

**THE DEVELOPMENT OF HAWAI'I'S KUMU KAHUA THEATRE
AND ITS CORE REPERTORY: THE "LOCAL" PLAYS OF
SAKAMOTO, LUM AND KNEUBUHL**

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ABSTRACT

Kumu Kahua Theatre is a non-profit theatre company in Honolulu which has been in existence since 1971. It is the only theatre in the world dedicated to producing plays which speak particularly to the multi-ethnic audiences of Hawai'i. Over the past thirty years Hawai'i's "local" playwrights have benefited from a working relationship with Kumu Kahua Theatre, which has served as an original stage on which they could practice and refine their craft.

This dissertation defines what is meant by "local" theatre, and includes a brief historical overview of Hawai'i's socio-political climate and theatrical activities before 1971 to provide a foundation from which to discuss Kumu Kahua Theatre and Hawai'i's contemporary "local" playwrights. The activities of Kumu Kahua Theatre from 1971 through 1999 are described, focusing upon the productions of significant "local" plays during this period, and the role of Kumu Kahua Theatre in the growth and refinement of "local" drama. Playwrights mentioned here include: Aldyth Morris, Lynette Amano, James Grant Benton, Jon Shirota, Milton Murayama, Brian Clark, Peter Charlot, John Kneubuhl, Daniel Therriault, and Alani Apio.

Three playwrights, Edward Sakamoto, Darrell H.Y. Lum and Victoria Nālani Kneubuhl, stand out for their contributions to "local" theatre, and their plays have comprised the core repertory of Kumu Kahua Theatre. Chapters three, four and five analyze the "local" plays for adults by these writers. The conclusion compares and contrasts these three playwrights, summarizing the overall developments in "local" theatre and the role of Kumu Kahua Theatre in Hawai'i's "local" drama tradition. Tammy Haili'ōpua Baker's Hawaiian language theatre troupe, Ka Hālau Hanakeeka, is briefly

discussed in reference to the changing use of language in Hawai'i's "local" drama and as a possible indication of what we might expect more of in the future.

Four appendices are provided. Appendix A lists all plays produced by Kumu Kahua Theatre, including the names of playwrights, directors, venues, and production dates. Appendix B provides a season-by-season listing of Kumu Kahua Board Members. Appendix C summarizes the box-office reports for each production from which these figures were available. Appendix D lists Hawai'i's "local" playwrights and "local" plays.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of Study

Kumu Kahua Theatre is a non-profit theatre company which has been in existence since 1971. Throughout its three decades of existence Kumu Kahua Theatre has consistently worked to nurture emerging playwrights and to encourage the development of local drama in Hawai'i. In its efforts to seek out local drama Kumu Kahua has held an annual playwriting competition each year since its inception, in conjunction with the University of Hawai'i's Theatre Department. Winning plays, if not ready for full production, are usually workshopped and given a public reading.

Kumu Kahua Theatre's annual season usually consists of five productions, the majority of which are new works by local playwrights. From 1981 to 1996 the season also included a statewide tour to bring high quality "local" theatre to neighbor island audiences. Now in its thirtieth year of existence, Kumu Kahua has made its long-term home in a newly-created theatre space in downtown Honolulu's historic Kamehameha V Post Office Building on the corner of Merchant and Bethel Streets. Kumu Kahua Theatre is important to consider in the study of ethnic theatre because it is a theatre which is dedicated exclusively to producing plays and theatre pieces that speak particularly to Hawai'i's multi-ethnic audiences.

Although there are other theatres in Hawai'i that occasionally produce works by "local" playwrights, that is generally the exception rather than the rule. Honolulu Theatre for Youth offers workshops in playwriting for youths aged twelve to twenty, and makes an effort to commission works by established "local" playwrights. In recent years they have noticeably increased their efforts to develop "local" drama. Since 1987 the University of Hawai'i at Hilo has made an effort to produce one "Hawaiian" play each year, which almost

necessitates that the playwright be “local,” simply because playwrights from other places seldom write about Hawai‘i in their plays. Hilo Community Players holds an annual playwriting competition for Big Island residents, although this does not always result in a “local” play making it to production. Throughout most of the 1990s, Diamond Head Theatre made an effort to produce one play each year by a “local” playwright. Other theatres in Hawai‘i use words such as “multi-cultural” or “diversity” in the descriptions of their theatres, but their seasons are still dominated by Broadway and off-Broadway successes.

Kumu Kahua Theatre is the only theatre in the state that tries to fill every season with locally written plays. Plays by non-local playwrights are used to round out a season if there are not enough good “local” dramas available, but preference is given to “local” plays. In addition to holding an annual playwriting competition for plays of relevance to local audiences, Kumu Kahua offers a playwriting class each summer, hosts free playwriting workshops, and offers approximately three rehearsed playreadings each year. Additional informal playreadings are also offered when the need arises.

In addition to this, Kumu Kahua has a play development committee which is involved year-round in searching out, reading, and helping to develop locally written plays. Unsolicited scripts are accepted at any time during the year and evaluated by Kumu Kahua’s Artistic Director as well as by the play development committee. Board members sometimes work one on one with a playwright to assist in the development of a script, or approach a “local” author with an idea for adapting their literature to the stage. Kumu Kahua also tries to commission a work by a promising “local” playwright each year. All of these activities are aimed at developing high quality plays that reflect life in Hawai‘i and therefore hold special appeal to Hawai‘i’s “local” audiences. From the beginning Kumu Kahua was a “playwright’s theatre,” committed to helping “local” playwrights bring their work to the stage.

In an attempt to lay the groundwork for further study of ethnic theatre in Hawai'i, this dissertation offers the history of Kumu Kahua Theatre from 1971 through 1999 as a starting point for the consideration of the locally relevant plays of Edward Sakamoto, Darrell H.Y. Lum, and Victoria Nāalani Kneubuhl; three important "local" playwrights who have emerged since the foundation of Kumu Kahua Theatre in 1971. All three of these playwrights have had long-term working relationships with Kumu Kahua Theatre, which has been beneficial to both the playwrights and the theatre. The publication of many of their plays and their successful production in other venues attests to the quality of their work.

Value of this Study

Throughout human history we have used art to reflect our feelings, whether wondering at the awesome forces of nature or commenting upon specific events in our lives. In societies around the world we have relied upon art to serve as our collective conscience, either reinforcing or causing us to question the status quo. The value of the study of theatre to tell us something of our world can be drawn from the words of Alan Read in *Theatre and Everyday Life: An Ethics of Performance*:

The recent fact that a domain called 'literary criticism' rather than 'philosophy' or 'theology' has become one of prominence beyond the academy for intellectuals has of course historical roots. Now it would seem the word is as material as the world, a belief that has led to a faith that literature might tell us more of the world than the compromised sciences. (129)

Political scientists, sociologists, linguists and others who are interested in learning about the dynamics of life in any society can benefit by studying the art that is produced there. As art does anywhere, the arts in Hawai'i serve to examine, reflect and question our attitudes about our environment and our society.

Hawai'i's culture and social structure are unique because of the wide variety of ethnic groups that live together here in relative harmony. In addition to the native Hawaiians, this island state is home to immigrants from Japan, North America, the Philippines, China, Portugal and many other places around the world.¹ In order to live peacefully together, people of every ethnic group have had to adapt to the other cultures present in Hawai'i. The result is a unique island culture in which traditions from many ethnic groups are adapted and celebrated by the society as a whole.

Because of its multi-ethnic population, inter-ethnic relations are an integral part of everyday life in Hawai'i. Naturally, along with the joys of living in a multi-ethnic society, there are frustrations and tensions to contend with.² This is reflected in Hawai'i's local drama. Although inter-ethnic relations may not be the theme of every locally written drama it is almost always present in some way, just as it is in Hawai'i's society. Because of Hawai'i's unique social climate, it is an ideal place for the study of ethnic theatre and inter-ethnic relations.

Kumu Kahua Theatre's seasons are dominated by new "local" plays which comprise Hawai'i's ethnic theatre tradition. These plays provide a valuable resource in portraying Hawai'i's unique social atmosphere. Perhaps this study will draw attention to Hawai'i's position as an important site for the study of ethnic relations through theatre, and encourage further scholarly attention on Hawai'i's "local" theatre tradition.

¹ In the year 2000 the United States Census allowed people to classify themselves under more than one racial category, which resulted in some significant changes since the 1990 census. In 2000, 21.4% of the population described themselves as being of two or more races. Of these, the largest groups were Asian/Hawaiian (or Pacific Islander) at 4.8% and Asian/White at 4.5%. The remaining 78.6% of the population which defined themselves under a single racial category breaks down as follows: Asian 41.6%, White 24.3%, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander 9.4%, African American 1.8%, Native American or Alaska Native .3%, and other race 1.3% (U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Redistricting Data [P.L. 94-171] Summary File, Table PL1. Information available via the internet at: <http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/BasicFactsServlet>).

² In their book *Politics and Prejudice in Contemporary Hawaii* Michael Haas and Peter Resurrection have compiled an extensive collection of newspaper articles written during the 1970s on the subject of ethnic relations in Hawai'i. These numerous articles can serve as testament to the fact that ethnic relations is an integral part of life in Hawai'i and therefore of ongoing concern among Hawai'i's people.

Background and Scholarly Sources

Since the Civil Rights Movements of the 1960s the study of ethnic theatre has been part of a general trend in the United States toward examining pluralism.³ Ethnic theatres on the mainland such as the East West Players and Teatro Campesino have become known nationally for their work with non-white ethnic groups. But Kumu Kahua Theatre and the ethnic theatre tradition of Hawai'i are relatively unknown outside of Honolulu. Kumu Kahua Theatre's productions have been reviewed extensively by Honolulu's leading newspapers the *Honolulu Advertiser* and the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*, but very little scholarly attention has been paid to the work of this, Hawai'i's multi-ethnic theatre.

Maxine Schwartz-Seller's book *Ethnic Theater in the United States* describes the work of ethnic theatre groups throughout the United States, but does not mention the multi-ethnic work of Kumu Kahua Theatre, or for that matter, the existence of any ethnic theatre tradition in Hawai'i at all. Josephine Lee, on the other hand, is to be credited for including Kumu Kahua Theatre in her 1997 book on Asian American Theatre, *Performing Asian America*.

In the fields of sociology, history, and ethnic studies, there are many sources dealing with the relations between the various ethnic groups that have come to make Hawai'i their home. Histories from a Hawaiian perspective which provide the most authoritative information about Hawai'i before contact with the West include the works of David Malo, John Papa 'Ūi, and Samuel Kamakau. Gavan Daws' *Shoal of Time* and Ralph Kuykendall's *A History of Hawai'i* provide a broad historical perspective on events in

³ The existence within a nation or society of groups distinctive in ethnic origin, cultural patterns, religion, or the like. Also, a policy of favoring the preservation of such groups within a given nation or society. (Webster's Dictionary).

Hawai'i's past. Judd's *Hawaii: An Informal History* provides another general social history, with a pro-missionary leaning.

Many of the more recent historical studies focus on plantation life or on the social changes that came during and after World War II. The works of Franklin Odo, Dennis Ogawa, and Ronald Takaki are prominent amongst these. The journal *Social Process in Hawai'i* provides a variety of articles on the evolving economic, social and political climate in Hawai'i from 1935 onward. Noel Kent's *Hawaii: Islands Under the Influence* and Lawrence Fuchs' *Hawaii Pono: A Social History* provide an overview of the economic and political forces that have shaped Hawaiian society.

Other modern scholars have focused on the losses suffered by native Hawaiians. Elizabeth Buck's *Paradise Remade: The Politics of Culture and History in Hawai'i* focuses on western and commercial appropriation of Hawaiian culture. Lilikalā Kame'eleihiwa's *Native Land and Foreign Desires: Pehea Lā E Pono Ai?* provides a detailed commentary on the disenfranchisement of Hawaiians from their land. Many Hawaiian activists have written on the subject of Hawaiian sovereignty, most notably Haunani-Kay Trask who has written numerous articles as well as a book entitled *From a Native Daughter: Colonialism and Sovereignty in Hawai'i*.

The history of theatre in Hawai'i has been researched and documented rather unevenly. Hawai'i's native theatre form, the hula, has been written about most extensively, but focusing on it as a music and dance tradition rather than as a form of theatre. Katherine Luomala's book on Hawaiian Puppetry, *Hula Ki'i*, comes closest to discussing the hula as a form of theatre, and cites many useful sources which discuss the history and practice of the hula. Nathaniel B. Emerson's book, *Unwritten Literature of Hawai'i*, written during the time of King Kalākaua, is a valuable reference documenting the traditional training,

costuming, instruments, and dances of the hula. Kanahelo, Topolinski, Tatar, and Barrère are more recent authorities on the hula.

Sources such as Cook, King, Vancouver, Beaglehole and Campbell provide descriptions of entertainments offered during early periods of contact between Hawaiians and Western Explorers. These are valuable as written documentation on what the hula tradition was like before Western influences began to affect the Hawaiian way of life, although they of course reflect a Western bias and a limited understanding of what they were viewing.

There are a few sources which document the history of western theatre in Hawai'i during the 1800s, including: *Theatre in Hawaii (1778-1840)* (Hoyt); *A History of the Theater in Honolulu During the Reign of Kamehameha V, 1863-1872* (Brown); *The History of the Theatre during the Reign of King Kalakaua, 1874-1891* (Frowe); and *Reminiscences of Theatricals in Honolulu* (Sheldon).

Hawaiian theatre during the early 1900s was dominated by pageant-dramas, and Dennis Carroll's introduction to *Kumu Kahua Plays* not only provides a concise history of theatrical activity in Hawai'i during the 1900s, but also cites a number of sources relating to the pageant dramas. The archives of the various theatres in Hawai'i of course hold specific information about each theatre's individual history. There are also a few Master's Theses and Doctoral Dissertations dealing with different periods in Hawai'i's theatrical history during this century: *A History of the Theatre in Honolulu During the Second World War 1941-46* (Breneman); *Honolulu Theatre for Youth, 1955-1973* (Muschamp); *Performing Arts Education in Hawaii* (Oppenheimer); and *Performing Arts for Children in Hawaii* (Slaughter) are amongst these.

Very little research has been done applying the topics of sociology, history and ethnic studies to theatre in Hawai'i during the twentieth century. There are two recent articles that are pertinent in the area of "local theatre": Jane Desmond's "Invoking 'The

Native': Body Politics in Contemporary Hawaiian Tourist Shows," and Dennis Carroll's "Hawai'i's 'Local' Theatre." Dennis Carroll has also written some important articles dealing with pidgin theatre in Hawai'i, including "Hawaiian Pidgin Theatre," "Kumu Kahua: An Approach to Alternative Theatre in Hawaii," and his introduction to *Kumu Kahua Plays*. Stephen Sumida's *And the View from the Shore*, which focuses upon the literary traditions of Hawai'i, also mentions some of Hawai'i's local playwrights and analyzes Milton Murayama's *All I Asking for Is My Body* which has recently been adapted into a play.

"Local" plays have been published in several sources. The University of Hawai'i Press and Bamboo Ridge Press have published individual works by playwrights such as Aldyth Morris or Darrell H.Y. Lum. Larger anthologies have included the "local" works of Daniel Therriault (in *Anti Naturalism*) and Victoria Nālani Kneubuhl (in *But Still, Like Air, I'll Rise*). In addition to offering published versions of "local" plays, a few of these books also offer informative introductions that provide background information on the playwrights, the plays, or Hawai'i's society. These include: *Kumu Kahua Plays*, *Think of a Garden and Other Plays*, *Hawai'i No Ka Oi*, and *Aloha Las Vegas and Other Plays*. Aside from these sources, much of my research relies upon unpublished scripts, historical records such as newspaper articles and original publicity materials, and personal interviews.

Terminology and Definitions

Before proceeding further, I should discuss some of the terminology that will be utilized in the dissertation. The term "local" is used extensively, so it is important to establish a clear definition of the term as it is employed here. In the general sense of the

word,⁴ local means something that is characteristic of, or is confined to a particular place or district, and in colloquial use it means a resident of a particular place. But anyone who has spent time in Hawai'i knows that being a resident does not automatically make one a "local." In Hawai'i the term has a much more specific meaning, hence my use of quotation marks to distinguish the word.

The "local" identity as it is seen in Hawai'i developed as a result of Hawai'i's plantation history where Native Hawaiians and immigrant workers from places such as China, Japan, Okinawa, Portugal, Puerto Rico, the Philippines, and Korea worked as laborers on the sugar and pineapple plantations.⁵ Sharing a status subordinate to the *haole* plantation owners, managers and merchants who essentially controlled the government and the economy of the islands (Kent 47, 70-71),⁶ these working-class groups gradually gained a collective identity as "locals" despite the efforts of plantation management to keep them separate and thus easier to control (Takaki 24, 164; Daws 304; Junasa 95). In 1945 the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union won the right to legally organize and unionize plantation workers (Thompson 512). With this official unification of mostly non-haoles against the haole bosses, the "local" identity in Hawai'i gained greater importance.

After World War II and the end of Martial Law in Hawai'i, the Democratic Party began to be recognized as a tool for political change and with this came an even greater increase in the strength of the "local" identity:

⁴ As defined by Webster's New World Dictionary of American English: Third College Edition.

⁵ Other ethnic groups such as Germans, Norwegians, Russians, Samoans and other Pacific Islanders also came to Hawai'i as plantation workers but they came in small numbers or did not stay for very long, so are not usually mentioned as separate groups. *Social Process In Hawaii* volume 29, edited by Michael G. Weinstein, contains articles discussing some of these smaller groups, as does Ronald Takaki's *Pau Hana: Plantation Life and Labor in Hawaii 1835-1920*.

⁶ *Haole* is a Hawaiian word which was originally used in reference to anything that was foreign to Hawai'i. In contemporary usage it specifically denotes a person of caucasian ancestry.

If the Republicans were racially exclusive (using the Hawaiian vote just as a political tool), then the Democrats would have to be racially inclusive. This was the only way to make a political advantage out of the disadvantage of a skin that was not white, and if the political advantage could be used intelligently, then after a time perhaps the racial disadvantage would disappear. (Daws 366)

In 1954 the Democratic party won control of the state legislature for the first time (Wisniewski 112). The Democratic party represented the ambitions of Hawai'i's growing middle class, the rising resentments of Hawai'i's non-haole groups against the patterns of the past, and their increasing pride in the articulate and youthful leadership of Japanese and Hawaiian lawyers, Chinese businessmen, and Filipino union officials (Fuchs 321).

So the "local" identity was initially a distinction of both class and ethnicity, uniting Hawai'i's various ethnic groups in social and political opposition to the dominant *haoles*. Once "locals" were in a position to affect politics and policy in Hawai'i, many moved out of blue-collar occupations and into the upper levels of the social hierarchy. "Local" identity continued as an ethnic distinction but became less about economic and social class than it had been in the past.

The "local" identity, however, is about more than just ethnicity or social class. For example, a person of Japanese ancestry from the U.S. mainland or from Japan could look like a "local," but their behavior and their manner of speaking would quickly set them apart from the "local" Japanese people in Hawai'i. Jonathan Okamura defines "local" in his article, *Why There Are No Asian Americans in Hawai'i: The Continuing Significance of Local Identity In Hawai'i*:

the notion of "local" had come to represent the common identity of people of Hawai'i and their shared appreciation of the land, peoples and cultures of the islands. Given this commitment to Hawai'i, *local* also had evolved to represent the collective efforts of local people to maintain control of the economic and political future of Hawai'i from... external forces.⁷ (162)

⁷ Okamura's article discusses the increased marginalization of Hawai'i's people to external sources of power through the substantial immigration of caucasians from the U.S. mainland, increased immigration from Asia and other parts of the Pacific, the enormous growth of the tourist industry, and substantially increased investment from Japan during the late 1980s; all of which have had a negative impact on Hawai'i.

Using this definition, we can understand a “local” person as being a resident of the islands with a strong commitment to the long-term health and welfare of the people and the environment of Hawai‘i.

In his article, “Immigration to Hawai‘i,” Andrew Lind explains that since annexation to the United States, Hawai‘i had increasingly become for many people from abroad, “not the site of permanent settlement for immigrants, but a way-station or stepping-stone for “in-migrants and out-migrants (16).” This has been especially true of *haoles* in Hawai‘i. *Haoles* are generally perceived as outsiders or temporary residents, lacking the necessary long-term commitment to Hawai‘i that would make them “locals.” So they are generally excluded from this definition unless they can prove by their actions that they merit the term “local.”

Jane Desmond in her article “Invoking ‘The Native’” states that “sometimes the term ‘local haole’ is used to refer to a Caucasian (*haole*) from the islands, usually with several generations of family ties there (106).” In his book *Islands of History* Marshall Sahlins claims similarly that “Having resided a certain time in the community, even strangers become ‘children of the land’ (*kama‘āina*⁸) (xi).” Although I would agree that length of residence can show a certain level of commitment to Hawai‘i, this alone does not make one “local.” In fact, the locally published book *Pidgin To Da Max Hana Hou!*⁹ defines the word *kama‘āina* as a “word used only by haoles to denote a longtime haole resident (Simonson et. al.),” and in *Hawaii Pono* Fuchs refers repeatedly to “the *kamaaina* haole elite” as a social class separate from Hawai‘i’s other residents (152). Haunani-Kay Trask puts it in stronger terms: “Non-Natives, no matter how long their

⁸ A Hawaiian word meaning native-born, host, or to be familiar. The literal translation is “land child” (Pukui & Elbert).

⁹ A satirical “dictionary” of Hawaiian-English written for “local” readers in 1982, which was the sequel to the extremely popular 1981 *Pidgin To Da Max*.

residence in Hawai‘i, should acknowledge that they live, as uninvited guests, in our Native country (*Native Daughter* 174).” So although a *haole* might consider him or herself to be a *kama‘āina* after living in Hawai‘i for a long enough time, that does not necessarily mean that others will consider them to be “local.”

Physical appearance (i.e. being non-white) is usually the first sign that people look for when they try to determine who is “local,” but this initial sign will be supported or refuted by certain behaviors which people look for in “locals” as an indication of their long-term commitment to life in Hawai‘i. One of the most easily recognizable behaviors is the use of pidgin English, or Hawaiian Creole English, in their speech. This form of speech originated out of necessity on the plantations where immigrants from many different countries needed to find a common language with which to communicate (Takaki 117-119).¹⁰

Pidgin is comprised mainly of English, with borrowed words from Hawaiian and the languages of other ethnic groups present in Hawai‘i, utilizing a combination of English and Hawaiian sentence structures. The first generations on the plantations used many borrowed words from the original languages of the ethnic groups present, but the pidgin dialect evolved with later generations using more words from English and fewer words from other languages, although the sentence structure and pronunciation continued to be markedly different from standard English. “Local” people use pidgin English to varying degrees depending upon their situation, and many can switch back and forth at will between pidgin and standard English. Linguists distinguish between three levels of creole language: basilect, which is the most “heavy” or creole-like; mesolect, which is the

¹⁰ Linguists define pidgin as a language which is native to none of its users and whose grammatical structure and vocabulary are sharply reduced from its source languages. When a community has raised children for whom the pidgin language of their parents or its derived form is native, it is called a creole language (Nagara 271, 278). In recent years people have begun to refer to the language in Hawai‘i as Hawaiian Creole English, although to most people it is still commonly known as pidgin. In this dissertation I will use what is still the most commonly used term, pidgin, to describe this language.

average, ordinary level; and acrolect, which is closest to the more prestigious language - in this case, closest to standard English (Forman, Masuda). There are also dialects of pidgin which can identify a person as being from a particular island or neighborhood depending upon their word choice, word order or pronunciation.¹¹

In addition to speech, other behaviors that mark one as “local” include the adaptation of customs from Hawai‘i’s various ethnic groups.¹² As Dennis Ogawa explains in his book *Jan Ken Po*:

...Hawaii’s people have come to share their cultures and their lives. When one speaks about the Japanese, Chinese, Hawaiian or Filipino in Hawaii, one is not talking about separate ethnic units whose communities do not have interactions with each other. Rather, one must speak of a shared island heritage of cultural background and lifestyle. (155)

For example, most “locals” leave their shoes outside the front door when they enter a home (a Japanese custom), pop firecrackers to celebrate New Year’s Eve and the Chinese New Year (a Chinese custom), and offer leis as gifts to mark special occasions (a Hawaiian custom). Appreciation of Hawai‘i’s various ethnic groups can also be shown through the foods that many “locals” enjoy such as: malasadas (Portuguese), manapua (Chinese),¹³ kim-chee (Korean), pancit (Filipino), musubi (Japanese), pasteles (Puerto Rican) and poi (Hawaiian). These are, of course, only a few examples from the many contributions made by each ethnic group.

¹¹ For some useful discussions on pidgin English in Hawai‘i see: Carr, “A Recent Chapter in the Story of the English Language in Hawaii”; Hormann, “Hawaii’s Linguistic Situation”; Long, “Hawaiian Pidgin”; Reinecke & Tokimasa, “The English Dialect of Hawaii”; and Reinecke’s Master’s Thesis, published in 1969 as *Language and dialect in Hawaii, a sociolinguistic history to 1935*. More current evaluations on the evolution of pidgin can be found in: Sato, “Linguistic Inequality in Hawaii: the Post-Creole Dilemma”; Roberts, “The role of diffusion in the genesis of Hawaiian Creole”; and Bickerton, *Change and Variation in Hawaiian English*.

¹² Bernhard Hormann’s article, “The Mixing Process,” supports this thesis and explores it in detail.

¹³ The Chinese term for this is *charsiubaau*, but in Hawaiian it was called “mea ‘ono pua‘a,” which in pidgin became “manapua.” (Hormann 122)

The “Hawaiian Renaissance” of the 1970s marked a period during which a resurgence of pride in being Hawaiian was apparent throughout Hawai‘i. Hawaiians, who at the time of early contact with Westerners were described as “the most industrious people I ever saw (Shaler 112),”¹⁴ came to be characterized as dumb and lazy partly because they were not interested in working steadily on the *haole* sugar plantations (Takaki 22, 130). This stereotype was inflicted upon them for nearly two centuries, but beginning in the 1970s Hawaiians refused to accept such a stereotype any longer; instead they actively worked to revitalize their ancient customs, arts and language (Kanahele 1986: 3, Barrère 2). This newly asserted strength in the Hawaiian identity caused people of other ethnicities to sit up and take notice, as noted by George Kanahele in his 1982 article “The New Hawaiians”:

Non-Hawaiians...show greater and more active interest in the full scope of Hawaiiana - the hula, crafts, music, language, sports, and so on, indeed, so much so that being Hawaiian is becoming almost a vogue among non-Hawaiians. (24)

Native Hawaiians, being the original residents of the islands, have always been included automatically in the definition of “locals” in Hawai‘i. And, especially since the “Hawaiian Renaissance,” Hawaiians are the models that other “locals” strive to emulate at one level or another in order to show that they, too, belong.

Beginning with this “Hawaiian Renaissance” though, and with the growing strength of the Hawaiian Sovereignty movement throughout the 1980s and 1990s,¹⁵ many Hawaiians have consciously separated themselves from non-Hawaiians and choose to identify themselves as Native Hawaiians rather than as “locals,” although the terms are not mutually exclusive.

¹⁴ This is one of several sources cited by Stannard (*Before the Horror* 44-45) describing the self-sufficiency and work ethic observed in the ancient Hawaiians during the early years of contact with the West.

¹⁵ I will explain Hawaiian Sovereignty further in Chapter 5 during the discussion of the play *January, 1893*.

As already seen, one does not necessarily have to be native to Hawai'i to be considered "local." Sassy mynah birds, mean mongooses and sneaky cockroaches are examples of introduced animal species which have become notoriously celebrated parts of the "local" lifestyle. Foods from different cultures have been combined to create culinary delights which are uniquely "local." Victuals such as spam musubi, shave-ice with azuki beans or ice cream, Li Hing popcorn, Cafe 100 Loco-Mocos in Hilo and Rainbow Drive-In teri-beef plate lunches in Honolulu can be found nowhere else in the world. Similarly, people of widely divergent geographic origins have inter-married to produce the multi-racial "local" children of Hawai'i, who may or may not have Hawaiian blood.

To conclude my explanation of the term "local," for the purposes of this dissertation I will define "local" as a resident of Hawai'i who shows by his or her actions a familiarity with the history and customs of the various ethnic groups of Hawai'i, a concern for the welfare of Hawai'i's people and environment, an appreciation of the uniquely "local" things that make Hawai'i special, and a commitment to be a part of Hawai'i - in good times and bad. The term "local" connotes an emotional state of belonging to a particular place, and this belonging can be achieved through longevity of attachment or through intensity of attachment. What is important, is the sense of attachment.

Following along the same lines, when I refer to "local" theatre in this dissertation I am not simply referring to plays that were written or produced in Hawai'i. I am referring to theatre which reflects the unique culture of Hawai'i to which all of Hawai'i's ethnic groups have contributed. These are plays which are set in Hawai'i and deal with some aspect of life in Hawai'i as experienced by "local" people.

Although American culture has established itself as a major influence in Hawai'i, it is an immigrant culture as much as any of the other non-Hawaiian cultures in Hawai'i are. So although the theatrical production style and the language are most often borrowed from American culture, the subject matter of the plays often focus on the influences of Hawai'i's

other ethnic groups. In this sense, Kumu Kahua Theatre is a community theatre in the truest sense of the word, as it reflects Honolulu's community in all its diversity.

I am tempted to use the word "multicultural" in reference to Hawai'i's theatre tradition because it is a tradition which involves many cultures at once, but because of the connotations associated with this word, I will avoid it.¹⁶ I will use instead, the term "ethnic theatre," which seems to be more generally acceptable.

In the dissertation I will, from time to time, need to address issues of racial or ethnic interrelations. Again, the choice of terminology is problematic. In *Performing Asian America: Race and Ethnicity on the Contemporary Stage*, Josephine Lee explores this problem in depth. She notes that "heated debates surround the use of the terms race and ethnicity in examining literature and drama... [and] many writers prefer the term ethnic precisely because it can imply more self-determination on the part of the individual than does the term race (189)." For this reason, I will use the term "ethnicity" instead of "race" in my discussions on this subject.

Methodology and Structure of Dissertation

The first part of my dissertation is historical in nature. Although the history of theatre in Hawai'i prior to 1971 is beyond the scope of this dissertation, I do address it in the introduction in order to provide a context for discussion of events that occur later. Key

¹⁶ As Susan Bennett explains in *Theatre Audiences: A Theory of Production and Reception*:

Intercultural theatre is not - or at least it should not be - the same as international theatre, intranational theatre, crosscultural theatre, transcultural theatre, or multicultural theatre. Yet many of these terms get used interchangeably, not, generally speaking, because the user is deliberately sloppy or has incorrectly conceptualized the performance but because a performance often includes some aspects of several of the categories but not all of the aspects of one of them. Beyond this, many (perhaps all) of these terms have not yet been as finely calibrated as they must be if they are to pull off any or some of the claims made for them. It is often the case that the preference of one particular category promotes a specific political currency: interculturalism, for example, is seen as generally a good thing as it is discussed in language, literary, and/or theatre studies, whereas multiculturalism tends to be understood as something altogether more insidious (government policy used to 'manage' immigrant communities). (Bennett ix)

playwrights that I include in this introduction are: John Kneubuhl, who was important as a pioneer in the development of the idea of a theatre uniquely for people of Hawai'i and the Pacific; Bessie Toishigawa Inouye, whose 1947 play *Reunion* is notable as an early play to utilize pidgin in the dialogue; and Jean Charlot who translated legends from the Hawaiian language to create his dramas.

Chapter two of the dissertation provides a narrative history of the activities of Kumu Kahua Theatre from the time of its founding in 1971 to the end of its twenty-eighth season in 1999. This history describes the subject matter of the "local" plays comprising each season, and relates the way that these plays were received. In addition to Edward Sakamoto, Darrell H.Y. Lum and Victoria Nālani Kneubuhl, significant playwrights mentioned in this section are: Aldyth Morris, Lynette Amano, James Grant Benton, Jon Shirota, Milton Murayama, Brian Clark,¹⁷ Peter Charlot, John Kneubuhl, Dan Therriault, and Alani Apio.

Due to the absence of other forms of historical documentation, I rely heavily upon critical reviews as the only written sources available that describe audience reaction to the productions. I supplement these limited viewpoints when possible with responses from other audience members or with my own perceptions. In *Theatre Audiences* Susan Bennett explains the value of this approach:

The description of an individual response to a particular production may not be possible or, indeed, even desirable. But, because of that individual's participation in a given culture and the importance of his/her culturally constituted horizon of expectations, and selection of a particular social event, it is important to reposition the study of drama to reflect this. Recent developments have at least marked an encouraging emancipation from previous devotion to the dramatic text. (211)

The role of the drama critic is problematic for several reasons. First of all, a reviewer is only one person seeing a production on one particular night. The opinions and

¹⁷ This playwright has written under a variety of names including Brian Clark, Brian Clark-Kenton, Brian Burgess-Clark and B. Burgess Clark.

judgments that critics share with the public are subjective. As Patrice Pavis points out in *Languages of the Stage*, well-established playwrights and directors are less likely to be severely challenged by reviewers for their artistic choices or techniques. For example, in reviews of Peter Brook's 1978 production of *Measure for Measure* Pavis found that:

The critical discourse - probably because Brook has the status of a public monument - does not take the risk of discouraging or encouraging the public to go and see the play... The unexpressed judgment seems to be: 'obviously it is good because it is Shakespeare, directed by Brook, although it hasn't got that particular twist of the novel and exceptional'. (104)

In other words, critics will generally play it safe with established playwrights and directors. On the other hand, when it comes to new playwrights working with non-traditional theatres such as Kumu Kahua, reviewers feel more freedom to impose their own judgments and perceptions about what constitutes good drama.

Also complicating matters is the fact that audiences do not always agree with critics' opinions, but these critical opinions can sometimes have a devastating effect on the run of what would have otherwise been a popular play by giving it bad publicity before the public has a chance to form its own opinions. One instance where something like this happened was with Luis Valdez's play *Zoot Suit*. This play was a huge success in California, but received a much different reception in New York where the opening night audience enjoyed the show but critics did not. As a result of poor reviews, traditional Broadway audiences avoided the play (Bennet 159).

In looking at audience response, it is important to consider who the people are that comprise the audiences of Kumu Kahua Theatre. In *Theatre Audiences* Susan Bennett cites several sources that have come to the studied conclusion that the mainstream theatre audience of the U.S. mainland is white, well educated, professional male, middle class, heterosexual, and in their late youth or early middle age (87-89). But she also states:

Perhaps too readily theatre-going is thought of as a middle-class occupation by definition. Since the 1960s many theatres have emerged which speak for dominated and generally marginalized peoples, and the proliferation of these groups demands new definitions of theatre and recognition of new non-traditional audiences. Many of these emergent theatres have self-consciously sought the centrality of the spectator as subject of the drama, but as a subject who can think and act. (1)

The demographics of Hawai‘i’s population are different than those of the U.S. mainland, and the composition of theatre audiences in Hawai‘i reflect this. In contrast to the description of the “typical” audience member in mainstream American theatre, the audience members of Kumu Kahua Theatre are primarily of “local” non-white ethnicities. In his article, “Hawai‘i’s ‘Local’ Theatre,” Dennis Carroll states that although Kumu Kahua has never done a demographic study of its audiences, box-office returns have shown that “local” Japanese plays are the most popular and most frequently staged, followed by “Local Hawaiian,” Chinese American, and Filipino American plays. He also notes that audiences at Kumu Kahua tend to be more “local” than other theatres on the island, and that the tourist component of the audience is minuscule (126). Kumu Kahua Theatre is one of those emerging theatres which, as Bennett explains, seeks out the centrality of the non-traditional spectator as subject of the drama.

An examination of the plays by “local” playwrights whose works are produced at Kumu Kahua can also tell us something about the audiences for which they write. As Susan Bennett says:

The detailed examinations of texts and their addressees undoubtedly lend themselves to studies of how playwrights shape their writing to meet, surprise, or thwart the expectations of the intended and/or actual audiences. (53-54)

Audience response certainly shapes what kinds of plays are chosen to fill a season, and experience will often teach a playwright which types of plays are more likely to be accepted for production. This in turn can affect the types of plays that a playwright will choose to create in the future.

In any theatre that depends upon box office revenue to support its operating costs, the anticipated audience response has a significant impact upon the selection of plays for a season.

The effects of processes of evaluation are particularly acute in the case of theatre. While publishers of novels survive on a fairly modest success rate, both big - and low-budget theatres can collapse under the economic burden of a single failed production. Pre-performance evaluation certainly reduces the range of productions available and does this more stringently than other kinds of artistic production. (Bennett 53)

Fear of box-office failure often makes theatres overly cautious in their choice of plays.

Kumu Kahua theatre, in its mission to present new and provocative drama, has resisted this cautious trend as much as possible. But in recent years, with severe funding cut-backs on the state level, Kumu Kahua has had to rely to a greater extent upon box office revenue for its support. This has caused the theatre to depend more upon the works of already established playwrights, and perhaps to revive a previous “hit” to offset the box office losses that a new, untried play very likely might pose. So seasons are far less likely now than in the past to consist entirely of new works by unfamiliar playwrights. The unfortunate result of this is that “local” playwrights now have more difficulty getting their work staged, because the theatre may opt to present a mainland play with a proven track record rather than taking a risk with a brand new “local” work.

In addition to discussing Kumu Kahua’s role in Hawai‘i’s ethnic theatre tradition, this dissertation provides an in-depth analysis of the works of three major playwrights who have been important in the development of Hawai‘i’s contemporary “local” drama. This section of the dissertation necessarily emphasizes dramatic text over production, since the text is the most fixed part of the playwright’s work. My analysis of each play, based loosely on an Aristotelian paradigm, addresses plot, character, language, visual and aural elements, and mood. The main idea of the play which is imbedded in the play’s action is addressed as the theme. Each of these elements is addressed somewhat flexibly, different

elements being emphasized depending upon what is most important in the play being considered.

The three playwrights who are focused on in chapters three, four and five are: Edward Sakamoto, Darrell H.Y. Lum, and Victoria Nālani Kneubuhl. Each of these playwrights have worked with Kumu Kahua Theatre repeatedly over the twenty eight year period from 1971 to 1999. Each playwright's chapter includes a brief biographical introduction, an analysis of their "local" plays, and an evaluation of recurring themes and devices or techniques that the playwright uses.

