



A Film by Freddy Macdonald

# *Sew Torn*

Sew Torn, LLC | 2024 | Thriller, Dark Comedy | 96' | Color

ORISONO



Barry Nasr  
PRODUCTIONS



A cinematic still from a film. A woman with blonde hair, wearing a dark coat over a light-colored dress, is running away from the camera down a paved road. The road is flanked by dense evergreen trees. In the foreground, two bodies are lying face down on the asphalt. The scene is lit with natural light, creating a somber and urgent atmosphere. A dashed teal line originates from the 'Logline' text and extends across the right side of the image.

## *Logline*

A seamstress gets tangled in her own thread after stealing a briefcase from a drug deal gone bad. In an escalating game of cat and mouse, her different choices lead to drastically different outcomes along the way.





## *Synopsis*

Barbara Duggen, 'The Mobile Seamstress', is struggling to keep her fabric shop alive. After a botched sewing appointment sets her on a quest to replace her client's lost button, she unexpectedly stumbles upon a drug deal gone bad. Faced with two downed motorcyclists, guns, and a briefcase - Barbara is completely torn. She is forced to pick between three choices: commit the perfect crime, call the police, or drive away.

The narrative presents the repercussions of all three decisions, and the deadly confrontations that result from each as she gets entangled with the case's owner. Using thread to free herself, Barbara stops at nothing to save her store.





## *Director's Statement*

A film about the choices we make is my story to tell. I've always been drawn to narratives that explore decision making, and *Sew Torn* is the culmination of this interest; a layered feature that depicts how actions define your path, ultimately shaping you - for better or worse.

Set in and around a quaint Swiss town, *Sew Torn* is a thriller / dark comedy that takes place over the same afternoon, three separate times. It's a film about loneliness and home. About grief and redemption. About revenge and love.

With twists and turns driven by an undercurrent of humor, the plot is all but impossible to predict. And with a dexterous seamstress protagonist, liberation from a tangled past is finally achieved...

...with thread.

- *Freddy Macdonald*



# Cast



EVE  
CONNOLLY  
*Barbara*

Eve Connolly is an Irish actor from Kildare who trained at the Gaiety School of Acting in Dublin. Shortly after graduating from drama school, Eve landed her first role, playing the part of Ava in Miles Millar and Alfred Gough's television series *Into the Badlands*. She has gone on to star in a variety of projects including the feature film *The Other Lamb* with Denise Gough and Michiel Huisman, and the popular series *Vikings*.

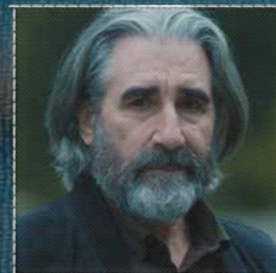
Most recently, Eve co-starred in *River Wild* for Universal Pictures alongside Adam Brody and Leighton Meester.



CALUM  
WORTHY  
*Joshua*

Calum Worthy began his acting career at the age of nine and made his film debut in the BBC award-winning mini-series *I Was A Rat*. Worthy's most acclaimed roles include Hulu's *Reboot* and *The Act*, Netflix's *American Vandal*, Eminem's *Bodied*, and Disney Channel's *Austin & Ally*.

Worthy is a vocal activist for the environmental movement and is currently working with Al Gore's Climate Reality Project and Bono's One organization. He has millions of followers across his social media platforms which he dedicates to educating and empowering his young fan base on the climate crisis and gender inequality in developing countries.



JOHN  
LYNCH  
*Hudson*

John Lynch is a Northern Irish actor and novelist, known for his roles in critically acclaimed titles such as *Sliding Doors*, *The Secret Garden*, *In The Name of The Father* and *Best*. His performance in Michael Rymer's *Angel Baby* earned him awards for 'Best Actor' from the Australian Film Institute and Australian Film Critics awards. John's television credits include *The Fall*, *The Banishing* and Sky's *Tin Star* opposite Tim Roth.

John can most recently be seen as a lead role in the BBC's *Blue Lights* which has received rave reviews, and will return for a third season of *The Head*, in which he plays the leading role.



# Cast



K  
CALLAN  
*Ms. Engel*

K Callan managed to work professionally as an actor while still in college at the famed Margo Jones Theatre, as a singer at a local Texas Air Force Base, and in television in an episode of *Route 66* shooting in Dallas before she ever left for NY. Once there, her film debut opposite Peter Boyle's in *Joe* brought rave reviews from The New York Times. Other films include *American Gigolo*, *A Touch of Class*, *Knives Out*, *Pie in the Sky* and most recently, *Sew Torn*.

