

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



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4th ANNUAL MIXED ROOTS FILM & LITERARY FESTIVAL  
AT THE  
JAPANESE AMERICAN NATIONAL MUSEUM

**WHAT:** The *Mixed Roots Film & Literary Festival* ([www.mxroots.org](http://www.mxroots.org)) is a free public event targeting the growing population of multiracial and multicultural individuals and families. The Festival brings together film and book lovers, innovative artists, and individuals and families interested in the Mixed racial and cultural experience.

**WHEN:** June 11 - June 12, 2011. The Festival hosts the largest West Coast party for *Loving Day*, a nationwide celebration of the anniversary of the Supreme Court decision that affirmed the right of different races to marry. All events are free. Registration strongly encouraged at [www.mxroots.org](http://www.mxroots.org).

**WHERE:** *Japanese American National Museum*, 369 E. First St., Los Angeles, CA

**WHO:** Co-producers [Fanshen Cox](http://www.fanshencox.com) and [Heidi Durrow](http://www.heididurrow.com) of the award-winning podcast *Mixed Chicks Chat* ([www.mixedchickschat.com](http://www.mixedchickschat.com)) host the event which is a fiscally sponsored project of the *New York Foundation for the Arts*.

**WHY:** The *Mixed Roots Film & Literary Festival* features artists and their work to encourage a dynamic conversation about the connectedness of all races and cultures.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:**

**SPONSORS & DONORS:** *Japanese American National Museum* ([www.janm.org](http://www.janm.org)), *Target*, *Zerflin.com*, *Puffin Foundation*.

**CONFIRMED PROGRAMS & GUESTS:**



**Loving Day Celebration - June 11 at 6pm.** An evening to celebrate the anniversary of the *Loving* decision, and to co-mingle and network with festival participants. Loving Day's mission is to fight prejudice through education and to build a sense of community among people to engage in meaningful interracial and intercultural relationships. The reception features drinks, dessert and music.

**Loving Prize Presentation - June 11 at 6:30pm.** The Loving Prize is given “for inspirational dedication to celebrating and illuminating the Mixed racial and cultural experience.” This year’s Loving Prize Honorees scholar **Paul Spickard** and playwright **Velina Hasu Houston** will attend. Past recipients include best-selling writer James McBride, Hapa artist Kip Fulbeck, *National Football League* star Hines Ward, scholar Dr. Maria P. P. Root, and writer/producer Angela Nissel.

**Paul Spickard** is a pioneering scholar on issues concerning the Mixed experience. A professor at *University of California Santa Barbara*, Spickard has written some of the most ground-breaking books on this topic including: *Mixed Blood: Intermarriage & Ethnic: Intermarriage And Ethnic Identity In Twentieth Century America*. Spickard has received accolades and awards as a *Fulbright Research Professor*; *Rockefeller Foundation Residential Fellow*; Distinguished Lecturer by the *Organization of American Historians*; and *Outstanding Teacher of the Year* among others.

**Velina Hasu Houston** an award-winning American playwright, essayist, poet, author, editor, and screenwriter. A *Phi Beta Kappa*, Houston is Professor of Theatre, Director of Dramatic Writing, Associate Dean of Faculty, and Resident Playwright at the School of Theatre, *University of Southern California*, where she founded the graduate playwriting program. She is best known for her play *Tea* which portrays the lives of Japanese war brides who move to the United States with their American servicemen husbands. Her plays are studied in the US, Asia, and Europe in high schools and in colleges and universities. She is the only American playwright to amass a body of work that explores the transnational US-Japan relationship through stories that include a bilateral, global view of identity and belonging. The former *Honorable Consul General of Japan* of Los Angeles Kazuo Kodama paralleled Houston’s work in drama to the work of Isamu Noguchi in fine art, both being offspring of one Japanese parent and one American parent. Across the span of her career, Houston has been recognized as a *Japan Foundation Fellow*, a *Rockefeller Foundation Fellow*, a *Sidney F. Brody Fellow*, a *California Arts Council* fellow, and a *Los Angeles Endowment for the Arts Fellow*. Currently, Houston is a Commissioner for the *U.S. Department of State’s Japan-U.S. Friendship Commission*, a member of the *U.S.-Japan Conference on Cultural and Educational Interchange* (a binational cultural advisory panel initiated by President John F. Kennedy), and a member of the *Japan-US Bridging Foundation*. Houston is of Japanese, Blackfoot Pikuni Native American Indian, and African American heritage with historical ties to India, Cuba, and China.

