



**WORLD OF WONG KAR WAI**

# The Hand

Like *In the Mood for Love*, *The Hand* is set in the hazy Hong Kong of the 1960s, but its characters couldn't be more different from the earlier film's restrained, haunted lovers. Originally conceived for the omnibus film *Eros*, the film – presented in this retrospective for the first time in its extended cut – tells the tale of Zhang (Chang Chen), a shy tailor's assistant enraptured by a mysterious client, Miss Hua (Gong Li).

A hypnotic tale of obsession, repression, and class divisions, *The Hand* finds Wong Kar Wai continuing to transition from the frenetic, energized style of his earlier films into a register that is lush with romantic grandeur.

## **Production notes**

Multi-director portmanteau films are a dangerous format: they don't merely invite but virtually compel invidious comparisons. The classic example is *New York Stories*, which cruelly exposed the decline in Francis Ford Coppola's creative skills by teaming him with an on-form Scorsese and a Woody Allen near his best. *Eros* is an even more embarrassing exercise, since it was apparently conceived as a respectful homage to the nonagenarian Michelangelo Antonioni. But of the three segments on offer, his is by far the weakest.

Unusually for the portmanteau format, *Eros* starts out with its longest and strongest segment. *The Hand*, shot in deep, rich chiaroscuro by Christopher Doyle, is suffused with the yearning, muted eroticism that director Wong Kar Wai has made himself a master of. It's set in Hong Kong and begins in 1963. Virtually a two-hander (in more ways than one), it traces two contrasted trajectories: as an initially nervous apprentice tailor gradually gains in confidence and experience, the once imperious courtesan he adores sinks to the most abject depths of her profession.

Their relationship is bookended by two hand jobs, which might seem squalid but Wong deflects any such risk, treating both episodes with a delicate sensuality. When the couple first meet, the courtesan masturbates the young man with lofty contempt, as if to imply that this is all he's worth. 'Never touched a woman before, have you?' she demands as her hand strays between his legs. 'Then how can you be a tailor?' Years later, dying, she offers him the same service – but this time, her body wasted and ravaged by disease, she's giving him all she has left to give. Gong Li and Chang Chen, both pitch perfect, play out this doomed erotic dance with affecting subtlety.

**Philip Kemp, *Sight & Sound*, October 2006**

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**THE HAND (extended cut, segment from EROS)**

*Directed by:* Wong Kar Wai  
*©:* Block 2 Pictures  
*Production Company:* Jet Tone Films  
*Executive Producer:* Chan Ye Cheng  
*Produced by:* Wong Kar Wai  
*Producer:* Jacky Pang Yee Wah  
*Line Producer:* Alice Chan  
*Unit Manager:* Si Chun Hung  
*Production Manager:* Carly Wong Tung Fa  
*Production Accountant:* Edmond Poon Pui Man  
*Post-production Consultant:* Stéphane Kooshmanian  
*1st Assistant Director:* Lee Chiu Wah  
*Continuity:* Chan Po Chun  
*Written by:* Wong Kar Wai  
*Director of Photography:* Christopher Doyle  
*2nd Unit Camera:* Lai Yiu Fai  
*Gaffer:* Wong Chi Ming  
*Visual Effects Supervisor:* Gilles Gaillard  
*Editor:* William Chang Suk Ping  
*On-line Editing:* Béatrice Bauwens  
*Production Designer:* William Chang Suk Ping  
*Art Director:* Alfred Yau Wai Ming  
*Props Master:* Wong Tze On  
*Wardrobe:* Luk Ha Fong  
*Make-up Artist:* Kwan Lee Na  
*Hairstylists:* Wong Bo Chuen, Bower Ng Yuk Ho

*Digital Colour Grading Supervisor:* William Chang Suk Ping  
*Digital Intermediate by:* Mikros Image  
*Grading Artist:* Jacky Lefresne  
*Music:* Peer Raben  
*Music Editor:* Tu Tu-chih  
*Sound Designer:* Tu Tu-chih, Claude Letessier  
*Production Sound Mixers:* Kuo Li Chi, Chu Shih Yi  
*Boom Operators:* Hsu Yu Teng, Kang Yung Chien, Hsu Cheng-yi  
*Re-recording Mixer:* Michael Hinreiner  
*Sound Editor:* Grégoire Couzinier  
*Dialogue Editors:* Wu Shu Yao, Magda Habernickel  
*With special thanks to:* Carina Lau Ka Ling

**Cast**

Gong Li (*Miss Hua*)  
Chang Chen (*Xiao Zhang*)  
Tin Fung (*Master Jin*)  
Auntie Luk (*Hua's servant, Ying*)  
Zhou Jianjun (*Hua's lover, Zhao*)  
Sheung Wing Tong, Wong Kim Tak, Tong Siu Man, Yim Lai Fu,  
Shih Cheng You, Siu Wing Kong, Lee Kar Fai (*tailors*)  
Un Chi Keong (*hotel concierge*)

Hong Kong 2004  
56 mins

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**WORLD OF WONG KAR WAI****The Hand (Extended Cut)**

Thu 22 Jul 18:30; Fri 30 Jul 18:20

**The Grandmaster (Yi dai zong shi)**

Thu 22 Jul 20:50; Mon 26 Jul 20:50

**Happy Together (Chun gwong cha sit)**

Fri 23 Jul 18:10

**My Blueberry Nights**

Fri 23 Jul 20:50; Wed 28 Jul 20:40

**Fallen Angels (Do lok tin si)**

Sun 25 Jul 18:30

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**Censor**

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