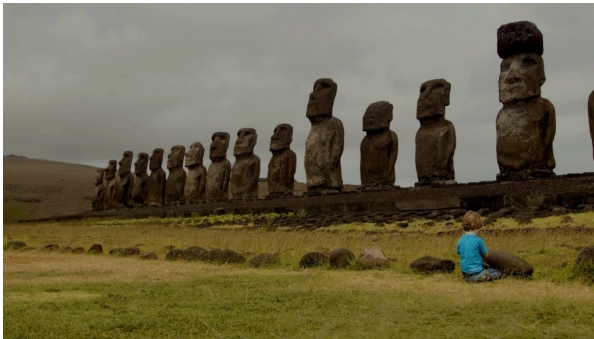




FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 1, 2021

Video here: <https://vimeo.com/536605581/1661506e75>



A scene from *DISTANT LEARNING*, a documentary directed by Sergio M. Rapu. Photo courtesy of PIC



A scene from *E HAKU INOA: TO WEAVE A NAME*, a documentary directed by Christen Hepuakoa Marquez. Photo courtesy of PIC

## PACIFIC ISLANDERS IN COMMUNICATIONS CELEBRATES 30TH ANNIVERSARY

(Honolulu, Hawaii) This May, celebrate Pacific Islander stories and storytellers with Pacific Islanders in Communications (PIC). This year marks the 30th Anniversary of the media organization and their global collective of established and emerging content creators throughout Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, and diaspora communities. PIC is the only national public media organization that is committed to supporting, advancing, and developing Pacific Island media content and talent that results in a deeper understanding of Pacific Island history, and culture. To amplify the legacy of films and filmmakers in the collective, the PIC will screen a diverse collection of films will be available in various virtual platforms starting this spring and throughout the rest of the year.

“Pacific Islanders have the unique challenge of being both invisible and hypervisible at the same time, especially as part of a widely diverse group of peoples”, said Leanne Ka’iulani Ferrer, Executive Director of Pacific Islanders in Communications. “This is why it’s important to engage multiple communities and bring them together with Pacific Islander media makers to enrich the cultural landscape. Despite the Pandemic, and having to shelter in place, we value this

opportunity to share our Pacific Islander stories virtually across the ocean. When we cultivate new audiences we expand the spaces where our full selves are reflected, honored, and respected.”

During May, a wide selection of films will be available for audiences via virtual film festivals. Using a platform of cinema, these films continue a rich tradition of storytelling that is the center of many Pasifika cultures. Some highlights include:

### **DISTANT LEARNING**

Directed by Elena GK Rapu, Sergio M. Rapu

A Rapanui filmmaker and father living in the American Midwest never imagined he would lose his ability to return to the land of his ancestors.

Playing in: CAAMFest (Program: Pacific Showcase)

### **E HAKU INOA: TO WEAVE A NAME**

Directed by Christen Hepuakoa Marquez

A young multiracial Kanaka Maoli woman sets out to discover the meaning of her lengthy, 63-letter Hawaiian name from her estranged schizophrenic mother.

Playing in: Asian Pacific Virtual Showcase (Program: Daughters of the Ocean)

### **O A‘U ‘O LE TAUPOU**

Made by PIC American Samoa Filmmakers Workshop

A young Taupou (sacred maiden) must find the balance between Samoa traditions and her modern way of life.

Playing in Asian Pacific Virtual Showcase (Program: Daughters of the Ocean)

### **THE TRIBUNAL**

Directed by Nā Maka o ka ‘Āina

A fascinating legal study of justice under occupation, THE TRIBUNAL documents the Peoples’ International Tribunal Hawai’i 1993, during which the United States and the State of Hawaii were put on trial for crimes against native people.

Playing in: SDAFF Spring Showcase (Program: SOVEREIGN CINEMA: THE POLITICAL DOCUMENTARY OF NĀ MAKA O KA ‘ĀINA)

Audiences in the US can also watch the new season of **PACIFIC HEARTBEAT** on Youtube. Now in its tenth season, PACIFIC HEARTBEAT is an anthology series that provides viewers with a glimpse of the real Pacific – its people, cultures and contemporary issues. The series features a diverse array of programs that will draw viewers into the heart and soul of Pacific Island culture.

