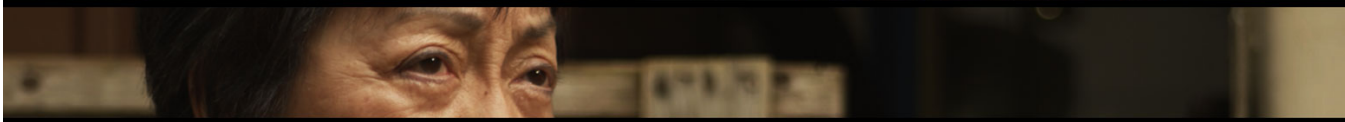


"Remarkable cinematography...
a must-see film that is comedic,
insightful and enjoyable."
- *The Indie Fest*

"Complex...with restraint and
a keen eye for telling detail...
a film you'd show to reveal
what life is like in modern
Hawaii."
- *The Honolulu
Star-Advertiser*

"Skillfully directed...
charming and
poignant."
- *The San Diego
Film Foundation*



LYCHEE THIEVES



Tagline

A bountiful lychee tree hanging over a neighbor's fence causes a commotion among locals in contemporary Hawai'i.

Synopsis

In Hawai'i, the highly prized lychee tree blooms only once a year. Paranoid Arnie and Ethel vow to protect their fruit from lychee thieves...at any cost! Arnie and Ethel's feelings of suspicion are stirred when a Hawaiian stranger named Keoki (Pomaika'i Brown, *50 First Dates*) offers to harvest their lychee. When Arnie's selfish impulses drive him to hire professional pickers for the task instead, Keoki realizes that their lives are being dictated by fear, and attempts to set things right. *Lychee Thieves* explores the often humorous – and sometimes contentious – interactions among the culturally and ethnically diverse people of Hawai'i. Its lush dream sequences take us from the mystical valleys of Hawai'i to ancient China, where a smitten emperor will stop at nothing to feed his lady's lust for the rare fruit.

An official selection at over 40 film festivals in 2010-2012 and winner of six festival awards, *Lychee Thieves* is a cautionary tale with universal appeal. The film was shot entirely on location on the island of O'ahu by Independent Spirit Award Nominee Anne Misawa (DP, *Treeless Mountain*) and features contemporary Hawaiian music by acclaimed musical artists Makana, Hapa, and Raiatea Helm. A homegrown film made within the Hawaiian film community by people from Hawai'i, *Lychee Thieves* delivers a uniquely multicultural experience that delights and inspires audiences around the globe.

Film Facts

- Academy Award "Live Action Short Film" Qualifier (one of 75 films)
- Official Selection at over 40 international film festivals
- Official Selection at 3 Academy Award accredited film festivals
- Winner, Best Narrative Short, Estes Park Film Festival
- Winner, Special Jury Prize, The Honolulu Film Awards
- Winner, Jury Award, Vesak Buddhist Film Festival, Sri Lanka
- Winner, Award of Merit, The Indie Fest
- Winner, Bronze Palm Award, Mexico International Film Festival
- Winner, Honorable Mention, Twin Rivers Media Festival
- Winner, Spirit of Aloha Award (Pomaika'i Brown), Big Island Film Festival
- Award Finalist, Academy-accredited USA Film Festival
- Award Finalist, Moondance International Film Festival
- Audience Award Runner-Up (Pomaika'i Brown), NYC PictureStart Film Festival
- Screened in Best of the Shorts Program, Hawaii International Film Festival
- Screened internationally in France, Spain, Canada, Switzerland, Russia, Sri Lanka, Nepal & Mexico

Praise for “Lychee Thieves”

“*Lychee Thieves* is a swell little film with a complex ethos, and beyond that, it’s likely the most accurate depiction of life in Hawaii yet committed to film...Filmmaker Kathleen Kwai Ching Man wrote and directed *Lychee Thieves* with restraint and a keen eye for telling detail. For the first time, we get a film that’s the visual equivalent of a short story from the literary journal *Manoa*. *Lychee Thieves* is a film you’d show to reveal what life is like in modern Hawaii.”

– Burl Burlingame, Film Critic
THE HONOLULU STAR-ADVERTISER

“*Lychee Thieves*, an official 2010 SDAFF selection skillfully directed by Kathleen Kwai Ching Man, delivers a charming and poignant story about a lychee tree that draws the attention of several would-be harvesters. Internationally acclaimed cinematographer Anne Misawa beautifully frames the Hawaiian landscape from start to finish.”

