

LOG LINE:

After inheriting an old cabin in Norway, an American family moves there with the intentions of turning the adjoining barn into a bed and breakfast. They end up disturbing an ancient Barn Elf who will go to deadly lengths to drive the family away.

SYNOPSIS:

After inheriting his uncle's estate in Norway, Bill and his family move into their new home with the dream of turning the property into a bed and breakfast. As the family adapts to their new Scandinavian lifestyle, Bill's son Lucas discovers an ancient barn elf living in the adjoining barn. There are rules to keep the barn elf happy, and Lucas does his best to follow them. But after Bill ignores Lucas' warnings and plans a Christmas party in the barn, the barn elf plots to get rid of the intruders at any cost.

This captivating Norwegian horror-comedy unites Martin Starr (SILICON VALLEY) and Fantastic Fest Alum Kjetil Omberg (DEAD SNOW 1 & 2, THE TRIP), under Magnus Martens' skilled direction. This nightmarish and hilarious tale about an American family's desire to fit in spirals into a survival saga laced with smart cultural jabs. If the allure of Norway and its mystical elves, coupled with a nostalgia for the playful horror of the 1980s piques your interest, don't miss THERE'S SOMETHING IN THE BARN.

DIRECTORS STATEMENT

Barn elves are deeply rooted in Norwegian folklore and tradition. They are in our souls and part of our culture. Making a movie about a foreign family who do not understand them, then annoys the hell out of them and then must fight them, makes perfect sense. The only weird thing about it is that it hasn't been done before.

I love Christmas movies as much as anyone else and having two kids, I have watched them all over the years around the holidays. But what all of us really seem to miss is a movie that has a new, fresh, and original approach, without losing the classic Christmas spirit. I truly believe that THERE'S SOMETHING IN THE BARN is what people are looking for.

What I find extremely compelling about THERE'S SOMETHING IN THE BARN, is that it has qualities that go beyond any "normal" Christmas movie. It's edgy, fun, has absurd action, and big scares. I see this as a genre mash up: part horror, part comedy and 100% Christmas movie.

My intention is to make a highly entertaining movie that strikes a perfect mix of scares and comedy, grounded characters, and family spirit. I know I'm not the only adult around the world that desperately wants a fresh and fun Christmas-movie that I can watch every December. THERE'S SOMETHING IN THE BARN is definitely that movie!

Merry Christmas!
Magnus Martens
Director

ABOUT THE PRODUCTION

THE MYSTERIOUS BARN ELF

Many think the Norwegian barn elf is a wholesome, decent, and kind little guy, helping tend to the animals, the crops, and the farm. But if you mistreat the barn elf by breaking the rules or forget to take them a treat on Christmas Eve, they will unleash hell upon you, your family, and your livestock.

THERE'S SOMETHING IN THE BARN is the first feature film where this fascinating mythological creature takes the spotlight, in ways that are both gruesome and funny. Barn elves are deeply rooted in Norwegian folklore and tradition. Every Christmas, the whole nation read stories about them, sing songs about them, dress up like them, send postcards featuring their weird little faces to each other, and fill their houses with small and big doll-versions of them. And most importantly, put out porridge on the doorstep to please them, lest they get angry and go ballistic.

Scottish-Norwegian screenwriter Alexander Kirkwood Brown came up with the idea for THERE'S SOMETHING IN THE BARN in 2014 when he started writing about the mythological Norwegian creature *fjøsniissen*, the barn elf. Unlike the troll, the barn elf has never been the subject of a feature film, until now.

"However, the film could easily have turned out very differently", says Brown. "At first, my script was a pure horror story, but the feedback I received from people who read it was that the story was just as funny, as it was scary." The writer who has previously written several books as well as TV series and films, has always been fascinated with folklore and fairy tales. "I grew up in Dokka, a village in the inland of Norway, where my father was the director of a farm museum. I've always found old barns and houses exciting and creepy."

