

PRESS RELEASE

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Hawaii International Film Festival

**HAWAII INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL SHOWCASES AMERICAN
IMMIGRANT FILMMAKERS ON PROFILE**

**PRESENTED BY HALEKULANI PARTNERS, WITH SUPPORT FROM THE VILCEK
FOUNDATION**

HONOLULU, HI — (Wednesday, September 28, 2011) — The 31st Hawaii International Film Festival (HIFF), presented by Halekulani, in partnership with The Vilcek Foundation, will present five films in the "American Immigrant Filmmakers On Profile" (AIFP) program. AIFP highlights the creative spirits that enliven and inspire the American cinema, an art form that owes much to the immigrant community in this country.

The screenings will be held throughout the Festival, from October 13-23, at the Regal Dole Cannery Stadium 18 Theaters & IMAX. And on Monday, October 17, The Vilcek Foundation and HIFF will host a reception honoring the AIFP filmmakers at the Halekulani Hotel.

A delegate from each of the five films will be on hand this year at the first showing of their respective films. In attendance will be:

- **Bertha Bay-Sa Pan**, Director, Producer, Writer of ALMOST PERFECT
- **Ian Gamazon**, Director, Writer of LIVING IN SEDUCED CIRCUMSTANCES
- **Christoph Silber**, Producer, Writer, of MY LAST DAY WITHOUT YOU
- **Mimi Chakarova**, Director, Producer, Writer of THE PRICE OF SEX
- **Nadia Hennrich**, Editor, Writer of SKATEISTAN: FOUR WHEELS AND A BOARD IN KABUL

After the screenings, these artists will take questions from the audience.

Bertha Bay-Sa Pan and Ian Gamazon will also be volunteering as guest speakers at HIFF's Guest Filmmaker Program, which offers students on O'ahu the chance to interact with professionals in the film industry.

"America and the American way of life have been defined in and through movies since the very beginnings of Hollywood," said HIFF Executive Director Chuck Boller. "Most of the leading directors, as well as actors and producers, were immigrants to the United States. Their vision and interpretation of culture, society, and values in America became, and remain, the defining characteristics of America and what it means to be an American."

"Today's immigrant filmmakers," Mr. Boller added, "continue to define and expand the concept and meaning of America, and these perceptions and interpretations spread across the U.S. and throughout the world."

Echoing Mr. Boller's sentiments was Rick Kinsel, Executive Director of the Vilcek Foundation, and its

representative at HIFF. “The AIFP program has proven to be an ideal showcase for bringing widespread attention to the remarkable work of immigrant filmmakers, both in front of and behind the camera. We are proud to renew our sponsorship of the AIFP program. Through our partnership with HIFF, now in its fifth year,” said Mr. Kinsel, “we have presented more than twenty films and introduced numerous talented film professionals with diverse backgrounds to American audiences. Cinema, more than any other medium, clearly demonstrates the many ways American culture is enriched by the contributions of immigrants.”

The Vilcek Foundation honors and supports foreign-born scientists and artists who have made outstanding contributions to society in the United States. For more information on The Foundation, please visit www.vilcek.org. For more information on HIFF, please visit www.hiff.org.

Film Synopses and Delegate Bios:

ALMOST PERFECT

Hawaii Premiere

AIFP Delegate: Bertha Bay-Sa Pan

Sunday, October 16 | 3:00 PM | Regal Dole

Monday, October 17 | 9:30 PM | Regal Dole

United States 2011 | English | 106M

DIRECTOR: Bertha Bay-Sa Pan

CAST: Christina Chang, Tina Chen, Edison Chen, Kelly Hu, Ivan Shaw

Vanessa is surrounded by models of relationship failure—her brother is estranged from his wife and hiding out from her, and their parents are splitting up. Enter Dwayne, who finds his way into Vanessa's heart amidst the family drama. But will Vanessa give their relationship a chance or remain stuck in her role as family savior? Set in San Francisco, ALMOST PERFECT offers a new, realistic take on the "you're marrying my family, too" genre.

Born in New Jersey and raised in Taiwan, **Bertha Bay-Sa Pan** received an MFA degree in Directing from Columbia University Graduate Film School in 1997, while working as an International Sales Executive in film distribution. Pan's feature film debut, FACE, co-written by Academy Award nominee Oren Moverman, and starring Bai Ling, Treach, Kristy Wu, Kieu Chinh, Ken Leung, Will Yun Lee, and Emmy Award and Golden Globe Nominee Tina Chen, premiered at the 2002 Sundance Film Festival in the Dramatic Competition.

LIVING IN SEDUCED CIRCUMSTANCES

Hawaii Premiere

AIFP Delegate: Ian Gamazon

Tuesday, October 18 | 8:45 PM | Regal Dole

United States 2011 | Vietnamese, with English subtitles | 72M

DIRECTOR: Ian Gamazon

CAST: Long Nguyen, Quynn Ton

Minh, a young, pregnant, Vietnamese woman is taking a relaxing vacation in the woods. With her is Mr. Thanh, an older man she had an affair with and now has drugged and kidnapped. She takes him to an isolated cabin in the forest where she mercilessly tortures him. How did she come to this? LIVING IN SEDUCED CIRCUMSTANCES is a disturbing psychological horror-thriller by Filipino-American filmmaker Ian Gamazon (CAVITE, HIFF 2007).

Ian Gamazon's debut film *CAVITE* had its world premiere at the Rotterdam International Film Festival, and its North American premiere at the South by Southwest Film Festival, in 2005. The film also played in numerous other festivals, including the Los Angeles Film Festival and the prestigious New Directors/New Films. In 2006, Gamazon was named as one of *Filmmaker Magazine's* Twenty Five New Faces of Independent Film. *CAVITE* also earned Gamazon the Someone To Watch Award for the 2006 Independent Spirit Award. The film was picked up and distributed by Magnolia Pictures. *LIVING IN SEDUCED CIRCUMSTANCES* is his third feature film.

