



# ‘*Ai Pōhaku, Stone Eaters: Affirmation, Defiance, and Kānaka ‘Ōiwi Visual Culture Today*

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*Kaulana nā pua a‘o Hawai‘i  
Kūpa‘a mahope o ka ‘āina  
Hiki mai ka ‘elele o ka loko ‘ino  
Palapala ‘ānunu me ka pākaha*

*Famous are the children of Hawai‘i  
Ever loyal to the land  
When the evil-hearted messenger comes  
With his greedy document of extortion*

Kānaka ‘Ōiwi, Native Hawaiian visual artists and arts educators living and working today often reference the Second Hawaiian Renaissance—the cultural and political reawakening of the late 1960s and early 1970s—as a moment when Hawaiians began self-identifying as contemporary artists.<sup>1</sup> However, it was not until the late 1990s and early 2000s that Kānaka received support in the form of significant commissions, exhibitions, and acquisitions from arts and educational institutions in our homeland.<sup>2</sup> Long overdue, this much-needed turning point was short-lived.

Two decades later, after a period of relative dormancy, another transformational moment for Kānaka art in Hawai‘i is underway. Generations of artists are coming together from across the Hawaiian Archipelago and elsewhere to simultaneously honour our creative expressions and challenge institutions that have excluded us for decades. Collectively, we are calling attention to the meaningful work that has been done and the necessary changes that remain to be made within the museum and education environments of Hawai‘i. Indeed, those who care about this place continue to ‘eat stones’, the nourishing spirit food of the land. It is from this position of joyous affirmation and defiance *‘Ai Pōhaku, Stone Eaters* found its form, and from which this co-written text flows.

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In 2020, energised by the possibilities of planetary uncertainty during the devastating COVID-19 pandemic and widespread social unrest, we began discussing the need for a multi-venue group exhibition of Kānaka art within the University of Hawai‘i (UH) System.<sup>3</sup> This was not a new process but part of an ongoing effort that many have worked together towards for decades.<sup>4</sup> Despite the abundance of our Kānaka contemporary art and exhibition-making practices, it has been more than twenty years since a large-scale exhibition like the one we were dreaming of was presented within Hawai‘i’s only public system of higher education.

*‘Ai Pōhaku, Stone Eaters* is an affirmation of our longstanding acts of creative resistance as Kānaka ‘Ōiwi. The project emerged collaboratively and is guided by ongoing conversations with family, friends, mentors, and colleagues, all of whom have contributed to a larger movement toward self-determination within the arts of Hawai‘i. A deep sense of love and a desire to see our community of artists, creatives, makers, and cultural practitioners acknowledged and honoured in our homeland binds us together. Our efforts are rooted in the generations before us, who advocated for our cultural values and practices while defying those imposed by Imperial, settler colonial, and capitalist forces. Spanning nearly 50 years of production across the Islands, *‘Ai Pōhaku, Stone Eaters* brings together new commissions, existing artworks, and work in progress to celebrate the interconnected expressions of an intergenerational group of over 40 artists—poets, painters, carvers, weavers, filmmakers, photographers, musicians, educators, and organisers.<sup>5</sup>

Throughout 2023, *‘Ai Pōhaku, Stone Eaters* held ground within six venues on O‘ahu: The Art Gallery and Commons Gallery, UH Mānoa (22 January–26 March and 5 March–2 April); Koa Gallery, Kapi‘olani Community College (19 February–13 August); Gallery ‘Iolani, Windward Community College (31 March–5 May); Hō‘ikeākea Gallery, Leeward Community College (29 April–25 August); and East-West Center Gallery, East-West Center (30 April–13 August). The project was organised by Pu‘uhonua Society,<sup>6</sup> with funding and support provided by the Institute for Museum and Library Services, Native Arts and Cultures Foundation,<sup>7</sup> Independent Curators International,<sup>8</sup> and the Hawai‘i State Foundation on Culture and the Arts.<sup>9</sup>

The text that follows is an incomplete curatorial reflection. We begin with a discussion of ‘Mele ‘Ai Pōhaku’ (1893), the well-known Hawaiian national song from which the project’s title is sourced. After providing historical context for Native Hawaiian resistance to settler-colonial desires, we address the current situation within a specific arts ecosystem of Hawai‘i, namely the Department of Art and Art History at UH Mānoa. Given the issues that continue to negatively impact students and faculty—Native and non-Native alike—within this Department, we take this opportunity to focus on the largest of the six venues where *‘Ai Pōhaku, Stone Eaters* was presented: the Department’s main gallery, The Art Gallery (TAG) (fig. 1, 2). Several artworks by participating artists, including BFA and MFA graduates of the Department as well as current and former employees of the UH



Figure 1. Noelle M.K.Y. Kahanu and Jaimey Hamilton Faris talking together within *'Ai Pōhaku, Stone Eaters* (2023), curated by Drew Kahu'āina Broderick, Josh Tengan, and Noelle M.K.Y. Kahanu, The Art Gallery, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, January 22 to March 26, 2023. Artwork from left to right: Cory Kamehanaokalā Holt Taum, *Death of Cook*, 2014; Charlie Sinclair, *Stacked Stone (Imu)*, 2022; Kunāne Wooton, *Ka'i i ke Kua*, 2019; Rocky Ka'iouliokahihiko'ehu Jensen, *Ke 'Ea 'Ekolu O Ke Kanaka*, 1978. Photo by Drew Kahu'āina Broderick.

System, are considered in detail and read in relation to previous Kānaka-led efforts to decolonise and indigenise the Department underway since the mid-1990s. We conclude by sharing some of the project's concrete outcomes that have contributed to institutional reform in small but meaningful ways.

### He 'Ohu No Ka Po'e Aloha 'Āina

The title of the exhibition, *'Ai Pōhaku, Stone Eaters*, takes its name from the Hawaiian mele lāhui, patriotic song, 'Mele 'Ai Pōhaku', 'Stone-Eating Song', more commonly known today as 'Kaulana Nā Pua', 'Famous Are The Flowers'. It was written in the days and weeks following the overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom on 17 January 1893 through an armed coup d'état by the Committee of Safety, a group of white pro-American businessmen, with the support of 162 United States Marines. The overthrow deposed Queen Lili'uokalani, who was coerced by an act of war 'to yield to the superior force of the United States of America'.<sup>10</sup> When the new Provisional Government issued a mandate for all government workers to sign an oath of loyalty, many defied the order and stood in proud affirmation of their love for their queen and country. Among those who resisted were members of the Royal Hawaiian Band, who were famously memorialised in this mele, written by Eleanor Kekoahiwaikalani Wright Prendergast.