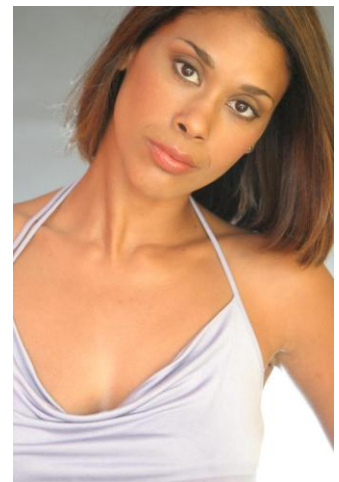
## **Mixed Unplugged:**

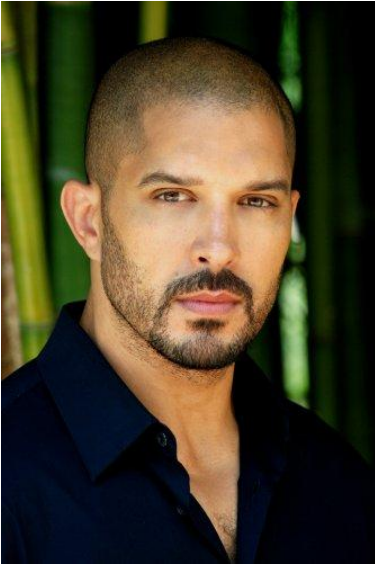
**Live Performance with Comedy, Music, Spoken Word**

**June 11, 2011 6:30PM**

**Co-Hosts: Victoria Platt Tilford & Terrell Tilford**

Victoria is an American film, television and stage actress who was most recently featured in *Venice* at the *Kirk Douglas Theatre* and in *Pippin* at the *Mark Taper Forum*. She has held featured roles in the Bill Duke thriller, *Cover*, and was thrilled to play Josephine Baker in the *HBO Original movie Winchell* as well as Dexter Gordon’s daughter in *‘Round Midnight*. Platt was born in Queens, New York to an Afro-Caribbean mother and a Polish-American father. Victoria has been best associated with roles on the daytime dramas *Guiding Light* and *All My Children* and has been seen in numerous television roles including *Strong Medicine*, *Crossing Jordan*, *Barbershop* and *CSI: Miami*. Platt is married to actor Terrell Tilford and together they own and run *Tilford Art Group*, an art gallery devoted to promoting emerging artists.





Terrell Tilford received his MFA in Theater from *Rutgers University* and a BA from the *University of California at Berkeley*. He is best known for his recurring roles on *Showtime's Soul Food* series, *Enterprise* as a mutated Klingon and for his recurring roles as Dr. Carrington in *Days of our Lives* and Detective David Grant in *Guiding Light*, and Dr. Greg Evans of *One Life to Live*. He is also a noted Art collector and artist himself. He is currently working on two pilot TV shows.

#### Featured Mixed Unplugged Performers

Amy Hill's television credits include *Grey's Anatomy*, *Boston Legal*, *Desperate Housewives*, *Friends* and *Seinfeld*. She might best be remembered for her groundbreaking

role as grandma in *All American Girl* with Margaret Cho now available on DVD. She co-starred with Mike Myers in *Cat in the Hat* and with Adam Sandler in *Fifty First Dates*. Hill's voice work includes *King of the Hill*, *Lilo & Stitch*, *Jackie Chan Adventures*, *American Dad* as well as on *Nickelodeon's* new fall animated series *Kung Fu Panda*. She will recur in a new *HBO* series, *Enlightened* with Laura Dern premiering in January.



CP Chang received his M.F.A. in Fiction Writing from *Columbia College of Chicago*. His fiction and poetry have appeared in *Hair Trigger*, *artisan*, *Upstairs at Duroc*, *Atlanta Review*, on *Nerve.com*, on *wordriot.org*, and in the anthologies *My Angels and Demons at War*, *Open to Interpretation*, and *Chicago: An Immigrant City*. He was an Associate Producer for *Elephant Rock Productions*, which produced a series of educational videos on the art and business of writing, and he is currently a company member of *2nd Story*. A section of his novel-in-progress won the *Patricia Painton Scholarship* at the *Paris Writers Workshop* and an Honorable Mention of the *Helen Fong Dare Scholarship* at *Columbia College*.

