



A HAND TO HOLD

FILM PRESS KIT



THE MARRIAGE THAT REFUSES TO DIE

Moira, an elderly Irish woman, finds herself literally attached to her deceased husband Patrick. When his hand refuses to let go after death, it leads to increasingly grotesque events. Everyone in the couple's orbit, from their daughter to the local doctor, a farmer, a priest, and a Satanist, all try to intervene with horrific consequences.

A Hand to Hold blends horror with pitch-black Irish comedy, exploring themes of grief and toxic relationships.

A HAND TO HOLD

Written by award-winning screenwriter **Eliza Power**, and directed by award-winning filmmaker **Philip Clyde-Smith**, *A Hand to Hold* is an elevated horror-comedy short about love, control, and the grotesque cost of refusing to let go.

The film stars two-time Olivier Award nominee **Frances Barber** and features a cameo by British comedy icon **Jimmy Tarbuck**, in his first-ever horror film role, aged 86.

For fans of *The Substance* and *The Banshees of Inisherin*.

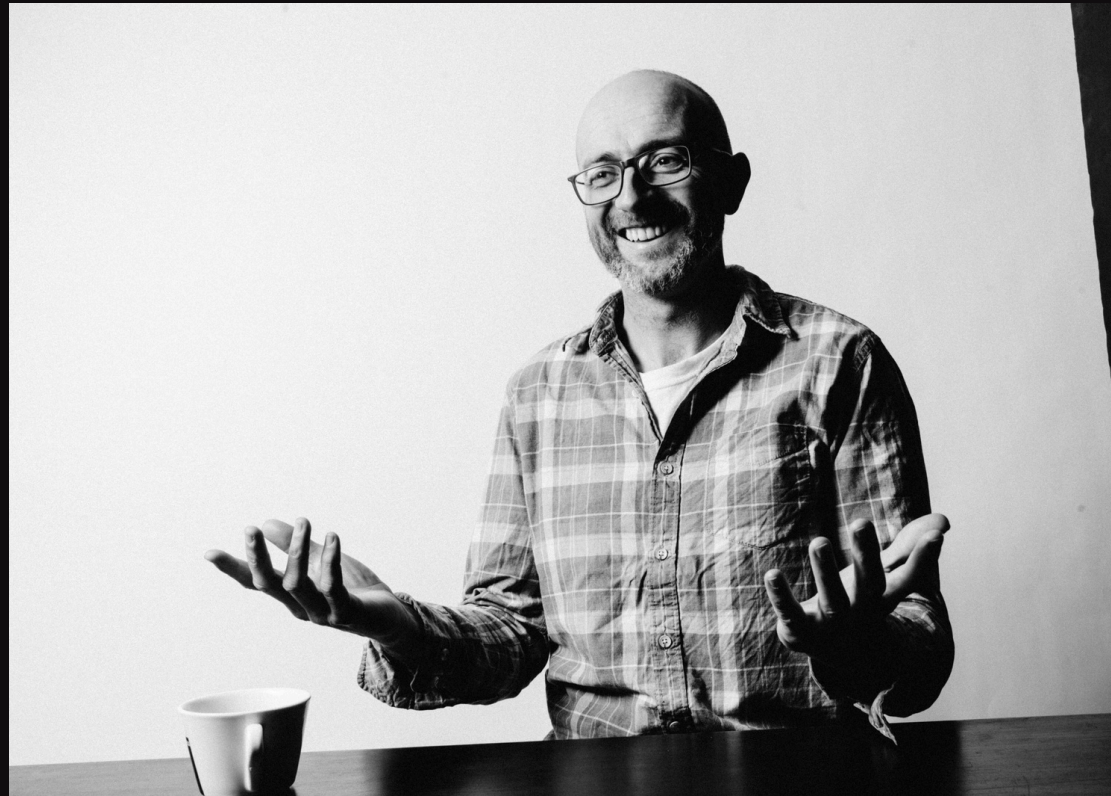




WHAT SETS THIS HORROR APART:

