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# OUR BRIT BOY CRUSH

In the 1970's biopic *Talk to Me*, British heartthrob Chiwetel Ejiofor drops his accent and adds a 'fro to play an all-American activist



“The music, the politics, the way radio became the voice of the movement. It was an exciting period to dive into.”

Ever since Chiwetel Ejiofor (pronounced Chew-it-tell Edge-oh-for) crossed the Atlantic in 1997's *Amistad*, Hollywood has been making room for this Brit-born actor. One look at him on-screen and it's clear why: The 32-year-old stage vet both mesmerizes and makes you think. In *Dirty Pretty Things*, he mans up as a dignified immigrant doctor turned cabbie; in HBO's *Tsunami*, he strips away just enough machismo to play a broken father accepting his daughter's death. His villainous swagger as a Detroit drug lord in *Four Brothers* speaks volumes. Now Ejiofor steals scenes as Don Cheadle's best friend and boss, Dewey Hughes, in this month's *Talk to Me*, a biopic about the prominent role a radio show played in the post-Civil Rights Movement in Washington, D.C.

"Dewey and I talked at great length about the history of it all—the music, the politics, the way radio became the voice of the movement," says Ejiofor. "It was just a really exciting period to even dive into, so I felt pretty good about the whole thing."

Directed by Kasi Lemmons, the film also explores the complexities of male friendships, a subject Ejiofor didn't mind untangling on-screen. "This story is essentially about the relationship of two guys over a few decades," he explains. "Kasi, who has a

real good understanding of masculine sensitivity, wanted to show the formation of their friendship and the love they had for each other." Ejiofor's longstanding love for 1970's music made his immersion into the movie's setting even better. "Back then, that's when music was music. Those tunes just survive."

Male bonding and pure soul? Ejiofor gives us something to chew on this summer.

—CORI MURRAY



**ON THE SET:** While Ejiofor (who's known by friends as Chewy) enjoyed reliving the seventies on the Toronto and Washington, D.C., set, there was a downside: the costumes. "All the facial hair, sideburns and Afros you've got to contend with every day. Apart from that, the clothing is funky. The music, the vibe—everybody's so cool."

EJIOFOR, LORENZO AGUIRRE/EXCLUSIVE BY GETTY IMAGES; FILM STILL, FOCUS FEATURES/COURTESY OF EVERETT COLLECTION