Television credits include *Poker Face*, *Brooklyn 99*, *Veep*, *Carnivale*, *Meet the Browns*, *How I Met Your Mother*, as Cousin Liz in that iconic episode of *All in the Family*, and as Ma Kent, Superman's Mom on ABC's *Lois & Clark*.



RON  
COOK  
*Oskar*

Ron Cook has had an extensive stage career including playing leads at the Royal Court, Donmar Warehouse, Royal Shakespeare Company, National Theatre and in the West End. He has received two Olivier Award nominations.

Recent plays include *Grenfell*; *Value Engineering* (Tabernacle), *The Children* (Royal Court and Broadway), *Hamlet* (West End and Broadway), *King Lear* (Donmar Warehouse and BAM). Film credits include *The Empire of Light*, *Hot Fuzz*, *Chocolat*, *Merchant of Venice*, *Charlotte Gray*, *Thunderbirds* and *Topsy Turvy*. Television credits include *Andor*, *Chernobyl*, *Les Misérables*, *The Witcher*, *Mr Selfridge* and *Dr Who*.



THOMAS  
DOUGLAS  
*Beck*

Thomas Douglas is a European Film - and Theatre Actor based in Zurich and Berlin. His broad portfolio with over 80 Theater - and more than 70 film productions in different, contrasting roles, characters and projects of all genres are a testimony to his desire not to be tied down, neither to a subject nor to a certain orientation.

Internationally he also became known to a wider audience with his performance as Ralph in the Netflix miniseries *The Billion Dollar Code*. In 2022, Thomas took on a continuous part in the series *Maxton Hall* for Amazon Prime. He has a longstanding collaboration with Freddy Macdonald; *Sew Torn* is their 4th film together.



## Cast



CAROLINE  
GOODALL

*Grace*

Caroline Goodall has starred in two Steven Spielberg films (*Hook*, *Schindler's List*) and is internationally renowned for her lead performances in Hollywood blockbusters, independent films and TV.

She has made 42 films and 44 TV series with some of the greatest names in the industry, cementing her global recognition and versatility. Other films include *Cliffhanger*, Ridley Scott's *White Squall*, *The Princess Diaries 1 & 2*, *The Hitman's Wife's Bodyguard*, *The Dressmaker* and *A Streetcat Named Bob*. TV series work includes *Berlin Station* and *The Mists of Avalon*. Producing and writing credits include *The Bay of Silence* with Olga Kurylenko and Brian Cox, and *Caserta Palace Dream* starring Richard Dreyfuss.



WERNER  
BIERMEIER

*Melvin*

Werner Biermeier studied acting at the Lee Strasberg Theatre Institute. His film and TV credits include *Nancy & Frank*, *Mein Name ist Eugen*, *Handyman*, *Deadlocked*, *Spooky & Linda*, *Der Bestatter*, *ANNO 1914*, *Resistance*, *Diario Di Spezie*, *Color of Heaven*, *Mad Heidi*, *Filip*, Peter Greenaway's *Walking To Paris*, and David Fincher's *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo*.

His theatrical work includes *Im Weissen Rössl*, *Die Schwarze Spinne*, *Der Zerrissene*, *The Black Rider*, *Die Dreigroschenoper*, and *Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe*, to name a few.





## Director, Co-Writer



### FREDDY MACDONALD

In late 2018, then Zürich-based eighteen year old Freddy Macdonald had one goal, and that was to be admitted to the American Film Institute as a Directing Fellow. The problem was that Freddy was a high school senior; not only did AFI rarely accept candidates without undergrad credentials, in the history of the conservatory it had never accepted an eighteen year old Directing Fellow.

Freddy had been making films since he was nine, and at the time his latest shorts won at several competitive film festivals internationally. However, Freddy knew his chance of being accepted to AFI was slim to none. One of the requirements for AFI applicants is to shoot a five minute film using a given prompt. In 2018, AFI's prompt was "Change of Heart". After brainstorming the basic premise with his father Fred, Freddy wrote *Sew Torn* (the short film); a story about a seamstress, her thread, and a deal gone bad. With a crew of four, including Freddy's longtime Swiss cinematographer Sebastian Klinger, Freddy shot *Sew Torn* in one day in Bad Ragaz, Switzerland for a budget of \$4,000.

