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TRUST

# GUAM PRESERVATION TRUST

P.O. Box 3036, HAGATÑA, GUAM 96932  
TEL: 671-472-9439/40 FAX: 671-477-2047

## Grant Application

**Submission Date:** January 5, 2024

**Project Title:** Haga' yan Acho' | Blood and Stone

**Applicant's Name:** Antonio Azios

**Applicant's Address:** 450 Chalan San Antonio #566 Tamuning, GU 96913

**Telephone: (W)** \_\_\_\_\_ **(Cell)** 671.689.0206 **(Home)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** tonyazios@gmail.com

**Duration of Project:** 04/29/2023 **to:** 01/31/2025

**Amount of Request:** \$100,000

**Project Location:** Primarily in Guam, with a few shoots in the CNMI, Hawaii, and Spain

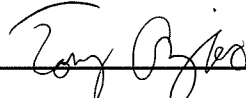
### Check One

- ☒ New Proposal
- ☐ Old Proposal with Changes **Date of Previous Submission:** \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Old Proposal without Changes **Date of Previous Submission:** \_\_\_\_\_

### Type of Application (Check One)

- ☒ New Grant ☐ Continuing Grant ☐ Supplemental Grant

I have made such steps as are necessary to verify the information given in this application package and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, all information is true, correct and accurate:

**Applicant's Signature:** 

*\*No funds will be disbursed when the GPT is funding a partial amount for any grant proposal until the applicant has demonstrated with letter of commitment or by other acceptable means, that adequate support, financial or other, has been guaranteed for the project's completion.*

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# Guam Preservation Trust

## Grant Application

### PROJECT OVERVIEW

**Applicant Name**

Antonio Azios

**Project Title**

*Haga' yan Acho' | Blood and Stone*

**Duration of Project**

04/29/2023 - 01/31/2025

**Project Goals**

- 1) Produce a broadcast-quality documentary film that explores the past, present, and future of slinging (*âcho' atupaf*) in CHamoru culture.
- 2) Collaborate with a diverse set of historians, archaeologists, anthropologists, artists, poets, writers, dancers, musicians—and, of course, CHAmoru slingers—to explore the historical and cultural significance of slinging in Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands, and investigate what is driving a modern revival of this ancient practice.
- 3) Relate information in a clear, compelling, and accurate manner that evokes deeper contemplation, fosters understanding, and maintains balance while interpreting events for the film's viewing audience and for community event participants.
- 4) Place slinging into a global context while exploring what makes it both unique and historically important in this region.
- 5) Utilize archival media and artifacts creatively to illustrate Chamoru history in new, engaging ways which promote discussion, analyses, and further exploration.
- 6) Design and execute a series of community screenings and seminars to facilitate public conversation in Guam about the history and cultural relevance of slinging, as well as community and classroom workshops to teach local people the basics of slinging and introduce them to ancient slinging artifacts.
- 7) Air the completed film on PBS Guam and other PBS affiliate stations across the USA.
- 8) Have the film screen at local, regional, and international film festivals.
- 9) Make the film available for schools in Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), along with classroom instruction materials.

**Project Objectives**

- 1) Research the topic, as well as potential film subjects (characters), interviewees, archival resources, funding sources, relevant events and locations, etc. during the spring of 2023.
- 2) Build out a production team in the spring of 2023.
- 3) Secure full funding by no later than March of 2024.

- 4) Complete filming by early summer of 2024.
- 5) Complete post-production (editing, scoring, color grading, motion graphics, etc.) by September 2024.
- 6) Provide hands-on opportunities for young / emerging filmmakers and students during production and post-production stages.
- 7) Hold a minimum of three community events (film screenings, Q&A seminars / discussions, and workshops) on Guam between October and December 2024.
- 8) Air the film on PBS Guam in December 2024.
- 9) Submit the film to domestic and international film festivals.
- 10) Distribute the film to Guam and CNMI schools with classroom instruction materials.

### **Expected Outcomes**

- 1) Help to grow public interest in and engagement with the history, traditions, and evolving practice of slinging in the region and abroad.
- 2) Increase the number of active slingers in Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands.
- 3) Promote the critical analysis of historical events, materials, and primary sources.
- 4) Inspire further dialogue, interpretation, and research about the region's history, traditions, artifacts, and peoples.
- 5) Help preserve and promote CHamoru heritage, customs, traditions, values, and artifacts.
- 6) Display the diversity of experiences and perspectives within the Mariana Islands in an educational and engaging manner.

### **Project Location**

Roughly 75 to 80 percent of the film will be filmed in Guam, 10 to 15 percent in the CNMI, seven percent in Hawai'i, and three percent in Spain. (The Spain footage has already been filmed.)

### **Introduction of the Proposed Project**

*Haga' yan Ácho' | Blood and Stone* is a roughly 30-minute film that documents the movement to revive the ancient Chamoru tradition of slinging throughout the Mariana Islands, while putting slinging into a global context and exploring what makes it culturally unique and historically important in this region. Our audience will get to know two charismatic community leaders on a mission to reintroduce *ácho' atupat* throughout their archipelago, as well as hear from notable CHamorus about why slinging is "in their blood." The film shows how slinging is a source of strength, resilience, and symbolic resistance for the CHamoru people... as well as great fun for *anyone* who picks up a sling to test their aim!

\* \* \*

In the Marianas, slinging is so much more than just a simple diversion. Slings and stones are deeply rooted in the cultural identity of CHamorus, to the point that its elliptical pattern is a central feature of the Guam flag. Many people get slingstone tattoos. Their iconic shape adorns monuments, museums, and the logos of companies that otherwise have no obvious link to slinging. In murals and statues throughout the Mariana Islands, revered chiefs and warriors are almost always depicted with a sling in hand.

While many cultures around the world have a history of slinging, CHamorus arguably have one of the longest and most symbolic relationships to the sling and stone. *Haga' yan A'cho' | Blood and Stone* aims to provide a rare glimpse into the history, passion, and pride of CHamoru slingers as they use *âcho' atupat* as a vehicle to reclaim and rebuild some of what has been lost and stolen. It will explore themes of resilience and resistance in the face of colonialism and cultural erasure, the importance of sport and friendly competition in a community, and how fine craftsmanship and athleticism come together in *âcho' atupat* to create something special and enduring that helps connect CHamoru culture with others around the world.

Importantly, the film will feature respected historians, archaeologists, and anthropologists who are deeply familiar with CHamoru culture and customs to ensure the film provides both accurate and engaging information regarding the long history of slinging here. Likewise, the film will showcase CHamoru artists, poets, writers, dancers, musicians to explore the historical and cultural significance of slinging in Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands, and investigate what is driving a modern revival of this ancient practice.

We will explore the evolving role of slinging in modern Chamoru culture by probing the following question: How has slinging taken on new importance and relevance for the people of the Marianas today? Why have emblems related to slinging continued to grab our imaginations and symbolize the people of Guåhan? Is slinging forging new bonds in the community and with the Chamoru diaspora? How are the past functions, conceptions, and symbolism of *âcho' atupat* evolving to fill modern psychological and sociological needs here as the Marianas reconnects to its traditions and defines its position in a globalized world?

This is a critical time to document this movement and story, as the slingers (*man yiyupaktu*) of the Marianas are on the cusp of introducing slinging to other Pasifika cultures as an official event at FestPac 2024, playing host to the first international slinging tournament on Guam, and as Guam repatriates over 1,000 sling stones from the Bishop Museum. It's also important to note that there are no other documentaries about slinging in the Marianas, so it's an excellent opportunity to explore this topic in a format easily accessible to a diverse audience.

In addition to producing a documentary film, we will host multiple community events, including hands-on slinging and artifact workshops as well as film screenings followed by panel discussions + Q&A sessions. We anticipate significant community attendance and participation. These events offer members of the public the opportunity to share their views and interpretations in a public setting while engaging in dialogue with the filmmaker and some of the experts / practitioners featured in the film.

Finally, this project will also provide career-advancing opportunities for young / emerging filmmakers and students during production and post-production stages. We have a plan to take on multiple paid interns to assist with video production, archival research, marketing, community event planning, and other related tasks.

### **Project's Significance and Anticipated Benefits**

This project will yield a unique and educational documentary film that helps a diverse audience to learn about the history and continued cultural relevance of slinging in the Marianas. It's very likely to be aired on television and screen in film festivals, thereby amplifying its reach and impact. The film and its associated community events will help to preserve and protect Guam's history, culture, and perspectives. We believe this is described and detailed throughout this application and above and further elaborated upon in the additional documents provided.

### **NEED FOR ASSISTANCE**

#### **GPT Programs**

*Haga' yan Acho' | Blood and Stone* and its associated community events (screenings, seminars, and workshops) falls under several of GPT's Funding Priorities as described in the 2023-2027 Strategic Plan, including:

- Capacity Building Workshops and Seminars
- Traditional Cultural Knowledge
- Youth and Education
- CHamoru Traditional Cultural Knowledge
- Technology, Media, and Heritage Preservation

However, we believe the documentary film and its associated community events (screenings, seminars, and workshops) most closely align with the "Public Interpretation and Presentation" Grant Program.

The film and community events are designed to educate the public about the tradition of slinging, an important and understudied historic resource in the Marianas. This will allow for an exchange of information, ideas, and interpretations between subject area experts and members of the public in a variety of forums and formats. This includes opportunities to safely practice slinging techniques and interact with ancient sling stones and other artifacts. Furthermore, this project includes distribution of the film to local schools with accompanying lesson plans, which will serve as valuable tools to assist educators in presenting lessons directly related to the historic properties.

We also believe this proposed project aligns with GPT's "Ethnography and Oral History" Grant Program.

Our film will deeply explore the traditional cultural values and practices associated with *acho' atupat* and explore the myriad reasons why slinging—as an act and the sling stone itself as a symbol—continues to be imbued with such enduring significance in CHamoru culture. Through interviews, the documentary will employ the research methods used in ethnography and oral history. With the recent surge in popularity of podcasts and documentary films, it's worth

considering that these have become the preferred (or at least most widely accessible) modern-day versions of the oral storytelling tradition.

### **Furthering GPT's Five Year Strategic Plan**

This project furthers Guam Preservation Trust's Five Year Strategic Plan as it collaborates with members of the public and Guam's preservation community to promote the appreciation for and preservation of *âcho' atupat*, which is an historically and culturally relevant tradition worthy of further study and consideration.

GPT can feel confident this project will have an enduring impact on cultural preservation and advance the community's knowledge of CHamoru Traditional Cultural Knowledge, as the film will remain easily accessible to future viewers via the internet, public library, and through donated copies to Guam's public schools. It is also very likely to air on PBS Guam (see the "Letter of Interest" from PBS Guam in the Additional Documents folder), which significantly broadens the film's reach. This also allows local *manâmkö'*, children, or the disabled who may not always be available or physically able to travel to historical/cultural sites and events to view the film and learn from it. Likewise, we anticipate the film will also be of great interest to diasporic CHamorians, and once PBS Guam airs it the chances become high that other PBS-affiliate stations nationwide will, too. This is yet another way that GPT can partner with a project that furthers its mission and goals for the people of Guåhan — even for those who may not currently live here but are rooted to the island.

Meanwhile, the community events (Capacity Building Workshops and Seminars) allow local participants to speak directly with longtime slingers and subject area experts alike, while also offering opportunities to try their hand at slinging and interact with ancient sling stones and other artifacts. Such experiences serve to educate the community about Guam's culture and diverse perspectives, while also deepening people's interest and ability to incorporate cultural activities, such as slinging, into their own lives. This arguably does as much or more to preserve and protect a disappearing cultural practice than many museum exhibits or books can.

Finally, this project also includes unique components that fall under the Youth and Education and the Technology, Media, and Heritage Preservation goals described in GPT's Five Year Strategic Plan. We will produce an educational documentary film exploring historical and cultural topics and promote Heritage Preservation in the Marianas. The film will be appropriate for youth and made available to schools along with classroom instruction materials. The project's community events will also be appropriate for youth and have activities designed specifically for them.

### **Applicant's long-range goals**

The Grant Application Checklist states, "*If the applicant is an organization*, please provide a brief statement of the organization's mission and a concise summary of its long range goals."

The applicant is not an organization, but he is partnered with Guam International Film Festival, which is serving as the fiscal sponsor for this project.

GIFF, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, proudly presents an international event exhibiting a dynamic source of cross-cultural artistic presence, bridging gaps among the U.S., Asia, and the Pacific's multi-cultural population and region. GIFF is the first and only annual U.S. film festival in the western Pacific. Its mission is to foster the growth of cross-cultural understanding through the art of filmmaking. GIFF achieves this through community outreach, education through festival programs, and efforts to build awareness for social responsibility through our carefully curated film programming. It also provides free film education and promotes cultural understanding in Guam. Program collaborations have included Pixar Animation Studios, Adobe, Warner Archive Collection, Pacific Islanders in Communications, and others.

As for the applicant, his long term goals are to continue producing high quality documentary films and historical podcasts about the Marianas, and to foster and empower the next generation of filmmakers in Guam through his role as a media instructor at the University of Guam's College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences.

## **PROJECT APPROACH**

### **Project Conception and Community Involvement**

The idea for *Haga' yan Acho' | Blood and Stone* first came to Tony Azios a few years ago while teaching a Visual Anthropology course at the University of Guam. As the students brainstormed topics for their video projects, he suggested one of them explore the cultural significance of sling stones as a significant symbol and motif in modern CHamoru culture. A student opted to pursue a similar route for her project, but focused instead on latte stones.