Kekoahiwaikalani was a close confidante of the Queen and served as a lady-in-waiting. She was recognised as an accomplished haku mele, a poet, and



Figure 2. Installation view, *'Ai Pōhaku, Stone Eaters* (2023), curated by Drew Kahu'āina Broderick, Josh Tengan, and Noelle M.K.Y. Kahanu, The Art Gallery, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, January 22 to March 26, 2023. Artwork from left to right: Kaili Chun, *Yet to be titled*, 2022; Kunāne Wooton, *Nau ā Wali*, 2009; 'Īmaikalani Kalāhele, *We remember now*, 1989; Sean K. L. Browne, *'Āina Lani II*, 1996; Bob Freitas, *That which is within must never be forgotten*, 1995; Pam Barton, *Kilipue*, 1996; Charlton Kūpa'a Hee, *Maka*, 2014; Kahi Ching, *Hua Lā I*, 2013; Hanale Hopfe, *Ki'i Poho Pōhaku*, 2015; Keith Tallett, *Pōhaku (sentinel event)*, 2023; Bernice Akamine, *Mamo*, 2023; 'Īmaikalani Kalāhele, *'Āina Hānau*, 2016; Ipō Nihipali, *Kipuka*, 2000. Photo by Drew Kahu'āina Broderick.

songwriter, having composed a handful of other nationalist songs and a name chant for Lili'uokalani. Kekoaahiwaikalani's daughter recounts the events surrounding the song's writing:

[She] was sitting on an afternoon of January 1893 in the lovely garden of her father's mansion [Puahaulani Hale] at Kapālama. Her prized guitar lay close at hand. When guests were announced, their familiar faces proved to be the troubled ones of all but two members of the Royal Hawaiian Band—on strike. "We will not follow this new government", they asserted. "We will be loyal to Lili'u. We will not sign the haole's paper but will be satisfied with all that is left to us, the stones, the mystic food of our native land". So they begged her to compose their song of rebellion.<sup>11</sup>

One of the two members who signed the loyalty oath was the Royal Hawaiian Bandmaster himself, Henri Berger, who notoriously expelled his defiant band members with the words, 'A mahope ai pōhaku no', later you will eat stones.<sup>12</sup> Berger's disparaging comment, meant to mock and belittle the band members, became a rallying cry for the lāhui, Hawaiian nationals, who stood steadfast alongside their Queen.

Forbidden to gather and assemble publicly, those favouring the restoration of the Hawaiian Kingdom were obliged to find covert ways to communicate and

disseminate information to supporters. Nūpepa, Hawaiian language newspapers, ‘became central sites of contestation against the new Provisional Government’, where writers and editors ‘persisted in their attacks on the government, making strong calls for the restoration of their Queen, despite newly enacted “Sedition Laws” that were being used to arrest and harass opposition papers’.<sup>13</sup>

‘Mele ‘Ai Pōhaku’ was first published in nūpepa on 24 February 1893, where the song’s authorship date is identified as 10 February, barely three weeks after the overthrow.<sup>14</sup> It appeared at least nine times in nūpepa between February and May of that year. By all accounts, it was one of the most popular mele of the time, capturing the spirit and sentiment of one of the most pivotal moments in Hawai‘i’s history. In 1895, it was published in *Buke Mele Lāhui*, a compilation of Hawaiian national songs. In his review of *Buke Mele Lāhui*, Hawaiian researcher, educator and scholar Kīhei de Silva writes:

As characterized by Dr. Noenoe Silva, this collection gives voice to a conversation between people who most needed to speak to each other at a time when they were most forbidden to converse. Hawaiians, she says, “were surveilled”; it was their good fortune—and ours—that these surveillers placed little importance on the mele that were being published in the newspapers of their day.<sup>15</sup>

Full of kaona, layered meaning, and sentiment, ‘Kaulana Nā Pua’ remains a rallying cry, sung with reverence and fervour at community gatherings, protests, parties, and performances across the Islands, recast with new political significance for each generation. This creative act by Kekoaoihiwaikalani continues to affirm our love for land, culture, and country, resist ongoing U.S.-occupation and desecration of Hawai‘i, and offer a way to understand Kānaka ‘Ōiwi contemporary artists today.

*Pane mai Hawai‘i moku o Keawe  
Kōkua nā Hono a ‘o Pi‘ilani  
Kāko‘o mai Kaua‘i o Mano  
Pa‘apū me ke one Kākuhihewa*

*Hawai‘i, land of Keawe answers  
The bays of Pi‘ilani help  
Kaua‘i of Mano lends support  
Firmly united by the sands of Kākuhihewa*

### **UH Mānoa Department of Art and Art History**

UH Mānoa’s Department of Art and Art History awards a BA/BFA in Studio Art and a BA/MA in Art History. Furthermore, it is the only master’s degree-granting program for Visual Arts in the State of Hawai‘i.<sup>16</sup> The Department’s art gallery system comprises The Art Gallery (TAG), Commons Gallery, and John Young Museum. According to the Department’s website, TAG ‘presents a varied program ranging from contemporary exhibitions featuring works by local and international artists to thematic exhibitions of art historically significant works’.<sup>17</sup> TAG’s program also includes annual BFA and MFA program degree exhibitions and features current and former faculty members in group and solo exhibitions.

Despite describing itself as a ‘Native Hawaiian Place of Learning’ and ‘model Indigenous serving institution’, it has been over twenty years since a large-scale exhibition of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi art was presented within the UH System.<sup>18</sup> ‘*Ai Pōhaku, Stone Eaters*’ sought to address the exclusion of Kānaka worldviews from academia, specifically within the UH Mānoa Department of Art and Art History. Beyond the educational environment under discussion, systemic racism and anti-Hawaiian stances underlie many of the inequities and associated challenges that Native Hawaiians face daily in our homeland.

Since the late 1990s, advocating for a Hawaiian presence within the Department has been almost entirely student- and community-led, with little support from senior faculty. The only art course dedicated to Hawaiian perspectives was first offered in 1998, twenty-three years after the Department dedicated its new building and current home in 1975. The course was spearheaded by Kānaka artist, designer, and scholar Herman Pi‘ikea Clark, who, when he was an MFA candidate in 1996, submitted a course proposal to the Department as a part of his thesis. Unfortunately, but perhaps not surprisingly, the course only lasted for one semester and was never formally adopted into the Department’s official course offerings.<sup>19</sup>

In 2000, a group of Native Hawaiian artists led by educators Meleanna Aluli Meyer and April A.H. Drexel, with the support of TAG Director Tom Klobe and East-West Center Gallery Curator Jeanette ‘Benji’ Bennington, organised the two-part exhibition, *Mai Nā Kūpuna Mai, Ho‘i i ka Pū‘olo* (Fig. 3). This marks the last



Figure 3. Installation view, *Mai Nā Kūpuna Mai, Ho‘i i ka Pū‘olo*, co-organized by a group of Native Hawaiian artists with Benji Bennington and Tom Klobe, East-West Center Gallery and The Art Gallery, University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa, October 9 - December 22, 2000. Photo by Kapulani Landgraf.

time that the Department of Art and Art History ceded space for an exhibition of Native Hawaiian contemporary art.

In short, Kānaka students pursuing degrees in Studio Art and Art History at UH Mānoa have been confined by and forced to situate themselves and their practices within imposed notions of history, theory, criticism, and practice that do not have meaningful connections to our genealogical and geographical positions here at the centre of Moananui, the Pacific. To put it into greater perspective, an entire generation of students has been educated in the Department without experiencing a single large-scale group exhibition of Kanaka art until this moment.

