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HA'I MO'OLELO MA KA MOKU O KEAWE  
2008 Big Island "Talk Story" Film Festival

WAIKOLOA, HAWAII—I—The Big Island's native tongue announces the 2008 Big Island Film Festival, coming up May 15-18, 2008 at Waikoloa Beach Resort, with a fascinating Hawaiian language TV commercial sub-titled in English. Starring well-known cultural advisor Kaniela (Danny) Akaka, the commercial is a 60-second film in itself, promoting the essence of the third annual "Talk Story" Film Festival.

"We wanted to do something different and very special," says organizer Leo Sears. "Because it's the 'Talk Story' Film Festival, we focus on narrative films, storytelling films, in all the many diverse ways you can tell a story. And because it takes place here, what better way to introduce the Festival than in this island's original language?"

"Leo wanted to do the commercial and asked if I could help by translating it," says Akaka. "We did it on 'Anaeho'omalua Beach, and my biggest worry was I had to memorize everything – no cue cards!"

"There's no better spokesperson than Danny," says Mason Farish, whose company Farish Media shot the promotional spot. "It's a unique approach to promoting a unique event in Hawai'i," he says.

Akaka learned Hawaiian from his grandfather. "When I translate something, I try and think of it in the old way... My feeling is that every school in the state should have 1 year mandatory to give at least the foundation of Hawaiian language--at least for the student to pronounce the street names and place

names and pay proper respect to places that are quickly disappearing ... Hawaiians felt a name has *mana* and the more you use it and get it out there in the universe, the more it benefits.”

The BIFF spot is not Akaka’s first film appearance; in fact he was an extra in “Hawaii 5-0” among others in Honolulu. He would not be opposed to taking a part, if the right opportunity came along. “You know what, I’ve never seen a movie yet that portrayed Hawai‘i as it should be portrayed--true Hawai‘i, not the Hollywood version of what Hawai‘i should be.”

“If I was making a movie, I would probably start with a documentary,” he says. “We have so short a time to capture the knowledge of the people who are here.” But there is inspiration in the “Talk Story” narrative film too. “Something from a book like *Fires of Eden*,” Akaka says would be a great start, “using legends, and so captivating {that} people learn about the culture through the stories.”

The Big Island Film Festival is a celebration of “talking story” via narrative filmmaking. The 4-day Festival includes a full slate of international feature-length and short films, along with Filmmaker and Actor Salute parties (this year’s in-person honoree is TV and movie star D.B.Sweeney), educational Filmmaker Panels, gala “Golden Honu Awards” Brunch and the “Best of the Fest” featuring Brother Noland in Concert and audience-voted best feature and short of the entire Festival.

For ticket information and to see the Hawaiian language promotional spot, visit

[www.BigIslandFilmFestival.com](http://www.BigIslandFilmFestival.com) or call 808-883-0394.

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