My final chapter provides an overall assessment of the themes, subject matter, and styles of the "local" plays of Sakamoto, Lum and Kneubuhl. I also comment upon the changing use of language in "local" drama, noting an increased use of the Hawaiian language in recent years. I argue that Kumu Kahua Theatre has been central in the development of a "local" drama tradition in Hawai'i and continues to support local playwrights and theatre artists in a variety of ways. I conclude with a statement about Hawai'i's importance as a site for the study of ethnic relations through theatre. Four appendices are included: the first provides a production history for Kumu Kahua Theatre, the second provides a listing of the members of the Kumu Kahua Board of Directors, the third provides Kumu Kahua Box Office Summaries, and the fourth provides a listing of "local" playwrights and "local" plays.

Scope and Limitations

Objectivity:

Although I make every effort to be as objective as possible, I have, over the years, been involved with Kumu Kahua in a variety of capacities, including as an actress, a Board Member, a season subscriber, a volunteer, and most recently in creating and maintaining

the theatre's archives. In questioning my objectivity up-front, I borrow from the thinking of Friedrich Nietzsche in *The Genealogy of Morals*:

'objectivity' is not meant to stand for 'disinterested contemplation' (which is a rank absurdity) but for an ability to have one's pros and cons within one's command and to use them or not as one chooses... All seeing is essentially perspective, and so is all knowing. The more emotions we allow to speak in a given matter, the more different eyes we can put on in order to view a given spectacle, the more complete will be our conception of it, the greater our 'objectivity.' (Nietzsche 255)

I hope to use my variety of perspectives to provide as complete as possible a conception of the work of Kumu Kahua Theatre and the quality of the plays discussed herein.

Audience Attendance:

It is difficult to assess Kumu Kahua's box-office success from one production to the next for a number of reasons. First, there are no box office records available at all before 1980, and box office records did not begin to be kept consistently until 1983. Second, Kumu Kahua's plays were presented in an assortment of venues capable of holding audiences of widely varying sizes; and the number of performances held for each production also differed from one production to the next.

Without some level of consistency in these areas it is difficult to gauge how popular a play was based on box-office records alone. Because of this I also rely on interviews or personal letters from people who have a personal recollection of how popular one production was in comparison to another. When I am able to refer to box office records, I divide the total number of those who attended by the number of performances that were offered to come up with the average sized audience per night for each play.

Plays Beyond the Scope of this Dissertation:

Because this dissertation focuses primarily on Kumu Kahua Theatre and the works that have been developed in cooperation with this theatre, there are some plays and

playwrights that must be excluded as being beyond this dissertation's scope. This means that plays by Edward Sakamoto, Darrell H.Y. Lum and Victoria Nālani Kneubuhl that are not "local" or that are intended for children will not be discussed. This also means that "local" dramatists who aren't affiliated with Kumu Kahua Theatre, such as Wallace Chappell, Marlene Sai, Leon and Malia, Tremaine Tamayose and Lisa Matsumoto will be excluded.

Socio-Historical Context in Hawai'i Before 1970

Hawai'i is an isolated chain of islands in the middle of the Pacific ocean, approximately 2,400 miles from the West coast of the Mainland United States and 2,400 miles from Tahiti (Kuykendall 19). According to historical estimates, Polynesians first settled in Hawai'i sometime between the third century B.C.E. and the first century A.C.E. (Stannard 32). Hawaiian oral tradition states that there was a new influx of Polynesian settlers between 1100 and 1250 A.C.E. (Barrère 7, Kame'eleihiwa 35, Kuykendall 49), but other than that Hawai'i remained largely isolated until January of 1778 when Captain James Cook stumbled upon the islands accidentally while on an expedition to find a strait through north America.¹⁸

Captain Cook's ships arrived in Hawai'i during the Makahiki festival commemorating the God Lono, and the Hawaiian people reacted to this unprecedented visitation with amazement, believing that Cook was an incarnation of Lono. Cook and his men were treated with awe and respect by the Hawaiians, who generously provided them with rations, sexual gratification and various entertainments. Once Hawai'i was

¹⁸ Kuykendall states that there are some reasons for believing that Spanish or Dutch sailors may have landed in Hawai'i sometime during the 16th or 17th century, but if this did indeed occur it did not result in knowledge of these islands to the Western world (52). Sumida also cites several sources recounting stories of shipwrecked vessels from Japan arriving on Hawai'i's shores prior to 1778 (279).

“discovered” by Cook, Westerners began to visit with increasing frequency and in greater numbers.

During these early years of contact with the West, Kamehameha I was battling with rival chiefs to gain control over the entire chain of Hawaiian islands. In 1795, his strength enhanced by weapons provided by the white foreigners, Kamehameha gained control of all the islands except Kauaʻi and Niʻihau. In 1810 Kaumualiʻi surrendered these two islands to Kamehameha, thus uniting all the islands under the reign of a single ruler.

The introduction of Western diseases caused widespread death and disease-induced infertility resulting in a catastrophic drop in the native Hawaiian population.¹⁹ Influence from the West also quickly brought about the irrevocable fall of the ancient *kapu* system,²⁰ destroying Hawaiʻi’s religion and changing Hawaiian society forever. King Kamehameha died in 1819 and within the year Kamehameha II (Liholiho) took the decisive step of publicly eating with women, proving that the *kapu* system no longer held any power. *Heiau* were destroyed and *kiʻi* were toppled and burned throughout the islands (Kameʻeleihiwa 68, 74).²¹ Many native Hawaiians fell under the influence of sailors and traders who were often only too happy to take advantage of a newly lawless Hawaiʻi. Into this environment of social upheaval came a small group of Calvinist missionaries hoping to bring Christianity to the Hawaiian people in 1820 (Kamakau 246). The Queen Regent Kaʻahumanu led her people in the conversion to Christianity.²²

¹⁹ Historical estimates on the size of the Hawaiian population before Western contact vary greatly, ranging from a low of approximately 100,000 to a high of at least 800,000. But within a century that population fell to a mere 53,900 (Stannard 114-116). The Hawaiian population continued to fall until it hit its lowest point in 1900 at 37, 656 (Kuykendall 346). After this, “the immigrants intermarried with the Hawaiians, and there came to be a group of part-Hawaiians. While the pure Hawaiians decreased, the part-Hawaiians increased and have kept on increasing (Kuykendall 261).”

²⁰ Hawaiian tradition of laws and beliefs based on an ancient pantheon of gods.

²¹ Heiau were ancient Hawaiian religious temples. Kiʻi were carved wooden images of the Hawaiian gods.

²² Victoria Nālani Kneubuhl addresses this period of history in her play *The Conversion of Kaʻahumanu*, which is analyzed in chapter 5 of this dissertation.

Throughout the 1800s representatives from France, Britain and the United States vied for influence over the Hawaiian kingdom. Honolulu had become an international hub for trading and from 1840 to 1860 the whaling industry was at its peak in Hawai'i. At the same time, haole plantation owners and others with a financial interest in the islands attempted to gain increased control in Hawaiian governmental policies. Between 1845-1850 the *Great Mahele* was created to divide Hawaiian lands and gave both commoners and foreigners the right to own land fee simple (Kame'eleihiwa 208-209). In 1851 the sugar industry began importing immigrants to labor on the plantations.²³ Hawaiian rulers were repeatedly coerced into signing unfavorable treaties with foreign governments, and the question of annexation to the United States was raised many times. New constitutions were created several times (1840, 1852, 1864, and the "Bayonet Constitution" of 1887) as Hawaiian rulers and their haole-dominated cabinet members struggled over policy and political control (Dudley & Agard 17-19).

In January of 1893, shortly after Queen Lili'uokalani assumed the throne, she tried to proclaim a new constitution that would be more favorable to her people than the "Bayonet Constitution" that her predecessor, King Kalākaua, had been forced to sign.²⁴ Fearing an armed revolution from American Annexationists, the Queen's Cabinet refused to endorse the new constitution, so she informed the Hawaiian people that she would have to postpone the granting of the constitution to some future date. She was speaking in Hawaiian, and her words "ua kēia mau lā," were ambiguous because they could also be translated to mean "in a few days." This ambiguity was seized upon by annexationists who

²³ Many of the plays of Edward Sakamoto and Darrell H. Y. Lum focus on contemporary characters who have descended from these immigrant workers.

²⁴ This constitution severely limited the King's power. It also imposed income qualifications for the privilege of voting. Only men who owned property worth at least \$3,000 or who had an annual income of at least \$600 were allowed to vote. This effectively prevented most Native Hawaiians from voting while at the same time allowing non-citizens to dominate Hawaiian politics (Trask *Native Daughter* 14, 15).

accused the Queen of attempting a revolutionary act and fostering an unstable government (Daws 272).²⁵

Annexationists formed a thirteen-member “Committee of Safety” and obtained assurance from the U.S.S. Boston, which was in port at the time, that the military would support them if American lives and property were threatened. They formed a Provisional Government and named Sanford B. Dole as their President, taking control of Ali‘iolani Hale, the central government building. Fearing an armed conflict with the U.S. military, Queen Lili‘uokalani relinquished her power, hoping to avoid the perpetration of violence against her people (Kame‘eleihiwa 315). She made it clear though, that she was yielding to the superior force of the United States of America, not to the Provisional Government of the Republic of Hawai‘i. Her famous speech showed that she hoped this would only be a temporary measure, trusting that when the U.S. leaders learned the facts they would restore her kingdom (Daws 276, Kamauu 16).

Two months later Grover Cleveland became President of the United States. He sent a special commissioner, James H. Blount, to Hawai‘i to investigate the facts surrounding the abrogation of the monarchy. Blount reached the conclusion that the revolution was accomplished by force, against the wishes of the vast majority of Hawaiians (Fuchs 32, Kame‘eleihiwa 316). Cleveland instructed Dole and his associates to restore Lili‘uokalani to her throne (Dudley & Agard 25–46), but the Provisional Government refused to comply. Since the United States could not interfere with the internal affairs of Hawai‘i (still an independent nation), things remained as they were.

In order to make its government permanent, the Provisional Government held a constitutional convention (making sure that only those supporting the new government could participate) and on July 4, 1894 proclaimed the constitution of a new government,

²⁵ This period in history is dealt with in detail because it is important for an understanding of Kneubuhl’s play *January, 1893* which deals with the overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy. The play *Ka‘iulani* also deals with this period in Hawai‘i’s history.

the Republic of Hawai'i, with Dole as its President. This new government was promptly recognized by all the leading nations of the world, including the United States.

Having lost the hope of intervention by the U.S., Hawaiian Nationalists planned an armed revolution to restore the Queen to her throne in January 1895. The Republic's governmental leaders learned about the plans though, and arrested a number of people including Lili'uokalani herself. There was talk of sentencing the "rebel" leaders to death under martial law, so Lili'uokalani did the only thing she could to try to gain clemency for her followers. Imprisoned in a bedroom of 'Iolani palace, Lili'uokalani officially renounced all claims to the throne and signed an oath of allegiance to the new Republic of Hawai'i (Fuchs 35, Dudley & Agard 62). This action ended any lingering hopes for the restoration of the Hawaiian monarchy.

The issue of annexation was hotly debated among U.S. politicians until they saw what an advantageous ally Hawai'i proved to be during the Spanish American War (Dudley & Agard 55, 63). In August of 1898 Hawai'i officially became a territory of the United States despite the opposition of ninety-five percent of the Native Hawaiian population.²⁶ Shortly after annexation, the U.S. military set to work building strategic outposts and transforming Pearl Harbor into a port capable of supporting a large number of military and commercial ships.

With the United States' 1917 entry into World War I, thousands of men in Hawai'i entered the military forces. Hawai'i made a serious effort to become agriculturally self-supporting to reduce the amount of food that had to be imported, and liquor was prohibited (Wisniewski 19-23). Tourism ceased almost entirely because most ships were taken over by the government for service in the war (Kuykendall 306-307).

²⁶ Two petitions which held a total of 38,554 signatures protesting the proposed treaty of annexation were delivered to the U.S. Senate. (The 1896 census lists the total Hawaiian population as 31,019 Hawaiian native and 8,485 Hawaiian half-caste.) As a result of this and other legal questions, the Senate did not ratify the treaty of annexation - but it was later passed through Joint Resolution No. 55 (Hawaiian Patriotic League 18-19).

Benefiting from the protective-tariff laws of the United States, sugar became the dominant industry in Hawai'i. By 1924 more than 45,000 people, approximately one-sixth of Hawai'i's population, were laborers on the sugar plantations (Kuykendall 315). The commercial growth and production of pineapples, which began in the early 1900s, quickly became Hawai'i's second largest industry. Chinese, Japanese and Filipinos were the largest immigrant groups that provided the labor for these plantations, and they formed a large segment of the population. The "Americanization" of such immigrant groups became a largely debated topic during this time period.

During the first half of the 20th century laborers on the plantations and in other industries struggled repeatedly to unionize and to strike for better working conditions and higher wages.²⁷ In the late 1930s the ILWU emerged as the most powerful union in Hawai'i, and they were poised to move into organization of the plantation workers when World War II intervened (Fuchs 239-240, Wisniewski 97).

On December 7, 1941, Japanese bombers attacked Pearl Harbor, launching the United States into World War II. Hawai'i was placed under United States' martial law and General Walter C. Short took control of the territory's government.²⁸ Although most Japanese Americans in Hawai'i were not interned as those on the U.S. mainland were, they were subject to many restrictions in their day-to-day lives.²⁹ Martial law, which was supported by many of Hawai'i's prominent businessmen, continued in Hawai'i even after the war ended. It was finally abolished by Presidential proclamation on October 24, 1944.

²⁷ In his article "Unionization and the Plantation," Kiyoshi Ikeda discusses the effects that unionization has had on the plantations.

²⁸ For a description of the extent to which the military controlled every aspect of day to day life in Hawai'i, see Fuchs (300). Ogawa also describes the effects of the war effort upon people from many different walks of life (1978: 313-314).

²⁹ Fuchs (301-307), Ogawa (1978: 315-320) and Wisniewski (87-92) describe the restrictions imposed upon Japanese Americans in Hawai'i. Kawahara and Hatanaka describe the effects of these restrictions after two years of martial law in Hawai'i in their article "The Impact of War on An Immigrant Culture." Although most Japanese in Hawai'i were not interned, many of their community leaders were. One such person, Kazuo Miyamoto, wrote a semi-autobiographical account of this experience entitled "Hawaii: End of the Rainbow."

However, due to Executive Order 9489 curfews and blackouts were continued in Hawai'i until July 11, 1945 (Wisniewski 83).

Initially Japanese Americans were forbidden from participating in the U.S. armed forces, but they persisted in their requests to serve the United States during the war. On June 5, 1942 National Guardsmen and draftees from Hawai'i formed the first nisei combat group, known as the 100th Battalion. In 1943 Japanese American volunteers from Hawai'i and the mainland formed the 442nd Regimental Combat Team. These soldiers bravely fought some of the bloodiest battles in the war and suffered enormous casualties. Those who returned from the war came back as decorated heroes. Many of them entered politics, determined to change the social situation in Hawai'i.³⁰

Until the end of the 1950s Hawai'i was still a United States' territory. During this decade the Democrats, predominantly supported by Japanese and other non-haoles, had gained control of island politics. The I.L.W.U. (International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union), however, was a major factor of divisiveness within the Democratic party as the union tried to dictate legislative decisions (Fuchs 346). Congressional and F.B.I. "Red Hunts," begun during the 1940s as a reaction against communism, continued sporadically throughout the 1950s (Daws 368-376). Some felt that the issue of communism was kept alive by political factions that did not want Hawai'i to become a state. But if that was the case, they fought a losing battle.

In 1959 Hawai'i became a state, winning the same rights, privileges and responsibilities shared by the other states of the nation. The majority of Hawai'i's population was jubilant, celebrating the economic opportunities that they anticipated with statehood status. Many Native Hawaiians, though, expressed ambivalence.³¹ In 1959 only 10,000 pure Hawaiians remained, but part-Hawaiians who made up 18 percent of the

³⁰ This situation is reflected in plays such as Edward Sakamoto's *Our Hearts Were Touched With Fire* and Bessie Toishigawa-Inouye's *Reunion*.

³¹ The island of Ni'ihau, the only exclusively Hawaiian precinct, rejected statehood in this vote (Fuchs 414).

state's population, strongly identified with their Hawaiian ethnicity. Although most Hawaiians were unhappy with the further absorption of their nation into the United States of America, they tried to look toward this new phase in history as an opportunity to share in the prosperity that others enjoyed (Fuchs 442-447, Trask *Native Daughter* 88).

The introduction of commercial airlines in the 1950s led to the rapid growth of tourism, resulting in extensive construction to support this expanding industry.³² During the 1960s tourism continued to grow, while at the same time the University of Hawai'i was expanding its facilities and striving to become a world-class institution of learning (Fuchs 434). People from the U.S. mainland as well as from other countries came to Hawai'i as University students. These students, whether recent arrivals or "locals," actively followed the civil-rights trends in other parts of the world, participating in anti-establishment demonstrations and protests against U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War. Socially, this set the stage for an experimental theatre such as Kumu Kahua to be formed within the University environment.

Theatre in Hawai'i Before 1970

During the centuries when Hawai'i had no contact with other parts of the world, the Hawaiian people developed and refined their own form of theatre, the hula. There were numerous forms of hula including sacred dances honoring gods or *ali'i*;³³ dances recounting legends, genealogy or historical events; as well as satirical and sexually suggestive dances composed for fun and entertainment. If we accept Richard Schechner's definition of theatre as something that does not depend on *written* texts, but on carefully *scripted* activities (Schechner 103), we can say that Hawai'i's theatre tradition began with

³² This is discussed in greater depth in the analysis of Victoria Nālani Kneubuhl's play *Emmalehua*.

³³ The Ali'i were the Hawaiian chiefs.

the hula, including a form of puppetry called Hula Ki'i,³⁴ centuries before exposure to the Western concept of theatre.

Not long after the arrival of the first foreigners in Hawai'i, new forms of theatre were introduced to the islands. James Beattie, Kamehameha I's "block-maker,"³⁵ built a theatre in which hulas and several plays were enacted. During 1809 - 1810 a play entitled *Oscar and Malvina* was performed here. Although originally a pantomime, Beattie supplied words for this production. The scenery was cut from *kapa*³⁶ and hung from the rafters, and the costumes were made from kapa to resemble clothing from the Scottish Highlands. Here we have the first documented instance of a Hawaiian acting in a western play, as the Hawaiian wife of Isaac Davis played the part of Malvina. The Hawaiian audience was apparently bewildered by the play, but they were delighted with the play's after-piece which was a mock naval engagement that accidentally set the forest and the theatre afire (Campbell 205-206). After this initial attempt to bring western theatre to Hawai'i, Hawaiian hula, songs, kite-flying contests and athletic contests again dominated the entertainment scene until the mid to late 1820s.

Under the influence of Calvinist Missionaries who felt that entertainment in general was frivolous and that the hula was a lascivious practice, Ka'ahumanu banned the hula (approximately 1824 according to Judd 52-53; in 1830 according to Kamakau 299). Athletic contests, sham-battles, and kite-flying were also interdicted (Hoyt 11). During this time the hula went underground and its tradition was kept alive in secret, its knowledge and practice passed on within individual families. There were occasional instances of hula

³⁴ In *Hula Ki'i* dancers manipulated, or sometimes danced in imitation of, simple wooden puppets which were 1/3 life size and had articulated head and arms with a cloth-covered body. A musician / interlocutor served as intermediary between the puppets and the audience members who were sometimes objects of jokes. Katherine Luomala's book *Hula Ki'i* describes this form of hula in detail.

³⁵ James Beattie helped to make the wooden blocks, or pulleys, through which a ship's rigging was run. Campbell calls him the "king's block-maker." (Hoyt 8)

³⁶ kapa is a traditional Hawaiian cloth made from the bark of native trees such as the wauke and māmaki.

presentations or athletic events documented, but these were limited in scope and given without Ka'ahumanu's consent (Hoyt 11).

In 1825 the young Kauikeaouli became King Kamehameha III. He enjoyed the theatrical entertainments that were offered in Honolulu, and hosted the Oahu Amateur Theatre's productions at his palace until, probably under the advice of the Calvinist missionaries, his Queen Kina'u interceded with him to stop the Thursday night theatricals.³⁷ Subsequent performances by this amateur group were held in the large dining room of Major Warren's Hotel.³⁸ During this period the Calvinist missionaries harshly opposed the presentation of theatre or entertainments of any kind, and performances were often greeted the following Sunday by a fiery sermon on the evils of the theatre. But unlike the hula, Western drama was not banned legally.

In 1837 Hawai'i saw the beginning of a trend where performers on their way to or from Australia, New Zealand, Japan, China, or the United States, would stop in Hawai'i to do a few performances. Individual actors came through alone or in small groups and presented readings or scenes from plays, or formed a company supplemented by local amateurs to present full length dramas. Variety Acts and Minstrel Companies were extremely popular. Other entertainments such as singers, magicians, glassblowers, circus acts, puppeteers, and panoramas also took their turn on Honolulu's stages. A number of theatre spaces opened up during the mid to late 1800s to accommodate these performers.³⁹

In 1879 a temporary Chinese theatre was built on the Esplanade behind George Lucas' planing mill (Frowe 56-58). Numerous visiting Chinese Theatre professionals performed in this space during 1880-81, but the *haole* segment of the population viewed

³⁷ Helen P. Hoyt's article, "Theatre in Hawaii - 1778-1840" describes Kauikeaouli's interest in the theatrical entertainments offered by visiting ships (10, 13) and his assistance as stage manager with the productions of the Oahu Amateur Theatre (14). Sheldon's "Reminiscences of Theatricals in Honolulu" also mentions the King's attendance at performances in the theatre known as The Thespian (34).

³⁸ According to Hoyt (14), Major Warren's Hotel was located approximately on the makai-ewa corner of Fort Street and Beretania.

³⁹ These spaces have been researched and described in the writings of Brown, Sheldon and Frowe.

this theatre with hostility and suspicion, urging authorities to close it down or to place it under more vigilant police surveillance. In 1884 a permanent new hall, called the Chinese Theatre, was built on Beretania Street to house Chinese theatrical productions (Frowe 102-103).

The Hawaiian art of hula continued to be perpetuated in private, but it wasn't until after King Kalākaua assumed the throne in 1874 that the ban on hula was officially lifted. Public opinion among the *haoles* in Hawai'i continued to disapprove of the hula as is evidenced by numerous letters to the editor published in the *Pacific Commercial Advertiser* between 1869-1874. In 1886 King Kalākaua held a grand jubilee celebrating his fiftieth birthday, and at this celebration the hula and the Hula Ki'i were featured prominently. The Hula Ki'i, at least, seemed not to meet with the characteristic hostility reserved for hula presentations, as a description in the *Pacific Commercial Advertiser* claimed that "the exhibit of the ancient Punch and Judy created much amusement and had to be repeated (Frowe 130)."

Amateur performers were also quite active, often participating in benefits for charitable causes. In addition to full length plays, they sometimes produced scenes, tableaux, readings, variety programs, and minstrel shows.⁴⁰ During the 1860s and 1870s many amateur productions were presented by the crews of visiting ships, and residents served to supplement these casts. The Honolulu Dramatics club, founded in 1880, has existed under a variety of names until the present. Known as the Honolulu Dramatics Club until 1914, they changed their name to the Footlights Club in 1915. In 1935 they became known as Honolulu Community Theatre until 1989 when they changed their name to suit their location, calling themselves Diamond Head Theatre, a name which they have retained until the present time (Slaughter 126-127).

⁴⁰ Sheldon, Brown and Frowe have each written about some of the activities of amateur performers in Honolulu.

By 1900 Political control had been completely wrested from the Hawaiians and contemporary life was dominated by haole policy. Perhaps this was part of the reason for the fascination with Hawai'i's ancient past in the "local" theatre of this period. The theatrical scene during the early 1900s was dominated by large historical pageant plays, somewhat reminiscent of the huge hula performances that early visitors to Hawai'i witnessed. Initially, these pageant dramas depicted events such as the landing of Kamehameha I at Waikīkī or the meeting of rival kings Kaumuali'i and Kamehameha in Kailua-Kona. In 1928, for example, an elaborate pageant was staged in Waikīkī which reenacted Captain Cook's first landing in Hawai'i (Daws 25). Eventually these huge pageant dramas came to include other ethnic groups and subjects, and adapted a more conventional dramatic form including narration, mime, songs, and a number of scenes (Carroll 1983: x-xi).

The University of Hawai'i (originally called the College of Hawaii) was established in 1907 (Kuykendall 342), and within a few years formed the University Theatre Guild which produced a pageant play each year and began encouraging the writing of "local" drama.⁴¹ One early example of the emerging "local" drama is *The Submission of Rose Moy* by Gladys Li (Li Ling-Ai), published by *Hawaii Quill Magazine* in 1927 and produced at the Arthur Andrews Theatre in 1928 (Lee, 192).⁴²

In his introduction to *Kumu Kahua Plays*, Dennis Carroll notes that in addition to the activities at the University, several amateur community theatre groups were founded in the early 1900s. These included the Footlights; the Lanai Players; the Wilbur Players, and

⁴¹ Although originally called the University Theatre Guild, by 1946 when they began holding an annual playwriting competition, the name had become the University Theatre Group. After the University of Hawai'i created a Theatre Department, the University Theatre Group became an exclusively undergraduate theatre organization. This group faded away at about the time that Kumu Kahua Theatre was formed, although later undergraduate theatre groups in the department did exist under a series of different names (Carroll 4/1/02).

⁴² The Arthur Andrews Theatre, also known as Andrews Ampitheatre, is a large outdoor ampitheatre on the campus of the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa.

the Maui Players. Numerous plays were written locally, as can be attested to by the collections held at the University of Hawai'i's Hamilton Library, which contain plays written as early as 1936. But the majority of plays that made it to production were initially by European and later by American playwrights.

In 1935 the University produced what was touted as "the first full-length Hawaiian Play." This was a play dealing with the struggles of two twelfth-century Hawaiian kings called *Ke Kuapuu Alii* (The Royal Hunchback), written by Roland R. Shepardson. The cast was entirely of Hawaiian or part-Hawaiian ancestry (Carroll 1983: xi). Also of "local" relevance in the 1930s, the University Theatre Guild produced "some topical sketches in its *Scrambled Sandals* revues and put on two locally-written musical comedies by Claude Albion Stehl that used the American music hall tradition to lampoon Honolulu politics (Carroll 1983: xii)."

Between 1941-1946 there was a great deal of theatrical activity catering to the needs of the thousands of military servicemen who were brought in to Hawai'i as a result of World War II. These theatrical endeavors were carried out primarily by Honolulu Community Theatre and by two military divisions: The United Service Organizations Camp Shows, and the Army Special Service Entertainment Section. "Local" plays were conspicuously absent during this period. Instead, by special arrangement with Broadway producers (who felt that the Honolulu productions were geographically isolated enough not to interfere with the attendance at Broadway theatres) Honolulu Community Theatre was allowed to present Broadway hits while they were still playing on Broadway. The only play with some local relevance was the 1945 *Waikiki Diary*, a musical revue about wartime Waikiki. This was created by two servicemen: William Corrigan and David Hughes (Breneman 84).

After martial law was lifted there was a new development in Hawai'i's drama. The Honolulu Community Theatre hired a young assistant director and resident playwright,

John Kneubuhl, who became a leading spokesperson in the drive for locally relevant drama. Kneubuhl was half Samoan, and his years at Honolulu Community Theatre “were acclaimed as groundbreaking because he placed island life and island issues on the stage (Johnson 254).” As Kneubuhl said, “We want to have a far greater representation of the various groups that make up island society, and we hope for the day when they can appear solely in plays for them and by them (Kneubuhl 1947: 68).” Kneubuhl wrote two important plays that were staged by the Honolulu Community Theatre. His historical drama about the missionary Lorenzo Lyons, *The Harp in the Willows*, was produced in 1947. In addition to standard English, Kneubuhl utilized quite a bit of Hawaiian language in the play.

Within a year Honolulu Community Theatre produced a second Kneubuhl play, this time a contemporary play about postwar Honolulu, called *The City is Haunted*. After scripting and directing the feature film *Damien*, Kneubuhl had one last play, *Point Distress*, produced by Honolulu Community Theatre before he moved to Hollywood in 1950 to pursue a long and successful career as a screen-writer. It was a number of years before Hawai‘i saw another local playwright of his stature.

1947 saw the production by the University Theatre Group of another important play, Bessie Toishigawa’s *Reunion*, about Japanese American veterans who must figure out how to adjust once again to civilian life after the end of World War II. This play was important not only because it depicted important socio-political issues about life in Hawai‘i at that time, but also because it was the first play produced which utilized pidgin English extensively in its dialogue.

The use of pidgin English has traditionally been frowned-upon by *haole* educators and authorities. In 1896 English was elevated to the only official language of Hawai‘i (Trask *Native Daughter* 21). Children were prohibited from speaking the Hawaiian language at school, and according to G.P. Judd in his book *Hawaii: An Informal*

History, “during the 1920s ‘English Standard’ schools appeared, limited to children with a stated proficiency in English, as a means of eradicating pidgin (Judd 151).” In Hawai‘i, where you cannot always determine a person’s ethnic background by physical appearance alone, language was one method used to express one’s identity. Pidgin had become a way of showing others that you were “local.” So to “local” audiences the use of pidgin dialogue was a welcome part of the play. *Reunion* “was a success to audiences who delighted in its familiarity, and to reviewers who praised it (Carroll 1983: xiv).”

Throughout the 1950s the University Theatre Group continued to encourage the production of locally written plays, although “local” drama was not emphasized in their programming. During this decade there was great deal of interest in transforming Hawai‘i from a United States’ territory to a State, and this may, perhaps be part of the reason why theatres were more interested in presenting plays from the U.S. mainland than in developing “local” plays.

Jean Charlot, primarily known as a visual artist, wrote a number of plays in the late 1950s and the early 1960s. These plays were adaptations from Hawaiian legends, translated into English by Charlot, who spent a decade studying the Hawaiian language at the University of Hawai‘i. During the years 1959 and 1960 he wrote three plays: *U‘i a U‘i* (Beauty Meets Beauty), *Moa a Mō‘ī* (Chicken into King), and *Na‘auao* (The Light Within). *U‘i a U‘i* has never been produced. *Moa a Mō‘ī* remained unproduced for more than twenty five years, until it was presented by the University of Hawai‘i at Hilo in 1987. *Na‘auao* was produced in 1962 by Honolulu Community Theatre. Although the play apparently suffered from an uncertainty of tone and an inadequately rehearsed production (Carroll 1983: xvi), it was nevertheless heralded as “the most important stage event in Hawaii in many years (Elbert viii).” This was no doubt due to the delight in seeing Hawaiian subject matter presented on one of Hawai‘i’s stages.

Jean Charlot later wrote two more plays, this time keeping the dialogue in the Hawaiian language, but using “readers” who stood at lecterns to the side of the stage and provided the English language translation as the play progressed. The first of these plays, *Laukiamanuikahiki* (Snare That Lures a Farflung Bird) was produced at Punahou School under the sponsorship of the Hawaiian Historical Society in 1964. This play, which intermingled the doings of chiefs and gods, was about a father’s longing for his lost daughter. The second play, *Na Lono Elua*, about Captain Cook’s discovery of and eventual death in the Hawaiian islands, has never been produced. Part of the difficulty with these plays is the extensive use of the Hawaiian language, which most audience members did not understand, and the necessary tediousness of English language translators interrupting the flow of the action.

The Honolulu Theatre For Youth produced several children's plays based on Hawaiian legends during the 1960s.⁴³ Jeffrey Fleece’s *Kalau and the Magic Numbers* was especially popular, being produced first in 1960 and then revived twice within a space of ten years. But although Honolulu Theatre for Youth has made an effort through the years to include locally written drama in their seasons, that has never been their primary focus. For the most part, theatre in Hawai‘i prior to 1971 was dominated by mainstream American drama and Broadway musicals. Although these types of plays were entertaining, they held little relevance or value for “local” audiences who were so far removed from the lifestyle of Broadway or “mainstream America.”

For theatre in Hawai‘i to be relevant to “local” audiences, it needed to reflect the issues and concerns of their communities. Issues of special concern to “local” audiences

⁴³ The Honolulu Theatre for Youth (HTY) is the only theatre company in Hawai‘i that can pay its actors a living wage. Nancy Jean Corbett initiated their first production in 1955, and they were officially incorporated as an organization in 1959. The dissertations of George Muschamp, Timothy Slaughter and Sharon Oppenheimer all include information on this highly respected company. The existence of HTY eventually phased out the need for the plays of the Junior League of Honolulu, an organization which had been touring children’s plays to schools from 1934 through the early 1970s.

included: inter-ethnic relations, cultural identity, and the challenge of "leaving home" to see the world beyond Hawai'i. Although the University Theatre Group had suspended regular production of its playwriting competition prize-winners, "local" plays reflecting these contemporary concerns were being written, and they needed a stage on which to be heard. This need was met with the creation of Kumu Kahua Theatre.

CHAPTER 2

A NARRATIVE HISTORY OF KUMU KAHUA THEATRE AND ITS “LOCAL” PLAYS

ESTABLISHING AN IDENTITY (1971-1981)

The 1970s was a decade still fueled by the momentum of the 1960s in its grass-roots campaigns and anti-establishment sentiments, and this influence could be seen in the theatres as well as on the streets. A fervent “localism” emerged during this decade as a backlash against the unchecked development of national and international interests in the islands. Native Hawaiians also focused their energies in efforts to reclaim lands and to re-establish pride in their cultural heritage. The Protect Kaho‘olawe ‘Ohana¹ and the Hokule‘a² were two significant factors which fueled Hawaiian pride & Hawaiian activism (Apo 82), largely contributing to the movement that became known as the “Hawaiian Renaissance.”

1978 was an important year in two ways. This was the year of Hawai‘i’s Constitutional Convention in which the Office of Hawaiian Affairs was created to administer trust proceeds (proceeds from ceded lands) on behalf of Native Hawaiians (Kamaau 19). It was hoped that this would improve conditions for Hawaiians who continued to rank among the poorest of the state’s population. 1978 was also an important year for “local” literature because it was at this time that the journal *Bamboo Ridge* was created. This is a literary journal published through the University of Hawai‘i which is devoted to the publication of poetry and fiction by local writers. The mission of *Bamboo Ridge* was similar to that of *Kumu Kahua*: to produce works for and about the people of

¹ This was a grass-roots organization which worked through physical occupation and other methods to reclaim the island of Kaho‘olawe for Native Hawaiians. This small island, a sacred site to Hawaiians, had been used for many years by the U.S. military as a site for bombing practice, and was covered with live artillery and other military debris. The website <http://www.kahoolawe.org> contains current information about the on-going work in reclamation of this island.

² This double-hulled canoe was built according to ancient Hawaiian practices and in 1976 was the first ocean-going vessel in many centuries to navigate from Hawai‘i to Tahiti without the aid of modern instruments.

Hawai'i. This journal grew in prestige and contributed to the recognition of "local" writers on a national level.³ It was too early to know this yet, but eventually "local" writers of stature such as Gary Pak, Nora Okja Keller, and Lois-Ann Yamanaka, who initially became known through *Bamboo Ridge*,⁴ would have their works brought to life on the stage by Kumu Kahua Theatre.

Kumu Kahua's origins date from the beginning of this decade. During the summer of 1971 a young professor from the University of Hawai'i, Dr. W. Dennis Carroll, made a return visit to his home in Australia and was inspired by the new direction Australian theatre had taken. He saw that the new Australian theatres were examining specifically Australian themes and problems, and utilizing Australian language, all with a rather anti-colonial or anti-establishment bias which was common in the theatre during that era. The anti-establishment bias of "fringe" or experimental theatre was present not only in Australia, but throughout the world, and was sparked in part by opposition to the Vietnam War as well as reaction against Aristotelian Drama, Realism, and the standard "Well-Made Play (Carroll 1993)." In a personal interview Dr. Carroll explained why he felt the trends in Australian experimental theatre could work well in Hawai'i:

It made me realize that you could have a theatre that was specifically tied-in to a regional source, that would be viable and would show local people their lives in ways that imported modes of drama didn't do. (9/16/93)

Upon returning from his trip to Australia, Dr. Carroll invited interested graduate students to attend a meeting about establishing a theatre group at the University of Hawai'i which would produce locally written plays. Out of this meeting came eight graduate students who would serve as the first board of directors for the theatre group which they

³ Over the years *Bamboo Ridge* has been recognized nationally for its work, receiving awards from such organizations as the National Endowment for the Arts, the General Electric Foundation, the Council of Literary Magazines and Presses, the Before Columbus Foundation, and the Association of Asian American Studies.

named "Kumu Kahua," ("original stage").⁵ The members of this board of directors were: Gary Toyama, Ninette Mordaunt, Atsumi Sakato, Min Soo Ahn, Mel Cobb, Tony Haas, Gay Wood, and Les Miller.

Through word of mouth, small announcements in the newspaper, and notes in the first few production programs, the new Kumu Kahua Theatre sent out an appeal to the Honolulu community for new plays, as well as for people interested in acting or other aspects of theatrical production. The intent of Kumu Kahua Theatre was clear from the beginning: "promoting and producing plays which are written by Hawaii residents with Hawaii audiences in mind (Lawrence 11/14/71)." The University of Hawai'i Theatre Group had sponsored an annual playwriting competition since 1947, and Kumu Kahua began co-sponsoring the competition in 1971, hoping in this way to find stage-worthy plays. During the first year that Kumu Kahua co-sponsored this playwriting competition, plays were not limited in terms of content or theme as long as they were original works, but they were restricted to one-act length. Three prizes were offered: \$150.00, \$100.00 and \$75.00. The judges had the right to withhold any or all of the prizes if they felt that the plays submitted did not show sufficient merit. This annual playwriting competition was to become an important source for new works for Kumu Kahua in subsequent years.

The physical space which Kumu Kahua initially occupied was room 2 of the Hamilton Annex. This was an un-airconditioned classroom in a wooden temporary building next to the Hamilton library. The space was not fancy, but it was flexible enough to suit the needs of Kumu Kahua theatre. The audience seats could be moved around to

⁴ In an interview with Cynthia Oi, Keller and Yamanaka were among four of Hawai'i's prominent women writers who discussed how Bamboo Ridge Press has helped them.

