



The Honolulu Advertiser

# Keeping the spirit



One of the most striking scenes in Kahili award-winner "Ulalena" occurs when a mysterious mo'o (lizard goddess) appears out of a flowing fabric waterfall and performs an untethered gymnastic dance in mid-air, tantalizing the love-stuck man below her.

## Awards program helps preserve Hawaiian culture

By Peter Rosegg  
SPECIAL TO THE ADVERTISER

Living in a tourist paradise can be a mixed blessing: Our Islands can be pricey and sometimes crowded, but we also don't have to go far to have a great vacation.

The Islands offer so many options that sometimes the problem for kamaaina becomes which one to choose.

A source of good tips on visitor attractions that are working to preserve and protect Hawaiian culture and showcase the aloha spirit is the annual Keep It Hawai'i Awards, presented by the Hawaii Visitors & Convention Bureau.

Last Thursday, the 2000 awards were presented at a gala luncheon at the Hawaii Prince Hotel.

Filmmaker Edgy Lee's elegant ode to "America's first cowboys," "Paniolo O Hawai'i," won Best of Show and a Kahili Award in the broadcast category. (Lee's next film is a history of Waikiki, due out in late spring or early summer.)

The spirited documentary has already aired on local and national television. The Honolulu Advertiser donated a copy to every public school so students could learn the history and experience the pride of these inspiring Hawaiian cowboys.

For nine years, HVCB has sponsored the Kahili Awards for preserving Hawaiian culture. Independent panels of past winners and practicing experts on Hawaiian subjects pick the winners.

Winners range from humble and everyday — such as a small plate-lunch restaurant and working ranch store — to the grand and unusual, such as a Maui-based theatrical spectacular unlike any ever seen here.

Two Kahili Awards — for attractions and shows — went to "Ulalena," staged in the state-of-the-art Maui Myth & Magic Theatre in Lahaina.

Two years ago, Cove Entertainment President Roy Tokujō envisioned something completely different in local entertainment, sometime designed to convey history and mythology to visi-

See AWARDS, F4



## Hawaii Woman Extraordinaire

Documentary filmmaker

*Edgy Lee*

talks about the state's growing film and television industry, affirmation, inspiration and a different kind of gift.

By Lisa Beazley

Photography: Ric Noyle

**An** image on a movie or television screen is as close as many people ever get to Hawaii. As a maker of award-winning films that tell the real story of Paniolos, beach boys and Hawaiian Royalty, Hawaii-born Edgy Lee has made a career of educating audiences around the world with captivating and entertaining documentaries. Now, the nationally recognized documentary filmmaker is focusing her energies on Hawaii-specific projects. She wants to take Hawaii's film and television industry to a new level, and she has the experience, the drive and a plan to do it.

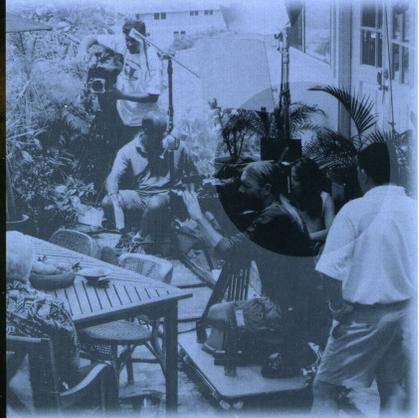
Hawaii's current role in major films and television shows is for the most part a supporting one—the beautiful backdrop. And although Lee thinks Hawaii can be more, she has to give some credit to the blockbuster films that use Hawaii as their backdrop. "When Lilo and Stitch is out of the theatres and kids stop buying those lunch pails, Waikiki In The Wake of Dreams (her 2001 documentary) will be in the library for the sixth grader who is going to learn about his or her heritage through film," she says. But Lee wants to create a climate where the people of Hawaii see their heritage reflected in television and film without going to the library to borrow documentaries. She believes it's healthy for children to see themselves reflected when they watch television or film. Her vision is clear, "I want local television to show original local programming that reflects local faces, thoughts, concerns, history and culture and is made solely by Hawaii talent. Not stories told from outside perspectives but rather stories told about us and by us." She has been working toward this goal with her independent film company, FilmWorks, Limited, since she moved back to Oahu from Los Angeles more than ten years ago.

Edgy (what her parents decided to call her as a baby when she literally "kept them on edge") left Hawaii after high school and studied fine art at the San Francisco Art Institute while working as a West Coast illustrator for the National Observer. While always drawn to the visual arts, she made an effort not to limit herself to just one career path. Lee modeled and worked as an actor, appearing as co-host of Bill Cosby's Picture Pages and on The Tonight Show with Johnny Carson, where overcoming an episode of stage fright revealed her tough spirit. She remembers standing behind the curtain she had grown up watching. "I was literally stuffed—falsies and all—into this little Chinese dress and was carrying this huge fake monkey. I was so nervous I was hyperventilating. I'm supposed to surprise Johnny Carson in the middle of his monologue and when I hear my cue, the stage guy takes off one of his headphones and says 'Are you nervous?' All I could do was look at him, pant and nod. So he says, 'Don't worry, honey, only two hundred million people are watching, and he pushes me out on stage. I come out in these high heels and this stuffed dress and somehow I do it. After that I knew I could do anything."