### *Circling in, Spiralling out*

Upon entering TAG, an octagonal structure surrounded by bamboo on seven sides, visitors to the exhibition were immediately confronted with an introductory wall text in ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i and English that explicitly addresses the Department’s exclusion and neglect of Hawaiian artists and our stories. To the left and right, artworks in a variety of materials—basalt, aerosol, metal, hair, plastic, bone, glass, and trash, to name a few—filled the space, set on top of custom freestanding bases, arranged on walls, suspended from the ceiling, and amplified on loudspeakers. Running along the perimeter of the gallery overhead was the lyrics of ‘Kaulana Nā Pua’. We designed the installation at TAG in concentric circles, referencing well-known ki‘i pōhaku, petroglyphs, that are understood to be depictions of genealogical relationships to Hawai‘i (Fig. 4). Diagonal pathways created



Figure 4. Detail of ki‘i pōhaku, Pu‘uloa Petroglyph Field, Pānau Nui, Puna, Hawai‘i, April 20, 2023. Photo by Josh Tengan.

extended sightlines across the gallery, facilitating connections between artists and artworks positioned on opposite sides of the room, encouraging exhibition-goers to flow through the space without a prescribed route. The layout was designed to draw visitors toward the piko, centre, where a central gathering space awaited. There were no wall labels accompanying any artworks on display; instead, printed exhibition guides were available to those who needed additional explanatory information.

### *Pōhaku 'Alaea—Lā'au Lapa'au*

Gathered at the threshold of TAG for the opening protocols, artists and curators stood hand in hand forming a tight circle, surrounded by community members and onlookers linked in a larger circle of their own. Senior artists Ipō and Kūnani Nihipali addressed the crowd: 'I love you folks so much, I want you to taste a bit of this pa'akai', she said, flicking salt over her left and right shoulders, honouring 'aumākua and 'āina, explaining that we were ceremoniously ingesting the salt so that 'we go [into the gallery] with clean thoughts and clean minds'. Continuing as if only the artists and organisers of the exhibition were present, she reminded us all, 'No one can create like us [Hawaiians]. Only we can'.<sup>20</sup>

At the piko of the installation was an offering in the form of an artwork by Auntie Ipō and Uncle Kūnani. Together, the two have devoted much of their lives to the repatriation, return, and reburial of iwi kūpuna, ancestral remains, as a part of Hui Mālama i Nā Kūpuna o Hawai'i Nei, a Native Hawaiian organisation dedicated to the proper treatment of ancestral Native Hawaiians. Auntie Ipō is an artist, educator, and activist known for her representational painting and more abstract installations utilising water, stone, and other natural materials. Uncle Kūnani is an artist, activist, and community organiser. Both were members of Hale Nauā III: Society of Maoli Arts during the 1970s.<sup>21</sup> In the 1980s they founded the 'Uhane Noa Foundation to address the lack of institutional support for Native Hawaiian artists and cultural practitioners across the Islands.

Their work, *Pōhaku 'Alaea – Lā'au Lapa'au* (2023), was for all who entered TAG. It laid bare their intentions as artists and our intentions as curators to activate the project as a pathway for positive change. *Pōhaku 'Alaea – Lā'au Lapa'au* consists of a large 'alaea pōhaku, iron oxide-rich volcanic clay, circled by a bed of pa'akai, salt, gathered from Kaua'i, O'ahu, Moloka'i, Maui, and Hawai'i. 'Alaea is used in lā'au lapa'au, Hawaiian healing arts, and is a natural earth pigment in our dyeing practices. Beyond seasoning and flavouring, pa'akai—a crystallisation of land, sky, and sea—is also used for purification and protection. Over the course of the exhibition, the 'alaea slowly shed, blanketing the surrounding pa'akai in a delicate red covering. This 'alaea pa'akai, as Auntie Ipō and Uncle Kūnani instructed, was gifted to artists, students, faculty, staff, administrators, and community members after the exhibition closed.

One of the goals of *'Ai Pōhaku, Stone Eaters* is to facilitate a process of healing for Hawaiian students discouraged and oppressed by the Department of Art and Art History and also for the same Department to begin repairing relationships



with Hawaiian artists and arts communities more broadly. Indeed, the gift of healing can last a lifetime and, if passed on with care, has the potential to repair divides and strengthen future generations. Our co-curator, Noelle M.K.Y. Kahanu, best articulates this sentiment in response to feedback given via email by Deborah Waite, long-time Professor of Pacific Art History, who retired from the Department:

We hope that this exhibition offers a window into difficult conversations. The entire show is built around a living room, a gathering space to talk story—face-to-face, he alo a he alo. That is how change happens. It is also how healing happens. At a piko of the exhibition is an ‘alaea stone from Moloka‘i, and as it naturally sheds, its clay mixes with the surrounding salt to form a healing and purifying mixture of pa‘akai.

### *Hālāwai (Living Room I)*

Encircling the Nihipali’s offering of ‘alaea pa‘akai at the piko of the exhibition was a surrounding central space for conversation, *Hālāwai (Living Room I)* by newly formed anonymous artist collective Kama‘āina Kidz. A casual yet calculated intervention into the exhibition and the Department as a whole, the work resembled a typical living room in Hawai‘i, complete with vintage rattan and koa furniture from the late 1950s, originally belonging to my [Josh’s] great-grandmother.

Anchoring the living room was a 2.6 metre by 3.4 metre lauhala moena, a floor mat made from pandanus leaves, woven by Keanahala, a community weaving group that perpetuates the practice of lauhala weaving, to bring moena back into the hands and homes of community. Aunty Lorna May Pacheco, a kumu, teacher, with Keanahala, often says that when we weave together, we are also weaving our relationships and connections to each other, thus an act of collective healing and transformation.

With the above in mind, *Hālāwai (Living Room I)* was where all visitors, regardless of identity, could gather. An artistic, curatorial, and educational gesture, the work reorients TAG, creating a discursive space for community to relax, reflect, converse, and share oral histories. It is a strategy to guarantee that discussions are happening and to remind audiences that our understandings are not fixed. With time, it became a space for visits with middle school, high school, and college student groups, intimate exchanges amongst family and friends, intergenerational poetry readings, and public programming as a part of the exhibition.

### *A Life of Its Own, Ancestral Cape, Warrior’s Cape, Makawalu, Battle Fatigue*

Surrounding *Hālāwai (Living Room I)* were four walls, which held the work of four artist-educators who each received a degree from UH and have worked within the System, know one another well, and have critical stances on the Art and Art History Department: Maika‘i Tubbs (Adjunct Faculty, Parsons School of Design,

The New School), Maile Andrade (Director, Kamakākūokalani Center for Hawaiian Studies, UH Mānoa), Herman Pi‘ikea Clark (Interim Chair of Advertising, Faculty of Design, OCAD University), and Kapulani Landgraf (Title III Project Director, Kapi‘olani CC).

Maika‘i’s installation, *A Life of Its Own* (2010), comprised of white invasive vines made from heat-treated and hand-altered recycled plastic, spread out insidiously in all directions. Directly across from his work were two protective coverings by Maile—*Ancestral Cape* (1994) in wauke, paper mulberry, pulp, and *Warrior’s Cape* (2023) in glass, copper wire, washers, and brass fasteners—marking her time within the UH System. On the other two walls were layered works by Pi‘ikea and Kapulani. Pi‘ikea’s *Makawalu* (2023), a grid of sixteen relief and digital prints on acrylic panels, enforced the importance of considering multiple perspectives before taking action.<sup>22</sup> Directly across was Kapulani’s *Battle Fatigue* (2018), a silver gelatin collage of the artist’s eyes pierced with iron nails, staring fearlessly with tearless knowing at exhibition-goers, reminding all who entered the interior space to remain vigilant.

