

## Sundance Film Festival standout 'Middle of Nowhere' makes a one-day stop in Minneapolis

Written by Alaina L. Lewis

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As the film credits rolled to a close at the 2012 Sundance Film Festival, it was only a matter of seconds – the time it takes one to formulate a tweet or a Facebook post – before Ava Duvernay's feature film masterpiece "Middle of Nowhere" had catapulted this former media and marketing strategist into a household name.

Although Duvernay had already made some monumental waves as the director of the 2011 standout narrative "I Will Follow," starring Salli Richardson-Whitfield and Omari Hardwick, there was something about *this* flick that made the fervent audience rush to propel a story about "nowhere" – everywhere. Living up to its intentions, "Middle of Nowhere" garnered Duvernay the Best Director award at the 2012 Sundance Film Festival marking her as the first African-American woman to take home the prize.



Backed by Participant Media and a product of AFFRM (African-American Film Festival Releasing Movement), Duvernay's film distribution company, "Middle of Nowhere" charts the struggle one woman, Ruby (played by Emayatzy Corinealdi), undergoes when her husband, Derek (played by Omari Hardwick) is sentenced to eight years in prison, forcing her to drop out of medical school so she can be there for him. A life once full of possibility now seems hopeless as she ventures every week to a maximum security prison to visit the man to whom she gave her heart, but who now leaves her conflicted with feelings of shame and loneliness. Just as Ruby is adjusting to this new life, she encounters a hard-working bus driver named Brian (played by David Oyelowo) who shakes up her life, and her heart, sending her through a

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whirlwind of emotions and choices on her journey to make her broken life whole again.



"Middle Of Nowhere" is new, it's refreshing, and it's an incredible display of storytelling on a subject matter not often explored in African-American film. Call it a drama, call it a love story, or just call it genius movie making. But definitely understand that this is a prized piece that everyone should see and celebrate. As a writer/director, Duvernay is not only leaving a trail of imaginative and creative film gems in her path, but she is also propelling herself, one frame at a time, onto a must watch list for the future of film.



For one night only, "Middle of Nowhere" is coming to the Twin Cities for a special screening at the Roseville AMC Theater on Tuesday, June 11, at 7:30 p.m., as a part of its AMC independent series. Tickets are only available via [www.Tugg.com](http://www.Tugg.com) and must be pre-purchased by June 4. To purchase tickets, visit:

[www.tugg.com/events/4298](http://www.tugg.com/events/4298)

. To learn more about the film, visit

[www.middleofnowhere.com](http://www.middleofnowhere.com)