⁵ One of the Hawaiian Language Dictionary definitions of "Kumu" is "beginning, source, origin." One of the Hawaiian Language Dictionary definitions of "Kahua" is: "foundation, base, site, grounds, platform, as of a house; an open place, as for camping or for sports..." (Pukui). In the Hawaiian language, an adjective comes after the noun it is modifying, therefore "Kumu Kahua" translates literally as "stage original." In a personal interview Dennis Carroll explained, "years later [after the group had established its name] Samuel Elbert, an expert in Hawaiian language, said that really was incorrect, it should have been 'Kahua Kumu'... it was a bit late by that point [to change the name of the theatre group] (Carroll 1993)."

accommodate the varying needs of the productions, allowing the audience to surround the performance area, or be on two sides of the performance area, or to conform to a more traditional proscenium setting with the audience on one side of the room and the performance area on the other side.

The Kumu Kahua Board Members set about planning their first season, ambitiously setting aside time slots for eight productions. They planned to request a modest fifty cent donation for admission to help pay for the costs of production. Kumu Kahua's first play, a one-act comedy entitled *The Lucifer File*, opened on November 18, 1971 and ran until December 4. Although this play did not have a specifically "local" theme, it met the criteria of Kumu Kahua by being written by a Hawai'i resident, George Herman. It was directed by Kumu Kahua board member Gary Toyama.

In this, Kumu Kahua's first production, it was especially important to make clear to the audience what this theatre group was all about. A full-page program note was used to achieve this:

KUMU KAHUA, or "original stage," is a search for a kind of theatre not necessarily dependent on elaborate sets, costumes, large and engulfing theatre buildings, or fantastic technical effects. An intimate setting with actors and small audience sharing a room in the University's Hamilton Annex permits exploration of theatre in its most simple terms. The line of distinction separating actors from audience blurs in such close proximity. The impact of words and action is emboldened without the distraction of big sets and numerous effects.

In the same spirit of adventure and simplicity, the directors of KUMU KAHUA seek original scripts appealing in subject matter to the people of Hawaii particularly. Too often we look elsewhere, away from home, to find originality; surely there are seeds of creative playwriting amongst us. KUMU KAHUA offers a platform for these efforts. Actors, directors and playwrights for KUMU KAHUA share the enthusiasm of nurturing the as yet unrecognized talents to be found here in our community. All scripts of any length or type are welcomed and read for possible production. All actors are given a chance to perform. And all the directors are scheduled to direct a show of their own – if not this year, then next. (*Lucifer File* 1971)

In this statement Kumu Kahua justified its use of a non-traditional theatre space, explained its intent to produce locally written plays, and sought out the people and the scripts to make this possible.

Contemporary “local” material was hard to come by right away though. Performing in a make-shift theatre and working with only the bare essentials, Kumu Kahua managed to create a full first season of original works by local writers; but with the exception of *Take It As It Is or Lump It*, which contained some “local” material, none of the plays yet dealt fully with “local” concerns.

With the beginning of Kumu Kahua’s second season in October 1972, the theatre company was able to move into a more comfortable theatre space, the University of Hawai‘i’s Kennedy Laboratory Theatre.⁶ This was a 150 seat black-box theatre space with air-conditioning, flexible seating configurations, and greater lighting capability, so it was an improvement over their previous venue. Along with this new space, though, came new policies. To accommodate other departmental needs for the Lab Theatre space, the time of Kumu Kahua’s performances was changed from the original 8:00 p.m. to a new time of 5:30 in the afternoon. This unusual curtain time made it difficult to establish a regular audience, but it was a compromise the fledgling theatre group had to make. In an effort to draw audiences Kumu Kahua dropped the fifty cent admission fee to their plays and presented them free of charge. They could afford to do this because the U.H. Theatre Department supported them with theatrical supplies, publicity materials and rehearsal space free of charge (SFCA Grant Appl. 3/23/81). Unless otherwise noted, all plays until 1980 were presented at the U.H. Lab Theatre.

With the second play of the season Kumu Kahua began to realize its goal of producing theatre which dealt directly with “local” people and the issues they face. This ground-breaking play was Lynette Amano's *Ashes*, directed by Dennis Carroll. *Honolulu*

⁶ now called the Earl Ernst Lab Theatre

Star-Bulletin columnist Phil Mayer called *Ashes* "the first original play about life in modern Hawaii that I have seen in ten years (11/20/72)." Tomi Knaefler of the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* referred to *Ashes* as what is "believed to be the first locally written play to reveal directly some of the conflicts of tradition and identity within a contemporary Japanese family (11/23/72)." The play centers around Yuki, a young college student at the University of Hawai'i, and her mother, Ruth. Mother and daughter argue over trivial issues such as Yuki's Americanization and her non-Japanese friendships to cover the deeper problem each is trying to come to terms with, which is the death of the father. While the mother makes offerings to his ashes each day, unable to let go, Yuki resolves to move on with her life and to help her mother and brother to do the same. This play was atypical in style and structure compared to other locally written plays because the mood, atmosphere and internal relationships were far more important to the meaning of the play than was a linear progression of events.

After the success of *Ashes*, Kumu Kahua was able to find and produce plays addressing "local" issues much more frequently. As we will see, these "local" plays often dealt with themes of inter-ethnic relations; and an important, frequently commented-upon aspect of the plays was the use of pidgin English in the dialogue. In December of 1972 Kumu Kahua presented two one-act plays: *A Crack In The Pot* by Marshall Doi, and *On The Tuesday Side of A Sunday* by B.J. Ursic. *A Crack In The Pot* was a play that dealt with:

the conflicting and often violent forces that lie beneath the tranquil surface of our island culture. Two problems are specifically dealt with [...] the local-haole conflict; and the conflict between local people who prefer the easy life of old Hawaii [with ...] those who are set on fulfilling the American dream. (production program 1972)

On The Tuesday Side Of A Sunday was an original play which recalled the memory of a long past love affair, but it was not specifically "local" in its subject matter.

Kumu Kahua was able to find some stageable works through the playwriting competition, although most of the plays submitted were still not “local” in subject matter. With the 1973 competition the rules were revised to allow submission of longer plays; now the plays were required to be 30 minutes to two and one-half hours in length. The prizes offered remained the same.

In February of 1973, Kumu Kahua presented *Instant Poi* which was a collection of short scenes and comic moments. The primary ingredients in this evening of entertainments were: "Birth of a Turkey" by Barry Rohrbach and Dando Kluever, "Excerpts from a Non-Existent Play" by Chuck-Chuck, "Evelyn: A Slice of Drama" by D.M. Dubin, "The End of the News" by Y.W. Saylor, and "Hello World" by Chris Akiyama (*Instant Poi* 1973). Most of these scenes were not of “local” relevance, with the exception of Chuck-Chuck’s collage which utilized pidgin dialogue and depicted “local” situations.

The March 1973 production of Aldyth Morris' *Damien* marked Kumu Kahua's first production dealing with a historical figure in Hawai'i's culture. Morris was a playwright with a long history in Hawai'i. In 1951 she wrote *The Sign*, which was a prize winning historical drama about the birth of Kamehameha I produced by the University Theatre Group. *The Damien Letter*, her historical drama about the Scottish writer Robert Louis Stevenson and the Belgian Priest Father Damien, was done by Honolulu Community Theatre in 1963-64. Terence Knapp commissioned and directed the 1973 production of *Damien* which covered the last four years of the Belgian priest's life, opening with the discovery of his leprosy. In 1976 the University of Hawai'i Theatre Group presented a re-worked version of the play which reached its definitive form as a monodrama starring Terence Knapp. This monodrama received great acclaim and was televised nationally. In 1975 Morris' play for children, *Dragon of the Six Resemblances*, was produced by Kumu Kahua Theatre. During this time period Morris also wrote two other monodramas,

one on Robert Louis Stevenson and the other on Captain James Cook, both of which have been published. In 1978 Morris was awarded the prestigious Hawai'i Award for Literature in honor of her work.

Da Kine Kyogen was the first attempt by Kumu Kahua to adapt an Asian performance mode to "local" theatre. It was billed as "a collection of the comic interludes of Japan, adapted in modern English with local settings (*Da Kine Kyogen* 1973)." The production program described the history and development of traditional Japanese kyogen, and explained the purpose of Kumu Kahua's production:

Today Kyogen are performed in a stylized and formal manner that has developed with the Noh over the centuries. DA KINE KYOGEN is an attempt to recapture some of the spontaneity these folk plays must have had when they were originally improvised [...] We constantly tried to be fresh and relevant while remaining faithful to what we perceived to be the essential qualities of the Japanese humor, delight, spirit and flavor of Kyogen.

Still having difficulty finding enough contemporary "local" material to fill out an entire season, members of the Kumu Kahua Board of Directors went into the archives of Sinclair Library in search of older "local" plays that could be resurrected. The result of this search was a trilogy of one-act plays which concluded Kumu Kahua's third season in a production billed as *One Act Revivals: 3 Pidgin Speaking Plays*. The plays were called "revivals" because they were originally written in the 1930s, 1940s and 1960s. The three plays included were: *Let's Go See The World*, *Reunion*, and *In the Alley*. These plays were "local" not only because of the subject matter, but also because of the use of pidgin-English as the language of the plays.

Hawai'i during the 1970s was facing a period of extremely rapid development. The tourist industry was booming and construction of hotels, high-rise apartment buildings and highways was rampant. "Locals" made bitter jokes about the (construction) crane being Hawai'i's state bird. Farmers and residents of rural areas were being evicted in order to make way for development (Kent 158-159, Trask *Native Daughter* 89-91). Kumu Kahua

made note of this contemporary political situation in reference to their presentation of these three plays from earlier decades:

Reviving older plays has not previously been one of Kumu Kahua's concerns, but we feel that the frightening rate of change in Hawaii makes such work important and valuable. In the face of fourteen cranes on the Waikiki skyline, a possible highway ripping into Moanalua Valley, and "magic islands" where sea used to be, the past of Hawaii seems increasingly elusive and inaccessible. The theatre can be a medium for catching a glimpse of it. (Production Program)

Kathryn Bond's *Let's Go See The World*, written in the 1930s, is a fragment of a short trilogy called *Hawaiian Sketches* (*One Act Play Revivals* 1974). It was a scene between two old Chinese men, field workers living in Kohala on the Big Island, before a social worker comes to take them away to live in an old-age home in Honolulu. Pidgin dialogue was still something of a novelty in the theatre, as was evidenced by the remarks of the reviewers. For example, the Drama Critic from the *Honolulu Advertiser* stated, "if you hadn't lived in these Islands [sic] a long time you probably couldn't understand one word in five of this charming scene (Pryor 5/74)."

Bessie (Lisa) Toishigawa's *Reunion*, which was briefly discussed in chapter one, received its premiere with the University Theatre Group in 1947. The original production was "praised for its affectionate reflection of familiar realities and for the pidgin dialogue (Carroll 1983: 47)." Reviewers for Kumu Kahua's 1974 production also appreciated the pidgin dialogue, although Pryor complained that this play was rather static compared to the other two (Pryor 5/74). *Honolulu Star-Bulletin's* Entertainment Editor saw more in the play: "There is substance and truth in the play's situation, and Ron Nakahara, as Taka, the central character, is wonderfully full of energy and frustration in his quandary (Bowman 5/11/74)."

Edward Sakamoto's *In The Alley* won the University of Hawai'i Theatre Group's Playwriting Contest in 1961 and received its premiere that year at the Kennedy Lab Theatre under the direction of professor Edward Langhans. Set in the 1950s in Honolulu, this play

deals with the clash between a group of young disadvantaged “local” men and the *haole* military men who had been coming to the islands in large numbers since the early 1940s. The original production stressed the universality of the dramatic conflict, arguing that the clash between insiders versus outsiders had more than “local” significance (Production Program - *Four One-Act Plays*). Aside from noting that a few of the actors in the 1974 production sounded less than authentic speaking pidgin dialogue, the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* described the play as “tight and quick, inexorably dramatic, and an authentically fine piece of work (Bowman 5/11/74).”⁷

James Grant Benton was a student at the University of Hawai‘i when his professor, Terence Knapp, suggested that he try adapting a Shakespearean play into pidgin-English. Benton rose to the challenge and wrote *Twelf Nite O Wateva!*, an adaptation of Shakespeare’s *Twelfth Night, Or What You Will*. This play, directed by Terence Knapp, was produced in cooperation with Leeward Community College, performing on the Kennedy Theatre Mainstage at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa, and at the Leeward Community College Theatre. The idea of turning Shakespearean poetry into pidgin-English worked well. As Dennis Carroll stated, “Benton’s tactic of quoting almost verbatim from Shakespeare and then deflating the mood with a burp of pidgin or a four-letter word stresses the more farcical aspects of the original model (Carroll 1983: 185).” Benton’s adaptation made Shakespeare’s comedy accessible to many “local” people for the very first time, when previously, elevated Shakespearean language was often an alienating factor. With this production Kumu Kahua began once again charging a fifty cent admission fee. *Twelf Nite* was enormously popular and played to such large audiences that Kumu Kahua was able to establish a fund of about five hundred dollars with the box-office revenue (Carroll 3/3/81).

⁷ *In the Alley* is analyzed in chapter three.

Lana's Party! B.Y.O. by David Terrell was presented in February 1975 under the direction of Jim Donohue. This was a full-length play about a group of high school friends, depicting life at Ewa Beach's Campbell High School on the island of O'ahu. The final production of the 1974-75 season was a collection of improvised scenes based upon life in Hawai'i, entitled: *Kapakahi*.⁸ This production was created collectively by the Drama 223 students of Kapiolani Community College and directed by Sara Edlin. The scenes comically and successfully depicted people and situations in Hawai'i (Bowman 5/16/75; Harada 5/15/75; Herman 5/17/75).

Kumu Kahua's fifth season consisted primarily of locally written plays which had little or nothing to do with Hawaiian themes. The only two "local" productions were *Oranges Are Lucky* by Darrell H.Y. Lum and *No Laff My Pilikia, Eh!* by Kitty Heacox. *Oranges Are Lucky* was produced in cooperation with and presented at the Leeward Community College Theatre.⁹ *No Laff My Pilikia, Eh!* followed the tradition of Kumu Kahua's earlier production, *Da Kine Kyogen*, as an evening of Japanese Kyogen adapted to local Hawaiian situations. After this production completed its run at the Kennedy Lab Theatre it toured the island of O'ahu in cooperation with an organization called Hospital Audiences Incorporated. This was the first time Kumu Kahua took one of its productions on tour, but it would not be the last.

Charles Kates' *The Travels of Heikiki* was the first "local" prize-winning play from the University Theatre Group/Kumu Kahua playwriting competition to make it to the stage. The play won third place in the 1975 playwriting competition and opened Kumu Kahua's sixth season in repertory with a re-worked version of William Saylor's *Commonroom* (originally presented by Kumu Kahua in 1974). This was the first time Kumu Kahua Theatre presented two full-length plays in repertory. A surrealistic parody of

⁸ *Kapakahi* is a Hawaiian word meaning lopsided, crooked or askew.

⁹ *Oranges Are Lucky* is analyzed in chapter four.

pageant style dramas, this play follows the character Heikiki as he aids “Pineapple” in his quest to rescue the Rain Goddess from the Dog-Man so that the gods would help Pineapple become ripe.¹⁰ After being presented at the Kennedy Lab Theatre *The Travels of Heikiki* also toured the island of O’ahu through an arrangement with Hospital Audiences Incorporated.

The next two short plays also dealt directly with “local” culture. The plays, presented together, were: *Paradise Tours* by Robert J. Morris, and *Hapa Hau’ole* by David Terrell. *Paradise Tours* is somewhat reminiscent of Jean Paul Sartre’s “No Exit.” In this Hawaiianized version of hell, a group of middle-aged tourists find themselves trapped in a tour bus circling the island of O’ahu for all eternity. *Hapa Hau’ole* was about a 19 year old college drop-out who wants to pursue the ancient Hawaiian way of life but is informed by the *kahuna nui*¹¹ that he is “less than apt for a future in the ancient traditions (Bowman 11/19/76).” It also dealt with his relationships with his mother, his sister and his uncle.

During these first few years of existence Kumu Kahua’s Board of Directors was fairly informal. It consisted of students in the University of Hawai’i’s Theatre Department who had an interest in staging locally written work. The composition of the Board changed as often as each semester when students entered or left the Theatre Department. Dennis Carroll served as the Faculty Advisor each year except for a short time during 1975-76 when Joel Trapido served as interim advisor while Carroll was on sabbatical leave. During the 1976-77 season Kumu Kahua attempted for the first time to assign specific duties to each Board member, with some being in charge of script evaluation, some in charge of

¹⁰ For a more complete discussion on this play see Mattos, Justina. “Stereotypes and Racial Relations in Hawai’i’s Contemporary Indigenous Drama,” *Native Playwrights’ Newsletter*. Spring, 1996. vol. 10. A copy of this issue is housed in the Kumu Kahua Archives.

¹¹ a Hawaiian high priest or expert in his field

publicity, or lighting etc. With the following season, however, the Board returned to a more informal composition.

In 1976 Kumu Kahua took over sponsorship of the annual playwriting competition although it was still called the University Theatre Playwriting Contest. This year they added the stipulation that plays submitted to the competition must deal with some aspect of the Hawaiian experience. All other contest rules and prizes remained the same.

In the late 1970s Kumu Kahua had difficulty scheduling productions which would not interfere with the U.H. Theatre Department's use of the Lab Theatre space. Kumu Kahua made use of alternate spaces at the University such as the Lunalilo Theatre Building (a portable classroom located next to a freeway off-ramp) or the Campus Center Roof Garden when possible, but ultimately found that they were unable to mount as many productions as they had in earlier seasons. Because of this Kumu Kahua's seventh season consisted of only two productions. However, both plays were written locally and although Shannon Patten's play *Hannah's Place* was only nominally set in Hawai'i, Arthur Aw's play was much more pertinent to "local" life.

Arthur Aw's *All Brand New Classical Chinese Theatre* was performed during the summer of 1978. This play was an iconoclastic representation of the identity crisis of Michael, a thirty year old "local" Chinese man with a haole girlfriend, a haole roommate, and a very tradition-oriented anti-foreigner Chinese mother. The conflicts within the play were represented not only by having two actors simultaneously portraying Michael #1 and Michael #2, but also by the performance style which utilized techniques from Western "Soap Operas" as well as from Chinese Opera.¹²

Kumu Kahua's eighth season was also relatively small, and only one play was "local" in its setting. This was Diana Hansen's *Our Lady In Rose Doré*, about "a young

¹² Josephine Lee analyzes this play in *Performing Asian America*.

woman's loss of innocence through her friendship with a homosexual couple (Roberts 10/18/78),” which dealt with the gay lifestyle in Honolulu. The ninth season consisted of only two fully mounted productions, but several playreadings were held as new “local” plays were being developed. The playreadings were for: Wendy Russell's *Construction Unlimited Honolulu*, Gay Gurican's *A Beelie Tale*, Linda Edlin's *Slippers*, Nelson Clark's *Fatigue* and *When Haunted Dreams Wake*, and George Herman's *Sueaki's Turn*. *Fatigue* received some extra attention when its main actor, a member of the military, went AWOL.¹³ Eric Pourchot's *The Waters of Kane* was the only fully mounted “local” play of the season. Kumu Kahua was unable to use the Kennedy Lab Theatre for this children’s musical, so it was performed at the Honolulu Zoo Outdoor Stage in January 1980. Loosely based on a Hawaiian legend, this play focused on a young boy's search for the waters of Kāne to save the life of his dying Hawaiian patriarch.

During their tenth season Kumu Kahua Theatre was still using the University of Hawai‘i’s Lab Theatre as their home base. But the Theatre Department had priority in the growing crunch for rehearsal and performance space, and Kumu Kahua found it increasingly necessary to seek out other venues. During November and December of 1980 Kumu Kahua produced two locally-set plays that dealt with themes of war. The first of these plays was Nelson Clark's *Fatigue*, produced at Hawai‘i Performing Arts Company in Mānoa Valley.¹⁴ The second was *Echo II* by Michael Shapiro, which was presented at the Kennedy Lab Theatre.

Feeling a dearth of high quality “local” plays during the past few seasons, Kumu Kahua focused its energies more intently on playreadings with the hope that those plays could be developed into stage-worthy pieces. They held a series of playreadings on

¹³ Absent Without Leave

¹⁴ The relationship of this theatre with Kumu Kahua Theatre is explained on page 56.

Monday nights, and all plays submitted to their annual competition were considered for readings or productions, regardless of whether or not they were winning entries.

In March and April of 1981 under the direction of Penny Bergman, Kumu Kahua presented a series of improvisational performances called *The Incredible Instant Theatre*. The performance was done in two segments. In the first segment, the audience members posed a question which the actors then had to answer in their skit. In the second segment the cast performed "an episode of a mythical soap opera called 'Manoa Manor' (Bowman 3/28/81)," and the audience was asked to provide key suggestions for the action of the scene by naming an object and an obsession, which the actors then incorporated into the drama. According to reviewer Pierre Bowman, "In a peculiar way, much of the business seemed rehearsed, rather than improvised, which marginally diminished the zing of the whole business (3/28/81)." Although some bits of business may have been rehearsed, the actors did incorporate audience suggestions into the action of the performance. This improvisational theatre was performed at Hawaii Performing Arts Company and at Anna Banana's Restaurant. The members of *The Incredible Instant Theatre* also participated in the Artists-in-the-Schools program, teaching school children about improvisation.

The final production of Kumu Kahua's tenth season was another attempt at Children's Theatre, produced in collaboration with the University Laboratory School. *Changing Voices* was compiled by Phyllis Look and directed by Kathy Kuroda. Phyllis Look is from Hawai'i, but she compiled the writings of this play while she was working with inner-city children in Manhattan. To make the play relevant to a "local" audience, the director set the play in the Kalihi-Palama area (*Changing Voices* 1981).

During its tenth year of existence the status of Kumu Kahua Theatre was still fairly uncertain. It had become increasingly apparent that Kumu Kahua was going to have to move out of the familiar Lab Theatre space if they wanted to continue to grow as a theatre company, and at the end of the year they did just that. It was a step toward independence

which was both frightening and exhilarating. In the production program of *Changing*

Voices the recent accomplishments and future plans of Kumu Kahua were summarized:

[...] we have cemented a new alliance with HPAC's Studio Series, given rehearsed readings to five new scripts we are considering for production, evaluated many other scripts, and laid plans for a new touring affiliated company, the Kumu Performing Company.

At this time the Kumu Kahua Board of Directors consisted of seven members: Penny Bergman, Barbara FitzSimmons, Barbara Kelly, Teviot Pourchot, Phyllis Look, Russell Omori, and Richard MacPherson. These members expressed a renewed commitment to presenting plays which relate specifically to the people of Hawai'i. In the production program for *the Incredible Instant Theatre*, Dennis Carroll stated, "Interest in indigenous material has fallen off after the highpoint of summer, 1976. But we sense an upswing..." This statement expressed the direction in which Kumu Kahua Theatre planned to focus its energies, and was in fact a good indication of things to come.

SEARCHING FOR A HOME (1981-1993)

Many of the faces had changed, but the Democrats continued their dominance in Hawaiian government throughout the 1980s. Hawai'i's Democratic Governor George Ariyoshi, in office since 1974, was replaced in 1986 by John D. Waihe'e III, another Democrat. The tourism and construction industries in Hawai'i had reached a plateau by the 1980s, and the sugar and pineapple industries were struggling to carry-on in a changing world market. The thriving economy in the islands began to reverse itself during this decade. Young adults, frustrated with the lack of career opportunities outside of agriculture and tourism, headed to the U.S. mainland to pursue professional careers in a more diverse economic environment. "Brain drain" was the term used to describe this exodus of educated young people (Kent 197). People were not happy with this trend because

generally, young people did not *want* to leave their homes, families and “local” lifestyles, but were forced to by economic pressures.

People were not the only thing leaving Hawai‘i to make an impact on the mainland. During the 1980s the Bamboo Ridge Press became an important source in the emergent voice of the Asian American writer on a national level. The Bamboo Ridge Press was also influential in the changing perception of pidgin in literary circles. Where in the 1970s the familiar and comic aspects of pidgin were celebrated, in the 1980s pidgin became more widely recognized as a dialect in its own right, with the ability to express a broad range of concepts and emotions in “local” life.¹⁵ This trend carried over onto the stage. While pidgin continued to be one of the ways by which one could recognize a play as being “local,” it was no longer the most important signifier of “localness” on stage. Playwrights such as Victoria Nalani Kneubuhl were emerging, who focused on “local” subject matter but used standard English or Hawaiian language more often than pidgin in their plays. As the 1980s progressed, Kumu Kahua’s plays reflected this trend, continuing to use pidgin in most of their plays, but to more serious effect.

Beginning its first season outside of the academic environment in 1981, Kumu Kahua worked out an arrangement with the Hawai‘i Performing Arts Company (HPAC) to participate in their “HPAC Studio Series.” Kumu Kahua and HPAC shared credit as co-producers of the productions so that Kumu Kahua could present the works in HPAC’s intimate 110 seat theatre space in Mānoa Valley. These co-productions were held on “dark nights,” when HPAC did not have one of its own productions in performance. This meant that Kumu Kahua could not alter the set-up of the stage or the audience seats because they were performing on the existing set for whichever HPAC play was in production at the time. The HPAC theatre was a small wooden building (formerly a church) in a graveyard.

¹⁵ Linguistic scholar Suzanne Romaine has written a couple of articles on the rise of a literary standard for Hawaii Creole English (pidgin) - one appeared in *The Contemporary Pacific* and the other in the sociolinguistic journal *Language in Society*.

The building was very old and termite-eaten, and there was no air-conditioning; it was not ideal, but it was a space within walking distance from the University of Hawai‘i where Kumu Kahua could continue to present its works.

1981-82 was a crucial year for Kumu Kahua Theatre. This was the year during which the assets of the Hawaii Public Theatre (now defunct) were given to Kumu Kahua, which helped at a time when they were struggling to exist outside of the University environment.¹⁶ But Dennis Carroll went away for a year’s sabbatical leave, and Kumu Kahua could very well have folded without him were it not for the vital energy and drive of Barbara FitzSimmons. FitzSimmons took over the administration of Kumu Kahua during Dr. Carroll’s absence. She created and became the Artistic Director of the “Kumu Performing Company,” independent of the University, to take productions on tour. Out of this the new, independent Kumu Kahua Theatre emerged.

FitzSimmons spear-headed the effort to obtain non-profit 509(a)(2) status for Kumu Kahua as an unincorporated organization, which was an instrumental step in making the group capable of surviving independently from the University. Largely through her efforts, a \$4,000 grant was procured from the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts which funded an inter-island tour of one production from their season. For this, FitzSimmons directed Wakako Yamauchi’s lyrical drama, *And the Soul Shall Dance*, a revival of her M.F.A. production at the University of Hawai‘i. This was a first for Kumu

¹⁶ The Hawaii Public Theatre was founded in 1975 as the Hawaii Theatre Festival by Ken Kanter, as a program of the Honolulu Department of Parks and Recreation. The program commissioned plays from local playwrights and provided professional theatre productions to the public free of charge. Actors, administrators and production crew were paid through the Federal Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) as well as through the State Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (SCET). Their biggest season was the summer of 1976 in which they presented *Flash Gordon and the Planet of Evil*, *Twelfth Nite O Wateva!*, and *The Adventures of the Cookie Kiss Kid*. In 1979 the company’s steering committee named Ken Kanter as Executive Director and Eugene Lion as Artistic Director, giving Lion sole artistic control. Kanter resigned, and the steering committee changed the organization’s name to the Hawaii Public Theatre. Within a couple of years the Hawaii Public Theatre had lost its Federal and State funding, and stopped producing plays. They gave their remaining assets to Kumu Kahua Theatre because their goals and philosophy were closest to that of the Hawaii Public Theatre. (Carroll 1983: viii; Kanter 1/22/02; Slaughter 151-155)

Kahua in two ways: it was the first time they were able to take a production to a neighbor island, and it was the first time that they produced the work of a non-local playwright. Although the playwright was not “local,” the play was relevant to “local” audiences because it depicted the harsh life of first-generation immigrants from Japan trying to eke out an existence as farmers in the United States. Kumu Kahua hoped that touring a new production to the neighbor islands each summer would become an on-going practice. The production played to full houses in Hilo (FitzSimmons 3/1/83) and on O‘ahu where it was touted as “one of the most moving, successful productions of the 1981 season in Honolulu (Bowman 5/22/85).”

This was also the year that substantial revisions were made to the annual playwriting competition, which was now called the Kumu Kahua/Drama Department Playwriting Contest. Prizes were now offered in two divisions. Division One was open to anyone, whether or not they were residents of Hawai‘i. In opening the competition to non-residents Kumu Kahua stated its awareness that playwrights who were born and raised in Hawai‘i but were no longer residents, or playwrights who experienced Hawai‘i from a visitor’s perspective may have equally valuable insights about Hawai‘i. The plays in this division had to be set in Hawai‘i or to deal with some aspect of the Hawaiian experience, and they had to be full length. Two prizes were offered in this division: a first prize of \$200.00 and a second prize of \$100.00. Plays in Division Two, which was restricted to Hawai‘i residents, could be on any subject and could be between 30 minutes and two and one-half hours in length. The prizes offered in this division were \$150.00 and \$75.00. All entries continued to be considered for readings or full productions.

In opening up their selection process to include plays of “local” relevance by mainland playwrights, Kumu Kahua found it easier to fill their seasons with high quality plays while still giving preference where they could to “local” playwrights. Most of the plays written outside of Hawai‘i that were pertinent to “local” life were written by Asian

American playwrights on the mainland. During the 1980s Kumu Kahua produced the works of Asian American playwrights such as Wakako Yamauchi, Milton Murayama, Philip Kan Gotanda, Jon Shirota, Owen Hagino, Leigh Kim, and Velina Hasu Houston. Sometimes set in Hawai'i, sometimes not, these plays relied less on the use of pidgin English in the dialogue, and focused more intently upon the themes of alienation and oppression experienced by Asian Americans who are not part of the mainstream "white" society of the United States.

The official season opener for 1981-1982 was a revival of Lynette Amano's locally-written *Ashes*, which was originally produced by Kumu Kahua Theatre in 1972. This new production was co-directed by Barbara Kelly and Jim Nakamoto. Returning temporarily to the University of Hawai'i's Lab Theatre for the following production, Kumu Kahua presented a double-bill of one-act Chinese plays. The first portion of the program was a revival of Darrell H.Y. Lum's award-winning *Oranges Are Lucky*, which was first produced in 1976 in cooperation with Leeward Community College. This new production of *Oranges Are Lucky* was directed by Barbara FitzSimmons. The second portion of the program consisted of Arthur Aw's *All Brand-New Classical Chinese Theatre*, which had previously been produced in 1978. The 1982 production was directed by Penny Bergman with acknowledgments to Virginia Jones. This double-bill ran from February 4-13, and was lauded by Honolulu critics as being some of the best and most relevant entertainment of the year (FitzSimmons 3/1/83). Kumu Kahua received a grant of \$6,000 from the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts which enabled them to tour both of these plays to Hilo and Lana'i at the end of the season. The plays were also published the following year in the book *Kumu Kahua Plays*.

Between March 15-23, 1982 Kumu Kahua presented the world premiere of *Vanishing Shadow* which was co-written by Glen Grant, Debbie Lutzky, and Lynne Nakamura. This was a fictionalized recreation of the famous Fukunaga kidnap-murder

case which rocked Hawai'i in 1928. The play examined a community's guilt, complicity, and self-confrontation as it pursued justice in its trial and conviction of a young murderer. This production was directed by Paul Jozwicki and presented at the HPAC theatre.

In its twelfth season Kumu Kahua Theatre continued its arrangement with the HPAC studio series at Manoa Valley Theatre.¹⁷ The second production of the season, *Strangers in Paradise*, was presented at the Manoa Valley Theatre as part of HPAC's studio series on Monday and Tuesday evenings, and was also presented at Ala Moana Park's McCoy Pavilion on Thursday through Saturday nights. *Strangers in Paradise* was an improvisationally created performance put together by a collective called the "Incredible Instant Theatre." This group existed separately from, but worked in cooperation with, Kumu Kahua Theatre. The members of this collective were: Kati Kuroda, Stanford Egi, Gary Nomura, Richard MacPherson, and Penny Bergman. Direction was provided by Penny Bergman. Structured like a television soap-opera, the comedy presented parallel stories of two tourist couples: the Otanis from Japan, and the Albrights from New York. Other characters included California Valley Girls, local surfers, and members of a hula hālau facing modernization. The plots intertwined in a kaleidoscopic look at how the Aloha Spirit affected the lives of locals and visitors during the time of Hurricane 'Iwa. The actors played multiple parts in this fast-paced and funny production which carried the underlying message that it is important to learn to understand and care for people from other backgrounds.

The second half of the evening consisted of an improvisational exercise called *The Harold*, which changed each night depending on the audience's response to a particular

¹⁷ For their first production of the season Kumu Kahua tried presenting *A Class "C" Trial in Yokohama* on Monday and Tuesday nights at the Honolulu Community Theatre, in an arrangement similar to that which they had with HPAC. This was a large (approximately 470 seat) proscenium theatre with good acoustics and comfortable audience seating. However, this was the only production presented by Kumu Kahua at that venue.

question. This improvisational segment was presented to illustrate the process by which *Strangers in Paradise* was created. At a time when the local economy was heavily dependent on tourism and “locals” were feeling growing animosity toward the tourist industry, it is notable that Kumu Kahua chose with this production of *Strangers in Paradise/The Harold* as well as with the next production of its season, to present plays that humanize the tourists who visit Hawai‘i’s shores.

Kumu Kahua continued its arrangement with the HPAC studio series from March 14 to 22 with two one act plays by Les Wilkins which had previously won prizes in the Kumu Kahua Playwriting Competition. The first was called *18’s*, and the second was entitled *On the Wall*. Each of these plays dealt in some way with the relationship between “locals” and haoles. *18’s* is about a haole boy who belongs to a local canoe club and the conflict with his father who wants him to distance himself from the “local” lifestyle and pursue a college education. *On The Wall* features a “local” boy who is hiding from the authorities. At an area along Waikīkī beach known as “The Wall” he encounters a terminally ill haole tourist girl. A brief romance flowers between the two as they buoy one another’s spirits, but in the end the boy is taken away and the girl is left alone. The two plays, directed by Jim Nakamoto, were aimed at High School and Intermediate School aged audiences. To make the plays more accessible to these audiences Nakamoto made arrangements for students to be brought by school bus to HPAC’s Mānoa Valley Theatre for a few daytime performances (Nakamoto 1/8/99). The play did so well that Kumu Kahua extended the run and played a free performance at McKinley High School and at the University of Hawai‘i Campus Center.

During the months of May and June *Strangers in Paradise* was revived for what had now become an annual event: Kumu Kahua’s inter-island tour. This time a humorous sub-title was also tacked on: *or Two Baked Potatoes Meet Three Scoops Rice*. In addition to playing on O‘ahu at the New Coconut Grove, it was also presented on the Big

Island at the Kona Surf Hotel, the Volcano Arts Center, and at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo. On Maui it was presented at Maui Community Theatre's space on the Kahului Fairgrounds.

Beginning with this season the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts began providing Kumu Kahua with slightly larger grants each year which not only subsidized the inter-island tours, but also helped with production expenses for the rest of the season and with Kumu Kahua's work toward developing "local" theatre. At this point in time Kumu Kahua's main approach to play development was the annual playwriting competition from which plays were selected for readings or full production the following season, but it was their fervent desire to find other methods of nurturing "local" playwrights.

The 1983-84 season began in a new performance space, on the top floor of the brand new eight million dollar theatre complex in Kawaiaha'o Hall on the grounds of Mid-Pacific Institute in Mānoa Valley.¹⁸ Because it was an unfamiliar venue, audiences initially had a great deal of difficulty finding the theatre, but Kumu Kahua was happy to find what they hoped would be a long-term performance space of their own.

An apt choice during a time when uncontrolled development continued to be a problem on O'ahu, the first production of the season in this new venue was an original play by Wendy Russell entitled *Construction Unlimited Honolulu*, directed by Dennis Carroll. This play was about Rudd, a retired school teacher who enlists the help of a Kahuna to stop construction of a high-rise building next to his home. As a result of this he becomes a local television celebrity, and is betrayed by his own success when he loses touch with his original convictions. The production ran for six performances from October 22 through October 29, playing to very small audiences totaling only 130 altogether.¹⁹

¹⁸ The Mid-Pacific Institute is a private high school located just above the University of Hawai'i. Its Kawaiaha'o Hall is a picturesque old building, the exterior of which is built with lava rocks. Set pieces for Kumu Kahua's shows had to be carried up the stairs or had to be able to fit inside the building's elevator.

¹⁹ All references to audience size are based on the figures from Kumu Kahua's Box-Office reports, which are held in the Kumu Kahua Theatre Archives. These reports are summarized in Appendix C.

The second play of the season was Harold Heifetz's *No Smile for Strangers*, directed by Barbara Kelly. Set in Honolulu during the 1950s, this play dealt with the volatile conflicts surrounding an interracial love affair as Narcisco, a Filipino man falls in love with Tomeko, a protected Japanese woman. Their love explodes in a passion filled drama that threatens to destroy their families and their hopes for the future. The play premiered in 1982-83 with the Los Angeles East West Players to sold-out houses. Kumu Kahua's production was presented at Mid-Pacific Institute's Kawaiaha'o Hall from January 20 through January 29. Audience size for this production was more than double what it was for the previous production, an indication not only of the greater popularity of this play, but also of growing familiarity with the new Kawaiaha'o Hall theatre space.

Returning for a brief stint with Hawai'i Performing Arts Company's studio series, Kumu Kahua presented Edward Sakamoto's *A'ala Park* from March 19 through April 3 on Monday and Tuesday evenings. *A'ala Park* was a re-written and expanded version of Sakamoto's first play, *In The Alley*.²⁰ Although it is set during the time that Hawai'i was granted statehood, the play explored issues that were still of concern to local people during the 1980s such as inter-ethnic dynamics, and destruction of old communities in favor of development. Audiences loved *A'ala Park*, and came in large numbers to see this play (Harada 10/16/84). In addition to the facility fees that Kumu Kahua paid for use of the space, HPAC also received approximately two-thirds of the box office revenue for the production, which meant a tidy profit for them this year.

The final play of the season was Philip Kan Gotanda's *Song For a Nisei Fisherman*, directed by Barbara FitzSimmons. The production was presented for six performances at Mid-Pac's Kawaiaha'o Hall May 18-27, and in June was toured to Kaua'i; Maui; and Volcano and Hilo on the Big Island. *Song For a Nisei Fisherman* was about

²⁰ Both of these plays are discussed in chapter three.