The creepy and malevolent side of the barn elf is central to THERE'S SOMETHING IN THE BARN. Aleksander Kirkwood Brown points out that the traditional *fjøsniissen* has little in common with the modern and sanitized Christmas figures like Santa's elves. "The barn elf is part of a very old tradition, which goes way back thousands of years. Back then, the barn elf was not someone you'd want to mess with. If you crossed him, he could be really dangerous and violent" says Brown.

A CHRISTMAS HORROR-COMEDY

Horror-comedy is tricky and needs a careful balance between the elements and a careful handling within these elements. One of the most striking aspects of THERE'S SOMETHING IN THE BARN is how the movie balances humor and warmth, with violence and gore. "Scary, funny and cheeky, can be a pretty tricky combination" Magnus Martens admits. Although there's no shortage of blood, deaths and f-bombs throughout the movie, the director insists that it's *almost* made for the entire family. "It's an entry level horror movie, and I imagine that 18-year-old horror fanatics will enjoy it too" says Martens. The holiday season is another movie genre in itself, "I love Christmas! So having a chance to bring this weird, grumpy, and creepy Norwegian Christmas character to life, is a real blessing".

THE MAGIC OF THE 80s

Producer Kjetil Omberg, whose previous credits include the DEAD SNOW movies and THE TRIP, describes THERE'S SOMETHING IN THE BARN as "a dream project". "In many ways, we've had the opportunity to make the kind of movie we loved as kids" says Omberg.

Director Martens elaborates, "We've been inspired by some of the great 80s movies, such as GREMLINS and NATIONAL LAMPOON'S CHRISTMAS VACATION. Making it colorful and playful, visually as well as tonally, was important to me. THERE'S SOMETHING IN THE BARN's DNA is already deeply rooted in the 80's, but I will modernize it and tailor it for a very demanding age group who consume visual storytelling in a whole different way than we ever did. We had a lot of fun making this movie, and I really wanted that to show."

THE FAMILY DYNAMIC

The Family is really the core of the story. They bring the warmth and humanity that is essential. This is a family that already have problems and issues that needs to be resolves if they are to survive as a family, or even survive at all:

- The naïve and well-meaning dad who drags his whole family to the other side of the earth without thinking of the consequences... He's clumsy, he's out of his element, and he finds it easier not to confront any problems hoping they will magically disappear by themselves.
- The mom, already unhappy in her marriage, hasn't really had the guts to confront it for real. She's trying to hold the family together both on an emotional level and a purely practical level. She never really wanted to go to Norway, and now the problems have piled up in a way that's almost impossible to handle.
- The teenage daughter who is pulled brutally out of her own live – at the worst possible time. For her, friends, independence and live is more important than family, and now she's stuck with people she doesn't want to be with, on a cold arm in the middle of absolutely nowhere.
- The curious, but insecure little bother who realizes that he is the one who has to step up if this family is to be saved. His story is almost a coming-of-age story, where innocence and naivete needs to be replaced by pure courage.

"This story is really about a family that has tons of unresolved issues and difference. In their meeting with the hostile elves, their problems escalate, and they have to find back to each other again." Director Magnus Martens explains. "Understanding these characters on a grounded, human level will give the movie warmth and heart. Creating realistic characters that have real, relatable problems, issues and relationships, set in a heightened world, has been a key part of all my previous work."

CULTURES COLLIDE

The clash between American and Norwegian culture sets the stage for some truly funny moments. After inheriting an old farm, the American quartet; dad Bill, stepmom Carol, teenage daughter Nora and younger son Lucas look forward to settling down in the Norwegian mountains, but the locals are seemingly less than enthusiastic about their presence.

The director of *THERE'S SOMETHING IN THE BARN*, Magnus Martens, knows a thing or two about the US after spending time there directing several hit TV shows. "We have fun with the American perception of Norwegians, and vice versa. It's somewhat exaggerated, obviously and we're playing around with outdated prejudices, but the American family is our classic 'fish out of water'. They have come from the outside, without any knowledge of the traditions and unwritten rules."