Bolstering the underlying intentions of *‘Ai Pōhaku*, *Stone Eaters* and the message of his work, *Makawalu*, Pi‘ikea met and consulted with faculty and students, conducted informal Hawaiian design-thinking sessions, and gave a talk titled, “‘A‘ole hiki iā Goldilocks ke hopu he‘e/Goldilocks can’t catch squid’ through the Admiral Residency in Contemporary Pacific Art. During his address, which took place in *Hālāwai* (*Living Room I*), Pi‘ikea presented Kānaka perspectives on education in conflict with current approaches to learning practised within the Department of Art and Art History and the value of Indigenous knowledge and its capacity to relevantly transform and advance public higher education in the arts across Hawai‘i in the immediate future. After Pi‘ikea’s bout with the Department in the late 1990s and spending much of the past twenty-five years abroad in Aotearoa studying and teaching, it was a full circle moment and a powerful homecoming (Fig. 5).

*‘A‘ole a‘e kau i ka pūlima  
Ma luna o ka pepa o ka ʻenemi  
Ho‘ohui ʻāina kū‘ai hewa  
I ka pono sivila a‘o ke kanaka*

*No one will fix a signature  
To the paper of the enemy  
With its sin of annexation  
And sale of the civil rights of the people*

### **Art in the Bush**

ʻĪmaikalani Kalāhele is one of the most senior artists in our community and among the first wave of Native Hawaiian artists active in the 1970s. He has consistently made art, poetry, and music and organised group shows and gatherings for Kānaka artists and poets for the past five decades. Despite the breadth and significance of his creative and collaborative output, Uncle ʻĪmai has only begun to receive recognition from local institutions in the last five years. His poem,



Figure 5. Herman Pi'ikea Clark giving a lecture, "A'ole hiki iā Goldilocks ke hopu he'e / Goldilocks can't catch squid", as part of public programming for *'Ai Pōhaku, Stone Eaters* (2023), curated by Drew Kahu'aina Broderick, Josh Tengan, and Noelle M.K.Y. Kahanu, The Art Gallery, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, January 22 to March 26, 2023. Artwork from left to right: Herman Pi'ikea Clark, *Makawalu*, 2023; 'Imaikalani Kalāhele, *Kumulipō*, 1989; Maika'i Tubbs, *A Life of Its Own*, 2010; Ipō and Kunani Nihipali, *Pōhaku 'Alaea-Lā'au Lapa'au*, 2023; Kama'aina Kidz, *Hālāwai (Living Room I)*, 2022. Photo by Drew Kahu'aina Broderick.

'Manifesto', was foundational to the theme and organising framework of the Honolulu Biennial 2019, *To Make Wrong/Right/Now*, curated by Nina Tonga and me [Josh].<sup>23</sup> That same year, the Hawai'i State Foundation on Culture and the Arts acquired their first works by Uncle 'Īmai for the State's Art in Public Places Collection.

As a janitor at Queen Lili'uokalani Children's Center (QLCC), Uncle 'Īmai was a live-in caretaker for the property and its facilities. He used his influence at the centre to exhibit Kānaka 'Ōiwi contemporary art in the hallways of offices and courtyards of buildings. This effort lasted over 30 years and, as a result, created significant opportunities for our community of artists to exhibit their work. His retirement and departure from QLCC in 2017 was a pivotal moment for our communities. Soon after, the artist, cultural practitioner, carver, and 'āina-based educator Puni Jackson invited Uncle 'Īmai to set up his studio mauka, upland at Ho'oulu 'Āina, a place of refuge nestled in the back of Kalihi Valley dedicated to propagating the connections between the health of the land and the health of the people.

For *'Ai Pōhaku, Stone Eaters* Uncle 'Īmai is showing multiple works across three venues. Encircling TAG, installed within the bamboo grove, are three large paintings on canvas drop cloths with rope and paracord, accompanied by four free-standing sculptures cut out of a reclaimed cabinet in koa, a prized Native



Figure 6. Poetry reading with ʻImaikalani Kalāhele, Brandy Nālani McDougall and friends organised in conjunction with the closing reception of *ʻAi Pōhaku, Stone Eaters*, curated by Drew Kahuʻāina Broderick, Josh Tengan, and Noelle M.K.Y. Kahanu, The Art Gallery, University of Hawaiʻi at Mānoa, January 22 - March 26, 2023. Artwork from left to right: Kapulani Landgraf, *Battle Fatigue*, 2018; Cory Kamehanaokala Holt Taum, *Death of Cook*, 2014; Kunāne Wooton, *Kaʻi i ke Kua*, 2019; Ipō and Kunani Nihipali, *Pōhaku ʻAlaea-Lāʻau Lapaʻau*, 2023; Charlie Sinclair, *Stacked Stone (Imu)*, 2022; Maile Andrade, *Ancestral Cape*, 1994 and *Warrior's Cape*, 2023; Solomon Enos, *After the darkness there is still darkness*, 2016; Kamaʻāina Kidz, *Hālāwai (Living Room I)*, 2022. Photo: Drew Kahuʻāina Broderick.

hardwood. This grouping of outdoor works directly references *Art in the Bush* (2018), a community event where Uncle ʻImai and his friends transformed the bamboo forest at Hoʻoulu ʻĀina into an open-air venue for creative expression. Although Uncle ʻImai's community based practice of artmaking, curating, and organising has paved the way for contemporary Kānaka artists, curators, and educators, this is the first occasion his work is present at such a scale at UH Mānoa (Fig. 6).

### *ʻUmeke Lāʻau*

On the third floor of the Department sits musician, artist, and gardener Kahi Ching's installation, *ʻUmeke Lāʻau*. The installation features eight plants in pots placed atop concrete blocks arranged in a large circle on TAG's roof, directly above a piko of the exhibition below. In Hawaiʻi, ʻumeke, bowls or circular vessels, are typically made of wood or gourd, and lāʻau refers to plants or trees. In this case, the vessels are all ceramic, containing plants grown and manicured in the Japanese tradition of bonsai. They are much larger than the typical miniature trees but are trained to grow in ways only achieved by human intervention.

Like Uncle ʻImai and many beloved artists within our community, Kahi received most of his education outside of institutional settings.<sup>24</sup> He has studied

bonsai informally and resists identifying his plants as such, even though he learned from and participated in exhibitions with Hawai‘i’s premier bonsai guild, the Hawai‘i Bonsai Association, for 20 years. In a personal conversation, Kahi expressed that he left the association because of criticism from more traditional practitioners but maintained his interest in plants as a part of his creative repertoire.<sup>25</sup> Representative of an entire body of work, *‘Umeke Lā‘au* expresses Kahi’s understanding of the practice of bonsai from a uniquely Hawaiian perspective.

Each plant has a story and is connected to a significant place, event, or person. A royal poinciana tree he propagated from seeds sourced from ‘Iolani Palace; another grew from fallen aerial roots of the giant banyan tree fronting the Honolulu Museum of Art School. The cascading bright magenta bougainvillea is for his Aunt, and a large swirling moringa tree—the trending superfood—is used for everyday Filipino dishes his family prepares at home. The only Native variety in the group, a Hau with a yellow blossom, is dwarfed by its introduced counterparts.

‘They all come to me’, Kahi says of his various bonsai in the front yard of the humble home he rents in the dense urban neighbourhood of Mō‘ili‘ili on the backside of Waikīkī.<sup>26</sup> Because he rents and does not own land, Kahi cannot plant his trees directly in the ground. *‘Umeke Lā‘au* simultaneously references the first Hawaiian voyagers who arrived in the Islands two thousand years ago, bringing their plants with them in gourds on canoes, and also speaks to the ongoing land dispossession that Kānaka face today (Fig. 7).