– SAN DIEGO ASIAN FILM FESTIVAL

“*Lychee Thieves* beautifully captures not only the breathtaking scenery of O’ahu through the film’s remarkable cinematography, but also captures the ethnic tensions in Hawai’i that are often overlooked. It articulates the history of territorial conflict in Hawai’i through an allegory about Arnie and Ethel, the owners of a newly-bloomed lychee tree, who grow paranoid about their lychee being stolen by a Hawaiian stranger and their old Chinese neighbor. It is a must-see film that is comedic, insightful, and enjoyable.”

– THE INDIE FEST

"We were honored and delighted to have screened *Lychee Thieves* as part of the 2010 Estes Park Film Festival! Its beautiful cinematography, inspiring message and realistic depiction of life in Hawai’i resonated so well with our audience. We want to thank Kathleen Man and everyone else who worked on *Lychee Thieves* for bringing such a wonderful film to Estes Park, Colorado!"

– Sean Doherty, Executive Director
ESTES PARK FILM FESTIVAL

“What an honor to have *Lychee Thieves* be a part of the Maui Arts & Cultural Center’s Heritage Film Festival. Kathleen Man Gyllenhaal revealed the intricacies of life in Hawai’i and how fascinating and complicated it is to live in a multi-cultural landscape. There are numerous gems revealed in every frame. It is artfully written, beautifully filmed, and is storytelling at its finest. “

– Hokulani Holt, Cultural Programs Director
MAUI ARTS & CULTURAL CENTER

“Beautiful cinematography by Anne Misawa helps the film stand apart from others in the program. But what I enjoyed most was the film’s ability to distill complex cultural conflicts unique to the islands into a cohesive and moving film under 30 minutes.”

– Christen Marquez, REEL ARTSY

Exhibition & Credits

Exhibition Formats:	HDSR, HDCAM, Digibeta, BetaSP, DVCAM, Blu-Ray, DVD
Sound Format:	Dolby Surround 5.1, Dolby Stereo
Duration:	28 minutes, 55 seconds
Aspect Ratio:	1.78:1 (16x9)
Language:	English, with some Chinese
Subtitles:	English when Chinese is spoken
Other:	Spanish & German subtitles available in Blu-Ray and DVD
World Premiere:	NewFilmmakers LA, Los Angeles, March 18, 2010
Theatrical Premiere:	Landmark Theatre, Los Angeles, September 13, 2010
Broadcast Premiere:	Time-Warner Cable Video-On-Demand San Diego, January-June 2011
A Production of	Fishbowl Films, LLC
In Association with	Cre808 Films
Written and Directed by	Kathleen Gyllenhaal (credited as Kathleen Kwai Ching Man)
Director of Photography	Anne Misawa
Editors	Carsten Kurpanek, Tyler Nelson
Original Score	Emanuel Heinstein
Music by	Raiatea Helm, Hapa, Makana
Produced by	Angela Laprete
Producers	Titus Y.H. Chong, Matthew Locey
Co-Producer	Vince Keala Lucero
Executive Producer	Stephen Gyllenhaal
Principal Cast:	Pomaika'i Brown (Keoki), Blossom Lam Hoffman (Mrs. Chun), Scott Moura (Arnie), Linda Sato (Ethel)
Supporting Cast:	Duane Char (Dennis), Dann Seki (Emperor), Scott Friel (Kai), Thomas Isao Morinaka (Gary), Pomai Lopez (Katie), Lacey Chu (Lady Yang), Sven Lindstrom (Foreman), Roy Tjioe (Chinese Official), Yolán Chan (Shopkeeper)
Digital Intermediate by	Company Three
Sound Mixing by	Smart Post Sound
Funded by	The Louise Boyd Dale Fund

Contacts

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Official Film Website <http://www.lycheethieves.com>
Official Facebook Page <http://www.facebook.com/LycheeThieves>
IMDB Page <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1525865/combined>

Background

Lychee Thieves was a labor of love, a “little big film” that brought together many of the leading film professionals in the Hawaiian islands. Writer/director Kathleen Kwai Ching Man, a “hapa haole” (half-Caucasian) who was born and raised on O’ahu, returned home after 17 years on the mainland and abroad to make her first “local” film. With the help of producer Angie Laprete and cinematographer Anne Misawa (both local girls themselves), *Lychee Thieves* was forged out of island connections and the “Aloha Spirit”. Shot in some of the most desirable locations on O’ahu, with two RED camera crews and a stellar cast, *Lychee Thieves* should have cost a few hundred thousand dollars to make. But, with everybody working for free and on weekends, “ohana” (family) style, and top post facilities slashing their fees in support of indie filmmaking, this high production value film was made for only \$35,000.