**Emmanuel Matt Egbu** Born and raised in a suburb of Chicago, Emmanuel was constantly immersed in the music scene. His father, from Nigeria, owned an African night club for the majority of Emmanuel's younger years. His mother, from Illinois, manages an West African high-life band to this day. Aside from those influences Emmanuel had a collective of close friends from different backgrounds and very contrasting cultures which shaped the person he is and the music he plays. His music varies vastly across genres and makes an attempt to mix the sounds of the world. He has recently been working on his acoustic singing/song writing skills, which focus on the rock/reggae/hiphop genre.

**Chanel Elizabeth Miller or Zhang Xiao Xia** Is currently a freshman at UCSB majoring in literature, and is proud to say that all her life she has been learning how to swim in my multiracial gene pool.

**Jason Lockett**, a Los Angeles based artist, in the past two years, has performed with classical Indian musicians in Kerala, toured the western United States to promote healthcare reform, been published in the groundbreaking literary anthology *The Black Body*, and read as part of the prestigious *ALoud* series at the Los Angeles Public Library and *Sit 'n Spin* at the Comedy Central Stage. He also contributed a solo theatrical piece to *The Emmett Till Project* at Highways Performance Space and twice featured at *The Mixed Roots Film & Literary Festival* in both his musical and literary capacities. Jason recorded his latest release, *The Second Half of the Bet (Hope Again)*, as 2010 came to a close. As wide-ranging as his activities of the past couple years, *SHOTB* moves organically through folk, jazz, rock and world rhythm influences, retaining the strong personality of what Jason irreverently calls “groovy acoustic soul.”

**Linda Ravenswood** (BFA, MA) has a new book, *Hymnal*, forthcoming from Mouthfeel Press in the Spring of 2011. Her work ( literary and visual ) has appeared in many journals and magazines in the US and internationally ( most recently, Poetry Magazine, Underground Stories, Poetry Salzburg Review, The Hamilton Stone Review, BlazeVOX ) and as a featured writer on *The No Impact Man Project*. Her music has appeared in several documentary films and on PBS. Recently her installations were exhibited at The Jose Vera Gallery (Eagle Rock, 2011) and The Pico House Gallery (Downtown Los Angeles, 2010). She has lived extensively in the US, Ireland and the UK. She is presently in Los Angeles making art and pursuing her Ph.D.

**Kimberlee Soo** is an actor and writer published by *INTHEFRAY*, *2D Magazine*, *Cellstories* and *seventytwowords.com*, who has read for *Featherproof*, *TheDollarStoreShow*, *MCA's Literary Gangs of Chicago* and *Victory Gardens' SparkPlug*. Favorite acting projects include the west coast premiere of *Pacific Overtures* (MTO, starring Mako); *Words On Fire* (Steppenwolf); Rebecca Gilman's *The Crime Of The Century* (Circle Theatre); *A Christmas Carol* (Goodman Theatre); the original production of *Eleven Rooms Of Proust*, adapted/directed by Mary Zimmerman (*About Face/Lookingglass*) and the mid-west premiere of David Henry Hwang's *GOLDEN CHILD* (*Silk Road Theatre Project*).



**Jessica Young** is a writer and adjunct professor at *Columbia College Chicago*. She has a Performance Studies degree from *Northwestern University* and an MFA in Fiction Writing from *Columbia College*. She has won awards for her fiction and nonfiction, and has been regularly featured on *Chicago Public Radio's Eight Forty Eight*. Jessica is currently at work on a book project about race, gender, family and her upbringing in the black middle class. You can read her writing at [www.ashy-knees.blogspot.com](http://www.ashy-knees.blogspot.com).

**2nd Story** is a hybrid performance event combining storytelling, wine, and music that has been going strong for 10 years. A typical *2nd Story* evening goes something like this: you hang out with your friends and eat and drink and make merry. Three to five times during the night, the lights go down, a spotlight comes up on somebody - maybe the person sitting next to you! - and they tell you a story. It's a great time, and if we do our job right, you'll leave telling your own stories. This year *2nd Story*, which started in Chicago, is launching new series in Glasgow Scotland and Los Angeles. [www.2ndstory.com](http://www.2ndstory.com)



## TARGET FREE FAMILY DAY

June 11, 2011 11AM-4PM



### ALL DAY CRAFT ACTIVITIES:

- Stencil and pencils and markers... oh my! Express yourself with a colorful poster that's all about you!
- Design stickers for yourself and to share.
- Ruthie's Origami Corner: Show someone you care by making a Father's Day card!

### 12:30-2:00PM Mixed Youth Experience: Define Your Voice!

Reading by Sarah Culberson, author of *A Princess Found*, and interactive workshop.

