



Thomas Takemoto- Chock

**Movie Producer
Class of 2004**

By Erin Swain

Imagine spending a half hour setting up a photo shoot for a living room or bedroom. You cover the windows with a special film so that light filters evenly from the outside. You place your expensive RED camera on a tripod than lock it on a dolly with wheels. As you shoot photos of the room, your colleague slowly pulls you and the camera along, creating movement as you pan the room. Your keen eye films close ups of the ceilings and floors. You make small flowers appear larger by magnifying them. You take two and a half days to shoot a 3-minute cinematic tour of a million dollar home.

This is a typical day in the life of Thomas Takemoto-Chock, a movie producer. A movie producer wears many hats. He takes care of all of the organization, logistics and scheduling required to produce a movie. He must also raise funds to produce the film, create and follow a budget, hire the cast and crew and schedule the filming, as well as get permission to use the locations necessary for the film. He oversees all stages involved in getting a film produced: from the planning stage (pre-production), the shooting stage (principle photography), and the finishing stage (post-production). Basically, a producer takes care of the "business" end of film production.

Tommy is one of the first graduates of the Academy of Creative Media at the University of Hawaii, where he produced a number of short films ranging from 10 to 20 minutes. One of these films, entitled "Rain," has been screened in dozens of film festivals, including in Shanghai and India. He's now working on commercial productions, producing a short original film (30-40 minutes) and writing several feature length scripts of 90+ minutes. Tommy's long term goal is to write and direct feature length films in and about Hawaii.

Tommy observes that there is no one way to become a movie producer. Every film has a different dynamic and every crew has its own

strengths and weaknesses. Some producers start at the bottom of the ladder as a production assistant, while others choose the independent route and learn from making their own low-budget movies. His advice is "to just go out there and do it, and always keep an open mind. The only thing standing in your way is how much you want to make it happen. If you need money, ask for donations. If you want to become a screenwriter, read books about it. To secure the right cast for your movie, visit drama classes and find the perfect actors. You'll learn from your mistakes."

Tommy's entrepreneurial spirit caused him to establish Real Space Hawaii, LLC, which produces cinematic tours for high end real estate properties, hotels and businesses. He started to shoot short home movies in middle school, then several longer films for class assignments in his freshman year. During his senior year, he did a 115-minute modern adaptation of *Beowulf* using students in his class as actors. Other projects included a History Day documentary on Akira Kurosawa, a Japanese director, and a fictional period piece set during the first World War. At the end of his high school career, he knew he wanted to make movies for the rest of his life. Other memories about Waiakea High is working and hanging out with his friends. He was also involved with the WHS Sound Crew and Tech Crew. He helped produce a lot of the videos for the Variety Show and commencement ceremonies. He was one of the Class of 2004's valedictorians.