After submitting *Sew Torn* to AFI, Freddy and Fred sent the short to their friend Peter Spears (*Nomadland*, *Call Me By Your Name*). Within a matter of weeks Searchlight Pictures acquired the film, Freddy secured representation at United Talent Agency with agents Rich Klubeck and Amanda Hymson, and if that wasn't enough, Peter shared *Sew Torn* with Joel Coen. With Freddy's recent college essays all focused on the work of his favorite filmmakers, the Coen brothers, it was a dream come true to sit with Joel to discuss why he appreciated *Sew Torn*.

In 2021, Freddy graduated as the youngest Directing Fellow to ever attend AFI. His AFI thesis film, *Shedding Angels*, won a Student Academy Award and was shortlisted for a student BAFTA.



# Producers



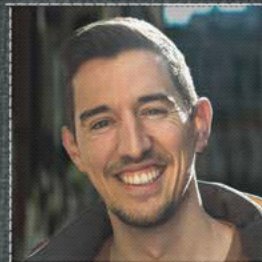
## FRED MACDONALD

Fred Macdonald is a writer, producer, and founder of several entertainment and media companies. Over the years his companies have partnered with The Walt Disney Company, DreamWorks Animation, Lionsgate / Summit Entertainment, and Viacom. Macdonald was CEO and Chairman of Olive Jar Studios, Inc., a film production company with studios in Los Angeles and Boston. While helming the studio, Macdonald creative directed theme park media (The Walt Disney Company, Universal Studios), television commercials (Levi Strauss & Co., Samsung Electronics, and a Coca-Cola CLIO Gold winner that Macdonald creative directed with Spike Jonze).



## BARRY NAVIDI

Barry Navidi is a producer who has worked with John Huston, Al Pacino, Marlon Brando, Robert Mitchum, Michael Caine, Paul Scofield, Johnny Depp, Sean Connery, Jeremy Irons, Anthony Hopkins, and many others. His producing credits include *Mister Corbett's Ghost*, *Divine Rapture*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Wilde Salomé*, and most recently *Modi* starring Al Pacino, and directed by Johnny Depp. As producing partners for over 20 years, Barry Navidi and Al Pacino have a number of films in development, including *Lear Rex* based on William Shakespeare's play *King Lear* and *The Einstein Calculus*, a thriller based on a true story of Albert Einstein's affair with a Soviet spy, set in 1944 during his involvement in the Manhattan Project.



## SEBASTIAN KLINGER

Sebastian Klinger is an award-winning Swiss cinematographer and producer whose credits include all of Freddy Macdonald's short films as well as multiple music videos for three time Grammy winner Fantastic Negrito. He also contributed to the Netflix series *Contigo Capitán* as well as Spanish feature *Color Of Heaven*, which premiered at San Sebastián International Film Festival.



## THE ZAVITSANOS BROTHERS

The Zavitsanos Brothers (Socratis and Diamantis) are filmmakers based in Houston, Texas. They co-directed the micro-doc *Two of Five Million* in 2017, which follows the story of two cousins in their teens from Deir ez-Zor, Syria who were captured by ISIS. The film was selected by over 30 film festivals worldwide and garnered four festival wins. Their next narrative short *Sharing is Caring* starred Grant Goodman (*Stranger Things*, *The Campaign*). A year later, they made another experimental short, *Confined*, which follows the true story of their friend who was held at gunpoint in Baltimore. The film world premiered at SXSW.



# Crew



## TIMOTHY ROSS *Co-Producer*

Timothy Ross is a film producer and co-founder of ORISONO, the official Swiss co-producing partner of *Sew Torn*. He worked on numerous fictional and commercial projects for international clients including Netflix, HBO Max, Turkish Airlines and co-produced the Spanish feature *Color Of Heaven*, which was selected at San Sebastián International Film Festival.



## ALEXANDER STRATIGENAS *Co-Producer*

Alexander Stratigenas is a Swiss producer and supervising sound editor. He co-founded ORISONO with Timothy Ross and helped establish one of the finest Dolby Atmos mixing studios in Switzerland. As co-producer he worked on the acclaimed feature *Color of Heaven* and the Peruvian Netflix series *Contigo Capitán*.