These films reflect a long line of films that have received funding support from PIC. Through the work of PIC media makers, these films trace the community, visibility and work of Pacific Islander stories and storytellers to understand how these narratives can lay the groundwork for the future power and visibility. Looking ahead to the next 30 years of filmmaking, PIC continues to improve the ways to support media content by and about indigenous Pacific Islanders and to adapt to

growing needs in the filmmaking community. Doing so, PIC has launched the **Shorts Fund**, that includes a filmmaking collaboration with 'OHINA. The Shorts Fund will support electing projects for public media digital distribution and television broadcast.

“Storytelling is vital to Pacific Island culture.” said Cheryl Hirasu, Managing Director and VP of Programs of Pacific Islanders In Communications. “It's a way for knowledge to be passed from one generation to another and to honor who and where we've come from to help navigate us to a future grounded in harmony, integrity and respect. The Shorts Fund is one way we support this vision and this year we're very excited to announce our collaboration with 'OHINA this year, which will maximize opportunities for filmmakers with fiction projects, including the chance to participate in the 2021 'OHINA LABS development hub for short content. The Lab is an intensive filmmaker education workshop that provides mentorship from Hollywood screenwriters, producers and directors in a variety of key filmmaking fields, including script development, honing pitches, production support, project guidance and more. “

PIC will continue its 30th Anniversary Celebration with a series of special artist conversations, available for audiences around the globe. The conversations, scheduled for May 20, 2021, will feature acclaimed musician and actor Stan Walker and filmmaker Mitchell Hawkes as they discuss the documentary film **STAN**. Additional conversations will celebrate films and **TOKYO HULA** and **FOR MY FATHER'S KINGDOM**.

For more information on all of the films and programming, please visit <https://www.piccom.org/>

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### **A PLACE IN THE MIDDLE**

Directed by Dean Hamer and Joe Wilson

A PLACE IN THE MIDDLE is the true story of a young girl in Hawai'i who dreams of leading the boys-only hula group at her school, and a teacher who empowers her through traditional culture. This kid-friendly educational film is a great way to get students thinking and talking about the values of diversity and inclusion, the power of knowing your heritage, and how to prevent bullying by creating a school climate of aloha – from their own point of view!

Playing in: Asian Pacific Virtual Showcase (Program: Daughters of the Ocean)

### **CROSSING SPACES**

Directed by: Lola Bautista

As the newest group of Pacific Islanders to arrive in the Hawaiian Islands, Micronesians aspire to the same dreams as every new immigrant group before them. Similarly, many face discrimination and poverty as they struggle to build new lives. Despite these obstacles, higher education remains the key to unlocking the American dream for themselves and their families. Crossing Spaces is a series of three documentary shorts profiling three Micronesian women in Honolulu as they grapple with the challenges of higher education and work to enact meaningful change for their families and communities.

Playing in: Asian Pacific Virtual Showcase (Program: Daughters of the Ocean)

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Playing in: Asian Pacific Virtual Showcase

### **EATING UP EASTER**

Directed by Sergio M. Rapu

A native Rapanui (Easter Island) filmmaker explores the modern dilemma of his people as they face the consequences of their rapidly developing home.

Playing in: Asian Pacific Virtual Showcase

### **HOW TO CATCH A TAOTAOMONA**

Directed by Neil Tinkham

As Raph wanders through the jungles behind his house, he encounters a human figure that resembles the taotaomona, an ancestral spirit from Chamorro mythology.

Playing in: CAAMFest (Program: Pacific Showcase)

### **HAWAIIAN SOUL**

Directed by 'Āina Paikai

Against the backdrop of the 1970s native rights movement, George Helm, a young Hawaiian activist and musician must gain the support of kūpuna (community elders) from the island of Maui to aid in the fight of protecting the precious neighboring island of Kaho'olawe from military bombing.

Playing in: CAAMFest (Program: Pacific Showcase)

### **KAPAEMAHU**

Directed by Hinaleimoana Wong-Kalu, Dean Hamer and Joe Wilson

Long ago, four extraordinary beings of dual male and female spirit brought the healing arts to Hawaii and imbued their powers in four giant boulders. The stones still stand on Waikiki Beach, but their true story has been hidden - until now.

