

EXCLUSIVE LIVE Q&A WITH CAST AND FILMMAKERS
The ARTIST
 IN THEATERS NOW



WATCH, CHAT & ASK QUESTIONS
TOMORROW 1/6
 9:00 PM PST



THE VOTE



- NEWS
- FEATURES
- PHOTOS
- VIDEOS
- BLOG

Search variety.com

RECENT NEWS

Posted: Wed., Jan. 4, 2012, 1:00pm PT Share Print

Haris Zambarloukos on Phedon Papamichael

Eye on the Oscars: The Cinematographer

By

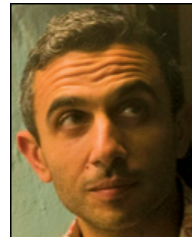
What struck me about "The Descendants" was the power of subtlety. Hawaii is a particularly beautiful place to photograph, but Phedon Papamichael and Alexander Payne chose to show a different Hawaii -- a moodier, brooding and overcast setting. Sticking with that brilliant choice from the first frame to the last captures the audience's heart and focuses attention on the internal struggles and the human conflict.

"The Descendants" is such a performance-led film, and those performances are nurtured and enhanced by the subtle perfection of the portraiture, set against this muted backdrop.

The decision to not photograph Hawaii as bright, vibrant and colorful might be antagonistic to theories of beautiful, spectacular cinematography. But the result is a film that actually has greater power and beauty, because it comes from the soul of the film, rather than from the landscapes or pretty lighting. One mark of a great director of photography is the restraint to follow the psychological journey of the protagonist.

Something special happens when Phedon and Alexander work together. A cinematographer is hired for their opinion, and that opinion can be one of the strongest forces in the crafting of a film. The ability to make your opinion synonymous with that of the director is a huge talent that is very apparent in Phedon's work on "The Descendants."

Haris Zambarloukos, who shot "Thor," also was the d.p. on such films as "Mamma Mia!" "Sleuth" and "Venus."



Zambarloukos



'The Descendants'

[Return to EYE ON THE OSCARS: THE CINEMATOGRAPHER](#)

Contact the Variety newsroom at news@variety.com

GUEST, HERE ARE OTHER ARTICLES RECOMMENDED FOR YOU...

- Oscars: Academy announces vfx short list
- Scenes reveal souls
- WGA noms: 'Bridesmaids,' 'Win Win' in
- Payne keeps it casual
- Stephen Goldblatt on Frank DeMarco & Benjamin Kalsulke
- Are acad rules out of synch?

Powered by

[Read Next Article: 4 thespis hook 'Fishes' >](#)

-- Advertisement --

IN THEATERS NOW
The ARTIST
 EXCLUSIVE LIVE Q&A WITH CAST AND FILMMAKERS




WATCH, CHAT & ASK QUESTIONS
TOMORROW 1/6
 9:00 PM PST

-- Advertisement --

EXCLUSIVE
 LIVE Q&A
 WITH
 MICHEL HAZANAVICIUS
 JEAN DUJARDIN
 BÉRÉNICE BEJO
 JAMES CROMWELL
 PENELOPE ANN MILLER
 MISSI PYLE

The ARTIST
 IN THEATERS NOW



© Copyright 2011 , a division of Reed Elsevier Inc.

[Subscribe](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Terms & Conditions](#) | [About Us](#) | [Advertise](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Sitemap](#) | [Help](#)

Media: [LA 411](#) | [New York 411](#) | [Variety](#) | [Variety Arabia](#)

Construction: [Reed Construction Data](#)

Business Directory: [HotFrog](#)