Lychee Thieves sneak-previewed at the 2009 Hawaii International Film Festival only a month after wrapping, and enjoyed a repeat screening in the “Best of the Shorts” program at the end of the festival. It was then recut and finished in February 2010, beginning a long and successful tour of the festival circuit with its March screening at NewFilmmakers Los Angeles.

With over 40 official selections, various screenings at film centers, universities, and galleries, a Los Angeles theatrical release, and a qualifying screening for the 2011 Academy Awards, *Lychee Thieves* has emerged as a festival favorite, garnering six festival awards, several finalist achievements, and enthusiastic praise from critics.

Director's Statement

It was late June in 2008, when I started to get an acute feeling of anticipation. This was the normal reaction to the onset of lychee season, a time in Hawai'i when everybody tries to score the best lychee (big, juicy and with a tiny, "chicken-tongue" seed).

My Chinese grandma, who understands my love of lychee, made sure to get me a bag from the Kapi'olani Community College farmer's market. One morning, while eating the lychee, I read an article about a lychee farm robbery on the Big Island. Two Samoan guys were caught on the surveillance camera and were now on the lam. At first, I laughed – amused by how lychee intoxicates everybody on this island – but as I looked at the faces of the lychee thieves, I was struck with sadness and concern. What drove these guys to commit this crime? What was going to happen to them if they were caught?

These questions wouldn't go away, so I began to write "Lychee Thieves" and wound up spending the next year-and-a-half making it into the film you're hopefully going to see. I went home for long stretches of time (I live in Los Angeles now) to explore why people go nuts around this little fruit. As the story crystallized, lychee came to symbolize the deliciousness in life that each and every one of us has a right to. For me, it represented the divinity of nature and its infinite bounty. In the film, it also stood for Hawai'i. When Keoki, Arnie, Ethel and Mrs. Chun squabble over the tree, we are witnessing a form of internalized oppression typical of a colonized state. Like the pristine lychee tree, the islands of Hawai'i are precious gems in the Pacific, and so they have been fought over, plundered and abused.

In "Lychee Thieves," I brought together an ensemble cast that represented the diversity of the island population. The Hawaiian character Keoki emerged as the hero, because he has an ancestral connection to the land that is awoken during the course of the film.

The experience of making "Lychee Thieves" was a very personal one for me. It afforded me the opportunity to explore my own biracial background and my relationship to Hawai'i. I think I succeeded in confronting some of those questions about the Big Island lychee thieves while painting a realistic portrait of middle class Hawai'i from my firsthand experiences growing up on O'ahu.

I was determined to end the film on a positive note; I am at a point in my life where I am compelled to be both realistic and optimistic. I hope audiences feel they have watched something truthful, and that they take away a promising message for the future.

*Kathleen Man Gyllenhaal
Honolulu, HI*

About the Crew

Kathleen Man Gyllenhaal, Writer/Director

Kathleen is an independent filmmaker, Yale graduate, and Fulbright Scholar who hails from Hawai'i. She is the writer/director of a diverse body of award-winning documentaries and dramas including *THE INTERVIEW*, a Kafkaesque French-language film set in Paris, *SITA: A GIRL FROM JAMBU*, an ethnographic drama about child sex trafficking in Nepal, and *BEAUTY MARK*, a social documentary exploring America's obsession with body image, perfection and success. Kathleen was also the producer and director of photography of *KIND OF A BLUR*, a film festival favorite starring Sandra Oh. Kathleen taught film production for six years at UC-Boulder, then joined the Film Department at Vassar College, where she was awarded tenure. In 2010, Kathleen moved to Hollywood to co-produce the feature film *GRASSROOTS*, directed by Stephen Gyllenhaal and starring Jason Biggs, Lauren Ambrose and Cedric the Entertainer. She is currently the executive producer of *EXQUISITE CONTINENT*, a feature-length documentary on dreams and dream interpretation. In addition, Kathleen is writing and directing her first dramatic feature film, *5 MILE CREEK*.