Itsuta Matsumoto, a nisei man who was born into a poor family on Kaua'i and went to the mainland, spending years performing menial labor while working toward a degree in medicine. The play shows his confrontation with sexual and racial prejudice in the 1930s, the dilemma of the Loyalty Oath and the humiliation of internment in the 1940s, as well as the joys and sorrows of raising a family. Critical reviews were mixed, praising the production, but panning the drama (Bowman 5/19/84).

Although audiences started out small during the 13th season due in large part to their new location at Kawaiaha'o Hall, the members of Kumu Kahua's Board of Directors felt optimistic about their future since they had found a comfortable venue. As Artistic Director Barbara FitzSimmons stated:

The number of quality scripts being submitted to the organization is increasing, giving us a large pool of plays to choose our season from. The overall quality of our productions is steadily increasing, as reflected in the positive reviews and audience response. (SFCA Grant Appl. 9/25/84)

Indeed, Kumu Kahua Theatre was proving to have an impact in "local" theatre. "Local" playwrights, actors, directors, designers and others were practicing and refining their craft through Kumu Kahua Theatre, and the cumulative effect was a consistently higher quality in productions.

During this season Kumu Kahua tried once again to formalize the operation of the Board of Directors. The intention was to move out of the amateur or educational theatre mold and shape Kumu Kahua into a professional level community theatre, modeling the structure of the Board after other Honolulu theatre groups. Under this formalized plan, Dennis Carroll officially took on the title of Executive Director; Barbara FitzSimmons became Kumu Kahua's Artistic Director, Dando Kluever became the Resident Director,²¹ and other Board members were given specific titles and responsibilities tailored to take advantage of their areas of expertise.²²

²¹ A temporary, but renewable, position requiring him to direct two productions each season.

²² See Appendix B for a complete list of Board members and their titles.

Brian Clark (now known as B. Burgess Clark) wrote several notable plays about Hawai'i during his few years of residence here. In October of 1984 two of his plays were presented in repertory by Kumu Kahua Theatre: *Purple Hearts*, and *A String of Pearls*. The two plays, presented under the umbrella title: *The Pearl Harbor Plays*, were historical dramas dealing with ordinary peoples' response to the 1941 bombing of Pearl Harbor rather than depicting the more familiar large-scale ramifications of that event. The first play, *Purple Hearts*, was directed by Dennis Carroll. The second play, *A String of Pearls*, was directed by James Nakamoto. The two full-length plays were presented in repertory, something which Kumu Kahua hadn't done since 1976; and this was the first time two full-length plays by a single author were presented in such a way.

Purple Hearts is based on a true event in which three sailors were trapped in an unflooded storage area of the battleship West Virginia when it sank on Dec. 7. In the play the men slowly suffocate while the three women they love wait at home for news of them. *A String of Pearls* is set in St. Louis Heights, an up-scale Honolulu neighborhood, on the morning of the Pearl Harbor Bombing. The play deals with two families: one haole, one Japanese American. The families find that their formerly warm friendship cannot withstand the shock, incredulity, rising suspicion and fear created by the events of Dec. 7 1941. *The Pearl Harbor Plays* were presented fourteen times at Kawaiaha'o Hall to a total audience of 1,029 people. This was the largest verifiable number of people that had yet made it to a Kumu Kahua production.²³

The 1984 playwriting competition marked some changes from previous years. The two divisions, "division one" for non-residents as well as residents, and "division two" restricted to Hawai'i residents, were retained. Division one, which offered prizes of \$250.00 for a full-length and \$100.00 for a short play, required the plays to deal with some

²³ This does not take into account the earlier hit production of *Twelf Nite O Wateva!* which occurred in 1974 when Kumu Kahua did not keep permanent box office records.

aspect of life in Hawai'i. Division two, offering prizes of \$125.00 for a full-length and \$75.00 for a short play, were restricted from subject matter pertaining to Hawai'i. The reason for retaining Division two even though Kumu Kahua had a stated preference for plays of Division one was to continue to encourage local playwrights to write - regardless of subject matter.

Life of the Land was the third "local" production of the season, which played in Honolulu March 8-31 before going on a tour to the neighbor islands in June. The production was presented in celebration of the centennial of Japanese immigration to Hawai'i, so its theme of emigration was especially relevant. The production was granted official recognition by Governor George Ariyoshi's Coordinating Committee for the 1985 Japanese 100th Anniversary Celebration. A rise in ticket prices to \$5 did not deter audience members, and performances in Honolulu were consistently sold-out. Part of the reason for the popularity of this play may have been because of its central conflict in which a man questions his earlier decision to leave Hawai'i in pursuit of a career on the mainland.²⁴ As explained earlier, "brain-drain" was a very real concern in Hawai'i during this time, as Hawai'i's young people were being forced to leave the islands in search of better economic opportunities elsewhere.

The fourteenth season had been a good one for Kumu Kahua for several reasons. First, they had a venue at Mid-Pacific's Kawaiaha'o Hall that, apart from some difficulties with load-ins and strikes, suited them well. Second, the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts was continuing to provide them with a grant each year in support of their development and outreach, which allowed them to continue with their annual inter-island tour. And also because, for the first time, they received money from private donors in support of their work (Carroll SFCA Rpt. 7/30/85). A new development for Kumu Kahua Theatre with their fifteenth season was that for the first time they were able to offer season

²⁴ For a detailed discussion on this play, see chapter three.

subscriptions, which meant that productions could be more securely supported by ticket sales than was possible in the past. This year also marked a change in leadership for Kumu Kahua, as Barbara FitzSimmons departed and Dando Kluever stepped in as the theatre's new Artistic Director.

The University of Hawai'i Theatre Department was still co-sponsoring the annual playwriting competition with Kumu Kahua Theatre, and in 1985-86 the two entities agreed to raise the prize money offered. The prizes for Division One were increased to \$500.00 for a full-length play and \$200.00 for a short play; and in Division Two prizes were increased to \$250.00 for a full length play and \$100.00 for a short play. The contest rules remained the same, and all plays continued to be read by the Kumu Kahua Board of Directors for consideration for readings or full productions.

The 1985-86 season opened with a new play by Brian Clark, *Summer's War*, which was directed by Kumu Kahua's Executive Director, Dennis Carroll. The production ran from October 24 through November 10 at Kawaiaha'o Hall. Reviewers admired both the script and the production which did extremely well at the box office. *Summer's War* is about a group of nuns who come to work at the Kaka'ako leper Holding Station in 1883, only to find themselves struggling against bureaucracy and male chauvinism, as well as their own doubts and fears. Ultimately the nuns grow in wisdom, compassion and strength through their experiences, except for the youngest nun who is consumed by her surroundings and descends into madness. The play is based upon the true-life experiences of Mother Marianne Cope, and O.A. Bushnell's book on her experiences provided Clark with the central metaphor and much of the information for the play.

Daniel Therriault was the first published playwright to bring his original work to Kumu Kahua Theatre before the late 1980s. When he began his association with Kumu Kahua Theatre he had already been published twice by Broadway Play Publishing, Inc. in New York. These published plays were: *Battery (A Love Story)* (1983) and a one-act

drama entitled *Floor Above the Roof* (1984). In 1986 his play, *The White Death*, was premiered by Kumu Kahua Theatre. The production was directed by Dando Kluever and ran from January 23 through February 9, 1986 at Kawaihae Hall. Set in the “Volcano Bar” on the rim of Kilauea Crater, this play centered upon Rev Hunter, who arrived in Hawai‘i to investigate a murder for the Catholic Church. Other characters were ethnic stereotypes including a small, ineffectual Filipino man, a Hawaiian prostitute, a Hawaiian thug, a haole tourist, and a Japanese Yakuza gangster. Another haole man, the Cardinal Code, is also present, although he only interacts with Rev Hunter over the telephone. Using the Catholic Church and the Yakuza crime syndicate as two of its central images, the play investigates the idea of an individual’s role within an organization and deals with issues of personal responsibility, racism and ethnic stereotyping.

The White Death is highly theatrical with colorfully delineated characters, strong dramatic tension, as well as several on-stage murders, an assortment of dead bodies, and a full-blown dance of seduction. Joseph Papp of the New York Shakespeare Festival was quite interested in *The White Death* during its development at Kumu Kahua, and the play was later published by Broadway Play Publishing in an anthology entitled *Anti-Naturalism: Six Full-Length Contemporary American Plays*. The playwright’s unfamiliarity with the “local” pidgin English dialect, which is used extensively in the drama, was overcome in rehearsal with the help of the “local” actors who “went through the play, line by line, to see if it felt right (Harada 1/23/86).” Therriault had strong feelings about what he wanted theatre in general and his play in particular to accomplish:

...it’s meant to challenge the audience. I want people to go out of the theater and talk - about what they’re for, and what they’re against. That’s what theater’s all about - an exchange of ideas. (Harada 1/23/86)

To encourage and facilitate this type of intellectual interaction, a free, concurrent public panel entitled “Ethnic Stereotyping in Hawaii: Historical Perspectives and Dramatic Images,” was hosted by Franklin Odo and Miriam Sharma. Excerpts from the play were

presented at the panel and the playwright and director were there to participate in discussions. Despite academic interest of this type, the play did not fare well at the box office.

Emmalehua was the first full-length play written by Victoria Nālani Kneubuhl, a part-Hawaiian playwright who was the niece to John Kneubuhl. John Kneubuhl, who left Hawai'i in 1950 for a long and successful career as a television writer in Los Angeles, had returned to his childhood home in Samoa. But he came back to Honolulu to direct this production. Although the playwright sought to explore the tensions between ancient Hawaiian traditions and modern Hawaiian society, the play wasn't strongly enough focused in this direction and the production did not bring out the subtle hints that were there. *Emmalehua* ran for ten performances from March 27 to April 19 at Mid-Pac's Kawaiaha'o Hall to disappointingly small audiences.²⁵

The final production of the 15th season was a revival of James Grant Benton's classic pidgin adaptation, *Twelf Nite O Wateva!* The 1986 Kumu Kahua production, which was co-directed by Dando Kluever and James Grant Benton, coincided with a renewed interest by Hawai'i's Board of Education with the issue of the use of pidgin in the schools. While the Board of Education noted that students did poorly in job interviews because of their use of pidgin, Benton claimed that pidgin was "the manifestation of the Hawaiian spirit and more noble than the spiritually barren forces that threaten it (Rozmiarek 5/5/86)." Whatever their feelings about this controversial topic may have been, audiences continued to enjoy *Twelf Nite*. After playing to sell-out audiences at Mid-Pac's Kawaiaha'o Hall from May 1 to 25, the production toured to Maui, Kaua'i, and the Big Island, then returned to Honolulu to do one final benefit performance at the University of

²⁵ For a full discussion on this play, see chapter five.

Hawai'i's Kennedy Theatre Mainstage for an audience of 644 people (Carroll SFCA Rpt. 7/27/87).

Kumu Kahua's 16th season continued the high momentum of the previous season. The number of season subscribers tripled with Kumu Kahua's offering of four diverse plays which were presented at Mid Pac's Kawaiaha'o Hall (Carroll SFCA Rpt. 7/27/87). The season opened with Darrell H.Y. Lum's *My Home Is Down The Street*, which won the Kumu Kahua playwriting competition in early 1986. This play is about the inter-generational struggles in a local Chinese American family.²⁶ The production was delayed two weeks due to casting challenges because of the difficulty and complexity of the role of Kwan Choy. After losing two actors during the rehearsal process, director Dando Kluever was forced to step in and play the role himself. With the assistance of makeup designer Bryan Furer, Kluever was able to convincingly change both his age and his ethnicity. In fact, reviewer John W. White stated that Kluever's performance was one of the most powerful of the season (11/7/86). Audiences appreciated this drama, providing nearly full houses for most of the run.

Dead Ends was written and directed by Brian Clark-Kenton who had already established his reputation as a playwright with his previous three plays for Kumu Kahua, *A String of Pearls*, *Purple Hearts* and *Summer's War*.²⁷ *Dead Ends*, however, was not a "local" play and the production did not appeal to Kumu Kahua's audiences as strongly as his previous plays had; audiences only half-filled the house.

During the 1980s immigrants to Hawai'i, such as the Japanese, marked the 100th anniversary of their arrival in Hawai'i with special publications and centennial celebrations. Tommy Kaulukukui Sr., a trustee at the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, suggested that

²⁶ *My Home Is Down the Street* is analyzed in chapter four.

²⁷ This playwright has used a number of different names as explained in chapter one.

Hawaiians celebrate their existence in the same manner (Wilson 9/20/01). So 1987 was declared the Year of the Hawaiian, with the theme “Ho‘olākō - We Are Enriched.” The purpose of this was to instill pride in being Hawaiian, identify important Hawaiian values, raise the consciousness of the Hawaiian community, and to celebrate that reawakening throughout the year (Boyd 9/21/01). Funding for “Ho‘olākō” activities were provided by the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, the State, and County governments. The *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* ran a special booklet containing dozens of articles by Hawaiian writers on a number of topics, and a collection of original stories based on Hawaiian values was published called *Kupu: He Mau Mo‘olelo No Ke Au Hou* (Akamine 9/19/01). Hawaiian rights activists made much of the Year of the Hawaiian in the legislature that year to remove the 90 year ban on children speaking Hawaiian in the public schools (Wilson 9/20/01). The year culminated with a huge gathering at Aloha Stadium (Boyd 9/21/01).

Kumu Kahua Theatre presented a new play, *Ka‘iulani*, in honor of the Year of the Hawaiian. *Ka‘iulani* was created by a group of four writers. Robert Nelson had written an original dramatic poem entitled “The Princess,” and entered it in Kumu Kahua’s playwriting competition. Subsequently, Dennis Carroll, Victoria Nālani Kneubuhl, Ryan Page and Robert Nelson collaborated to revise the dramatic poem into a cantata for the theatre.²⁸ The form of a cantata allowed the production to meld Hawaiian and European performance techniques in a way that mirrored how Hawai‘i and Europe were joined in the person of Ka‘iulani, the bi-racial princess who was heir to Hawai‘i’s throne. The production combined traditional Hawaiian chant and hula with poetic character monologues, dialogue, and choral speeches in the style of Western theatre.²⁹ *Ka‘iulani* played thirteen performances to large audiences in Honolulu and closed to a full-capacity

²⁸ A cantata is a musical composition consisting of vocal solos, choruses, etc., often with instrumental accompaniment, used as a setting for a story to be sung but not acted. (Neufeldt)

²⁹ An analysis of this play is presented in chapter five.

200 seat house in Hana, Maui where it received a standing ovation (Carroll 7/24/87; Carroll SFCA Rpt. 7/27/87)).

Stew Rice by the already popular playwright Edward Sakamoto was the final offering of the season. Dando Kluever directed this production about three high school boys who graduate in the 1950s and are reunited 20 years later only to find that their friendship and hopes for the future are strained in the more jaded 1980s. The play dealt with the contemporary concern of young “locals” leaving Hawai‘i for the mainland - and the question of whether or not it is possible ever to come home again.³⁰ After a run of nine performances in Honolulu the production toured to the neighbor islands of Kaua‘i, Maui and Hawai‘i.

Kumu Kahua was forced to move out of their performance space at Kawaiaha‘o Hall at the beginning of the 1987-88 season when the Starving Artists Theatre Company formed an Artists-in-Residence arrangement with Mid Pacific Institute. So the first play of their new season was presented at Chaminade University’s Croarkin Theatre, which had a narrow proscenium stage and steeply raked audience seating for about two hundred people. Although the change of venue was a great disappointment and meant a rise in expenses for Kumu Kahua, the Board of Directors was hopeful for a strong season because they had several exciting plays planned and they now had a larger Board that was able to rise to the challenge of a nomadic existence once again.

For the opening of their 17th season Kumu Kahua tried something new: an original musical set in the islands, focusing on the contemporary concerns over rampant development and Hawaiian land rights. This was Kumu Kahua’s most expensive undertaking yet, so they were fortunate to secure funding from the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts; “Ho‘olākō” (The Year of the Hawaiian - through the Office of Hawaiian Affairs); and the Honolulu Cellular Telephone Company to aid with the costs of

³⁰ Chapter three provides a detailed discussion of this play and its critical reception.

production. This musical, co-written by David Talisman and popular “local” singer Henry Kapon, was called *Home in the Islands*. The story centered around two “local” brothers - one a land rights activist, the other a musician in Los Angeles. The brothers find themselves in conflict with each other and with the land developers when their mother’s beach-front bar is threatened. Les Gantan provided the musical direction for *Home In the Islands* and his four-member band, Rhythm Method, provided live accompaniment for the production. Reviewers felt that the characters were mere stereotypes and the story was loosely strung together to showcase the songs, but the production did well at the box office. However, because of the large expense of producing the play it still resulted in a substantial financial loss for Kumu Kahua.

Lucky Come Hawaii, adapted by Jon Shirota from his 1965 best-selling novel of the same title, was the second production of the season. Set during the time of the World War II attack on Pearl Harbor, this comedy deals with an Okinawan family living on Maui whose members think they must adjust to a new life dominated by Kenyei, a Japanese loyalist who wants to marry their daughter Kimiko despite her feelings to the contrary. The comic confusions and divided cultural loyalties are eventually resolved after a chaotic betrothal ceremony interrupted by American soldiers searching for spies. The many idyllic Maui settings of the novel are transposed to the Gusuda family kitchen for the play, which opened to mixed reviews. Audiences loved the play, and the financial success of this production helped to offset some of the losses from *Home in the Islands*.

Hawai‘i’s Governor John Waihe‘e and his wife Lynne, who is of Okinawan ancestry, attended the production of *Lucky Come Hawaii* and liked it so much that they requested a special performance for the state legislature. This was the first time a Honolulu theatre group had been honored in such a way (Carroll SFCA Rpt.7/1/88). Waihe‘e’s request was initially denied by the production’s director, Jim Nakamoto, because of other commitments among the cast members. But understanding the impact such a performance

could have on the future of Kumu Kahua Theatre, Dennis Carroll made a special appeal to the cast and made arrangements for financial recompense to them (ordinarily Kumu Kahua actors were not paid) in order to make this “command performance” possible. The performance for the state legislature was well-received and gave an identity to what was previously, to many legislators, a faceless organization seeking funding. Kumu Kahua’s heightened visibility among these law makers would become a great help over the next few years in their quest to find a permanent theatre space.

Kumu Kahua found itself again at Tenney Theatre with Owen Hagino’s *Paradise Bound* under the direction of Gene Burk. This play dealt with Hawai‘i’s infamous Massie vs. Kahahawai rape and murder case of the early 1930s, examining the significance of famed criminal lawyer Clarence Darrow’s participation in the defense and the implications of the verdict. Focusing on Darrow and his reasons for taking an uncharacteristic stance with this case, and for coming out of retirement to accept the case, the play used a self-reflexive style incorporating literary allusion, shock, and comedy of manners. Foregrounded themes included the gap between law and justice (in the play Darrow admits privately that his clients are “as guilty as sin (Rozmiarek 4/11/88)”), as well as the divisive legacy of colonialism in Hawai‘i.

Although the subject matter of *Paradise Bound* was provocative, the production did not draw very large audiences. People who had attended Kumu Kahua’s previous production at Tenney Theatre had found that it was an uncomfortable space with a high, old-fashioned proscenium stage, no air-conditioning and a problem with echoes coming from the uncarpeted corridor outside during performances. The only other theatre group in town that was willing to use this venue was the Hawaii Chamber Opera Theatre. The Kumu Kahua Board felt that the main reason for the decrease in audience size with *Paradise Bound* was because of the problems with the venue.

Playwright Edward Sakamoto provided a new play for Kumu Kahua's next production, one which was a far cry from his usual Chekhovian comedies in pidgin English. *Chikamatsu's Forest* was a fantasy set in old Japan in 1704, as the famous playwright Chikamatsu journeyed from Kyoto to Osaka. The play, directed by Ben Moffatt at Croarkin Theatre, utilized contemporary English speech juxtaposed with Kabuki and Bunraku stylistic conventions as it explored the boundaries between reality and illusion, and the relationship between an artist's life and his work. Although Sakamoto received a dramalogue award for this play when it premiered in Los Angeles, Honolulu critics had divided opinions about the production. Audiences, which were usually quite substantial for Sakamoto's "local" plays, failed to support this production in large numbers, perhaps because it did not carry any "local" relevance.

It had become Kumu Kahua's policy to finish each season by doing a neighbor-island tour of the production that had been their greatest artistic and box office success that year. With this purpose in mind, Kumu Kahua revived the production of *Ka'iulani* for a run of performances in Honolulu and a tour of the neighbor islands. This version, again directed by Dennis Carroll, involved some slight revisions to the script and production, and a few changes in casting. But the core of the play, giving insight into Ka'iulani's life as she is groomed for the throne but never allowed to take it, remained the same. The production toured widely on O'ahu, and visited the neighbor islands of Kaua'i and Hawai'i. Due to low box office revenues from *Chikamatsu's Forest*, Kumu Kahua Theatre did not have the funds to do their complete inter-island tour and the scheduled performances on Maui had to be canceled. Critics again felt that although the production was quite striking, the script was still problematic (Rozmiarek 6/88; White 6/2/88).

1988-89 was a financially devastating year for Kumu Kahua Theatre. Having lost their performance space at Kawaihae'o Hall the previous season and being unwilling to use Croarkin Theatre again, Kumu Kahua was forced to present all of its plays at Saint

Andrews' Tenney Theatre although this, too, was a problematic venue. Since Kumu Kahua had no home-base, all of their administrative work was handled through the homes and offices of the various Board members involved. Because of the lack of a central office, the handling of Kumu Kahua's ticket reservation line was a continual challenge. While Ryan Page was a member of the Board of Directors, his mother managed the reservation line for Kumu Kahua from her home. But after graduating from the University of Hawai'i, Page and his mother moved away. So the reservation line now had a new phone number and was handled by an answering machine in the home of Board members Juli Thompson and Gene Burk (Burk 1/15/99).

Aside from the invaluable aid given by Board Member Wayne Kischer through his facilities at the Punahou School Theatre where he worked, Kumu Kahua Theatre had no physical support for its technical work at this time. The tedious work of load-ins and set painting was done, primarily by the Kumu Kahua Board of Directors, outside Tenney Theatre in the hot sun. Load-ins took place on Saturdays and the set was up by Sunday so that the actors could rehearse on it for a few days before a Thursday night opening performance.

Opening the 18th season was a new play by Victoria Nālani Kneubuhl, *The Conversion*, about Queen Ka'ahumanu and the American Missionaries of the 1820s. This initial production was a small beginning to what in the year to come would become an international adventure not only for the playwright but for Kumu Kahua as well. Early on, the production was invited under the sponsorship of the American Samoa Arts Council to perform in American Samoa for National Arts Week, where they presented two performances at the Community College of American Samoa. But in Honolulu *The Conversion* did not draw large audiences and the season got off to a poor start financially.

At this point in time Kumu Kahua Theatre went through a shift in leadership. Former Executive Director Dennis Carroll shifted into the role of Managing Director, and

former Dramaturge Juli Thompson stepped into the role of Executive Director. Dando Kluever continued as Artistic Director, thus creating a triad of leadership for the theatre company. The major goals for these leaders were to increase grant funds from the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts, and to try to locate a permanent space for Kumu Kahua to use. Audience subscriptions and attendance had fallen off since Kumu Kahua lost its home at Kawaiaha'o Hall, and the uncomfortable temporary venues were largely the problem. The Kumu Kahua Board of Directors had always been a hands-on Board doing the majority of the technical, clerical and menial labor required to keep a theatrical organization going; and this season they were spending disproportionate amounts of time coping with the difficulties of being "on the road." The University of Hawai'i Theatre Department, with which Kumu Kahua was still marginally affiliated, could provide neither rehearsal nor storage space. The expenses of renting space for storage, rehearsals and performances were high; for all these reasons, finding a "home" was vital to the continued existence of the organization.

The majority of the plays presented this season did very poorly at the box office. Cherylene Lee's play *Overtones*, directed by Dando Kluever, played to a total of only 398 people. Peter Charlot's play *'O'O: Hawai'i*, managed to draw larger audiences than the previous two productions; 683 people in all came to the run of ten performances. Roger Pulvers' *Yamashita* had been widely performed and televised in Australia prior to being produced by Kumu Kahua, and was also produced by Los Angeles' East West Players as well as being published by Currency Press in Sydney. Although the production by Kumu Kahua was well done, it was a disaster at the box-office, drawing the smallest audiences Kumu Kahua had seen in many years. This may have been in part because *Yamashita* was a last minute substitution for a different play which had been announced before the playwright could revise the work to the satisfaction of the theatre's Board of Directors.

The State Foundation on Culture and the Arts had shown its faith in Kumu Kahua with increasingly generous annual grants which were the major source of Kumu Kahua's funding; but with the expenses of being "on the road" coupled with one box-office failure after another this season, Kumu Kahua found itself in dire financial straits. The final offering of the season was a revival of Jon Shirota's hit comedy, *Lucky Come Hawaii*. One of the most appealing aspects of this play was its comic treatment of a period in history which is usually approached with gravity and reverence. Although the original production emphasized the farcical comedy of the script, this second production emphasized character realism. This production had a new director, Gary Saito, a largely new cast, and some slight revisions to the script. Perhaps since it was a revival, the production was only reviewed - unenthusiastically - by one of Honolulu's newspapers. Well-attended performances were held on O'ahu, and then the production toured to Kaua'i, Maui and the island of Hawai'i. The financial success of this production allowed Kumu Kahua Theatre to finish the season on sound financial grounds.

1989-90 was a significant season for Kumu Kahua Theatre in two ways: they moved into a brand new venue, and they completed the season by taking two Hawaiian plays on tour to Scotland, Washington D.C., and California. The new space was Kapi'olani Community College's old cafeteria, sometimes called "the Lanai" and sometimes called the ETO cafeteria, at 600 Pensacola Street. The Kumu Kahua Theatre Board of Directors had to outfit the space themselves, installing their own lighting grid and instruments and also making some electrical adjustments in order to transform a cafeteria into a workable theatre environment. The theatre was under such financial strain that Dennis Carroll had to take out a loan for five thousand dollars to pay for the costs of the first production (Wong 2/14/99). The Kumu Kahua Board also had to break down their sets after Thursday night rehearsals and performances, because the space was still being used as a cafeteria on week days. But the members of Kumu Kahua felt the effort was

worthwhile because they now had a flexible theatre space with a seating capacity of 120 which they could depend upon using for every production.

Because Kumu Kahua Theatre was opening its 1989-90 season in a new venue they were worried about being able to attract audiences there. But audiences found their way there in large numbers to see the work of one of their favorite “local” playwrights, Edward Sakamoto. The play was *Manoa Valley*, directed by Chris Ivanyi. Previously produced in 1982 by the University of Hawai‘i’s Kennedy Theatre, the script was revised for a production at Pan Asian Repertory in New York. Kumu Kahua’s production utilized this revised version.³¹ In contrast to Sakamoto’s earlier-produced *A‘ala Park*, this was a more light-hearted look at statehood from the point of view of a “local” Japanese family. But like *The Life of the Land*, this play also examines the problem of “brain-drain” as the young men of the family choose to leave Hawai‘i to pursue college educations on the mainland. Tickets for *Manoa Valley* sold so well that the company added two performances to the run. The following production though, David Penhallow’s *The House of Happy Talk*, drew only small audiences.

Kumu Kahua Board member and dramaturge Juli Thompson felt that it was important for Kumu Kahua to begin producing more plays by women, and one result of this was the beginning of a fruitful relationship with the mainland playwright Velina Hasu Houston (Burk 1/15/99). Kumu Kahua’s third offering of the 1989-90 season was a production of Houston’s play, *Tea*, directed by Ellen Polyhronopoulou. This was a play about five Japanese war brides residing in Kansas. Four of them join together in a tea-ceremony to try to heal their loss after one of their friends has committed suicide. Although the play was not set locally, local audiences related strongly to the Asian American

³¹ This play is analyzed in chapter three.

characters. Toward the end of the run the 120 seat theatre space was filled to capacity and people had to be turned away several nights (Carroll SFCA Rpt. 7/3/90).

With Leigh Kim's comedy *Da Kine*, Kumu Kahua again produced a play by a non-Hawai'i resident. Although the playwright had been born and raised in Hawai'i, he was now residing in California. The experience living in and outside of Hawai'i served the playwright well. This play dealt with a sensitive, embattled teenage Korean American boy from Pittsburgh who is sent to Hawai'i by his parents for a crash course in macho behavior from his eccentric uncle. But it is during their more casual moments, and through encounters with his cousin and with a haole Vietnam veteran, that the boy learns the values and gains the confidence he needs to make the transition into young adulthood. A complex play that refused to give pat, easy answers, *Da Kine* was reviewed in glowing terms for both its script and its production. Audiences seemed to agree with the reviewers' opinions, showing up in substantial numbers to attend the run of ten performances.

Wakako Yamauchi, the third mainland playwright produced this season, was well known for her award-winning drama *And the Soul Shall Dance*, which Kumu Kahua had done in 1981. Her play *12-1-A* was about two Japanese American families interned in Poston, Arizona during World War II, and the results of their differing reactions to the "loyalty questionnaire." Both the play and Kumu Kahua's production received favorable reviews, although audiences were slightly smaller than for the previous two productions. *12-1-A* was an apt choice for production that season because the issue of reparations to survivors of the internment camps was a topical issue at the time.

It was during this season that Juli Thompson and Dennis Carroll brought a new member onto the Kumu Kahua Board of Directors: Gene Shofner. Shofner had attended the 1988 International Fringe Theatre Festival in Edinburgh, and wanted very much to bring Kumu Kahua's production of *Ka'iulani* to that festival. Shofner and the other

members of the Kumu Kahua Board came up with a plan to take the productions of *Ka'iulani* and *The Conversion of Ka'ahumanu* on tour to Edinburgh, Scotland; Washington D.C.; and Los Angeles, California. To do this, Kumu Kahua was fortunate enough to secure a grant of \$80,000 from the Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism. The grant paid Shofner \$800 a month to devote the time and energy necessary to plan and organize the international tour that would bring the 1989-90 season to a close, and covered a substantial portion of the expenses of the tour.

Raising the rest of the money for such a large tour was an enormous undertaking which took most of the year. Kumu Kahua was able to raise most of the necessary money from a variety of sources including Abigail Kawananakoa, the Campbell Estate and numerous individual donations, but as the dates for the International tour approached they were still about \$35,000 short of the money they needed to do the full tour. During this time *The Conversion of Ka'ahumanu* had been playing at Tenney Theatre on O'ahu and touring to Kaua'i, Hilo and Kona as a preamble to the international tour. At the University Lab Theatre Kumu Kahua held fundraising performances of both *Ka'iulani* and *The Conversion of Ka'ahumanu*. They invited Hawai'i's Governor John Waihe'e to see the gala performance of *Ka'iulani*, but since he was busy that night he came to see *The Conversion of Ka'ahumanu* instead. Kumu Kahua held the curtain of the nearly sold-out performance fifteen minutes until Waihe'e's arrival because they wanted to make sure he heard their plea for funds (Shofner 2/13/99).

After Waihe'e arrived, Gene Shofner gave a speech to the audience describing the tour they were planning to make with the two productions. Shofner explained that because Kumu Kahua was unable to come up with the necessary money for the full tour they were going to have to cut the production crew down to one person and eliminate the performances they had scheduled for Washington D.C.. Waihe'e visibly winced at that

prospect. Robert Midkiff of the Black Trust,³² who was also in the audience that night, liked the performance so much he told the Governor that his organization would give \$5,000 to Kumu Kahua for the tour. The next day Governor Waihe'e met with Shofner and Sheila Kelly³³ in his office and personally telephoned several large Hawai'i businesses to raise the necessary funds so that Kumu Kahua could make the complete tour (Shofner 2/13/99).

During their two weeks in Scotland Kumu Kahua presented four performances of each play at Chaplaincy Centre as part of the internationally renowned Edinburgh Fringe Festival. The venue seated approximately 125 people, and the houses were consistently 1/2 to 2/3 full (Shofner 2/13/99). This was an appropriate year to appear in Edinburgh, since the Festival was celebrating the 100th year of Robert Louis Stevenson's settling in Samoa, and spotlighting the Pacific (Harada 8/1/90). Princess Ka'iulani, who was half Hawaiian and half Scottish, was a friend of Stevenson; and a scene featuring Stevenson was included in the play *Ka'iulani*. After their run of performances were done, Kumu Kahua was invited to the meeting of the Fringe Festival's Board of Directors, where they were very warmly received and where actress Leo Anderson Akana and playwrights Robert Nelson and Victoria Nālani Kneubuhl had the opportunity to present the Fringe Board with a framed greeting by Hawai'i's Governor Waihe'e.

Following the Edinburgh productions, the plays were performed twice in Washington D.C. at Georgetown University's Hall of Nations Theatre as a preliminary to the Pacific Arts Festival being held there. Audiences for these performances were "packed to the rafters" and very enthusiastic (Shofner 2/13/99). From Washington, the 24-member company brought the productions by special invitation to the Los Angeles Festival, which that year was focusing on the Pacific Rim and Basin. They performed the plays there a

³² A large trust administered through the Hawai'i Community Foundation.

total of six times at the Inner City Cultural Center. Despite the fact that the box-office profits from Washington were stolen at the airport in California (Burk 1/15/99; Shofner 2/13/99), it was an exciting accomplishment to bring these Hawaiian plays to national and international audiences.

The 1989 DBEDT grant which allowed Shofner a monthly stipend marked the first time in Kumu Kahua's history that they were able to pay someone for their administrative work. Prior to this, production directors and designers were paid a modest sum for their services as independent contractors if they were not Board members. Board members continued to serve in a volunteer capacity. After directing *Da Kine* in March and April of 1990, Kumu Kahua's Artistic Director Dando Kluever left Hawai'i. Gene Shofner was named the new Artistic Director. Juli Thompson took on the role of Executive Director which had previously been held by Dennis Carroll, and Dennis Carroll shifted into the role of Managing Director.

Unfortunately for Kumu Kahua Theatre, the Hawai'i State Library had to relocate its collections to the "Lanai" on Pensacola Street during the summer of 1990. Kumu Kahua Theatre was forced to vacate the space and was once again without a home. It was particularly frustrating to the Kumu Kahua Board that they were able to use the venue for only one season after the amount of work they had put into transforming a cafeteria into a viable theatrical space. At the end of the 1989-1990 season they had no firm commitment yet for a venue for the next season, but they went ahead with their production plans faithful that they would find a space somewhere.

While the Kumu Kahua Board members dealt with the immediate pragmatics of finding venues for the upcoming season of productions, they also worked on the long-term goal of finding a suitable permanent home for their theatre. As a result of the growing professionalism of Kumu Kahua's work, their numerous artistic successes, and the recent

³³ Kumu Kahua Board Member who was primarily responsible for grants and public relations.

international tour, Kumu Kahua had gained status in the eyes of the community and of the local government; especially among state legislators who still remembered the 1988 command performance of *Lucky Come Hawai'i*. Hawai'i state legislators David Hagino and Anthony Chang were staunch supporters of Kumu Kahua and, along with Russell Nagata and Franklin Odo, provided invaluable aid in the quest for a permanent space. Kumu Kahua had hoped the state might allow them to use the old water pump station on Nimitz Highway. This was an old two-story lava rock building with very high ceilings. It was a small space and had some structural limitations as a theatre venue, but at the same time it provided some excellent possibilities for experimental theatre.

Kumu Kahua was turned down for the old water pump station, but they were informed that there was another old, historic building that was also going to become available for refurbishment and renovation. This other building was the Kamehameha V Post Office Building. This building was historic for several reasons: it was the first cement building constructed in Hawai'i, it was the first post office in Hawai'i, and it was where David Kalākaua served as Postmaster before he was elected to serve as Hawai'i's last King. The building was located in downtown Honolulu at the corner of Merchant and Bethel Streets, just a block away from the waterfront. The historicity of the waterfront area and the surrounding neighborhoods which include Chinatown, the downtown business district and the "red light" district along River Street were ideally suited to a theatre which sought to examine past and present life in Hawai'i. Although there were efforts underway to revitalize the waterfront area with the renovation of the piers surrounding Aloha Tower, the downtown area was still not considered a tourist destination. This was important so that "locals" would not feel out of place going to the theatre there as they might if the theatre was situated in a tourist mecca such as Waikīkī.

The Kumu Kahua Board of Directors was delighted with the prospect of such an ideal location for their theatre, and immediately set about raising the necessary funds to

refurbish and outfit the space although plans had not yet been finalized. The State Foundation on Culture and the Arts also wanted to locate their offices in the Kamehameha V Post Office Building. They wanted the entire building, but the state legislature felt that the SFCA didn't need that much space. So the legislature gave a twenty year lease on the ground floor of the building to Kumu Kahua Theatre, and the upstairs to the SFCA. Neither organization ended up with as much space as they had hoped for, but both were happy with the prospect of a new home. Kumu Kahua's two resident technical directors, Joe Dodd and Wayne Kischer, were able to have a lot of input with the architect, Glenn Mason, as the inside of the building was being rebuilt. This allowed them to customize the design to the needs of their theatre and use the small space as efficiently as possible.

In the meantime, Kumu Kahua still had to find venues for its 1990-91 season. The space they found for the first production of the season was at Central Intermediate School's large, un-airconditioned assembly hall. Despite the problem of booming acoustics, they were able to present a well conceived production of Wakako Yamauchi's *The Chairman's Wife*. Xue Hua "Sherwood" Hu, a radical stage and film director who had been exiled from China, directed this stylized production exploring the life of Madame Mao (Chiang Ching) and her significance in post-Tienanmen China. After five performances the production toured for another five performances to Leeward Community College and the Big Island together with Milwaukee's professional Theatre X, under the sponsorship of CCECS.

The next offering, also presented at Central Intermediate School, consisted of two locally written short satirical comedies which were presented together for an evening's entertainment. The eight cast members performed in both plays. The plays, *Biff Finds Himself in Hawaii* and *Paradise Tours* examined the phenomenon of newcomers to Hawai'i and their often distorted perceptions of life in the islands. John W. White's *Biff Finds Himself in Hawaii* was written as a "local" sequel to Arthur Miller's *Death of a*

Salesman. In the play Biff Loman attempts to get a new start on his life by moving to Hawai'i, but finds that he is faced with the same lack of self-fulfillment that he had in Brooklyn. *Paradise Tours*, by Robert J. Morris, was previously produced by Kumu Kahua in 1976. Both plays received lukewarm reviews, and audiences were not highly responsive to either play.

