

VILCEK FOUNDATION

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2014 New American Filmmakers Selections Announced

Immigrant filmmakers featured in expanded programming at the 34th annual Hawaii International Film Festival

New York, NY, October 28, 2014 — The Vilcek Foundation is pleased to announce this year's selections for the New American Filmmakers (NAF) program. Curated and presented in partnership with the Hawaii International Film Festival (HIFF) in Honolulu, NAF spotlights immigrant contributions to American cinema.

“Immigrants have long expanded our cultural consciousness and artistic voice,” said Rick Kinsel, executive director of the Vilcek Foundation. “Through the New American Filmmakers program, we are proud to present immigrant filmmakers who weave narratives from places such as rural Ethiopia, coastal Vietnam, and Iranian ghost towns into the American cinematic imagination.”

French-born producer Antoine de Cazotte will join the program as the NAF Featured Filmmaker. Mr. de Cazotte has produced award-winning films such as *The Artist* and currently serves as the French representative to the Producers Guild of America. Mr. de Cazotte will host a discussion on his career and the role of a producer as a part of HIFF's Creative Lab courses. NAF will also present a free screening of *The Artist*, followed by an extended discussion with Mr. de Cazotte.

NAF is also pleased to announce an extended selection of films. Now in its eighth year, NAF will sponsor seven films at the festival, including a free community screening as a part of HIFF's outdoor series.

This year, New American Filmmakers is proud to present the following films:

The Artist, produced by French-born Antoine de Cazotte. Set in the age of silent cinema, this Academy Award–winning film portrays a romance between an aging star and a rising young actress as the “talkies” gain popularity. It is an homage to the genre as well as a brilliant demonstration of its power.

A Girl Walks Home Alone at Night, directed by Ana Lily Amirpour, born in the U.K. to parents of Iranian descent. This visually striking film has been dubbed as the first “Middle-Eastern feminist vampire romance” in history. Drawing strongly from both American pop culture and Iranian New Wave, this directorial debut set in the fictitious Bad Town is unforgettable.

Man from Reno, starring Japanese-born actress and writer Ayako Fujitani. A famous Japanese mystery author runs away to San Francisco in the middle of a publicity tour and has an affair with a stranger who vanishes. Enmeshed in a stranger-than-fiction plot, she teams up with a small-town sheriff in this suspenseful neo-noir thriller.

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Difret, directed by Ethiopian-born Zeresenay Berhane Mehari. Fourteen-year-old Hirut is abducted on the way home from school, in the rural Ethiopian tradition of bride kidnapping. When she accidentally kills her captor while trying to escape, a young lawyer risks her career by defying customary law and volunteering to defend the girl.

Nước 2030, directed by Vietnamese-born Minh Nguyễn-Võ. In the not-too-distant future, rising water levels have turned arable lands into premium property in this sci-fi romance. Set in a Vietnam controlled by multinational conglomerates, a woman searching for the truth behind her husband's murder finds more than she expected.

Uzumasa Limelight, directed by Japanese-born Ken Ochiai. This moving drama provides a behind-the-scenes look at the lives of *kirare-yaku*, extras from the golden age of Japanese samurai epics who specialize in portraying spectacular deaths on screen. One elderly extra fears that the art form is dying, until he takes on a young disciple.

Mudbloods, directed by Iranian-born Farzad Sangari. Although Quidditch originated from the fictional world of Harry Potter, it is now an intercollegiate sport with high stakes. This sports documentary follows the UCLA Quidditch team as they set their sights on the Fifth Annual Quidditch World Cup in New York.

Several of the NAF delegates will be present at selected screenings for a discussion and Q&A with the audience. HIFF will run from October 30–November 9 in Honolulu and from November 13–16 on the Big Island and Kauai.

For tickets, screening times, and more information about the New American Filmmakers program, please visit www.hiff.org. For information about the Vilcek Foundation, please visit www.vilcek.org.

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The Vilcek Foundation was established in 2000 by Jan and Marica Vilcek, immigrants from the former Czechoslovakia. The mission of the Foundation, to honor the contributions of foreign-born scholars and artists living in the United States, was inspired by the couple's careers in biomedical science and art history, respectively, as well as their personal experiences and appreciation for the opportunities they received as newcomers to this country. The Foundation hosts events to promote the work of immigrants, awards annual prizes to prominent immigrant biomedical scientists and artists, and sponsors cultural programs such as the Hawaii International Film Festival.

To learn more about the Vilcek Foundation, please visit Vilcek.org.