In the late 1980s, after years of modeling and acting, she moved from in front of the camera to pursue some less glamorous—but for Lee, much more rewarding—positions. She began to independently produce and write, making a name for herself as one of the few female in-studio record producers. She produced big names like Joe Higgs and The Wailers. A talented musician classically trained in piano and violin, Lee also composed music with jazz legend Wayne Shorter and composed film scores. She credits her musical training for her success as not just a composer, but in



Edgy Lee, her partner Jeffrey Mueller (with dog) and crew on location



every aspect of life. "In life, rhythm and timing are everything. How many times is it about being in the right place at the right time? That's rhythm."

When she decided to direct and produce her breakthrough, first full-length independent film, *Papakolea, A Story of Hawaiian Land*, it marked a turning point in her life and career. She commuted from her home in Los Angeles while making the film and started to wonder if she could make a living back in Hawaii. "When I first came back, the beauty here really struck me. I thought, if there's a way that I can live and work here and truly contribute to the television and film industry, then I'm going to do it." From her Makiki home and production studio, it is obvious that she has found her way to contribute and is at peace with her decision and her surroundings, "When I think about how I lived in L.A., was I crazy? Now I wake up in the morning, hear birds and look down at the skyline of Waikiki. I feel lucky."

For someone who spent the formative part of her career holed up in dark studios editing and producing reggae music, Lee's inspiration comes from observing human interaction. It's the seemingly un-dramatic moments that most people may not even notice but from which Lee derives inspiration. When Lee talks about what inspires her, she describes moments where she is pulled out of her little world by a striking interaction between two people. An old man standing to let a woman sit down at a bus stop, for example, might strike her. "It's the kind of moment where you may not cry but something just hits you and you're almost brought to tears and you don't even know why. That's how I would describe inspiration." Negative moments, too, inspire her she says, recalling a frustrated mother at the supermarket. "I didn't have to know anything about her to see her whole story. It was written on her face and in

the way she dressed and her demeanor. She was so frustrated that she was about to backhand this screaming four-year-old little boy. You just wanted to hug her or grab her and stop what she was about to do. That's inspiring—it's those moments that make me want to document."

Though her long list of accolades includes Best Cinematography from the New York International Independent Film Festival and her documentaries have been translated into other languages for viewing around the world, Lee's real affirmation comes from the people she affects with her films. When three third grade boys came to interview her for a school project because they had watched *Papakolea* in school and shaking from nervousness they asked her what it was like to be from here and make television and films, it touched her deeply. "They told me they looked at their Hawaiian classmates differently after that film." One of the boys left an indelible mark on Lee. He was from Vietnam and had only been in the country two years, but he spoke perfect English. "When I asked him what he wanted to be when he grows up, he said that he wanted to go into politics. I thought you know what? This kid is going to remember the story he saw and maybe be a little bit more understanding of indigenous cul-



On the location set of *A Tribute to Hawaii's Firefighters*



Photography: Ric Noyle

tures, no matter where he ends up. Maybe that little glimpse during his early childhood of another culture through film is going to make him kinder when it comes to approving a budget for the arts."

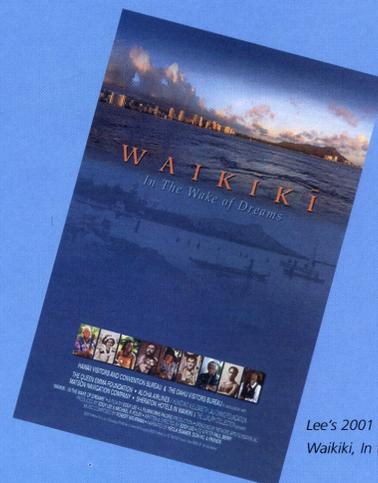
A similar reward comes when older people send letters or approach Lee with tears in their eyes and say thank you for telling their story or for preserving a part of their family history. "And I think, well I had nothing to do with it; I'm just passing through here."

Just passing through or not, Lee had something to do with it. And the success of Papakolea depended on her dedication to the truth and to telling a story with compassion and honesty. She struggled with the focus of the film, shifting from the disproportionate amount of men from the neighborhood who were in jail to the Jawaiiian movement as different ways to frame the underlying story of indigenous struggle. She was concerned, though, about passing on a negative impression of Native Hawaiians. Then finally, after

months of research and soul searching, she came upon a positive story that would shape her film.

Someone told her that she should talk to a grandmother who was living in Papakolea when Franklin D. Roosevelt came to visit. "Who knew that FDR had come up to this neighborhood? What made me want to do the film is the fact that the people of my generation and younger didn't care. They don't even understand that they should care, so I had to do the film." The story didn't come easy, though. "I sat and talked for hours with these 80-and 90-year old women. Finally one of them said, 'Okay, we decided we're going to give you the story.' And I thought, what a beautiful, deep culture the Native Hawaiian culture is. Their story was the gift. And if you're not responsible and if you don't deserve this gift, you're not going to get it."

The self-sufficient film and television industry in Lee's vision may be getting closer to a reality, thanks to her untraditional method of creating this scene. Tired of talking about the limited market, Lee came together with competing filmmakers to produce a series of tribute films aimed to captivate local audiences. She directed the first in the series, A Tribute to Hawaii's Firefighters, which premiered on Kuhio Beach in September and aired on local television stations. Other local directors are lending their skills to the next films in the series, paying tribute to Lifeguards and Rescue Professionals, Hawaii baseball and others. She is also working on a primetime courtroom series scheduled to air early in 2003. These projects differ from Lee's previous films in that they are made solely for a Hawaii audience. "It has been really fun because we get to use local jargon and we don't have to use subtitles or explain ourselves," she says. The prospect of the people of Hawaii seeing their history and culture honestly depicted on a weekly television show is exciting to Lee. Time will tell if we are ready to forsake reruns of Friends in favor of a locally made television show. But until then Lee is committed to her mission and to her life here in Hawaii. ★



Lee's 2001 documentary film  
Waikiki, In the Wake of Dreams

Přiznal Alj Dvorský v první polovině 80. let fotografoval a spolu s Miroslavem Capkem, Milanem Kubišem, Janem Loudem a dalšími natočil krátké dokumentární i hrané filmy. Současně pracoval u Československé televize jako zvučák. V roce 1987 emigroval do Rakouska, v roce 1989 se dostal do Bostonu a příštích několik let cestoval po Americe. Za velkou lásku se později dostal i ke své kameramanské práci a natočil několik filmů. Od ledna 2003 žije opět trvale v Praze.

