

Out of My Hand

a film by Takeshi Fukunaga



USA/LIBERIA / Narrative / Digital 2K / 88 minutes

“Out of My Hand” is Both of the Moment and Timeless”

IndieWIRE

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LOG LINE

A struggling Liberian rubber plantation worker risks everything to discover a new life as a Yellow Cab driver in New York City.



SYNOPSIS

Working as tree tapper on a rubber plantation in Liberia, West Africa, Cisco struggles to make a decent life for himself and his family. Despite his and his fellow workers' attempt at unionizing, the rubber corporation maintains a stranglehold over their lives, keeping their dreams of a brighter future at bay. But when a well-timed visit from an American cousin opens Cisco's eyes to a better future abroad, he seizes the one chance he has to change his life, and risks everything for a journey to New York City. Here, he finds himself in Staten Island's small, close-knit Liberian community, where fellow ex-pats help him line up work as a taxi driver. From behind the wheel of his Yellow Cab, a brave new world, full of new people and experiences, is revealed to Cisco. But just as he begins to adjust to his new life, he meets Jacob, a former Liberian child soldier, who unexpectedly forces Cisco to confront the demons of his own difficult past.

Beautifully shot on location in Liberia and New York City, *Out Of My Hand* showcases Liberian actors in raw, powerful and haunting performances. With a restrained and confident directorial hand, Takeshi Fukunaga evokes both the daily struggles within Liberia, and the complexities of its diaspora in New York City, giving voice to a community that is woefully underrepresented in film today.

PRODUCTION

Out of My Hand is the second narrative feature film ever shot in Liberia by a foreign production, and the first to be made in association with the Liberia Movie Union, an affiliate of the Liberia government. All of the cast members in Liberia

are native to the country, and for the many of them, the project is their first involvement in film production. *Out of My Hand* is Takeshi Fukunaga's debut feature film and had its world premiere in the Panorama section at the 2015 Berlin International Film Festival and won the Grand Jury Prize at the 2015 Los Angeles Film Festival. *Out of My Hand* will be released as the first title under Ava DuVernay's new label, ARRAY in North America in fall, 2015.



DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

In this age of information and the Internet, it has become in some sense a choice to remain ignorant of and indifferent to the world around us. Notwithstanding the implicitly political nature of this film, my intention is to raise awareness to the simple fact that, behind the mass industrial products we use every day, we're tied to men and women in parts of the world we know nothing of.

While my own personal background is both culturally and geographically far from Liberia, the themes I'm trying to relay through this story are universal. I believe that having an outsider's perspective on the country allowed me a unique opportunity to find universal points of connection between the Liberian people and the rest of the world. My hope is that this connectivity resonates with audiences irrespective of their own nationalities or backgrounds.

With this in mind, I most of all wish to tell a story about a man who fights in earnest for his life and attempts to go beyond his own inherent limitations. I believe this, in and of itself, delivers a positive message to any audience.

- Takeshi Fukunaga, Director

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Takeshi Fukunaga is a Japanese filmmaker based in New York. He's received support from IFP, Berlinale Talents, and National Board of Review. His directorial debut film, *Out of My Hand* was screened in the Panorama section at Berlin International Film Festival and won the Top Prize at Los Angeles Film Festival.

CAST

Cisco – Bishop Blay

Joy – Zenobia Taylor

Francis – Duke Murphy Dennis

Marvin – Rodney Rogers Beckley

Jacob – David Roberts

Maria – Shelley Molad

CREW

Director – Takeshi Fukunaga

Writer – Takeshi Fukunaga, Donari Braxton

Producer – Donari Braxton, Mike Fox

Executive Producer – Josh Wick, Matthew Parker

Cinematographer – Ryo Murakami, Owen Donovan

Editor – Takeshi Fukunaga, Eugene Yi

Production Design – Steve Gris , Ioannis Socholakis

Costume Design - Cassidy Mosher

Sound Recordist – Mike Wolf Snyder

Sound Design – Anne Tolkkinen

Composer – Tyondai Braxton

ARTICLE & REVIEW

Review: "Soulful immigrant's tale 'Out of My Hand' shows how the past lingers"
L.A. Times, 11 November, 2015

<http://www.latimes.com/entertainment/movies/la-et-mn-out-of-my-hand-review-20151113-story.html>

Review: "Haunting Drama 'Out of My Hand' Tracks a Liberian From Tree-Tapper to NYC Cab Driver" Village Voice, 10 November, 2015

<http://www.villagevoice.com/film/haunting-drama-out-of-my-hand-tracks-a-liberian-from-tree-tapper-to-nyc-cabdriver-7893759>

Article: "Aiming to diversify storytelling, Ava DuVernay expands scope of film distribution collective" L.A. Times, 08 September, 2015

<http://www.latimes.com/entertainment/movies/la-et-mn-ava-duvernay-20150908-story.html>

Review: "LAFF Review: Out of My Hand" is Both of the Moment and Timeless"
IndieWIRE, 14 June, 2015

<http://blogs.indiewire.com/shadowandact/laff-review-out-of-my-hand-is-both-of-the-moment-and-timeless-20150614>

Review: "Berlin Film Festival 2015: Out of My Hand"
The Upcoming, 15 February, 2015

<http://www.theupcoming.co.uk/2015/02/15/berlin-film-festival-2015-out-of-my-hand-review/>