**Directed by** FREDDY MACDONALD

**Written by** FREDDY MACDONALD  
FRED MACDONALD

**Produced by** FRED MACDONALD  
BARRY NAVIDI  
SEBASTIAN KLINGER  
DIAMANTIS ZAVITSANOS  
SOCRATIS ZAVITSANOS

**Co-Produced by** TIMOTHY ROSS  
ALEXANDER STRATIGENAS

**Executive Produced by** RONNIE LOTT  
JOHN ZAVITSANOS  
MICHAEL ZILKHA  
BAIRD CRAFT  
TRISTAN AUFIERO  
ELENA KOURKOUMELIS  
JOHN DILLON POWELL  
AMY LIN

**Executive Produced by** WILLIAM LIN  
DIDI WONG  
GARY MACDERMID  
OLIVER KELLER

**Director of Photography** SEBASTIAN KLINGER

**Production Designer** VIVIANE RAPP

**Editor** FREDDY MACDONALD

**Supervising Sound Editor** ALEXANDER STRATIGENAS

**Music by** JACOB TARDIEN

**Costume Designer** VIVIANE RAPP

**Hair and Make-up Designer** CAROL GEIGER

**Casting by** SHARON HOWARD-FIELD  
NATHAN WILEY



# Interview

## FREDDY MACDONALD

### How would you describe *Sew Torn*?

*Sew Torn* is the tale of a seamstress who comes upon a deal gone bad and is faced with three critical life changing decisions. The first is to commit the perfect crime with her thread. The second is to call the police. And the third is to drive away and pretend that she never saw the crime scene in the first place. And we get to explore the repercussions of her actions through this three-story-format, and ultimately build to an even greater cinematic resolve.

### Tell us about shooting in Europe and the implications for casting?

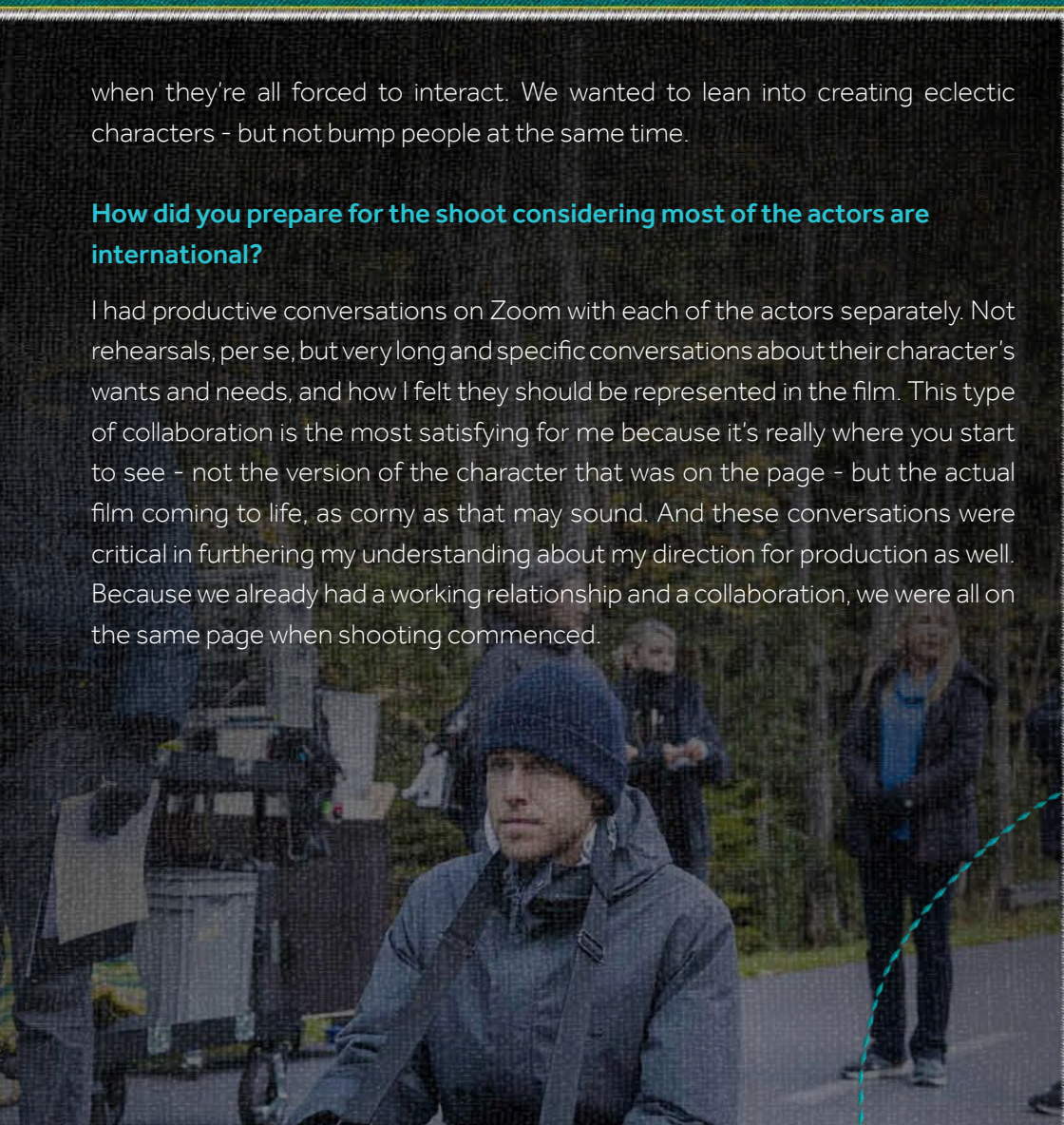
We knew it was going to be an incredibly ambitious task to shoot in Switzerland, and that in order for our 'world' to work, an international cast was essential. I have actors in L.A. that I absolutely love working with - Calum Worthy and K Callan - who were eager to fly to Zurich to be a part of this. But I also wanted the cast to feel international, to fit believably in the fictitious Swiss town we were creating. And that was a major part of the casting process - defining where the film is set and what types of people live in this world.