**BLANKA JOSEFOVA  
LUSAKEVA**

Co vás v roce 1987 vedlo k odchodu z Československa? Mám jiné politické problémy?

Nebyl jsem vyloženě pronásledován lidem, a rozhodl jsem se ani tak, že bych neměl přestat pracovat. Jenže někdy by se mělo stát něco, co by bylo třeba změnit. Když jsem byl v Praze, jsem se musel schovávat, protože se lidé jako například Jan Kubiš, Milan Kubiš a Jan Loud, kteří byli kameramané a dokumentaristé, dostali do problémů. Když jsem byl v Praze, jsem se musel schovávat, protože se lidé jako například Jan Kubiš, Milan Kubiš a Jan Loud, kteří byli kameramané a dokumentaristé, dostali do problémů.

dětem vstoupili do školy. Je mi líto, že jsem nemohl být s nimi, aby se mohli vyvíjet. Když jsem byl v Praze, jsem se musel schovávat, protože se lidé jako například Jan Kubiš, Milan Kubiš a Jan Loud, kteří byli kameramané a dokumentaristé, dostali do problémů.

Jak jste v Bostonu začínal? Ze začátku jsem se nevěnoval tvorbě, ale spíše tomu, aby lidé mohli vidět dokumentární filmy v angličtině. Pak jsem si začal hledat práci a šel jsem do televize, ale protože jsem nebyl s tím zvyklý, musel jsem hodně pracovat. Při práci jsem občas narazil na lidi, kteří byli z Prahy.

# Cesta se stala naším životem



Jih Dvorský za kamerou, režisér Michael Pope a jedna z protagonistek filmu *Ennema* Foto Damián Kubiš



Wahki in *The Walk of Dreams* - Jih Dvorský a režisérka Elly Lee Foto David Kuning

věm v čase po dvou letech, kdy vám vyřídili občanství do Ameriky, jste musel odjet do Bostonu. Jak jste začal vidět lidi kolem sebe?

V Americe všude lidé byli šťastní, ale když jsem šel do Prahy, všude bylo smutno. V Česku jsem byl šťastný, ale když jsem šel do Prahy, všude bylo smutno. V Česku jsem byl šťastný, ale když jsem šel do Prahy, všude bylo smutno.

vidět věřících, což bylo dříve, protože jsem měl království a poslal jsem spoustu lidí. Začal jsem taky křivky a kacířství, protože jsem byl šťastný. Po dvou letech jsem se vrátil do Ameriky a začal jsem znovu pracovat. Když jsem šel do Prahy, všude bylo smutno.

Kde jste na to bral peníze? Já měl nějakou firmu, ale když jsem šel do Prahy, všude bylo smutno. V Česku jsem byl šťastný, ale když jsem šel do Prahy, všude bylo smutno.

proběhl od Kanady, od státu Maine až po Floridu, pak až do Ameriky přes Texas, Arizona až do Kalifornie, potom například státové do Nového Mexika, Utah, Nevada, Colorado, Wyoming, Idaho, Oregon, Washington a pak vlastně celou severní část Kanady až po britskou úroveň - provincie Alberta, Saskatchewan a Manitoba. Když jsem šel do Prahy, všude bylo smutno.

na jih. Jedna zima jsem byl v jižní Kalifornii, další v Los Angeles, v Mexiku. Až jsem si našel kameru 1988, počal jsem se znovu zabývat filmováním na živno. V roce 1995 jsem si koupil kameru, sbíral jsem se s věcmi, a když jsem se vrátil do Prahy, všude bylo smutno. V Česku jsem byl šťastný, ale když jsem šel do Prahy, všude bylo smutno.

člověk, který se sám učil. Viděl, že se všechno začíná od začátku. A dodnes se snaží být šťastný, protože když jsem šel do Prahy, všude bylo smutno.



Jih Dvorský v saze angažované bitvě. Foto archív J. Dvorského

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Jak se vám, že se vám podařilo dostat se z Prahy do Ameriky? Já jsem šel do Prahy, všude bylo smutno. V Česku jsem byl šťastný, ale když jsem šel do Prahy, všude bylo smutno.

Co vás vedlo přivést a natáčet do Česka? Když jsem šel do Prahy, všude bylo smutno. V Česku jsem byl šťastný, ale když jsem šel do Prahy, všude bylo smutno.

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Texas Foto archív J. Dvorského

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V Americe je to odlišná...

Article in Czechoslovakia largest newspaper featuring DP, Jorge Dvorsky



# Spirit: Lee's 'The Hawaiians' points to a revival of pride

*Continued from D1*

aries arrived in 1819 but embraced the haole (non-Hawaiian) concept of writing with such enthusiasm that by the 1860s the kingdom of Hawaii had the highest literacy rate of any nation. More than 100 Hawaiian-language newspapers documented events big and small during the final decades of freedom.