Hear Sarah's amazing story. Let it inspire you to "Define Your Voice".

Immediately following Sarah's reading, join in an interactive workshop to learn how to tell your Mixed Youth experience with Sarah and Rayme Cornell, *Festival Education Outreach Coordinator & theatre professor and actor*.

**Sarah Culberson** (born 1976) is a biracial American woman of Mende ancestry from Sierra Leone on her father's side. She is the biological daughter of one of Sierra Leone's 149 chiefdoms. Culberson was adopted one year after her birth by a West Virginia couple and was raised in the United States with little knowledge of her ancestry. In 2004, Culberson hired a private investigator to track down her roots, and discovered that her father was in fact a prince. Since then, Culberson has established the *Kposowa Foundation* to alleviate the suffering endured by her people. She has worked with *CONTRA-TIEMPO*, a dance group whose goal is to fuse various forms of dance in their performances and create forms of dance that reach audiences without regard to social boundaries.

### FILMS:



**LA Premiere: *Yelling to the Sky*** (Directed and Written by Victoria Mahoney).

In a New York neighborhood, the youngest of three mixed-race sisters named Sweetness O'Hara, spends the better part of being seventeen navigating an identity between the known: a violent life of crime, and the unknown: a life of purpose and meaning.

"A powerful, emotionally nuanced debut..."  
- *Filmmaker Magazine*

“*Yelling to the Sky* boasts a strong directorial voice... Mahoney was clearly driven by a genuine creative gift.”  
- *Variety*

“An assured debut *Yelling to the Sky*’s quiet intensity is buoyed by Kravitz’ affecting performance.”  
- *Boston Herald*



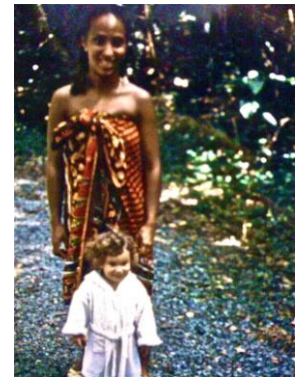
***One Big Hapa Family*** dir. Jeff Chiba Stearns. “And you thought your family was mixed up!”

After a realization at a family reunion, half Japanese-Canadian filmmaker, Jeff Chiba Stearns, embarks on a journey of self-discovery to find out why everyone in his Japanese-Canadian family married interracially after his grandparents’ generation. This feature live action and animated documentary explores why almost 100% of all Japanese-Canadians are marrying interracially, the highest out of any other ethnicity in Canada, and how their mixed children perceive their unique multiracial identities.



*One Big Hapa Family* challenges our perceptions of purity and makes us question if mixing is the end of multiculturalism as we know it.

***Uncovering Color***, dir. Marcelitte Failla. *Uncovering Color* reflects the mixed race experience through a biracial women's reclamation of her African heritage. Through interviews with women of different shades and backgrounds, it explores how Black women have been socialized to see their color and seeks to unify Black women of different racial backgrounds.



***Cedar & Bamboo***, dirs. Kamala Todd & Diana Leung A beautiful and sincere tale of the mingled, almost unspoken about, history of Chinese immigrants and First Nations that resulted in mixed marriages and common children.



Other films confirmed to be screened: *Multiracial Identity* dir. Brian Chimena; *Anomaly* dir. Jessica Chen Drammeh.

## READINGS:

Susan Straight was born in Riverside and still lives there with her family. (She can actually see the hospital from her kitchen window, which her daughters find kind of pathetic; most days, she walks the dog past the classroom where she wrote her first short story at 16, at Riverside City College, which they find even more sad.) She has published seven novels and one middle-grade reader. *Highwire Moon* was a finalist for the National Book Award in 2001; *A Million Nightingales* was a finalist for the Los Angeles Times Book Prize in 2006. She was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship to work on *Highwire Moon*, and a Lannan Prize was an immense help when working on *Take One Candle Light a Room*.



Danzy Senna was born in Boston, Massachusetts and is the daughter of the author Carl Senna (*The Black Press and the Struggle for Civil Rights*), a black poet of Mexican heritage who came from a struggling single-parent household, and Fanny Howe, an Irish-American poet and novelist born into privilege. They met and married while both were activists during the American Civil Rights Movement. Senna received her B.A. from Stanford University and MFA in creative writing from the University of California, Irvine, where she received several creative writing awards. Her first novel, *Caucasia*, received the *Book-of-the-Month Stephen Crane Award for First Fiction*. It

also received the *Alex Award*, American Library Association. Her second novel *Symptomatic* (2003), is a psychological thriller narrated by a biracial young woman who is often mistaken for white. In 2009 her memoir *Where Did You Sleep Last Night?: A Personal History* was published. Her short story collection *You Are Free* will be published in Spring 2011.