Figure 7. Drew Kahu‘āina Broderick and Josh Tengan standing in silence within Kahi Ching’s, *‘Umeke Lā‘au*, as part of *‘Āi Pōhaku, Stone Eaters* (2023), curated by Drew Kahu‘āina Broderick, Josh Tengan, and Noelle M.K.Y. Kahanu, The Art Gallery, University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa, January 22 to March 26, 2023. Photo by Sancia Miala Shiba Nash.

Additionally, Kahi's installation on TAG's roof directly references Pi'ikea's MFA thesis exhibition, *Ho'okumu Hou*, presented in part at that exact location in October of 1996. In a written manifesto accompanying his work, Pi'ikea and members of Ka Maka o Ka Ihe, an association of Hawaiian students within the Department, declared:

[We] request that the University of Hawai'i take steps to end its colonist practices by hiring Native Hawaiian teaching faculty and to develop courses in Native Hawaiian contemporary art and design. For the first time in the history of the University of Hawai'i Art Department, Native Hawaiian artists have gathered to speak out. In this our first expression of Hawaiian sovereignty and art, we challenge you who are in power to respond.<sup>27</sup>

More than twenty-five years on, not much has changed. Another generation of Kānaka 'Ōiwi artists and students have gone through the Department with little support in the form of culturally informed feedback from faculty members, an overall decrease in access to Hawaiian contemporary art and exhibition histories, and few opportunities to connect meaningfully through their studies with Kānaka arts communities beyond the confines of campus.

### *Loa'a*

Nanea Lum is a graduate of the Department, where she obtained both her BFA in 2014 and MFA in 2021. Her research-based practice spans oil painting, kapa, and community education. Her work is shown across three venues for *'Ai Pōhaku*, *Stone Eaters*. For TAG, we selected a painting from her BFA exhibition, first exhibited in the same gallery nearly a decade earlier. *Loa'a* is a large abstract oil painting with mostly reddish hues. Layers of wash cover the canvas, mimicking water and blood; dabs of paint in various colours are scattered throughout the composition, like stars and planets in the cosmos. The painting is immersive and visceral and makes one feel small standing before it. For Nanea, the painting addresses the duality of 'imi loa'a, to seek and to find. She says, 'When we are searching, we are finding. Where we are looking, we are learning. Loa'a [comes] when you deeply immerse yourself into that which you are looking at in front of you'.<sup>28</sup>

*Loa'a's* return invited audiences, specifically Nanea's former professors and instructors, to see both the work and its maker in an entirely new context outside a final presentation for her degree. *'Ai Pōhaku*, *Stone Eaters* situated her within a larger group of Kānaka whom the institution had systematically disenfranchised. With support from this community of artists, curators, and educators, her work and her concerns could no longer be ignored. After years of voicing her truths from the perspective of an undergraduate and graduate student, she was finally being heard, and perhaps even understood, by the Department. Speaking in a gracious redemptive tone during a public exhibition walkthrough, Nanea encapsulated her experience: 'That which you [professors] have disregarded for so long, it's in front of you. 'Āina, the interconnected universe of our bodies and our

environment, all of that is still waiting for you. Just because you have negated it in the past doesn't mean you can't affirm it now'.<sup>29</sup>

*'A 'ole mākou a 'e minamina  
I ka pu 'u kālā a ke aupuni  
Ua lawa mākou i ka pōhaku  
I ka 'ai kamaha 'o o ka 'āina*

*We do not value  
The government's hills of money  
We are satisfied with the stones  
The astonishing food of the land*

### **Resounding Resonance, from Individuals to Communities**

In a swift response to the exhibition, an ad hoc committee of engaged community members self organised to design a public program series of ten informal conversations that aimed 'to address issues and possibilities as a means to elevate Native Hawaiian voices and presence'.<sup>30</sup> This group, 'The Villagers' as they called themselves, included senior Kānaka artists and educators April A.H. Drexel (Associate Professor, Kamakakūokalani Center for Hawaiian Studies, UH Mānoa), Kaili Chun (Instructor, Kapi'olani Community College), and Kapulani Landgraf (Title III Project Director, Kapi'olani Community College), along with Japanese settler-allies Dr Karen Kosasa (Associate Professor and Director of Museum Studies Certificate Program, American Studies, UH Mānoa) and Stacy Hoshino (Director of Grants and Special Projects, Hawai'i Council for the Humanities).

Working closely with the curatorial team and exhibition organisers at Pu'uhonua Society, the committee under Karen's leadership also drafted and circulated a petition with assistance from Halena Kapuni-Reynolds, a Kanaka 'Ōiwi PhD candidate in the American Studies Department at UH Mānoa. The document addresses Dr David Lassner (President, UH), Dr Michael Bruno (Provost, UH Mānoa), Dr Peter Arnade (Dean, College of Arts, Languages, and Letters, UH Mānoa), Professor Deborah Drexler (Chair, Department of Art and Art History, UH Mānoa), and faculty members in the Department of Art and Art History, urging them to

- 1) Support more exhibitions of Kanaka 'Ōiwi art in the future; 2) Hire a tenure-track professor who specializes in Kanaka 'Ōiwi visual culture and studio art practices in the Department of Art and Art History at UH Mānoa; and 3) Recognize their kuleana (responsibility) to address the needs of students interested in enrolling in art classes based on Kānaka perspectives in the same department.<sup>31</sup>

Elaborating further, the petition signatories question: 'We are troubled to learn there is currently no faculty member responsible for teaching Kānaka worldviews and artistic practices ... How can a "Hawaiian Place of Learning" exist without someone who can teach Kānaka visual culture and practices in the arts

curriculum'? As we write now, the petition has garnered nearly 800 signatures from Native and non-Native supporters, locally and internationally.<sup>32</sup>

With the above in mind, it is relevant to know that prior to the exhibition, public program series, and accompanying petition, faculty members of the Department declared on the Department's website, 'We hereby commit ourselves to improving our department culture and curriculum and developing ways to better resist the cultures of systemic bias and colonial history in which we are embedded'.<sup>33</sup> Despite this, the reality of working with specific faculty members and gallery staff proved to be a challenge, both conceptually and practically.<sup>34</sup>

### **Let Our Stories of Kanaka Art, Exhibition-Making, and Education Be Told**

Kānaka artists, curators, and educators active across different overlapping disciplines often lament the absence of meaningful scholarship and critical writing around our stories of art, exhibition-making, and arts education in Hawai'i. We believe this is a direct result of the academy's own resistance, apathy, and woeful ignorance of our worldviews, cultural practices, knowledge, and ways of being.

For just over two months, 'Ai Pōhaku, Stone Eaters at TAG created a pu'uhonua, place of refuge, for Kānaka 'Ōiwi artists within the Department of Art and Art History at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. The project helped open a diplomatic pathway for our communities to challenge the Department, which has not been held accountable for over two decades. As we write, the exhibition series continues to hold space at Koa Gallery (Kapi'olani Community College), East-West Center Gallery, and Hō'ikeākea Gallery (Leeward Community College) and will do so through August 2023.