For the rest of the season Kumu Kahua Theatre found itself back on the boards of Tenney Theatre, but by this time the theatre had been renovated and air-conditioning had been installed so the venue was more comfortable. In this space Velina Hasu Houston's award winning play *Asa Ga Kimashita / Morning Has Broken* was followed by *Maui the Demigod*, adapted by Gary L. Balfantz from Steven Goldsberry's 1984 novel of the same title. The production used storytelling techniques, hula and chant along with traditional theatrical practices. Original hulas and chants were composed and choreographed by Kahoa Malalis, assisted by Anna Pung. The play presents some of the major events in the legend of the mischievous demigod Maui, including his birth, his rites of passage, his great fishing adventure, his capture of the sun, his seduction of the volcano goddess Pele, and his attempt to defeat Nuikapo in a quest for immortality.

The production was given mixed reviews. Referring to the production as "erotic, violent - and sometimes frightening," reviewer John W. White praised the direction: "[Balfantz] orchestrates light, music, and movement to create a fascinating theatrical experience based on the purposes and processes of storytelling (White 4/15/91)." At the other extreme, Joseph Rozmiarek criticized the use of storytelling technique and hula: "Balfantz' liberal use of Hawaiian chants and hulas... weighs down the action even while providing cultural context and dignity. The pieces underscore the spoken word, but they also bring it to a stop (Rozmiarek 4/15/91)." Despite the mixed reviews the play appealed to local audiences and houses were nearly full for most of the run.

Hawaii's public television station KHET featured Kumu Kahua Theatre and its production of *Maui the Demigod* on its series called *Spectrum Hawaii*. The episode, entitled *Kumu Kahua: A Local Voice*, gave television viewers some background on Kumu Kahua and its origins, and followed the entire process of the production of *Maui the Demigod* from casting to final production.

From May 30 to June 30, 1991 Velina Hasu Houston's play *Tea* was revived for Kumu Kahua's annual inter-island tour. The production, again under the direction of Ellen Polyhronopoulou, played at various locales on O'ahu as well as on Kaua'i and the Big Island. Two of the actresses reprised their roles for the touring production and three new actresses stepped in for the roles of Atsuko, Teruko and Chizuye. Again, *Tea* enjoyed critical acclaim for both the writing and production of the drama (Berger 5/31/91, Rozmiarek 6/3/91). Although the production did not do as well as hoped on the neighbor islands, Kumu Kahua was contracted to present two performances of *Tea* for Honolulu's Bishop Museum and these were presented August 30 and 31 to capacity crowds (Carroll SFCA Rpt. 7/10/92).

Kumu Kahua took another important step forward in its existence as an organization with the 1990-91 season. Striving to increase Kumu Kahua's funding during this time, Executive Director Juli Thompson Burk worked with Board member Bill Dendle on Grant Applications, and it became apparent that in order to qualify for better grants Kumu Kahua needed to become officially incorporated. So under the guidance of attorney David Farmer, a Kumu Kahua Board member, Kumu Kahua Theatre drew up its articles of incorporation and changed its status from a 509(a)(2) to a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization in 1991 (Burk 1/15/99). As part of the process of becoming incorporated, several Board members were named officers of the organization, which gave them the authority to sign documents or carry out other official duties on behalf of Kumu Kahua Theatre. In August of 1991 Juli Thompson Burk resigned as Kumu Kahua's Executive Director. Kumu

Kahua Theatre's administrative duties were then divided between two people: Dennis Carroll, who served as Board President and Managing Director; and Gene Shofner, who served as Artistic Director and Executive Officer.

Kumu Kahua's playwriting competition had been expanded to a national competition in 1981 and it was still the major avenue for play development. Selected plays from the competition were presented as public readings if they were not ready for full production; but in recent seasons there was not much public interest in these readings and the audiences were very small. So with the 1991-92 season Kumu Kahua decided to try a different approach to the readings. Instead of presenting four minimally rehearsed playreadings they presented two workshopped readings, each involving one week of intensive work by cast, playwright, dramaturg and director. Both readings were well attended and Kumu Kahua felt that this approach would be more fruitful in terms of getting constructive feedback that could result in a play eventually making it to full production.

Another approach to play development arose out of a collaboration with Honolulu Theatre for Youth. Darrell H.Y. Lum's *A Little Bit Like You* was commissioned through a Rockefeller Grant by Honolulu Theatre for Youth, which presented the play in conjunction with Kumu Kahua. Playing for ten performances at Chaminade's Croarkin Theatre, *A Little Bit Like You* attracted audiences slightly below average in size for Kumu Kahua's productions at the time.³⁴

At the end of Kumu Kahua's 21st season Gary Balfantz's *Maui the Demigod* was revived in a stream-lined version for the annual state tour. The play's new director, Harry Wong III, gave it a new production concept linking it to the Kalākaua era. This revised version had not only "a new look, but a tighter style and a dramatic unity that gives it definite shape and direction (Rozmiarek 5/30/92)." Potential audience members were warned about the sexually risqué quality of the production, but as one reviewer said, "more

³⁴ This play and its critical reception are discussed in chapter four.

open minds can count on being thoroughly entertained by the world view and deft wit included in the script, and by the quality of the performance (Berger 6/1/92).” The production played on O’ahu, Maui, Kaua’i and the Big Island. After avoiding Maui for three years because of venue and sponsorship difficulties, Kumu Kahua was quite pleased with the response they received there with this production (Carroll 6/16/92, 6/23/92).

Another project that Kumu Kahua became involved in during the summer of 1992 was in cooperation with, and sponsored by the Community College of Micronesia in Pohnpei. For this project several members of Kumu Kahua traveled to Micronesia where they taught a class in transforming local legends or local literature into theatre. The production they created was based on a Micronesian legend and was entitled *Taimwahn the Demon*. This was performed in Pohnpei by an entirely Micronesian cast. Originally the intent was to eventually stage the work in Honolulu, but this never came to pass.

In October 1992, after two decades of functioning under a volunteer administrative team, Kumu Kahua secured the funding necessary to make the Managing Director a paid position for the first time in its history. This enabled Managing Director Gene Shofner to more fully devote his time and energies to promoting and supporting the work of Kumu Kahua Theatre. This also meant that since he was now a paid employee, Shofner had to step down from the Board of Directors. The Board composition was shifted around a bit, with Dennis Carroll serving as President of the Board, James Nakamoto serving as Vice President, Paul Cravath serving as Secretary, and Sheila Kelly serving as treasurer.

Contractors were still busy at work on the renovations of the Kamehameha V post office building, so Kumu Kahua presented its entire 1992-93 season in the recently renovated Tenney Theatre. Kicking off its twenty second season Kumu Kahua opened with a world premiere of Edward Sakamoto’s play *Aloha Las Vegas*, directed by Jim Nakamoto. This play, about a retiree who decides to leave Hawai’i and move to Las

Vegas, was quite pertinent in 1992. As Noel Kent explains in his 1993 book *Islands*

Under the Influence:

Economic distress is accelerating the remarkable number of local people who leave Hawaii each year... Increasingly commented upon in the 1990s, out-migration is a sign that many locals now find living in the Islands untenable. The unstable, low-wage job structure and soaring cost of living differential (38 percent higher than the mainland) is propelling all sorts of people to become ex-residents. Attractive because of its relatively dirt-cheap land and homes, and as unlikely as it may seem, Las Vegas has become a center of the Hawaii diaspora. (197)

If audience size is any indication of the social relevance of a play, then this play which played to large and enthusiastic audiences, touched a resounding chord among the “local” people of Hawai‘i.³⁵

In November of 1992 Kumu Kahua presented *Yellow Fever*, a play by Rick Shiomi which had received numerous awards in Canada and North America. The play had been produced in San Francisco, New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, Toronto, Vancouver, and Seattle before being presented in Honolulu by Kumu Kahua under the direction of Jo Scheder. A parody of Humphrey Bogart/Lauren Bacall detective-thrillers, *Yellow Fever* examines the treatment of Asian Americans in North America as the play’s hero, private investigator Sam Shikaze, searches for the missing Cherry Blossom Queen.

Philip Kan Gotanda’s *The Wash* was an established play on the mainland, and although not set in Hawai‘i it resonated strongly with Hawai‘i’s audiences. The play is about an elderly second-generation Japanese American couple that divorces after 42 years of marriage. Alvin Ing, who has appeared on Broadway and in various national touring productions as well as in film and television, took on the role of Nobu while he was home in Hawai‘i recuperating from a two-year tour with the musical *City of Angels*. Audiences turned out in substantial numbers to see *The Wash*. All proceeds from this production

³⁵ An in-depth consideration of this play and its critical reception is presented in chapter three.

were deposited into a “Building Fund” for Kumu Kahua to outfit their permanent theatre space at 46 Merchant Street which they planned to open in January of 1994.

Rounding out the season was a revival of Darrell H.Y. Lum’s *A Little Bit Like You* which performed at Tenney Theatre and Windward Community College on O’ahu as well as touring to Kaua’i and the Big Island. This production, directed by Keith Kashiwada, utilized a slightly revised version of the earlier script.³⁶ *The Honolulu Advertiser* stated: “Lum clarifies his message in this version, giving the characters greater clarity and warmth and tying the action neatly together to support his theme (Rozmiarek 5/29/93).” The play had a record-breaking opening week at the box office (Carroll 6/5/93) and audiences were quite a bit larger than those for the original 1991 version. So the theatre company’s twenty second season had a strong finish.

FULFILLING LONG-TERM GOALS (1993-1999)

The tourist boom and rapid development of Hawai’i during the 1970s and 1980s resulted in an economy that was heavily dependent upon outside investors; national and international corporations that had the funds to create large commercial or residential developments. The economy had shifted away from its dependence upon the sugarcane and pineapple industries of the past century, and these plantations were slowly dying out and selling off their assets. The hotels became the “new plantations” where local people worked long hours for low wages and minimal job security. For “locals,” work in the tourist industry was often demeaning as they were forced to take part in the stereotyping and commercialization of their own culture (Kent 179, Trask *Native Daughter* 192).

Since the “Hawaiian Renaissance” of the 1970s, the issue of Hawaiian Sovereignty had grown in importance and by the 1990s it had come to the forefront of local politics.

³⁶ This play is analyzed in chapter four.

The movement gained momentum as 1993, the 100th anniversary of the overthrow of the Hawaiian Monarchy, approached. That year came and went without a return to Hawaiian Sovereignty, but important inroads had been made.³⁷ Conflicts in subsequent years resulted in steps backward in the struggle for Hawaiian Sovereignty. In 1996 a fifth-generation haole resident named Harold “Freddy” Rice challenged the law that stated only those of Hawaiian ancestry could run for office or vote in elections for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs. The Federal District Court ruled against him, and this decision was upheld by the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. But Rice took the case all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court where the law was overturned in February, 2000. As a result of this some non-Hawaiians ran for office in the 2000 election and non-Hawaiians throughout the state were allowed for the first time to cast their ballots in an OHA election. It remains to be seen what the outcome of this will be, but a way has been cleared to wrest control of the Hawaiian Home Lands from those for whom they were intended.

Although the focus of sovereignty groups is primarily upon gaining control over Hawaiian lands and natural resources, the Hawaiian language is also an important aspect of the Hawaiian identity which is tied-in to this movement because of the inter-connection between language and culture. In 1978 the Hawaiian language was reinstated alongside English as one of the two official languages of the state, but there were very few native speakers of the language left. Hawaiian language immersion schools were founded in 1983 to re-establish Hawaiian as the mother tongue of a new generation.³⁸ In these schools students are taught all subjects in the Hawaiian language, and English is taught as a second language. These schools began at the preschool level and are now located on all of the major islands with students up through the twelfth grade. In 1999 the first class of

³⁷ I discuss the issue of Hawaiian Sovereignty more fully in the chapter on Victoria Nālani Kneubuhl.

³⁸ At the preschool level these schools are called Pūnana Leo. The elementary to high school levels are called Kula Kaiapuni.

Hawaiian language immersion students graduated from high school. There is now also a college of Hawaiian language, named Ka Haka 'Ula O Ke'elikōlani, which was established at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo in 1997.

Hawaiian language classrooms in high schools and colleges throughout the state were filled to capacity during the 1980s and 1990s, reflecting a desire in the larger "local" population to understand and identify with the native Hawaiian culture. The 'Ahahui 'Ōlelo Hawai'i was created to publish books and other materials in the Hawaiian language. Plays, for the first time since Jean Charlot's and John Kneubuhl's plays of the 1960s, were beginning to use passages of Hawaiian language in the dialogue rather than just a word thrown in here or there for effect. Most of these plays, written by playwrights such as Alani Apio, John Kneubuhl and Victoria Nālani Kneubuhl, were presented through Kumu Kahua Theatre.

After twenty-two years without a space to call their own, Kumu Kahua was finally moving into their own venue in the historic Kamehameha V Post Office Building at 46 Merchant Street. Contractors were behind schedule and the theatre space would not be ready until January 1994 though, so the first two productions of the season were presented at Tenney Theatre. Moving into a permanent home was a milestone occasion for Kumu Kahua, and to celebrate the event they wanted to have a milestone production. What they decided to do was to present a trilogy of plays by one of Hawai'i's most popular playwrights, Edward Sakamoto. They would present each of Sakamoto's Kamiya family plays in chronological order, then in celebration of opening their permanent theatre space downtown they would present the complete trilogy in a six and a half hour theatre-going feat.

For several years Dennis Carroll had been urging Edward Sakamoto to write a third play about the Kamiya family. The first two Kamiya family plays were *Manoa Valley* and *The Life of the Land*, both of which had been produced by Kumu Kahua. Under

commission from Kumu Kahua Theatre, Sakamoto finally did write a third play, a prequel to the other two plays. This was the first time Kumu Kahua had ever commissioned a play, but they were happy with the results and planned to do it again in the future. *The Taste of Kona Coffee* was very successful at the box office. Although it was not intended to be a touring production, director Jim Nakamoto accepted an invitation to present the play at the Kona Coffee Cultural Festival, where audiences were especially touched by the personally recognizable references to old-time people and places in Kona.³⁹

The second play of the season was the second play of the trilogy, *Manoa Valley*, set in 1959 in the Kamiya family's back yard. *Manoa Valley* received warm reviews from critics who admittedly gained a greater respect for the work after learning something of the Kamiya family history through seeing *Kona Coffee*. The third play of the trilogy, *The Life of the Land*, had the honor of being the first play produced in the brand new Kumu Kahua Theatre space. Set in 1980, the play focuses on Spencer Kamiya visiting home after 20 years on the mainland.⁴⁰

On the afternoon of February 26, 1994 Kumu Kahua held its official grand opening celebration and open house. Before an invited audience of special guests a traditional Hawaiian blessing of the space was performed, Governor John Waihe'e gave an inaugural speech, and a Chinese Lion Dance was presented. Other speakers featured were Karen Masaki from the Hawai'i Community Foundation, playwrights Edward Sakamoto and Victoria Nālani Kneubuhl, and Kumu Kahua's Artistic Director Gene Shofner. Kumu Kahua Board member Keith Kashiwada served as Master of Ceremonies for the event. Guests were served refreshments and given an opportunity to tour the brand new facility. It was a great day for the members of Kumu Kahua Theatre who had for so long struggled to continue their work without a permanent space to call their own.

³⁹ See chapter three for an in-depth discussion of this play.

⁴⁰ These plays are also discussed in chapter three.

The brand new Kumu Kahua Theatre was an intimate venue capable of seating approximately 120 audience members. The theatre was designed as a flexible black-box space with risers and chairs that could be configured to create a variety of audience seating possibilities. There were three doors into the theatre space which could serve as stage entrances or audience entrances (or both), depending upon the seating configuration. An accordion door was capable of closing off one section of the theatre space, and this was originally intended to be used as the scene-shop area; but they later found that it was almost always necessary to use that space for audience seating or for stage space.⁴¹

One of the most intriguing aspects about this venue is how much audience and actors share the same space. The audience enters the theatre from a patio area which borders a small grassy courtyard. Actors often mingle with the audience there during intermission or after performances. The main thoroughfare for the audience is a hallway which also provides the only access to a small dressingroom, equipped with a shower, for the actors. An accordion door down the center divides this room into two smaller dressingrooms if necessary. Audience members occasionally walk into the actors' dressingroom by accident as they search for the restrooms (which the actors also utilize). The hallway is lined with closets which serve as storage for the theatre's costumes, props, technical equipment and office supplies. At the end of the hallway is Kumu Kahua's administrative office and a small storage room for set and lighting needs.

Depending upon the stage and seating configurations, audience members sometimes have to cross the stage in order to reach their seats, putting themselves temporarily and self-

⁴¹ Although being in an historic downtown building was a very positive and exciting place to be, the locale had some inherent difficulties. Since it is a historic building, Kumu Kahua could not make any modifications to the outside area or put up large signs, so audience members sometimes had trouble finding the building or figuring out where the theatre's entrance was. Parking downtown was always a challenge, especially since the area outside the theatre's box office was a tow-away zone. Load-ins and strikes were essentially done outside on the sidewalk, since the theatre had no space for a scene shop. Dealing with the garbage which a theatre generates was another issue. Kumu Kahua worked out an arrangement with the nearby Bank of Hawai'i, giving them ad space in the production programs in exchange for use of the bank's dumpster.

consciously on view for the other spectators. The intimacy of the theatre also emphasizes this sense of being “on stage” as an audience member, since the stage lighting or stage action sometimes reaches out into the audience. Kumu Kahua’s new venue turned them into a theatre where audience and actors co-mingled on many levels. Audience members seemed to look forward to this intimacy, and actors quickly began to blur the lines between play and reality, often remaining in character and bantering with the audience from the stage, in the hallway, or outside on the patio during intermissions.

While still presenting evening performances of *The Life of the Land*, Kumu Kahua began integral presentations of the entire trilogy, collectively entitled *Hawaii No Ka Oi*. Having already been reviewed this season, the plays were not reviewed again during the presentation of the trilogy. The trilogy performances worked out well, with 45 minute breaks between plays so audience members could eat light meals, actors could change costumes and makeup (characters aged 20 years or more between plays), and the technical crew could change the sets. It had been a huge undertaking to open a brand-new theatre space and to mount an entire trilogy as its inaugural production, but it was deemed by all involved to have been a worthwhile effort.

The next offering in Kumu Kahua’s new theatre space was a play by Pacific island playwright Vilsoni Hereniko, based on a story told to him by Teresia Teaiwa. The production was co-directed by Vilsoni Hereniko and Gene Shofner. *Last Virgin in Paradise* is about a German professor who comes to a remote Pacific island in search of a virgin bride who will give him no problems. Billed as a “serious comedy,” the play examines the issues of colonization and cultural conflicts in the Pacific. Although the major characters are more like stereotypes or positions in a debate than they are believable characters, the reviewers accepted this as part of the production style and focused on the innovative staging and the Polynesian use of clowning, song and dance:

When I first arrived at Kumu's new theater... I ran into a group of gaily costumed Pacific Islanders seated on grass mats, weaving, singing to guitars and joking among themselves. They seemed so relaxed and natural that I thought they were relatives of the cast and that I had stumbled on the stage door, not the main entrance, so I went looking for the box office. When I finally got it figured out, I was right where I'd started, and the actors were still dallying on their mats to the delight of the crowd. The encounter underscores the whole style of this production: It's so charmingly real that you forget to act like you're part of an audience. (Thomson 4/27/94)

This extended quote emphasizes the degree to which audience and actors shared the space in Kumu Kahua's intimate new venue. *Last Virgin in Paradise* was performed in-the-round with audiences on all sides of the stage, and with the front rows of audience members occupying mats on the stage floor. Audience members were not only spectators; the clown characters played around with them and they were physically brought onto the stage to dance with the guests in the wedding scene. Audiences responded so favorably to this production that it warranted a re-mount of the play in September of that year.

Completing the inaugural season in their new downtown home, Harry Wong III directed *Kāmau*, a new play by an emerging young Hawaiian playwright, Alani Apio. Apio became known in Hawai'i as an actor before turning his hand to playwriting. Appearing in such plays as *Summer's War* (1985) and television specials such as *Seestarella* (1985), it wasn't until 1989 that Apio wrote his first play, *Nā Keiki O Ka 'Āina*. This was a play for children about Hawai'i's natural ecology and the harm that can be caused by the introduction of foreign plants and animals. Told through animal characters with the arrival of a pair of mongooses, the play also served as an allegory examining the positive and negative changes wrought upon the native society by the arrival of foreigners in Hawai'i. *Nā Keiki O Ka 'Āina* was produced in 1992 by the Maui Academy of Performing Arts. In 1993 Apio established a company, Kuaihelani Productions, through which all of his creative work has since emerged (Apio 1/11/99).

Apio, like Victoria Nālani Kneubuhl and other Hawaiian playwrights, most often finds the subject matter of his plays in the issues that face the Hawaiian community today. While Asian American playwrights explore topics such as personal identity versus family responsibility, or how to find a sense of belonging in an adopted home, Hawaiian plays often focus upon the Hawaiians' struggle to survive in a foreign society that has been forced upon them. One example of this is Apio's play, *Kāmau*.

Apio wrote *Kāmau* in 1994 (he credits Harry Wong III, Margaret Jones and John H.Y. Wat with assistance in development); and it was produced that year by Kumu Kahua Theatre as their inter-island touring production. *Kāmau* is a strong social drama, surrealistic in flavor, which uses a combination of standard English, pidgin, and Hawaiian language to tell its story. As I explained on pages 92-93, the Hawaiian language had experienced a dramatic resurgence, and the expanded use of Hawaiian language in this play was one indicator that Hawaiian language was becoming more readily accepted and understood not only on stage, but in the larger community as well.

The early 1990s in Hawai'i marked a time when it was virtually impossible for most "local" families to purchase their own home, and on the island of O'ahu one-third of all families paid over thirty-five percent of their income in rent (Kent 168-169).⁴² Apio's play *Kāmau* powerfully presents the desperation Hawaiians feel in the growing crunch for housing, as well as the pain they feel when they must swallow their personal feelings and work in the tourist industry selling their culture to visitors.⁴³ The play presents a trio of Hawaiian cousins coping in their various ways with modern day Hawai'i. The land on which their family has lived for generations is being bulldozed for a hotel development and the cousins react in opposing ways. One hangs himself and the other two are left to pick up

⁴² In *From a Native Daughter*, Trask explains how the Hawaiian Sovereignty movement grew from this desperation over disenfranchisement from the land (89).

⁴³ Trask equates Hawaiian tourism with prostitution of the land and culture (*Native Daughter* 190), and Apio's play explores this sentiment.

the pieces and carry on, also taking responsibility for their dead cousin's girlfriend and child. Alike adjusts, working as a tour guide although it tears him up inside. Michael rebels, and is imprisoned when he stabs a security guard who tries to force him to leave his family's fishing shrine.

Kāmau examines why violence, suicide and self-destruction through alcoholism and drug abuse have plagued many Hawaiians, and suggests that Hawaiians must find a way to persevere. The drama had a strong impact on audience members; the opening night performance received a standing ovation (Carroll 5/22/94). Reviewers also felt the play's impact:

“Kāmau” is on an emotional short fuse. The characters are propelled by multiplying stresses toward a climax that will test Alike's will to live. The cast is also put through its own theatrical marathon in a continuous two hours where the principals rarely leave the stage and dialogue builds to nightmarish intensity. (Rozmiarek 5/25/94)

Critics applauded Apio's even-handedness and the universality of the concerns he addressed with his references to American Indians and black-lung miners while at the same time tightening his focus on the Hawaiian situation. In addition to being presented in two locations on O'ahu, the play toured to Maui, Kaua'i, and two locations on the Big Island.

At the end of 1994 Benjamin Cayetano was elected to serve as Governor of the state of Hawai'i. Shortly after assuming office he announced that the state was in a financial crisis and budgets had to be slashed severely. The State Foundation on Culture and the Arts was one of the many programs that were targeted for cut-backs. Cayetano proposed a sixty percent cut in the budget of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts. Legislators worked to restore what they could to the SFCA budget, but the end result was that funding to many arts organizations, including Kumu Kahua, was cut drastically. Kumu Kahua had been awarded a grant of \$40,376 by the SFCA to support their 1994-95 season. For the 1995-96 season, after the budget cut-backs, Kumu Kahua received a total of only \$18,200 from the SFCA.

Before they knew about the impending loss of state funding the Board of Kumu Kahua decided that since the theatre finally had a home they could venture to add an extra production to the season. They decided to begin presenting what they called “summer classics” where works by such playwrights as Shakespeare, Sophocles or Molière might be presented without regard to performers’ ethnicities, thus giving “local” actors an opportunity to play ‘classic’ parts that they might never get elsewhere. The first summer classic presented was Euripides’ *Medea*, directed by David Farmer and starring Leo Anderson Akana.⁴⁴ Reviewers varied in their responses to the production but were unanimous in their praise of Akana’s riveting performance. Some people felt that the summer classic did not fit into Kumu Kahua’s mission because neither the playwrights nor the subject matter were “local,” and the production did not draw large audiences. Due to the 1995 budget cut-backs Kumu Kahua was forced to do away with the idea of adding an extra production into future seasons, and the summer classic was not repeated.

The revival of *The Last Virgin in Paradise* was scheduled to coincide with the Pacific Writers Conference being held at the East-West Center. Most of the original actors were back for this revival, with the exception of one male and one female role which had to be re-cast. Hereniko and Shofner again co-directed the production. Honolulu’s two major newspapers did not review the revival, but *Honolulu Weekly* gave a brief and glowing account of the play (Thomson 9/7/94). Audiences were again favorable, although they were not as large for the revival as they had been for the original production.

Kumu Kahua saw a number of important changes during its 24th season. To begin with, Dennis Carroll and Gene Shofner shuffled their administrative duties and titles around a little: Gene Shofner became Kumu Kahua’s Managing Director, and Dennis Carroll became Artistic Director. Then, in November of 1994 Shofner submitted his

⁴⁴ Akana is a well known “local” actress, entertainer and songstress who has composed songs for the Peter Moon Band and other musical groups.

resignation as Managing Director to take on a temporary teaching position at Leeward Community College. After a careful search of several months, the Board of Directors hired Sharon Aoki to replace him. With extreme budget shortfalls on the state level, Kumu Kahua made increasing revenue and balancing the budget a priority for Aoki's position. Aoki quickly pointed out that Kumu Kahua Theatre had a long-standing tradition of spending more money on a production than was brought in by box-office revenue. This practice allowed Kumu Kahua more freedom in its artistic choices, but it also resulted in great dependence upon dwindling state resources for funding. One of Aoki's first goals was to figure out ways for Kumu Kahua to break-even if not see a financial profit with each production. Some of the changes took many months to incorporate, but eventually they did take hold.

Since Kumu Kahua's theatre space is an intimate one, the run of each production was extended to twenty performances which increased the number of tickets that could be sold. The Hawai'i Community Foundation supplied Kumu Kahua with a grant to hire a box-office assistant for one year, which allowed Kumu Kahua to finally abandon the answering-machine reservation system and sell tickets in advance.⁴⁵ Achieving credit-card capability was another important step in serving customers more efficiently and increasing box-office revenue by allowing for pre-paid tickets. An increase in ticket prices was also recommended, and although the Board of Directors were not happy about this, they eventually conceded to the financial necessity of it.⁴⁶ This year Kumu Kahua also began

⁴⁵ So far, Kumu Kahua has been able to find funding to continue this position on a year-to-year basis.

⁴⁶ Trying to keep tickets as affordable as possible, they decided upon the following prices: \$15 for general admission, \$12 for senior citizens and \$10 for students. They also tried various strategies to give people who really needed it the opportunity to purchase tickets at lower prices by offering discounted tickets to people who were verifiably unemployed, discounted "rush" tickets at ten minutes prior to curtain if the show was not sold-out, discounted group rates, and discounted tickets on Thursday nights.

paying its actors a stipend of one hundred dollars each for the run of a show. This was a practice they had long desired to implement, although budget constraints had never allowed it before.

The official 1994-95 season opened with a play called *Specs* by Bob Okasako (pen name for Bert Narimasu). This comedy, set on a residential O'ahu construction site, is about the rekindling of an old romance. In the play Sheryl returns after 20 years on the mainland to check on the progress of her new home's construction and finds her old lover, Jeff, on the construction crew. Both are in new relationships but still feel the old flame of their past relationship. Audiences did not seem to agree with the critics' initial assessments, and they came out in substantial numbers to support the production.

Playwright Victoria Nālani Kneubuhl wrote the next play of the season under commission by Kumu Kahua Theatre. Her play, *Ola Nā Iwi*, was inspired by a personal experience she had at a museum in Scotland while she was on tour with Kumu Kahua's productions of *Ka'iulani* and *The Conversion of Ka'ahumanu*. With this play, we again see a Hawaiian playwright's concern with the disparity between ancient Hawaiian cultural practices and the contemporary Western society of Hawai'i of the 1990s. *Ola Nā Iwi* is a Hawaiian "whodunit" mystery with a surreal twist, focusing on the question of who has the right to determine the fate of ancestral bones.⁴⁷ The play was presented nine months after two sets of ancient Hawaiian bones disappeared from Honolulu's Bishop Museum causing widespread controversy throughout the Hawaiian community. Although it addressed a hot topic, the production received a lukewarm reception from both critics and audiences in Honolulu. But the University of Hawai'i at Hilo was sufficiently impressed with the play to stage a production of it shortly thereafter.

⁴⁷ In *From a Native Daughter* Haunani-Kay Trask describes the indignation felt by Hawaiians who see the bones dug up from ancient burial sites for the convenience of modern development or in the interests of Western science (173). This topic is addressed further, along with an analysis of this play, in chapter 5.

Talk Story by mainland playwright Jeannie Barroga, fared better with local critics and attracted larger audiences. *Talk Story* is about a Filipina American fledgling journalist who is doing a series of articles on her immigrant father and other relatives. Her research reveals how her relatives have overcome hardship and prejudice to make their lives in a new country, giving her strength as she negotiates her own professional and romantic life. Critics raved about this play, which bounced around in time and place without disrupting the audience's understanding of developing events. The acting of the entire cast was praised, especially Lito Capina as the heroine's father. Kati Kuroda's crisp direction was applauded, as was Joe Dodd's sparse but effective set.

A cooperative effort between Kumu Kahua Theatre and Honolulu Theatre for Youth resulted in the mounting of a new play for young audiences in March of 1995 at Tenney Theatre, directed by HTY's Pamela Sterling. The play was *The Matsuyama Mirror* by Velina Hasu Houston. Based on an ancient Japanese fable, *The Matsuyama Mirror* was about a girl's transformation from childhood into womanhood, centering upon the onset of her first menstruation. Despite being housed in the larger venue of Tenney Theatre, *The Matsuyama Mirror* failed to draw large audiences.

Back in their home at 46 Merchant St., Kumu Kahua presented Les Wilkins' prize-winning play *Chibariyo!*, directed by Jim Nakamoto. The play dealt with the heroism of Japanese American soldiers in the 442nd and 100th Battalions during World War II. This play was very popular despite the fact that a larger, more lavish production of Edward Sakamoto's *Our Hearts Were Touched With Fire* was presented earlier that season at the University of Hawai'i.

An unlikely playwright, Wilkins was a stevedore before he came to Hawai'i to work as a janitor in 1971. He did not take an interest in writing until the age of 40 when he took a creative writing class at night school. In 1983 his first two one-act plays, *18s* and *On the*

Wall were produced by Kumu Kahua. He went on to write a few other plays, and *Chibariyo!* was his last. He died in January 1995, shortly before *Chibariyo!* received its world premiere at Kumu Kahua Theatre. Critics and audiences alike loved *Chibariyo!*, which played to sell-out houses and standing ovations on O‘ahu as well as on tour to the islands of Kaua‘i, Maui and Hawai‘i.

Unfortunately, *Chibariyo!* was the last inter-island tour offered by Kumu Kahua Theatre. The annual tours had always cost more than they brought in financially, but Kumu Kahua felt that these were an important part of their outreach work to the community. The annual grants from the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts had been crucial to off-set the financial losses from the tours. When the Board of Kumu Kahua learned that their 1995-96 funds would be less than half what they had been for the previous year, they realized that they would have to suspend their annual tours until some time in the indefinite future when funding could again be secured to finance this endeavor.

After a successful career as a Hollywood screenwriter, John Kneubuhl left Los Angeles and returned to his home in Samoa where he began work on a trilogy of plays consisting of: *Think of a Garden*, *Mele Kanikau: A Pageant*, and *A Play: A Play* (Johnson 255). In 1989 he directed the world premiere of *A Play: A Play* at the University of Hawai‘i at Hilo. He then returned to Pago Pago to complete work on his final play, *Think of a Garden*, which received its world premiere a few hours after his death in 1992 (Hereniko vii). In addition to its first production by O Le Si‘uleo O Samoa, *Think of a Garden* has been staged in Auckland (1994), in Wellington (1995), and by Kumu Kahua Theatre in 1995 under the direction of David Farmer.

Think of a Garden, considered the most autobiographical of John Kneubuhl’s works, was about a Samoan-American boy and his family in the Samoan village of Leone. After the political assassination of a beloved leader of the Samoan Independence movement, the family’s anguished response prompts a crisis in the boy’s emerging cultural

identity. The productions in Samoa and New Zealand hit close to the hearts of Samoans in these countries as can be attested to by the rave reviews it received (Calder 2/12/93). The play also received favorable reviews by Honolulu critics, although audiences were rather small.⁴⁸ Victoria Nālani Kneubuhl was featured in the play as Lu'isa, the mother of the young protagonist. Because this was the first play in Hawai'i to address such a seminal moment in Samoa's history, it initially attracted the interest of the Samoan community. There was some talk of bringing the production to a wider audience, although efforts ultimately did not pan out.

With the cancellation of both the annual inter-island tour and the presentation of a "summer classic," Kumu Kahua's space and resources were open for some other kind of summer activity. It was decided that three classes would be offered during the summer of 1995: one beginning acting class, one advanced acting class, and one beginning playwriting class. The classes cost \$95 each, with scholarships available on a sliding scale. The goal of offering the classes was to develop actors and scripts for future productions. The classes did well and have been repeated, with some variation in the types of classes offered, each summer since.

While the summer classes took one approach to developing "local" drama, Kumu Kahua's Board of Directors worked toward this goal from another angle. In August 1995 they created a formal Play Development Committee. The members of the committee read solicited and unsolicited scripts as well as seeking out other sources for plays, sometimes working individually with the playwrights to help develop their scripts. The committee meets once a month to share information on the status of plays that are under consideration or development, and to formulate the recommendations that they bring to the Board of Directors.

⁴⁸ The final production of the season was originally supposed to be David Penhallow's *Banzai, Darling* but due to a conflict with the playwright who did not approve of Kumu Kahua's selected director, the play was replaced with *Think of a Garden*.

Renewing its focus on the goal of nurturing “local” playwrights, Kumu Kahua chose to feature only home-grown writing talent during their 25th season. The season would feature new stagings of classic “local” plays and a couple of new works. The season started off with a revival of Edward Sakamoto’s *Stew Rice*, previously produced by Kumu Kahua in 1987. The production got an unexpected boost when film star Jason Scott Lee auditioned and was cast. He was home in Hawai‘i between movie projects and felt that he would enjoy doing some stage work. His presence in the production resulted in a sell-out five-week run, with a one-week extension that sold out within hours of being announced. Demand for tickets was so high that the production could have extended indefinitely except for the fact that prior commitments of cast members and for the use of the space precluded such a consideration. At the end of the run of 28 performances a total of 3,404 people had packed into the small 120 seat theatre to see *Stew Rice*.

Sean T.C. O’Malley directed Alan Sutterfield’s play *World War niIhau* in November and December of 1995. This play had tied with *Chibariyo!* in Kumu Kahua’s 1992 playwriting competition. The play was a fictionalized account of an actual historical incident which occurred on the island of Ni‘ihau after the 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor. In the play a downed Japanese pilot is aided by a local Japanese bee-keeper in taking control of Ni‘ihau until a Hawaiian *paniolo*⁴⁹ kills the pilot with his bare hands. These events are framed by the FBI interrogation which followed. *The Honolulu Advertiser* praised every aspect of this production, saying that it was “a fine example of how creativity can triumph over practical limitations and come to the aid of a challenging script (Rozmiarek 11/10/95).” Other reviewers were also enthusiastic about the production. However, despite a finely wrought production and good reviews, audiences for this play were disappointingly small.

⁴⁹ cowboy

Two short plays by Darrell H.Y. Lum were presented next. *Oranges Are Lucky* and *Fighting Fire* were both directed by John H.Y. Wat. *Oranges...* was the first play Lum had ever written, and had been produced twice before by Kumu Kahua. A unique aspect of this new production was a pre-curtain improvised stand-up comedy routine by cast member Rodney Kwok who, in the persona of a Chinese waiter, teased various audience members as they filed into their seats, to the delight of the crowd (Harada 1/24/96). *Fighting Fire*, which had been commissioned by Kumu Kahua, was Lum's newest play.⁵⁰ Timed to coincide with Chinese New Year celebrations, the Lum double bill sold quite well and was extended for an extra week of performances.

A revival of Victoria Nālani Kneubuhl's *Emmalehua* was featured next. Originally directed for Kumu Kahua by John Kneubuhl in 1986, this version, under the direction of Dennis Carroll, was revised to bring a more strongly surreal focus to the spiritual forces working upon the central character, emphasizing the tensions between her ancient Hawaiian traditions and the western world of modern Hawai'i that she lives in. The production managed to complete its run despite an injury which required understudies to take over the central role of Emmalehua and the supporting role of Pearl for the last three performances.⁵¹

The final production for the 1995-96 season was an adaptation of local author Gary Pak's short story, *The Watcher of Waipuna*. This was another play dealing with the contemporary issues of big corporation land development versus the rights of individuals in small Hawaiian communities. The production was adapted and directed by Keith Kashiwada in a process that lasted over a year from first conception to final performance. Done in "readers theatre" style, the production involved a chorus of six gossiping housewives who played supporting characters and relayed their versions of the story to the

⁵⁰ Both of these plays are discussed in chapter four.

