

MEDIA RELEASE

MASTER CLASSES & FILM SCREENING WITH PROFESSOR VILSONI HERENIKO

Internationally renowned film and stage director Dr. Vilsoni Hereniko who is also a professor at the School of Cinematic Arts at the University of Hawai‘i will spend 27-28 January, 2025 at the Oceania Centre for Arts, Culture and Pacific Studies (OCACPS). During this time, he will share his knowledge and expertise on filmmaking as well as weaving, which includes two master classes and a film screening.

All events are FREE and OPEN to the general public.

Hereniko’s first narrative feature film *Pear ta Ma ‘On Maf: The Land Has Eyes* was the first and only film from Fiji to screen at the prestigious Sundance Film Festival and remains the only film Fiji ever submitted for the Academy Awards (2005). Since then, he has made several documentaries and short films that have won multiple awards at international film festivals. To share his expertise, he will conduct a free master class on Directing/Acting on Monday 27 January, from 2-5 p.m.

A little-known fact is that Hereniko is also a master weaver of coconut leaf baskets. His work has been exhibited in seven curated and competitive art exhibitions and Hawai‘i’s State Foundation for Culture and the Arts even bought one of his baskets for its permanent collection. On Monday 27 January, from 9-12 p.m., Hereniko will teach a master class on weaving and share his art practice.

On Tuesday 28 January, the OCACPS will host a screening of his three most recent short films: *A Niu Way: Coconut Trees, the Virus and the Vision* (2021), *Sina ma Tinirau* (2022), and *Woven* (2024). This screening is the first time *Woven* is being screened in Oceania outside Hawai‘i. The same films will screen in Rotuma on Jan. 30th with Hereniko and Philipp Schorch (Executive Producer) in attendance.

See trailer of *Woven* here: <https://vimeo.com/manage/videos/918810427>

Sina ma Tinirau has won five awards, including Best Short at the Berlin Independent Film Festival (2023) and the Los Angeles International Film Festival (2023). Completed last year, *Woven* had its world premiere at the Hawai‘i International Film Festival in October of 2024 where it was in competition for the “Best Short Made in Hawai‘i.” It will screen at the 22nd International Oceanian Documentary Film Festival held in Tahiti (FIFO) from 31 January to 9 February, 2025 where it is in competition for “Best Short”. *A Niu Way* was made for social media and shot during covid with a smartphone. All three films focus on the importance of the coconut tree and are either set on Rotuma or about Rotuman traditions and culture. A short performance by Rako Pasefika will precede the film screening, which will also feature an after-film discussion.

The film screenings form part of the European Research Council-funded research group on ‘Indigeneities in the 21st Century’: www.indigen.eu.

Hereniko’s visit to Fiji is sponsored by the European Research Council, the Oceania Centre for Arts, Culture, and Pacific Studies, Rako Pasefika, the Nicholls Film Fund, and Film Fiji.

EVENT DETAILS

Master Classes:	Weaving	27 January 2025 09.00am – 12.00pm	Oceania Centre Pavilion
	Directing & Acting	27 January 2025 2.00pm – 5.00pm	Oceania Centre Pavilion
Film Screening:	<i>A NIU Way</i> <i>Sina ma Tinirau</i> <i>Woven</i>	28 January 2025 7.15pm-9.30pm	Oceania Centre Pavilion

Registration is mandatory for the master classes; please contact katrina.igglesden@usp.ac.fj to register your interest. Twenty participants for each master class will be chosen on a first-come-first-served basis.

The film screening is free and no registration is necessary.

For more information, please contact Vilsoni Hereniko: vili@hawaii.edu.

