

# THE HARD R

ΔΔΔFILMS



PERGOLA PICTURES

**a short film  
about racism, code switching & a drug deal gone wrong**

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**LIGHT**  
ANTICUS REUS, INIMICUS INIMICI MEI

# SYNOPSIS

Hakeem is a humble black drug runner who aspires to be a veterinarian and escape the world of drug peddling. He works hard to earn the approval of his hospital mentors Damian and Roshel. Don is a brash white drug runner who appropriates black culture and desperate to prove himself in the drug game.

As Don and his boss, Adolfo, prepare for a large drug deal that will either make or break their struggling drug operation, Hakeem rushes into the vet clinic carrying one of their runners who is riddled with bullet wounds. Don convinces Adolfo that he can complete the deal on his own as Adolfo and the others attempt to save the young guy. With so much at stake, Damian sends Hakeem to look after him.

Their conversation turns serious after Don's "gangsta" attitude leads him to sing along to the N-word in a hip-hop track. Hakeem calls out Don's appropriation of black culture as actually racist. The debate continues in line outside the club when Hakeem is abruptly stopped by the club bouncers while Don is allowed to pass freely. When they meet Dwayne inside, the former superstar drug-runner, to pick up the case of money, Dwayne belittles Don and hurls racist profanities at Hakeem. Don comes to Hakeem's defense by standing up to Dwayne and throwing a wad of money at him. With the case in hand, the two flee the club and drive off to meet the dealers.

In the car, Hakeem and Don bond through their shared struggle to prove themselves to their mentors. Despite the dealers bullying Don a little, the fentanyl purchase goes smoothly. When Don returns to the car, they are relieved. They did it. Until Dwayne shows up out of nowhere and shoots them in a fit of rage. He grabs the case and starts to leave when he is fatally shot by the driver of the suspicious car that had been tailing them earlier. Hakeem stirs, only to find that Don has died. He notices the wounded cat and bandages its bleeding leg. Hakeem limps away from the scene as distant police sirens sound. He's carrying the cat and insulin for Don's mom, haunted by the ill-fated run and the death of his would-be friend.

# CAST



**Ezekiel Ajeigbe**  
**'HAKEEM'**

A Nigerian actor born in Fort Worth, Texas and grew up in Arlington, Texas.

He is known for:  
'Dynasty'  
'Bigger'  
'Seal Team'



**Wil Crown**  
**'DON'**

An American actor Born home in Niagara Falls, NY.

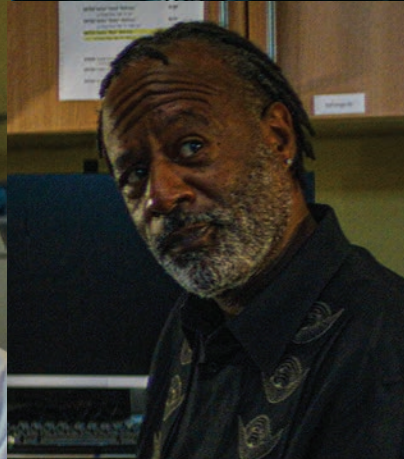
He is known for:  
'Crawl Or Die'  
'Smoke Like Echo'  
'Skid'



**Tristan Cunningham**  
**'ROSHEL'**

An American actor, circus artist and teacher.

She is known for:  
'Reasonable Doubt'  
'NCIS'  
'S.W.A.T.'



**Kyle Greenlaw**  
**'DAMIAN'**

An American actor born in Gary, Indiana, a father of 6, and currently resides in Detroit.

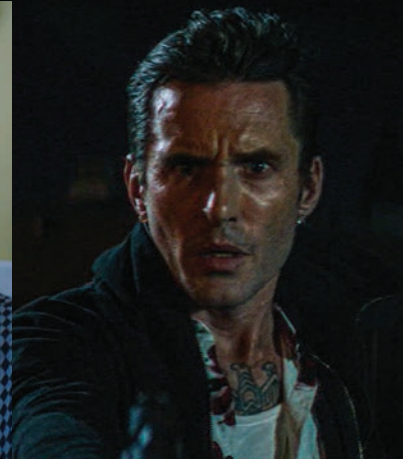
He is known for:  
'A Very Merry Hood Christmas'  
'The Mule'



**Ed Regine**  
**'ADOLFO'**

An American actor & stand-up comedian from Providence, Rhode Island.

He is known for:  
'Once Upon a Time in Hollywood'  
'Charlie Wilson's War'



**Jarrid Masse**  
**'DWAYNE'**

An American actor and rock singer Born in West Warwick, RI.

He is known for:  
'The Christmas Thief'  
'Lord of the Street'  
'Bodyguard Seduction'

# CREW



**Adad Joel Warda**  
Co-writer/Director

An Assyrian American whose films center on family, social-impact issues, diversity, the environment and the nature of reality. He was a finalist in the screen-craft film fund competition as well as at the atx pitch festival with his sci-fi tv pitch for sky city haya. His short film "miss her" won multiple accolades, including placements in the Oscar-qualifying international film festival and "best short" at the Illume Film Festival. He also placed in the Stowe Producer Lab.



**Levi Gordon**  
Co-writer / Exec Prod.

Levi has always had a passion for film and has independently studied screenwriting while working as a veterinarian. The hard R was born out of his personal experiences where many around him misappropriated black culture. And, now, due to the black lives matter movement and the recent public discourse surrounding race, he's had many honest conversations and done research, leading him to tell this story.



**Madisun Leigh**  
Producer  
Story Consult.

She has 20 years of broadcast experience, including at CBS radio. She has worked in television as a technical director for WMSN and held management positions in programming, music, marketing, and promotion. She broadened her portfolio to include film financing and production, becoming production supervisor and director of ops for two production companies & vice president of operations at global pictures media.



