



LISETTE MARIE KAUALENA FLANARY

THE FILMMAKER

As an independent filmmaker and a hula dancer, Lisette Marie Kaualea Flanary creates documentary films that celebrate a modern renaissance of the hula dance and Hawaiian culture. She is the writer, producer and director of Lehua Films and her first documentary, **AMERICAN ALOHA: Hula Beyond Hawai'i** received a CINE Golden Eagle Award when it aired on the critically acclaimed P.O.V. series on PBS in 2003. In 2021, Lisette was featured in Hawai'i Women in Filmmaking's REEL WĀHINE OF HAWAI'I series Season 2 of short documentary films on female filmmakers in Hawai'i highlighting her filmography over the last 20 years of her career.

Her award-winning film, **Nā Kamalei: The Men of Hula**, featuring legendary Hawaiian master hula teacher and entertainer, Robert Cazimero, screened in numerous film festivals around the country. Lisette received the Hawai'i Filmmaker Award at the Hawai'i International Film Festival in 2006 and the Emerging Director Award at the New York Asian American International Film Festival in 2007. The film also received Best Documentary and Audience Awards at the San Francisco International Asian American Film Festival, the Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film Festival, and the San Diego Asian Film Festival. **Nā Kamalei: The Men of Hula** was broadcast nationally on the 2007–2008 Independent Lens series on PBS in May 2008 and it was the winner of the Audience Award for the series. The film was also a selected project of the Tribeca Film Institute's All Access program and the Independent Feature Project's Spotlight on Documentaries screening during Independent Film Week in NYC.

Lisette also directed the documentary feature, **ONE VOICE**, which follows the young song directors at the Kamehameha Schools Song Contest celebrating the revitalization of the Hawaiian language through music. It was nominated for an Emerging Director Award at the Los Angeles Asian Pacific American Film Festival in 2010 and won Audience Awards for Best Documentary at the Hawai'i International Film Festival, the San Diego Asian Film Festival, and the San Francisco International Asian American Film Festival in 2011. Executive produced by Pacific Islanders in Communications and Juniroa Productions, **ONE VOICE** was theatrically released in Hawai'i and Japan in August 2011 and broadcast nationally on PBS in 2012. In 2016, **ONE VOICE** was a 25 in 25 Honoree celebrating the 25th anniversary of Pacific Islanders in Communications.

In 2019, Lisette completed the final film in the trilogy of documentaries on the hula entitled **TOKYO HULA** about the explosive popularity of the hula dance in Japan. **TOKYO HULA** premiered at the Yamagata International Documentary Film Festival in October 2019 in AM/NESIA: The Forgotten Archipelagos of Oceania and screened at the Hawai'i International Film Festival in the Made in Hawai'i Competition in November 2019 in Honolulu, Maui and the Big Island. The film also won the Best Moana Whārahi Award at the Doc Edge Festival in New Zealand and was also nominated for a Grand Jury Award for Best Documentary at the Guam International Film Festival in 2020. All three of the documentaries in the Hula Trilogy were broadcast on the Pacific Heartbeat Season 10 series from Pacific Islanders in Communications in 2021.

Lisette is a graduate of New York University's Tisch School of the Arts in Film and Television Production and received her MFA in Creative Writing at the New School University. Having lived in New York City for over twenty years, Lisette moved to Honolulu in 2011 and is currently a Professor of Indigenous/Native Creative Media at the School of Cinematic Arts (formerly ACM) at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. She was awarded the Board of Regents's Excellence in Teaching Award in 2016, the highest university-wide award recognizing faculty who have made significant contributions in teaching and student learning. In 2021, she also received the OVCR Excellence in Mentoring Undergraduate Research & Creative Work Award.

Lisette has served as a jury member for the Hawai'i International Film Festival (Feature Documentaries 2012, Made in Hawai'i 2017, Pasifika Award 2024), the FIFO Festival of International Documentaries on Oceania (Documentary Competition 2017), and the 'Ōhina Short Film Showcase (Narrative and Doc Shorts 2017). In 2019, she also served as the co-director for Good Pitch Local Hawai'i, a community effort to generate support for media projects and the next generation of emerging storytellers in the Pacific through a curated pitch event based on a model of dynamic collaboration aimed at inspiring social good. She currently serves as the Director of Education at 'Ōhina Films and co-ordinates the annual 'Ōhina Labs hosted at Shangri La Museum of Islamic Art, Culture & Design.