Kapulani Landgraf was born and raised in Pu‘ahu‘ula, Kane‘ohe, on the windward side of O‘ahu. Landgraf’s 1994 book, Nā Wahi Pana o Ko‘olau Poko: The Legendary Places of Ko‘olau Poko (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press), was the winner of Ka Palapala Po‘okela Award for Excellence in Illustrative Books. Her work has been shown in Alaska, Arizona, British Columbia, Hawai‘i, New Mexico, New York, Oklahoma, Ontario, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Vermont, Washington, and Germany. She currently teaches photography at Kapi‘olani Community College and Windward Community College.

Issues impacting Hawaiian rights and culture motivate Landgraf’s photographic collages and installation work. Her interest in history is reflected in the multiple layers of her collages, and many dimensions of Hawaiian symbolism and allusion infuse her work.

Landgraf’s photographic collages debunk the myth of Hawai‘i as paradise. Missionaries, tourists, and Hawaiian spiritual ancestors occupy a photographic reality in which the past and present coexist. Hawaiian voices of resistance reverberate throughout the English and Hawaiian texts she uses. These voices of protest demand protection for Hawaiian sacred sites and ancestral burial grounds in the face of continual development.

In Landgraf’s view, land is not meant for individual profit. Instead, the land inspires, even demands, responsible guardianship. Her art is therefore part of a creative movement that exists to love and cherish the land, including the protection of nā wahi kapu from desecration. Because these lands bind contemporary Hawaiians to their ancestors, the survival of sacred sites is imperative. To respect and care for these sites now is to prepare for a future for native Hawaiians.
Ka huli au
Silver gelatin collage,
32" x 40"

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Contact the artist for reprint permission
Maka‘awa‘awa
Hand-stamped silver gelatin collage,
32" x 40"

Contact the artist for reprint permission
Missionary Party
Silver gelatin collage, 32" x 40"
Ho‘i hou i ka māpuna
Hand-woven silver gelatin collage,
32" x 40"

Contact the artist for reprint permission.

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Make ke kai hononu
Installation
White Woman
Hand-etched silver gelatin collage,
32" x 40"