

TO UNCOVER THE TRUTH HE HAS TO BECOME THE LIE



Hawai‘i '72

Based on a true story

Written and Directed by James Sereno

LOGLINE

In 1970s Hawai‘i, a conflicted young cop goes deep undercover in a heroin empire run by a faceless kingpin known only as The Ghost. The deeper he goes, the more the world turns upside down—until good and evil become impossible to tell apart.

BASED ON TRUTH - Inspired by the real story of a Hawai‘i police officer who went undercover—and the personal cost that followed.

GENRE - Crime Drama / Undercover Thriller / Character Study

TONE - Gritty. Lyrical. Haunting. Like "Donnie Brasco" meets "City of God" set under tiki torches and shadowed banyans.

Synopsis

In the illusion of paradise, shadows run deep.

Hawai‘i '72 follows Jimmie Silva, a young father struggling to provide for his growing family in 1970s Honolulu after losing his job. A mysterious offer comes from a covert police unit: become someone else, vanish from his old life, and infiltrate the island's rising heroin empire, ruled by a man no one has ever seen, only heard whispered in fear: The Ghost.

With a new name, Boogie, and no backup but a cold-eyed handler named Zero, Jimmie sinks into a world of backroom deals, banyan-shrouded drug dens, and officers who wear the badge by day and deal poison by night. The deeper he goes, the more the lie fuses to him, until his cover becomes his skin, and the mission blurs into the man.

Back home, Angela raises their infant daughter alone, sensing the man she loves is vanishing. Haunted by old wounds and entangled with a mysterious woman named Faith, Jimmie's descent threatens to consume his mission and he must choose between protecting the ones he loves or burning everything down to take the devil with him.

Hawai‘i '72 is a raw, atmospheric crime drama inspired by true events about identity, loyalty, and the steep price of becoming the very thing you swore against.

THEMES:

- **Identity and erosion of self**
- **Corruption within paradise**
- **The high cost of loyalty and truth**
- **Masculinity, shame, and silence**
- **Truth vs. Justice**

SETTING:

Waikiki Hawai‘i, 1972, a tropical postcard masking systemic rot. A city of banyan shadows, barefoot prophets, corrupt cops, and colonial hangovers.

MAIN CHARACTERS

JIMMIE SILVA (25)

A young father with a fractured past, desperate to provide for his family. Recruited to go undercover in a heroin ring, Jimmie slips into a false identity —only to find the deeper he goes, the harder it is to find his way back.

ZERO (Detective Andrew Hernandez) (31)

A shadowy, calculating detective who recruits and controls Jimmie. More handler than ally, Zero operates with surgical coldness, believing the end justifies the means.

THE GHOST (50)

A myth. A kingpin. No one knows who he is, only that he controls everything.

FAITH BENNETT (32)

A waitress with a sharp tongue and a tired heart. Faith sees through people, especially Jimmie.

ANGELA KUA (22)

Jimmie's wife and the mother of their infant daughter. Fiercely grounded, emotionally worn, and unafraid to call out the truth.

DICKY "SNOW" HUGHES (27)

A flashy young dealer with a smooth face and deeper loyalties. He's the public face of a private rot, loyal to The Ghost to the bitter end.

VISUAL STYLE FILM REFERENCES

Donnie Brasco (1997)

Undercover intimacy. Gritty textures, muted tones, and slow-burn tension.

City of God (2002)

Kinetic and raw. Handheld chaos, color bursts, and inner decay.

Requiem for a Dream (2000)

Addiction as unraveling. Surreal edits, fractured time, and psychological collapse.

True Detective (Season 1)

Spiritual rot in sunlit stillness. Long takes, moral gray, and place as character.