But the idea remained in Tony's mind. The more he observed his surroundings in the Mariana islands, the more he saw that slingers and slingstones continue to possess great cultural weight as symbols here. He also began to learn more about the considerable efforts of people like Roman Dela Cruz and Vicente "Guelu" Rosario and groups like ACHO Marianas to revive the fading art and tradition of slinging in the region.

One day, Tony found a sling stone while hiking in Luta. He felt its power while holding it in his hands. It was magnetic. He desperately wanted to know the story behind this object. He yearned to find more of them. Tony even felt inspired to learn to sling. This stone felt like an invitation to personally connect with an ancient practice.

Last year, Tony was walking along Oleai Beach in Saipan with a small group of friends, colleagues. They were casually looking for artifacts as they walked and talked. He was already considering finally pursuing a documentary film about slinging in the next year, so Tony quietly said to the universe, "If I should make this film now, show me a sign." About 10 steps later, he found a sling stone at the edge of the shore.



From that moment on, Tony began speaking with colleagues at UOG, the Guam Museum, and from Guam and Saipan's film/video industry. He reached out to Roman and Guelu. Everyone he spoke to about the project was excited about it and wanted to be involved in some capacity. Recognizing the power of the subject matter, many expressed shock that no one has made this kind of film already.

Since finding that sling stone on the beach and deciding to pursue this project, Tony has built a production team comprised of some of the most talented filmmakers on Guam. They have captured relevant footage and interviews at the 4th World Cup of Slinging in Spain, at the the 4th Annual Gilita Chamorro Festival in Rota, and all across Guam. They have secured a substantial amount of funding from local arts and humanities organizations and began assembling an impressive cast of characters to feature in the film. It will be a true community effort, with buy-in from leaders in the slinging community, from CHamoru artists and creators, and from local academics and researchers in the fields of history, archaeology, and anthropology.

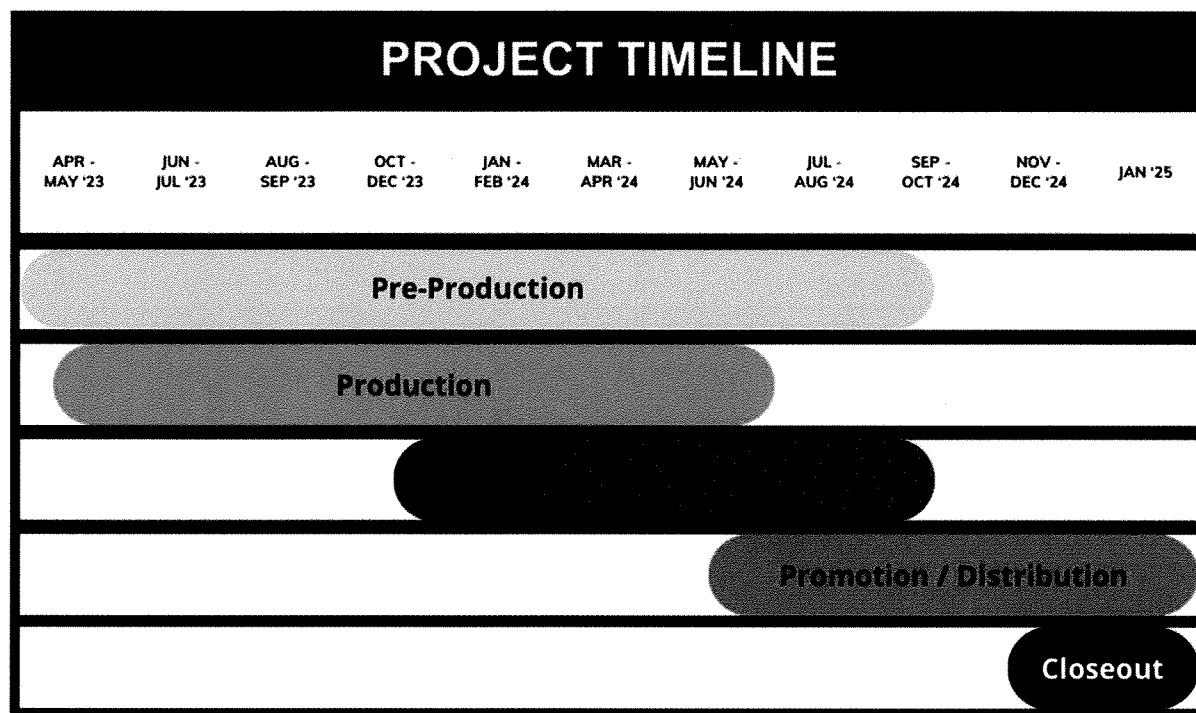
The community members most involved in the conception and planning of the project so far are:

- Dr. Michael Bevacqua, curator of the Guam Museum. He will serve as both an advisor for the project and an on-camera interview subject.
- Roman Dela Cruz, founder and former president of ACHO Marianas. He will serve as both a key character in the film and as an advisor for the project.
- Vicente "Guelu" Roasario, traditional teacher and longtime slinger. He will serve as both a key character in the film and as an advisor for the project.
- Dr. Sylvia Earl, producer and researcher. She will serve as a co-producer on this project.
- Dr. Raymond Anderson, professor of communication and media studies at UOG. He will serve as an executive producer on this project.

### **Implementation Plan**

The majority of development and other pre-production activities were completed in April and May of 2023, although we continue to seek additional funding through a variety of sources. With the exception of one brief shoot in April, we began principal photography in June 2023 and have since completed several shoots in Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, and Spain. At this time, we estimate we have captured approximately 15 percent of the footage needed, including some of the most difficult footage to capture..

Going forward, we will continue activities as described in the Project Timeline below.



Due to the compressed timeline of this production there's significant overlap on the schedule of the various production phases, especially because we've grouped financing activities under "pre-production" and we will continue to pursue grants and donations throughout most of the filmmaking process. The team, of course, is following a highly detailed calendar for more precise planning and implementation.

## ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

### **Applicant's Organizational Structure**

The organizational structure of a documentary film project can be quite different from that of more formal organizations or companies. This is due to many factors, including that positions can be fairly fluid, with some people wearing very "different hats" on different days and stages of production. Likewise, film staff and crew are typically freelance contractors who only work with each other for short periods before moving on to their next projects so there's not always institutional knowledge or uniform schedules / availability. Funding for documentary films often comes from grants being reviewed and awarded at different times (and with no guarantee of award at all), so until there is a concrete budget in place it can be challenging to accurately plan the exact staff, shoot schedule, and other budget-dependent factors. Finally, many documentary films, including this one, chronicle real people's lives and unscripted events. This means that

things can and do change often as life unfolds in unpredictable ways, and the story must adapt along with it.

Because of the variable nature of the documentary filmmaking process, it's especially important a film is led by a team with the necessary knowledge, skills, and expertise to successfully manage the project and funds. Rest assured that *Haga' yan Acho' | Blood and Stone* has such a team.

As the project's director, co-producer, and co-writer, Tony Azios will lead the organization. He brings to the table a terminal degree in film production, 13 years of professional film / video production experience, and five years of teaching and classroom management experience. Tony has served as video production manager for both media production companies and nonprofits, which required him to oversee all stages of production and manage cast and crews for high quality, fast-paced productions on tight deadlines. He has served key creative roles on several award winning documentary films.

He will work with and manage a small, but talented and capable team of co-producers and technical crew members. The professional biographies and position descriptions for key crew members and advisors are below.

## **Project Staff Biographies and Position Descriptions**

### **Tony Azios — Director, Co-Producer, Co-Writer**

Tony is an award-winning documentary filmmaker and multimedia producer with an MFA in Film & Electronic Media from American University in Washington, D.C., and a BA in International Studies (with minors in History and Journalism) from Manhattan College. Based in Guam, he's taught Cinematography, Photojournalism, Visual Anthropology, and Documentary Production courses at the University of Guam. He's played key production roles for high-quality films, videos, and multimedia projects from Palau and Saipan to New York City and the Galapagos Islands. His films have screened in numerous film festivals and aired on Maryland Public Television, PBS, and Link TV. Tony has also worked as a multimedia producer and reporter for over 18 years. His articles, radio stories, and photographs have appeared in numerous outlets, including NPR, PBS FRONTLINE, CNN, *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Christian Science Monitor* newspaper, *The Guam Daily Post*, Radio New Zealand, Agence France-Presse, and others.

#### **Tony's notable documentary credits and awards include:**

- Director / Producer for *Memoirs Pasifika* (2021-2022), a documentary-style historical podcast series exploring events, movements, and people in modern Micronesia.
- Cinematographer for *Gods in Shackles* (2016), a feature-length investigative film about captive elephants in India.
- Cinematographer on *When Mickey Came to Town* (2016), a thirty-minute film about a rural Virginia community's epic fight against a Disney Company development plan.

- Second Camera and Audio Mixer on *Check It* (2016), a feature-length film about a Washington, DC, gang formed by young black LGBTQ people for self-defense. Premiered at the 2016 Tribeca Film Festival.
- Head Writer and Associate Producer on *Menhaden: The Most Important Fish in the Bay* (2012), a thirty-minute film for Maryland Public Television about the most important fish you've never heard of, the people who love it, and a company loving it to death. It won three Regional Emmy Awards (National Capital Chesapeake Bay Chapter) in the categories of Outstanding Documentary, Photography, and Editing — Student Division.
- Winner of the Will Interactive Dramatic Short Screenplay Award (2011) for *Crossing*.

### **Raymond Anderson, PhD — Executive Producer**

Dr. Raymond Anderson has worked in Digital Cinema and Mass Media education for over 17 years in Oregon, Kansas, and at the University of Guam. For the past 8.5 years he's helped shape UOG's Communication and Media program. He teaches classes ranging from Broadcast Production to Independent Narrative Filmmaking, Film and TV Criticism, and Documentary Process, and his students won national awards for filmmaking projects in 2019, 2021, and 2023 at the Broadcast Education Association's Festival of Media Arts. He has written about cultural groups and their interplay with popular culture and directed short narrative documentary public service announcements for UOG's Cancer Research Center. Recently, Ray scripted, directed, and produced several mini-narrative anti-vaping vignettes that were used by Pacific Island Partnership for Cancer Health Equity to train Guam middle school students in a pilot study with the University of Hawaii. As both an educator and filmmaker, Dr. Anderson is committed to producing projects that develop future filmmakers and multi-media storytellers in the Marianas.

#### Ray's notable awards include:

His feature-length script, *The Centenarian's Birthday Party*, won an Award of Excellence at the national Broadcast Education Association's Festival of Arts. It subsequently was a semifinalist and quarterfinalist in WeScreenplay's Diverse Voices (2018) and ScreenCraft's Drama (2017) contests, respectively. It was also a finalist in the UK Film Festival Script competition (2019).

### **Sylvia C. Frain, PhD — Co-Producer**

Sylvia is co-founder of Fâha' Digital Media, an NGO with a mission to support Indigenous storytellers while developing an equitable film industry in the Mariana Islands. She is a producer working on multiple projects across the Mariana Islands. Her most recent work was with a journalist and photographer for the *New York Times Magazine*, resulting in two July 2023 articles: "The America That Americans Forget" and "In Guam, the U.S. Military Presence Is in Full View." Previously, she served in the role of Public Affairs Coordinator at the U.S. Consulate General in Auckland, as well as with the U.S. Mission in New Zealand, the Cook Islands, and Niue focusing on climate governance and policymaking in the Indo-Pacific region. Sylvia earned her Ph.D. in Peace & Conflict Studies at The National Center for Peace and Conflict Studies | Te Ao O Rongomaraeroa at the University of Otago | Te Whare Wānanga Otāgo in Ōtepoti | Dunedin, Aotearoa New Zealand and a Master Degree in International Studies in the field of Peace & Conflict Resolution at the School of Political Science and International Studies at the University of Queensland in Brisbane, Australia. In 2018, she was the inaugural postdoctoral

research fellow at the Pacific Media Center, and in 2020 was awarded a Whitinga Research Fellowship in Visual Arts | Toi Whakatu in the School of Art + Design | Te Kura Toi a Hoahoa at Auckland University of Technology | Te Wānanga Aronui o Tāmaki Makaurau.

### **Nia Serneo — Co-Producer**

Nia is a Filipina-American film producer born and raised in Hågat, Guam. She is a founding member and Producer for the Marianas-based film production company, Mighty Island, whose mission is to create film and media that are representative and authentic to Guam and the Mariana Islands. She received her BA in Strategic Communications from Seattle University and PMBA from the University of Guam. Prior to full-time film producing, she served as Social Marketer and Communications Manager for the Guam Behavioral Health Wellness Center (GBHWC), whose various marketing initiatives received numerous SAMHSA Excellence in Communication Outreach Awards (2016-2018).

### **Nico Serneo — Cinematographer**

A Filipino-American from Guam, Nico Serneo is a founding member of Mighty Island. As a Director of Photography, Nico's passion is creating dramatic and organic images that capture the viewer's attention and leave a lasting impact. He attended De Anza College in Cupertino, CA, where he earned an AA in Film Production. He then transferred to the Academy of Arts in San Francisco and graduated with a BA in Film Editing. Kyle has been a working cinematographer since 2010, completing dozens of short films, documentaries, television commercials, and music videos in San Francisco and Guam.

### **Mariana Gabriel — Co-Writer & Associate Producer**

Mariana Gabriel joined Mighty Island in 2018 as a Key Grip / Production Assistant and worked her way into her current roles of Production Manager and Associate Producer. She attended Regent's College, London School of Film, Media and Performance and received a BA in English from the University of Guam in 2020. Mariana, who is CHamoru and native Hawaiian, is passionate about ushering unheard voices forward through emotionally compelling storytelling, particularly throughout the Pacific region.

