

## OIKAWA Ataru



Genre: Drama, Horror, Suspense  
Format: 35mm  
Estimated Running Time: 90 min.

Budget:  
US\$1,000,000  
(HK\$7,760,000)

Producers:  
KITO Yukie  
HIRATA Mikihiro

Writing Credits:  
OIKAWA Ataru

Production Company:  
Entertainment Farm

HAF Goals:  
Co-producers, Pre-sales

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## INTRODUCTION

This film is about the mysterious psychology and unexpected behavior of a human being confronted by fear. KUWATA Akira is an ordinary, mid-level businessman whose curiosity gets the better of him after a mystery rudely intrudes on his normal, everyday life. Something as simple as losing his cell phone takes him on a journey into fear as he's led deeper and deeper into darkness by a mysterious woman and a mummified hand. The exhilaration of solving a mystery piece by piece; the thrill of an amorphous fear coming at you in infinite, ruthless waves; and the aftermath of an ending that no one could have expected.

## SYNOPSIS

KUWATA Akira is a 30-year-old Japanese businessman who works for a mid-level advertising firm. Everything about him is ordinary. As the advertising industry reels from the recession, Akira is rebuffed by clients and criticized by his superiors day after lackluster day. One night he loses his cell phone on his way home and when he calls it from a pay phone a woman picks up and says that she'll deliver it right away.

It's pouring down rain when she arrives at his apartment and Akira is surprised to see that she's quite beautiful. He offers to dry her clothes while she warms up in the shower and to his further surprise, she agrees. She borrows his umbrella and promises to have dinner with him when she returns it. After she leaves, Akira notices that she left her make-up bag in the bathroom. He opens it and finds her cell phone inside...gripped by a mummified human hand.

At a loss for what to do he visits TANABE Keiko, a professor of archeology whom he met at a conference, and she confirms that it's a perfectly mummified human hand. Akira considers taking the bag to the police, but he decides not to do so partly because he doesn't want to be involved with anything weird and partly because Kaoru, the woman who owned it, was so beautiful.

Strangely, he feels truly alive for the first time in years. He can't find out who Kaoru is, and the cell phone contains no data apart from some unclear photos and disturbing, meaningless videos. He is shocked to discover that one of the videos shows a road near his house and he wonders if he was targeted by Kaoru. In the meantime, Keiko thinks that this might be part of a ring of people who are creating artificial mummies for sale on the antiques market. Akira begins to have disturbing dreams about Kaoru.

Finally, one night, he gets a confused phone call from Kaoru who tells him, "That was...supposed to be yours..." leaving him even more confused. Akira thinks someone is standing outside his apartment door but he cannot see anyone in the hall. He turns and walks away. Behind him, the doorknob begins to turn slowly...

Akira is still unaware of everything that will befall him.  
Kaoru's true identity.  
Her monstrous purpose.  
And the incredible truth behind the mummified hand.

## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

I happened upon the story for this film when I lost my cell phone one day. I desperately retraced my steps to find my cell phone, but in the end I never succeeded. I worried myself sick as my mind whirled with visions of what would happen if a stranger found my cell phone and decided to act in unpredictable ways. It is a minor experience in hindsight, but I felt myself becoming increasingly trapped in the deep, dark tunnel of fear that exists just below the everyday. To encounter a stranger you would normally never meet because you lost your cell phone — this was the "new horror" that became the beginning of my story. The narrative of the film yearns to move beyond the typical terrain of horror, and I hope to create a new kind of fright film that showcases a fear much stronger, and far more exquisite, than mere horror.

## DIRECTOR

OIKAWA Ataru made the transition from magazine editor to screenwriter with the 1988 film *Door*, directed by TAKAHASHI Banmei. A suspense-thriller about an ordinary housewife who becomes the target of violent threats from a salesman it won critical acclaim and drew the attention of KUROSAWA Kiyoshi who gave it a rapturous review in *Director's Company*. Director KUROSAWA also participated in the *Door* franchise when he directed *Door III* in 1996. OIKAWA wrote and directed the three-part *Tomie* franchise (*Tomie: Beginning*; *Tomie: Revenge*) about a beautiful, immortal young woman. In 2008, he directed *Shrill Cries of Summer*, based on a popular video game, and the movie went on to become a teen sensation in Japan, playing on over 60 screens and earning a 200 million yen box office. OIKAWA is currently directing the sequel which will be released in 2009.

## PRODUCER

KITO Yukie started her career at JVC Entertainment in Los Angeles. In 1999, she joined Media Suits and worked with directors Mira NAIR, Richard LINKLATER and David CRONENBERG. In 2004 she joined Entertainment Farm as the Managing Director of the International Division and partnered with Fox Searchlight and India's UTV to finance Mira NAIR's *The Namesake* before going on to produce Ethan HAWKE's *The Hottest State*. KITO also produced

KUROSAWA Kiyoshi's acclaimed *Tokyo Sonata* which premiered at the 2008 Cannes International Film Festival and won the Jury Prize in the Un Certain Regard competition.

HIRATA Mikihiro was born in 1957 and began his career at Nikkatsu in 1985. In 1988 he joined Geneon Entertainment, acquiring Western films for distribution and producing Japanese films. In 1995 he founded Panorama Communications and served as its CEO until 2006, when he became its Vice President. He is in production on the American remake of the Japanese series *Kamen Rider Ryuki*, set to debut in January, 2009. He also helped produce the *Tomie* films and director OIKAWA's hit horror film *Shrill Cries of Summer* (2008) and is currently at work on the sequel.

## PRODUCTION COMPANY

Entertainment Farm is a Tokyo-based finance and production company founded in 2002. Headed by KOTANI Yasushi, in the past six years the company has been involved in six American films including *The Namesake* by Mira NAIR which premiered at 2006 Toronto International Film Festival; *The Hottest State* by Ethan HAWKE which premiered at the 2006 Venice International Film Festival; and finally *A Thousand Years of Good Prayers* by Wayne WANG which won the 2007 San Sebastian International Film Festival's Golden Shell for Best Film. The company has also financed twelve Japanese films including the *J-Horror* Theater franchise which is distributed worldwide by Lionsgate. One of the films, *Retribution*, was directed by KUROSAWA Kiyoshi and screened at the 2006 Venice International Film Festival.