

## Two documentaries about Oceania screened at the 30th San Francisco International Asian-American Film Festival

(As reported by George Heymont for *The Huffington Post*, published online 15 March 2012).

The 30<sup>th</sup> San Francisco International Asian-American Film Festival was held from 8-18 March 2012 and featured two documentaries that explored peoples' relationships with the Pacific Ocean. The first, entitled *Papa Mau: The Wayfinder*, directed by Na'alehu Anthony, documented the voyaging renaissance that began with the voyage of Hōkūle'a from Hawai'i to Tahiti in 1976. The life of the master navigator on that and subsequent voyages, Mau Piailug (from the Micronesian atoll of Satawal) is the focus of this documentary, which chronicles the first voyage as well as years of subsequent mentoring of Polynesian navigators by Mau up until his death in 2010. The second documentary, directed by Briar March and entitled *There Once Was an Island: Te Henua e Nnoho*, explores life on the small low-lying atoll of Takuu (Mortlock Island) off the coast of Papua New Guinea, which is home to approximately 400 inhabitants. The island experienced a major cyclone in 2006 and three days of high tides in 2008 that caused serious destruction. The documentary explores the science behind rising sea levels and the indigenous inhabitants' decision-making processes regarding how to cope with the first major impacts of climate change in the Pacific Islands. In her director's statement, March states, "Takuu's plight draws attention to the situation of other people in the Pacific and in coastal areas elsewhere who will soon face similar problems. In addition to being an important record for all Pacific peoples, this film will help preserve the way of life and cultural identity of a unique Polynesian culture. The Takuu community has stressed to us that they feel they do not have a voice. We hope that, through this film, we will be able to give them one."

## Gauguin and Polynesia Exhibition held in Copenhagen and Seattle

An exhibition entitled "*Gauguin and Polynesia: An Elusive Paradise*" was held in Copenhagen from 24 September to 31 December 2011, and then opened at the Seattle Art Museum from 9 February to 29 April 2012. According to the Seattle Art Museum's official press release, the show highlighted the "complex relationship between Paul Gauguin's work and the art and culture of Polynesia" and featured nearly 60 of Gauguin's paintings, sculptures, and works, tracing the artist's journey from France to Tahiti and the Marquesas Islands during the 19th century. In the exhibition, his artworks were displayed alongside 60 major examples of Polynesian

sculpture in order to provide a "solid analysis of how this one artist enacted his own quest for the Polynesian past and reacted to the changes evident in Polynesia during his lifetime" (Seattle Art Museum press release). The Polynesian sculptures included items in wood, shell, and other materials from Tahiti, the Marquesas, and Rapa Nui. The exhibition was accompanied by a full-color 399-page catalogue including essays by art historians and curators that expand on the works of Gauguin and the history of Polynesian culture and art. Further information is available at [www.seattleartmuseum.org/gauguin](http://www.seattleartmuseum.org/gauguin).

## EASTER ISLAND FOUNDATION NEWS

Antoinette Padgett and Marla Wold

The EIF Scholarship Committee is very pleased to announce the selection of three new scholars to receive EIF awards for 2012.

The Fraternal Order of Moai very generously donated a \$3000 scholarship, awarded to Laura Tarita Alarcon Rapu (pictured below). Tarita is in her 4th year of study in physical anthropology at the University of Chile and states that she will be the first Rapanui student to be a physical anthropologist. She hopes her research will contribute to better understanding of the island, for foreigners and especially at the community level. She has deep respect for the oral tradition and the wise knowledge of Rapanui and Polynesian people. She states "the new generations of young Rapanui have an obligation to act as a bridge between the past, which protects us, and the present, which accompanies us, and we cannot stop it, but we can understand it to serve the continuation of our people's cultural beliefs." She would like to work with the museum on the island. She also has a vocation as a singer and dancer and is in the group *Te Manu Rapa Nui*. She is grateful for the scholarship and thrilled to be able to help fulfill the objectives of the Easter Island Foundation: promoting the study and investigation of the island.