Through the support of Hawaiian artists and educators, who are engaged in local and international discourses, as well as its physical presence and accessibility across four interconnected campuses within the University of Hawai'i System on O'ahu, we believe 'Ai Pōhaku, Stone Eaters offers much needed opportunities to engage meaningfully with Native Hawaiian practices, artists, and arts communities. We are grateful to do this collaborative work and are indebted to so many folks here in Hawai'i and beyond who have struggled to carve paths for us to follow.

*Ma hope mākou o Lili'ulani  
A loa 'a ē ka pono o ka 'āina  
Ha'ina 'ia mai ana ka puana  
Ka po'e i aloha i ka 'āina*

*We support Lili'ulani  
Who has won the rights of the land  
The story is to be told  
Of the people who love the land*

In the words of participating artist and self-described 'possibilist' Solomon Enos, 'being self-sufficient, without dependency on the U.S. government and corporations, means we need a re-evaluation of our own lives so we can help to stand in solidarity with all the people around the world who practise 'ai pōhaku by other names'.<sup>35</sup> With the abundance of this interdependent vision in mind, may



we continue to share stories of Kanaka ‘Ōiwi creative resistance, persistence, and the inevitability of our nationhood.

**Postscript:** Redressing the lack of Pacific presence in the Art History department at the University of Hawai‘i, Dr Nina Tonga (Vaini, Kolofou, Kingdom of Tonga) was recently appointed Assistant Professor of Pacific Art History, to start in early 2024. She comes to Honolulu from her position as Curator of Contemporary Art, Te Papa Tongarewa Museum of New Zealand.

## Notes

1. Throughout this article, we use the terms Kānaka ‘Ōiwi, Kānaka, Native Hawaiians, and Hawaiians interchangeably to refer to the Indigenous people of Hawai‘i. We do not italicise words in ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i, Hawaiian language; we do not place English translations of words in ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i in parentheses; we do not translate proper nouns; and we only include translations following a word’s first mention.

2. From our perspective, many of these institutions have exploited Native Hawaiian artists to advance their own agendas and generate positive publicity without making significant long-term commitments to decolonise and/or indigenise their commissioning, collecting, exhibiting, and/or educating practices. This was certainly the case with *Nā Maka Hou: New Visions – Contemporary Native Hawaiian Art* (2001), an exhibition presented as part of the inauguration of the Henry R. Luce Pavilion Complex at the then Honolulu Academy of Arts (now the Honolulu Museum of Art). *Nā Maka Hou* was the first and last time that the Honolulu Museum of Art organised a large-scale group exhibition of contemporary Native Hawaiian art. And, to this day, the museum has still not supported a large-scale solo exhibition by a Native Hawaiian artist in the main gallery of the Luce Pavilion. I [Drew] write extensively about the above example and the larger ‘watershed moment’ for Kānaka artists within art institutions across Honolulu during the late 1990s and early 2000s in the essay ‘Pre-CONTACT: Kanaka-Centric Exhibition-Making in Honolulu, O‘ahu at the Turn of the 21st-Century’, in *CONTACT 2014–2019*, eds. Drew Kahu‘aina Broderick, Marika Emi, Maile Meyer and Josh Tengan (Honolulu: Pu‘uhonua Society and Tropic Editions, 2021), 271–90.

3. The two of us first collaborated with Noelle M.K.Y. Kahanu in 2014, brought together by the efforts of my [Drew’s] mother, Maile Meyer, the then director of Honolulu-based arts organisation Pu‘uhonua Society, which put on an annual open call thematic group exhibition, *CONTACT*, from 2014 to 2019. Each year two arts workers were invited, one Native Hawaiian and the other non-Native Hawaiian, to curate the exhibition. In 2015, Noelle and Ngarika Mason, curator of Māori Art at Auckland Art Gallery, Toi o Tamaki from 1999 to 2015 curated the exhibition together. I [Josh]

served as the project manager, and I [Drew] served as the exhibition designer and installer. In the years following, we three have worked together with Pu‘uhonua Society in different capacities at different times to support art, exhibition-making, and education in Hawai‘i.

4. In the early 1970s, after nearly a century of U.S. occupation, community struggles for sovereignty and self-determination erupted across the Islands. Galvanised by grassroots resistance efforts, including those of the community-based, archipelago-wide organisation Protect Kaho‘olawe ‘Ohana, artists and activists banded together to protect beloved ‘āina, land, that which feeds. Ever since, culturally informed political action and artistic expression remain closely linked in Kānaka art in Hawai‘i.

5. Our deepest gratitude to all of the participating artists and their families: Nālamakuiikapō Ahsing, Bernice Akamine, Maile Andrade, Pam Barton, Meala Bishop, Sean Kekamakupa‘aikapono Ka‘onohiokalani Lee Loy Browne, Kahi Ching, Kaili Chun, Kau‘i Chun, Herman Pi‘ikea Clark, Kauka de Silva, April A.H. Drexel, Joy Lehanani Enomoto, Solomon Robert Nui Enos, Bob Freitas, Noah Harders, Roen Hufford, Puni Jackson, Rocky Ka‘iouliahikohiko‘Ehu Jensen, ‘Imaikalani Kalāhele, Kama‘aina Kidz, Kapulani Landgraf, Al Kahekiliuilā Lagunero, Leimomi Lani, Lehuauakea, Nanea Lum, Marques Hanalei Marzan, Charlton Kūpa‘a Hee, Micah McDermott, Meleanna Aluli Meyer, Ipō and Kūnani Nihipali, Harinani Orme, Carl F.K. Pao, Tiare Ribeaux, Abigail Romanchak, Charlie Sinclair, Keith Tallett, Cory Kamehanaokālā Holt Taum, Maika‘i Tubbs, and Kunāne Wooton.

6. Pu‘uhonua Society is a Honolulu-based not-for-profit arts organisation that creates safe spaces and opportunities for Native Hawaiian and Hawai‘i-based artists and cultural practitioners to serve as translators/mediators/amplifiers of social justice issues in Hawai‘i. Pu‘uhonua Society traces part of its genealogy back to 1972, when Emma Aluli Meyer originally founded the organisation as the Young of Heart Workshop & Gallery in Kailua, Ko‘olaupoko, O‘ahu, to inspire and empower young people through art and creativity. Maile Meyer, Emma’s third daughter, stewarded Pu‘uhonua Society from 1996 until 2022, when her first daughter, Emma Broderick, took on the responsibilities of leading the organisation. Emma

and I [Drew] are siblings and work closely with family to be of better service to communities.

7. *'Ai Pōhaku, Stone Eaters* was partially funded through Native Arts and Cultures Foundation's SHIFT – Transformative Change and Indigenous Arts program, which supports artist and community driven projects responding to social change issues through a Native lens. I [Drew] was the lead artist and I [Josh] along with Noelle was a collaborator, and Pu'uhonua Society was the lead partner organisation on a 2021 SHIFT award. For additional information see 'Drew Kahu'aina Broderick', Native Arts & Cultures Foundation, <https://www.nativeartsandcultures.org/drew-kahu%CA%BBaina-broderick>.

8. In 2019, we participated in Independent Curators International (ICI)'s first Curatorial Intensive in Tāmaki Makaurau, Auckland, Aotearoa, New Zealand. In 2020, we were invited to participate as curators in *Notes for Tomorrow*, a travelling group exhibition conceived by ICI 'that took the COVID-19 pandemic as a jumping-off point for a radical reassessment of the present'. Building on this collaborative relationship and in support of the research phase of *'Ai Pōhaku, Stone Eaters*, ICI awarded us a 2022 Indigenous Curatorial Research Fellowship. For additional information see '2022 Curatorial Research Fellows: Drew Kahu'aina Broderick and Josh Tengan', Independent Curators International, <https://curatorsintl.org/learning/20533-2022-curatorial-research-fellows-drew-kahuaina-broderick-and-josh-tengan>.

