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# Documentary Film: Moana with Sound

07/20/2016, 7:00 PM to 8:40 PM

Location: \$9/\$5 Brooks members and students with valid ID/Free with VIP Film Pass. [map](#)

## Description:

After the triumphant success of his true-life Arctic adventure *Nanook of the North* (1922), director Robert J. Flaherty journeyed with his wife Frances and their children to the South Seas island of Savai'i to capture on film the exotic lifestyles of the Samoan people.

It was in a 1926 review of *Moana* that the word "documentary" was first used in a cinematic context (John Grierson commented that the film had "documentary value"). While *Moana* may not have been a documentary in the purest sense of the word—the Flahertys "cast" the leading roles and required them to wear traditional clothing, and restaged certain rituals that had, by 1923, already become obsolete—what the filmmakers achieved was even greater. The Flahertys resurrected the recently vanished customs of the Samoan people while they still lingered in the minds of the elders, and dramatized these struggles for survival just before modernization permanently altered the cultural landscape of the island.

In 1975, the Flahertys' daughter Monica ventured back to Savai'i, with documentarian Richard Leacock, to record a new audio track comprised of the sounds of the island and voices in the regional dialect—completed in 1980 and released as *Moana With Sound*. This edition of *Moana With Sound*, restored by Bruce Posner and Sami van Ingen (great-grandson of the Flahertys), marks the first time Monica's soundtrack has been married to a pristine 35mm print of *Moana* and allows the landmark motion picture to be seen—and heard—in its full glory.

Directors: Robert Flaherty & Frances Hubbard Flaherty | USA | 1926/1980 | 98 minutes | Samoan with English subtitles

[TICKETS](#)

Tickets are available online until 2:30 pm the day of the screening or 2:30 pm on Friday for weekend matinees. Tickets are also available at Visitor Services, or by calling 901.544.6208 during regular business hours. Unsold tickets are also available in the rotunda immediately preceding a screening.

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# Memphis Brooks Museum of Art

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