Rafael Simon Paoa Rapu (pictured below) was awarded the EIF Annual Award of \$2000. Rafael is studying archaeology and is in his 4th year at the International University SEK, in Santiago. He feels that “education is the basis of knowledge.” His academic interests lie in the study of the peopling of Polynesia, focusing on the dynamics of subsistence, particularly in the relationship between people and the environment. In the case of Rapa Nui, he would specifically like to work in the systemic study of the population’s ways of adapting to the natural environment (subsistence and administration of available resources) and the links with social adaptation, strongly related to cultural rituals and social activities.



Mauricio Tamaru Hey Salas was awarded the EIF Directors Award of \$2000. Mauricio is studying in his 2nd year in commercial engineering at Pontificia Universidad Católica in Valparaíso. His interests include history, administration, business, social sciences, languages and technology. His interest in history goes back to his youth when he was enchanted to hear the Rapa Nui histories. He states that a major problem Rapa Nui faces is “how to create a sustainable economy in a society where no one has a great source of supplies, prices rise steadily without oversight, and our closest resources are en route to extinction.” His interests include helping with the development of all areas of the island to prepare new generations of Rapanui for the future. Mauricio has been involved with the folkloric group *Kuhane* and has participated in the group *Rangi Moana* as well. Through these involvements he has learned much respect for the island and its culture.

Congratulations to our new scholars and we hope to hear much more from them in the future!

We are also very pleased to announce the continuation of scholarship awards for an additional year to the following students: Cecilia Hormazabal Araki is studying nursing at the Universidad de Santo Tomás in Viña del Mar (Nicolas Haoa Haoa Award, \$2000); Merahi Atam Lopez is continuing her graduate studies in archaeology (Fraternal Order of the Moai Tangata Manu Award, \$2500); Tavake Riroroco Cabezas is

completing her commercial engineering degree (Mildred R. Donoghue Award, \$2500); and Barbara Gaete Tuki is completing her studies in phonoaudiology (Mildred R. Donoghue Award, \$2500).

We are very grateful to our sponsors of these scholarships, especially Mildred R. Donoghue and The Fraternal Order of Moai, who have generously supported our scholarship program, and to all who have donated to the EIF scholarship program. We are very proud of all our 2012 recipients. They all have expressed their appreciation for the scholarship help and their hopes to return to the island and promote the goals of the Easter Island Foundation.

The EIF Office moved in February from Baywood Park to downtown Los Osos. The move was necessary due to two separate flooding issues during the year in our former building that created a very damp working environment. Our present office, while significantly smaller, is in a nice sunny location. Please feel free to visit us if you are in the area.

We have many interesting items on our webpage for sale, varying from recently acquired rare books by various authors (Churchill, Agassiz, Knoche, Fedorova, Loti, Métraux and Routledge, to name a few), some outstanding woodcarvings, clothing, a Rapanui flag and even some ceramic tiki kitsch items. Please visit [islandheritage.org](http://islandheritage.org) for images and details.

We are now gearing up for the 8th International Conference on Easter Island and the Pacific, “*Living in Changing Island Environments*”, to be held on July 8-13, 2012 at the Hyatt Vineyard Creek Hotel (Santa Rosa, California), located in the heart of the famed Sonoma Wine Country, in collaboration with Far Horizons Archaeological and Cultural Trips. The overall emphasis of the conference is on the relationships between people, climatic variation, and consequent changes introduced to environmental and social landscapes.

The registration fee includes three full days of scholarly papers and coffee breaks twice a day. The Keynote speaker is Patrick V. Kirch. A wine tasting in the hotel gardens on 8 July from 6-7 pm and a welcome banquet on 9 July with wine and a talk by Grant McCall is also included. A reduced registration fee is available for students with a valid ID. There is a special room rate for conference participants at the Hyatt Vineyard Creek Hotel. Optional events during and after the conference include a sake & sushi tasting; a tour of Sonoma’s historic sites and wine tasting, concluding with a barbeque and entertainment at the Seghesio Family Vineyards; and a post-conference tour of the gold rush country. Additional details about these events are available at [www.islandheritage.org](http://www.islandheritage.org) or at [www.farhorizons.com](http://www.farhorizons.com).

The EIF will have an information and book sales table at the conference. We will have a range of our publications, some one-of-a-kind books and woodcarvings, and other items for sale. We hope to see you in Santa Rosa!