



# [CLASSIFIED]: AN EMPIRE IN PERIL

"The war of another tomorrow."

CONTACT: [NICKCHANGLLC@GMAIL.COM](mailto:NICKCHANGLLC@GMAIL.COM) | 1-808-265-3588

TITLE: *An Empire in Peril*

GENRE: Military Sci Fi, Mockumentary

RUNTIME: 55 minutes

FORMAT: MP4 H.264

YEAR: 2025

LOCATION(s): Seattle, WA., Reno, NV, Honolulu, HI

# MISSION BRIEFING

**“From the far future of an alternate universe, a lost tape documentary chronicles a bleak war against an alien AI.”**

In the far future of an alternate universe, the 19<sup>th</sup> Century New Imperialism never ended. Empires have fallen, emerged, and evolved, reaching across hundreds of worlds. It was an extravagant, ruthless era of discovery and expansion, until the First Contact.

The rest of the known galaxy has been taken over by a rogue alien artificial intelligence. Human Space is, as far as we know, the last corner yet to be conquered. A frantic, desperate plan was devised, a final gamble to win it all, and an old tape documentary of it is all that has made it into our universe.



This experimental, independent film was made by a team of 10 young adult filmmakers on a microbudget. We aimed to simultaneously return to form and break the mold; to revive the early 2000's era of science fiction, and to subvert it in unique and interesting ways.

Our goal was to create an uncanny futurescape inspired heavily by the nostalgic “Liminal Spaces,” those eerie, transitional environments that feel both familiar and strangely out of place.

The 2000's as a decade was defined by transition and uncertainty. The rapid adoption of the internet and computer graphical technology was at the forefront of the public consciousness, much as it is becoming again today with Artificial Intelligence. Our film reflects on how the world today feels to those who came of age in the 2000's: vaguely familiar, but increasingly under threat.

# DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

By Nick Chang

Growing up in Hawaii in the 2000's, my whole life has been shaped by a love of aviation, space, and science fiction. The dawn of the information age seemed to promise a new era of spectacular entertainment. Advances in CGI and personal computing meant that entire sci fi and fantasy empires could be created out of thin air. Your imagination was the only limit.

Today, I feel much of our hopes for the future remain unfulfilled. Media has stagnated into formulaic sequels and remakes. The tools that once promised a world of free information and ideas are increasingly under attack.

Producing and directing *An Empire in Peril* has been the adventure of a lifetime. The original version dates back to 2018, as a student film in collaboration with the Art Institute of Seattle. Since then, it has taken me on a journey of learning and self-discovery. I gained resiliency in the face of failure and rejection, and found a lifelong calling in 3D art.

Through it, I sought to express my childhood passions, hopes, dreams, and fears for the future. I hoped to create a return to form, capturing the spirit of the early digital age: back when original, unique content wasn't made for algorithms and engagement, but just having fun.



*Born and raised in Honolulu, Hawaii, Nick Chang wrote his first sci-fi novel "An Empire in Peril" while at Seattle University, studying Business Analytics. He continued to write and began making 3D art while working as a logistics specialist, using his knowledge of supply chain operations for a more grounded approach to science fiction worldbuilding.*

*He is currently living in Honolulu again, as a mortgage underwriter for the State of Hawaii, while also continuing work on independent film and animation.*

# CO-PRODUCER'S STATEMENT

**By Kati Chau**

I've spent roughly half my life in Hawaii and the other on the mainland, and I've always felt caught between two worlds—longing for one while missing the other. Since middle school, I've used photography to make sense of life by seeking out the truest moments that defined it.

Today, with a degree in Digital Photography from Seattle Pacific University, I pursue project-based learning that bridges past and present influences. Artists of all media, like Roy DeCarava, Jeremy Shaw, Vivian Maier, Sueco, and KennyHoopla, inspire me to use photography as a lens for understanding why things are the way they are.