### **Kyle Perron — Editor**

Kyle Perron is a founding member of Mighty Island. As a Chamoru born and raised in Guam, his focus is to develop authentic and relevant visual media that showcase traditional and contemporary cultures of the Mariana Islands. Kyle attended De Anza College in Cupertino, CA, where he earned an AA degree in Film Production. He then transferred to the Academy of Arts in San Francisco and graduated with a BA in Film Editing. Kyle has been a working editor since 2010, completing dozens of short films, documentaries, commercials, and music videos.

### **Mighty Island's notable screenings and awards include:**

The short film *I Matai* and short documentaries *Naturel* and *Pow!Wow!Japan* were showcased domestically at the Los Angeles Asian American Film Festival, Guam International Film Festival, Philadelphia Asian American Film Festival, and internationally at the Pasifika Film Festival, Maoriland Film Festival, and Yamagata International Documentary Film Festival. Most recently,

their short film *Tradewinds*, funded by the Pacific Islanders in Communications Shorts Fund Grant, was accepted to the 2023 Hawaii International Film Festival. Their commercial projects have also received official recognition. The “We Start with You” video campaign for GTA Guam received the 2023 Excellence in Marketing Award by the Competitive Carriers Association and their work with the Bank of Guam has received three Viddy Awards, including two Platinum Viddy Awards under Branding Campaign and Culture/Lifestyle Short Form Video categories.

**Vicente “Guelu” Rosario — Cultural Advisor / Key Film Subject**

Guelu is a man of many woven hats. Hailing from Luta, NMI, he can carve canoes, navigate, cook traditional food, speak Fino’ Chamoru, construct huts, carve sling stones, weave slings, and throw stones with the best of them. He has represented the CNMI in multiple international slinging tournaments. Guelu is a doting teacher to the entire community and a joy to learn from

**Roman Dela Cruz — Key Film Subject**

Roman is co-founder and president of Fokai Industries, a Marianas-inspired lifestyle and apparel company based in Tumon, Guam. He founded ÅCHO Marianas, a Guam-based slinging organization, in 2017 and served as its president until 2022. He continues to dedicate much of his time to teaching and promoting stone slinging (åcho’ atupat) on Guam and the CNMI through expositions at primary school, lecturing at community and academic conferences, hosting cultural summer camps, and building a community sling cage. He has also represented Guam in multiple international slinging tournaments and has traveled all over the world with a sling in hand, eager to teach anyone who is curious.

**Michael Lujan Bevacqua, PhD — Advisor / Interview Subject**

Dr. Michael Bevacqua is Curator of the Guam Museum and a community scholar who specializes in Chamoru history and the teaching of the Chamoru language. He earned an MA in Micronesian Studies from UOG and a Ph.D. in Ethnic Studies from University of California, San Diego. He has worked on many documentaries, as a consultant and producer, most notably *Island Soldier* by Nathan Fitch and *War for Guam* from Frances Negron-Muntaner, and was a recurring contributor to Tony Azios’ *Memoirs Pasifika* documentary podcast. He hosts *Fanachu! Podcast*, a decolonial current events and academic critique podcast based in Guåhan. Bevacqua has conducted extensive research into Guam and Marianas History, with a focus on the impacts of colonization on the Chamoru people and theorizing possibilities for their decolonization. He has published numerous articles on the impact of American colonization on the Chamoru people of Guam, tracing the changes in Chamoru identity (and their relationship to the U.S.) from 1898 up until the present day.

I also hope to work with the following archaeologists, anthropologists, and other members of the preservation community in this project: Scott Russell, CNMI-based historian; Patrick Lujan, Guam State Historic Preservation Officer; Dr. David Atienza de Frutos, Professor of Anthropology and Micronesian Studies, UOG; Dr. Patricia Alonso, Curator, Spain’s National Museum of Anthropology; Alba Ferrándiz, Anthropology PhD student; Dr. Michael Carson, Professor of Archaeology, UOG; Robert and Gigi York, archaeologists and authors; John Mark Joseph, Historic Preservation Office archaeologist.

### **Funding and Fiscal Management Capacity**

Our team's fundraising strategy is primarily focused on obtaining grants through nonprofit organizations with a mission of funding creative projects (including documentary films) with an emphasis on Pacific islanders, Chamorus, the arts, and humanities. This includes organizations like Pacific Islanders in Communications, Guam Council on the Arts and Humanities Association (CAHA), Humanities Guåhan, the Northern Marianas Humanities Council, the University of Guam, and the Guam Preservation Trust.

The secondary strategy is to seek private donations from local / regional corporations, agencies, and nonprofits with a vested interest in and track record of financing projects and initiatives promoting the history, cultures, traditions, and artists of the Marianas, even if that's not their primary mission. This includes organizations like Bank of Guam, GTA Telecom, Guam Visitors Bureau, Guam Chamber of Commerce, Guam Women's Chamber of Commerce, and the Rotary Club of Guam. We will explore relevant cultural organizations and the Spanish Embassy as a potential that might sponsor the film due its inclusion of Spain-oriented history, culture, events, and slingers, but this is not a key strategy.

Our tertiary strategy is to secure in-kind donations in the form of donated or discounted goods and services from companies and individuals. This will lessen the cost of production and allow us to direct limited funds toward more pressing budgetary needs. We will approach companies invested in the Marianas providing goods/services we need, such as regional airlines, hotels, restaurants, and car rental agencies, as well as to individuals and companies in relevant industries (marketing, video / audio production, etc.) who might be willing to help.

Thus far, this project has received grant funding from both Humanities Guåhan, the Guam Council on the Arts and Humanities Agency (CAHA), and a cash contribution by the director / producer.

### **Funding Secured to Date**

<b>Funding Source</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Status</b>
CAHA	\$8,750	Secured
Humanities Guåhan	\$15,000	Secured
Producer's Cash	\$3,000	Secured

### Potential Sources of Funding

Funding Source	Amount	Probability
University of Guam	\$6,000	Extremely Likely
Northern Marianas Humanities Council	\$10,000	Extremely Likely
Pacific Islanders in Communication	\$65,000	Unknown
Guam Preservation Trust	\$100,000	Unknown
Guam Visitors Bureau	\$2,500	Likely
Bank of Guam	\$2,500	Likely

Of the potential funding sources listed above, we have so far only applied to Pacific Islanders in Communications (PIC) and now Guam Preservation Trust. We have not yet heard from PIC. We are waiting for the others to either open their grant application cycles or to schedule a meeting with a representative from the organization, as appropriate.

While we cannot guarantee these potential sources will provide funding, these are the organizations we feel most confident will offer cash donations or grants. This is based on existing professional relationships with these groups, while the listed amounts are based on knowledge of similar financing provided for similar projects. We are confident that we will receive a *minimum* of \$10,000 more in funding for this project.

In the event we do not secure the amount we are seeking from either GPT or PIC we will shorten the film's length and lower our creative ambitions to succeed with what funds we did secure. But we would do so with a significantly smaller crew working significantly less hours. More importantly, a shorter and lesser product hampers the ability to get the film aired on PBS and screened in festivals. This means far fewer people will have the chance to learn about and explore one of the most unique facets of CHamoru culture.

Guam International Film Festival, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, is acting as the fiscal sponsor for this production. This allows for tax-deductible donations, which is often a prerequisite to giving for many corporations and is always an incentive to give for individuals and corporations alike.

### **Letters of Commitment, Support, and Interest**

This project has received letters of commitment and support from Roman Dela Cruz, Vicente "Guelu" Rosario, Dr. Raymond Anderson, and Dr. Michael L. Bevacqua. We have also received



a letter of interest from Don Muña at PBS Guam and a letter of support from Sophia Perez, a PhD student in Geography at University of California, Berkeley, and a CHamoru filmmaker.

These letters are included in the Additional Documents section. Please note that these letters were written for previous grant applications so are not addressed to GPT. However, each letter is for this same proposed project.

## **PROJECT IMPACT & EVALUATION**

### **Expected Project Impact**

We expect the following impacts on Guam from the airing / distribution of our film and following the aforementioned community events:

- 1) A tangible growth in public interest in and engagement with slinging activities.
- 2) An increased understanding and appreciation among the general public of CHamoru history, values, and traditions related to slinging.
- 3) A tangible growth in public dialogue, interpretation, and research about the region's history, traditions, artifacts, and peoples in relation to slinging.
- 4) An increased number of active slingers on Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands.
- 5) The incorporation of the film and instruction materials in local classroom curriculums.
- 6) Professional development for young / emerging filmmakers.

### **Evaluation and Monitoring Process**

In order to evaluate the success or failure of the project, Tony Azios and Sylvia Frain will work with student interns to obtain attendance numbers and gather audience feedback from evaluation forms distributed during local public screenings and community events. From these, we can evaluate and assess the quantitative and qualitative responses against the stated objectives and proposed content. The *Haga' yan A'cho'* team will create a comprehensive system to:

- Track the number and demographic composition of attendees at each event, and the number of audience members that asked a question;
- Distribute neutral audience evaluation forms to attendees, designed to elicit substantive feedback and actionable critiques on the content/format of the film and community events;
- Make substantive changes to future community events based upon the evaluation data, as well as edits to the film, if warranted.
- 

At the project's close, we will submit to GPT a detailed evaluation of the audience size, composition, and an assessment of the project's strengths, weaknesses, and suggested areas for improvement. The evaluation will also assess whether or not we achieved our stated goals, and offer data or verifiable examples regarding how and why those determinations were made.

It should be noted that the final film will remain accessible online even after the project period ends, and will be viewed by film festival and television audiences we cannot survey. Thus, this project has the potential to have a far bigger impact and scope than can be described in a single evaluation.

We will also work with an impact strategist to determine additional ways to evaluate and monitor the project's impacts.

**HAGA' yan ACHO' | BLOOD and STONE**  
**ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS**

**The following documents are included below:**

- Proposed Project Budget
- Film Proposal (including Film Treatment)
- Web link to a brief trailer for the film
- Letters of Commitment, Support, and Interest

## HAGA' yan ÁCHO' | BLOOD and STONE BUDGET

Note that this budget only includes already secured funds and the requested GPT grant funds. Potential funds are not included. Should additional grant funds be awarded we are willing to revisit the proposed budget with GPT and shift funds, as needed.

### Budget Summary

#### 1. Cost-Share

a. Cash from Applicant	\$3,000
b. Cash from Other Sources (donors listed in Budget Tables)	\$23,750
c. In-Kind (list donors in Budget Narrative)	\$30,000
e. Total Cost-Share	\$56,750

**2. Amount requested from Guam Preservation Trust** **\$100,000**

**3. TOTAL** **\$156,750**

### Budget Tables

#### Guam Preservation Trust

We are applying for \$100,000 in grant funds from GPT. If awarded, we plan to spend those funds in the following manner:

<b>GPT</b>		<b>Total: \$100,000</b>
Project Staff		\$59,000
Stipends/Honoraria		\$4,000
Travel		\$7,000
Per Diem		\$1,500
Supplies		\$3,000
Printing/Duplication		\$500
Postage/Telephone		\$0
Equipment / Software Rental		\$8,500
Facilities Rental		\$1,500

Advertising	\$2,000
Bookkeeping	\$4,000
Other / Miscellaneous	\$9,000

#### Humanities Guåhan Community Grant

We have received \$15,000 in grant funds from Humanities Guåhan. We plan to spend those funds in the following manner:

<b>HG</b>		<b>Total: \$15,000</b>
Project Staff		\$7,500
Stipends/Honoraria		\$0
Travel		\$3,550
Per Diem		\$0
Supplies		\$0
Printing/Duplication		\$0
Postage/Telephone		\$0
Equipment Rental		\$2,900
Facilities Rental		\$0
Advertising		\$0
Bookkeeping		\$1,050
Other / Miscellaneous		\$0

#### The Guam Council on the Arts and Humanities - Grant

We have received \$8,750 in grant funds from CAHA. We plan to spend those funds in the following manner:

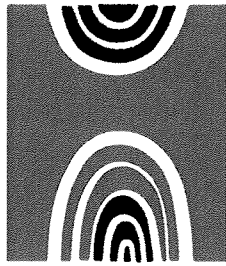
<b>CAHA</b>		<b>Total: \$8,750</b>
Project Staff		\$6,500
Stipends/Honoraria		\$0
Travel		\$0

Supplies	\$0
Printing/Duplication	\$0
Postage/Telephone	\$0
Equipment Rental	\$0
Facilities Rental	\$1,525
Advertising	\$0
Bookkeeping	\$0
Other / Miscellaneous	\$725

### Applicant Cash

We have received \$3,000 in donated funds from the applicant. We have spent those funds in the following manner:

<b>Applicant</b>		<b>Total: \$3,000</b>
Personnel Salary and Wages	\$0	
Stipends/Honoraria	\$0	
Travel	\$0	
Supplies	\$3,000	
Printing/Duplication	\$0	
Postage/Telephone	\$0	
Equipment Rental	\$0	
Facilities Rental	\$0	
Advertising	\$0	
Bookkeeping	\$0	
Other / Miscellaneous	\$0	