- An original horror-comedy about love, control, and emotional consumption featuring an elderly couple
- Comedy legend Jimmy Tarbuck's first horror role at the age of 86
- Award-winning screenplay by Eliza Power
- Practical-effects-driven body horror by 23-year-old SFX designer, Eve Pashley
- Oscar-qualifying award nominations at Cleveland International Film Festival, Miami Film Festival and Balinale, while still in the early stages of the festival run

CREATIVE TEAM



PHILIP CLYDE-SMITH, DIRECTOR

Philip is an award-winning director. He has worked across film and commercials for international brands, developing a distinctive style that blends dark humour with naturalistic storytelling.

“Coming from a large, Irish family, the script rang true. It fits my own dark sense of humour ... slightly mad, emotionally charged, and in the horror genre, which I really wanted to explore.”



ELIZA POWER, SCREENWRITER

An award-winning screenwriter and playwright, Eliza has worked extensively in tv and film in the UK and Ireland, across comedy, drama and horror.

“With A Hand to Hold, I wanted to use horror and dark comedy to explore the terror inside emotional attachment; not just what we hold onto, but what it costs us to let go.”

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

I read Eliza Power's script for 'A Hand to Hold' and knew instantly that this was the project I'd been looking for. Coming from a large, Irish family, the script rang true. It's a script that fits my own dark sense of humour ... slightly mad, emotionally charged, and in the horror genre, which I really wanted to explore.

The film touches on several important themes, including toxic relationships and domestic abuse, and has a unique narrative that really stood out. Having worked on multiple award-winning shorts, I was looking for a project that is a proof of concept both artistically and commercially, that could be developed into a feature.

Because of the strength of the script, an escalating avalanche of very talented actors and crew wanted to become involved. Filmmaking, to me, is about collaboration. I want to work with the best because that pushes me to be the best that I can be.

MAIN CAST



FRANCES BARBER AS MOIRA

Award-winning stage and screen actor, known for her work with the Royal Shakespeare Company and for roles in Doctor Who, Silk, and Inside No. 9.



MURRAY MCARTHUR AS PATRICK

Acclaimed film and television actor with credits including Game of Thrones and Wednesday, known for his commanding and versatile screen presence.



SHANE CASEY AS MIKE

Popular Irish actor best known for his breakout role in the BBC hit comedy, The Young Offenders, bringing sharp comic timing and grounded realism to the screen.

Also featuring Frank Bourke as 'Doctor', Lisa O'Connor as Kathleen, Katherine Moran as 'Satanic Priestess' and a special cameo by Jimmy Tarbuck as 'Priest'.

SELECTED CREW CREDITS



BRIAN BYRNE, COMPOSER

Golden Globe–nominated composer (Albert Nobbs), with collaborations including Barbara Streisand, Bono, and Katy Perry.



EVE PASHLEY, SFX DESIGNER

Rising practical effects artist delivering bold prosthetic-driven body horror and full-scale transformations in genre films.



DEANE THRUSSELL CINEMATOGRAPHER

Award-winning (RTS, Cannes Lion) Director of Photography/Cinematographer known for his work across television and film.

MEDIA/TECH SPECS

Running Time

14 minutes 55 seconds

Genre

Horror, Comedy

Country of Origin; Language

United Kingdom; English

Trailer

[Watch the Teaser Trailer on YouTube](#)

Publicity Stills

[Stills Google Drive](#)

FESTIVALS: 2026

A Hand to Hold is in Academy Award-qualifying competition at Cleveland International Film Festival, Miami Film Festival and Balinale.



PRESS



**"Brilliantly written,
beautifully timed,
casually gruesome,
fantastic piece of
horror-comedy"**

Film Carnage



**"A Monty Pythonesque
bloody good time.
Monstrously delirious."**

Zombo's Closet



**"Genuinely funny,
unsettling, and
thoroughly
recommended."**

Journey With a Cinephile

GET IN TOUCH

Email

handtoholdfilm@gmail.com

Social media

@ahandtoholdfilm (Instagram)

Phone

+44 (0)7590 370261