THE PRODUCTION

Production for *THERE'S SOMETHING IN THE BARN* was supposed to start in early 2022 but a new wave of COVID-19 forced the production to stall. A blessing and a curse, according to Kjetil Omberg. "It felt bitter at first, but the delay gave us more time to prepare. It also gave us the chance to cast Martin Starr in the leading role as he wasn't available when the shooting was initially scheduled."

Finally in October 2022, they were able to begin principal photography. After a month of shooting in Lithuania, the production moved to the Norwegian villages Ringebru and Tretten. There was only one slight problem. "There was no snow! Which is kind of a problem when you're making a Christmas movie. Thankfully, it started snowing the day before we started shooting", Omberg says.

ABOUT THE CAST

Martin Starr ‘Bill’

Martin Starr is an American actor and comedian who has played the role of Roman DeBeers in the comedy series PARTY DOWN (2009-) and Bill Haverchuck in the comedy drama FREAKS AND GEEKS (1999-2000). Besides these, the actor has appeared in dramas SILICON VALLEY (2014-2019), REVELATIONS (2005), BURNING LOVE (2013) and LIFE IN PIECES (2015-2019).

Starr has also done considerable work on the big screen. His film and short film credits include STEALING HARVARD (2002), BAND CAMP (2003), WHO'S YOUR DADDY (2002), KICKING & SCREAMING (2005), AMERICAN STORAGE (2006), KNOCKED UP (2007), BIG BREAKS (2009), THE INVENTION OF LYING (2009), A GOOD OLD FASHIONED ORGY (2011), SAVE THE DATE (2012), I'LL SEE YOU IN MY DREAMS (2015), INFINITY BABY (2017) and SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING (2017).

Amrita Acharia ‘Carol’

Amrita Acharia is a British actress of Nepalese-Ukrainian heritage. Her credits include HBO's GAME OF THRONES (2011-2012), Laika's THE MISSING LINK (2019), ITV's THE GOOD KARMA HOSPITAL (2017-2022) and THE SISTER (2020), and most recently Starz's THE SERPENT QUEEN (2022), alongside Samantha Morton.

Her Norwegian credits include leading roles in Norway's 2015 Best Foreign Film entry I AM YOURS (2013) and TV2/Netflix's ACQUITTED (2015-). Amrita is also pursuing writing and directing, with projects currently in development.

Kiran Shah ‘Original Elf’

Kiran Shah, also known as “Little Kiran”, is a veteran of TV and film, with 45 years in the industry. He has performed in numerous blockbusters including THE LORD OF THE RINGS trilogy (2001-2003), TITANIC (1997), INDIANA JONES AND THE RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK (1981), DARK CRYSTAL (1982), SUPERMAN, THE HOBBIT trilogy (2012-2014), LEGEND (1985), THE LION, THE WITCH AND THE WARDROBE (2005), and many STAR WARS films & TV (1983-2022).

Kiran is a two-time Guinness World Record holder. He is currently the shortest active stuntman at 4'1, and since May 2010 also the shortest wing-walker, facing speeds of 120mph at 1000ft. As well as being published in many anthologies in the UK and USA, Kiran's latest book is *Invisible Enemies*, with all proceeds going to Great Ormond Street Children's Hospital.

Townes Bunner ‘Lucas’

Alexander Townsend Bunner is an American actor from New York, NY. THERE’S SOMETHING IN THE BARN is his first major movie role. Townes was cast in this breakout role while living in Oslo, Norway during the filming of an American-Norwegian film set in Norway. He currently lives with his parents and three sisters in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Zoe Winther-Hansen ‘Nora’

Zoe Winther-Hansen is a Norwegian-American actress. She made her debut on the big screen in 2017 with in the film the 12TH MAN. She has since then acted in several short films including SHALLOW WATER BLACKOUT (2019) and SYNTHBABE (2022). She plays the lead character in her newest film, THE BITCOIN CAR which is set to premiere in 2024.