I met Nick in 2021, and our similar obsession with our own creative tools made collaboration inevitable. When he asked me in 2024 to help remake his film, I knew it would demand more than skill. It needed a new perspective that complimented his own. *An Empire in Peril* became a space to explore the questions that have haunted me: How do you reconcile two conflicting identities? How do you honor both worlds without losing yourself?

This project pushed me beyond comfort, into a realm where faith, collaboration, and imagination collide. Seeing it completed often feels like I've done the impossible, and I can't wait for whatever adventures come next.



*Kati Chau is a photographer based in Honolulu, with a BA in Digital Photography from Seattle Pacific University. Her work explores themes of identity, contrast and, ultimately, grief. The loss of her mother at age fifteen profoundly influenced her perspective, driving her to capture life with authenticity.*

*Recently, Kati has focused on concert photography, documenting local underground music scenes in Seattle and Honolulu. Her visuals emphasize "realness," willing to present the cities as they are, beyond the travel brochures.*

# PRODUCTION DETAILS

FORMAT: Hi8 Tape digitized to MP4 H.264 + 3D animation in Blender

CAMERA: Canon ES800 8mm, refurbished

ASPECT RATIO: 4:3 1440 x 1080

EDITED IN: Davinci Resolve Studio 20

AUDIO: RØDE - VIDEOMIC GO II

LANGUAGE: English with Subtitles for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (SDH)

WRITTEN BY: Nick Chang, edited by Castle Hootman

CO-PRODUCED BY: Nick Chang and Kati Chau

TECHNICAL PRODUCER: Johnny Nguyen

SOUND RECORDIST: Ethan Buob

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT: Madi Kim



## CRAZY FACT:

Due to concerns about the age of the analog Canon ES800, we shot the *entire film* side by side in both analog and digital. If the analog camera stopped working, or its footage was unusable, we still had a digital version as a backup.

We later found out that, as far as we know, we were the only film in history to have two separate, COMPLETE versions, in analog and digital, **besides Tommy Wiseau's *The Room***.

Are we proud of that?...Kinda.

# BEHIND THE SCENES:



# PRESS MENTIONS & MEDIA COVERAGE

## **SEATTLE UNIVERSITY NEWSROOM**

"Out of this World"

NOV. 9, 2023

*A feature on how the local Seattle film community, and Seattle University Film School, assisted in the first version of this film following the sudden closure of the Art Institute of Seattle in 2019. The first version of film was screened at a private event, before the decision was made to reshoot.*

## **PACIFIC EDGE MAGAZINE**

"Creating Into the Stars"

JAN. 21, 2024

*A write up spotlighting filmmaker Nick Chang, planning to move back to Hawaii from Seattle, explaining his motives and inspirations for An Empire in Peril from the 2000's.*

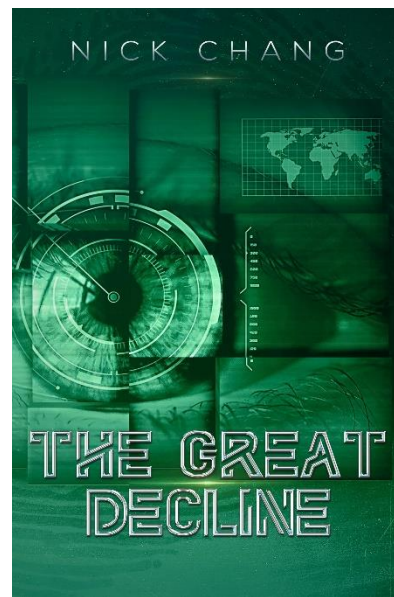
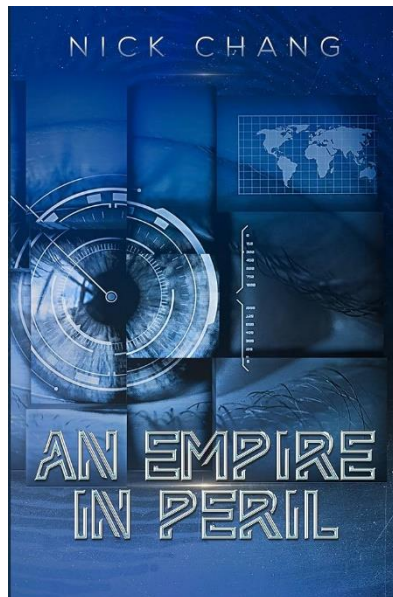
## **KOMO4 NEWS' SEATTLE REFINED**