U.S. Sen. Daniel Akaka speaks matter-of-factly of growing up at a time when many Hawaiians thought they were doing their children a favor by refusing to teach them their ancestral language. He also speaks movingly of his joy in seeing his children taking pride in the culture and the language.

Other speakers include Alaka'i Kahuena, who describes the traditions and protocols involved in harvesting and using

medicinal plants, and Nainoa Thompson, the first Hawaiian celestial navigator of modern times, who explains why long-distance canoe voyaging is about much more than re-enacting a heroic ancient past.

The most powerful segments address the struggle faced by native Hawaiians who attempt to maintain their culture. A woman whose family has been salt makers for generations tears up while talking about people who steal the salt or make it without observing the traditional protocols. Two former residents of Niihau speak with obvious emotion of the sense of loss they feel at being forced by economic circumstances to live away from their ancestral aina.

And, tying native Hawaiians into the struggles of indigenous people across North America, Lee also includes the observa-

tions of a specialist in that area.

Considering that the film was completed in four months to make the opening at the Smithsonian, there are remarkably few problem areas. It isn't clear from the narration whether Kamehameha unified the islands before or after Cook arrived in 1778, and a viewer unfamiliar with Hawaiian history could easily assume that Grover Cleveland was still in office when the United States finally annexed the islands in 1898. A few revisions of the audio track would clarify the facts and smooth out the only obvious rough spots in this impressive film.



# Waikīkī spurs fond memories for director

Frank Sinatra, Ava Gardner and Sam Giancana. Together. In an outrigger canoe off Waikīkī Beach.

That's just one of many vintage scenes highlighted in Edgy Lee's new film "Waikīkī: In the Wake of Dreams." But the 67-minute tribute to the part of O'ahu that means "spouting waters — a place where

## MOVIE REVIEW

By Katherine Nichols

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natural beauty heals your spirit" — is not really about the myriad of celebrities who relished Waikīkī. They weren't really celebrities when they came here, Lee said, "they were left alone." Instead, it is about the ocean, the sand, the people and the music who give this area life. And it is a subject close to Lee's heart.

"I was a colicky baby," she said at press preview yesterday at the Hawai'i Convention Center, explaining how she got the name "Edgy" and why she feels so close to this area. "My parents used to come to Waikīkī Beach and rock me to sleep."

The film had its U.S. premiere in November at the National Geographic Society in



EUGENE TANNER • The Honolulu Advertiser

Edgy Lee's new film, "Waikīkī: In the Wake of Dreams," is about the ocean, the people and the music that give it life.

Washington, D.C.; the formal Hawai'i premiere will be March 10.

And she knows she's not the only one with emotional ties to the Islands' best-known neighborhood. "There's not a single family who's not affected by what happens

in Waikīkī. This is our place, and we better remember that. We can't blame anybody else but us" for what happens to this land.

See LEE, D3

## 'Waikīkī: In the Wake of Dreams'

Free public screening, sunset, March 10

Kūhiō Beach, Waikīkī

Sunset: Torch-lighting ceremony; performances by Don and Hoku Ho

7:15 p.m.: Film begins on a 22-by-30-foot screen

Details: Screen will face 'ewa; audience will face diamondhead on the night of a full moon; about 5,000 seats are available.

# Lee: Director turns vivid images of Waikīkī into tribute film

FROM PAGE D1

Music is an important part of the film. "If you follow the music, you can follow the trends," Lee said. But it's not just the music that she's trying to get across. "It's a way of life, and Waikīkī is the gateway," she said. Unfortunately, it's a "way of life that's gone. Long gone."

The film and the book that came before it are Lee's efforts to preserve Waikīkī. The saddest part to Lee is that "local people have kind of given up on (Waikīkī)."

Many people contributed to the musical score, including Bette Midler, George Winston, Take 6, and most of all, composer Robert Wehrman, a team that Lee hopes will attract national attention when the movie is shown in select cities in "museums rather than theaters."

While the music is evocative, the images are equally compelling. There is one sunset shot of the horizon from the Outrigger Canoe Club beach that literally drew gasps from the audience. The 16 millimeter film (with the exception of 35 mm shot under- and steady shooting give it

the quality of top PBS productions, incorporating still photographs and voices who bring history to life in the style of an epic Ken Burns documentary.

Lee says she couldn't cover the history of Waikīkī in an hour. "This is just a small slice of the history," she said. "I think that the voices that are present are representative." Her struggle was "telling an authoritative, responsible story and not making it up as you go, and not telling a story that you wish existed. Because it's quite different from (what) I wish it were," she said.

Each period comes alive with stories and voices of George Kanabete, Benny Kalama, and Steamboat Mokuahi, who all died during the making of the film. Uncle Keola Beamer narrates, and occasionally throws in a memory to give personality to the history.

But in her effort to tell the history, Lee takes a very specific approach, carefully targeting time markers rather than overwhelming her audience with dates for every occurrence. "Too many dates — what's the point?" she said. "Listen

to the music, hear the people. Our films are a quirky combination of a PBS documentary and cinema verité," which means that the effort is not as much about sharing information as it is about conveying a feeling. And "In the Wake of Dreams" manages this flawlessly. She does not inundate the film with voice-over material. She lets the movie breathe. The images and the music often say everything Lee wants to tell.

Lee's effort to tell stories that many people have not heard is highlighted with film shot by a young Henry Ayau in 1967, showing Duke Kahanamoku with a young Don Ho nearby. In fact, there is lots of entertaining footage of Don Ho, "who looks like he's 26, with all the chicks around him," she said, laughing.