Angela Laprete, Producer

Angie hails from O'ahu and is a graduate of Moanalua High School and received her B.A. in film studies from the UC Santa Barbara. Angela, whose company is cre808 Films, produced the homegrown indie film, *ONE KINE DAY* and the Lifetime movie, *DEADLY HONEYMOON*. Her long list of credits as Production Manager/Supervisor/Coordinator include major studio and indie features *PRINCESS KAIULANI*, *INDIANA JONES AND THE CRYSTAL SKULL*, *THE REEF: INTO THE BLUE PART 2*, *SNAKES ON A PLANE*, *YOU ME AND DUPREE*, *ALONG CAME POLLY*, and most recently Julie Taymor's *THE TEMPEST* and the CBS remake of "Hawaii Five-0". Angie has been vice president of the Board for the Hawaii International Film Festival during the last 11 years and serves on the Board for the Film and Video Association of Hawaii.

Stephen Gyllenhaal, Executive Producer

Award-winning director Stephen Gyllenhaal's productions include *PARIS TROUT*, for which he received a DGA Award for Outstanding Directorial Achievement in Dramatic Specials, as well as *WATERLAND*, *A DANGEROUS WOMAN*, *LOSING ISAIAH* and *HOMEGROWN*. In 2012, he received a DGA nomination for Outstanding Directorial Achievement in Movies for Television for *GIRL FIGHT*. Among his many tv movie and mini-series credits are *LIVING WITH THE DEAD*, *TIME BOMB*, *A KILLING IN A SMALL TOWN*, for which he received an Emmy nomination for directing, and the Emmy and Golden Globe-nominated *FAMILY OF SPIES*. His episodic directing credits include *HOMICIDE: LIFE ON THE STREET*, *TWIN PEAKS*, *THE MENTALIST*, *NUMB3RS*, and *BLUE BLOODS*, among many others.

Gyllenhaal is currently directing the pilot *SWORN TO SILENCE* for Lifetime, and his upcoming feature film *GRASSROOTS* will be released theatrically in June 2012. Gyllenhaal also serves as chair of the DGA's Independent Director's Committee.

Vince Keala Lucero, Co-Producer/2nd Unit DP

Telly award winner, Vince Keala Lucero, grew up spearfishing and surfing the oceans of West O'ahu. He attended the Kamehameha Schools, where he was chosen to produce an award winning documentary on the 6th Festival of Pacific Arts. Studying tv/film at Loyola Marymount University, his senior project was the very first music video of the Black Eyed Peas, "Fallin' Up." Lucero has shot indie favs of the Hawaii International Film Festival like "Public Access," "Valtor," "Symphony for One," "Wahine O Ke Kai," and the PBS documentary feature NA KAMALEI: MEN OF HULA. Using his instincts as a hula dancer, Lucero captured the story of Robert Cazimero's Halau Na Kamalei as they swept the Merrie Monarch Hula Competition. The film took the Hawaii Filmmaker Award, and Best Documentary at the Hawai'i International, Los Angeles Asian Pacific, San Diego, and San Francisco International Film Festivals.

Anne Misawa, Director of Photography

Anne Misawa was born and raised on O'ahu. She received her M.F.A. in Film Production from USC. Her directorial credits include: WAKING MELE (Sundance 2000) and EDEN'S CURVE (Emerging Film Best Feature, NCGLFF 2003), among others. Her work as a cinematographer include many award-winning films: KAMEA (HIFF 2004 Best Short), TIME OUT (directed by Xelinda Yancy, executive producer John Singleton, HBO Award), SALT (Caligari Award for Innovative Filmmaking at Berlin Int'l Film Festival 2003) and LIV, (directed by Edoardo Ponti, executive producers Robert Altman and Michelangelo Antonioni, Venice Int'l Film Festival 1998). She was nominated for an Independent Spirit Award for Cinematography for TREELESS MOUNTAIN, directed by So Yong Kim, in Korea, which screened in such festivals as the Toronto Int'l Film Festival, the Berlin Int'l Film Festival, and the New Directors/New Films series at Lincoln Center. Recently, Anne was the Director of Photography of Brad Gray's upcoming feature film, JACK AND DIANE. Anne also teaches film production at the University of Hawaii's Academy for Creative Media as an Associate Professor.

