



# WHAT'S ALOHA

You can't own Aloha, but you can live it.

## **“WHAT’S ALOHA”**

*You can’t own Aloha, but you can live it.*

### **Logline**

A retired Navy SEAL, haunted by loss and burnout, travels to Hawai‘i for a brief escape and collides with a Hawai‘i-raised architect navigating her own crossroads. Together, they rediscover what it truly means to live Aloha.

### **Genre / Format**

Drama / Independent Feature Film (Approx. 98 pages)

### **Synopsis**

Michael, a high-level real estate broker and retired Navy SEAL, returns to O‘ahu for a short stay after being forced to take leave. Carrying the weight of personal loss and survivor’s guilt from losing his SEAL teammate Ikaika, he encounters Maile, a Hawai‘i-raised architect searching for meaningful impact in her work and community. As both navigate grief, cultural identity, and second chances, their lives unexpectedly intertwine across community builds, family traditions, and the simple power of presence. “What’s Aloha” explores the healing force of Aloha as more than a word — as a way of life.

### **Core Themes**

- Healing from grief and trauma
- Rediscovering identity and culture
- Living with purpose after loss
- Community, connection, and second chances

### **Copyright & Registration**

WGA Registered (No. 2304068) | U.S. Copyright Registered – Performing Arts Category

### **Main Characters**

“Michael” – African-American Navy SEAL (ret.), now a successful real estate broker. Grieving the loss of his son and SEAL teammate, he arrives in O‘ahu guarded but open to rediscovery.

“Maile” – A proud, Hawai‘i-raised architect who walked away from luxury real estate to find work that serves her community. Strong, intuitive, and guided by the memory of her late mother.

“Jesse” – Maile’s best friend, a witty and openly gay former coworker who provides heartfelt and humorous support as Maile rebuilds her life.

“LT. Ikaika Mahelona” – Michael’s fallen SEAL teammate. A local Polynesian hero who sacrificed his life saving others; his legacy anchors Michael’s emotional journey.

“Darius” – Michael’s longtime Army friend and fellow Veteran, now living in Hawai‘i with his Polynesian wife. Grounded and supportive, Darius offers Michael tough love, insight, and an unfiltered reminder of what really matters.

## Writer's Statement

As a Navy Veteran and real estate professional who once called Hawai'i home, this story is deeply personal. "What's Aloha" was born from lived experience, both in uniform and in transition.

Through Michael and Maile, I explore the emotional terrain of coming home, living with loss, and discovering how cultural values can transform even our darkest seasons. This is my love letter to Hawai'i, Veterans, and second chances.

## Target Audience & Comparables

This film resonates with:

- Veterans and military families
- Hawai'i-raised and diaspora viewers
- Audiences drawn to healing, identity, and human connection

Comparable Films:

- "The Descendants" (tone, Hawai'i setting)
- "Manchester by the Sea" (grief and redemption)
- "Aloha" (as counter-example: "What's Aloha" succeeds with authenticity and cultural respect)

## Festival Strategy

"What's Aloha" is currently being submitted to top-tier screenplay competitions and film festivals via FilmFreeway and Coverfly. The screenplay is competition-ready, with pitch deck, poster, and visual lookbook available upon request or via website.

## Contact

For inquiries, please contact:

Donta Tanner

Email: [dontanner35@gmail.com](mailto:dontanner35@gmail.com)

Website: [www.whatsaloha.com](http://www.whatsaloha.com)

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