The vivid images are many: horse races at the track at Kapi'olani Park, where people also rowed boats in the pond. And there once were plans to build a casino. Children jumping from diving towers into the natatorium's saltwater pool. Gracie Allen playing the 'ukulele and singing,

"I'm on my way to Honolulu." President Franklin D. Roosevelt preparing to meet with Gen. Douglas MacArthur and Adm. Chester Nimitz. John F. Kennedy riding through Waikīkī in the same car that would carry him for the last time through Dallas a few weeks later. And the old surfing footage is nothing less than spectacular.

"What is reflected in the film is representative of all the voices, people and families who made such a contribution to the history," Lee said.

The film also evokes a sense of how much Hawaiians care about this one-mile stretch of sand and sea that is a fantasy destination to the rest of the world and the soul of a few proud kama'āina.

Tourism officials try to jump-start visitor activity with an outrigger canoe race in the East River ... among other things.

# Honolulu on the Hudson

ED RANPELL

**W**ith visitor figures down from 2000's record year, Hawaii's tourism industry is doing whatever it can to inspire potential visitors. On June 27, Outrigger Resorts and Hotel, the largely taxpayer-funded Hawaii Visitors & Convention Bureau and county Visitor Bureaus, accompanied by their attendant public-relations coterie, launched a PR blitz in New York City, in Manhattan — smack dab in the heart of the city that never sleeps. The Islander offensive aimed at turning the Big Apple into Da Beeg Mango for a few days with a meet-the-travel-press happening, an "Aloha Friday" event, a film screening and an outrigger canoe regatta.

The tourism flaks lured about 50 members of the New York press corps (representing media outlets from *Bride's Magazine* to *Travel Holiday*) to a luncheon held at the Coco Pazzo Teatro restaurant at the Time Hotel on West 49th Street, where they feasted on Hawaiian grinds from the Kāhala Mandarin Oriental's chef, while cultural experts expounded various facets of Hawaii's heritage.

"I never knew lauhala weaving would bring me to the Big Apple," says Kaula's Sabra Kauka, who demonstrated pandanus leaf weaving. Waipi'o valley's Kia Foronda talked about cultural tourism with tales of working in Big Isle taro patches and making nose flutes. In the wake of her dreams of a Manhattan premiere, filmmaker Edgy Lee represented O'ahu by talking story about Waikiki's history.

According to the HVCB, the total cost of the event — excluding sponsorship dollars and radio buys footed by Outrigger Hotels — was \$60,000, which included airfare, daily expenses and accommodations for the PR consultants, experts from each island and the paddling teams.

The June 29 Aloha Friday happening was ballyhooed over the airwaves by NYC's Jammin 105.1 FM, urging New Yorkers to swarm the South Street Seaport, a yuppie-friendly mall near Wall Street on Pier 17 at the edge of the East River. This venue draws huge crowds at pau hana time — especially weekends. The Seaport is home to street performers, restaurants, bars, live bands and retail staples like Abercrombie & Fitch and The Gap.

Climate aside, there's actually something about the South Street Seaport with its aquatic panorama to remind Hawaii residents of home: Most of New York City has a coastline, and Manhattan long served as a

major port. Cobblestone streets and a few early 19th-century buildings at the Seaport and near the famous Fulton Fish Market bring to mind another port, Lahaina.

While Kauka shared her lauhala weaving skills, masses of people lined up for freebies guided by a wobbly sound system. In front of a Falls of Clyde-like barge called The Peking, the Hawaii contingent peddled their wares out of tented pavilions on the pier, distributing travel brochures, orchid bracelets, leis and Outrigger polo shirts.

On a Seaport stage at the edge of the pier, the Aloha Boys — four local transplants up from Washington, D.C., accompanied by six likewise relocated hula dancers in faux-plumeria leis — sang and danced to Hawaiian tunes and hapa-haole ditties such as "Blue Hawaii."

New Yorkers took the stage for a hula contest to, as the Aloha Boys' manager put it, "basically make fools of themselves." More likely, the wannabes hoped to win a free stay at a primo Outrigger property. The hypnotic Odalisa Brown, originally from the Dominican Republic, won the contest. She told me she "learned to hula watching the *Brady Bunch* episode where they meet Don Ho."

As the sun set on Aloha Friday, the crowd anticipated the screening

*Waikiki film screened in outdoor venue, New York City. Sponsored by HVCB*

of Lee's *Waikiki: In the Wake of Dreams*. The film showed on an outdoor screen at a gated theater space especially constructed for the event, with tall ships and the Financial District offices towering over the scene. At least 500 ticket holders for the free screening eagerly awaited a glimpse of far-off Aloha Land and the chance to win a free trip — and to at least walk away with a purple orchid lei and travel brochures left on every seat.

As Lee's homage to Waikiki got underway, lightning intermittently flashed to the north up the East River, and soon, the storm struck causing about two-thirds of the standing-room-only crowd to flee for cover. But, in that grand show-biz tradition, the show went on. After the rain stopped, film fans returned to the open-air theater.

New Yorker Mary Padro says, "I'm planning to go to Hawai'i, but the film definitely made me want to go more."

"We thought *Waikiki* was nothing less than brilliant," says author and attorney Jonathan Kirsch, a visiting Californian. "We've been to Maui, Big Island and O'ahu, and were very excited to revisit Hawai'i on film, which made us want to go straight to the airport and go back there." ■



**NY, UHI:** (Above) Hundreds lined up at the South Street Seaport to admire *Hawaiiana*. (Below) Team Hawai'i's women's team exalts after finishing second at the Fifth Annual Liberty World Challenge.