Also, from a very early stage we knew that we wanted the town to be its own character, and for it to feel a bit suffocating. We loved the idea of having an international cast come together in this strange place, and see what happens

when they're all forced to interact. We wanted to lean into creating eclectic characters - but not bump people at the same time.

### How did you prepare for the shoot considering most of the actors are international?

I had productive conversations on Zoom with each of the actors separately. Not rehearsals, per se, but very long and specific conversations about their character's wants and needs, and how I felt they should be represented in the film. This type of collaboration is the most satisfying for me because it's really where you start to see - not the version of the character that was on the page - but the actual film coming to life, as corny as that may sound. And these conversations were critical in furthering my understanding about my direction for production as well. Because we already had a working relationship and a collaboration, we were all on the same page when shooting commenced.





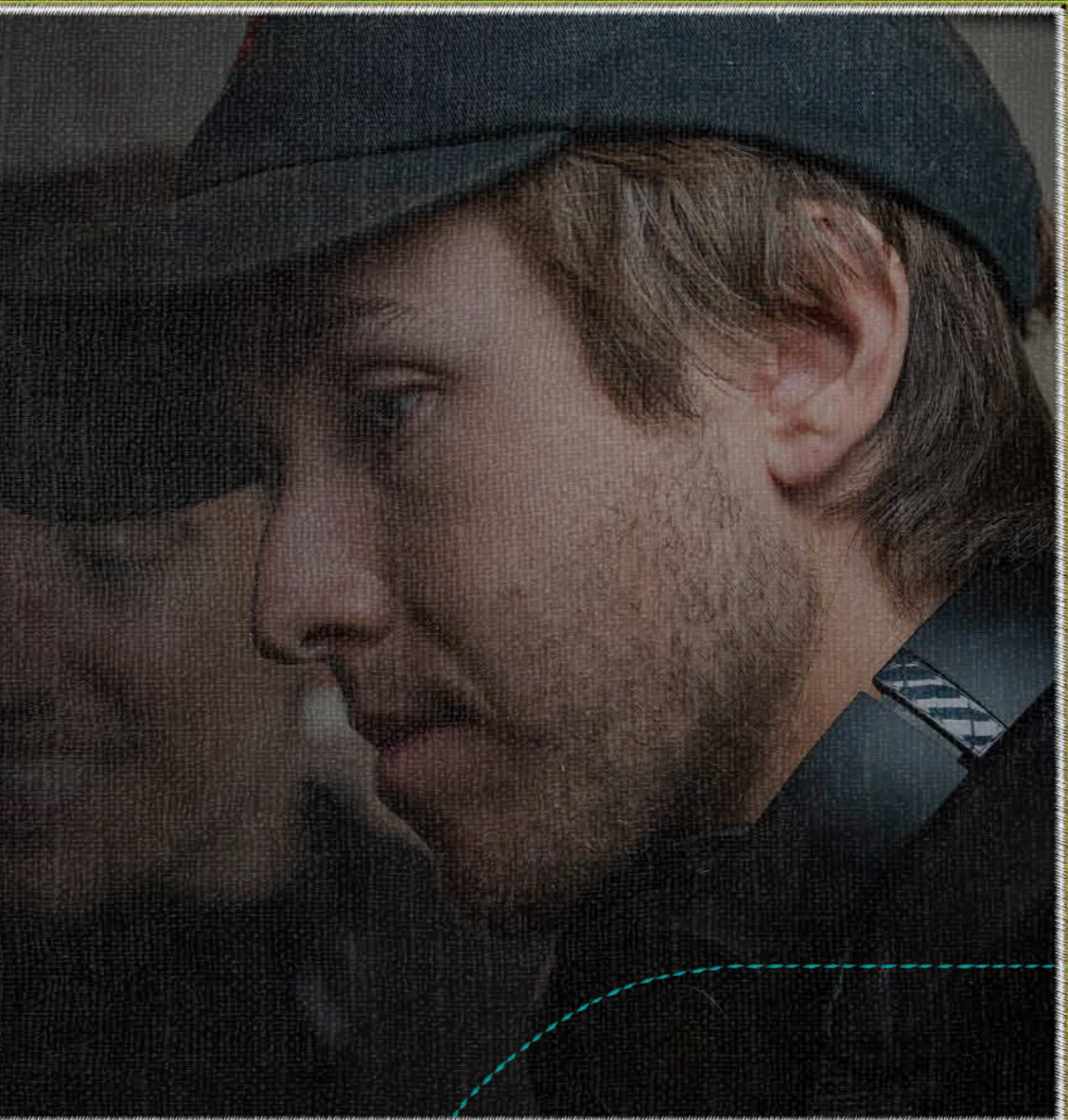
### What was your most challenging part of the film?