MY LAST DAY WITHOUT YOU

West Coast Premiere

AIFP Delegate: Christoph Silber

Friday, October 14 | 7:00 PM | Regal Dole

Sunday, October 16 | 9:00 PM | Regal Dole

United States 2011 | English, German with English subtitles | 92 M

DIRECTOR: Stefan Schaefer

CAST: Nicole Beharie, Reg E Cathey, Ken Duken, Marlene Forte, Laith Nakli

When a young business executive, Niklas, is sent from Frankfurt to New York to shut down a division of his firm, he doesn't realize his life is about to be turned upside down. His duty done by 9:30am, he has time to kill because his flight home doesn't leave for another 11 hours. In this time, he meets and falls for Leticia, a beautiful African-American singer-songwriter. Unbeknownst to him, however, she's one of the people he just fired.

Born in Berlin, in 1971, and raised bilingual, **Christoph Silber** works in English and German. A singer, actor, and music journalist from his early teens, he studied American and French literature and translated writers such as Quentin Tarantino, Joe R. Lansdale, and James Cameron for German publishers. His debut as a playwright came in 1996 at the Vienna Burgtheater with his critically acclaimed adaptation of Puccini's *Tosca*. Considered one of Germany's leading screenwriters, Silber has written and co-written several award-winning films, including *GOODBYE LENIN!* (2003) and *NORTH FACE* (2008), which won him the 2008 German Film Critics Award for Best Screenplay. On the TV front, he penned celebrated episodes for Europe's legendary crime series *Tatort* (1969). A member of the German Film Academy, he has won the 2009 Grimme Award, Germany's Emmy equivalent.

THE PRICE OF SEX

Hawaii Premiere

AIFP Delegate: Mimi Chakarova: Director

Wednesday, October 19 | 6:00 PM | Regal Dole

Friday, October 20 | 3:15 PM | Regal Dole

United States 2011 | English, Romanian, Russian, Turkish with English subtitles | 72M

DIRECTOR: Mimi Chakarova

Women of all ages and backgrounds are trafficked from Eastern Europe to work as prostitutes all over the world. Looking for a better life for their families at home, these women—sisters, daughters, mothers—are duped into believing they will be working as housekeepers and at other legitimate jobs. *THE PRICE OF SEX* is a powerful documentary by photojournalist Mimi Chakarova, who unearths the societal causes that force these women into sexual slavery.

Mimi Chakarova received her BFA in photography from the San Francisco Art Institute and her MA in visual studies from UC Berkeley. She has had numerous solo exhibitions of her documentary projects

on South Africa, Jamaica, Cuba, Kashmir, and Eastern Europe. For the past decade, Chakarova has covered global issues, examining conflict, corruption, and the sex trade. She was awarded the Nestor Almendros Award for courage in filmmaking at the 2011 Human Rights Watch Film Festival in New York.

SKATEISTAN: FOUR WHEELS AND A BOARD IN KABUL

Hawaii Premiere

AIFP Delegate: Nadia Hennrich

Tuesday, October 18 | 6:00 PM | Regal Dole

Thursday, October 20 | 5:30 PM | Regal Dole

Afghanistan 2011 | English, Farsi, German with English subtitles | 100 M

DIRECTOR: Kai Sehr

CAST: Sharna Nolan, Oliver Percovich

Oliver and Sharna come to Afghanistan with a few skateboards and the desire to make a difference. They begin skating in an abandoned water fountain, attracting a few nearby children, both boys and girls. That number soon multiplies as Ollie and Sharna try to bring hope and happiness to children in a war-torn country.

Editor **Nadia Hennrich** spent six years of her schooling in Tehran, Iran, before continuing her education in Hamburg, Germany. Her first film experience came in Germany, where she worked as a location scout, runner, and video operator. She began working on features as an editing assistant, before cutting commercials and television trailers. In 2003, after working for years in Germany at production companies such as E&P, Dock 7 Films, Erste Liebe Film, Markenfilm, and Telemaz, Hennrich relocated to the United States, where she immediately made waves cutting spots for McDonald's/PlayStation "Connected" and Nintendo "Control."

The 31st Hawaii International Film Festival, presented by Halekulani, will feature 212 films from 43 countries and will be held at the Regal Dole Cannery Stadium 18 Theatres & IMAX from October 13-23. Tickets go on sale to HIFF Ohana members starting September 29, and to the general public on October 3. General admission tickets will be available for \$12 or \$10 for students, seniors, children, and the military. Tickets may be purchased in person at the guest services desk at Regal Dole Cannery Stadium 18 Theatres & IMAX, or by phone, at (808) 447-0577.

Hawaii International Film Festival:

Established in 1981, the Hawaii International Film Festival is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the advancement of cultural exchange and media awareness in the Pacific Rim. HIFF is a premier international film event that has won the praise of governments, filmmakers, scholars, educators, programmers, and film industry leaders across the globe. HIFF's programming has two particular mandates: to be a festival of record for emerging films from Asia and the Pacific, and to present the top festival films from around the world. To this end, HIFF annually screens films from over 45 countries. HIFF also presents content and panels in the fields of film and music, and mobile entertainment and gaming. These transmedia programs reflect HIFF's commitment to exhibiting innovative creative content coming from the Asia Pacific Rim. For more information visit hiff.org.

HIFF's major sponsors are: Halekulani Hotels & Resorts, Regal Entertainment Group, Starwood Hotels & Resorts Hawaii, Hawaii Tourism Authority, The Vilcek Foundation, and EuroCinema Hawaii.

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