⁵¹ I analyze this play in chapter five.

audience. The central character, who has several personalities, was played by four different actors. The play was a black comedy about a naive, illiterate, schizophrenic hero who inherits the duty of being the new “Watcher of Waipuna” while developers and his sisters wrangle over how to get him to sell his parents’ land. Although critics all agreed that the production and story were charming, creative, and genuinely funny, each also found some fault with the play.

Partly hoping to repeat the phenomenon that star-power brought the previous season, and partly trying to work the “summer classic” into the regular season, Kumu Kahua opened its 26th season with Shakespeare’s *Othello*, starring Al Harrington. The drama was transposed to 1818 Kaua’i when Russians tried to build a fort there, and director Victoria Racimo gave the production a filmic quality with music and lighting underscoring the action. Reviewers were divided in their responses to the production, and audiences were smaller than expected.

Feeling increased pressure from the Managing Director to enlarge the theatre’s operating budget and to depend more heavily on box-office revenue rather than grant funds to support the activities of the theatre, the Kumu Kahua Board of Directors began to chafe under the restrictions of choosing “safe” plays that would sell well at the box-office rather than encouraging more daring, experimental dramas. This was a difficult position to be in for an organization which considered itself to be a cutting-edge “playwrights’ theatre.”

With the 1996-97 season Kumu Kahua Theatre again saw some drastic changes in leadership. In September of 1996 Sharon Aoki submitted her resignation as Managing Director, and Kumu Kahua had to quickly find someone to fill her shoes. It was decided to temporarily hire someone to complete the season so that Kumu Kahua would have time to do a careful search for a permanent replacement. Kumu’s former Managing Director, Gene Shofner, agreed to fill in temporarily and was later hired for the permanent position. To avoid the difficulties involved when the theatre is primarily dependent upon the

administrative leadership of a single person, the Board of Directors decided to use what had previously been budgeted for Aoki's salary to pay for two part-time positions instead of one full-time position. The responsibilities of the job would be divided between a part-time Managing Director and a part-time Artistic Director.

Anticipating his planned departure for a sabbatical, and feeling that it was time to pass the reins of leadership on to someone else, Dennis Carroll informed the Board of Directors that he would be relinquishing his combined duties as Kumu Kahua's Artistic Director/Board President. After evaluating what his various responsibilities were, it was decided that it would be best to divide the duties between two people. One would serve in an unpaid capacity as the President of the Board of Directors. The Artistic Director would for the first time become a part-time, paid position. After several months of fine-tuning the job descriptions and determining what qualities were desired for people in these positions, the Board of Directors elected Keith Kashiwada as Board President and Harry Wong III as Artistic Director. Since the Artistic Director was now a paid job, Wong had to step down from the Board of Directors to accept the position.

The administrative team for Kumu Kahua now consisted of the following people and positions: Harry Wong III as Artistic Director, Gene Shofner as Managing Director, and Keith Kashiwada as Board President. Kumu Kahua also had a large working Board of Directors who still carried out most of the volunteer functions of the theatre such as facilities management, set load-ins and strikes, evening and weekend box office, etc. Celeste Ohta served as part-time Box Office Manager until 1998 when she got a full-time job elsewhere and agreed to serve on the Board of Directors instead. She was replaced as Box-Office Manager by Sharlynn Paet.

In honor of the 100th anniversary of Filipino immigration to the United States, Kumu Kahua presented *Peregrinasyon* during November and December of 1996. This play was written and directed by Chris B. Millado. *Peregrinasyon* was about the

enduring spirit of Filipinos and their struggle to find a place to call home. At the play's center are two brothers: one defies his father by seeking his fortune in America, where he is greeted with racism and menial labor shortly before the Watsonville riots; the other remains in the Philippines and becomes involved with an underground land reform movement seeking to overthrow the American occupation. Both are confronted with murderous violence. The brothers' stories weave into one another through letters, parallel violence and ritual. Critics were enthusiastic about this exciting play, remarking on the fluid interweaving of the stories and the masterful use of ritual. The play was so well received that Kumu Kahua added an additional week of performances to its run.

Once again teaming-up on a literary adaptation, Keith Kashiwada and John H.Y. Wat adapted Lois Ann Yamanaka's new novel, *Wild Meat and the Bully Burgers*, to the stage. The novel was a collection of short stories, centering primarily on a teenaged "local" Japanese girl in Hilo named Lovey Nariyoshi as she struggles to create a personal identity in a world of pop culture icons that bear no resemblance to her own life. The play used the techniques of "Chamber Theatre" specifically designed to explore narrative in performance. The adaptors chose to split the voice of Lovey between two actresses, one as the adult narrator Lovey and one portraying the younger Lovey in action. This approach worked well, as the *Honolulu Advertiser* noted, "The device successfully disappears from notice early in the show, and we readily accept the dual performance as one role (Rozmiarek 1/9/97)." All but the first two nights were completely sold out, including the five day extension and two benefit performances for the literary journal *Bamboo Ridge*. The production was so popular that it was re-mounted in June and July to accommodate the numerous people still clamoring for seats.

Yankee Dawg You Die, by mainland playwright Philip Kan Gotanda was a much smaller production, with a cast of only two actors and a stage hand. The play takes a

bittersweet look at the developing friendship between two Asian American Hollywood actors, and probes the images of Asian Americans in the film industry from the 1930s to the present. Reviewers noted the careful direction by Phyllis Look and David Furumoto and the excellent acting by Dann Seki and J. Martin Romualdez, but the play apparently did not hold a strong appeal for “local” audiences.

A play with a much more “local” impact, Edward Sakamoto’s *A’ala Park* wrapped up the season. The play was originally produced by Kumu Kahua in 1984. This new production was directed by James Nakamoto. Local television actor Ray Bumatai was featured in the central role as the older Manny, and Warren Fabro played the younger Manny.⁵²

In July of 1997 the Kumu Kahua Board of Directors voted to open up their venue for other artists and fledgling theatre groups to use when the space was available. Kumu Kahua called this their “dark night series,” and hoped this would help to bring diverse offerings from Hawai’i’s multi-ethnic population to the stage. Groups such as *Cabaret Tiki* and *The Traveling Bohemians* were among the first, and many productions since then have taken advantage of the opportunity to use this venue.

The 1997-98 season opened with *Eating Chicken Feet* by mainland playwright Kitty Chen, guest-directed by Kati Kuroda. The play is an eccentric comedy which examines serious issues such as divorce, abandonment, the abasement of Chinese women, and the suicidal impulse. In the play Betty Sung is in a coma after being hit by a car. Although she cannot speak directly with the other characters, she can speak to the audience and is able to put words into the mouths of her hospital visitors... to hilarious effect. Honolulu audiences were hungry for a theatrical comedy with “local” relevance, so tickets for this production sold very well.

⁵² See chapter three for a detailed discussion on this play.

The year 1998 was fast approaching, and this would mark the 100th anniversary of Hawai'i's annexation to the United States. Hawaiian Sovereignty groups were again agitating for some kind of reparations from the United States and/or a return to some form of sovereignty for the Hawaiian people. As was the case previously, there were many different sovereignty groups with a variety of different plans of action, but no single leadership was able to get a majority of the Hawaiian people to strongly support it. A plebiscite vote was presented to the Hawaiian people through the Office of Hawaiian Affairs to try to determine the best model of sovereignty to strive for, but many Hawaiians refused to participate in this vote because OHA was administered through the State Government, and was therefore suspect. The frustrating disunity that characterized this year was captured in Kumu Kahua's production of *Kāmau A'e*.

Kāmau A'e was a commissioned work by Hawaiian playwright Alani Apio. The play was a sequel to his earlier *Kāmau*, which had been premiered by Kumu Kahua in 1994. Again, Harry Wong III assisted in development of the drama and directed the production. *Kāmau A'e* picks up ten years after *Kāmau* left off, when Michael is released from prison after serving time for stabbing a guard who tried to remove him from his family's sacred land. The play includes flashbacks to his time in prison as Michael tries to move forward in his life and find a new way to reclaim his land through affiliation with a Hawaiian sovereignty group. Ultimately the group disintegrates as they are unable to agree on a definitive course of action, and Michael is again arrested for trespassing upon what was once his family's traditional ground.

As with his previous play *Kāmau*, reviewers commended Apio for *Kāmau A'e's* complex examination of an uncomfortable contemporary issue: "Apio deftly weaves a tapestry of conflicting viewpoints on sovereignty and what defines Hawaiian-ness in contemporary Hawaii (Berger 11/8/97)." Bryan Hiroshi Wake's performance in the continued role of Michael Mahekona was noted specifically: "...still as angry and intense as

a newly caged animal... Wake plays the character's inner torment so strongly that his presence intimidates the tiny Kumu Kahua space (Rozmiarek 11/17/97)." The play did not provide any simplistic answers or miraculous happy endings, but in the final scene Michael says, "We not grown up yet. One moa generation mus' lose its legs befo da mo'o can stan' high enough foa see (Apio 1998: 51)." This line gives audience members a glimmer of hope that the forthcoming play of the trilogy will bring about a triumph of some sort for these characters. Apio is important as one of the few native Hawaiian writers working in the genre of theatre today. His work brings a Hawaiian perspective and sensibility to the stage, exploring volatile topics such as Hawaiian land rights and sovereignty issues without alienating audiences of other ethnicities. Hopefully his work will continue to reach out and touch wider audiences in the theatre.

John H.Y. Wat and Keith Kashiwada once again put their heads together to create a stage adaptation of a literary work. This time the novel was *Comfort Woman* by local writer and first-time novelist Nora Okja Keller. This haunting book was receiving national attention for revealing the horrors suffered by Korean women during the Japanese occupation, and Kumu Kahua Theatre was excited to be given permission to adapt the work to the stage. The book jumped about in time and space, primarily between present day Honolulu and the "recreation camps" of occupied Korea.

The play focuses primarily upon the mother-daughter relationship in Hawai'i and the daughter's personal growth when she learns to deal with her mother's death and understands the events that shaped her life. Reviewers appreciated the play, the strong work of the cast, and the device of double casting the major roles so that one could narrate the story while the other performed the action or spoke the dialogue (Berger 1/9/98). "Director John Wat and the Kumu Kahua cast weave the text through the performance, giving us a sense of the narrative and a feel for the humanity in the characters (Rozmiarek

1/12/98).” Audiences were highly responsive to this drama, filling the house almost to capacity for an extended run of twenty seven performances.

Keith Kashiwada was involved with the next production too, directing Darryl Tsutsui’s original play *Easy Street* for a run of nineteen performances. This was a play about the aftermath of Hurricane ‘Iniki on the island of Kaua‘i. Although in early drafts the play was a comedy, by the time the production made it to the stage it had become a more serious analysis of the moral implications of get-rich-quick schemes.

Kumu Kahua Theatre’s Artistic Director Harry Wong III directed the final play of the season which was another world premiere. This was a historical drama by Kumu Kahua’s founder and former Artistic Director, Dennis Carroll. The play, *Way of a God*, examined the challenges and temptations facing Captain Cook and his crew during his last visit to Kealahou Bay in 1779. The central issue of the play was Cook’s reaction to being “deified” by the Hawaiians as the god Lono, and his fateful decision to accept this role. Joseph Dodd’s set of boardwalks and gangplanks was uniformly praised, and reviewers also took note of the six scenes performed entirely in the Hawaiian language (translations by Tammy Haili‘ōpua Baker were provided as a program insert), noting their effectiveness even for a predominantly non-Hawaiian speaking audience.

During 1997 Kumu Kahua formed a playwriting group, led by Victoria Nālani Kneubuhl. This was an outgrowth of the playwriting class offered over the summer. The group met on a regular basis to have their works-in-progress read out loud and to get feedback from other playwrights. A delightful early product of this endeavor was Lee Cataluna’s play *Da Mayah*, a comedy about politics in Hilo, which opened the 1998-99 season. The timing of the production was ideal because it was presented in the midst of a heated Gubernatorial race during an election year.⁵³ This play, directed by R. Kevin

⁵³ This was the 1998 race for governor between incumbent Ben Cayetano and Maui Mayor Linda Lingle which resulted in a slim victory for Cayetano - the closest gubernatorial race ever in Hawai‘i’s history.

Doyle, is about Lester Perez, the obtuse mayor of Hilo, who depends entirely on the intelligence of his administrative assistant Sandra to keep things running smoothly. The play is populated with shady syndicate characters who eventually do away with each other, leaving Sandra to step in as Mayor when Lester dies of food poisoning after eating a bad plate lunch. *Da Mayah* was a comic hit. It played to full houses for a run of 29 performances. It was so popular, in fact, that after seeing Kumu Kahua's success with the production, Maui Community Theatre dropped *The Importance of Being Earnest* from their season and replaced it with *Da Mayah* (Honolulu Advertiser 11/11/98).

In October of 1998 Kumu Kahua implemented a new type of play development workshop, which met once a month for most of the year. The aim was to help playwrights generate new material, while not necessarily intended to result in a completed work before the end of the year. The workshop was free of charge and open to anyone interested in writing for the stage. Members of the larger group were encouraged to meet independently in smaller groups which could work on developing specific projects if so desired. The Kumu Kahua Board of Directors was encouraged by the response to this workshop, which initially drew about twenty-five participants. The workshop is still in its early phases of implementation, so it remains to be seen what will result from this endeavor.

D. Scott Woods directed the November 1998 world premiere of the late John Kneubuhl's *Mele Kanikau: A Pageant*. Written in 1975, this play was a product of the 1970s "Hawaiian Renaissance." It criticized the common superficial representation of "pageant drama" Hawaiians, and contrasted these with characters who the playwright felt were genuinely, although certainly less regally, Hawaiian. This was the most commanding of Kneubuhl's plays in its exhortation to perpetuate Hawaiian culture and language, and in its searing look at the role of the Hawaiian Ali'i class in the unfortunate circumstances of today's Hawaiian people. As Jackie Pualani Johnson states in her afterword on John Kneubuhl's plays, *Mele Kanikau* "contrasts between what is truly Hawaiian and what is

manufactured to be ‘Hawaiian’ (263),” condemning those who pay lip service to a culture which they have not truly made an effort to understand.

Reviewers agreed that *Mele Kanikau* was a powerful drama and “must-see theater for everyone in Hawaii (Berger 11/9/98).” One of the great challenges of the drama is the fluent and extensive use of Hawaiian language by several of the characters. The context and the supporting action make these segments comprehensible to a non-Hawaiian speaking audience, while adding depth and feeling for those audience members who understand the language. The most riveting aspect of the production was the central character of Noa Napo‘oanaokalā, the reclusive kumu hula. The director explained, “It’s a really mystical, powerful, terrifying role for an actor and the guy playing the role, B.K. (Kalama) Cabigon is one of the rising stars in the Hawaiian language community (*Star-Bulletin* 11/3/98).” Cabigon was unintimidated by the material and embraced the role with passion. In the words of one reviewer, “He’s a mixture of noble savage, slovenly drunk and cult leader, shot through with radiating energy and intensity that create an almost visible aura (Rozmiarek 11/11/98).” Unfortunately, audiences only half-filled the houses of the 19 performance run.

Sean T.C. O’Malley’s *Island Skin Songs* premiered in January, 1999 under the direction of Lurana O’Malley. This play had been the winner of Kumu Kahua’s 1996 playwriting competition. The play intertwines the love stories of five different interracial couples in different periods of Hawai‘i’s history. In addition to the five separate storylines, the play utilized three different languages (English, Hawaiian and Russian) and several dialects as well as some original songs. Each actor played multiple roles, and reviewers commented upon their effectively diverse characterizations. However, there were weaknesses too. The *Honolulu Weekly* stated the opinion that the structure of the play did not allow any of the characters to be developed fully enough (Choo 1/13-19/99). The *Honolulu Advertiser* cited problems with the staging, blaming Kurt Wurml’s set and

Kumu Kahua's "awkward" theatre space for forcing the audience to "twist uncomfortably to follow the action (Rozmiarek 1/9/99)."

In March of 1999 Ralph B. Peña's Obie-award-winning drama *Flipzoids* was given its Hawai'i premiere. This play examines how three very different migrants from the Philippines adapt to life in Orange County, California. Reviews were generally positive, although one source felt that the production was a little too cool and detached to engage the audience emotionally (Rozmiarek 3/17/99). Audiences, in fact, did not respond strongly to the production, and the houses were only about half-full throughout the run.

Milton Murayama is a nationally known novelist originally from Hawai'i, although he now lives in San Francisco. He first made a name for himself with the 1975 publication of his novella, *All I Asking For Is My Body*, which captured the harsh life of Hawai'i's sugar plantations and garnered him national prestige as a writer. It became an underground classic and has been used in college classrooms for over twenty years as an illustration of a segment of the American experience and the clash between generations. Murayama's use of pidgin to bring his characters to life while still remaining comprehensible to non-pidgin speakers has been praised by book reviewers nation-wide and his work has been taught alongside with seminal works such as *Huckleberry Finn*, *Catcher in the Rye* and *Lucky Jim*. Murayama was presented with the 1991 Hawai'i Award for Literature in recognition of his literary accomplishments. Murayama's first play produced in Hawai'i was *Yoshitsune*, presented by Kumu Kahua in 1982.

Murayama later adapted *All I Asking For Is My Body* into a work for the stage, which was presented as a staged reading by San Francisco's Asian-American Theater under the direction of Phyllis Look. After this Murayama revised the play, drawing in material from his other books *Five Years on a Rock* and *Plantation Boy*. Harry Wong III directed this revised version as Kumu Kahua's final season offering in 1998-99. The play depicts the life of the Oyama family on a Maui sugar plantation camp during the months

surrounding the 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor. Brothers Tosh and Kiyo take up boxing in the hope of escaping the hardship and poverty of plantation life, but struggle with their personal obligation to help their father get out of debt. This play is very similar to Edward Sakamoto's *The Taste of Kona Coffee* (produced by Kumu Kahua in 1993-94) in its setting and its exploration of the Japanese concepts of *oya koh koh*⁵⁴ and *giri*.⁵⁵

There was great interest in the production because of its connection with the well-known novella, but ultimately the production drew audiences that were smaller than anticipated. Reviewers appreciated the performances of the ensemble of actors who brought to life the unspoken feelings and frustrations of their characters (Berger 5/3/99), but were not enthusiastic about the script which the *Honolulu Advertiser* concluded "remains plodding, repetitive, and - sadly - too dutiful (Rozmiarek 5/3/99)." In a letter to the *Hawaii Herald*, the playwright stated that he felt the fault lay with the production rather than the script (Murayama 6/18/99).

The novella *All I Asking for Is My Body* brought national attention to "local" life in Hawai'i in 1975, at a time when Kumu Kahua Theatre was just starting out. After three decades of nurturing playwrights and producing plays which depict "local" life in Hawai'i, Kumu Kahua has had great success with adapting "local" literature to the stage and has begun to do this more frequently. The success of the play *All I Asking for Is My Body* was equivocal, but it did bring Kumu Kahua Theatre full-circle in a manner of speaking.

Between the years of 1971-1999 Kumu Kahua produced approximately 150 plays by, for, and about the people of Hawai'i. During this time Kumu Kahua Theatre has accomplished many important goals. One thing they did which was crucial to their survival was to establish a subscription audience, beginning in 1981 with a regular season of four productions and finding their definitive season with five productions and several

⁵⁴ filial piety

⁵⁵ reciprocal obligation

playreadings in their continued mission to develop “local” works. Over the years Kumu Kahua has built up a loyal subscription audience that has supported the theatre in ever greater numbers despite a faltering state economy which has forced people to be more frugal with their entertainment dollars.

Throughout its history Kumu Kahua Theatre has produced three types of plays: experimental works by local playwrights dealing with non - “local” themes; plays by “local” or mainland writers dealing specifically with some aspect of life or culture in Hawai‘i; and, very rarely, Children's Theatre, which generally could fit into one of the two previous categories. Kumu Kahua's early years were devoted primarily to “experimental plays,”⁵⁶ if for no other reason than that these were the only types of plays submitted for consideration this early in the group's existence. There were only five children's plays produced by Kumu Kahua, all during their first ten years of existence.

Kumu Kahua's Board of Directors repeatedly stated their desire to produce plays that dealt more specifically with life in Hawai‘i, but good plays of this type were not easy to come by in the early years. The 1972 production of *Ashes* marked the first play produced by Kumu Kahua which dealt with themes implicit in the “local” culture. Gradually the number of specifically “local” plays grew, peaking between 1974 to 1976, then waned until 1981 when they began to appear more frequently again. Having firmly established itself as Hawai‘i's “local” theatre, Kumu Kahua's Board of Directors has consistently and continuously sought out plays that hold particular relevance for their multi-ethnic audiences.

In addition to the annual playwriting competition, Kumu Kahua has sought out “local” drama in other ways. In 1993 Kumu Kahua began commissioning playwrights to

⁵⁶ In the 1970s “workshop theatre” or “experimental plays,” which tended to emphasize process over final product, were very popular. The scripts for these types of dramas could be very rough, and were often created collaboratively. Sets, costumes and other technical aspects could also be very minimal. These dramas broke free from the traditional proscenium stage setting and the bold staging techniques were an important part of the production.

create new works. Plays such as Edward Sakamoto's *The Taste of Kona Coffee*, Victoria Nālani Kneubuhl's *Ola Nā Iwi*, Darrell H.Y. Lum's *Fighting Fire*, and Alani Apio's *Kāmau A'e* were created through this process. Kumu Kahua's Play Development Committee, formed in 1995, continues to work year-round seeking out and evaluating new scripts. In their endless search for high quality "local" drama Kumu Kahua Theatre has used a variety of approaches to encourage local playwrights to refine their craft and to continue to produce new works. Their efforts have created a body of "local" drama, some of which are returned to again and again as "local" theatre classics.

From the beginning Kumu Kahua was clear in its purpose to produce locally written drama, and consistently stuck to that until 1981 when they began to feel that some works by non-resident playwrights could also have relevance to Hawai'i's people. They have been highly selective in their use of non-local plays however, using them only when there weren't enough high quality locally written scripts to fill-out a season or when an exciting non-local play seemed like it would have special appeal to "local" audiences. A few playwrights, like Ed Sakamoto, got their start in Hawai'i and continued to maintain a working relationship with Kumu Kahua even after moving away.

Kumu Kahua has long sought to bring its work to as wide an audience as possible, and often this has meant taking their productions on tour. This began in 1975 with *No Laff My Pilikia, Eh!* which toured the island of O'ahu. In 1981 they secured funding from the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts which allowed for an annual inter-island tour bringing their most successful production to the neighbor islands; usually Kaua'i, the Big Island, and Maui. This continued for fifteen years and only stopped when state funds were drastically cut in 1995. The annual grant from the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts heavily subsidized the inter-island tour, and when these funds were cut the tours had to be discontinued.

As part of its work to develop a “local” theatre tradition in Hawai‘i, Kumu Kahua occasionally offered workshops, presentations or classes to increase awareness of themes and issues in “local” drama or to develop practical skills in various aspects of theatrical production. This type of outreach work began in 1981 when cast members from *The Incredible Instant Theatre* participated in the Artists-in-the-Schools program, teaching children about theatrical improvisation. In 1986 a panel presentation on race relations in Hawai‘i tied thematically into the production of *The White Death*. In 1997 a slide-show lecture, a lobby display, and a film series were tied in to the production of *Yankee Dawg You Die* and its themes of ethnic mis-representation in the media. At other times, such as with *Talk Story* or *Think of a Garden* (both in 1995), playwrights or scholars were invited to speak at post-performance lectures or audience discussions.

During 1991 and 1992 Kumu Kahua was involved for the first time in offering formal theatre-related classes. First, they offered a course through the University of Hawai‘i’s College of Continuing Education called “Mixed-Plate.” Later, they were involved with a project in which several educators affiliated with Kumu Kahua taught a summer-long class in Micronesia. This was an introductory theatre class which culminated in a production bringing the islanders’ local folklore to the stage. Once Kumu Kahua moved into a home of its own in 1994, they were able to focus more intently on offering courses and workshops of this type. They began by offering summer courses in acting and playwriting taught by members of the Board of Directors, and gradually added special workshops by guest artists such as Rena Owen, Riwia Brown or Claire Davidson during other times of the year.

As Kumu Kahua moves into the new millennium, they have a number of long term goals which they hope to implement. Some of the goals are administrative, such as the desire to some day be able to turn the Artistic Director, Managing Director and Box Office Manager’s jobs into full-time positions. Some of the goals are related to building and

serving the audience better, such as striving to increase the audience base, hoping to bring in high school audiences for evening performances, bringing back signed performances for the deaf, bringing back the inter-island tour, finding new ways to bring more “local” people into the theatre, and lowering ticket prices. Some of the goals are related to the venue and the artists who work there: they would like to make Kumu Kahua more accessible to the community, using approaches such as the “dark night” series to allow interaction between people of many walks of life, holding dramatic and literary readings there and offering classes year-round. They would like to compensate their actors by paying them a minimum wage for the time they spend in rehearsal and performance (Wong 2/14/99).

Most importantly, Kumu Kahua continues to grow in its role as a “playwrights’ theatre.” Artistic Director Harry Wong articulated this sentiment:

Kumu has no other function in Hawai‘i than to tend to its playwrights. At any step in their process, they must be able to seek refuge at Kumu and get whatever it takes to continue to create. And if Kumu gains any national or international notice, it can be only through the attention we bring to our writers. (Wong 3/13/01)

There are many things aimed at serving Hawai‘i’s playwrights that are in the early stages of implementation at Kumu Kahua Theatre. They plan to create a Writer’s Endowment Drive to pay for writing workshops, production royalties, the cost of hosting playreadings, to commission scripts, to send playwrights to national conferences or workshops, and to print and circulate the scripts that are produced by Kumu Kahua (Shofner 2/13/99, Wong 2/14/99). Some scripts, such as *Island Skin Songs*, have already been printed and used for study in college classrooms. They have also begun applying for grants on the national level, and recently received their first grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.

Three playwrights who stand out in Kumu Kahua’s history for both the quality and quantity of their work are Edward Sakamoto, Darrell H.Y. Lum and Victoria Nālani Kneubuhl. Based on critical acclaim, box-office success, as well as publication and production at other venues outside of Kumu Kahua, these three writers have proven to be

significant in the history of “local” theatre. They have received attention not only in Hawai‘i but elsewhere as well. Focusing on life in Hawai‘i, the “local” works of these playwrights epitomize the repertory that Kumu Kahua has strived to build over a period of three decades. And, as we can see by the frequency with which they have been produced, the plays of Sakamoto, Lum and Kneubuhl indeed comprise the core repertory of Kumu Kahua Theatre.

An examination of the “local” plays of Sakamoto, Lum and Kneubuhl will show us several things. I will analyze which themes and issues tend to surface most frequently in their “local” dramas, and how the playwrights differ in their approaches to these topics. I will also compare and contrast the writing techniques of these three seminal writers in Hawai‘i’s “local” theatre tradition. Each uses language in a different way, and each has his or her own unique dramatic style.

CHAPTER 3

EDWARD SAKAMOTO

Sakamoto's "local" plays are extremely popular both in Hawai'i and with expatriate audiences on the mainland, in large part because of the sense of nostalgia they offer. Each of Sakamoto's "local" plays is rooted in a specific place and time in Hawai'i's past. Like the playwright August Wilson who has sought to capture a different decade of the African American experience in each of his plays, Sakamoto captures the "local" Japanese experience in Hawai'i in very specific ways. His plays are filled with references to places or pastimes of a particular era, and many of the elements depicted have changed drastically or are no longer existent today.

Edward Sakamoto is one of Hawai'i's most prolific playwrights, and the most frequently produced playwright at Kumu Kahua Theatre. Born and raised in Hawai'i, he earned his B.A. in English from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa in 1962. In 1966 he moved to Los Angeles where he worked as a copy-editor for the L.A. Times and as a journalist for various other newspapers while continuing to write plays. He has been the recipient of many playwriting awards, including awards from the Rockefeller Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts as well as the 1997 Hawai'i Award for Literature. His plays have been staged not only in Hawai'i, but also in major cities such as Los Angeles, San Francisco, Sacramento and New York. Sakamoto is now a full-time playwright and a member of the Dramatists Guild.

Fifteen of Sakamoto's plays have been produced. Eleven of these have been produced in Hawai'i, by either Kumu Kahua Theatre or the University of Hawai'i. My analysis of Sakamoto's "local" plays, which reflect the experiences of Japanese Americans in Hawai'i, include: *Our Hearts Were Touched With Fire* (1994), *In The Alley* (1961), *A'ala Park* (1979), *Stew Rice* (1987), *The Taste of Kona Coffee* (1993), *Manoa Valley*

(1979), *The Life of the Land* (1980), and *Aloha Las Vegas* (1992). Although Sakamoto has written less naturalistic dramas which have been received favorably on the mainland, his "local" plays are predominantly realistic in style.

One difficulty that non-local readers or audience members may encounter with these plays is an unfamiliarity with the historical material that is taken for granted by the playwright. Because of this, I will outline the historical information which is crucial to an understanding of the plays covered in this chapter.

Our Hearts Were Touched With Fire

Our Hearts Were Touched With Fire is an epic drama dealing with the struggles of Americans of Japanese Ancestry (A.J.A.s) during and after World War II. The play, containing over fifty characters, covering locales from Hawai'i to Italy, and spanning five years (1941-1945), depicts the conflicts and struggles that the "buddaheads," "kotonks," and "haoles" faced during this turbulent time in history. It centers on three families, each representing a different cultural viewpoint. The Kumata family of Hawai'i represents the "buddaheads," or Japanese raised in Hawai'i; the Nakamoto family of San Francisco represents the "kotonks," or Japanese raised on the mainland; and the Walker family represents the upper-class "haoles," or whites of the mainland. A son from each family volunteers for the army during the war, and these young men find a sense of common ground as they serve together in battle.

Our Hearts Were Touched With Fire takes place in three acts and is structured episodically, with scenes alternating between the three families. The first several scenes introduce us to the backgrounds of each of the families before the impact of the war fully hits. In Act One scene seven, slides or film clips show the devastation as a radio voice-over announces the news of the attack on Pearl Harbor. From this point, the action escalates. First, the young men struggle with whether or not to leave their families and join

the army. Then the families struggle with the racial prejudice directed from whites toward Japanese Americans. The Nakamoto family on the mainland is divided by the war and their unjust internment. One brother, Tadashi, voluntarily joins the army to prove his loyalty to the United States. The other brother, Fujio, resists the draft in protest of their internment, and goes to prison. Among the G.I.s, there are initial conflicts between the "kotonks," "buddaheads" and "haoles," but gradually they learn to understand one another as they have to watch out for each other on and off the battlefield. As the play coalesces, Froggie Kumata emerges as the central character. We see him transform from a carefree boy in scene one, to a dedicated and determined soldier, to an angry and frustrated veteran, and finally near the conclusion of the play, to a man with a mission. At the end he and his fellow veterans are determined to change the political situation and make life better for Japanese Americans and for all people of Hawai'i.

When Pearl Harbor was attacked by Japan on December 7, 1941 the United States was suddenly plunged into the midst of World War II, and Japanese Americans found themselves in a position of uncertainty, subject to revilement and distrust by a large segment of the American population. Japanese Americans on the U.S. mainland were forced to leave their homes and jobs, and were relocated to isolated internment camps where they could be contained and kept under surveillance. Because Japanese Americans in Hawai'i made up such a large percentage of the population they were not interned; instead, the entire territory of Hawai'i was placed under martial law from December 7 1941 to October 24, 1944 (Wisniewski 75, 83).

Despite the racial prejudice against them, A.J.A. veterans in Hawai'i played a crucial role in the reshaping of a post-war society, and the personal growth experienced by each of the characters in this play underscores that fact. Japanese Americans were unjustly subjected to racial prejudice, went on to distinguish themselves above and beyond the call

of duty as loyal citizens of the United States,¹ and even after this continued to be the objects of hatred and unjust treatment, especially on the U.S. mainland. We see this in *Our Hearts...* with the continued prejudice that is leveled against the Nakamoto family on the U.S. mainland even after Tad Nakamoto gave his life in battle.

The crowning moment of the play occurs just before the final scene, when Warren Walker (whose anti-Japanese sentiments were reversed by a visit from "Froggie" Kumata, bringing a letter from Warren's dead son Brian) uses his influence to make General J. aware of the problems the Nakamoto family still face. General J. presents Tad's mother with Tad's Distinguished Service Cross, publicly acknowledging his heroism in the war.

At the close of the play, the young men briefly reminisce together and consider retracing their past by going off in search of the women they met during the war; but they decide to look toward the future instead. In this final conversation they plant the seeds of major political changes that would take place in Hawai'i's history, as they talk about joining the Democratic Party and making some changes in society with the help of a haole police sergeant named Jack Burns (who later became Governor of Hawai'i).²

As in all of Sakamoto's plays, language provides an important key to understanding the cultural background of the characters. The "buddaheads," from Hawai'i speak pidgin, while the "kotonks" and "haoles" from the mainland speak standard English. The fact that the "kotonks" - or Japanese Americans on the mainland - speak standard English shows how much they have conformed to white American norms, and this alienates them from the Japanese Americans of Hawai'i. In Act III Froggie, his sister Misako, and their friend Akashi decide to make a deliberate effort to learn "haole" English. Froggie wants to do this because he intends to visit Brian Walker's family on the mainland to deliver the letter Brian

¹ The 100th battalion and the 442nd regimental combat team won seven presidential citations and almost six thousand individual awards for their wartime valor. They had a casualty rate more than three times that of the average throughout the U.S. army (Daws 351).

² Burns was rigorous in demanding fair representation for every major ethnic group in Hawai'i and was an important figure in the rise to political power of young Japanese American Democrats (Daws 379-380).

entrusted to him before his death, and doesn't want to be embarrassed in front of them because he cannot speak the same kind of English that they speak. Akashi wants to learn so that he can accompany Froggie to the mainland. Misako wants to learn because, as she says, "Lefty and me getting married someday and I going be one politician wife so gotta talk good (*Hearts* 87)." Act III scene three provides a humorous interlude as they practice their "haole" English, overemphasizing their practiced pronunciation, especially the "THs" even if it doesn't particularly make sense in their conversation:

Froggie: I THink THE monoliTH is THirty feet high, and THE THERmometer is in THE Thicket.

Akashi: What da hell you saying?

Froggie: I practicing da T-H sound... (*Hearts* 90)

This is funny to "local" audiences because in pidgin English the T-H sound of Froggie's sentence above would be pronounced either "T" for the unvoiced sound, or "D" for the voiced sound ("I tink da monolit' is tirty feet high, and da termometer is in da ticket"). So Froggie's exaggerated pronunciation of "TH" sounds highly artificial.

Spectacle is more important in this play than it is in most of Sakamoto's other "local" plays. The scrim backdrop is utilized to show slides or footage from various historical moments that pertain to the play. One example of this which is clearly explained in the stage directions of the play, is in Act I scene seven, where newspaper headlines and pictures depicting the bombing of Pearl Harbor are flashed on the screen. This particular example is important because this is essentially the inciting incident of the play, as the attack on Pearl Harbor is described by the radio voice and graphically displayed on-screen.

The battle scenes, of which there are several, are also carefully described in the stage directions. The skillful staging of these scenes, with the right balance of realism and stylization, is crucial to maintaining the emotional power of the play. Because the cast of this play is necessarily large, an expansive, flexible set is important so that things do not appear to be overcrowded. There are times when all three families are present on stage,

each within their own locale. And there are times when an entire army platoon is doing battle. Lighting of this play also creates many interesting challenges, not only because of the required screen-projections, but also because of the artillery-like lighting effects that are required for the battle scenes.

Edward Sakamoto wrote *Our Hearts Were Touched With Fire* in 1994 and it premiered that year at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa's Kennedy Theatre under the direction of Glenn Cannon. It was so well received that plans were soon made to present the play again at a larger venue. A reading of the play was presented at the Mark Taper Forum and Sakamoto continued to work on the script, shortening the play to two acts and tightening his focus on the character of Froggie. In 1998, under the direction of James Nakamoto, the play was presented at Honolulu's Neil Blaisdell Concert Hall by the 442nd Regimental Combat Team Foundation as part of the Americans of Japanese Ancestry Veterans National Convention. The play has been translated into Japanese and Sakamoto expressed a desire to see it produced in Japan and in Texas (home of the "Lost Battalion" which was rescued by the 442nd Battalion), although he felt that the pidgin in the play might prevent some groups from producing it (Smyser 12/6/94). It has not been done in either of those places yet, but in the year 2000 James Nakamoto traveled to Los Angeles to direct a production at the Japanese American Cultural and Community Center as part of the center's twentieth anniversary.

In the Alley

In the Alley was Sakamoto's first play, written while he was still a student at the University of Hawai'i. The play won the University's 1961 Drama Department Playwriting Contest and received its premiere production at Farrington Hall that year, being presented along with three non-local plays. The production emphasized the universal theme of this play:

...in every time and place and on all social levels, the intruder, the foreigner is looked upon with a certain suspicion; and as it often happens, aggressive acts against him are only a manifestation of the bitterness and frustration caused by environment. (production program)

The drama gives us a brief glimpse of life in a downtown Honolulu side-alley on an evening in the 1950s when a group of frustrated “local” boys beat up a haole sailor who is out on a date with a “local” woman. The youngest of the “local” boys, Jojo, tries unsuccessfully to stop the violence, and is beaten-up in turn when the sailor’s friends arrive and assume he is trying to steal something. The sailor manages to stop his friends from beating Jojo to a pulp, but is dragged off by his friends as a siren warns of an approaching police car. Jojo is left lying alone on the ground as the siren grows louder and the play ends.

During the 1950s the sugarcane and pineapple industries in Hawai‘i had leveled off, and Hawai‘i’s economy became more dependent upon tourism and military spending. Tourism expanded rapidly with hotels sprouting up throughout Waikīkī as a result of the increased travel which was made possible by commercial flights to and from Honolulu (Wisniewski 102-103). Because of the cold war with the Soviet Union, United States defense expenditures in the islands rose from \$147,000,000 in 1950 to \$338,000,000 by 1959. The military presence in Hawai‘i during the 1950s was enormous, and almost totally concentrated on the island of O‘ahu. Approximately one sixth of Hawai‘i’s population consisted of military personnel and their dependents, and nearly one fourth of Hawai‘i’s people depended directly on defense spending for their living (Fuchs 379). Businesses catering to tourists and the military, often funded by mainland investors, grew and thrived. People from the neighbor islands and from the mainland U.S. moved to O‘ahu to share in the economic growth. Construction boomed to keep up with the increased demand for commercial space, hotel rooms and housing.