Emanuel Heinstein, Composer

Emanuel is a music producer, composer, and artist with over fifty releases. He has remixed and wrote for many major recording artists. Numerous networks and production companies including NBC, VIACOM (MTV Networks and VHI) and Sony Pictures Television have used his talent for composing title songs and scoring sequences. He is the founder of Syncofy™, a social music platform where artists and labels, entertainment media and advertising professionals can connect and directly collaborate on creative projects.

Tyler Nelson, Editor

Tyler lives and works in Los Angeles. He received his B.F.A in film production at the University of Colorado at Boulder and was a recipient of the competitive American Cinema Editors fellowship. Tyler's first assistant editor credits include THE CURIOUS CASE OF BENJAMIN BUTTON, THE SOCIAL NETWORK, APOCALYPSE, CA and the David Fincher remake of THE GIRL WITH THE DRAGON TATTOO. Tyler edited the feature film BORLAND, directed by Quam Odunsi.

Carsten Kurpanek, Editor

Carsten was born in Wurzburg, Germany and studied telecommunications at Ball State University. He graduated with a Master's degree in film studies in Germany and participated in the American Cinema Editors internship program in January/February 2008. Carsten won the editing competition Open Cut for the short film SUSANNAH. Since then, he has worked on the television shows "Make It Or Break It" and "Covert Affairs". In film, he assisted editor Sandy Solowitz on DANCING NINJA, Oscar-winning editor Richard Halsey on TICKET OUT and THE CHICAGO 8, Oscar-winning editor Chris Rouse on BURLESQUE, and Oscar-winning editor Angus Wall on THE GIRL WITH THE DRAGON TATTOO. He was also the first assistant editor of MACHINE GUN PREACHER.

Makana, Music Artist

"Slack key guitar music, indigenous to Hawai'i, has been around longer than the blues, and Makana is considered the greatest living player" (Esquire Magazine). Makana learned from the Slack Key Masters as a young boy and has developed his own universal sound that includes influences from rock, bluegrass, African, Latin, Celtic, modern and folk music traditions. He has been called "Hawaii's Guitar Hero" and has contributed songs to two Grammy-nominated albums. His acoustic tracks, "Morning Star", "Kauna a Na Lau", "Walking With You" and "Napo'o Ka La" are included on the soundtrack of LYCHEE THIEVES, at times incorporated into Emanuel Heinstein's original score.

Raiatea Helm, Music Artist

Raiatea Mokihana Maile Helm is a two-time Grammy nominee and eight-time Na Hoku Hanohano Award winner and recent recipient of the Native Arts and Culture Foundation's "Fellowship in Music" Award. Her recordings and performances have already launched her onto the international music scene with extensive concert appearances throughout Japan and Asia. Domestically, she has appeared at venues stretching from New York City to San Francisco, collaborating with legends of Hawaiian music: Keola Beamer, The Brothers Cazimero, The Makaha Sons, Keali'i Reichel, Ho'okena, Auntie Genoa Keawe, and Ledward Ka'apana. Her song, "Ku'u Sweet Lei Poina 'Ole", accompanies the key, climactic scene in LYCHEE THIEVES.

Hapa, Music Artists

Like the Hawaiian Islands themselves, HAPA's Pan-Polynesian music is an amalgam of influences ranging from ancient genealogical chants to the strummed ballads of Portuguese fisherman, Spanish cowboys, and the inspired melodies and harmonies of the traditional church choirs of the early missionaries. Add to this a dose of American acoustic folk/rock, and you have what has been described as the "most exciting and beautiful contemporary Hawaiian music the world knows!" (Maui Times). HAPA's self entitled debut cd released in 1993, swept the 1994 Na Hoku Hanohano Awards (Hawaii's equivalent of the Grammy's), becoming the biggest selling CD by a group or duo in the history of recorded Hawaiian music. The group's ground-breaking music has established them as the most recognized name in Hawaiian music internationally since their debut release, with sold-out shows from Tokyo to New York. Their song, "Justin's Lullaby", is included on the soundtrack of LYCHEE THIEVES.

About the Cast

Pomaika'i Brown (Keoki)

Hawaiian actor, entertainer and musician Pomaika'i Brown has appeared in film and television, most notably in the award winning film 50 FIRST DATES as "Nick", the tattooed chef. His television credits include the series "Hawaii Five-0", "North Shore" and "Celebrity Mole: Hawaii", as well as commercials. Pomai and his wife, Toni, currently head their own production company, Hollywood Brown Entertainment. They produce island contemporary music, television productions and live Polynesian show productions for select clientele.