HAGA' yan  
A'CHO' BLOOD  
and  
STONE



Film Proposal



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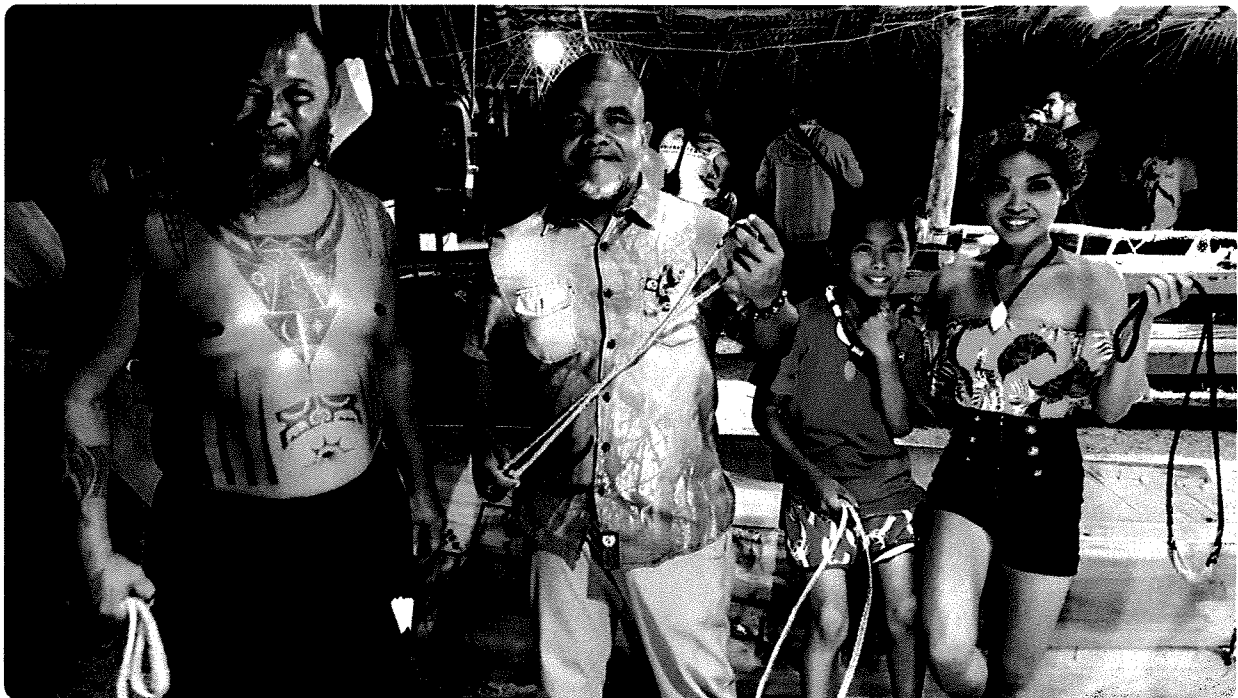


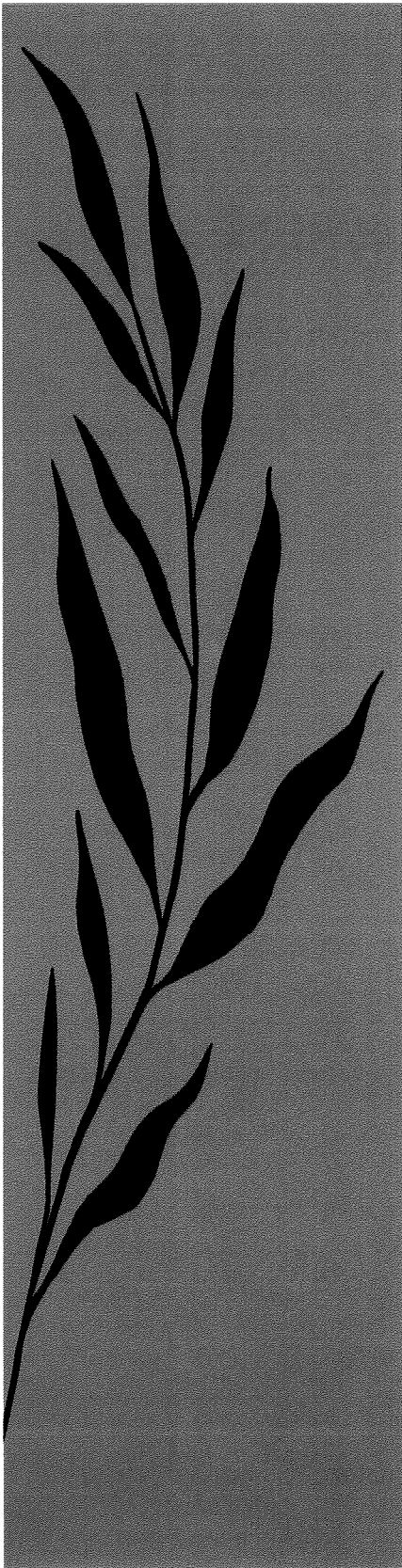
# SYNOPSIS

Haga' yan Åcho' | Blood and Stone documents the ongoing movement to revive the ancient Chamoru tradition of slinging throughout the Marianas (Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands), while putting slinging into a global context and exploring what makes it both unique and historically important in this region. Our audience will get to know two charismatic cultural and community leaders on a mission to reintroduce slinging (åcho' atupat) throughout their archipelago, as well as hear from notable CHamorus about why slinging is in their blood. The film shows how slinging is a source of strength, resilience, and symbolic resistance for the CHamoru people... as well as great fun for anyone who picks up a sling to test their aim!

# LOGLINE

Faced with the looming disappearance of stone slinging on their home islands, two CHamorus lead a movement to revive the ancient tradition at home while exploring why it is uniquely important in their culture.





## TOPIC SUMMARY

In the Marianas, slinging is so much more than just a simple diversion. Slings and stones are deeply rooted in the cultural identity of CHamorus, to the point that its elliptical pattern is a central feature of the Guam flag. Many people get slingstone tattoos. They adorn monuments, museums, and company logos that have no direct link to slinging. In murals and statues throughout the Mariana Islands, revered chiefs and warriors are almost always depicted with a sling in hand. And while many cultures around the world have a history of slinging, CHamorus arguably have one of the longest and most symbolic relationships to the sling and stone.

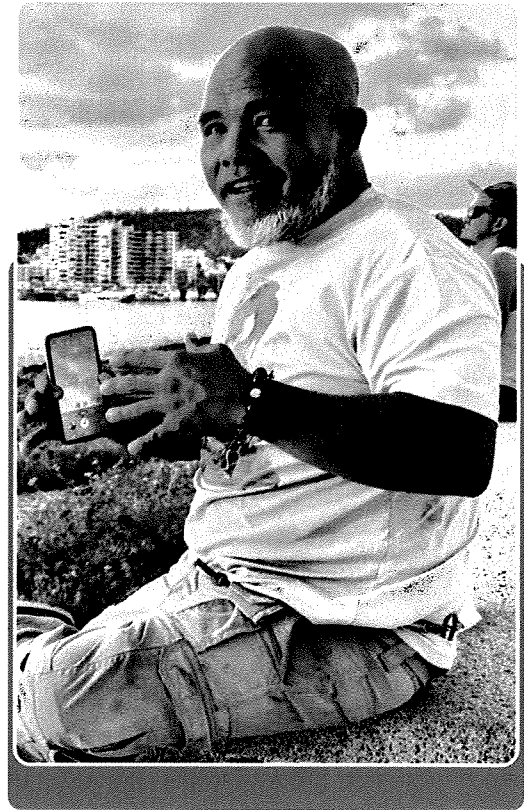
Haga' yan Åcho' | Blood and Stone aims to provide a rare glimpse into the history, passion, and pride of CHamoru slingers as they use åcho' atupat as a vehicle to reclaim and rebuild some of what has been lost or stolen. It will explore themes of resilience and resistance in the face of colonialism and cultural erasure, the importance of sport and friendly competition in a community, and how fine craftsmanship and athleticism come together in åcho' atupat to create something special and enduring that helps connect CHamoru culture with others.

This is a critical time to document this movement and story, as the man yiyupaktu of the Marianas are on the cusp of introducing slinging to other Pasifika cultures at FestPac 2024, playing host to the first international slinging tournament on Guam, and as Guam repatriates over 1,000 sling stones. It's also important to note that there are no other documentaries about slinging in the Marianas, so it's an excellent opportunity to explore a new topic.

# KEY CHARACTERS

ROMAN DELA CRUZ (48) is an excitable and fast-talking islander of CHamoru and Filipino descent. He is also a well-known entrepreneur on Guam with a wide range of interests from surfing to fashion and Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu. But these days, he's most-known as Guam's most vocal and passionate stone slinger (man yiyupaktu, in the indigenous CHamoru language of the Mariana Islands).

Roman first picked up a sling only 15 years ago. In that short time, he has become something of an evangelist for slinging (åcho' atupat) in Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), where he's on a mission to revive the ancient custom as a sport, art form, and source of indigenous pride.



If Roman is the charismatic preacher, his best friend VICENTE "GUELU" ROSARIO (58) is the humble O.G. who quietly kept the skills and knowledge of åcho' atupat alive as nearly everyone else moved on and forgot. He is now a doting traditional teacher to the entire community and a joy to learn from. Roman also relies on him to help guide the way on their shared journey. Guelu (which means "grandfather" in CHamoru) grew up in the sparsely populated island of Luta in the CNMI. He carries himself with the serene confidence of a man who knows he can comfortably live off the land and wayfind using the sea and stars.

With graying hair pulled up into a warrior's bun and a wiry goatee adorned with handmade jewelry of bayogo seeds and spondylus shells, he looks and lives as though he stepped out of a time machine from the 15th century. It's easy to admire his many tattoos of patterns telling the stories of his clan because he rarely wears a shirt. Who needs a shirt when you spend your days in the sun building traditional huts, carving and navigating traditional boats, and teaching folks how to sling a stone with enough force and accuracy to knock a coconut out of a tree?

# TREATMENT

## ACT I — Meeting Our Heroes, Establishing the History, Defining the Mission

We open to a bright summer morning in the rolling hills of southern Guam. Roman leads a few dozen people in a group activity. They are mostly CHamoru and range from very old to young. Using woven slings, they launch large seeds far into the distance.

These slings — an ancient tool for hunting, friendly contests, and even battles against Spanish conquerors — had almost completely fallen out of use here until recently. Today, they serve a different purpose: reforestation.

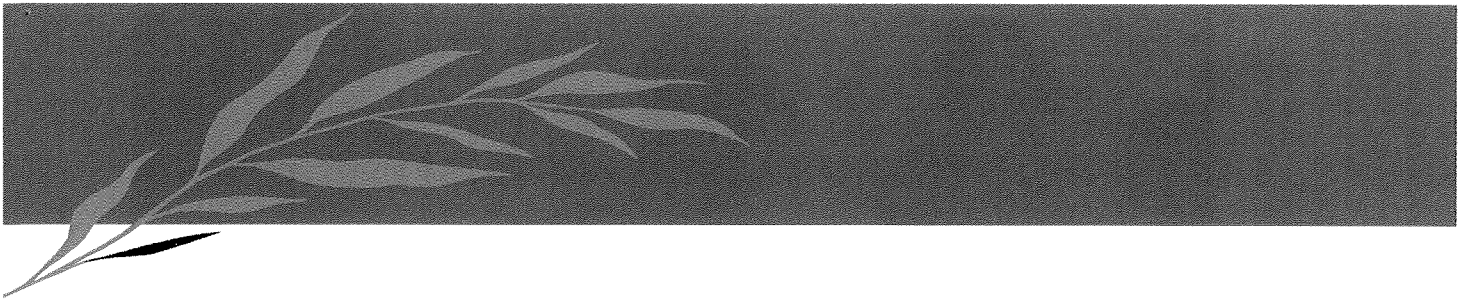
Roman explains that each seed zipping through the air may soon grow into a tree that will help restabilize the soil in this once fertile valley below the hills, which was burnt by poachers.

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As our protagonists, Roman and Guelu are the backbone of this film. They serve as our principal guides through the past, present, and future of åcho' atupat in the Marianas as they continue on their shared mission to bring slinging back into the regular lives of modern CHamorus and share the ups and downs of that journey.

That said, we also hear from a variety of respected historians, anthropologists, archaeologists, local preservation officers, museum curators, and others who are recognized experts in CHamoru culture and practices, including slinging. This is especially true in Act I of the film, as experts and practitioners alike reference CHamoru oral history, Spanish colonial-era records, and archaeological evidence to establish for viewers that slinging was a fundamental part of life for the ancient CHamorus as a tool for hunting, warfare, and play.

Likewise, they show that sling stones also held great symbolic importance in precontact society. We see examples of decorated sling stones and burial sites adorned with dozens of sling stones, strongly suggesting that these were not just utilitarian objects. They were seen as items of beauty or power to be used as jewelry for self-expression or caste identification and as tributes to the dead.



Experts admit that there is much we simply do not know (or have forgotten) about the practice of slinging in the Marianas, and there is much more to explore on the matter.

Importantly, we also establish in Act I that slinging was not only found in the Mariana Islands; It was practiced throughout much of the ancient world. We take a quick “world tour” of slinging, with fascinating examples from the Roman Empire, ancient Egypt (King Tutankhamun’s tomb contained the oldest sling found to date, c.1325 BC) and Greece (lead projectiles that have “Catch!” and “Take that!” carved into their sides), to the Assyrians, Arabs, Persians, Balearic Islands of Spain, Judea, Pohnpei, Bismarck Archipelago, etc. They also mention that slinging appears in some of the most famous pieces of Western literature, including The Iliad, The Odyssey, The Aeneid, Hamlet, The Bible, and even modern novels like The Hobbit

But the Marianas isn’t the only place still keeping slinging alive. Roman and Guelu, who have traveled the world with their slings and compete in international sling tournaments, describe how even today you can find communities big and small of slingers in places like Taiwan, Spain, Palestine, Tibet, and Peru.