Calle Hellevang-Larsen ‘Tor -Åge’

Calle Hellevang-Larsen is a comedian, writer and actor from Bergen, Norway. He is best known from the comedy trio RASKE MENN (2012) and his work with Ylvis, both on stage and television. In 2022, Calle released his first solo comedy drama show on television, CALLES GALE VERDEN, which is currently running season two.

Calle has also appeared in numerous television comedy shows, i.e. KONGEN BEFALER (2019-2020 based on BBC’s TASKMASTER), talk show PRAKTISK INFO MED JON ALMAAS (2018-2020) and reality show IKKE LOV Å LE PÅ HYTTA (2022).

Henriette Steenstrup ‘Liv’

Henriette Steenstrup is a Norwegian actress, scriptwriter, and comedian. Since 2003, she has been an active actress, comedian, scriptwriter, and showrunner. For several years, she’s been attached to the Norwegian National Theater, where she has done classical theater work. From 2010-2014 she was a cast member of a popular sketch-based show called TORSDAG KVELD FRA NYDALEN, with a lot of similarities to SNL.

She has done over 20 movies and played in several TV series, including PØRNI (2020-2023), a series made for Viaplay, which she has created writes and plays the main lead. PØRNI has received several awards, both in Norway and internationally. She is currently writing season 4 and 5 of PØRNI, which has been sold to more than 25 countries, including the rights to make an American version.

Jeppe Beck Laursen ‘Raymond’

Jeppe Beck Laursen is a Norwegian actor, best known for his role in the international series THE LAST KINGDOM (2017–2022). Beginning his career in 2004, he specialized as a stuntman before taking on bigger roles in DEAD SNOW (2009), HANSEL & GRETEL: WITCH HUNTERS (2013), THE TRIP (2021) and THE LAST KINGDOM: SEVEN KINGS MUST DIE (2023).

ABOUT THE CREW

Magnus Martens | Director

Norwegian screenwriter and director Magnus Martens is internationally recognized for his ability to deliver stylish and violent action while remaining staggeringly entertaining and savagely funny. He made his feature breakthrough with the slick comedy thriller *JACKPOT* (2011), which he wrote and directed based on a Jo Nesbø story. Selected for the Tribeca Film Festival, the critics described *JACKPOT* as bloody and brilliant, and applauded Martens' deliciously dark style, favorably comparing him to Tarantino and the Coen brothers.

Following his international breakthrough with *JACKPOT*, Martens has directed multiple episodes for some of the biggest TV shows in the US, including *BANSHEE* (2015), *12 MONKEYS* (2016), *POWER* (2016), *MARVEL'S LUKE CAGE* (2016), *GOOD BEHAVIOR* (2017), *LONGMIRE* (2017), *MARVEL'S AGENTS OF S.H.I.E.L.D.* (2016), *FEAR THE WALKING DEAD* (2018) and *THE WALKING DEAD: WORLD BEYOND* (2020). Most recently he directed the anticipated action-thriller *SAS: RED NOTICE* (2021) starring Sam Heughan, Ruby Rose and Andy Serkis and the dark political thriller *FURIA* (2021) for Viaplay. He is currently in prep for a new action-thriller for Netflix.

Alexander Kirkwood Brown | Writer

Alexander Kirkwood Brown is a Scottish-Norwegian author and scriptwriter. He has written several books, graphic novels, TV series and films. His film credits include *CLUE: MALTESERGÅTEN* (2021), *ASKELODDEN – I SORIA MORIA SLOTT* (2019) and *ASKELODDEN – I DOVREGUBBENS HALL* (2017).

Kjetil Omberg | Producer

Producer Kjetil Omberg entered the industry in 1994, initially as a distributor. After 15 years overseeing Warner Bros' titles, he founded Euforia Film, changing his career course and ventured into production. Since then, Kjetil has produced, served as an executive producer, and co-produced 25 films and one TV series. This includes Sundance favorites *DEAD SNOW* (2009) and *DEAD SNOW 2* (2014), as well as the cult series *HELLFJORD* (2012).