Blossom Lam Hoffman (Mrs. Chun)

Blossom Lam Hoffman has been in theatre since the age of 12. She has performed on the stages with The Pan Asian Repertory Theatre, New York, NY and The Singapore Repertory Theatre, Singapore. In Hawai'i, she has been seen in Hawai'i Opera Theatre's THE KING & I, in several productions with Kumu Kahua Theatre, HI Pacific University Theatre, Army Community Theatre and the Diamond Head Theatre. She's a Po'okela Awards nominee and a graduate of The New England Conservatory of Music, Boston, MA. Television credits include "Unsolved Mysteries" and "Hawaii". She is "Mrs. Malari" in the movie BLUE CRUSH.

Scott Moura (Arnie)

Scott Moura is credited for his numerous performances in local theater productions and television shows. He was the recipient of the Po'okela Award for "Featured Male in a Musical" in 2004 as "Sancho Panza" in MAN OF LA MANCHA and in 2007 as "Adolfo Pirelli" in SWEENEY TODD. His film experience includes local commercial work and appearances on the ABC network series "Lost". In addition to acting, Scott has contributed vocal talents to The Company Singers and the Hawaii Opera Theatre. Scott has appeared in over seventeen plays including SEUSSICAL, INTO THE WOODS, and THREE SISTERS.

Linda Sato (Ethel)

Linda Sato was born and raised on O'ahu. She has appeared in local commercials for American Savings, Ward Warehouse, Foodland and Hawaiian Telecom, to name a few. Linda has held principal and lead parts in Academy of Creative Media (ACM) short films such as RECRUITMENT and BORN IN HAWAII. She enjoys acting, modeling, singing, painting and volunteering for community services activities.

'Lychee Thieves' does islands proud

*Kathleen Kwai
Ching Man's film
shows Hawaii in
a realistic light*

REVIEW BY
BURL BURLINGAME
bburlingame@staradvertiser.com

"LYCHEE THIEVES"

Written and directed
by Kathleen Kwai
Ching Man
Not rated
Showing as part of the
Ohina Short Film
Showcase (see feature,
Page 11)

I approached "Lychee Thieves" with a heavy load of cultural cinematic baggage, because, for whatever reason, films made in Hawaii never quite ring true.

Either they're made by outsiders who have been snowed by the touristy "Aloha Spirit" propaganda, or Hawaii is simply used as a cute, colorful backdrop by characters just passing through. Or, even if local people are involved and there's a genuine desire to share the culture, the films end up so watered down and mutated to appeal to outside audiences that they just seem weird.

Like pod people in a sci-fi flick, Hawaii folk never come off as genuine human beings — with depths of feeling and subtle cultural shadings that are obvious to us and opaque to outsiders. Better to invent a wholly fictional Hawaiian milieu, some filmmakers decide, like the sacred breathlessness of "Princess Kaiulani" or the modern big-city crime craziness of "Hawaii Five-0" or the cartoon pidgin of "50 First Dates" or "Byrds of Paradise."

Therefore, I was delighted to find that "Lychee Thieves" is a swell little film with a complex ethos, and beyond that, it's likely the

most accurate depiction of life in Hawaii yet committed to film.

The story revolves around the annual craziness that ensues when lychees ripen and folks start angling to score fruit. Some people have lychee trees, most don't, and so a certain amount of politicking and negotiable behavior takes place.

No one group comes off well here, but no one really bad either. It's natural to want some lychee, yeah?

At a half-hour, the length works well. Pomaiki Pomaika'i Brown makes the biggest impression as a bruddah willing to work for lychee, and annoyed that sharing a tree's bounty is so socially difficult. Some of the smallest roles are perhaps slightly overacted, but that's a manini criticism in a short film that has to score points in few scenes.

Filmmaker Kathleen Kwai Ching Man wrote and directed "Lychee Thieves" with restraint and a keen eye for telling detail. For the first time, we get a film that's the visual equivalent of a short story from the literary journal Manoa.

"Lychee Thieves" is a film you'd show to reveal what life is like in modern Hawaii.

Is it too local? Is it too "local" for outsiders?

That's their problem.