However, they assert that with the exception of the Balearic Islands of Spain, maybe no culture keeps slinging alive and in their hearts the way CHamorus do. Even today, despite most CHamorus no longer knowing how to sling, it retains great symbolic power here. It’s one of the most commonly recurring symbols across the Marianas archipelago and with the CHamoru diasporic community, with slings and stones represented in tattoos, artwork, sculptures, company logos, government seals, and even the Guam flag. In fact, Guam’s flag is the only one in the world depicting a sling stone. “So,” says Roman, “it’s still with us everyday. Slinging is in our blood! These stones are part of us and we’re part of them.”







Guelu and Roman discuss how they and other advocates have made great strides in revitalizing slinging around the Marianas. They predict that 15 years ago there were only about 10 people actively slinging in the region, while now there are several hundred man yiyupaktu, as well as weekly meetups for slingers and even a few small retail companies making and selling slings. This is largely due to the efforts of the Guam-based slinging organization Åcho Marianas, which Roman founded in 2017 and led until 2022.

But the number of slingers is far short of what it could be, they say. And if slinging is to survive and stay relevant in the Marianas, they need to make big moves. Now.

To this end, they are embarking on a yearlong mission to exponentially increase the number of slingers in the region, forge global connections, and modernize slinging as a versatile sport rooted in ancient tradition. Their plans include integrating slinging into school curriculums, promoting it as an innovative way for communities to engage in reforestation projects, organizing inter-island tournaments, and helping local slingers to attend international competitions. They also want to convince local slingers to engage with the international slinging community by getting them to compete in weekly online sling tournaments hosted by a competitive slinger based in Louisiana that Roman and Guelu know from the Slinging World Cup tournaments in Spain.

But the duo's most ambitious endeavor involves introducing slinging to the Festival of the Pacific Arts (FestPac) in O'ahu in June 2024. It's never been an official FestPac event before. This is Roman and Guelu's best chance to put slings into the hands of people from dozens of Pacific islands at once and begin growing real interest across Oceania.

That journey begins now.

## ACT II — Exploring the Liminal, Embracing the Conflict

Act II is largely dedicated to hearing from a variety of CHamoru voices that can answer the questions: “Why does slinging remain so viscerally important to CHamoru culture when so few people here still sling? Why does it remain such a powerful cultural symbol?”

We hear from renowned CHamoru poets, artists, writers, dance groups, and musicians who use the sling and stone as motifs in their own work. We see them perform relevant portions of their craft and show examples of their visual art. We hear from CHamoru political leaders, academics, and psychologists. And, of course, we hear from other slingers.

Their answers and interpretations are as varied as their professions, but they serve to represent a cross-section of CHamorus who think deeply about and create culture. They often return to certain themes, including but not limited to:

- Slinging is empowering because it’s rooted in CHamoru culture, not imported.
- The elemental nature of the necessary materials are timeless and suggestive of a permanent connection to the land.
- Slinging is a cathartic act of resistance against modernization, militarization, and colonization of the Marianas.
- In a time of economic anxiety and land loss, sling stones can symbolize a foregone time of proud warriors and self-sufficient hunters/fisherman—archetypes so many people still strive to become, in some form.
- The sling stone’s prominent placement on the Guam flag and seal have effectively informed several generations of Guamanians that the sling stone is central to their culture and, like all flags, serves as a symbolic political statement communicating traits and values.
- In this largely predominantly Catholic island, the well-known story of David slaying Goliath with a sling stone can resonate with the CHamoru people’s ongoing resistance against foreign invaders and other mighty forces, while also symbolically connecting an iconic Bible hero to precontact Chamoru society.

Act II covers other critical ground, as well.

We see how Bernard Leon Guerrero, current president of Åcho Marianas, is also growing the local slinging community and exploring ways for his group to interact more with international slinging groups, such as

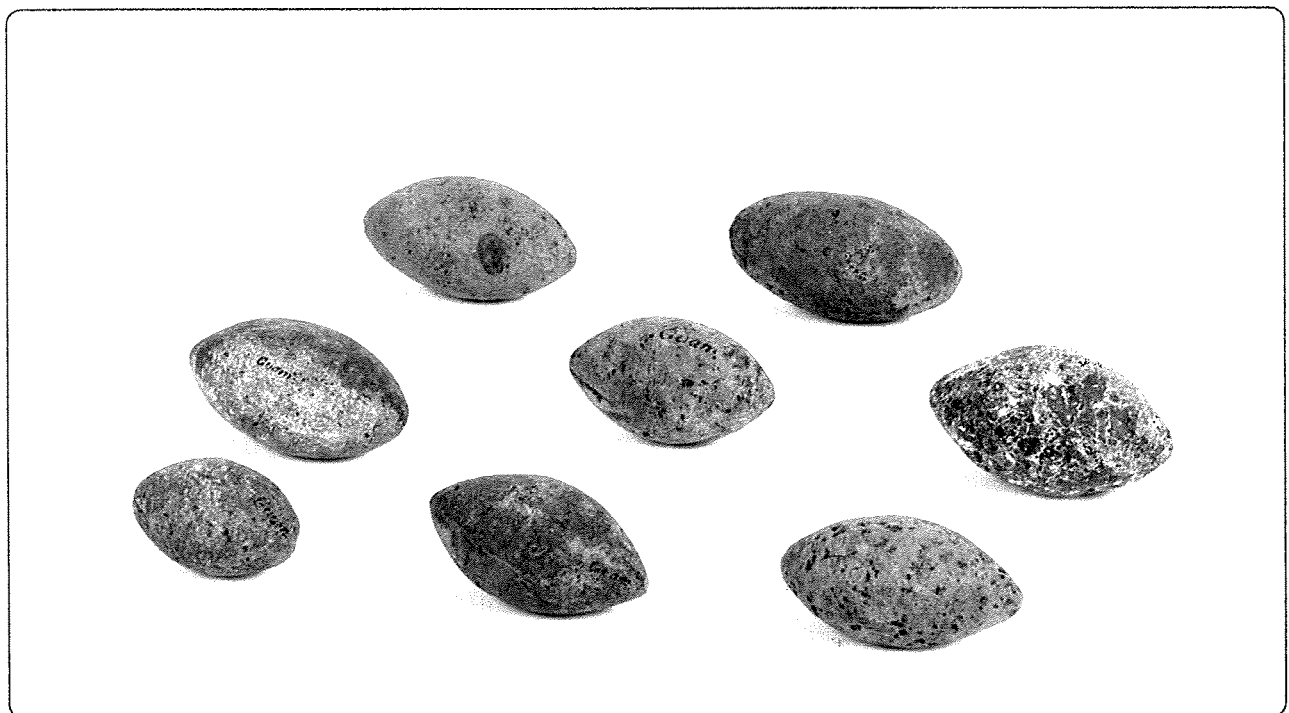
We check back in on Roman and Guelu to see their progress as they work hard in Guam and Luta to carry out their mission.

We see progress at the schools and in getting community groups to sling seeds in deforested areas. But while achieving small victories along the way, they also confront significant obstacles and struggle with doubts about their likelihood of success. They stay positive, always with an eye toward sharing the tradition of ʻāchoʻ atupat and attracting new slingers into the fold.

Furthermore, we are introduced to new characters who add additional layers to the story of slinging history and its evolution in the Marianas.

We meet Adrian Tedtaotao, a young man in California. He's a diasporic CHamoru who started slinging a year ago after visiting family in Saipan. He talks about how it can be tough to be an islander so far from home, but how slinging is an activity that lets him feel physically connected to his family and culture even when he's thousands of miles away. But he feels lonely on this journey and wishes he could sling with other islanders.

We also meet Patrick Lujan, Guam State Historic Preservation Officer, who discusses the ongoing plans to have a great number of CHamoru artifacts—including over 1,000 sling stones—repatriated to Guam from the Bishop Museum's Hornbostel collection in O'ahu. They were taken 100 years ago by an amateur archaeologist under questionable circumstances. Bevacqua and Lujan discuss why this is important, as well as the associated challenges. There's much that needs to occur before they can be returned. In that vein, we also hear from Patricia Alonso Pajuelo, curator of the collections of America and Oceania at Spain's National Museum of Anthropology in Madrid. Her collection houses the oldest known sling from Guam and she discusses options for someday repatriating it to Guam.





### ACT III — Sharing the Joy and Bringing Some Home

On Guam, Roman and Bernard work together to host sling events at parks, schools, and community centers.

The folks at Åcho Marianas talk about how they've been participating in the online tournament almost every week. A few of them have risen in ranks to be in the Top 10.

We learn that Adrian has also begun to participate in the weekly sling events online. Through that, he's not only connected to other CHamoru slingers online but has been able to meet up with other slingers in person in San Diego. He says his slinging has also inspired him to learn about other aspects of his culture and language he's not yet explored.

Guelu leads a successful and well-attended sling tournament in Luta during the Gilita Festival. It's a diverse, multigenerational group of slingers having fun and celebrating CHamoru culture.

But FestPac 2024 approaches! Roman and Guelu express how they must dedicate all their energies toward preparing for it. There's a lot on the line and no time to waste.

As the official Sling Delegation for Guam and NMI, we see Roman and Guelu preparing. They discuss and debate ways to use FestPac as a means of developing slinging as a sport throughout the Pacific and how they can effectively tell the story of slinging in the Marianas - the past, present, and future. They also express a desire to host a slinging tournament at FestPac with a cash prize but are not sure yet how it will be funded.

Finally, the big event has arrived. Delegates from across Oceania walk the FestPac grounds in traditional outfits. A crowd of onlookers and delegates gather at a pier for the arrival of traditional canoes who set sail from as far away as Fiji. It's the largest gathering of Pacific navigators and their boats in modern history. You can feel the energy in the air.

The remainder of the film tracks Roman and Guelu as they build a sling cage, hold slinging demonstrations, and give a presentation to a large audience about the past, present, and future of slinging in the Marianas. The audience is excited and intrigued.

The film's climax comes as a diverse crowd gathers at the sling cage for an exciting tournament featuring competitors representing several Pacific islands. We see some highlights, with competitors' dreams dashed and realized. The winners from various divisions happily collect their prizes, which include several slings to bring home, give away, and use to teach others with.

# EPILOGUE

As the film concludes, we learn through on-screen text and supporting video clips that

- ◆ The first shipment of slingstones repatriated from the Bishop Museum arrives to Guam. Smiling faces and celebrations as the unboxing begins.
- ◆ Adrian now leads a slinging workshop at the House of Chamorros community center in San Diego. He is also taking CHamoru language classes now.
- ◆ Roman has been named a vice president of the Spain-based World Slinging Association, the first CHamoru (or Pacific Islander, in general) to receive that honor.
- ◆ Roman, Guelu, and their friends at Åcho Marianas are now preparing for Guam to host the first-ever Slinging World Cup in 2025. This is the first time it will occur outside of Spain. Many Spaniards plan to come.

**TOTAL RUN TIME: 26:46**



# FILMMAKER'S STATEMENT

As a filmmaker, I seek stories that invite individuals and communities to share those things that are invisible to most but priceless to them. By letting us into their homes and showing us what they've taken the time to understand and admire — or even base their lives and hopes upon — a film's subject can help an audience deepen its appreciation for some of the hidden beauty and overlooked knowledge of the world. I believe Haga' yan A'cho' | Blood and Stone fits this model.

A'cho' atupat has been an integral part of Chamoru culture for at least a millenia. But, in a fast changing world, it nearly disappeared here over the last century. Yet, it's currently experiencing a resurgence that transcends age and class. And no one has made a long-form documentary film exploring the history of this ancient practice in the Marianas, its revival, and why it remains so important. This is a topic worth exploring, and one that can provide a deep dive into the region's history, archaeology, and cultures while entertaining and inspiring a general audience.

Since moving to Guam in 2016, I've found A'cho' atupat to be one of the most fascinating and unique aspects of the CHamoru culture. By befriending several of the most respected and talented man yiyupaktu in the Marianas, I've gained a deep understanding of what it is about slinging that so strongly captivates them. I've traveled to international sling tournaments with them, filmed with them, and learned to sling from them. Therefore, I believe I have better access to this story and a deeper interest in it than any other filmmaker in the region. Likewise, I have long-standing professional relationships with many of the people named in the treatment and have verbal commitments from most of them and alternate options for others. And since the film's Executive Producer and I both teach at UOG, we have easier access to historical resources at their Micronesian Area Research Center which can be utilized for the film.

Crucially, I also have a successful track record of directing and producing high-quality documentary films, TV commercials, and multimedia projects. I've worked as the Director of Video Production for one of Guam's largest full-service marketing agencies and as Video Production Manager and DP for Nihi Indigenous Media, a nonprofit, indigenous-led production house. Through those roles, I have developed a structured production workflow, a large network of creative collaborators, and a deep appreciation and respect for telling CHamoru stories. I possess an MFA in Film from American University in Washington, DC, and teach relevant courses at the University of Guam, including "Visual Anthropology," "Cinematography," "Photojournalism," and "Documentary Process." I am also serving as a cinematographer and associate producer on an hour-long documentary film partially about Chamoru WWII survivors, scheduled to air on PBS in the fall of 2024.

# ARTISTIC APPROACH

Haga' yan A'cho' will incorporate a variety of documentary formats and styles while maintaining a tight, cohesive aesthetic. Much of the footage will be in the tradition of direct cinema, but we will also utilize both sit-down interviews and walk-and-talks, as needed. We will incorporate animations and motion graphics to illustrate discussions about historical and ancient events and bring old archival sketches or photos to life.