# WAIKIKI:

## Dream catcher

In fading memories or futuristic visions, Edgy Lee's 'Waikiki' sparkles

**REVIEW**

► 'Waikiki: In the Wake of Dreams'

BY TIM EYAN  
Star-Bulletin

**W**AIKIKI: In the Wake of Dreams," the stunning new documentary by Hawaii filmmaker Edgy Lee and co-produced by Michael Foley, is as much about the people who live and come here as it is about the tattered past of the Pacific.

Lee presided over a private showing of her film yesterday at the Hawaii Convention Center. The film will be screened for the public March 10 in the open-air venue of Kalia Beach. (See information below, left.)

In the film, an elderly local man sums up Waikiki's enduring quality: "When I first came here to Waikiki, Diamond Head was old and I was young. Now I'm old but Diamond Head is young."

Interviews, photos and archival screen footage are used to capture the dream and reality of Waikiki. The dozens of people interviewed in "Waikiki: In the Wake of Dreams" agree that a thing of beauty lasts forever in one form or another. In spite of the urbanization process, Waikiki maintains its sparkle if you know how to look at it.

Singer Don Ho tells Lee he sometimes visits Waikiki Beach late at night, pretending the hotels are gone and all that remains is what makes Waikiki a coveted stretch of beach that's lined people's footsteps for more than 100 years.

"Waikiki" begins simply with unexplicated shots of local fishermen, underwater scenes of coral reefs and tropical fish, jumping dolphins, and people paddling outrigger canoes, perhaps the way early Polynesians arrived at Waikiki centuries ago.

Throughout the film, narrators, primarily "Uncle" Keola Beamer and the late Dr. George Kanahele, provide a substantial but easy to understand history of the place.

The mile-long beach was a favorite summer spot for



Edgy Lee  
DIRECTOR

PLEASE SEE WAIKIKI, C-4

**Outdoor screening**

Waikiki's first on-the-beach movie premiere stars the most famous stretch of sand in the world.

Edgy Lee's film "Waikiki: In the Wake of Dreams" has its Hawaii premiere at 7:15 p.m. March 10.

The free outdoor showing on Kalia Beach will be presented on a 22-by-30-foot screen during a full moon with Diamond Head as a backdrop.

The film will premiere a day of activities beginning at 12 a.m. with the "Waikiki: In the Wake of Dreams" Hoolele's featured Don Ho, daughter Hoku Ho, and the Royal Hawaiian Band.

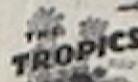
The day will feature food vendors, lei sellers, coconut huskers, luau

shows and live entertainment.

At sunset, 100 torches will be lit along Kalia Beach, followed by a performance by the Hoo. The public screening is expected to attract several thousand people.

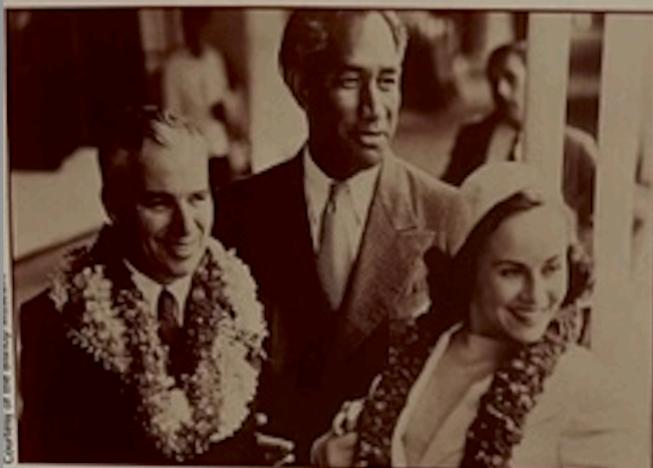
The Hawaii Visitors Convention Bureau, Oahu Visitors Bureau and Aloha Airlines are production sponsors of "Waikiki: In the Wake of Dreams," which tells the history of the one-square mile that has become one of the most famous travel destinations in the world.

In November, the HVCB sponsored the U.S. premiere of the film at the National Geographic Society in Washington, D.C.



Images of old Waikiki fill book and screen versions of "Waikiki: In the Wake of Dreams." Above left, hula dancers wave as Matten's Sierra pulls away from Honolulu Harbor during Boat Days festivities. At left is an overview of Waikiki and advertisements from popular hotels of an earlier era.

Waikiki: In the Wake of Dreams



Star power: Charlie Chaplin, Duke Kahanamoku, and Paulette Goddard turn heads on Waikiki.

**Q: From Elvis to Duke Kahanamoku to Brando, there are many celebrities in your film. What was your most "chicken-skin" moment in making the film?**

**EL:** When I happened to stumble across 1963 footage of President Kennedy in his black Lincoln convertible driving through Waikiki in a motorcade. I heard what he said about Hawaii as a living, breathing example of multiculturalism, that this is what the U.S. strives for. When he said that, I was looking at footage of all the different people who came out to see him – Chinese, Portuguese, Koreans, Japanese, Filipinos, Hawaiians – they all blend in to one another. JFK's in the same car he'd be assassinated in just a few months later. It was absolutely chilling.

**Q: What's your response to someone who says Waikiki's lost its Hawaiian character?**

**EL:** Waikiki is what she is today. You can't deny the change in landscape. But she's like a pearl, with a luster changing through the decades. Waikiki is not a

remote beach in Seychelles. It's an urban resort. A scholar said it beautifully: "Is it not a surprise that the ancient Hawaiians considered Waikiki a special place of great mana – power – of restoration, revitalization, play, and relaxation?" It's the same today; people are drawn to this place. If people know the history, they'll search out those things. Without the native Hawaiian culture, Waikiki might be like any other beach. But it's not.