"Artist of the Week: Nick Chang"

MAY. 11, 2024

*A Q&A deep dive with filmmaker Nick Chang, exploring how his upbringing in urban Honolulu has inspired his distinctive 3D art style.*

# OUT NOW: BOOKS 1 & 2



*An Empire in Peril* the film is part of a larger multimedia narrative that began with a series of self-published books. These works lay the foundation for the broader universe, offering fans a deeper dive into the lore that underlies the film.

**BOOK 1:** the eponymous *An Empire in Peril*, initially published Oct. 2018, and re-released Jun. 2024.

**BOOK 2:** *The Great Decline*, released Jun. 2024

AVAILABLE NOW: on Amazon and select local bookstores in Seattle, WA.

Nook and Cranny

Mam's Books

Foggy Tea Shop (Reading Corner)

Twice Sold Tales (used copies)

# AN EMPIRE IN PERIL

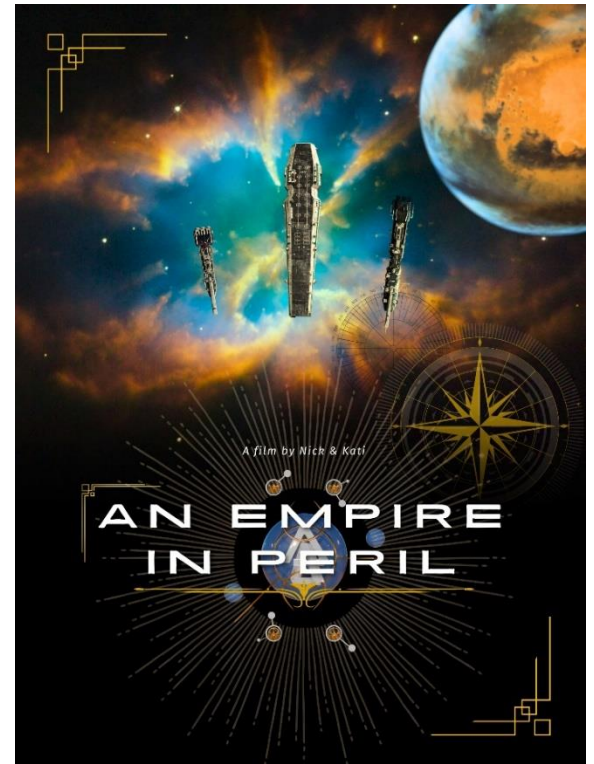
“The war of another tomorrow.”

From the far future of an alternate universe, a lost tape documentary chronicles a bleak war against an alien AI.

A retrofuturistic sci-fi mockumentary from the 29th century, chronicling humanity’s final stand against a galaxy-dominating alien AI. Stylistically unique, it blends analog visuals, liminality, and military action into a 55-minute feature reminiscent of the early 2000’s History TV specials.

## Director’s Statement:

Through An Empire in Peril, I sought to express my childhood passions, hopes, dreams, and fears of the 2000’s. I hoped to create a return to form, capturing the spirit of the early digital age: **when original, unique content wasn’t made for algorithms and engagement, but simply having fun.**



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[NICKCHANGLLC@GMAIL.COM](mailto:NICKCHANGLLC@GMAIL.COM)

NICKCHANG.ART

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Instagram: @anempireinperil

SHOT IN ANALOG HI8 AND COMBINED WITH ORIGINAL 3D VISUALS CREATED IN BLENDER

