

## **Hawaii A Voice For Sovereignty wins Audience Award for Best Hawai'i Film at Maui Film festival**

*By Renata Lorenc*

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*Catherine Bauknights' documentary "Hawaii A Voice for Sovereignty" won the Audience award for Best Hawai'i film at the 2009 Maui Film Festival.*

Catherine Bauknights' documentary "Hawaii A Voice for Sovereignty" won the Audience award for Best Hawai'i film at the 2009 Maui Film Festival. The festival was held from June 17-21, 2009 and is considered Hawaii's answer to Sundance. "Hawaii A Voice for Sovereignty" has joined the alumni of Maui Film Festival winners such as Departures the Academy Award Winner for Best Foreign Language Film, (500) Days of Summer starring Zooey Deschanel 2009 Maui Film Festival Nova Award honoree and Willie Nelson was also honored with a Maverick award. Approximately 20,000 people attended this year's Maui Film Festival at Wailea and voted on their favorite films. The scenic views of Maui served as a backdrop to some of the best American independent films and world cinema.

Filmmaker Catherine Bauknight is from Pasadena, CA and has shot the film over the past four years by traveling to and from the islands extensively. "Hawaii A Voice For Sovereignty" explores the culture and spirituality of the native Hawaiian People and its connection to the lands. This modern epic documentary contains rare interviews with Native Hawaiians in their homes, at sacred sites, in mountains and the rain forests. The Indigenous Hawaiians reveal their quest to secure their Hawaiian rights as the host culture, and their economic, social, and ecological future. By bridging their ancient knowledge with wisdom and modern technologies such as wind, solar, and wave renewable energy and agricultural land systems they move towards their goal of sustainability. "I'm honored to win this award in the homeland and be able to share this great accomplishment with the people who created this documentary" says filmmaker and world renowned photographer Catherine Bauknight.

The Hawaiians blogged for a screening of "Hawaii a Voice for Sovereignty" to come to Hawaii after reading information in the Honolulu Advertiser regarding the private screening in conjunction with US representative Neil Abercrombie at the Capitol Building in Washington DC June 4th. The screening was well attended and officials from the office of Hawaiian Affairs, Nancy Pelosi's office and California US Representative Adam Schiff attended the private Capitol Hill reception and screening.

Filmmaker Catherine Bauknight responded to these requests by calling Maui Film Festival director and founder Barry Rivers four days before the kick off to the Maui Film Festival to request that the documentary be screened at the festival. River's quick response was astounding to Bauknight. She said that he coordinated the schedule so that the film could be included in full support of the Native Hawaiian Community and to get the educational and historic information out to the public. Barry Rivers says "With both with factual accuracy and a Hawaiian Heart "Hawaii A Voice for Sovereignty" travels to all points on the compass to deliver the most up-to-date and well informed look at the status of the quest for sovereignty by native Hawaiians in a way that makes the subject accessible to all at this important crossroads in the history of the movement., Highly recommended to all"

"Hawaii A Voice for Sovereignty" premiered on Sunday June 21st at the Maui Film festival at the beautiful Wailea Beach under the stars and had a supportive local Hawaiian audience of approximately 400 people attend. The film was preceded by the short film "Power" which comes from Al Gores organization "The Climate Project" which complimented the themes of renewable energy in Hawaii. The Audience was touched by many emotions and treated to a sense of revelation about how the Hawaiians lived and were able to understand the history of Hawaiians since the takeover and what their struggles are today to avoid

extinction. The film garnered a favorable review in the Maui Weekly and writer Paul Janes Brown said “I think “Hawaii A Voice for Sovereignty” Hawaiian should be required viewing for every school child in Hawaii and every tourist should see it on the plane” Currently “Hawaii A Voice for Sovereignty” is in talks for a theatrical release in Los Angeles, New York and Hawaii and is touring the film circuit.

#### About Maui Film Festival

Maui Film Festival was founded in 1998 by Barry Rivers and is built on the belief that great film making is pure alchemy. When filmmakers choose to tell compassionate life affirming stories they turn darkness into light. It is this belief in the power of creativity to enlighten as well entertain. That is the guiding principle that gives the Maui Film Festival character, its energy, and its soul. For more information and a festival schedule go to [www.mauifilmfestival.com](http://www.mauifilmfestival.com)

#### About Catherine Bauknight

Catherine Bauknight’s exploration of cultural identities has its origins within her photojournalist background. A professional photographer for over two decades, Bauknight’s work has been featured in such distinguished publications as The New York Times, cover of Time Magazine, The Los Angeles Times, Newsweek Magazine, USA Today, Rolling Stone, and People Magazine. She was one of five international photographers who risked their lives to cover the Tienanmen Square massacre. Hawaii A Voice for Sovereignty is her documentary directorial debut.

To learn more about "Hawaii A Voice for Sovereignty" visit [www.catherinebauknight.com](http://www.catherinebauknight.com)

For more publicity or distribution requests about Hawaii A Voice for Sovereignty please contact Renata Lorenc [renata@rulapr.com](mailto:renata@rulapr.com) or 1917 690 1275

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Phone	1917 690 1275
City/Town	Venice
State/Province	California
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