Jørgen Storm Rosenberg | Producer

Producer Jørgen Storm Rosenberg is one of Norway's most successful producers, with over 2.5 million cinema tickets sold across ten films. Five of these films made it to the top ten list of the highest-grossing films in their respective years, including international releases. Additionally, three of his films are on the top 100 list of the best-selling films in Norway. He has showcased films at numerous international film festivals, with a highlight being his film *THE BOTHERSOME MAN* (2006) at the Cannes Film Festival.

Mika Orasmaa | Director of Photography

Mika is a multi-award-winning cinematographer working internationally across Film and TV. Always in demand, he recently shot an upcoming special of DOCTOR WHO for the BBC and Bad Wolf. Other projects include WHY DIDN'T THEY ASK EVANS? (2022), an Agatha Christie feature directed by Hugh Laurie for Mammoth Screen and BritBox; the first series of WWII drama WORLD ON FIRE (2019) for the BBC, and the political drama COBRA (2020) for New Pictures and Sky.

Other feature film credits include Finland's highest grossing movie of all time, UNKNOWN SOLIDER (2017) directed by Aku Louhimies which broke box office records in Finland and more recently the action thriller OMERTA12/6 (2022). He has worked with multiple A-List cast in a diverse range of genres and is constantly in demand for high profile commercial shoots.

Åsa Nilsson | Production Designer

After studying Natural Science in high school Åsa Nilsson became interested in art in all forms of expressions. This led to studies in Stockholm where she graduated in Fine Arts as well as studied to become a Production Designer at the Nordic Production Design School in the northern part of Sweden.

Åsa has worked as an Exhibition Designer, Theatre Set Designer and Production Designer in a wide variety of assignments, from tv shows to independent feature films. Her work can be seen in SNOWLAND (2005), WOLF (2007), HOME (2013), THE GARBAGE HELICOPTER (2015), THE KING'S CHOICE (2017), THE BIRD CATCHER (2019), DIANAS WEDDING (2020), EVERYBODY HATES JOHAN (2022), MINI ZLATAN AND UNCLE DARLING (2022) and many more. Åsa has also worked with Nordic Noir TV shows, such as the French-Swedish co-production THE MIDNIGHT SUN (2017) and others based on the Swedish writer Åsa Larsson's detective novels.

Bente Ulvik | Costume Designer

Bente Ulvik is an award-winning costume designer from Norway. She studied costume design at SHKS, worked as a textile artist with exhibitions from 1984 to 1995 and has worked on feature films, TV series, short films, and commercials since 1995.

Her film projects include HANDLING THE DEAD (2022), HANDLE WITH CARE (2016), BEATLES (2013) and LIMBO (2010), as well series such as WISTING (2023) and TWIN (2019).

Jim Udenberg | Makeup Designer

Jim Udenberg is a special effect makeup and prosthetics designer with 30 years of professional experience. After 10 years as the prosthetics supervisor at Universal Studios in Florida, Jim moved to Norway where he created realistic practical effects and fantastical characters for film, tv, commercials and theater since 2004 through his company Imaginarium FX.

Recognized throughout the makeup industry, he has designed makeups and effects and contributed to many films and television shows both in Norway and abroad, such as MAGIC SILVER (2009), A SOMEWHAT GENTLE MAN (2010), LAKE OF DEATH (2019), THE TITAN (2018) and the Finnish horror film DARK FLOORS (2008).

In 2019 he was nominated for Best Makeup in the Norwegian Gullruten TV awards for his extensive array of characters designed and created for the NRK series MAGNUS (2019), for which he was also featured at the Cannes Series Festival. He was also the creature designer for Norway's first werewolf film, the Netflix hit VIKING WOLF (2022). Most recently, he was hired to create alien-like characters featured in his latest release, ANT-MAN AND THE WASP: QUANTUMANIA (2023) for Marvel Studios.