**Q: Why did you have the movie premiere open to the public at Waikiki Beach?**

**EL:** Who needs a theater? We're talking about Hawaii, where the weather is gorgeous. Why not sit on the sand, with a full moon above Diamond Head? And free, definitely, because it's the people's story.

For more information or to order *Waikiki: In the Wake of Dreams* (video, \$24.95; companion book by Lee and Paul Berry, \$14.95), call FilmWorks Pacific at 808-585-9005, or visit [www.filmworkspacific.com](http://www.filmworkspacific.com)

## On Exhibit

### Sew Intricate

Before logowear, there were Awaji fishermen's coats.

By Nick Robertson

**L**ONG BEFORE WADERS AND GORE-TEX PROTECTED ANGLERS FROM THE ELEMENTS, fishermen from Japan's Awaji island were wearing intricately stitched cotton jackets that gracefully blended form and function.

In this enclave near Osaka, where the ocean's harvest still determines community survival, seafarers of centuries ago wore quilted, embroidered garments called *sashiko no donzo* ("pattern-stitched work coats"), originally practical but eventually a status symbol for the community's boat captains. Now, for the first time, these coats are on display in a traveling exhibit.

Traditionally the robe-like cloaks – designed to keep men warm and dry at sea – were crafted over several months or even years by fishermen's mothers or wives, who sewed them in their spare time. The simple indigo-dyed cloth required extra stitching to strengthen it, especially at the seat and shoulders, where the most wear took place. The reinforcement was done with white thread, which many women would sew in a combination of vertical, horizontal, diagonal, or curved lines. As those basic patterns evolved into elaborate designs, successful fishermen began hiring Awaji's most skilled needworkers, paying two months' earnings for a decorative *donzo*.

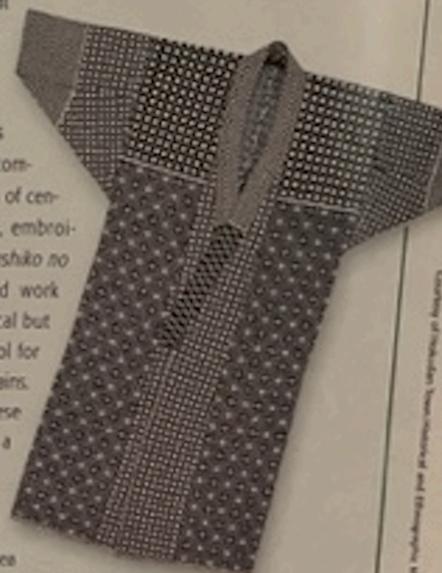
Those commissioned pieces were rarely worn to sea, and instead became symbols of affluence.

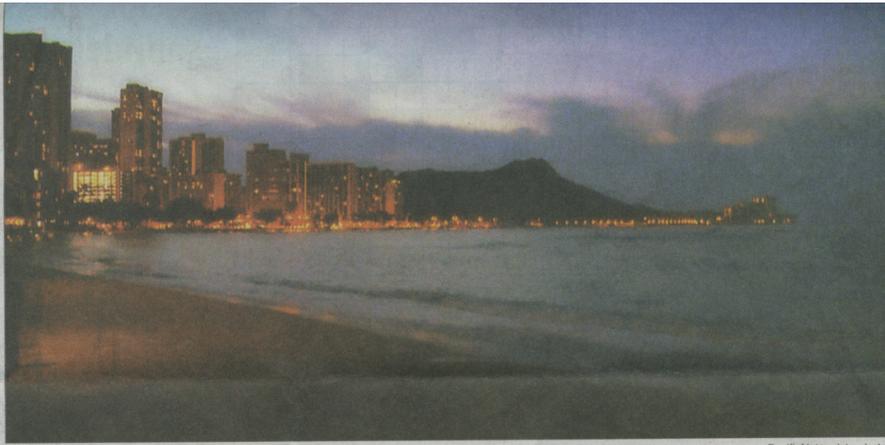
"Well-off fishermen owned these, and they'd strut around town in them," says exhibit co-curator Luke Roberts, a professor of Japanese history at the University of California, Santa Barbara. "For men it was a status issue wearing them; for women it was a status issue to be able to make them."

By the 1950s most Awaji fishermen wore standard Japanese or Western clothing, and only an old-timer would don his tattered *donzo* at sea. Today the jackets are worn only in March, during a play that is part of Awaji's annual Bountiful Fishing Festival.

Meanwhile, says Roberts, Awaji's contemporary fishermen wear Adidas.

"Japanese Fishermen's Coats from Awaji Island" will be housed at The Textile Museum in Washington, D.C., June 29 - September 2; at the University of Michigan's Museum of Art in Ann Arbor, October 14 - January 5, 2002; and at UCLA's Fowler Museum of Cultural History in Los Angeles, April 21 - July 28, 2002.





PacificNetwork.tv photos

PacificNetwork.tv focuses on Waikiki tomorrow evening with a fete honoring its beachboys and beachgirls. The public's invited.

► PACIFICNETWORK.TV PARTY

# Celebrate Waikīki beach culture in kanikapila style

Head to the Edge of Waikiki tomorrow for a free kanikapila-style public gathering to honor Waikiki's beachboys, beachgirls and other local icons, part of PacificNetwork.tv's new "Aloha Waikiki" series.