“Local” people, whose education in Hawai‘i’s public schools had prepared them for little more than work in the trades or in the plantations, had a problem.³ Increased mechanization meant there were fewer jobs for people in the sugar and pineapple industries. People coming in from the mainland usually had the educational background which enabled them to move into white-collar jobs. So jobs for “locals” were limited and they felt that the few opportunities available to them were snatched up by outsiders who were moving to O‘ahu in great numbers. Outsiders were not only taking “local” jobs, they were also creating a housing crunch and driving up the cost of living. The tension between “locals” and outsiders is presented clearly in Ed Sakamoto’s play *In the Alley*.

Jojo is the only “local” boy in the play who does not feel animosity toward the haoles, and he is the one who tries to break the cycle of racial hatred, but ends up taking the brunt of it. Jojo is twelve or thirteen years old, always smiling, good-natured and eager to please. He repeatedly tries to point out that there are exceptions to the other boys’ blanket rule that “da haoles no good (*Alley* 133),” but the older boys tell him he is too young to understand what they (haoles) are really like.

Jojo’s older brother Manny is quite different. He is twenty-one years old, silent, sensitive and rarely smiles. He struggles internally with his feelings about his father, who abuses his mother. Cabral and Champ also express frustration with their fathers who abuse either alcohol or their wives. As Josephine Lee has noted, “the themes of Sakamoto’s play - the anger of sons toward their ineffectual fathers, sexual jealousy, poverty - are inextricably linked to the dynamics of race (21).”

In the Alley presents the problem of racial hatred as a vicious cycle which is very difficult to break. The young “local” men feel rivalry with haole men over unequal

³ Fuchs describes the issues on schooling in the 1920s and 1930s when schools were under pressure to train the students toward low-income jobs on the plantations rather than instilling in them the desire to move into higher level professions (280-281, 295). Trask noted that even in 1993 “High schools and hotels adopt each other and funnel teenagers through... in preparation for post-secondary jobs in the lowest-paid industry in the state (*Native Daughter* 190).”

working conditions and competition for women. They complain that “local” men cannot get dates with haole women, but haole men can get dates with “local” women without a problem. Cabral also describes the inequality he feels with haoles at work:

Dey like act bossy... order you around... do dis, do dat. And wat you tink dey doing... just sitting on dea fat rears watching you work your sweat out. Dey let you do all da dirty work, just like my boss. Someday I going broke his mouth. (*Alley* 134)

When a haole sailor and a “local” woman wander unsuspectingly into the midst of the “local” men, the young men have a scapegoat upon which to vent their pent-up frustrations.

Although this play focuses on the issue of racial hatred, which is shown on-stage through violence, the play starts out with a sweet and comic quality as Manny and Jojo share their idealistic hopes and dreams for the future, imagining what they will be able to do for themselves and their mama when they become rich. As the other “local” boys gradually join the scene, they lightheartedly poke fun at each other, playing around and wrestling good-naturedly. It is not until later, when two outsiders to this group of friends appear, that the atmosphere becomes tense and somber.

While the 1961 production of *In the Alley* stressed that the play had more than “local” significance, the 1974 production by Kumu Kahua reveled in the “local” aspects of the drama. As described in chapter one, this time *In the Alley* was presented together with two other “local” plays, each representing a different decade in Hawai‘i’s history. Reviewers focused on the use of pidgin in the play and the sense of camaraderie between the “local” characters (Bowman 5/11/74).

Although Sakamoto has seen many of his works produced, *In The Alley* was his only published play until 1996. In the editor’s brief introduction to the play it is referred to as “possibly the best short play ever written in Hawaii on the dynamics of racial conflict,” and it is noted that although haoles are the scapegoats for the “local” boys’ sense of alienation, their feelings are confused. For example, Manny dreams of success on the

mainland, where he would be surrounded by haoles, and Cabral is considering joining the military where he, too, would be surrounded by haoles (Carroll 1983: 123).

A'ala Park

A'ala Park incorporates many of the characters and events of Sakamoto's first play, *In the Alley*, showing us the home life of the central character, Manny. The play is narrated by an older Manny who is looking back upon a turning point in his life when he was twenty years old and decided to leave Hawai'i, never to return. The play was originally a companion piece to another of Sakamoto's plays, *Manoa Valley*. *A'ala Park* and *Manoa Valley* showed contrasting views of life in 1959 Hawai'i on the eve of statehood. Three different versions of *A'ala Park* have been produced, and these are described by Dennis Carroll in his introduction to *Aloha Las Vegas and Other Plays*. My analysis focuses on the final, published version of the script.

Set in the area where Sakamoto grew up, *A'ala Park* takes a bittersweet look at the bleak existence of a family in a low-income neighborhood from the point of view of a "local" man who had nothing to gain by statehood except the opportunity to go away. The play begins with the older Manny addressing the audience directly, describing the neighborhood of his youth. We meet some of the boys of the neighborhood and learn that Manny entertains vague hopes of moving to the mainland someday. Manny catches Slick, his mother's sleazy lover, leaving their apartment and warns him, at knife-point, to stay away from her. Manny's confused feelings about his dead father are revealed in his attitude toward his mother, his memories of his dead father, and his repeated tendency toward violence with strangers, his girlfriend, and even his little brother. At the play's culmination Manny leaves for the mainland without saying good-bye to his Mother or brother. The older Manny concludes the play, bringing the audience up to date on what

eventually happens to the various characters, and revealing the regret he feels for never making-up with his mother before her death.

Until June of 1959 Hawai'i was still a Territory of the United States. This meant that citizens here could not vote for U.S. President or for their own Governor. They had only one non-voting delegate to Congress, and although they paid federal taxes, they did not get a fair share of federal money for roads, conservation, improvement of harbors, and other things. In 1958, 43 percent of the territory's population favored immediate statehood, 24 percent showed some opposition, and the rest were apathetic (Fuchs 412). The groups most strongly in favor of statehood were Japanese Americans who would be able to participate more fully in politics and social change if statehood were achieved, and haole sugar planters who realized they were at a financial disadvantage as long as Hawai'i was relegated to Territory status. Those in the islands who opposed statehood were primarily concerned with the political strength that Japanese Americans would wield once the island population had full voting rights (Lind 145-146; Ogawa 1978: 385).⁴ Once the bill for statehood passed in the U.S. congress though, voters of the Territory endorsed it by an overwhelming majority.⁵

This play follows along the same lines as many of Sakamoto's works, exploring the pain of leaving Hawai'i and never really being able to come home again. But the point here is driven even deeper by the chasm Manny has created in his family. The conflict of the play is essentially within Manny himself as he struggles with trying to find a useful

⁴ 27% of the Hawaiians and 23% of the haoles strongly opposed statehood (Fuchs 412-413).

⁵ In *From a Native Daughter* Haunani-Kay Trask points out that the vote for statehood was made when Hawaiians were a minority of the population, and states that "Most Hawaiians did not vote, choosing instead to stay away from the polls (38, 88)." Dudley and Agard explain a possible reason for this:

The options available regarding statehood did not allow one to choose between having a Hawaiian nation or having Statehood. One could only choose between having Statehood or continuing the American Territorial Government. It was an American question, asked of Americans: "What kind of Americanism do you choose?" There was no box for checking "None of the above." (74)

Significant anti-statehood sentiment was expressed in small Portuguese and Hawaiian precincts (Fuchs 414). It is notable that the island of Ni'ihau, the only precinct that was almost exclusively Hawaiian, was the only precinct which rejected statehood in this vote (Daws 391).

direction in his life, his obligation to take care of his younger brother, and with the guilt over his father's death, but these internal conflicts are manifested in his relationship with his mother. The moment Manny sees his Mama with Slick is the moment that catapults Manny into action which the older Manny knows he will eventually regret. Although from the beginning of the play, Manny's intention to eventually go to the mainland was clear, the older Manny regrets the fact that he was never able to tell his Mama how much he loved her, and he has neither seen nor spoken to his younger brother since their big fight.

The play's greatest irony comes at the climax when the young Manny and his girlfriend Jeanie go away to the mainland together, Manny leaving without saying good-bye. Full of anger and resentment, Manny tells his girlfriend:

I no mo' nuttin' to say. Too late... I jus' like get away from here. I wish someday dey tear down dis place and cova 'um up wit' cement. I hate dis island. No mo' chance fo' guys like me. Da soona I get outta here, da betta. I neva coming back to Hawaii. (*A'ala* 66)

These are the last words we hear from the young Manny. Little does he know that what he says at that moment will eventually come true, and that he will never be able to make up for the loss that he feels as a result of it.⁶

The central characters in this play are the younger Manny and the older Manny. The two characters work together to create an understanding for the audience of the play's theme. The younger Manny is dark and brooding, quick to joke around with his friends, but equally quick to react violently to anyone that makes him question his self-worth. Like many boys, he wants to idealize his father, and he feels intense guilt about his father's death which he might have been able to prevent. He cannot hear the older Manny who repeatedly reminds him of the cruel drunk that his father actually was.

⁶ In actual fact, the A'ala Park neighborhood no longer exists. The wooden tenement buildings were indeed torn down and covered over with cement. The area is now a city park, used primarily by skateboarders and the homeless.

The older Manny functions as a narrator, watching the action almost as a ghost. He speaks unheard words to the other characters, saying things he wished he had said as a young man and trying unsuccessfully to influence the thoughts and actions of his younger self. He joins in on some of the actions, such as playing 'ukulele with the younger Manny or confronting his mother's greasy lover; but refrains from other actions which he now regrets, such as beating up the sailor. At one point the older Manny takes on the persona of his own father, speaking to his younger self the cruel words his father said to him years ago. In his Introduction to *Aloha Las Vegas and Other Plays*, Dennis Carroll explains the significance of the older Manny:

Older Manny is a scalpel to probe those complexities of human behavior and reaction that are beyond self-understanding, as well as the failures of communication between the characters that are not only young Manny's fault. (9)

Through hindsight, the older Manny is able to understand the far-reaching implications of the younger Manny's actions, although of course he cannot change the course of events.

As in all of Sakamoto's "local" plays, the dialogue is predominantly pidgin English. All the characters in this play speak a heavy (basilectal) pidgin except Sweeney, the haole sailor. The pidgin of the "local" characters is not differentiated, since they are all from the same neighborhood and the same socio-economic background. Even the older Manny, who has spent many years on the mainland, still clings to his pidgin dialect, a clue to the fact that he has not let go of his emotional ties to Hawai'i.

Having left his home in the islands, the older Manny finds himself unable to assimilate into the mainland society or to put down roots anywhere. Perpetually homeless, the older Manny travels the mainland as a Hawaiian musician. There is a sad irony in the fact that he makes his living by singing songs about Hawai'i and "da happy people of paradise (*A'ala* 67)," all the while conscious of the fact that life is not always happy or beautiful in Hawai'i, and knowing that he will never return to his home as long as he lives.

Although there is quite a bit of humor in this play, the prevailing mood is somber and desperate, and is emphasized by the setting which Sakamoto describes in his stage directions:

...The main playing area of the alley has a wall with gangrenous-green appearance with peeling paint and termite-ridden wood. One beat-up trash can. There is a back door at stage left, which leads to an unseen pool hall.
(*A'ala* 1)

Costumes carefully described by Sakamoto also add to the effect of the play, emphasizing the fact that these people live in a poor economic situation. Uji-san is dressed in baggy pants, a drab shirt, and rubber slippers. Bear wears a slightly soiled white t-shirt, worn blue jeans and rubber slippers. Champ wears a sweatshirt without sleeves, swimming shorts, and is bare-footed. The other boys are dressed similarly. Sakamoto even describes the home-made scooter made with 2x4 lumber and roller-skate wheels which Cabral uses.

The action in the opening scene also depicts an environment that is not very hospitable to its inhabitants. Uji-san, the aged proprietor of the pool-hall discovers a smelly dead cat in a bag in his trash can, and bribes Bear to take it away by promising to make him a bowl of *saimin*.⁷ The images of the greasy, sleazy Slick swindling a couple of dollars out of Mama as he leaves her apartment, and then being assaulted by Manny with a knife are stark reminders of the brutal environment in which these characters exist.

After premiering *A'ala Park* with *Manoa Valley* at the East West Players in Los Angeles as two one-act plays presented together, Sakamoto continued to revise *A'ala Park*. The play grew, and completely incorporated the shorter *In The Alley* upon which it was originally based. As a full length play, *A'ala Park* was produced for the first time in Hawai'i by Kumu Kahua Theatre in 1984 on the intimate stage of the old Hawai'i Performing Arts Company Theatre. Despite the fact that it was performed as part of a "dark night series" on Monday and Tuesday nights, upon the existing set for another play,

⁷ oriental noodles in a salty broth

it was a huge box office hit. Audiences responded to the “local” humor and to the nostalgic memories evoked by the play. Reviewers felt the need for a more developed character in the older Manny who looks back with regret upon his fiery days of youth, and wished for a clearer connection between the older Manny’s sense of longing and the younger Manny’s rash behavior (Bowman, 3/20/84; Rozmiarek 3/21/84).

A’ala Park was revived on the proscenium stage of Leeward Community College in 1987, utilizing the same script. This production downplayed the nostalgia of the earlier production and emphasized the bitterness of Manny’s final departure. After this Sakamoto revised the script again, integrating the older Manny more fully into the action of the play. This version of the play was produced by Kumu Kahua in 1997. As Dennis Carroll describes it:

The intimate hundred-seat theatre, the deliberately claustrophobic skewed staging along the long end of the space, a threatening and decaying brick-scape designed by Alan Hunley, and the finely inflected work of an experienced cast created a sense that we were seeing the play in its fully realized form. (*Aloha Las Vegas* 8)

The evocative set and the performances by local television actor Ray Bumatai as the older Manny and Warren Fabro as the younger Manny indeed brought a depth to the play which had not been achieved in previous productions. Reviewers focused primarily on the complex delivery of Bumatai as the older, regretful Manny: “There’s a ready smile and laugh in Bumatai’s delivery, which can turn instantly to moments of palpable sadness and flashes of ignoble rage. He gives the part great richness and deep humanity (Rozmiarek 5/5/97).” Warren Fabro was compared to a young Marlon Brando in his performance of the younger Manny (Thomson 5/7/97). The drama was also a great vehicle for nostalgic remembrances of a lost time and place, as it depicted the no longer existent A’ala Park neighborhood of 1959 (only a few city blocks away from the current location of Kumu Kahua Theatre).

Stew Rice

In his article “Why There Are No Asian Americans in Hawai‘i,” Jonathan Okamura articulates the difference between Asian Americans of the U.S. mainland and Asian Americans of Hawai‘i. He argues that because Asian Americans represent only 2.8% of the national U.S. population, they “need to view themselves as a collectivity with shared problems and concerns in relation to the larger dominant society (163).” In Hawai‘i, on the other hand, Asian Americans are not a minority; they comprise approximately 58 percent of the state population (Madden 3/20/01: A1). They tend to identify themselves with their specific ethnic group(s);⁸ or with the larger “local” identity rather than with an “Asian American” identity. In the eyes of “locals,” Asian Americans who live on the mainland become “haolefied,” or assimilated into the dominant white culture, and are thus viewed as outsiders (Ogawa 1978: 361, 362).

Like *Our Hearts Were Touched With Fire*, *Stew Rice* examines the dichotomy between mainland Asian Americans and “local” Asian Americans, but from a different angle. *Stew Rice* focuses on three men: Russell, Ben and Zippy; and the changes they undergo after two of them leave Hawai‘i to pursue opportunities on the mainland. Zippy, who remains in Hawai‘i, retains his “local” identity. Ben assimilates into the mainland culture and becomes “haolefied” in Zippy’s eyes, and Russell is caught somewhere in-between, unable to fully fit into either culture.

Stew Rice is a two-act comedy set in Hawai‘i, which begins in 1957 when the three young men pair up with three older girls at the boys' high school dance, and ends in the year 1978 when the six characters are reunited after twenty years. At the beginning of the play the boys coach each other on techniques to impress Donna, Ruby and Sharon, who

⁸ Many are of more than one ethnicity. Out of Hawai‘i’s total population of 1,211,537 people, 121,755 reported being part Asian and part some other ethnicity. Of the many ethnic groups in Hawai‘i, Asians show the largest number of people who have intermarried with other ethnic groups (U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Redistricting Data (P.L. 94-171) Summary File, Table PL1).

they will be taking to the big dance of their Junior year, then try to put these techniques into action that night. The couples meet again the next day for a triple date at the beach. Act one ends on graduation night when the boys look forward to college opportunities on the mainland, vowing to be friends forever and promising to meet again in twenty years. In the second act the couples are reunited again and pair off for individual dates. Blackouts and freezes allow the audience to catch moments from each couple as the evening progresses. In the final scene of the play, the three men go crabbing in an attempt to relive one of their favorite youthful memories together. But the expedition is a disappointment - not only because the environment has changed (the water is too polluted to yield crabs anymore), but because their relationship has changed.

Like *A'ala Park*, this play grapples with the problems faced by a "local" boy who leaves home, and in doing so, loses any sense of having a home. At the climax of the play Russell states the problem clearly:

You know what the catch is? We don't belong in New York or L.A. And we don't belong in Hawaii anymore. We're displaced persons. Out in limbo. Neither here nor there. Sure, we try to fit in, we make believe like we're haoles, but the haoles will always look at us like we're foreigners, aliens with funny eyes and yellow skin living in their white society. I don't know if it's worth it. Pretending we're something that we're not. Maybe what we were searching for was in Hawaii all along. (Stew 123)

Although Ben still does not want to see the cold, hard truth, Russell recognizes what he lost by forsaking his comfortable and familiar home in search of elusive dreams and unexplored territory. Of course there were things to be gained by going away, but not without paying a high price.

Of the three central characters, Ben and Zippy are at opposite behavioral extremes. As a boy, Ben was fun-loving with the guys and outgoing with the girls. As the class valedictorian Ben had dreams of being a doctor someday. Hawai'i was too small and limited for his ambitions. Ben did become a doctor, but gave up his medical practice and went to New York where he now makes a lot of money as a stock analyst on Wall Street.

He married and divorced a haole woman, and now dates only younger haole women. Ben makes a lot of money, but lives a high-stress lifestyle and is ultimately dissatisfied with his life although he says he would never return to Hawai'i.

Zippy is less sophisticated than Ben, awkward and shy with the girls. Like Ben, Zippy had dreams of attending a mainland college. As a youth he says, "I tired stay in Hawai'i. Gotta see wat on da odda side of da ocean (*Stew* 83)." But late in the play we learn that Zippy never went away to college because his father got sick and he had to stay in Hawai'i to help his family. So he attended the University of Hawai'i and married Sharon, and they have two sons. He got a civil service job which is not lucrative, but offers long-term stability. He is a hard working "local" boy who loves his family and his home. In the original production he was portrayed by Keith Kashiwada as easy-going and happy-go-lucky, but in the 1995 production Jason Scott Lee brought a more restless, dissatisfied undercurrent to his character which amplified the friction between Zippy and the self-satisfied Ben.

Throughout the second act Ben puts on superior airs and pities Zippy because his family prevented him from going away to the mainland. But Zippy resents Ben's attitude and sees that Ben is not as happy as he would like people to think he is. At the end of the play when Ben reveals the real reason Zippy stayed in Hawai'i, Zippy tells him off:

Go back to the Mainland with all your haole girlfriends and your haole lifestyle. Who cares about that kind of life? Who wants it? Big deal, big shot. Do Hawai'i a favor. Don't come back, we don't need you. (*Stew* 124, 125)

Russell is caught in the middle, living a life similar to that of Ben on the mainland, but really believing that Zippy may have the better life.

Russell, written as the most thoughtful and introspective of the three men, went to college in California and became a movie critic for a small Los Angeles newspaper. He serves as the play's narrator, framing the play by introducing each Act and summing it up at the end. Russell can be identified most closely with the playwright Sakamoto's own life:

both left Hawai'i and found themselves after twenty years still working for Los Angeles newspapers, neither married, and both harbor a desire to return to Hawai'i as it used to be (Carroll *Aloha Las Vegas* 6). Like Ben, Russell has adjusted to living and working among haoles on the mainland, but he hasn't lost a sense of perspective on his life and he isn't so sure that the mainland is better than Hawai'i.

The three women in the play serve as parallels to the men. Ruby, the most sophisticated of the three women, pursues a career on the mainland, marries and divorces, as does Ben. Unlike Ben, though, Ruby decides that she would be happier returning to Hawai'i. Sharon marries Zippy and raises two sons with him in Hawai'i. She appears to be quite content with her life after many years of marriage. Donna, awkward and shy, pairs up with Russell during the two episodes when the three men couple up with the three women, but they never get comfortable together. Like Russell, Donna never married. Unlike Russell, she chose to remain in Hawai'i instead of moving away.

In *Stew Rice*, the characters are all capable of speaking either pidgin or standard English, and the choice of whether or not to speak pidgin is a political one. In choosing whether to speak Pidgin or standard English, the characters in this play choose whether they want to identify with the "local" lifestyle or with the haole lifestyle. In the first act all three boys speak pidgin, although they are capable of speaking standard English when the situation calls for it. Inspired by his crush on a teacher, Russell has learned to speak standard English with eloquence in the classroom. The other boys are amazed after hearing him read aloud in class, but he tells them that they can switch into and out of pidgin as easily as he can.

Shima: You guys can talk good English in class wen you have to.

Lee: Yeah, I can talk good English, but I no sound like one haole.
You sound like one haole. How you turn 'um off and on li'dat?

Shima: I dunno. I just can, 's all. I just can. (*Stew* 83)

In the second act, the characters who have spent time living on the mainland reflect this by speaking standard English. But Zippy is quick to point out that although “local” people prefer to speak pidgin that doesn't mean they lack the ability to speak standard English. In fact, in the climactic argument he tells Ben, "...And I'm gonna tell you this in good English, so you understand...(Stew 124)," and proceeds to demonstrate his ability to use either form of language in his denunciation of his friend.

In production, the set for *Stew Rice* was kept extremely simple with actors moving blocks around to represent different locales. Costumes and a few props clued the audience in on where and when each scene took place. Although the script indicates that the upstage area can be decorated with Hawaiian scenes of past years (*Stew 73*), it is primarily the actors' dialogue that sets the scene and helps to evoke the nostalgic memories of the audience. Russell Shima introduces the play and sets the scene for us at the opening:

Hi. Welcome to Hawai'i 1957. Well, you gotta use your imagination. This is the Hawai'i before statehood. When rock and roll was king but Alfred Apaka was still popular singing songs of Old Hawai'i. When the Royal Hawaiian and the Moana were the best hotels in Waikiki. (*Stew 73*)

The first act is raucously funny and full of nostalgia about the trials and tribulations of teenage dating. The second act is a little more troubled, but also funny up until the reversal of the final scene. The mood of *Stew Rice* is deceptively light throughout most of the play, leaving the audience unprepared for the dramatic shift in tone of the final scene. Such a sudden shift in mood throws the audience off-balance, and forces them perhaps to consider the theme of the play more seriously than they would if it was sugar-coated with humor throughout.

Ed Sakamoto wrote *Stew Rice* for Kumu Kahua Theatre, which premiered it in 1987. It also toured throughout the state of Hawai'i as Kumu Kahua Theatre's annual touring production that year. Although it did adequately at the box office, critics felt that *Stew Rice* ended up being “a bland formula blend that neither confronts or confides in its

audience. It lacks both the power of 'A'ala Park' and the warmth of 'Manoa Valley,' two of Sakamoto's earlier plays (*White* 5/8/87)."

Sakamoto revised *Stew Rice* and it was produced eight months later to sell-out crowds in Los Angeles by the East West Players, earning a Hollywood Drama-Logue award for the playwright. Critics appreciated Sakamoto's dialogue and the likable characters he created. One critic noted: "Gentle, tender and un-pretentious, imbued with goodwill and perception, Sakamoto's play has depths beneath its easygoing surface (*Warfield* 1/8/88). The depths recognized by this reviewer were there, and would become more apparent with Sakamoto's next revision.

The play was revived as a "local classic" by Kumu Kahua Theatre in 1995 in celebration of the theatre company's twenty-fifth anniversary. During rehearsals Sakamoto made several adjustments to the role of Zippy and re-wrote his final denunciation of Ben to take advantage of Jason Scott Lee's restive portrayal of the character (*Carroll Aloha Las Vegas* 15). Lee was obviously the major attraction to this production which drew enormous audiences and required an extension to the five week run which sold out almost immediately. Lee made it clear that he wanted to be treated not as a star, but as part of an ensemble. Although publicity and reviews never failed to mention Lee as the big draw, they made a pointed attempt to give equal consideration to other cast members and to Jim Nakamoto's direction. Lee's portrayal coupled with Sakamoto's revisions turned Zippy's final diatribe into "the charged highlight of the production, hanging in the air over the final moments of Russell's closing narration (*Carroll Aloha Las Vegas* 15)." This changed the thrust of the play from simple nostalgia to a more probing examination of what happens when one moves away and can no longer relate to "home" in the same way.

The Taste of Kona Coffee

The Taste of Kona Coffee was commissioned to complete a trilogy of plays dealing with the Kamiya family. It was written eight to eleven years after the other two plays of the trilogy, but in the chronological story of the Kamiya family, this two-act play comes first. The play depicts the struggles of an *issei*⁹ family as Kazuo Kamiya, the father, has become too old to work the farm any longer and his two sons want the family to sell their lease and move to Honolulu.

The play begins when Tosh tells his mother that he wants to move to Honolulu to learn how to build houses, and that Aki is returning to Kona to persuade Kazuo to move with them. When Aki arrives, Kazuo will not even speak to him because he is angry that Aki has not stayed on the farm to help the family. Aki develops a romantic interest in Tomi, but her eighteen year old sister, Haruko, is anxious to escape from Kona and tries desperately to seduce Aki into taking her with him. Leaving the farm would mean abandoning his dutiful plan to visit his mother's grave in Japan, so Kazuo refuses. After a clash of wills between Aki and Kazuo, Mikame gently persuades her husband that they should go with the boys. In the last scene of the play the family prepares to relocate to Honolulu. Tomi is able to ease Kazuo's mind about the move since she is going along too, although her relationship with Aki is still ambivalent.

The Taste of Kona Coffee is set in 1929 on a Kona coffee farm on the Big Island of Hawai'i. This setting evokes a time and place where the day to day life of Japanese immigrants consisted of long and arduous labor. Although life on a coffee farm was different from life as a plantation worker because coffee growers made their own decisions without the constant intervention of lunas or managers, it was still a difficult existence (Saiki 124). It was also a lonely existence because Kona coffee farmers lacked the sense of community enjoyed by those living in plantation camps. Families had to work together to

⁹ first-generation immigrants from Japan

eke out an existence in this environment. Often, women worked beside their husbands in the fields, carrying their babies along with them. As much as possible, families raised their own food, and made their own clothes. Few could afford the luxury of store-bought items.

The Taste of Kona Coffee was published in 1995 in a book named for Sakamoto's trilogy, *Hawai'i No Ka Oi*. In his forward to the book, Franklin Odo commented upon the value of Sakamoto's plays in looking at traditional Japanese values. He points out that "Sakamoto's treatment of the ways in which the Kamiya family inherits, alters, and redefines 'Japanese' values is exceedingly important (xv)." His argument is essentially that scholars, journalists and politicians have often tried to lump Japanese people into a single homogenous culture; but as Sakamoto's plays illustrate these values are not constant, but are evolving and are incorporated or rejected in the lives of individuals to varying degrees.

A major theme in *The Taste of Kona Coffee* which is directly related to the conflict between Kazuo and his sons is that the younger generation will always try to break away and gain autonomy, and the older generation must find a way to allow them to do this. Kazuo himself did this when he left Japan as a young man, and now his sons are doing the same. Hopefully the younger generation will pay heed to the notion of oyakōkō, duty to care for one's family. Kazuo's great pain is that he was unable to fulfill his duty toward his mother during her lifetime or after her death. But his sons fully intend to take care of him and Mikame. Mikame expresses this central idea succinctly at the end of scene eight:

Let's go with them. Ne? Your boys worry about you, they love you.
When we are young, the children follow us. When we get old, we must
follow the children. Ne? (*Coffee* 46)

In *Kona Coffee* the opportunity to leave home is desperately fought for, but the drawbacks of leaving home are not ignored. The overriding message is that family obligations should not prevent someone from being able to go away to explore their potential, but those who go away lose something valuable if they lose contact with their roots and do not appreciate

their family. This belief is presented in a nutshell in the scene between Aki and Jiro, a neighbor who went away to college on the mainland. When Jiro asks Aki what he should do about the people in Kona treating him like an outcast, Aki replies:

Well, I tell you, 's da price you pay. You get education, you make new friends. And lotta times you going lose da old friends you had, but 's life, yeah. Jus' no tink your *ungko*¹⁰ no stink because you can talk good English and your parents can only talk Japanese. And be happy you get good bruddahs who wen' keep up da farm so you can go school. You lucky you neva get one lousy bruddah like me. Den you hadda stay home on da farm like Tosh, and no Mainland school fo' you. Always t'ank your parents and your bruddahs and you no go wrong. (*Coffee* 34)

Jiro is treated like an outcast among the whites on the mainland because he is Japanese, and by his family and former friends in Kona because he can no longer relate to them on their level. Since Aki has also moved away from Kona, he can relate to Jiro in a way, and gives him a few words of advice reinforcing the traditional Japanese value of duty toward one's family, even though he himself has not yet lived up to that value.

Shogo, the extreme opposite of Jiro, is the slow-witted farm hand who provides comic relief. Since both of Shogo's parents have died, he also serves as a contrast to Aki who has two hard-working parents and still feels sorry for himself. Tomi, who helps Mikame with caring for Kazuo now that his legs are crippled, is hard-working and practical. Aki recognizes the value of these traits and begins to develop a romantic interest in her. Haruko, on the other hand, is immature and rash, and is desperate to get out of Kona. Her flirtatious invitation for Aki to meet her at night is made with the hope that she can persuade him to take her back to Honolulu with him.

One of the strengths of this play is that the conflicts are made so vivid visually. Throughout the play Aki struggles with Kazuo on a psychological level, and Kazuo struggles with himself on a physical level. Kazuo's character is unsympathetically portrayed up until act one scene six, where we learn that Kazuo really wants to forgive Aki

¹⁰ A Japanese word meaning "shit."

and allow him to come back to the farm if that is what Aki wants. We see Kazuo's frustration with his debilitated physical condition which prevents him from going out and working side by side with his sons. And we learn that the source of Kazuo's determination to try to make something of his farm year after year is the duty he feels to return to his mother's grave in Japan to ask her forgiveness for not returning before her death. But Kazuo is unable to express any of his love or pain to his sons.

Kazuo's crippled legs provide the characters with the opportunity to physically display the conflicts that are going on internally. In act one, scene six, Kazuo beats on his legs in frustration because they will not allow him to be close to his sons working in the fields. At the end of the scene Mikame takes Tosh to the store with her, forcing Kazuo to be alone with Aki. Kazuo tries to walk on his own and ends up falling badly. When Aki finds Kazuo on the ground and tries to help, Kazuo pushes him away. The emotional climax of the play is made all the more exciting by the physical action as Kazuo lunges for Aki, emotionally still the patriarch but physically reduced to a crawling baby as he reaches out unsuccessfully to grab Aki by the ankle. The physical action is underscored by Aki's long speech:

...You're a hopeless cripple. Your time has past. It's gone. Now it's Toshio's chance... Ootosan, you see, I'm stronger than you. And I'm doing what I think is best for all of us, the way you did what was best for us when we were children... Toshio and I won't let you down. You'll see...
(*Coffee* 45, 46)

The element of language is more important in *Kona Coffee* than it is in Sakamoto's other plays, because in *Kona Coffee* language not only differentiates characters and shows the relationships between characters, but also says something about their psychological make-up. Characters adjust their language, depending on who they are speaking to. The older characters speak a more formalized English, with Japanese words thrown in occasionally. This formal language is used to represent the characters speaking Japanese to

each other. When the younger characters speak to the older characters, they use the same formalized speech, which should read as the children speaking Japanese to their parents; but when the younger characters are alone they speak pidgin to each other, continuing to throw in Japanese words occasionally. In this play Sakamoto uses language to show the level of adaptability of the characters. The older characters who cling to their old form of speech also cling to their old customs and are less able or willing to adapt to changes that are brought their way. Characters such as Aki, Tosh, and Tomi, who can switch back and forth between the formal language and the pidgin language are much more easily able to adapt to changing situations. Scene four of act one, where Aki presents Kazuo with his hand-made walker, shows the contrast as Aki and Tosh switch from speaking with their parents to speaking privately together:

Aki: See, Otosan. You can use it to walk around, like this. It's very strong. You can put all your weight on it. Toshio and Shogo don't have to help you.

(He puts the walker in front of Kazuo.)

Mikame: Oh, nice.

Kazuo: Da-me kore. I-ran!

(Kazuo pushes the walker off the porch disgustedly. Aki walks off to the side of the stage. Tosh picks up the walker and takes it to the side of the house, then joins Aki.)

Aki: I wen' work all day on dat damn ting.

Tosh: He probably not strong enough to use right now anyway.

Aki: He like ack tough, I can ack tough too.

Tosh: Why we no tell 'um now. Tell 'um you and me going to Honolulu and he and Okasan gotta go wit' us... (*Coffee* 20)

Jiro's language, of course, is quite markedly different from that of the other young characters, because he has been educated on the mainland:

Well, you know. It's hard to relate to Kona people now. I don't have the same interests anymore. Here there's nothing to converse about but mundane things, like the weather, the crops, the family, the neighbors.

Right? You've been in Honolulu all this time, you know what I mean. You talk about more important things. (*Coffee* 33)

Jiro speaks with rigidly formal English to everyone he encounters. He does not incorporate any Japanese words, and he uses English words which are not in the vocabulary of most of the Kona people. Jiro has adapted to such an extreme that he is no longer able to switch back to pidgin, and this, coupled with his superior attitude toward the people in Kona makes it impossible for him to fit in with his former peers.

The quiet country setting appears, at least to those who have not struggled for day to day survival in such an environment, to be idyllic in the opening and closing moments of the play. But this setting reveals itself to be unrelentingly oppressive throughout most of the play. Characters fight tooth and nail for their existence, and young characters desperately seek a possible way of escaping the crippling constraints their parents have had to toil under. For these characters Honolulu offers the hope of a different, if not easier, way of life. At the end of the play as the characters prepare to leave their country home for a life in the city, the audience is left with a feeling of ambivalence. They feel nostalgia for a bygone time in which life may have been difficult but the conflicts were simpler, and a sense of sadness that the Kamiya family will be leaving that existence behind, even while the characters themselves look forward to the possibilities ahead.

It is not only the setting which leaves the audience feeling ambivalent. Kazuo Kamiya has struggled fiercely for most of his life to get something of permanent lasting value from the coffee farm. But in the end he is forced to leave, with nothing to show for all his years of labor. The audience may happily anticipate the future of the Kamiya family in Honolulu, but at the same time they feel a sense of sadness and loss for Kazuo who now has nothing to look forward to but dependence in life, and freedom in his eventual death.

Kumu Kahua Theatre presented the premiere of *The Taste of Kona Coffee* in September 1993 under the direction of James Nakamoto. It was then re-mounted as part of the *Hawai'i No Ka Oi* trilogy which opened Kumu Kahua's brand new theatre space in

downtown Honolulu, as described in chapter two. *The Taste of Kona Coffee* is probably the most poignant play of the trilogy. The only negative review came from the *Honolulu Advertiser* whose reviewer felt that the themes of family obligations, attachments to home and personal desires to seek “greener pastures” were so relentless that they overshadowed the development of the characters (Rozmiarek 9/21/93). But the play received positive reviews from several other sources (Berger 9/21/93, Hara 10/1/93, Kristen Sakamoto 9/22/93). The *Honolulu Weekly* commented upon Sakamoto’s dialogue, themes, and character development:

Sakamoto’s pidgin script sparkles with a frankness that is often humorous, sometimes slicing... The lofty themes of survival, family duty and identity are skillfully realized here through the realistic complexity of the characters. (Thomson 9/24/93)

The Kumu Kahua production of *The Taste of Kona Coffee* was also brought by special invitation to the Kona Coffee Festival that year where it was warmly received, especially by older members of the Kona community.

Manoa Valley

Manoa Valley was written in 1979 for the East West Players and presented as a companion piece to Sakamoto’s earlier one-act, *A’ala Park*. It is significant that Sakamoto chose to set both *Manoa Valley* and *A’ala Park* in 1959, the year that Hawai’i became a state. In contrast to *A’ala Park* which focuses on a disadvantaged family, *Manoa Valley* focuses on the upwardly mobile “local” Japanese Kamiya family. The older generation of this family emigrated in 1929 from their coffee farm in Kona to Honolulu, and in 1959 they are faced with members of the younger generation who feel the need to move away to the U.S. mainland.

Manoa Valley is set in the back yard of Tosh’s home in Mānoa Valley as the family makes preparations for a party to celebrate Hawai’i’s statehood. In this play the two

sons from *Kona Coffee*, Aki and Tosh, have matured and are raising families of their own. Tosh is now faced with the same conflict that he went through with his own father, when his son Spencer announces his intentions to go away to the mainland to study aerospace engineering instead of taking over the construction business that Tosh has built. At first, Tosh adamantly refuses to allow Spencer to leave Hawai'i. But in the end Aki reminds Tosh of his own struggle for emancipation when they had to convince their father to leave the Kona coffee farm so he could move to Honolulu. Tosh realizes that he must give Spencer the freedom to chase his own dreams, and takes the unprecedented step of offering the family business to his oldest daughter, Laura, instead.

1959, the eve of statehood, was a time of great social and political change in Hawai'i when new economic opportunities were opening up, and for the middle-class Kamiya family, the dream of providing one's children with a better life was for the first time within grasp (Odo x). Like others during this time in history, Tosh has worked hard to create something worthwhile that he could pass on to his son. But he is not prepared for the possibility that his son may not be interested in what he has to offer.

In *Manoa Valley* the older generation cannot stop the younger generation from making changes as they see fit, so they learn to stand aside gracefully and do their best to accept the changes brought their way. In addition to presenting this inter-generational evolution, *Manoa Valley* also explores two other important ideas. One is the commonly expressed feeling that it is necessary to leave home to prove oneself, the other is the changing role of women in the family and in society.