We intend to be particularly creative with how we introduce characters and locations, transition between key scenes, utilize lower thirds, and illustrate key points in the narrative. Our goal is to use animations, motion graphics, and stop motion animations to significantly raise the production value of the film, enhance more traditional visual elements in a unique way, and make the film visually stunning and memorable.

The film will also incorporate highly stylized and creative shots of sling stones in flight and at rest. Using extreme slow motion techniques, Laowa lenses, and advanced studio lighting we intend to use the many cinematic tools at our disposal to show slings and stones in ways they've never been seen before.

While Haga' yan A'cho' will have its tense and contemplative moments, its tone is ultimately joyful and optimistic and its pacing fairly quick. Therefore, most of the music, footage, and motion graphics will aim to capture the playful spirit of our protagonists and the activity they're so passionate about. We can and will discuss the very real impacts of colonization and loss of culture without it weighing down the film. CHamorus respond to adversity and loss with humor and hope, and so will this film. Opportunities for humor and levity will be taken full advantage of, when appropriate and in good taste.



# Key Creative Personnel

## Tony Azios — Director, Co-Producer, Co-Writer

Tony is an award-winning documentary filmmaker and multimedia producer with an MFA in Film & Electronic Media from American University in Washington, D.C., and a BA in International Studies (with minors in History and Journalism) from Manhattan College. Based in Guam, he's taught Cinematography, Photojournalism, Visual Anthropology, and Documentary Production courses at the University of Guam. He's played key production roles for high-quality films, videos, and multimedia projects from Palau and Saipan to New York City and the Galapagos Islands. His films have screened in numerous film festivals and aired on Maryland Public Television, PBS, and Link TV. Tony has also worked as a multimedia producer and reporter for over 18 years. His articles, radio stories, and photographs have appeared in numerous outlets, including NPR, PBS FRONTLINE, CNN, The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, The Christian Science Monitor newspaper, The Guam Daily Post, Radio New Zealand, Agence France-Presse, and others.

### Tony's notable documentary credits and awards include:

- Director / Producer for *Memoirs Pasifika* (2021-2022), a documentary-style historical podcast series exploring events, movements, and people in modern Micronesia.
- Cinematographer for *Gods in Shackles* (2016), a feature-length investigative film about captive elephants in India.
- Cinematographer on *When Mickey Came to Town* (2016), a thirty-minute film about a rural Virginia community's epic fight against a Disney Company development plan.
- Second Camera and Audio Mixer on *Check It* (2016), a feature-length film about a Washington, DC, gang formed by young black LGBTQ people for self-defense. Premiered at the 2016 Tribeca Film Festival.
- Head Writer and Associate Producer on *Menhaden: The Most Important Fish in the Bay* (2012), a thirty-minute film for Maryland Public Television about the most important fish you've never heard of, the people who love it, and a company loving it to death. It won three Regional Emmy Awards (National Capital Chesapeake Bay Chapter) in the categories of Outstanding Documentary, Photography, and Editing — Student Division.
- Winner of the Will Interactive Dramatic Short Screenplay Award (2011) for *Crossing*.

## **Raymond Anderson, PhD — Executive Producer**

Dr. Raymond Anderson has worked in Digital Cinema and Mass Media education for over 17 years in Oregon, Kansas, and at the University of Guam. For the past 8.5 years he's helped shape UOG's Communication and Media program. He teaches classes ranging from Broadcast Production to Independent Narrative Filmmaking, Film and TV Criticism, and Documentary Process, and his students won national awards for filmmaking projects in 2019, 2021, and 2023 at the Broadcast Education Association's Festival of Media Arts. He has written about cultural groups and their interplay with popular culture and directed short narrative documentary public service announcements for UOG's Cancer Research Center. Recently, Ray scripted, directed, and produced several mini-narrative anti-vaping vignettes that were used by Pacific Island Partnership for Cancer Health Equity to train Guam middle school students in a pilot study with the University of Hawaii. As both an educator and filmmaker, Dr. Anderson is committed to producing projects that develop future filmmakers and multi-media storytellers in the Marianas.

### **Ray's notable awards include:**

His feature-length script, *The Centenarian's Birthday Party*, won an Award of Excellence at the national Broadcast Education Association's Festival of Arts. It subsequently was a semifinalist and quarterfinalist in WeScreenplay's Diverse Voices (2018) and ScreenCraft's Drama (2017) contests, respectively. It was also a finalist in the UK Film Festival Script competition (2019).

## **Sylvia C. Frain, PhD — Co-Producer**

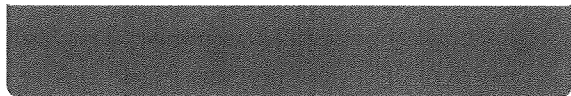
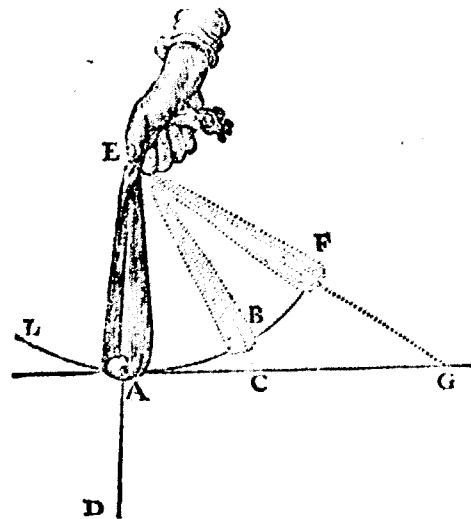
Sylvia is co-founder of Fāha' Digital Media, an NGO which supports storytellers and is a producer working on multiple projects across the Mariana Islands. Her most recent work was with a journalist and photographer for the New York Times Magazine, resulting in July 2023 publications: *The America That Americans Forget* and *In Guam and the U.S. Military Presence Is in Full View*. Previously, she served in the role of Public Affairs Coordinator at the U.S. Consulate General in Auckland, as well as the U.S. Mission in New Zealand, the Cook Islands, and Niue focusing on climate governance and policymaking in the Indo-Pacific region. Sylvia earned her Ph.D. in Peace & Conflict Studies at The National Center for Peace and Conflict Studies | Te Ao O Rongomaraeroa at the University of Otago | Te Whare Wānanga Ōtāgo in Ōtepoti | Dunedin, Aotearoa New Zealand and a Master Degree in International Studies in the field of Peace & Conflict Resolution at the School of Political Science and International Studies at the University of Queensland in Brisbane, Australia. In 2018, she was the inaugural postdoctoral research fellow at the Pacific Media Center, and in 2020 was awarded a Whitinga Research Fellowship in Visual Arts | Toi Whakatu in the School of Art + Design | Te Kura Toi a Hoahoa at Auckland University of Technology | Te Wānanga Aronui o Tāmaki Makaurau.

## Nia Serneo — Co-Producer

Nia is a Filipina-American film producer born and raised in Hågat, Guam. She is a founding member and Producer for the Marianas-based film production company, Mighty Island, whose mission is to create film and media that are representative and authentic to Guam and the Mariana Islands. She received her BA in Strategic Communications from Seattle University and PMBA from the University of Guam. Prior to full-time film producing, she served as Social Marketer and Communications Manager for the Guam Behavioral Health Wellness Center (GBHWC), whose various marketing initiatives received numerous SAMHSA Excellence in Communication Outreach Awards (2016-2018).

## Nico Serneo — Cinematographer

A Filipino-American from Guam, Nico Serneo is a founding member of Mighty Island. As a Director of Photography, Nico's passion is creating dramatic and organic images that capture the viewer's attention and leave a lasting impact. He attended De Anza College in Cupertino, CA, where he earned an AA in Film Production. He then transferred to the Academy of Arts in San Francisco and graduated with a BA in Film Editing. Kyle has been a working cinematographer since 2010, completing dozens of short films, documentaries, television commercials, and music videos in San Francisco and Guam.





## **Mariana Gabriel — Co-Writer & Associate Producer**

Mariana Gabriel joined Mighty Island in 2018 as a Key Grip / Production Assistant and worked her way into her current roles of Production Manager and Associate Producer. She attended Regent's College, London School of Film, Media and Performance and received a BA in English from the University of Guam in 2020. Mariana, who is CHamoru and native Hawaiian, is passionate about ushering unheard voices forward through emotionally compelling storytelling, particularly throughout the Pacific region.

## **Kyle Perron — Editor**

Kyle Perron is a founding member of Mighty Island. As a Chamoru born and raised in Guam, his focus is to develop authentic and relevant visual media that showcase traditional and contemporary cultures of the Mariana Islands. Kyle attended De Anza College in Cupertino, CA, where he earned an AA degree in Film Production. He then transferred to the Academy of Arts in San Francisco and graduated with a BA in Film Editing. Kyle has been a working editor since 2010, completing dozens of short films, documentaries, commercials, and music videos.

## **Mighty Island's notable screenings and awards include:**

The short film *I Matai* and short documentaries *Naturel* and *Pow!Wow!Japan* were showcased domestically at the Los Angeles Asian American Film Festival, Guam International Film Festival, Philadelphia Asian American Film Festival, and internationally at the Pasifika Film Festival, Maoriland Film Festival, and Yamagata International Documentary Film Festival. Most recently, their short film *Tradewinds*, funded by the Pacific Islanders in Communications Shorts Fund Grant, was accepted to the 2023 Hawaii International Film Festival. Their commercial projects have also received official recognition. The "We Start with You" video campaign for GTA Guam received the 2023 Excellence in Marketing Award by the Competitive Carriers Association and their work with the Bank of Guam has received three Viddy Awards, including two Platinum Viddy Awards under Branding Campaign and Culture/Lifestyle Short Form Video categories.



### **Vicente “Guelu” Rosario — Cultural Advisor / Key Film Subject**

Guelu is a man of many woven hats. Hailing from Luta, NMI, he can carve canoes, navigate, cook traditional food, speak Fino’ Chamoru, construct huts, carve sling stones, weave slings, and throw stones with the best of them. He has represented the CNMI in multiple international slinging tournaments. Guelu is a doting teacher to the entire community and a joy to learn from.

### **Roman Dela Cruz — Advisor / Key Film Subject**

Roman is co-founder and president of Fokai Industries, a Marianas-inspired lifestyle and apparel company based in Tumon, Guam. He founded ÅCHO Marianas, a Guam-based slinging organization, in 2017 and served as its president until 2022. He continues to dedicate much of his time to teaching and promoting stone slinging (åcho’ atupat) on Guam and the CNMI through expositions at primary school, lecturing at community and academic conferences, hosting cultural summer camps, and building a community sling cage. He has also represented Guam in multiple international slinging tournaments and has traveled all over the world with a sling in hand, eager to teach anyone who is curious.

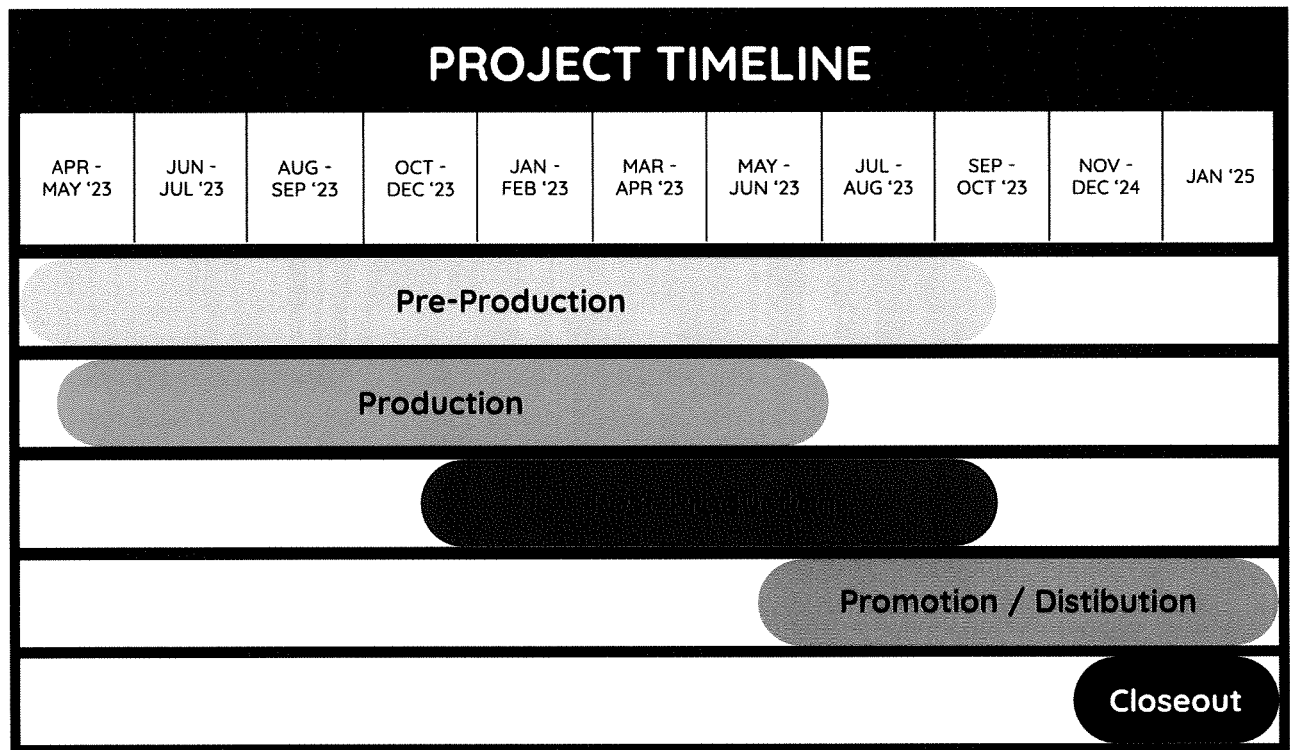
### **Michael Lujan Bevacqua, PhD — Advisor / Interview Subject**

Dr. Michael Bevacqua is Curator of the Guam Museum and a community scholar who specializes in Chamoru history and the teaching of the Chamoru language. He earned an MA in Micronesian Studies from UOG and a Ph.D. in Ethnic Studies from University of California, San Diego. He has worked on many documentaries, as a consultant and producer, most notably *Island Soldier* by Nathan Fitch and *War for Guam* from Frances Negrón-Muntaner, and was a recurring contributor to Tony Azios’ *Memoirs Pasifika* documentary podcast. He hosts *Fanachu!* Podcast, a decolonial current events and academic critique podcast based in Guåhan. Bevacqua has conducted extensive research into Guam and Marianas History, with a focus on the impacts of colonization on the Chamoru people and theorizing possibilities for their decolonization. He has published numerous articles on the impact of American colonization on the Chamoru people of Guam, tracing the changes in Chamoru identity (and their relationship to the U.S.) from 1898 up until the present day.

