recognizing multiple voices in climate change discourse. Hope for some is not the same as hope for all. By emphasizing and encouraging relationships across difference, including those with nonhuman animals and with water, Shewry asks her readers to take responsibility for present realities and to explore creative, collaborative solutions to environmental crises. As she points out, Pacific Islanders are responsible for only 0.3 percent of greenhouse gas emissions, yet they are among the first to directly experience the impact. Their voices, among others, will be crucial to producing a hopeful future.

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The Cultural Animation Film Festival. Doris Duke Theatre, Honolulu Museum of Art, 18–20 May 2018, Honolulu, Hawai‘i. For more information, see http://caff2018.twiddleproductions.com/

The Cultural Animation Film Festival (CAFF) was a three-day-long showcase of animated short films predicated on culture-based artistic expression. This year’s festival took place at the Honolulu Museum of Art’s Doris Duke Theatre from Friday, 18 May to Sunday, 20 May 2018. CAFF’s programming consisted of three days of screenings, two panel discussions, and opportunities to interact with companies and with the festival’s organizers. The companies and organizations present included Mana Comics, Keiki Coding, Bess Press, and Twiddle Productions. Currently in its second year, CAFF is a nascent forum for creative expressions of cultural identity and practices in animation.

The films selected for the festival draw from elements of Hawaiian/Kanaka Māoli, Chamorro, Māori, Chinese, Indian, and First Nations/Native American cultures. They ranged in length, visual style, subject matter, and filmmakers age and professional status. The films’ diverse themes and origins marked the 2018 festival as an event that centered and celebrated community and culture.

The festival’s grassroots organization engendered a lively, collaborative atmosphere. Some of the films and trailers screened at the festival were created by local filmmakers, including Kanaka Māoli. Especially exciting was the inclusion of films by youth directors Penelope O, Nālia W, and Phoenix Maimiti Valentine, who are some of the youngest filmmakers to exhibit at CAFF. The first two films, made in collaboration with the Queen Ka‘ahumanu School Tink Think Tank Tech Team, concern the resolution of interpersonal aggression at school and an account of the director’s daily routine, respectively, and the third film focuses on the water cycle of the Hawaiian ahupua‘a. The young filmmakers’ creative use of mixed media aptly expresses their understandings of the world around them. Hopefully their submissions will inspire more youth to submit their creations to CAFF in the future.

The festival’s programming began with a chant by Pacific Voices, a youth organization from Kokua Kalihi Valley dedicated to teaching and performing Micronesian chanting. The opening chants also included a Hawaiian ‘oli,
offered by Kahu Loko‘ulu Joseph Jr Quintero of the Hawaiian Church of Hawai‘i Nei. After the welcoming protocol, a screening was followed by a series of panel discussions.

The first panel was titled Silent Voices: Stories That Must Be Heard in Cultural Films, Animation, and Video Games, and the panelists included Hinaleimoana Wong-Kalu, Laura Margulies, and Jenny Fraser. Wong-Kalu, also known as Kumu Hina, is a Kanaka Maoli kumu (knowledge keeper), teacher, and activist. In addition to her educational work, she advises the O‘ahu Island Burial Council. Margulies is a professional designer and colorist who has worked on numerous television shows and has taught at many schools, including the University of Hawai‘i. Fraser is an award-winning Murri artist from the Yugambeh Country in the Bundjalung Nation. In addition to her educational and activist work, she is an artist.

These panelists offered complementary perspectives on the current state of and potential futures for indigenous-created and culture-based animation. Having indigenous women on this panel was essential, as indigenous people, particularly women, face significant institutional barriers in the arts.

The second panel, titled Inspiration Not Perspiration: Fiscal Responsibility in Cultural Films, Animation and Video Games, featured panelists Ty Robinson and Kenneth Paulino Jr and moderator Leanne Ka‘iulani Ferrer. Robinson is a financial adviser, film producer, and video-game producer. Paulino produces digital applications and music to facilitate learning about Guam. Ferrer is a filmmaker and the executive director for Pacific Islanders in Communications. This panel’s content seemed to differ considerably from that of the previous panel, as it focused on granular financial matters. However, such discussions are essential, particularly when matters of art and resource allocation are involved.

The second day of CAFF featured film screenings and a panel discussion concerning financial ethics in the context of cultural animation, movies, and video games. The third day of the festival was Doris Duke Theater’s Free Family Film Sunday and included films expressing themes relatable to people of all ages, such as the interconnectedness of living things, the importance of honesty in interpersonal dealings, and the importance of understanding and appreciating cultural diversity.

In addition to the films screened throughout the festival inside the theater, in the Kinau courtyard just outside, CAFF offered table displays and activities sponsored by various locally owned and operated organizations and companies. Representatives from these organizations and companies interacted with the public and were eager to engage people in discussions about the nature of their work and about CAFF itself.

The juxtaposition of these locally owned organizations, the museum, the public, and CAFF created a dynamic and welcoming atmosphere, and it is important that this atmosphere be present in future festivals. Some of the artists attended their films’ screenings, which allowed members of the public to interact with them. Ideally, more artists will be involved in the future, perhaps even participating in panel discussions. One suggestion for future
festival is to dedicate a block of time to the administrative and organizational resources available to artists. For example, there could be a series of panels dedicated to organizational support for indigenous artists and artists of color.

The creation and continued operation of a family-oriented showcase such as CAFF prompts the following questions: How are the films sourced? How do festival organizers decide which films will be shown? How will Pacific Islander–made films be showcased, and how will relationships between the Pacific and the rest of the world be demonstrated and strengthened?

By celebrating cultural animators’ social and technological accomplishments and realities and centering on their unique creative voices and audiences, CAFF promotes the continuation of cultural animation as an artform. It takes up exciting challenges—and, potentially, responsibilities—and acts as an important resource for artists and for community leaders, educators, families, and other individuals interested in representing and sharing culture through animated films and videos. The festival offers a novel and appealing platform for Pacific Islander and other indigenous filmmakers, and its potential as a springboard for artists of all ages and professional statuses is staggering. Events like CAFF are important for the future of animation, particularly for indigenous artists and artists of color, whose work will not flourish without adequate resources and support. CAFF’s potential for providing distribution and resource allocation opportunities allows for the amplification of voices that have been talked over throughout the history of mediated representations of marginalized peoples. Although CAFF is at the beginning of its life as a festival, its anchoring in community support will continue to be a pillar of strength as time passes.

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