

Timothy Spall In Talks To Star As Sir Ian Paisley In ‘The Journey’



EXCLUSIVE: [Timothy Spall](#) (*Mr Turner*) is in advanced discussions to star as the late [Sir Ian Paisley](#) in Nick Hamm’s *The Journey*. The film is a fictional account of the extraordinary story of two implacable enemies in Northern Ireland — firebrand Democratic Unionist Party leader Paisley and Sinn Fein politician [Martin McGuinness](#) — who are forced to take a short journey together in which they will take the biggest leap of faith and change the course of modern history. It is at this moment the two sworn enemies put their past actions behind them and begin to forge a friendship that would lead to them being known as “The Chuckle Brothers.”

Colin Bateman (*Divorcing Jack*) is writing the script with Hamm (*Killing Bono*) directing. Hamm, Mark Huffam (*The Martian*) and Piers Tempest (*Like Minds*) are producing. Stuart Ford’s [IM Global](#) is financing with Northern Ireland Screen and will handle world sales. Shooting begins mid-September on location in Northern Ireland and Scotland. The producers are currently out to cast for the role of McGuinness.

The friendship between Paisley and McGuinness, whose rival parties fought each other for decades during the darkest days of Northern Ireland's Troubles, is one of the more unlikely in modern politics. On Paisley's death in last year, McGuinness fought back tears as he paid tribute to the reverend, saying "Once political opponents — I have lost a friend."

It's a juicy role for Spall, one of the UK's most versatile and respected actors, and one that has awards-season prestige written all over it. Paisley's booming voice and larger-than-life persona is familiar to a generation who came of age during the worst of Northern Ireland's internecine conflict. Spall has *Alice In Wonderland* sequel *Alice Through The Looking Glass* in the pipeline. He is repped by Markham, Froggatt and Irwin.

IM Global has a slew of its own titles coming out of the gates including *Secret In Their Eyes* starring [Julia Roberts](#), Nicole Kidman and Chewitel Eijofor, which STX is releasing domestically; *Collide* starring Nic Hoult, Felicity Jones, Ben Kingsley and Anthony Hopkins for RED; and *Incarnate* starring Aaron Eckhardt which Universal is releasing.

<http://deadline.com/2015/07/timothy-spall-sir-ian-paisley-im-global-martin-mcguinness-1201466980/>

by [Ali Jaafar](#)

July 1, 2015 1:55pm