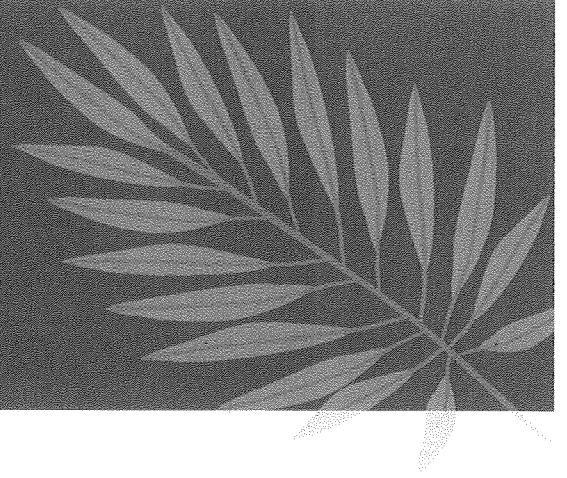
# Current Project Status

The majority of development and other pre-production activities were completed in April and May of 2023, although we continue to seek additional funding through a variety of sources. With the exception of one brief shoot in April, we began principal photography in June 2023 and have since completed several shoots in Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, and Spain. At this time, I estimate we have captured approximately 15 percent of the footage needed, including some of the most difficult footage to capture..

Going forward, we will continue activities as described in the Timeline below.



# Audience & Distribution



## Intended Audience

While a creative and inspiring film about a unique culture, sport, and the quest to bring an ancient tradition back to life will surely appeal to a wide audience, we believe this project will be of most interest to teenagers and adults with a passion for Pacific and Micronesian history, archaeology, cultural anthropology, sociology, oral storytelling, decolonization, indigenous customs and storytelling, Pasifika issues, emerging or “unusual” sports, and slinging. Haga’ yan Åcho’ | Blood and Stone will also be of great interest to Pacific Islanders interested in how other PI communities are engaging in innovative activities to preserve and promote their culture, as well as how they creatively express what’s important to their community. We hope our film will inspire further dialogue and research about Micronesia’s history and peoples, help to preserve and promote the indigenous language and culture of Guam and the CNMI, and promote the diversity of experiences and perspectives throughout the Mariana Islands.

There’s a growing national interest in Guam and the CNMI as U.S. territories, but a dearth of documentary films discussing them. Haga’ yan Åcho’ | Blood and Stone hopes to help fill that void. We intend to meet these diverse audiences in their homes via a multi-market PBS broadcast schedule and an online release on PBS.org, as well as through national and international film festivals and campus screenings in communities with a significant population of CHamorus and other Pacific Islanders.

## Distribution

First and foremost, we aspire to have our film aired on PBS National. We will also be quite proud, however, to air on regional PBS stations. PBS Guam has provided a letter of interest and is even willing to be the presenting station to PBS National.

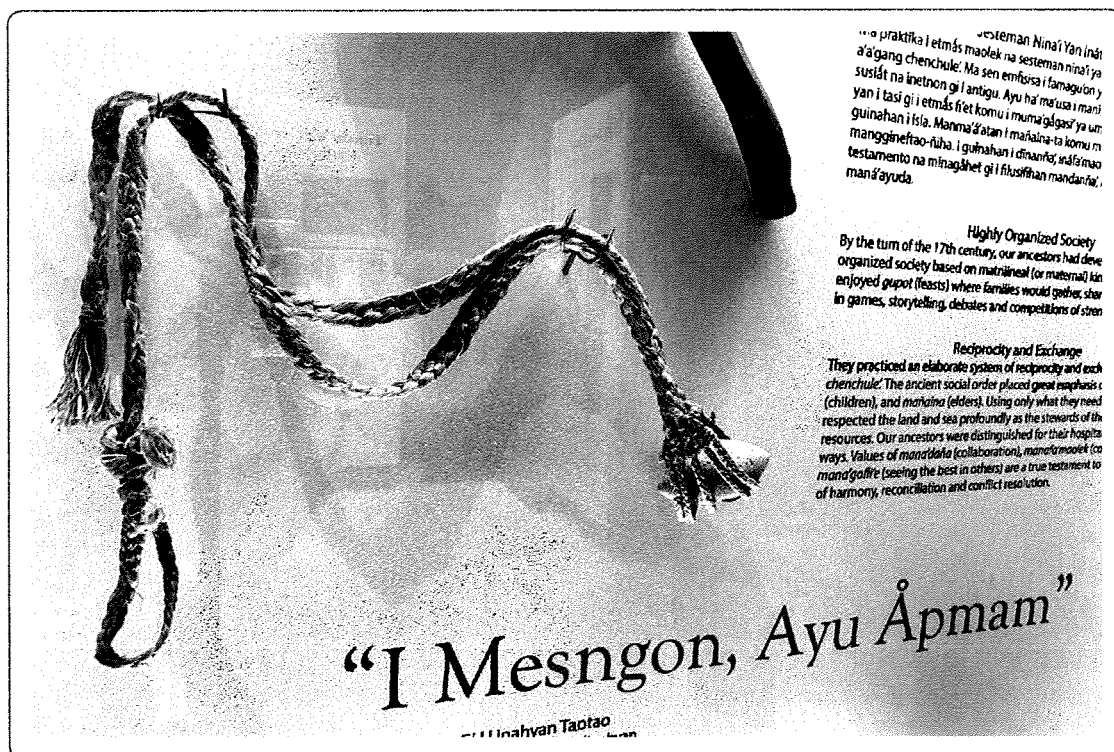
We also have a growing list of film festivals (domestic and international) that our film could be an excellent candidate for. We fully intend to submit the film to a minimum of 12 festivals where we believe it could have the most impact and that can heighten the public’s awareness of it. We also plan to have community screenings and filmmaker Q&A sessions in theaters, schools, and community centers on Guam and the CNMI.

# Promotion

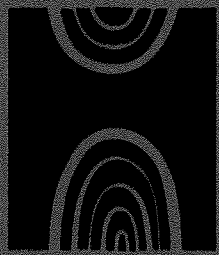
Our team is already extremely connected to the types of creative and academic communities in the Marianas that will rush to see this film and eagerly follow our progress on social media. We intend to maximize that local support network and ask them to help amplify our posts to our collective global network. We also have professional connections in traditional media and marketing agencies in the Marianas and mainland U.S. who can help us promote the film through interviews, feature articles, and other types of earned media.

Our director and protagonists are linked in with the global slinging community, located primarily across Europe, Asia, and the Americas. Many of them are already aware of the production of this film and are intrigued. We will activate that group, who are already so passionate about the topic, and ask them to help us grow awareness for the film online.

We also plan to promote the film to educational film distributors, as we can easily imagine it being screened in a number of high school and college courses.







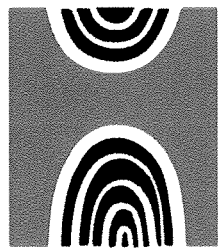
# HAGA' yan

## A'CHO' BLOOD and STONE

**For more information, please contact:**

**Tony Azios**  
Director / Co-Producer  
671-689-0206  
tonyazios@gmail.com

**Dr. Sylvia Frain**  
Co-Producer  
671-682-4734  
sylviafrain@gmail.com



HAGA' yan  
A'CHO' BLOOD  
and  
STONE



**HAGA' yan ÁCHO' | BLOOD and STONE**  
**FILM TRAILER**

This trailer is a brief sample of a fraction of the footage captured for this project so far:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Yeqpql6ZmOQfHgJ4TKpYA\\_czRBH5JIEA/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Yeqpql6ZmOQfHgJ4TKpYA_czRBH5JIEA/view?usp=sharing)

**HAGA' yan ÁCHO' | BLOOD and STONE**  
**LETTERS of COMMITMENT, SUPPORT, and INTEREST**

Please note that the following letters were written for previous grant applications so are not addressed to GPT. However, each letter is for this same proposed project.





KGTF CHANNEL 12

Guam Educational Telecommunication Corporation

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November 22, 2023

Independent Review Panel  
Pacific Islanders in Communications  
615 Pi'ikoi Street Suite 1203  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814

To the Pacific Islanders in Communications' Independent Review Panel:

Please accept this as a letter of interest from PBS Guam for the forthcoming documentary film, *Haga' yan Acho' | Blood and Stone*.

I have spoken extensively with Mr. Antonio Azios, the film's director / co-producer, about the documentary and reviewed its proposal. These are the types of quality, independent documentaries exploring social, historical, and cultural issues that our viewers seek. *Haga' yan Acho'* covers a topic of great interest and significance in this region, and I believe it has potential to prove engaging for viewers nationwide. It will also be a rare pleasure for our audience to watch a long-form documentary film from and about their region and culture on television.

I am familiar with the quality of Mr. Azios' and his talented team's past work and, therefore, feel confident the completed film will meet our station's standards and align with our mission at PBS Guam. I know he served a key creative position on a documentary film co-produced with Maryland Public Television that went on to win a regional Emmy Award and we believe this film can experience similar critical success.

Upon successful completion, formatting, and closed captioning of the series, we will strongly consider placing the program in our local broadcast schedule and will consider being the presenting station to PBS National, thereby releasing the show for national distribution.

Si Yu'os Ma'åse,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Don Muña", written over a horizontal line.

Don Muña  
Executive Producer, PBS Guam  
(671) 488-2468  
[donmuna@gmail.com](mailto:donmuna@gmail.com)

November 24, 2023

Mighty Island LLC  
221 Chalan Santo Papa, Ada Arcade Suite 304  
Hagatna, GU 96910

ATTN: Pacific Islanders in Communications

Please let this serve as a Letter of Commitment on behalf of the entire team at Mighty Island Productions to fill several of the Key Creative Personnel roles on the documentary film, *Haga' yan Acho' | Blood and Stone*.

Nia Serneo: Co-producer  
Mariana Gabriel: Co-writer  
Nico Serneo: Cinematographer  
Kyle Perron: Editor

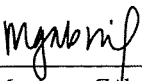
We have successfully worked with Antonio Azios, the film's director and co-producer, on multiple film/video projects and are excited to be working with him again on this important film. Moreover we believe this film can offer a contemporary perspective on a very specific aspect of our culture which is vital to our history and preservation.

Sincerely,



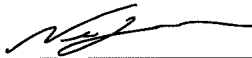
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Nia Serneo



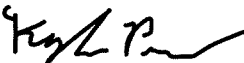
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Mariana Gabriel



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Nico Serneo



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Kyle Perron



**COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS & SOCIAL SCIENCES**  
*Division of Communication, Media and Fine Arts*

To the Pacific Islanders in Communication:

November 23, 2023

Re: Letter of Commitment & Support

Greetings,

My name is Dr. Raymond Anderson, and I am a filmmaker and Professor of Communication & Media at the University of Guam where I lead the university's Digital Cinema, Media, and Journalism track. I am writing this Letter of Commitment and Support for Mr. Antonio (Tony) Azios and the documentary film project, *Haga' yan Acho'* (*Blood and Stone*).

I have had the pleasure of working with Tony on several film projects and I now look forward to serving as the Executive Producer for this current film. I have known Tony since he moved to Guam in 2016. We serve as colleagues together at UOG, where I recruited him to teach courses in the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences, including Photojournalism (CO-240), Visual Anthropology (AN-321), Cinematography (CO-410), and Documentary Process (CO-426).

In both settings, I have observed that Tony is a thoughtful, hardworking and creative professional. He prioritizes accuracy in storytelling, clarity in communication, and a high production value in his multimedia work. As a result, I regularly ask him to serve on judging panels for student film festivals I coordinate, have him guest lecture for some of my courses, and collaborate with him on film/video projects. Clearly, I trust Tony's abilities and have no reservations in recommending him as a qualified and trustworthy colleague and grant recipient.

Finally, I would like to add that *Haga' yan Acho'* tackles a very interesting and important topic that has not yet been explored by other filmmakers in the region. Slinging and sling stones continue to play a unique role in CHamoru culture, both symbolically and in practice. The revival of slinging in the Marianas lends itself to visual storytelling and is a great launching pad to explore important social, political, and cultural issues here in Guam.

I am fully committed to this documentary and wholeheartedly endorse Mr. Azios and I am confident our film will be a success. I sincerely hope you will help us along with making it so, and even more visible nationally.