The most challenging part of the film had to have been the three part nature of the story and navigating it with a fluctuating schedule that was never chronological. The film is essentially three stories, three different choices that play out independently of each other. And so with that comes all the continuity craziness of not only physical continuity, but the emotional continuity of every actor. So that was already a challenge on its own.

And to add to this, we were also dealing with these incredibly complex thread schemes - these Rube Goldberg-esque contraptions that were so detailed and specific.

### How did you direct such a physically intense film?

One of my favorite parts of directing is when there's no dialogue, and it's all physical action. But with this comes a great deal of planning. Early in the scriptwriting process my dad and I created each contraption out of thread, needles, paper, cardboard... and we shot the action with my phone. It was critical for us that the rigs actually worked. These became important visual references for not only us, but for the crew and cast. Eve, for one, learned to make Barbara's dart gun at home. She would shoot it around the house - she told me no one was safe when she was armed!





# *Interview*

## EVE CONNOLLY

### **Can you tell us a little bit about the character that you're playing?**

The character I'm playing is Barbara, 'The Mobile Seamstress'. And she's at a point in her life where she's stuck, she's lost the person that matters most to her - her mother. And she is trying to figure out how she can still hold on to her mom in any way possible. When she stumbles upon what is possibly the answer to all her problems - we follow her make a number of decisions - a lot of the times the wrong ones - to try and find inner peace.

### **What was your first impression of the script?**

I had never read anything like it - it had such a specific personality and style. It didn't have any moments that were dull or expected. Everything felt so intense, but at the same time there are varying degrees. So you can breathe in the film, and it rises each time. I don't know how Freddy and Fred came up with it, and planned out all the intricate thread work needed to make all Barbara's masterpieces come true. But I'm just glad that I get to pretend to have come up with them - and seem like I'm the genius in the end.

There's action, there's comedy, there's drama, and there's a lot of heart; it's about realizing when you have to let go - and how you can hold on to things while not making them your entire world. About forcing yourself to move on so you can experience life.





### **What was challenging about bringing the script to life?**

It's definitely been challenging because, having read the script and meeting everyone who's a part of it, it was so clear to me that this film has everything it needs to be incredible. For me the fear was always that I wanted to make sure that I held up my end of the bargain.

Barbara is a really special character and there's so much sadness and love there - I just wanted to make sure that I was able to do it justice. That has been the challenge. But you want that challenge. And so every day shooting, I was a little bit scared, but again, working with people who are so dedicated and kind - I knew I could do it.

### **What was your impression of shooting in Switzerland?**

Well, my impression of Switzerland is that it's possibly the most - no... it IS the most beautiful place I think I've ever been. Every morning when we're walking to set and the sun is rising above the mountains, it doesn't look real.

A lot of the time it just looks like a painting. And it feels like it was made specifically for this film.





# Interview

## FRED MACDONALD

### How hard was it to continue the story of the *Sew Torn* short film?

After a false start with a more typical narrative that felt rather contrived, the new *Sew Torn* script came about rather quickly. I remember Freddy and I going for a walk and talking about how the short film only showed Barbara making one choice - to commit the "Perfect Crime", but that there were two other choices we could leverage that would be equally as interesting. "Call Police" and "Drive Away" immediately opened the broader story for us and we became very excited about showing all three choices back to back. And then there's the opening choice with the button... which of course alters everything.