9. In 2020, at the invitation of the Hawai'i State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA), I [Drew] along with artists and educators Kapulani Landgraf and Kaili Chun collaborated on a group exhibition, *Mai ho'ohuli i ka lima i luna* at Hawai'i State Art Museum in Honolulu, O'ahu. As part of the exhibition, the curatorial team conducted an unofficial assessment of the Foundation's Art in Public Places Collection and determined that less than three per cent of the artwork in the collection was made by Kānaka artists despite accounting for over 20 percent of the population. The exhibition marked an important turning point for the SFCA, and in the years following the organisation has made more of an effort to support Kānaka artists through increased representation in the collection, exhibitions, and public programming. For additional information see Drew K. Broderick, Kaili Chun, and Kapulani Landgraf, *'Mai Ho'ohuli i ka lima i luna'*, Honolulu: Hawai'i State Art Museum, 2020, [https://sfca.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Mai-ho%CA%BBohuli-i-ka-lima-i-luna\\_Curators-Statement.pdf](https://sfca.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Mai-ho%CA%BBohuli-i-ka-lima-i-luna_Curators-Statement.pdf). As a result of this and other efforts, SFCA assembled two Acquisition Award Selection Committees to visit four of the six venues and recommend ten artworks from *'Ai Pōhaku, Stone Eaters* for acquisition.

10. Lili'uokalani to Sanford B. Dole, excerpt from James H. Blount, 'Report of U.S. Special Commissioner James H. Blount to U.S. Secretary of

State Walter Q. Gresham Concerning the Hawaiian Kingdom Investigation' (17 January 1893), *Hawaiian Kingdom*, <https://hawaiiankingdom.org/blounts-report.shtml>.

11. Eleanor C. Nordyke and Martha H. Noyes, 'Kaulana Nā Pua: A Voice for Sovereignty', *Hawaiian Journal of History* 27, no.1 (1993): 28.

12. 'Hoolaulea Kanalima Makahiki', *Makaainana*, 6 August 1894, 1, reproduced in 'Henry Berger's 50th birthday, and commentary on eating stones, 1894', *nupepa*, 18 April 2015, <https://nupepa-hawaii.com/2015/04/18/henry-bergers-50th-birthday-and-commentary-on-eating-stones-1894/>.

13. 'Nūpepa 'Ōlelo Hawai'i', Bishop Museum, accessed 1 May 2023, <https://bishopmuseum.org/nupepa-olelo-hawaii/>.

14. 'He ohu no ka poe aloha aina', *Ka Leo o ka Lahui*, 24 February 1893, 1.

15. Kīhei de Silva, 'Review: Buke Mele Lāhui, Book of National Songs', *Ka'iwakiloumoku*, <https://kaiwakiloumoku.ksbe.edu/article/historical-snapshots-buke-mele-lahui-book-of-national-songs>.

16. The College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts in Honolulu was founded as a land-grant institution in 1907, less than a decade after the contested annexation of the Hawaiian Islands by the U.S. in 1898 under President William McKinley. The Morrill Land-Grant Acts of 1862 and 1890 armed the U.S. Federal Government with the power to transfer 'federal land', i.e., redistribute 'Indigenous lands' accumulated through settler colonialism to individual State Governments. In accordance with the Morrill Act's provisions, land granted was to be used to generate funds through rental and/or sale for the establishment and endowment of colleges of agricultural and mechanical arts. [The college] was renamed the College of Hawai'i and relocated from near Thomas Square to Mānoa Valley. Over the past century, the College of Hawai'i morphed into the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, and eventually expanded into a 10-campus, Islands-wide University of Hawai'i System. The increased access to education that the System provides comes as a consequence of longstanding and ongoing dispossession of Indigenous peoples across Hawai'i, the continental U.S., and elsewhere.' Broderick, 'Pre-CONTACT', 279–80.

17. University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Department of Art and Art History, 'About Exhibitions + Events + Museum', <https://hawaii.edu/art/about-exhibitions-events/>.

18. Since its 2002–2010 System Strategic Plan, UH has aspired to become a 'Hawaiian Place of Learning', as demonstrated through the imperative to 'recognize our kuleana to honor the [I]ndigenous people and promote social justice for Native Hawaiians'. In 2017, UH Mānoa established the 'Native Hawaiian Place of Learning Advancement Office' to help reach this ambitious institutional goal. For more information see University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, 'What is a Native

Hawaiian Place of Learning?'; <https://manoa.hawaii.edu/nhpola/aloaha-aina/>.

19. Although the course developed and implemented by Pi'ikea and his peers was not supported long-term by the Department, a version of it, ART 189: Introduction to Hawaiian Art, continues to be offered within the Community Colleges of the UH System. I [Drew] currently lead ART 189 at Kapi'olani Community College where I also steward Koa Gallery. For the Spring 2023 semester, ART 189 is structured around 'Ai Pōhaku, *Stone Eaters* and the participating artists.

20. Eric Chang, "'Ai Pōhaku, *Stone Eaters* Opening Protocols – Ipo Nihipali', 22 January 2023.

21. 'Hale Nauā III held its first informal gathering in 1973. Broadly concerned with advancing Native Hawaiian contemporary art and the causes of a developing art community, the group sourced its name from a private cultural organisation in existence during the late nineteenth century, Hale Nauā II. Founded by King David Kalākaua in 1886 and functioning until his death in 1891, Hale Nauā II worked to secure political leadership positions for Native Hawaiians while also promoting the revival and strengthening of Hawaiian culture in combination with the advancement of Western sciences, art, and literature. Although Hale Nauā II's membership was limited to those of Native Hawaiian descent, it was open to all genders in contrast to many Western fraternal organisations active in the Kingdom's capital at the time. As with Hale Nauā III, Hale Nauā II also sourced its name from an older order, which existed before 1778, during the reign of Kamehameha I. These Hale Nauā which functioned as councils had a narrower purpose and were focused on investigating the genealogical qualifications of those claiming relationships to ali'i'. For further discussion see Broderick et al., *Mai ho'ohuli i ka lima i luna*, 10; Frank Karpel, 'Kalākaua's Hale Naua, 1886-1891', *The Hawaiian Journal of History*, vol. 33 (1999): 203–12.

22. A testament to the potential of the Department and its facilities to support Hawaiian artists, Pi'ikea's installation, an adaptation of an earlier work produced for Hawai'i Triennial 2022: *Pacific Century – E Ho'omau no Moananuiākea*, was made on-site with longtime friend and master printer Charles Cohan, Professor of Art and Chair of Printmaking within the Department.

23. The source / of / my origins / lie beneath my feet, / the breath / in my chest / originated / in Pō / the destiny / of my race / is / plunged into / my gut / and / infesting / my veins / with a new nationalism, / old spiritualism, / and a need / to make wrong / right / now. 'Imaikalani Kalāhele, 'Manifesto', *Kalāhele*, (Honolulu: Kalamakū Press), 2002, 63.

