Rogue One,” which will hit theaters on December 16, 2016. He is repped by UTA and Art Management.

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