### What was the most challenging part of the filmmaking process for you?

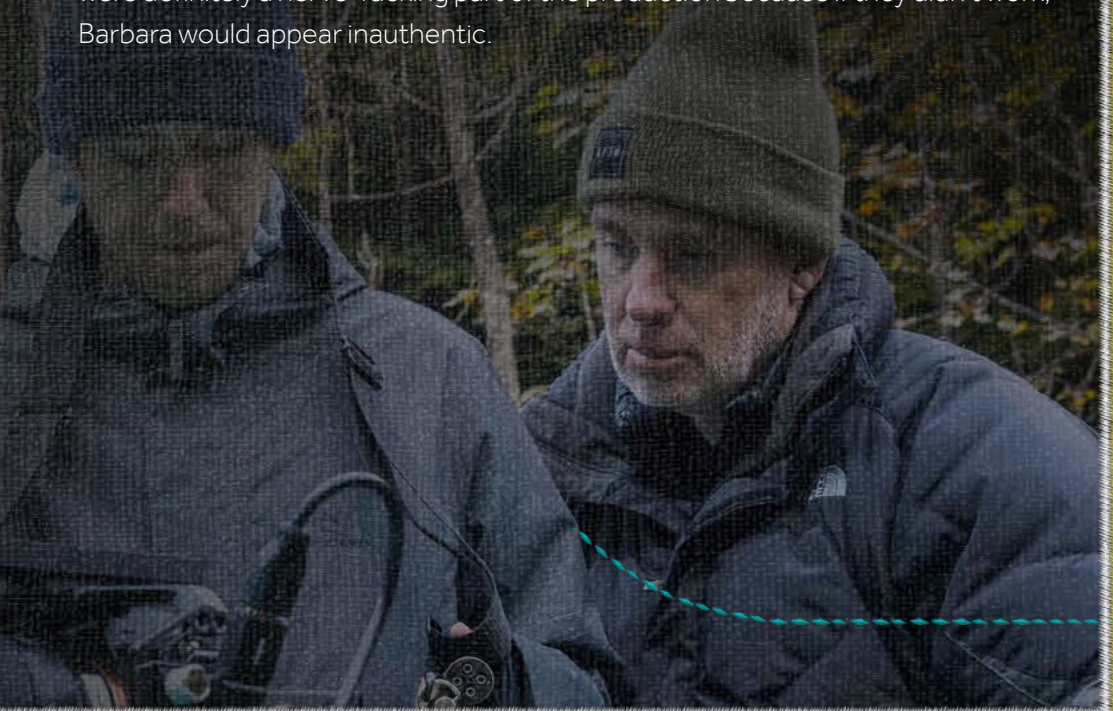
I think the most challenging part of the film was the casting. We were down to just a few weeks before we were scheduled to start shooting and there were still several key characters that had yet to be cast. Sharon Howard-Field and Nathan Wiley, our casting team, were extremely helpful in delivering timely options.

One thing Freddy and I did not do, which was a mistake, is we never ran a proper table read so once we started receiving videos from actors, we would cringe at some of the dialogue. So I think the stressful point for me as co-writer was getting casting tapes from extremely talented actors and trying to divorce their acting skills from early drafts of the script.

### How did you come up with the complex thread rigs involved in the film?

Barbara's thread and needle 'schemes' are an important part of who she is as a character. It's her superpower. And there are over a half dozen schemes that she uses throughout the film. Part of my job on set was to oversee the rigs and make sure they actually worked - that nothing was cheated.

As Freddy mentioned, he and I tested all of these schemes in Los Angeles first so we could show the cast and the crew what they were and how they worked, so there wasn't any confusion on set when it was time to shoot them. But they were definitely a nerve-racking part of the production because if they didn't work, Barbara would appear inauthentic.





### Can you explain your fundraising process?

From the very beginning, we took Joel Coen's advice and went the friends and family route. This allowed us to maintain full creative control, but it wasn't without its own set of issues. Because this was our first film, we had no track record... investors could only watch the Sew Torn short film and hope that we could pull off something much larger.

Working with the Zavitsanos brothers was key - they networked like crazy bringing in investors including Daryl Morey (President of Basketball Operations for the Philadelphia 76ers). We had also brought in Ronnie Lott so I guess you could say there was a sports component to it all.

