For Immediate Release Media Contact: press@halawai.org

**INAUGURAL HĀLĀWAI FILM FESTIVAL TO CELEBRATE, SHOWCASE AND CULTIVATE TALENT AND CULTURAL RESOURCES OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS IN THE NEW YORK METROPOLITAN AREA**

**Hālāwai Film Festival**

 **New York, NY**

**October 28-30, 2023**

*Call for film submissions open through September 1, 2023*

**NEW YORK, NY** (August 29, 2023) **–** [Hālāwai](http://www.halawai.org/hff.html), a 501(c)(3) non-profit, announces the launch of the Hālāwai Film Festival (HFF),dedicated to broadening horizons and telling a richer, more comprehensive story of the Pacific Islands and its people through film, music, and dance. With a keen editorial eye presenting content that resonates with all audiences, the inaugural festival will run October 28-30, 2023, across some of the most celebrated venues in New York City. Buy your [tickets now](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/halawai-film-festival-registration-702259465967?aff=oddtdtcreator).

With the recent tragedy affecting our community in Lāhainā, Maui, HFF will donate a portion of the proceeds to Maui relief funds. We will also be proud to present a talk story with Native Hawaiian Director Chris Kahunahana that will be a thoughtful and open conversation about the current ongoing efforts towards rebuilding a better Maui and what we can do as allies.

He aliʻi ka ʻāina; he kauwā ke kāne

The land is chief; man is its servant

* ʻŌlelo Noʻeau #531

“Our kūpuna (elders) teach us that we are the ‘āina (land) and it is our job to steward the land for generations to come. Lāhainā is the manifestation of what Native Hawaiians have been foreshadowing for decades. Today’s conversation about the future of Lāhainā will hopefully be different than other generations’, it will hopefully be steeped in sustainability and transparency.”

* *Chris Kahunahana, writer, producer and director of Waikīkī The Film*

See the list of resources and groups to donate to support victims of the Maui Fires now at [Halawai.Org](http://www.halawai.org/).

HFF is an excellent opportunity to experience the best entertainment/content coming directly from Pacific Islanders’ minds and hearts. Filmmakers are still invited to submit projects for consideration for HFF 2023. Due to the tragic losses in Maui and our collective support for those impacted taking priority, the submission deadline is extended to September 1*.* Applicants will be notified if a film has been accepted to the festivalby September 29. Full details and rules are available at <https://filmfreeway.com/HalawaiFilmFestival>.

HFF will offer three days of screenings, workshops and cultural experiences, as follows:

On Saturday, October 28, HFF Opening Day will be Presented by the **New York Public Library of the Performing Arts at Lincoln Center**, bringing films exploring dance and performance to this iconic location. Dancers embodying the best of the best in Hawaiian Hula, Ori Tahiti, and Samoan Sasa will take the stage to start the festivities, followed by ***Ka Huaka’i***, a film documenting the physical and spiritual journey of top cultural and dance practitioners on the road to Merrie Monarch—the Olympics of Hula. Continuing the day with our community partner **‘OHINA** highlighting work done by ‘OHINA to elevate the film content coming from Hawai’i. Opening Day will wrap with a presentation of ***Waikīkī The Film***, the critically acclaimed narrative feature revealing the dark side of the commercialization of Hawai’i.

Closing Day on Sunday, October 29 will be held at **AMC Village 7**, followed by a Gala hosted at the Tony Award-winning **La MaMa Experimental Theatre Club**. AMC Village 7 will host a lineup of feature films and shorts, showcasing fiction and documentaries that bring fresh voices from the Pacific Islands—including Samoa, Tonga, Rapa Nui, and Hawai’i—across a variety of genres including romance, comedy, horror, and cultural education. ***The Wind and the Reckoning*** will close the festival with heartfelt drama, following the story of a family and a community in conflict with the provisional government in Hawai’i. A cinematic milestone, the film’s dialogue is predominantly in the revived language of ‘olelo Hawai’i (Hawaiian Native language), subtitled in English. The film is written and directed by David Cunningham (*To End All Wars, Aloha Hotel*) and Written by John Fusco (*Young Guns*, *Marco Polo*).

The Closing Day Gala hosted by **La MaMa Experimental Theatre Club** will be a celebration of HFF, as we take in a show with internationally acclaimed Hawaiian slack key guitarist/singer/composer, **Makana.**

On Monday, October 30, **Flanders House of the Delegation of Flanders** will host a private VIP party at their location in **The New York Times Building.**  At this invite-only event, a deeper look at the film ***The Wind and The Reckoning*** will continue, connecting media and cultural representatives from various organizations and countries. The VIP reception will foster deeper conversations with top entertainment talent from the Pacific Islands and the wider entertainment community.

HFF 2023 is led by the generous sponsor and partnership support of **The New York Public Library of the Performing Arts**, **The La Mama Experimental Theatre Club**, **Flanders House**, **A/P/A Institute of NYU**, **The Asian American Foundation** with grant support from the **New York Department of Cultural Affairs**. Mahalo to the festival community sponsors **International Cultural Arts Network**, **‘OHINA**,and for the support from **Quixote by Sunset Studios**, **Ko’olau Distillery**, **Kim Taylor Reece**, **Noho Home, Maison Miru, Sanzo, Sool – Makku|Soku, and Popadelics.**

Come experience a new generation of fiction and documentary filmmakers, meet your favorite talent from the Pacific Islands, and rejoice in Aloha! For more information about the festival visit our website at <http://www.halawai.org/hff.html>

**Saturday, October 28—Opening Day HFF**

* NYPL at Lincoln Center (12pm – 6pm)
	+ Opening with *Ka Huaka’i: The Journey to Merrie Monarch*
	+ Highlighting our Community Partners
	+ Closing with *Waikiki The Film*
* Film at Lincoln Center (3pm – 8pm)
	+ Featuring Student Short Films
	+ Workshops by International Cultural Arts Network (ICAN), PISA

**Sunday, October 29—Closing Day HFF**

* AMC Village 7 (10am – 9pm)
	+ Two theaters running films all day
	+ Closing Showing of *The Wind and the Reckoning*
* La MaMa Experimental Theatre Club (6pm-9pm)
	+ Closing Gala
	+ Entertainment - Makana
	+ VR Experience

**Monday, October 30 —Private VIP Event**

* Flanders House (6pm-9pm)
* *The Wind and the Reckoning*
* VR Experience

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For more information:

Press kit: http://www.halawai.org/hff-pk.html

press@halawai.org

About Hālāwai:

Hālāwai is a 501(c)(3) non-profit based in New York City, with a mission to advance and support an inclusive community with shared interests in the culture and future of the people of Hawaiʻi and other Pacific Islands.

Hālāwai is presenting the inaugural Hālāwai Film Festival in October 2023, with three days full of movies, hula and other interactive experiences that delve into Pacific Island culture.