Nina Revoyr was born in Japan to a Japanese mother and a white American father, and grew up in Tokyo, Wisconsin, and Los Angeles. She is the author of four novels. *Southland*, was a *Los Angeles Times* bestseller and "Best Book of 2003," a *Book Sense 76 pick*, an *Edgar Award* finalist, and the winner of the *Ferro Grumley Award* and the *Lambda Literary Award*. *The Age of Dreaming*, was a finalist for the 2008 *Los Angeles Times Book Prize*. Nina's latest novel, *Wingshooters*, published is "Remarkable...[an] accomplished story of family and the dangers of complacency in the face of questionable justice," according to *Publishers Weekly*.

Other writers include: Adebé De Rango-Adem, Andrea Thompson, Sarah Culberson, Marie Mockett, and more.

## A Sample of Workshops To Be Offered:

### **Out of Sorrow Out of Joy: Writing Poetry from Deep Experience**

Our best writing comes from a connection to the human experiences and emotions we all share: the loss of loved ones, sorrow for past mistakes, regret, fear, joy, love, excitement, and awe. And yet, writing these experiences and emotions can be tremendously difficult -- how do we write poetry that explores these moments without slipping into the cliché and conventional? How do we find the language and images to evoke these powerful emotions and experiences in a reader who may not know us and our stories? Building these bridges in text, creating these opportunities to be understood -- this is what this workshop is about. Through a set of exercises, workshop participants will develop a deeper understanding of their own languages of sorrow and joy and be able to create stronger poems that address these important themes and moments.



Taught by Neil Tangaroa Aitken who is the author of *The Lost Country of Sight*, winner of 2007 *Philip Levine Prize for Poetry*, and the editor of *Boxcar Poetry Review*. A Canadian of Chinese and Scottish descent, he lives in Los Angeles. His poems appear in *Crab Orchard Review*, *Ninth Letter* and elsewhere.

### **Encouraging the Development of Minority Superheroes in Entertainment**

Workshop will explore the superhero throughout the global culture, specifically its absence in the minority community. Attendees will learn genre specific attributes such as the creation and maintenance of storyline for a superhero, common clichés of the superhero, trends in the development of new superheroes worldwide, and analysis of successfully marketed superheroes. Our expert panel will engage the audience by citing specific heroic examples, through in-depth evaluation of the submissions, and through stimulating discussion based upon the need for minority superheroes. Using scientific-based evidence on the relationship of superheroes/role models and the increase of childhood literacy, attendees will gain insight to the symbiotic relationship of superheroes, entertainment and literacy.

## ORGANIZERS:

### **Fanshen Cox**

#### **Founder & Producer, Mixed Roots Film & Literary Festival**

Fanshen graduated with honors from the *University of Michigan* and holds an MA from Teachers College, *Columbia University*. She served 2 years as a *Peace Corps Volunteer* in Cape Verde, West Africa and was one of the first recipients of the *Peace Corps' Franklin H. Williams Award*. She honed her production skills as a *Film Independent Project: Involve Fellow*, and is the co-producer and co-host of *Mixed Chicks Chat*. She is currently working towards her MFA in Acting & Performance at *CalState University, Los Angeles*. During her first quarter there, she was awarded a *Hollywood Foreign Press Association* scholarship and was invited to the *Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival* as a nominee for an *Irene Ryan Award*. Fanshen's parents are Jamaican, Scottish, Danish and Native American. [www.fanshencox.com](http://www.fanshencox.com)

### **Heidi W. Durrow**

#### **Founder & Producer, Mixed Roots Film & Literary Festival**

Writer/Podcaster/Lawyer

Heidi W. Durrow is the *New York Times* best-selling author of *The Girl Who Fell From the Sky* (Algonquin Books), which received writer Barbara Kingsolver's 2008 *Bellwether Prize for Literature*

*of Social Change*, and is already a book club favorite. *The Girl Who Fell From the Sky* has been hailed as one of the Best Novels of 2010 by the *Washington Post*, a Top 10 Book of 2010 by *The Oregonian*, a Top 10 Buzz Book of 2010 by the *Boston Herald* and named a Top 10 Debut of 2010 by *Booklist*. *Ebony Magazine* recently named Heidi as one of its *Power 100 Leaders of 2010* along with writers Edwidge Danticat, Malcolm Gladwell and Ntozake Shange. Heidi was recently nominated for an *2011 NAACP Image Award* for Outstanding Literary Debut. Heidi is a graduate of Stanford, Columbia's Graduate School of Journalism and Yale Law School. She is the co-host of the award-winning weekly podcast *Mixed Chicks Chat*; and an occasional essay contributor to *National Public Radio*.