### As his father, what did you think of Freddy directing his first feature film?

I've been incredibly impressed by Freddy's ability to direct actors, including those who are two to three times his age. And this was not a cast of unknowns, it was a group of seasoned actors who believed in the film and believed in Freddy based on his previous work. Because he and Sebastian had created extensive shot lists, Freddy knew exactly what he wanted well before he was on set. And the actors saw this and followed his lead. There was never a time where he was indecisive or showed any kind of insecurity due to his age. He knew what he wanted and he got what he wanted. And I think the film shows that.





# *Interview*

## BARRY NAVIDI

### **How did you get to know Freddy and Fred Macdonald?**

I got a call from a friend of mine, and he said "Look, I've got a short film I've got to show you and you've got to take a look at this kid". I said, well, kid, I didn't ask what age. If a friend is showing me a short, I never say no. And I was blown away by it. I said, "wow, this is directed by a kid?" The film is called The Father of Art.

This was before Freddy had shot the Sew Torn short - he was only seventeen. It was very smart, and the kind of mature type of filmmaking that I'm interested in. So I said, "Why don't you introduce me?"

### **And then what happened?**

I met Freddy and Fred for coffee. And I said "Father and son, what's better than that?". You know, because of the way you can nurture and take care of your son. And obviously I got to know them really well.

The first thing I said was "Look, guys, I'd love to team up with you in any shape or form - we can work together perhaps in the future". One thing led to another and I saw a couple of their later shorts, and I knew that this kid is gifted and I want to be part of his journey and legacy. And I just got to know them and invited them to some of the private screenings that I do with Al Pacino. So they got to see part of my relationship with my mentor and my friend.

Freddy then went to AFI and we continued to stay in close touch. Even before he graduated we were going back and forth on the Sew Torn feature. So once he graduated, we were literally ready to go. The fundraising happened quickly, and the next thing I know I'm on the ground in Switzerland shooting.

### **How did you experience shooting in Switzerland?**

I love to be in Switzerland. I have to say, when I was looking at some of the locations, I thought what a perfect place to be. In the beginning, I was a little skeptical about shooting there. But they nailed the location. Just the location itself is priceless.





### **What is your impression of the Swiss crew?**

I've been on the sets of a lot of big movies, small movies, no budget movies. But this picture had a certain synergy with the crew and everybody seems to be in sync. And I know that Fred and Freddy, both of them, were telling me that Sebastian had his own team and co-producers in Switzerland. They were working very closely with Fred as well, putting the below the line team together. But I had no idea the collaborations were so brilliant - how fast they work. I mean, a scene that could have been probably three hours for another crew, they did it in half an hour. And I love the fact that Freddy doesn't do that many takes.

### **Any concluding thoughts?**

I'm honored to be part of the production and I'm sure there's more to come, and there's a lot of more beautiful work ahead for Freddy and Fred. And I think just to be an instrumental part of the whole team, it's just an honor.

The world of cinema has changed. Apart from theatrical we're looking at a lot of streamers and video on demand and so on. This picture on paper is commercial. The word commercial is not a taboo. In fact, it's much harder to make a commercial film than an art film because you're competing with so many other movies out there. But this one is unique. It's so special and so out of the box.





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PRODUCTIONS

**Kanton St.Gallen  
Kulturförderung**



**SWISSLOS**

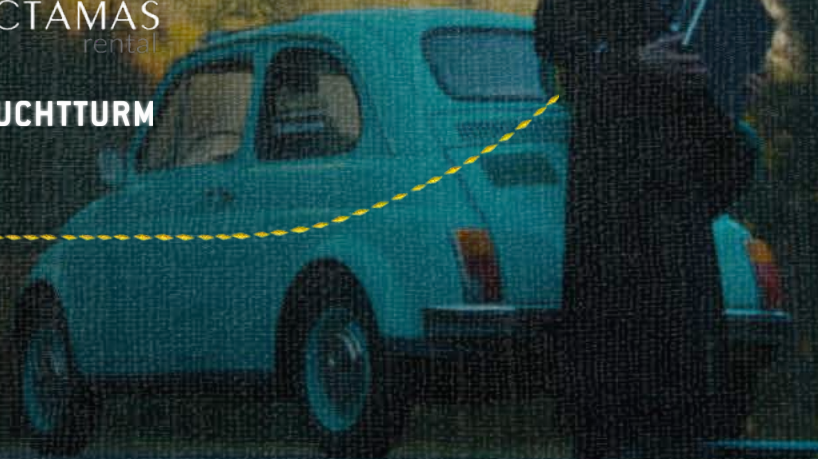
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