Playing in: Asian Pacific Virtual Showcase (Program: Pacific Cinewaves)

### **KUMU HINA**

Directed by Dean Hamer and Joe Wilson

Kumu Hina is a powerful feature documentary about the struggle to maintain Pacific Islander culture and values within the Westernized society of modern day Hawai'i. It is told through the

lens of an extraordinary Native Hawaiian who is both a proud and confident māhū, or transgender woman, and an honored and respected kumu, or teacher, cultural practitioner, and community leader.

Playing in: Asian Pacific Virtual Showcase

### **LET'S REMEMBER OUR ANCESTORS (TA HASSO I MANAINA)**

Directed by Neil Tinkham

Amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, a Chamoru cultural foundation attempts to continue its mission by having members create a new chant together, while they all remain in isolation.

Playing in Asian Pacific Virtual Showcase (Program: Daughters of the Ocean), and CAAMFest

### **MAHALO COVID-19**

Directed by Matt Yamashita

When a filmmaker and his small island community take on the pandemic, they unsuspectingly find a clearer path towards self-reliance and a stronger connection to each other and nature.

Playing in: CAAMFest (Program: Pacific Showcase)

### **MARIA**

Directed by Jeremiah Tauamiti

An ailing Polynesian matriarch must find the strength to lead her family one last time.

Playing in: Asian Pacific Virtual Showcase (Program: Daughters of the Ocean)

### **O A'U 'O LE TAUPOU**

Made by PIC American Samoa Filmmakers Workshop

A young Taupou (sacred maiden) must find the balance between Samoa traditions and her modern way of life.

Playing in: Asian Pacific Virtual Showcase (Program: Daughters of the Ocean)

### **ONE VOICE**

Directed by Lisette Marie Flanary

This is the story of the Kamehameha Schools Song Contest through the eyes of the student song leaders. Every year in Hawai'i, nearly 2000 high school students compete in the Song Contest where students direct their classmates in singing Hawaiian songs in four-part harmony, acapella.

Playing in: CAAMFest (Program: Pacific Showcase)

### **THE TRIBUNAL**

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Playing in: SDAFF Spring Showcase (Program: SOVEREIGN CINEMA: THE POLITICAL DOCUMENTARY OF NĀ MAKA O KA 'ĀINA)

**About Pacific Islanders in Communications (PIC):**

Established in 1991, Pacific Islanders in Communications (PIC) is the only national public media organization that supports media content and its makers to work together to promote a deeper understanding of Pacific Islander history, culture and contemporary issues that define our communities. PIC addresses the need for media content that reflects America's growing ethnic and cultural diversity by funding independently produced media, and by providing hundreds of hours of innovative media by and about Pacific Islanders to American public television including its flagship series Pacific Heartbeat. For more information about Pacific Islanders in Communications and Pacific Heartbeat, visit [www.piccom.org](http://www.piccom.org) and follow us on social media: Twitter: [@PICpacific](https://twitter.com/PICpacific) | [facebook.com/piccom](https://facebook.com/piccom) | Instagram: [@picpacific](https://instagram.com/picpacific)

**PIC 30th Anniversary video:**

<https://vimeo.com/536605581/1661506e75>

**About Pacific Heartbeat:**

Now in its tenth consecutive season, Pacific Heartbeat is an anthology series that provides viewers a glimpse of the real Pacific—its people, cultures, languages, music, and contemporary issues. From revealing exposés to rousing musical performances, the series features a diverse array of programs that will draw viewers into the heart and soul of Pacific Island culture.

**Festival information:**

**ASIAN PACIFIC VIRTUAL SHOWCASE**

Saturday, May 01 - Monday May 31

Tickets and more information: <https://vcmedia.org/apvs>

**CAAMFest 2021**

Thursday, May 13 - Sunday, May 23

Tickets and more information: <https://caamfest.com/2021/>

**SDAFF Spring Showcase**

Friday, April 23 - Sunday, May 02

<https://sdaff.org/spring2021/>