Sincerely,

Raymond Anderson, PhD  
Professor of Communication and Media, UOG  
[rdanderson@triton.uog.edu](mailto:rdanderson@triton.uog.edu)

T: +1 671.735.2700 F: +1 671.734.3575 W: [www.uog.edu](http://www.uog.edu)

Mailing Address: 303 University Drive UOG Station Mangilao, Guam 96913

*The University of Guam is a U.S. Land Grant Institution accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges Senior College and University Commission and is an equal opportunity employer and provider.*

**FORM FOR TRADITIONAL TEACHERS***For people who have extensive life experience in an area of the humanities*

**TRADITIONAL TEACHERS:** Please assist the applicant by completing this form thoroughly. Do not simply attach a vitae. This form is meant to take the place of a lengthy vitae and other attachments. Continue answers on another sheet if necessary. Please type your responses, and return the form as soon as possible to the applicant.

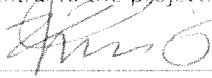
Name **"Guelu" — Vicente M. Rosario**Title **Character in film, Consultant, Panelist**Institution of employment (if any) **Rota Mayor's Office**Fields of Study **Traditional Teacher**Mailing Address **595 Rota 96951**Phone **670.532.1358**

Fax

E-mail **tingoguelu@gmail.com**

I, the undersigned, have agreed to participate in this project. I have a complete understanding of the project goals and objectives and will contribute to the development and/or dissemination of project content, and ensure a humanities focus is central to the project. My role in the project is described below.

Signature

Date **09-14-23**

**Experience:** List education (both formal and traditional, if appropriate), experience, and research activities relevant to this project.

I am a registered traditional Chamoru artisan. For many years I have taught to students of all ages in the Northern Mariana Islands and Guam. These skills include canoe making, hut building, slinging, and cooking. I also help plan annual festivals, organize sling stone tournaments on Guam and Luta, and work with youth to connect to their culture and grow as individuals. I have served as a delegate in past FestPacs and will do so again in 2024, where I will show traditional sling stone skills and organize a small tournament. Likewise, I have represented the Marianas Islands at the Slinging World Cup in Spain, where representatives from dozens of compete, and will do so again this year.

**Role in the Project:** What will be your role in the project (planner, consultant, lecturer, panelist, commentator, moderator, discussion leader, etc.)? How do you believe your role and experience will contribute to the overall program?

I have agreed to serve as a consultant on this project, as well as be in the film for interviews as I teach slinging or participate in tournaments. Tony will have access to me on both Luta and Guam, as well as at the 4th Slinging World Cup in Spain. In my capacity as a consultant and interviewee, I will explain the history of slinging in the Marianas, how a movement is underway to bring it back into the daily lives of Chamorus, and what it means for our future. I will also help connect him to other prominent slingers in the Marianas and at the Slinging World Cup so he can interview them and get better access to useful information and resources. If he needs me to serve as a panelist or participate in a public forum event, I am willing.

**Approach to the Subject:** What approach or approaches will you take in addressing the subject (historical, literary, philosophical, etc.)? What are some of the major points you will make? What issues will you address? Give specific examples.

I will contribute to this film as a traditional teacher, artisan, and practitioner. I have been slinging for several decades and have played a leading role in the movement to bring this tradition back to life. As a skilled slinger and artisan, in this film I will show how to make a sling and how to carve a stone, as well as how to throw with power and accuracy. But as a teacher with a deep love for Marianas history and thoughts on the philosophy of slinging, I will help explain why slinging is still valuable to our culture and history, how it can help to show us who we still are as a people, and the many ways we connect to each other and even other cultures through slinging.

**FORM FOR HUMANITIES SCHOLARS***For people with advanced academic degrees (M.A. or Ph.D.) in the humanities*

**SCHOLARS:** Please assist the applicant by completing this form thoroughly. Do not simply attach a vitae. This form is meant to take the place of a lengthy vitae and other attachments. Continue answers on another sheet if necessary. Please type your responses, and return the form as soon as possible to the applicant.

Name: Michael Lujan Bevacqua, PhD Title: Consultant, Advisor, Panelist

Institution of employment (if any): Guam Museum, Dept. of Chamorro Affairs

Academic Degrees, Institutions, Fields of Study: MA, Micronesian Studies — UOG;  
PhD, Ethnic Studies — University of California, San Diego

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 22894 GMF, GU 96921

Phone: 671.988-7106 Fax: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: michael.bevacqua@dca.guam.gov

I, the undersigned, have agreed to participate in this project. I have a complete understanding of the project goals and objectives and will contribute to the development and/or dissemination of project content, and ensure a humanities focus is central to the project. My role in the project is described below.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date 9/28/23

**Scholarship and Professional Experience:** List academic training, teaching experience, research activities and publications relevant to this project (this must include an advanced degree in a humanities discipline). If appropriate, include experience with non-academic audiences.

I am Curator of the Guam Museum, an educator, and community scholar. I teach free Chamoru language classes and host the Fanachu! Podcast, a decolonial current events and academic critique podcast based in Guåhan. I have conducted extensive research into Guam and Marianas history and am widely published. In addition, I have also worked on many documentaries as a consultant and producer, most notably "Island Soldier" by Nathan Fitch and "War for Guam" from Frances Negrón-Muntaner. I have also worked closely with Mr. Azios on several episodes of the Humanities Guahan-funded project, "Memoirs Pasifika" — a historical documentary-style podcast exploring people, events, and movements in modern Micronesian history. In my former position as a professor at the University of Guam, I served as a thesis advisor for many undergraduate and graduate students and am well-practiced in guiding others as they flesh out a project, focus their research, connect with other scholars and academic resources, and develop novel humanities themes to explore.

**Role in the Project:** What will be your role in the project (planner, consultant, lecturer, panelist, commentator, moderator, discussion leader, etc.)? How do you believe your role and experience will contribute to the overall program?

As a Consultant / Advisor for this documentary film, I will advise the Project Director and his crew on the known historical record regarding sling stone traditions and artifacts in the Marianas. I am also willing to serve as a Panelist for a discussion / Q&A event after a public screening of the film. In my capacity as Curator for the Guam Museum, I will help connect him to resources (archival documents and images, ancient artifacts, pertinent scholars and traditional practitioners, etc.) that might help to inform the film's narrative and provide a foundation in the rich history of ácho' atupat.

**Approach to the Subject:** What approach or approaches will you take in addressing the subject (historical, literary, philosophical, etc.)? What are some of the major points you will make? What issues will you address? Give specific examples.

In addition to helping the filmmakers critically explore the documented history of slinging on Guåhan, I am especially interested in guiding their exploration of the evolving role of slinging in modern Chamoru culture. How has slinging taken on new importance and relevance for the people of the Marianas today? Why have emblems related to slinging continued to grab our imaginations and symbolize the people of Guåhan? Is slinging forging new bonds in the community and with the Chamoru diaspora? How are the past functions, conceptions, and symbolism of ácho' atupat evolving to fill modern psychological and sociological needs here as the Marianas reconnects to its traditions and defines its position in a globalized world?

Buenas yan hafa adai.

Nov. 20, 2023

I am writing this letter to express my commitment to working with Antonio Azios on the documentary film *Haga' yan Acho'* | *Blood and Stone*

As former president of the Guam-based slinging organization ACHO Marianas (2017-2022), I have played a large role in reviving an interest in the tradition of stone slinging (acho' atupat) on Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Although I have left that role, I continue to organize slinging-oriented events and workshops across the Marianas, participate in relevant discussions and conferences with community groups and historians, and occasionally represent Guam in international slinging tournaments. I also joined fellow slingers from the Marianas at the 4th Slinging World Cup this October in Spain, where I was named a vice president of the hosting organization. I am also working to develop slinging into an official FestPac event beginning in 2024

At least 50 cultures worldwide have a tradition of slinging. They're found in the Pacific and as far away as Tibet, Ukraine, and Peru. Many people from slinging cultures are also giving the practice new life and energy in their communities. I continue to forge connections between them and slingers here

I have committed to serve as a story consultant and primary subject for this film. I will participate with the project both on- and off-camera and will help connect him to other members of the acho' atupat community who could play an important role in its successful production.

I have been an active slinger for 15 years, so I remember when it was just a few of us learning the craft and launching rocks into the surf. But, over the years, we've seen a significant growth in the number of folks here who have taken on slinging as a serious hobby. We are truly witnessing the revival of a nearly lost practice, and we've only just begun.

This is an ongoing story, and one worth documenting. The film will touch upon many important themes, including our community's reclamation of a stolen heritage, the persistence of ancient traditions and their evolution into modern practices and lifestyles, and the role CHamorus and other people who call the Marianas home are playing in reviving slinging traditions.

I commit to continue participating in the filming of *Haga' yan Acho'* and offer Mr. Azios and his team any support, insight, connections, and encouragement I am able to along the way. I hope your organization can also help bring this film to fruition by providing grant funding.

si Yu'os Ma'ase.

**Roman Dela Cruz**

Co-founder of Fokai Industries

Co-founder / former President of ACHO Marianas

671 777 6139; Fokaiindustries@gmail.com

July 28, 2023

Håfa adai,

My name is Michael Lujan Bevacqua, I am from the Kabesa and Bittot clans of Guam and I currently work as the curator for the Guam Museum. Prior to working at the museum, I spent 10 years as faculty at the University of Guam, where I helped found the CHamoru Studies Program there. I have published several dozen articles focusing on Chamoru culture, history and language and continue to offer free weekly Chamoru language classes in the community.

I write this letter to show enthusiastic support for the project "Haga' yan Åcho': Blood and Stone." This film will be an important educational tool within the Marianas and within global Chamoru communities, but will also be helpful in terms of educating the rest of the world about the Marianas and the Chamoru people.

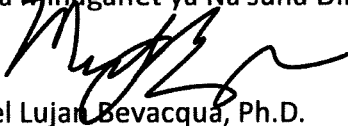
I acho' atupat or the slingstone remains one of the most iconic artifacts of the Chamoru people from our ancestors. What was once a weapon, used in battle, used in competition, and used to hunt centuries ago, continues to be found as artifacts in jungles and other sacred areas. The mere shape of it is something that can be seen in the architecture and imagery of Guam today, most noticeably in the shape of the Guam seal and the Guam flag.

European colonization which began in the 17<sup>th</sup> century in the Marianas, heavily disrupted Chamoru life, lands and the connections felt by the people to the lifeways of their ancestors. It created a division where Chamorus for the past two centuries felt fundamentally different and disconnected from their ancient ancestors. The Chamoru renaissance which began in the 1970s, has gone far in terms of helping to overcome those colonial divides, and create a more intimate and respectful connection between the Chamorus of today and those of the past. A key part of that renaissance in the past decade has been the revitalization around slinging.

What I enjoy most about this project, is that it will not only focus on the ancient aspects to the acho' atupat, but also the contemporary efforts to bring back slinging as a form of leisure and a way of education and uplifting youth. This is key since indigenous people in a modern context often become accustomed to thinking that their culture isolates them and that giving it up and replacing it with another, will make them feel more connected to the world. But as Chamorus and allies who have gone to participate in international slinging competitions have seen and experienced, dozens of cultures from every corner of the globe also had their own form of slinging. To embrace and enjoy the Chamoru version of slinging, means to both empower ourselves, but find unexpected affinity and solidarity with others.

I have worked with Tony on a few media projects over the years, most recently as a recurring host for the historical podcast he directed and produced, Memoirs Pasifika. Based in these experiences, I can attest that he is a diligent worker, committed to seeing through any project he undertakes and working collaboratively with subject area experts and members of the broader community throughout the process. I believe he will be able to help make this important and much needed project a reality.

Sahuma Minagahet ya Na'suha Dinagi

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael Lujan Bevacqua', written over the printed name.

Michael Lujan Bevacqua, Ph.D.  
Curator, Guam Museum



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**Sophia Perez**

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July 23, 2023

To whom it may concern,

I'm writing this letter in support of Tony Azios, a creative who I've worked with on several occasions and in several different capacities.

I first met Tony in 2021, when he applied to the Northern Marianas Humanities Council's Community Grant program. As Program Officer for the Council, I was impressed by his application's ambition and comprehensive planning. After he received the grant, he quickly became the most responsible and organized grantee I ever worked with in my time at the Council. The final product, *Memoirs Pasifika*, is a standout podcast in the Marianas, clearly painstakingly developed to be journalistically sound and artfully executed. The Council's board of directors was very pleased to have played a role in its creation.

In 2022, I wrote and directed a Sesame Street-style Chamorro children's show on Saipan called *Island Time*, and Tony was brought onboard by Guam's own Mighty Island Productions as an editor and an extra set of eyes on set. That's when I learned that Tony is not only able to maintain order within his own projects, but he can also create order in the midst of chaos. He is the epitome of a creative problem solver—he quickly reblocked an entire scene after an actor tested positive for COVID, taped hidden scripts around set for those who hadn't memorized their lines, and even found an empanada at a mini-mart *after* the lunch time rush (people kept eating the props). I'm hesitant to bring up the show's post production process and trigger my own PTSD, but I'll say that Tony deftly handled some unique editing challenges that came up when our team tried to edit a 30-minute show using different editing software and several different VFX programs, all on different devices on different islands and eventually in different time zones. If it weren't for his skill, creativity, commitment, endurance, and collaborative nature, I'm not sure the show would have been completed. Now, *Island Time* is premiering to rave reviews with regional and mainland audiences.

I guess this is all to say that Tony is not just a good artist—he's a doer. That's his personality. Anyone would be lucky to have him on their project, because they can trust he'll make it happen.

Please don't hesitate to reach out if you have questions.

Sincerely,



Sophia Perez