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Announcing the 2015 New American Filmmakers Selection

Showcase celebrates independent immigrant filmmakers at the Hawaii International Film Festival

Honolulu, HI, Nov. 10, 2015 — The Vilcek Foundation and the Hawaii International Film Festival are pleased to present the New American Filmmakers, a showcase of independent films by immigrant and first-generation artists. The selections this year break new ground, in topic, technique, and temerity.

New Zealand-born stuntwoman and actress **Zoë Bell** is this year's NAF Featured Filmmaker. Bell started as the stunt double for Lucy Lawless in *Xena: Warrior Princess*. Since then, she has segued into an acting career, appearing in *Grindhouse*, *Django Unchained*, and *The Hateful Eight*, opening this winter. She will be presenting ***Camino*** at the festival, an action-thriller about Avery, a photojournalist on an assignment in the jungles of Colombia; when Avery sees more than she should, she must run for her life.

In addition to *Camino*, the New American Filmmakers will also present:

- ***Margarita, with a Straw***, directed by Indian-born **Shonali Bose**. Filmed in India and New York, *Margarita* presents an honest look at life for a young woman with cerebral palsy. Bose is not afraid to confront the question of sexual desire in those living with disabilities, nor is she afraid to depict homosexuality in a country where it is outlawed. *Margarita* received the Sundance Institute's Mahindra Global Filmmaker Award and the Best Asian Film Award at the Toronto International Film Festival.
- ***Yosemite***, directed by French-born **Gabrielle Demeestere**. *Yosemite* is a wonderfully restrained look at childhood through the eyes of three young boys living under the threat of a mountain lion plaguing the suburbs of Palo Alto in the 1980s. Based on a novel by James Franco, *Yosemite* was the closing film at the Slamdance Film Festival and won the Tangerine Entertainment Juice Fund Award. Demeestere is a co-founder of La Ti Da Productions, a collective of women filmmakers in New York.

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- ***Seoul Searching***, directed by **Benson Lee** (born in the U.S. to Korean parents) and shot by Irish-born cinematographer **Daniel Katz**. *Seoul Searching* is a narrative feature based on a summer Lee spent in a South Korean cultural immersion camp for Koreans born overseas. Although he loved the teen dramas of the 1980s, Lee was bothered by the depiction of Asian-Americans, and set out to create a teen comedy with an all-Asian-American cast. He opened the casting call to social media, and *Seoul Searching* includes two new talents discovered via Facebook. The film was shot by Katz, building upon an impressive resume that includes *I Am Legend* and *Adam*.
- ***People Are the Sky***, directed by North Korean-born **Dai Sil Kim-Gibson**. As a child, Kim-Gibson and her family moved to Seoul to escape the warfare and political unrest that ultimately separated Korea into two countries. She did not return again until 2009, and she documented her homecoming in *People Are the Sky*. Kim-Gibson was one of the first Korean-Americans to film a documentary with the official approval of the government, and *People Are the Sky* is a contemplative exploration of the meaning of home.

The delegates will be in attendance at HIFF for Q&A sessions after select screenings. In addition to these screenings, New American Filmmakers is also sponsoring two events around the legendary British-born director Alfred Hitchcock: a screening of the documentary ***Hitchcock/Truffaut***, and a free, outdoor screening of Hitchcock's ***Spellbound***. Afterward, his granddaughters Tere Carrubba and Mary Stone will discuss Hitchcock's life and legacy.

The 2015 Hawaii International Film Festival will take place in Honolulu from November 12–22.

For more information about the New American Filmmakers or this year's delegates, visit www.vilcek.org.

For information about screening times and ticket purchases, visit www.hiff.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 respective careers in biomedical science and art history, as well as their appreciation for the opportunities they received as newcomers to this country. The Foundation 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.