## **Jennifer Frappier**

### **Festival Coordinator, Mixed Roots Film & Literary Festival**

Born and raised in Northern Virginia, Jennifer's career in front of the camera began at the age of three when her grandparents urged her to smile for a photo by saying "Hollywood smile!" Recognized for her naturally curly hair and infectious smile, her exotic appearance is credited to her French, Filipino and African American ancestry. Jennifer can be seen in national commercials for companies such as: *Anheuser-Busch*, *McDonald's*, *Microsoft*, *Skechers* and *Sony PSP*. She is also proud to be the face of the national *iChooseAdoption* campaign. Jennifer makes her film debut in the independent film, *One/One Thousandth*, to be released in 2011. She continues to study with Steve Eastin at the *Steve Eastin Studio* in North Hollywood. [www.jenniferfrappier.com](http://www.jenniferfrappier.com)



## 2011 Mixed Roots Film & Literary Festival Schedule

Saturday, June 11, 2011

	Japanese American National Museum	National Center for Democracy Tateuchi Democracy Forum	National Center for Democracy Democracy Lab	Conference Room	National Center for Democracy Boeing Lobby & Breezeway
10:00AM-11:00AM					CHECK-IN
11:00AM-12:00PM	Target Free Family Day (11AM-4PM)	FILM: Multiracial Identity (11:00AM-12:30PM)	WORKSHOP: Mixed Messages: Mixed Race / Interracial Representation in TV & Film & Media (11:00AM-12:00PM)		
12:30PM-1:00PM	Mixed Youth Speak: Define Your Voice, Original Stories & Poems Reading & Workshop with Sarah Culberson (12:30PM-2:00PM)	WORKSHOP: Development of Minority Superheroes in Entertainment (12:30-1:30)	WORKSHOP: Out of Sorrow, Out of Joy: Writing Poetry from Deep Experience (12:00-1:00)		
1:00PM-2:00PM	Target Free Family Day (11AM-4PM)	READINGS (1:30-2:30)	BREAK		

2:00PM-3:00PM	Target Free Family Day (11AM-4PM)	FILM: Yelling to the Sky (2:30PM-4:30PM)	WORKSHOP: "What's All the Hype?": Making Sense of Mixed Stereotypes in the Media		
3:00PM-4:00PM	Target Free Family Day (11AM-4PM)				
4:00PM-5:00PM			WORKSHOP: Don't Pass on Context: The Importance of Academic Discourses in Contemporary Discussion on the Multiracial Experience		
5:00PM-6:00PM	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK
6:00PM-6:30PM					Loving Day Reception
6:30PM-9:00PM		Loving Prize & Awards Presentation & Live Performance			

## 2011 Mixed Roots Film & Literary Festival Schedule

Sunday June 12, 2011

	Japanese American National Museum	National Center for Democracy Tateuchi Democracy Forum	National Center for Democracy Democracy Lab	Conference Room	National Center for Democracy Boeing Lobby & Breezeway
11:00AM-11:30AM					CHECK-IN
11:00AM-12:30PM		SHORT FILMS: <i>Anomaly</i> , <i>Uncovering Color</i> , <i>Cedar &amp; Bamboo</i>		WORKSHOP: Storytelling (11:30AM - 12:30PM)	
12:30PM - 1:00PM		BREAK			
1:00PM-2:30PM		READINGS			
3:00-PM-6:00PM		FILM: <i>One Big Hapa Family</i> with Filmmaker Q&A			

The *Mixed Roots Film & Literary Festival* is a sponsored project of the *New York Foundation for the Arts*, a 501(c)(3), tax-exempt organization. Contributions on behalf of the *Mixed Roots Film & Literary Festival* must be made payable to the *New York Foundation for the Arts*, and are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Please support this project with your tax-deductible donations. Donate on-line at [www.mxroots.org](http://www.mxroots.org) donation link. Or send checks payable to *New York Foundation for the Arts (NYFA)*, Dusky Sally Productions PO Box 291775, Los Angeles, CA 90029. Please specify "Mixed Roots Film & Literary Festival" in the memo.