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Hawaii sizzles with location shoots

6:59 PM PDT 10/7/2010 by Todd Longwell, AP

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'Hereafter,' 'Battleship,' 'Pirates' filmed in Aloha State

Recent productions set to bow in the coming months show that Hollywood is hooked on Hawaii.

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"Hereafter"

(Warner Bros.)

Release date: Oct. 22

For three days in January, director Clint Eastwood transformed

Maui's coveted tourist areas of Lahaina and Kanapali into the site of "Hereafter's" most intense action sequence. "When I saw the trailer, I thought, 'My God, our poor Front Street has been destroyed!' " says Maui Film Office commissioner Benita Brazier of the startling scene in which a tsunami washes through an open-air market. "Thankfully it was done with CGI," she says. Although Eastwood and company were only on site for three days, they employed 100 locals during the shoot. "It was big for the island," Brazier says.

"Just Go With It"

(Sony)

Release date: Feb. 11

Producer-star Adam Sandler's second Hawaii-set film following 2004's "50 First Dates," this romantic comedy shot on locations on Maui and Kauai between March and May. This time though, he brought co-stars Nicole Kidman and Jennifer Aniston, whose collective celebrity inspired some rare paparazzi moments in the laid-back island paradise. "They were all trying to take a picture of (Aniston) in a bikini," says Kauai Film Office commissioner Art Umezu. "Generally, they let celebrities do what they want and just hang, you know?"

"Pirates of the Caribbean: On Stranger Tides"

(Disney)

Release date: May 20

Disney wants to keep details about the film hush-hush, but that didn't stop "Pirates" producer Jerry Bruckheimer from sharing photos from the shoot on Kauai's remote Na Pali Coast (accessible only via boat or helicopter) with the world. ("Some truly amazing locations," he posted on Twitter.) And it

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was hard for people not to notice the two weeks of night work during the summer on the battle aboard Blackbeard's (Ian McShane) ship Queen Anne's Revenge in Oahu's He'eia Kea Harbor. "Every night, there were 800 people there just waiting for the stars come to the set," says Hawaii Film Office liaison Georja Skinner. "To [star] Johnny Depp's credit, he would shake their hands, talk to them and make a real effort to give people something special."

"Soul Surfer"
(Sony)

Release date: 2011

Safety was never far from the filmmakers' minds during the making of this inspirational biopic about Bethany Hamilton (AnnaSophia Robb), who lost her left arm to a shark attack at the age of 13 while surfing off the coast of Kauai in October 2003. Robb and co-stars Dennis Quaid and Helen Hunt prepared by training with surf instructor Noah Johnson and second unit director/water stunt expert Brian L. Keaulana. While shooting surfing scenes on the North Shore of Oahu, rescue divers were in the water, equipped with water repellent bracelets, jet skis towing life sleds and Seabobs, underwater propulsion devices that can dive up to 100 feet. Still, director Sean McNamara was a bit unnerved when they had to retrieve a camera that had fallen into the ocean during a night shoot. "Light attracts sharks at night, so it was spooky," he says.

"Battleship"
(Universal)

Release date: May 2012

Loosely adapted from the classic Hasbro board game of the same name, the Peter Berg-directed epic was originally scheduled to lens on Australia's Gold Coast. However, issues with the country's federal rebate steered it the Aloha State, where it started a six-week shoot last month in various Oahu locations, as well as on decommissioned battleship-turned-museum the USS Missouri -- site of the Japanese surrender, ending World War II -- currently docked at Ford Island in Pearl Harbor. In mid-October, the massive production, which stars Taylor Kitsch ("Friday Night Lights"), Alexander Skarsgard ("True Blood"), Liam Neeson and singer Rihanna (making her film debut), moves to Louisiana for additional shooting at Baton Rouge's Celtic Media Center studios.

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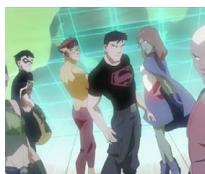
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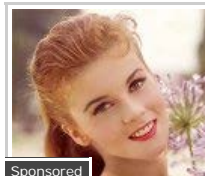


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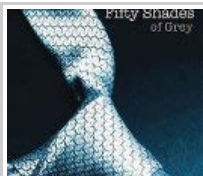
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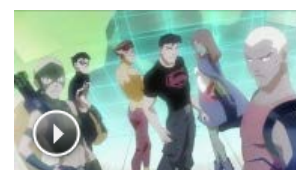
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
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