

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Spotlight on immigrant filmmakers at the Hawai'i International Film Festival: New American Perspectives

Presented by the Vilcek Foundation, New American Perspectives includes film screenings, talks, and a free panel discussion open to the public centering immigrant artists and filmmakers.

HONOLULU—September 26, 2024—The Vilcek Foundation is partnering with the Hawai'i International Film Festival (HIFF) to present New American Perspectives at the HIFF44, taking place October 2–13 in Honolulu, HI. Presented as part of the festival's featured offerings, New American Perspectives centers a select group of immigrant filmmakers and their work through film screenings, filmmaker Q&As, a panel discussion, and artist presentations open to the public.

New American Perspectives embodies the Vilcek Foundation's mission to raise awareness of immigrant contributions in the United States and fosters appreciation for the arts and sciences by recognizing and celebrating the cultural contributions of immigrants. The program was established in 2007 in partnership with HIFF, honoring the festival's vision of supporting independent, foreign-born, and indigenous filmmakers, with a focus on artists from the Pacific Rim.

At the 2024 festival, the Vilcek Foundation and HIFF are delighted to host Academy Award–winning cinematographer Roger Deakins (b. United Kingdom) and his partner, editor and script supervisor James Ellis Deakins. The 2024 New American Perspectives cohort also includes documentary filmmaker Ramona S. Diaz (b. Philippines), director Sasha Rainbow (b. New Zealand), artist, curator, and filmmaker Van Tran Nguyen (b. Vietnam), and director Kenji Tsukamoto (b. Japan). All six filmmakers will participate in a panel discussion centering their voices and experiences hosted by the Vilcek Foundation and HIFF on Sunday, October 6.

"Immigration and migration are a vital part of the American story," says Vilcek Foundation President Rick Kinsel. "Through the lens of film, New American Perspectives invites viewers to explore diverse narratives that reflect the immigrant experience—both through the stories told on screen, and the experiences of the filmmakers themselves."

He continues, "By creating this platform for immigrant artists' voices, we build greater recognition of the multiplicity of immigrant and migration stories that are part of the fabric of the United States. This diversity is a vital part of our collective identity."

HIFF Executive Director Beckie Stocchetti reflected on the program. "At the center of our work at HIFF, we aim to connect with project partners whose values mirror our own: To empower filmmakers and artists with meaningful support and opportunities, and to make film accessible to the public. New American Perspectives accomplishes this, while building visibility for emerging and leading immigrant filmmakers."

She adds, "Through HIFF's education programs, we are also able to bring these filmmakers to present talks and programs at schools in Hawai'i, providing students with powerful and diverse role models."

For more details on the program, the Vilcek Foundation and HIFF encourage you to go to <https://hiff.org>, or <https://vilcek.co/hiff>.

Film screenings and programs presented as part of New American Perspectives at HIFF44 include:

Blade Runner 2049

Roger Deakins (b. United Kingdom), cinematographer, and James Ellis Deakins

Young Blade Runner K's discovery of a long-buried secret leads him to track down former Blade Runner Rick Deckard, who has been missing for 30 years. Join HIFF and the Vilcek Foundation for an extended post-screening discussion with Roger Deakins and James Ellis Deakins.

Film screening and discussion | Consolidated Theatres Kahala
Saturday, October 5, 2024 – 4:30 pm

And So It Begins

Ramona S. Diaz (b. Philippines), director, screenwriter, and producer

Ramona Diaz is an award-winning filmmaker best known for her character-driven documentaries including *Imelda*, *Motherland*, and *A Thousand Cuts*. Diaz's latest documentary, *And So It Begins*, examines the rise of autocracy in Filipino politics, and the movement to protect truth and democracy in the Philippines during the 2022 presidential election between Leni Robredo and Ferdinand Marcos Jr.

Film screening and Q&A with Ramona S. Diaz | Consolidated Theatres Kahala
Sunday, October 6, 2024 – 7:00 pm

Encore screening | Consolidated Theatres Kahala
Tuesday, October 8, 2024 – 8:15 pm

Grafted

Sasha Rainbow (b. New Zealand), director and screenwriter

When an awkward but brilliant Chinese student wins a scholarship to a prestigious New Zealand university, she strives to fulfill her father's scientific legacy and achieve the popularity she craves one bloody body at a time. It's MEAN GIRLS meets FACE/OFF in this uniquely Kiwi body horror pierced with satire from BAFTA-nominated director Sasha Rainbow!

Film screening | Consolidated Theatres Kahala
Saturday, October 12, 2024 – 9:30 pm

Encore screening | Consolidated Theatres Kahala
Sunday, October 13, 2024 – 8:15 pm

Ashima

Kenji Tsukamoto (b. Japan), director and cinematographer

An inspirational film that captures a moment in the adolescence of Japanese American rock climber Ashima Shiraishi, as she attempts to be the youngest person and the first woman ever to climb Golden

Shadow in South Africa's rocklands. The world record and the pressures of sport and family loom large for the 13-year-old, who attempts the feat on a school break accompanied only by her father and coach, and a documentary crew.

Film screening and Q&A with Kenji Tuskamoto | Consolidated Theatres Kahala
Friday, October 4, 2024 – 8:00 pm

Encore screening | Consolidated Theatres Kahala
Tuesday, October 8, 2024 – 6:15 pm

The Motherload

Van Tran Nguyen (b. Vietnam), screenwriter, director, and performer

Tran Nguyen's first full-length feature, *The Motherload*, explores the experiences of a Vietnamese American mother and daughter as they navigate their relationships to one another, the United States, and Vietnam. With sharp satire, wit, cardboard helicopters, and puppets, the film deflates the militaristic propaganda and misinformation about the American war in Vietnam that has driven and been perpetuated by Hollywood films from *The Green Berets* to *Apocalypse Now*.

Film screening and Q&A with Van Tran Nguyen | Consolidated Theatres Kahala
Saturday, October 5, 2024 – 8:15 pm

Encore film screening and Q&A with Van Tran Nguyen | Consolidated Theatres Kahala
Monday, October 7, 2024 – 7:30 pm

The Vilcek Foundation

The Vilcek Foundation raises awareness of immigrant contributions in the United States and fosters appreciation for the arts and sciences. The foundation was established in 2000 by Jan and Marica Vilcek, immigrants from the former Czechoslovakia. The mission of the foundation was inspired by the couple's respective careers in biomedical science and art history. Since 2000, the foundation has awarded over \$7 million in prizes to foreign-born individuals and has supported organizations with over \$6.8 million in grants.

The Vilcek Foundation is a private operating foundation, a federally tax-exempt nonprofit organization under IRS Section 501(c)(3). To learn more, please visit vilcek.org.