The "Aloha Waikiki" crew will be filming throughout the evening to capture footage at Sheraton Waikiki's poolside bar, where guests will be entertained by the Sean Na'auao Trio, with expected sit-ins from some of the entertainers in attendance.

**'ALOHA WAIKIKI'**

4 to 8 p.m. tomorrow  
Edge of Waikiki, Sheraton Waikiki

The guest list includes Van Horn Diamond, Nalani Olds, Jimmy Borges, Tony Conjugacion, Sam Kapu, Nina Keali'iwahamana, Boyce Rodrigues, Gary Aiko and beachboys Blue Makua, Uncle Billy Lumpy and Ted Bush.

Other entertainment includes a fashion presentation of vintage and contemporary aloha swim and evening wear by 2 Couture's Takeo Kobayashi and Eric Chandler, as well as a mixology contest to create a new signature cocktail that will be called Waikiki Dream, a name borrowed from Edgy Lee's 2002 film "Waikiki on the Wake of Dreams."

Lee's current project, "Aloha Waikiki," presents a unique insider's tour of Waikiki that includes talk story sessions with the world-famous beachboys and behind-the-scenes visits with Waikiki's current trendsetters. Produced by PacificNetwork.tv, the series will be broadcast in more than 12,000 Waikiki hotel rooms on WhereTV, and will also be broadcast on television later this year and streamed on www.PacificNetwork.tv.

— PacificNetwork.tv



Pikake Enos will be at Edge of Waikiki tomorrow, when she and others will find out if they'll be in the "Aloha Waikiki" series.



Jade Chun, pictured with Peter Apo, is the current host of "Aloha Waikiki" and conducted all the casting interviews.



Find out more on Edgy Lee's blog at [LifetsGood.honadvblogs.com](http://LifetsGood.honadvblogs.com) and see video at [travel.pacificnetwork.tv/alohawaikiki/](http://travel.pacificnetwork.tv/alohawaikiki/).

[HONOLULUADVERTISER.COM](http://HONOLULUADVERTISER.COM)

*Waikiki film established the first "Sunset on the Beach" venue at Kuhio Beach. 3000 visitors and residents attended the premiere which inspired other events in Waikiki targeted at local families.*



A MODERN TAKE ON THE VINTAGE BEACH BAR :: SHERATON WAIKIKI 808.921.4600

THE  
edge  
OF  
WAIKIKI

# gettingedgy

FILMMAKER EDGY LEE'S NEW TV SHOW, "ALOHA WAIKIKI,"  
PREMIERES WITH A BANG AT THE EDGE OF WAIKIKI



TITUS NAKAGAWA (RIGHT), THE WINNING MIXOLOGIST IN THE COMPETITION TO CREATE THE WAIKIKI DREAM, THE FIRST ORIGINAL HAWAIIAN COCKTAIL IN 50 YEARS.



HULA BY THE INIMITABLE AUNTY KEALOHA KALAMA. SHERATON WAIKIKI GM KELLY SANDERS (RIGHT) WITH TWO COUTURE MODELS.

You may hear people talking about "Old Hawaii," but what was it, really? "It was when people were relaxed and felt safe and secure," says filmmaker Edgy Lee, who's on a mission to show how the aloha spirit is real here in Waikiki; it's alive, and it works its way through the hearts and souls of all people who are open to receive it. "This is what sets this place apart from all of the other beautiful locales on the planet. No one can match this culture," she says. "We want to introduce the visitor and *kama'aina* to this new Waikiki that's really based on the old. It's old and new, night and day; it's the people that make Waikiki, and it's the young people rediscovering its nightlife.

Much to the delight of those who know and love her work, Lee's latest television series, "Aloha Waikiki" is now airing. The theme is "Waikiki 24-7," she explains. "It's old and new, it's day and night, it's the

people who make Waikiki and who have made Waikiki." It includes "talk story" with world-famous beach boys, visits behind the scenes with Waikiki's current trendsetters, and "only in Hawaii" moments. There's a

**Partygoers were especially appreciative of the Sheraton's decision to make the entire evening free of charge. "You can't say 'aloha' any louder than free entertainment!"**

history here in Waikiki, says Lee. "This was the breadbasket where people could live off the ocean and it's where they fell in love. This was what Hollywood took to create the world's image of Paradise."

In the old beautiful days of Waikiki, the world's most powerful and wealthy people were entertained and hosted by

beach boys like Uncle Boyce Rodrigues. Lee attributes much of the inspiration behind the creation of Aloha Waikiki to Uncle Boyce. "He said: 'You have to remember that these are our islands and you should reclaim your heritage here. Whether you're native or not, it doesn't matter. this is *your* Waikiki. You make it.'"

For the shows' premiere party at The Edge at the Sheraton Waikiki, icons in the music and dance world gathered for the first time in years. "It's a fabulous venue," says Lee. "It's a wonderful open space, something very fresh and new for Waikiki." In true kani kapila fashion, local folks and newcomers mingled and openheartedly enjoyed the music, food and togetherness. "Some said they hadn't been in Waikiki for 20 years," recalls Lee, "and that was what thrilled me most. There are the people who created the feeling of Aloha in Waikiki. It was an honor to honor them."

PHOTOS BY DR. DAVID MATTO, COURTESY PACIFIC NETWORK. SEE ALOHA WAIKIKI AND MORE STREAMING ONLINE AT [PACIFICNETWORK.TV](http://PACIFICNETWORK.TV)

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A MODERN TAKE ON



*A Japanese language version of the film was created for NHK broadcast in Japan*