24. For many years Kahi and his wife Diana have operated K&D Signs and Graphics. Together, they design, produce, and install wall vinyl for arts institutions, organisations, and galleries on O'ahu including TAG, UH Mānoa. Kahi's inclusion in 'Ai

*Pōhaku, Stone Eaters* was an opportunity to share his work as an artist in a space that he usually frequents as an installer.

25. Kahi Ching in conversation with authors, 26 May 2023.

26. Ibid.

27. Karen K. Kosasa, 'Pedagogical Sights/Sites: Producing Colonialism and Practicing Art in the Pacific', *Art Journal* 57, no. 3 (Fall 1998): 46–54.

28. Nanea Lum in conversation with Josh Tengan, 29 May 2023.

29. Ibid.

30. Below is a list of the ten public programs accompanying the exhibition, including each conversation's title, date, location, and participants: 'Mai Pa'a I ka Leo: Inception, Intention, Interpretation and Impact' on 5 March at The Art Gallery, with curators Drew Kahu'aina Broderick, Noelle M.K.Y. Kahanu, and Josh Tengan, moderated by April A.H. Drexel; 'Nānā I Nā Kumu: Investigations Alignments and Complexities', on 7 March at The Art Gallery, with artists Maile Andrade, Kaili Chun, Maika'i Tubbs, and Kunane Wooton, moderated by April A.H. Drexel; 'A'o Aku, A'o Mai: Critique as a Form of Empowerment' on 21 March at The Art Gallery, with artists Drew Kahu'aina Broderick, 'Imaikalani Kalāhele, Kapulani Landgraf, and Cory Kamehanaokalā Holt Taum, moderated by April A.H. Drexel; 'Pili Pa'a Significance of Mentorship', on 16 April at Gallery 'Iolani, with artists Meala Bishop, 'Imaikalani Kalāhele, and Maika'i Tubbs, moderated by Drew Kahu'aina Broderick; 'Kū I ka Pono: Multi-Dimensional Codes of Resistance', on 22 April at Koa Gallery, with artists Sean K.L. Browne, Charlton Kūpa'a Hee, Keith Tallett, and Cory Kamehanaokalā Holt Taum, moderated by Drew Kahu'aina Broderick; 'Kōkua Aku, Kōkua Mai: Value of Collaboration', on 27 May at East-West Center Gallery, with artists Kahi Ching, Solomon Enos, Al Lagunero, Meleanna Aluli Meyer, Harinani Orme, and Carl F.K. Pao, moderated by Drew Kahu'aina Broderick; 'Pūlama Mauli Ola: Stealth Actions With Purpose' on 1 July at East-West Center Gallery, with panelists Kimo Cashman, Karen Kosasa, Annie Reynolds, and Chuck Kawai'olu Souza, moderated by Drew Kahu'aina Broderick; 'Aia I Hea ka Pono?: Disrupt, Corrupt, Irrupt', on 15 July at Hō'ikeākea Gallery, with artists Nālamakūikapō Ahsing, Noah Harders, Ipō and Kūnani Nihipali and Tiare Ribeaux, moderated by April A.H. Drexel; 'Nā Kuleana O Nā Alaka'i: Nuances of Re-Righting', on 22 July at Hō'ikeākea Gallery, with artists Kaili Chun, Herman Pi'ikea Clark, Kapulani Landgraf, and Abigail Romanchak, moderated by April A.H. Drexel; 'A'ole Pau: Possibilities and Potentialities', on 12 August at Hō'ikeākea Gallery, with curators Drew Kahu'aina Broderick, Josh Tengan, and Noelle M.K.Y. Kahanu, and UH Mānoa Director of Museum Studies Karen Kosasa, moderated by April A.H. Drexel.

31. 'Petition to Support and Advocate for Kanaka 'Ōiwi Art Exhibitions, a Kanaka 'Ōiwi Visual Culture Faculty Position, and Kanaka 'Ōiwi Art

Courses', 22 January 2023. For more on institutional critique of the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Department of Art and Art History, see D. Māhealani Dudoit, 'Carving a Hawaiian Aesthetic', *Ōiwi: A Native Hawaiian Journal* 1 (1998): 20–6; Kosasa, 'Pedagogical Sights/Sites', 46–54; and *'Ai Pōhaku, Stone Eaters*, ed. Drew Kahu'aina Broderick, Josh Tengan, Noelle M.K.Y. Kahanu (Honolulu: Pu'uhonua Society, 2023).

32. In response to the petition, letters of support, and public testimony, the Art and Art History Department faculty unanimously voted in support of creating a tenure-track faculty position for Kanaka Visual Art. At the time of writing this essay, the position was on a priority list under consideration by Peter Arnade, Dean, College of Arts, Languages & Letters, UH Mānoa. That said, with multiple layers of additional approval necessary, there is no guarantee that the requested position will come to fruition.

33. The 'About' page of the Department's website was rewritten by Jaimey Hamilton Faris, Associate Professor of Contemporary Art and Theory, in an attempt to address student concerns voiced through a letter and printed takeaway titled 'Decolonize the University of Hawai'i Department of Art and Art History', circulated in July 2020 by Rebecca Maria Goldschmidt, Thad Higa, and C.F.T. In September of that year Kaili Chun and I [Drew] were invited by Jaimey and her colleague in the Department, Mary Babcock, Associate Professor of Art and Fiber Area Chair, to speak with students about *Mai ho'ohuli i ka lima i luna* (2020). Making the most of the opportunity, we coupled our discussion of the aforementioned exhibition to a critique of the Art and Art History Department and their relationship to Hawaiian artists and arts educators over the years. Following the session, Jaimey and Mary reached out to encourage us to develop and submit an exhibition proposal (what would become *'Ai Pōhaku, Stone Eaters*) to the Department for consideration. Throughout the entire exhibition-making process, Jaimey was one

of only a few Department members who actively offered support from within the institution.

34. When asked if select gallery walls could be painted by our installation team, with the understanding that we would cover the associated costs of all materials and labour to return the walls to white during deinstallation, Maika Pollack (then Director of The Art Gallery and an Assistant Professor in the Department of Art and Art History) responded by saying that the gallery walls were 'too valuable for us to paint any color other than [the gallery] white'. This is just one of many interactions with representatives of the Department that demonstrated an unwillingness to adjust TAG's policies and procedures to accommodate our community based approaches to art and exhibition-making. Email correspondence between the curators and Maika Pollack, 28 December 2022.

35. A personal note on solidarities: In January 2023, the week after the exhibition opened at UH Mānoa, I [Josh] had a chance to deliver a paper on *'Ai Pōhaku, Stone Eaters* for the Orion Lecture Series in Fine Arts at the University of Victoria as part of *Wayfinders, the ones we breathe with*, a series of exhibitions, residencies and events curated by Toby Lawrence and Open Space in Victoria, British Columbia. In June 2023, I [Drew] had the opportunity to participate in *Estuaries: An International Indigenous Art Criticism Residency*, which brought together—online and in Lenapehoking—an intergenerational group of artists, curators, writers, researchers, educators, and administrators. The residency was led by Léuli Eshrāghi (Sāmoa) and Candice Hopkins (Carcross/Tagish First Nation) and organised collaboratively by Momus and Forge Project. Together, *Wayfinders* and *Estuaries* remind us of the importance of situating Kānaka efforts within international Indigenous networks to establish strategic alliances between movements, peoples, and places. We are profoundly grateful for the space and time both residencies afforded us to reflect on and write about *'Ai Pōhaku, Stone Eaters* from a critical distance within safe and supportive learning environments.