



Media Contact: Catherine Tarleton
808-883-0669
CatherineTarleton@gmail.com

CELEBRITY GUESTS CRANK UP THE ACTION
at the Big Island "Talk Story" Film Festival May 15-18

WAIKOLOA, HAWAII— If a full slate of 58 films isn't enough for movie-lovers, the 2008 Big Island Film Festival glitters with celebrity salutes and in-person appearances by actor D.B. Sweeney, filmmaker David Winning, Hawaii's own Brother Noland and David L. Cunningham. BIFF takes place May 15-18 at the Waikoloa Beach Resort, presenting films from 8 countries (including 8 made in Hawaii) and a premier event at the new Queens' Gardens Amphitheatre.

Familiar faces from the Hollywood "galaxy" appearing in this year's movies include D.B. Sweeney, John McGinley, Paul Hipp, Vanna White, Ed Harris, Stephen Baldwin, Tom Sizemore, Paul Sorvino, Sean Young, Kelly Preston, Pat Hingle, Bruce Dern, Janet Jones and Robert Englund, as well as local favorites Augie T and the late Ray Bumatai. But the stars are coming out to meet Big Island audiences in person too.

D. B. Sweeney, Friday, May 16. Currently known to TV fans as Goetz, the scowling Ravenwood administrator on the drama *Jericho*, D.B. Sweeney is often praised for his 1988 portrayal of Shoeless Joe Jackson in *Eight Men Out*, and in fact played minor league baseball before he started acting. His film career has included such diverse roles as a gung-ho soldier in Francis Ford Coppola's *Gardens of Stone*, a hockey player in *The Cutting Edge* and the voice of Sitka in Disney's *Brother Bear*. Sweeney will be honored in person Friday, May 16, 4:30-6:30pm, during the BIFF Actor's Reception & Salute at Sansei Seafood Restaurant & Sushi Bar. Afterwards, the comedy *Two Tickets to Paradise*, which stars Sweeney and was co-written and directed by him, will be shown at the Queens' Gardens "Festival Theater."

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David L. Cunningham, Saturday, May 17. BIFF is also happy to welcome home Kona director David L. Cunningham, whose independent feature *To End All Wars* gained Hollywood attention in 2001 and led to a controversial mini-series *The Path to 9/11*. The international premier of *Hakani*, a short film about infanticide in Brazil, happens Saturday, May 17, 12:30pm at the Waikoloa Beach Marriott Resort and Spa, as part of Cunningham's "Director's Notebook" filmmaker seminar.

David Winning, Saturday, May 17. Prolific director, actor, writer and producer David Winning has 13 feature films and many television series to his credit, in virtually all genres from kid's shows to westerns to science-fiction. Known for his work on Gene Roddenberry's *Andromeda* and *Earth: Final Conflict*, MGM's *Stargate: Atlantis* and ABC's *Dinotopia*, this award-"Winning" filmmaker started shooting at age 10 with a Super 8 camera in hometown Calgary, Canada and has since received 56 motion picture awards. Film credits include *Swamp Devil*, *Black Swarm* and *Blood Trail* (in production). On Saturday, May 17, 4:30-6pm, at Sansei Seafood Restaurant & Sushi Bar, Winning adds the BIFF "Golden Honu" award to his collection. That evening, two of Winning's feature films, *Swamp Devil* and *Black Swarm*, will be shown at the Kings' Keaka "Ohana Theater."

Brother Noland in Concert, Sunday, May 18. Also on Sunday, May 18, 5-7pm, Brother Noland kicks off the "Best of the Fest" party in the Queens' Gardens, with his own energetic style of Hawaiian, Jawaiian and contemporary island music. From original hits like "Coconut Girl" to creative covers of great songs by Stevie Wonder, Bob Dylan and others, Brother Noland expresses his many passions, musical versatility and abundance of aloha. www.MountainApple.com says, "Noland is able to incorporate many of the tools that his ancestors used into his 21st century life ... The result is a vocalist who can touch and communicate with more than one generation as well as music lovers of all genres."

“Best of the Fest, on our final night, is a ‘mini-experience’ of what the Big Island Film Festival is all about,” says Executive Director/Founder Leo Sears. “All during the Festival, after every film, audiences vote and we tally up their scores. Then on Sunday, not only do we offer a great concert starring Brother Noland, we present the best short film and full length feature of the entire Festival.”

This is the third annual BIFF and the entries, audience and excitement grows each year. “We are thrilled to offer Big Island audiences such a stellar lineup for 2008,” says Sears. “It’s very exciting to welcome celebrity guests of this caliber in the film community. Of course, none of this would be possible without sponsors like the County of Hawaii CPEP grant program, Waikoloa Beach Resort, Hilton Grand Vacations Club, Hilton Waikoloa Village, Waikoloa Beach Marriott Resort & Spa, Sansei Restaurant and Kings’ Grille. They help make possibilities into realities—just like in the movies.”

The 4-day Big Island Film Festival is a celebration of “talking story” via narrative filmmaking, and includes a full slate of 58 international feature-length and short films, along with Filmmaker and Actor Salute receptions, educational Filmmaker Panels, gala “Golden Honu Awards” Brunch and the “Best of the Fest” party on the final night, starring Brother Noland in concert and the top-rated feature and short films of the entire festival. For the complete schedule and ticket information, visit www.BigIslandFilmFestival.com or call 808-883-0394.

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