Dimitra Drakopoulou | Make-up Designer

Dimitra Drakopoulou is a Norwegian Film Award winner for her design work in the movie SICK OF MYSELF (2022). The movie received international recognition and was a participant in Cannes Film Festival, Un Certain Regard Selection. Dimitra has participated in many Norwegian films and TV shows that some also received international recognition. Shortlisted for The Academy Awards, THE 12TH MAN (2017), Norwegian comedy NORSHMEN (2016-2018) and a British drama WHERE HANDS TOUCH (2018).

Most recently Dimitra has worked on movies and TV shows in Norway as an SFX artist, key makeup artist and makeup designer such as MUNCH (2023), Netflix TV show HOME FOR CHRISTMAS (2021), Netflix TV show POST MORTEM: NO ONE DIES IN SKARNES (2021) and the HBO series BEFOREIGNERS (2019). In 2023, she was awarded with the Norwegian Film Critics Award for her work.

Ida Astero Welle | Makeup Designer

Ida Astero Welle is an award-winning makeup and prosthetic designer. Previous credits include STORIES FROM NORWAY (2018), for which Ida won the Gullruten award for her makeup design. She was the makeup designer for American disaster movie SURVIVE (2020), made prosthetics for the Oscar-nominated and Bafta-winning drama WORST PERSON IN THE WORLD (2021) and did makeup design for Netflix movie NOTHING TO LAUGH ABOUT (2021).

Recently, Ida did prosthetic makeup design for the third season of acclaimed series EXIT (2019-2023), prosthetic makeup supervisor for multi-award winning film SICK OF MYSELF (2023), makeup design for Amanda-winner DANCING QUEEN (2023) and NRK-series CAMMO (2022-2023), and prosthetic design for the biopic MUNCH (2023).

Kalle Doniselli Gulbrandsen | Editor

Kalle Doniselli Gulbrandsen is a Norwegian editor whose credits include THE BURNING SEA (2021), PROJECT Z (2021) and THE WAVE (2015).

Lasse Enersen | Music

Born in Hamburg, Germany, Finnish-Norwegian composer Lasse Enersen has been creating distinctive scores to internationally recognized films and series for over a decade. Lasse earned his masters in composition from Sibelius Academy (University of the Arts Helsinki), studying with Erkki Jokinen and Paavo Heininen. In 2004, he won first prize at the international Waterworks Composers Competition for his work *Agua Nocturna* for Solo Cello and Mixed Choir.

Lasse is perhaps most well-known for his scores to *TOM OF FINLAND* (which he scored with the Oscar-winning composer Hildur Guðnadóttir), and *THE UNKNOWN SOLDIER* (the highest grossing film in Finnish history). Enersen's unique approach to the score, combining Nordic folk, electronic, and avant-garde idioms, caught the attention of Renny Harlin, who tapped him to score two Chinese tentpole films: *LEGEND OF THE ANCIENT SWORD* and *BODIES AT REST*. He also scored US production *MISFITS* for Harlin with the composer Trevor Rabin.

CREDITS

DIRECTED BY

Magnus Martens

WRITTEN BY

Aleksander Kirkwood Brown

PRODUCED BY

Kjetil Omberg
Jørgen Storm Rosenberg

CO-PRODUCED BY

Aleksi Hyvärinen

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS

Aram Tertzakian
Nick Spicer
Maxime Cottray
Carole Baranton
Yohann Comte
Pierre Mazars
Martin Starr

CAST

Martin Starr
Amrita Acharia
Kiran Shah
Townes Bunner
Zoe Winther-Hansen
Calle Hellevang-Larsen
Henriette Steenstrup
Paul Monaghan
Jeppe Beck Laursen

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY

Mika Orsmaa, FSC

PRODUCTION DESIGNER

Åsa Nilsson

MAKE-UP AND PROSTHETICS DESIGNERS

Dimitra Drakopoulou
Ida Astero Welle
Jim Udenberg

COSTUME DESIGNER

Bente Ulvik

EDITORS

Kalle Doniselli Gulbrandsen

COMPOSER

Lasse Enersen

SOUND DESIGN

Panu Riikonen

CASTING BY

Scotty Andersson, CSA