**Jamie Ohlsen**  
Producer/Casting Dir.

The founder and CEO of Ohlsen Productions. She is a triple threat producer/actor/executive. She's produced over 17 shorts, features, tv movie pilots, and webseries. Her industry achievements have been recognized by several publications. She produced Alan Tracker, starring Richard T. Jones and Wrong For Right, starring Omar Gooding and Eric Roberts. Both films are slated for a 2023 release. Never one to rest on her laurels, Jamie has diverse list of upcoming projects.



**Courtney Gay Wilson**  
Staff Writer

Since 2010, she has been the ceo & director of business development for mie/attn:pr, a full-service pr firm. During this post, she was able to ghost-write for a #1-rated CBS radio personality, eventually earning her own byline as a staff writer for cbs' wvmv smooth jazz blog. Courtney was also given the opportunity to punch up a comedy script for a film with starring kevin hart and jamie foxx attached. She has written and polished several more tv pilots & features.



**Isiah Flores**  
Dir. of Photography

An award-winning dp, steadicam/gimbal op, cam op, and 1st ac living in san jose, ca. He is an associate member of the society of camera operators. He is both self-taught and art school educated with a bfa in cinematography from the academy of art university 2009. He shoots all forms of film, from narrative feature films to tv pilots to short films, documentary, music videos, commercials, branded content, and sports / action.

# LINKS

## The Film

film homepage: [thehardrmovie.com](http://thehardrmovie.com)  
instagram: [instagram.com/thehardrmovie](https://www.instagram.com/thehardrmovie)  
facebook: [fb.com/thehardrmovie](https://www.facebook.com/thehardrmovie)  
link to trailer: [vimeo.com/700647483](https://vimeo.com/700647483)  
link to the bts featurette: [vimeo.com/701103209](https://vimeo.com/701103209)  
crowdfunding: [seedandspark.com/fund/the-hard-r](https://seedandspark.com/fund/the-hard-r)

## The Cast

ezeziel: [imdb.com/name/nm7052597](https://www.imdb.com/name/nm7052597)  
Wil: [imdb.com/name/nm5099243](https://www.imdb.com/name/nm5099243)  
tristan: [imdb.com/name/nm1462981](https://www.imdb.com/name/nm1462981)  
kyle: [imdb.com/name/nm9251343](https://www.imdb.com/name/nm9251343)  
ed: [imdb.com/name/nm0716628](https://www.imdb.com/name/nm0716628)  
jarrid: [imdb.com/name/nm4436837](https://www.imdb.com/name/nm4436837)

## The Crew

adad: [adadfilms.com](http://adadfilms.com) / [imdb.com/name/nm2096803](https://www.imdb.com/name/nm2096803)  
levi: [imdb.com/name/nm12634070](https://www.imdb.com/name/nm12634070)  
madisun: [imdb.com/name/nm5927251](https://www.imdb.com/name/nm5927251)  
jamie: [imdb.com/name/nm951468](https://www.imdb.com/name/nm951468)  
courtney: [imdb.com/name/nm5257839](https://www.imdb.com/name/nm5257839)  
isiah: [imdb.com/name/nm3379746](https://www.imdb.com/name/nm3379746)

## The Vendors

wolfpack studios: [wolfpack-studios.com](http://wolfpack-studios.com)  
sharegrid: [sharegrid.com](http://sharegrid.com)  
wooden nickel: [woodennickellighting.com](http://woodennickellighting.com)  
driving plates: [drivingplates.com](http://drivingplates.com)  
lazy sloth productions: [lazyslothproductions.com](http://lazyslothproductions.com)

# FAQ

## **Why did you make this film?**

To add a meaningful voice to the discussion around racism, cultural appropriation and white privilege. To let folks know that it's a nuanced, complicated and thorny issue that deserves an equally nuanced and honest conversation. The events surrounding George Floyd and so many others who have suffered horrible injustices compelled our team to tell this story. Racism genuinely affects us all. Additionally, COVID caused all of us to pause and to reflect on life. This film is one of those many reflections on issues that matter to so many.

## **Where & when did you produce the film?**

The location scouting, casting and production all took place in and around Los Angeles County from 2021 to 2022. Post-production was handled by a remote artists collaborating over Zoom throughout late 2022 and early 2023.

## **Why did you make this as a short film?**

We are an independent team of filmmakers and producers who wanted to ensure our vision translated well on-screen. The resources we were able to procure allowed us to produce a short versus a full feature film. However, we have plans for a feature or TV series or perhaps both, should our film garner a reaction favorable to this outcome.

## **How did the team come together?**

Levi Gordon connected with Adad Joel Warda on Upwork.com in late 2020. Adad reached out to Jamie Ohlsen who he was previously connected with on Facebook. Adad Joel Warda connected with Madisun Leigh via the Facebook group "Black Filmmakers". Madisun Leigh introduced her wife and writing partner, Courtney Gay Wilson, to the team. Jamie Ohlsen introduced Isiah Flores to the team.

## **What medium was the film shot on?**

The film was shot primarily on the Red Komodo 6K cinema camera using Cooke Anamorphic Special Flare lenses. Other cameras included the Red Epic 5K along with Atlas Orion anamorphic lenses, as well as a DJI Mavic 4K drone.

## **What post-production software was used?**

Adobe Premiere Pro was used for editing. Adobe After Effects and Foundry's Nuke was used for digital compositing and VFX. DaVinci Resolve was used for coloring. Pro Tools was used for sound mixing. And Cubase was used to compose the score.

# CONTACT



For inquiries  
[Contact@TheHardRmovie.com](mailto:Contact@TheHardRmovie.com)