The problem of having to leave Hawai'i to "better oneself" is something acutely felt within the "local" Japanese community because of conflicting values which they are forced to choose between.¹¹ First of all, in the Japanese culture children are taught that they have

¹¹ Sakamoto has stated this sentiment himself, in relation to his own life: "You have to go to the mainland to better yourself, to get opportunities unavailable [in Hawai'i]... Now... I'm beginning to wonder. Should I have stayed in Hawai'i (Odo xix)?"

a responsibility to take care of their families.¹² Therefore, the idea of abandoning family to go away and pursue personal goals is fraught with guilt. Children of Japanese families also feel the need to succeed, to make their families proud of them. Parents work hard to provide the best for their children, which if possible includes a quality education. Children work hard to make their parents proud (Omori & Tsuneda 6). The conflict arises when the need to better oneself requires a child to go away.

In 1959 the prevailing attitude was that everything was better on the mainland. Parents strived to send their children to college on the mainland in order to help them to a better life. But still, that did not make it easier for parent or child when that option was achieved. Not only do the children of Japanese families feel as if they are shirking familial responsibility by going away, but they leave their comfortable and familiar surroundings to go to a strange place with strange customs where they don't have the love and support of their family to help them (Harada 6).

While going away to the mainland may perhaps have been a frightening prospect, it was also exciting because it offered so many new possibilities for the children without the restrictions of family pressure to do what was expected of them. Leaving home is a difficult thing to do whatever a person's ethnic background may be, but *Manoa Valley* shows us that it is even more difficult if one comes from a Japanese tradition which pressures an individual to remain at home to take care of the family while at the same time pressuring them to strive for success. At the end of *Manoa Valley* Tosh finally acquiesces to Spencer's desire to go away to the mainland, but not without first throwing in some of the old "familial responsibility" guilt. By accepting the change gracefully, Tosh avoids a display of direct defiance from Spencer and is able to maintain his sense of paternal authority as well as a feeling of peace and love within the family.

¹² This is commonly expressed in the traditional Japanese value of oyakōkō, or filial piety.

At the conclusion of the play, Tosh apologizes to Laura for taking her for granted, and asks her to work with him in the family business. Laura, who was hurt by her father's initial rejection, responds to this turn of events with indifference and hostility. But Fumiko assures her husband that he can depend on their daughter. Relating the new practice of accepting women into a male-dominated work force to the old tradition of filial piety, Tosh and Aki decide to take the whole family up to pay a visit to their parents' graves in celebration of the beginning of a new era for the Kamiya family and for the state of Hawai'i.

The women of this play diverge to various degrees from the stereotypical roles of subservient wives and daughters. Every female character presented in *Manoa Valley* is strong in her own way.¹³ In a conversation with his brother, Aki articulates his appreciation of this feminine strength: "But Mama was strong. Even wen tings used to get bad in Kona, she neva cry, she neva complain. Yeah, all da Kamiya wahines tough inside (*Manoa* 88)."

Tosh's daughter, Laura, represents the younger generation of "local" Japanese women who were moving out of the home and into non-traditional jobs for women. Both Tosh and Fumiko urge Laura to conform to the traditional expectations of a Japanese woman's behavior, but Laura has no interest in cooking or other household chores. Perhaps partly because Laura is unable to conceive a child, she looks outside the home for fulfillment. Laura's husband Toku is unaggressive in his approach toward life, so he supports Laura's need to step out of the traditional Japanese female role and approach life in a more aggressive way. When Tosh is confronted with the fact that Spencer is uninterested in taking over the family business, Laura is bold enough to suggest herself for the job. At first, Tosh is unwilling to even consider the idea of a woman running his

¹³ My paper "The women of Edward Sakamoto's Trilogy: Hawai'i No Ka 'Oi" discusses the strengths and the changing roles of the female characters in *Manoa Valley* and the other two plays about the Kamiya family. This is published in *Literary Studies East and West*, volume 12.

construction business, but by the end of the play he decides that Laura is responsible and has her heart in it, which indeed makes her the best person for the job.

The youngest man in the play, Spencer, is oblivious to the stature of the women who surround him because he is so self absorbed. Spencer is the protagonist of *Manoa Valley*, who longs for the chance to explore his potential in a far-off place, free from familial pressure. He knows he could have an easy life if he stayed at home and took over his father's contracting business, but in a private conversation with his mother he expresses his need to accomplish something on his own, "... going always be his business. Wen he die, going still be his business. Da rest of my life he going be telling me wat to do and how to do it...(Manoa 58)." Fumiko responds to Spencer's statement with the argument of familial responsibility, "How hard you tink Daddy working so you can go school. He depending on you (Manoa 58)."

Spencer looks to his cousin Nobu for inspiration and support because Nobu is the only member of the family who has spent time on the mainland and expresses an appreciation of what the mainland has to offer. The character of Nobu represents the ideal "success story," the "local" boy who was able to go away to the mainland to get a good education, and then came back home to his family. He is therefore something of a role-model for Spencer. But even Nobu's success story is problematic. Nobu feels that his father does not care about him because he did not try to talk him out of going away to the mainland. Nobu also brought home a haole wife when he returned to Hawai'i, which occasionally contributes to awkwardness in the family relations.

One of the ways characters are differentiated in *Manoa Valley* is by their use of language. The older generation is a product of a time when pidgin English was truly a makeshift mixture of the various languages present in Hawai'i. So the pidgin of the older characters uses many Japanese and Hawaiian words:

Aki: Oi, *Bāsan*¹⁴, you go too.

Tomi: No call me your old woman.

Aki: Nemmine. Hurry up, all da *wahines*¹⁵ go in da house, leave da men outside by demself.

Tomi: I going but only because I no like stay out here wit' one *kūkae*¹⁶ head like you... (*Manoa* 84)

The pidgin of the younger characters has evolved into its own dialect, known by linguists as Hawaiian Creole English. It is more standardized, using fewer specifically Japanese or Hawaiian words, but definitely maintaining an identity as a dialect distinct from standard American English (Nagara 1969: 93; Reinecke 1978: 211):

Laura: Watch out, no drop da box.

Debbie: Toku, wat happen to you hair?

Laura: Nuttin' wrong wit' his hair.

Debbie: But he had da nice Waikīkī wave in front wit' da long sideburns.

Toku: No mo' now. (*Manoa* 59)

Because Nobu spent several years on the mainland he no longer speaks pidgin to the extent that the rest of his family does. Nobu switches between a light (acrolectal) pidgin when he is speaking with his family to standard English when speaking with his haole wife, Susan.¹⁷ When Spencer asks Nobu how Aki reacted when Nobu wanted to go to college on the mainland, Nobu responds in light pidgin, "Chee, that was a long time ago. Let me

¹⁴ Japanese word meaning "old woman."

¹⁵ Hawaiian word meaning "women."

¹⁶ Hawaiian word meaning "shit."

¹⁷ In his article "'Pidgin English' in Hawaii: A Local Study in the Sociology of Language," John E. Reinecke explains that different people who use pidgin speak at various levels of a continuum:

At the one extreme the youth speaks as acceptably as the average educated American, at the other as brokenly as the average immigrant speaker of 'pidgin.' In most cases his speech among his fellows is sufficiently deviant from standard English to receive, if not to merit, the epithet 'pidgin,' which is applied along the greater part of the English speech continuum in Hawaii. (211)

As I explained in my introduction, linguists describe this continuum as acrolectal, mesolectal, and basilectal creole. My reference to light pidgin is to speech which is closest to standard American speech within the 'pidgin' continuum (acrolectal creole). The heaviest pidgin (basilectal creole) is at the opposite extreme, practically unintelligible to those who are not familiar with the dialect.

think. Ah, he said something like, 'Make sure da haoles no take you cheap. If dey ack smart, give 'um one (*Manoa* 68).' This shows that Nobu hasn't lost the ability to speak pidgin, he simply chooses to use it selectively.

When Nobu shifts to his "politician" mode or gets romantic with Susan, he switches to a very practiced and almost poetic style of speech:

Oh no. We're going places, baby. And fast. I can see our shiny new house, maybe up in Tantalus overlooking the city. Or past Diamond Head with the sea at our doorstep. A magnificent castle for my fairy tale princess. (*Manoa* 67)

Susan, the only Caucasian in the play, sounds like she is speaking a foreign language because her English is so proper. The whole rhythm of the dialogue stops when she speaks, then continues to flow on around her during her silences.

Nobu: Aeh, Debbie, how's my favorite cousin?

Debbie: Hi, Nobu! Oh, you brought the baby. Hi, Susan.

Susan: Hello, Debbie, nice to see you again.

(AUNTIE TOMI enters carrying a bag of malasadas.)

Debbie: Hi, Auntie Tomi!

Tomi: Mo' and mo' big, eh, you.

Debbie: Chee, Auntie, you only saw me last month. (*Manoa* 64)

This is Susan's first entrance in the play, and it establishes the awkwardness of her relationship to Nobu's family as the lively banter of the various family members is momentarily interrupted by the formal rhythm of Susan's speech.

Although it has its serious moments, for the most part *Manoa Valley* takes a light-hearted look at life in Hawai'i as it is experienced by the members of the Kamiya family. Being set in the year of statehood for Hawai'i, it represents a time of excitement in the promise of things yet to come. Nobu is excited about the political possibilities he sees on the horizon, Spencer is excited about the technological advances he could potentially be a

part of. The future is bright, and the mood of the play reflects the eager anticipation felt by the characters.

Manoa Valley premiered as a one-act in 1989 at Los Angeles' East West Players where it was presented together with *A'ala Park*. The double bill was advertised as "Hawaii No Ka Oi: Two views of Hawaii that the tourists never see." Critics preferred the up-beat *Manoa Valley* in contrast to the more problematic *A'ala Park* which had not yet reached its definitive form. They also drew comparisons between the nisei characters of the play and 2nd generation families on the mainland, either Japanese or not. *Manoa Valley* was then revised and produced as a full-length play by the University of Hawai'i's Kennedy Theatre in 1982, under the direction of Glenn Cannon. Sakamoto revised the script again and in 1984-85 the Pan Asian Repertory Theater brought the play for the first time to a New York audience.

This revised version of the script was used when Chris Ivanyi directed Kumu Kahua Theatre's production of the play in 1989. Honolulu critics responded warmly: "The play's tone is gentle and good-natured, but its dramatic foundation is solid and the story leaves a strong impression (White 10/2/89)." Kumu Kahua presented *Manoa Valley* again in 1993-94, first at St. Andrew's Tenney Theatre and then as part of the trilogy *Hawai'i No Ka Oi* which inaugurated the grand opening of the 46 Merchant St. theatre space. Critics admittedly gained a greater appreciation for this play after seeing *The Taste of Kona Coffee* which provided the audience with a deeper understanding of the family's history:

Appreciating family history helps "Manoa Valley" because it is essentially a character study in which not very much happens. The Kamiya family is preparing for a backyard party to celebrate Hawaii's new statehood status, and between chilling the Primo and peeling the daikon, its members manage to bridge three generations and put an old ghost to rest. (Rozmiarek 12/1/93)

Whether the play was seen in Honolulu, Los Angeles, or New York, certain things were noted consistently. One was Sakamoto's command of specifics in characterization,

and the other was his spontaneous and humorous dialogue. Even audiences unfamiliar with Hawai'i's pidgin English appreciated the language of the play and did not have trouble following along (Odo xxiv).

The Life of the Land

The final play of Edward Sakamoto's trilogy, *The Life of the Land*, is set in 1980 and shows how the Kamiya family has had to cope with developments brought on by decisions made a generation before within their family and within the larger society. Many of the same characters that were in *Manoa Valley* are here, twenty-one years older. The play compares Aki's grandson Daniel, who is being pressured by his parents to go to the mainland for college, with Tosh's son Spencer, who returns from the mainland after a twenty-one year absence. Daniel would prefer to remain in Hawai'i and work in the nursery with Aki. Spencer is unfulfilled by his career on the mainland and is contemplating a permanent move back to Hawai'i. Spencer's sister Laura is a hard working business woman, who despite her best efforts, is forced to sell the family business due to difficult economic circumstances. When Spencer discovers that Laura is selling the business he blames her for not being able to keep it going. Laura counters by blaming Spencer for moving to the mainland instead of taking over the business as he had been expected to do. Spencer and Laura come to a grudging truce in Act two and Aki persuades Daniel to go to the mainland as his parents wish, despite the fact that he would prefer Daniel to stay. The play draws to a close as Laura's husband, Toku, accepts Spencer's offer of financial backing to start a restaurant. As the stage empties and the sun sets, Spencer is left alone, contemplating the possibilities of a life back home once again.

After a period of growth centered upon the tourist industry during the 1950s and 1960s, Hawai'i's economy had begun to reverse itself by the 1980s. U.S. mainland and international investors had gained a majority of control over big business throughout

Hawai'i, and the fees and profits paid to these corporations were resulting in millions of dollars being sent out of Hawai'i each year. Due to the increased diversification of big business, small local companies such as the Kamiya family's construction business showed a steady decline in profits from 1958 to 1980. The small business class was, in fact, the hardest hit sector of the state economy since statehood (Stauffer 183-185).

In his introduction to *Aloha Las Vegas and Other Plays* Dennis Carroll explains that "since the 1950s, the pendulum of the degree of attractiveness of the mainland has swung back and forth for Hawai'i long-time residents (*Aloha Las Vegas* 5)." In contrast to the 1950s and 1960s, many people in 1980 felt no desire to go away to the mainland. Part of the reason for this is explained by Jonathan Okamura:

Globalization of Hawai'i's economy and other political and economic processes are contributing to the increasing marginalization of Hawai'i's people to external sources of power and control. As a result, local identity has been maintained as an expression of resistance and opposition, albeit unorganized, to such outside domination and intrusion. (256)

The "local" identity was again presenting itself in opposition to outside forces. Where previously "local" was seen primarily in opposition to people who were coming into Hawai'i, now in addition to that, "local" also stood in opposition to an almost unseen force, that of outside economic control. So "locals" identified even more strongly with place than they had before. Despite a gloomy economy, "locals" did not want to leave Hawai'i, partly because that would detract from their identity as "local." The difficulties with this situation are explored in *The Life of the Land*.

With this play Sakamoto again questions whether or not it is worthwhile to leave Hawai'i in search of fulfillment elsewhere, and if one does leave, whether or not it is possible ever to return home again. This query is underscored by the double plot, examining the issue through the situations of both Spencer and Daniel.

Daniel wants to remain in Hawai'i and follow in Aki's footsteps as a nurseryman but is pressured by his mother to go away to college in order to explore his potential. Daniel's desire to remain in Hawai'i is in direct contrast to the attitudes of the characters in the previous two plays of the Kamiya trilogy, and is a reflection of the prevailing attitude in 1980 that it was unnecessary to go away to prove oneself, and that indeed it was preferable to remain in Hawai'i. Influenced by the anti-establishment movements of the 1960s and the resurgence of Hawaiian cultural pride in the 1970s, the youth in Hawai'i began to develop an attitude of "Hawai'i no ka 'oi,"¹⁸ and felt that going to the mainland would be taking an unnecessary step away from their cultural identity.

Spencer is dissatisfied with his career in aerospace engineering, and with life on the mainland in general. Perhaps because he has turned forty, he is feeling like he needs to reevaluate his life and justify the choices he has made. Like Jiro in *The Taste of Kona Coffee*, Manny in *A'ala Park* and Ben in *Stew Rice*, Spencer went away to the mainland and severed his ties with friends and family back in Hawai'i. At this time in his life, trying to figure out where he made his mistakes, Spencer decides that maybe moving back to Hawai'i will help put his life back on track. The pivotal moment of the play, as it relates to Spencer, occurs near the end of the play when Laura reveals to Spencer that in their father's dying moments his last thoughts were still of Spencer. This is a heart-wrenching moment because Laura devoted her entire life to earning her father's love, while Spencer, who did little to deserve it, was still loved most of all.

Spencer's younger sister Debbie provides a third perspective to the issue of leaving home, as she contemplates going to the Middle East or to London; but she ultimately decides to stay. Based on the decision made by Spencer to forsake his career on the mainland in order to return to Hawai'i, and by Debbie's choice not to leave Hawai'i, it

¹⁸ A saying in Hawai'i which means "Hawai'i is the best."

appears that Daniel is justified in his feeling that it is not necessary to leave home to find fulfillment. But in order to make his mother happy, Daniel agrees to go to college on the mainland. Will he be able to return home? Will he want to? Debbie describes the ever widening horizons of the Kamiya clan as they search for a better life:

Our grandparents came from Kumamoto, Japan, to Kona, Hawai'i. Our parents left Kona for Honolulu. Spenca went from Honolulu to Los Angeles. Danny, the fourth generation, is off to Connecticut. Who knows, maybe Danny's grandchildren will want to live in a colony on Mars. (*Life* 127)

Since Daniel is leaving Hawai'i against his own wishes, he may indeed want to return when the time comes. If Spencer can entertain the possibility of returning after a twenty-one year absence with no prospect of pursuing his career in Hawai'i, Daniel should be able to return to Hawai'i and become a philosopher/nurseryman with a Ph.D. if he so desires. This play argues that it might be possible to find fulfillment right in your own backyard, and it underscores the loss of identity felt by someone who gave up home and family in search of personal fulfillment elsewhere.

The setting of *The Life of the Land* is different from the previous two plays of the Kamiya trilogy because it takes place at a beach park, which is a very public locale compared to the previous two plays of the trilogy which were set outside the family's homes. Nobu refers to people he sees passing by, and the action of the play is affected by people who are never actually seen on-stage. The playwright's choice to set *The Life of the Land* in such a public locale could be seen as a reflection on the state of limbo in which the characters find themselves, unable to identify a single place as being truly "home" for themselves anymore. On the other hand, such a setting also serves to tie the characters in with the larger society, placing the Kamiya family casually amongst the other "local" people of Hawai'i.¹⁹

¹⁹ Dennis Carroll describes how the use of costumes in the trilogy illustrates the movement of the Kamiya family from immigrant status to fully integrated "local" status in his article "Hawai'i's 'Local' Theatre." (131)

As “local” people, most of the characters in *The Life of the Land* speak a light pidgin. Aki, Fumiko, and Toku, having less education, speak a slightly heavier (mesolectal) pidgin than do the others. Nobu, Susan, and Spencer, educated on the mainland, speak standard English for the most part. And Daniel, being the son of an English teacher, also speaks standard English.

The mood of *The Life of the Land* is definitely more somber than *Manoa Valley*, although there are still many comic moments throughout. Overall the mood is on par with that of *The Taste of Kona Coffee*, although *The Life of the Land* is more disenchanting and less hopeful. The climactic fights in this play last longer, continuing to exist as subtext even through some of the more comic scenes. Critics have commented upon the Chekhovian aspects of Sakamoto’s plays (Christon 2/20/80, Rozmiarek 9/22/92, Bruckner 4/23/98, Carroll *Aloha...*17), and *The Life of the Land* is rife with Chekhovian influences. It is especially reminiscent of Chekhov's *The Three Sisters* with the sense of loss and regret that the characters' lives are limited by choices made in the past which they must now live with.

In act one of *The Three Sisters*, the sisters declare their intention to move to Moscow. However, for one reason or another they never make this move, so throughout the play they regret the fact that they are not living in Moscow, and insinuate that life would be much better if only they were able to make that move. Like the three sisters in Chekhov's play, Spencer tries to tie his sense of dissatisfaction with life to the fact that he is unable to be in a certain geographic space, and he assumes that if he relocates to that space (Hawai'i), he will somehow find happiness despite the alienation that has grown between himself and his family.

Near the end of act two, scene one, when Spencer tries to enlist Fumiko in his attack against Laura, Fumiko defends her daughter:

I no blame Laura. She wen' work hard for Daddy. If you feel like dat, why you neva stay in Hawaii and help Daddy. He had big ideas. He wanted you to take ova someday, but you neva care about dat. Afta you wen' to da mainland, Daddy neva say one word against you, but I know he was hurt. Jus' like you wen' stab him in da heart. (*Life* 129)

This moment is especially dramatic because Fumiko, who is normally the peace keeper of the family, says such harsh things to her son. After Spencer leaves, the three women try to comfort each other over the loss of the family business. This scene is also reminiscent of the final tableau of *The Three Sisters* where the women express their loss and regret over the paths not taken.

The final moments of the play are ambivalent. Spencer speaks hopefully, "This is my last hope. Things gotta change for the better. If nuttin' else, at least I'll be back with my people and I'll have native soil between my toes again (*Life* 137)." The stage directions also indicate that the end should feel positive:

The stage darkens as the sun sinks into the ocean. The glow of the charcoal in the grill becomes brighter and is reflected on SPENCER, who stands behind the grill. The effect of the glow and the darkness on stage is one of serenity. A native son has returned home. (*Life* 137)

But after a long night of arguing it is hard to feel completely upbeat even if everyone has reconciled. The end of the play leaves us a little drained, a little hopeful, but mostly with a feeling of sadness. Perhaps for the dreams lost, and for the uncertainty of the future that lays ahead for each of the characters.

The East West Players premiered this play in 1981, a little over a year after they presented *Manoa Valley*. Recalling the earlier production of *Manoa Valley* and reflecting upon the current production of *The Life of the Land*, one reviewer commented, "Sakamoto has found in the peculiar paradoxes of culture and family life in Hawaii a richly textured milieu that inspires his uniquely sardonic sense of humor (Duling 7/23/81). Critics commented upon the excellent direction by Mako and the strong performance of a

talented ensemble. The critique of the script was a little more ambivalent, praising the dialogue and characterizations, but questioning the structure of the plot:

In family dramas, all the individual character stories are traditionally tied together in a core conflict or question that is resolved in the end. Sakamoto bravely eschews this theatrical device, but it does lessen the emotional impact of his play. (Colker 7/24/81)

Kumu Kahua Theatre first produced *The Life Of The Land* in Hawai'i in 1985, under the direction of Dando Kluever. Again the dialogue and characterizations were the elements singled out for praise. According to one critic, "The play has no sharp dramatic definition. Instead, its virtues are a keen ear for dialogue in the lilt of Island pidgin and carefully developed character (Bowman 3/9/85)."

In 1987 former Hawai'i resident Kati Kuroda directed the play for New York's Pan Asian Repertory Theater. Again, a production of *Manoa Valley* preceded this production by two years and gave audiences who had seen it a greater sense of the history of this family. Critics responded warmly, if not enthusiastically, to the script:

"The Life of the Land," which is rather low on content, is mostly a matter of bringing us up to date on the family, with some shift in point of view. The members of the family, however, quarreling, laughing, rebelling, and playing, make agreeable company for an evening. (Oliver 6/15/87)

Kumu Kahua Theatre revived the play in 1994 when Sakamoto's three plays about the Kamiya family (*The Taste of Kona Coffee*, *Manoa Valley*, and *The Life Of The Land*) were presented together. This was John H.Y. Wat's directorial debut with Kumu Kahua Theatre. Critics gave the play middling reviews, feeling that it merely rehashed the same themes, such as family obligation versus personal fulfillment, that were explored in the first two plays. Other criticisms were that the play's structure was uninteresting, characters were not as likable as in the previous two plays of the trilogy, and the staging was a little awkward (Berger 2/15/94; Rozmiarek 2/15/94). Although audiences were smaller than they were for the previous two Sakamoto plays, they were still substantially

larger than average, proving once again Sakamoto's popularity with Hawai'i's "local" audiences.

Aloha Las Vegas

Aloha Las Vegas is another of Sakamoto's plays that looks at the issue of leaving home, but this time from a different perspective. In his previous plays it was always a young man who left his family behind to go to the mainland. In *Aloha Las Vegas* it is an older man, a widower named Wally Fukuda, who struggles with the decision over whether or not to leave his home, memories, and grown children in Hawai'i and move to Las Vegas where his old friend Harry now resides.

At the beginning of the play Wally, a 65 year old retired baker, is visited by his old friend Harry who has been a professional gambler in Las Vegas for the last three years. Harry suggests that Wally sell his house and move to Las Vegas. Wally is intrigued by the idea but his sense of obligation toward his unmarried daughter, June, prevents him from considering it too seriously at first. Wally and his housekeeper, Gracie, introduce June to a potential suitor named Alvin, then Wally announces his desire to move to Las Vegas. He invites his son and daughter-in-law, Butch and Deedee to move with him, and Butch is enthusiastic. Deedee reveals her concerns about Butch's gambling problems but eventually agrees to go. June brings up many reasons why Wally shouldn't leave, finally revealing her fear that Wally will forget Mama if he leaves Hawai'i. He assures her that such a thing would never happen. At the conclusion of the play June and Alvin are expecting a baby and planning to get married. Wally's house has been sold and he leaves for the airport, with Butch and Deedee planning to follow soon. Gracie remains alone, a melancholy reminder of what Wally is leaving behind.

The play was originally written in 1992 and set that year, although the published version of the play is set in 1994. This was a time when the high cost of living and low job

wages in Hawai'i meant that the average person had to struggle to make ends meet. In the early 1990s the cost of living in Hawai'i was thirty-eight percent higher than the average on the U.S. mainland.²⁰ The cost of a single family home skyrocketed ninety percent in three years, making it almost impossible for most people to own a home.²¹ In an article comparing income with cost of living in Hawai'i, the authors referred to these two things as cost factors of the "paradise tax" or the financial sacrifice that people make in order to remain in Hawai'i. These authors stated that "the high cost of living can be increasingly difficult for retired people on fixed incomes whose paradise tax is now equal to the cost factor... (Adler et. al. 120)" This difficult financial reality meant that many people had to consider the possibility of moving elsewhere. In his article entitled "Out Migration," Walter Miklius estimated that in 1990 two percent of Hawai'i's "local" population relocated to the U.S. mainland. He summarized the reason that many retirees have for leaving: "You can stay in your small home in Hawaii and have little cash, or you can live in a nicer home elsewhere and have extra cash for travel, hobbies, loans to the kids, etc. (244)." This is the quandary Wally faces in the play *Aloha Las Vegas*.

The play is set in Wally Fukuda's living room, in the middle class neighborhood of Liliha in Honolulu. The set is basic, with a couch, a couple of chairs, a couch-side table and a dining room table. A Japanese doll in a glass case, a small Buddhist shrine, and an unfinished jigsaw puzzle provide clues to Wally's personality. He was a devoted husband and father, and his home is full of memories - not only of his children growing up - but also of his wife's illness and death which were caused by his cigarette smoking. June tries to ease Wally's guilt about Kay's death and to justify her own desire to keep him in Hawai'i by telling him that she promised Mama she would watch over him. In a poignant speech

²⁰ This is according to the State of Hawai'i Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism Data Book, 1992, table 418.

²¹ Between 1987 and 1990, the median price of a single-family home on Oahu rose from \$185,000 to \$352,000 - an increase of 90 percent in just three years. People locked out of the inflated home market blamed investors from Japan (Mak, Sakai 35)."

Wally describes to June his happy memories of Mama visiting Las Vegas, and his need to go to a place where he can remember her happy instead of ill and dying. This is the turning point when June quietly realizes that she must let her father go in order for him to make peace within himself over Kay's death.

Harry presents himself as a good friend who only wants the best for Wally. But the script provides subtle clues to his sleazier, more manipulative side. Through the brief references he makes we learn that he flunked out of school and was kicked out of his house as a youth. He also admits he divorced his wife because she was too independent and would not let him order her around (*Aloha* 162). Harry's motivation to lure Wally to Las Vegas is not only to have his friend nearby, but also to use his money in a joint business venture. He tells Wally they can make a lot of money together selling shave ice in Las Vegas. Although Butch and Wally are impressed by Harry's boastful claims about life in Las Vegas, the darker facets of his personality are not lost on June and Alvin:

Alvin: I wish I had a friend like dat.

June: You don't want a friend like Harry.

Alvin: No, I mean your faddah. He's a good guy. (*Aloha* 176)

Harry presents Las Vegas in idyllic terms, so Wally's decision to leave Hawai'i appears, on the surface, to be a positive move. But this point of view is problematized by the parallel drawn with selling one's soul to the devil. This is brought to the surface briefly in the final scene when Gracie asks, "You sure Harry not da Devil (*Aloha* 182)?" This raises the question that perhaps Wally is cheating himself in the long run by seeking a quick and easy solution to his sorrow and guilt.

Wally's actions are not the only ones that we question. The drastic changes that each of these characters make in their lives are problematic. Butch is convinced that he will be able to start a new life with Deedee in Las Vegas, where they will both be successful in their work, and Deedee will be able to get pregnant. But how realistic is this expectation?

Like Hawai'i, Las Vegas exists on a tourist-based economy. With limited educations, the jobs that Butch and Deedee will be able to get there may not be much different from the jobs they already have. And Las Vegas is no more conducive to male fertility than Hawai'i is, so the idea that they might conceive a child due to this move is doubtful.²²

June is also starting a new phase in her life at forty one years of age. Having assumed that she was never going to marry because she never met a man who could conform to her standards, she is now about to become a wife and a mother. During the brief time that her family has known Alvin, they have come to appreciate his simple, hard-working ethic and his good-natured personality, so this news is greeted with bemused astonishment. Alvin too, is making a fresh start in life with June, as he has lived unmarried at home with his parents for 50 years of his life. Will their relationship survive the abrupt changes that marriage and parenthood bring? One might say that since they are older, they are wise enough to make the right decisions. But it could also be said that as we grow older, we become more set in our ways; and this might make it more difficult for June and Alvin to adjust comfortably to the changes in their relationship.

As we have seen, the difficulty involved in the decision to leave Hawai'i is a problem frequently encountered in Edward Sakamoto's plays and it is central to this play. Sakamoto explains, "The dilemma is whether to move or stay, maintaining a family tradition or moving on (Harada 9/17/92)." As his statement implies, *Aloha Las Vegas* also examines the desire to accept change, to move on and start afresh. In Act Two, scene one Harry, Wally and Alvin reminisce about the good old days of baseball at Honolulu Stadium where the local teams played, and Harry interrupts the reverie with, "...Hawai'i really junk nowadays. 'S why I love Vegas. Hawai'i change too much. Mo' crime, mo' murders, mo' traffic, mo' homeless (*Aloha* 167)." Harry transitions into a description of

²² In Act II Deedee confides to June that the doctor said their inability to conceive a child was due to Butch's low sperm count - but Deedee has not told Butch for fear of hurting his feelings.

how lively A'ala Park used to be, and how sad it is now that the only people who go there are the homeless. He uses this argument to try to persuade Wally that leaving Hawai'i is the right thing to do. He convinces Wally that it is never too late to start over, and if things have changed to the point where you can no longer recognize what was once home, it is time to move on and make a home somewhere new. But starting anew does not have to mean letting go of the past as June fears it might. In Act Two, scene two, June and Wally recall the good old days when Kay was still alive and Wally concludes, "Yep. Lodda memories. 'S da ting, yeah. I can take dose memories wit' me to Vegas (*Aloha* 179)."

Sakamoto has attested to Chekhov's influence on his writing style, and we can see that *Aloha Las Vegas* bears some interesting similarities to Chekhov's *The Cherry Orchard*. The reminiscing and yearning for the past, and the sense of loss over a loved one who has passed away are present in both plays. But the ambivalence in the last scene of *Aloha Las Vegas* is especially reminiscent of *The Cherry Orchard* as the home has been sold and the set is cluttered with boxes and furniture in preparation of a move, and people are preparing to go away permanently. The issue of starting over which is so important in *Aloha Las Vegas* is verbalized by two of the characters in the last scene of *The Cherry Orchard*:

Anya: Good-bye, old house! Good-bye, old life!

Trofimov: Welcome new life! (Chekhov 1991: 621)

But the most poignant parallel is the final image of the long-time friend and servant who is left alone on the couch after all the others have gone. In *The Cherry Orchard* it is old Firs who is unknowingly left behind. In *Aloha Las Vegas* Gracie willingly stays behind, listening to Wally and Kay's old song, "Time After Time," and holding on to the box containing a Guava Chiffon Surprise cake, her last gift from Wally.

Like Firs, Gracie is not central to the action, but has a strong effect on the overall mood of the play. Gracie is the first character on-stage in *Aloha Las Vegas*, and the last character to leave the stage at the end. Her highly comic presence keeps the atmosphere light and playful whenever she is on stage, up until the last moment when she is left alone after her dear friend has gone. This last moment is especially poignant because it is the only time in the play where Gracie is not doing something comical.

Compared with Sakamoto's other plays, there is not a great deal of differentiation in the way these characters speak. In the spectrum of light (acrolectal) to heavy (basilectal) pidgin, June speaks the very lightest pidgin, almost standard English. This is consistent with her character since she is a school teacher. All of the other characters speak a heavier pidgin, including Harry who has been living on the mainland. The fact that Harry still retains his pidgin dialect is a reflection of two things. First, he has not attempted to assimilate into the mainland culture. He has had no need to, because he lives as a perpetual tourist spending all his time at the hotels and casinos. In Las Vegas there is a large population of people who have moved from Hawai'i, so in certain contexts they form a sub-culture there, minimizing the need to assimilate into the larger culture. On a secondary level, Harry's pidgin dialect reminds us of his limited education. Of all the characters, Harry has achieved the lowest level of education, flunking out of intermediate school.

Aloha Las Vegas was given its world premiere in 1992 by Kumu Kahua Theatre under the direction of Jim Nakamoto. This production highlighted the comedy in the play, with outstanding performances by Nan Asuncion and Dann Seki in the comic roles of Gracie and Alvin. Dennis Carroll commented that "some of us felt that the ambivalent complexity of Wally's reasons for his decision, and its darker implications... did not entirely register (*Aloha Las Vegas* 17)." But audiences loved the production, turning out in record numbers to see it and requiring the run to be extended for several additional performances. The play was then remounted in a special limited run at Los Angeles' Japan

America Theatre in June 1994, also under the direction of Jim Nakamoto. This production utilized all but one of the cast original members from Hawai'i and a setting modified from the original Kumu Kahua design.

Aloha Las Vegas was then produced by New York's Pan Asian Repertory Theatre in April, 1998. Ron Nakahara directed the production and played the central role of Wally. Kati Kuroda turned in an especially funny performance as Gracie. Again, the comic elements of the script were emphasized, stressing the positive nature of Wally's move and minimizing the problematic issues below the surface.

Sakamoto's deft use of language creates subtle differentiation between characters, and his excellent ear for "local" dialogue contributes a great deal to the popularity of his plays among "local" audiences and among expatriate audiences on the U.S. mainland. His plays are also popular for their familiar and nostalgic images of family life in Hawai'i. In his introduction to *Hawai'i No Ka Oi*, Franklin Odo relates the following anecdote shared with him by Sakamoto which illustrates the extent to which audience members could identify with his characters:

Sakamoto had a deeply moving experience after the curtain fell on the first performance of Mānoa Valley by the East West Players in Los Angeles. An Asian American male approached him to exclaim that there was an instant shock of recognition when nisei Tosh appeared on stage at the beginning of the play. "When the character came out in his underwear, I said, 'That's my brother.'" Sakamoto realized that this man, perhaps for the first time, was seeing an actor on stage "he could identify with as someone from his own world and not the white man's world." (xxi)

But the ambiguous nature of Sakamoto's plays make it difficult to completely identify with the characters and the choices they make. Dennis Carroll has commented upon the fact that Sakamoto's plays do not simply invite an uncritical identification with the

characters: "...the responsive spectator - Asian American or otherwise, local or otherwise - finds it difficult to respond unproblematically to these plays and to empathize with these protagonists (*Aloha Las Vegas* 20)." This is in keeping with Josephine Lee's discussion of a model of spectatorship in Asian American theatre that allows for individuality, "for a more partial and tentative identification (28)" with the characters rather than some sort of idealized homogenous response.

Sakamoto's writing style is characterized by a looseness and fluidity with the dramatic structure, where he adapts the chosen structure of the play to suit his major theme. Although his "local" plays are often warm and humorous family dramas, they are imbued with a bittersweet ambiguity as characters struggle with regret over past decisions. When looking at the overall body of Sakamoto's work, one can detect in many of his plays a preoccupation with the problematic and equivocal nature of leaving home. "Home" for Sakamoto is rooted in a specific time and place in history, which makes it impossible to ever really go back. His plays are permeated with the playwright's ache to return "home" combined with the knowledge that the "home" he longs for no longer exists. The bittersweet ambivalence in Sakamoto's plays have an affinity with those of Chekhov. In the words of one reviewer, "The end result is not unlike the feeling we get from Chekhov; Sakamoto sees his people whole, and he cherishes them (Christon 2/20/80)." In this light, *The Life of the Land* and *Aloha Las Vegas* can be seen as his most significant plays because more than any of the others, these two plays emphasize the ambiguity involved when there are no clear-cut right or wrong answers to difficult questions.

CHAPTER 4
DARRELL H.Y. LUM

It has been noted that “Lum’s plays are about very old people and his short stories are about small kid time (Kam 1/9/96).” Lum explains, “If it seems as if I write about the very young and very old, it’s because they tell good stories, and in the end, you want people to come because this is a good story (Kam 1/9/96).” Each of his plays explores the complexities of inter-generational relations in one way or another. Lum’s plays also address the issue of inter-ethnic relations, generally pointing out that although older generations tended to be ethnocentric when they first came to Hawai‘i, eventually people learn to get along with others regardless of ethnicity as they merge into the “local” lifestyle.

Darrell H.Y. Lum is a Chinese American writer born and raised in Honolulu. In 1978 he co-edited an anthology of Hawai‘i’s local writers entitled *Talk Story*. In the same year he also co-founded *Bamboo Ridge*, a journal which publishes the works of local writers.¹ In 1991 he was awarded the Cades Award for Literature together with Juliet Kono (Yin 11/22/91). In 1996 he was honored with the prestigious Hawai‘i Award for Literature in recognition of his literary accomplishments. At present he continues to co-edit and co-publish *Bamboo Ridge*, write stories, and work as a counselor in the Special Services department at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa.

Although Lum is primarily known as a short story writer,² he has also written plays. In addition to his literature which has been presented in oral interpretation performances and by storytellers, five of his plays have been produced: *Oranges Are Lucky* (1975), *Magic Mango* (1982), *My Home Is Down the Street* (1985), *A Little Bit Like You* (1991), and most recently, *Fighting Fire* (1995).

¹ The significance of this journal is explained in chapter two.

I have analyzed each of these plays with the exception of *Magic Mango*, which is a short children's play and therefore outside the scope of this dissertation.

Lum has a strong poetic style and a surrealistic vision that is realized in his plays, all of which are "local" in their setting and subject matter. His plays are markedly different from Sakamoto's "local" plays, which are predominantly realistic, often focusing on a family within a particular socio-cultural milieu and usually using humor to soften the edge of the painful issues confronted. Lum's plays are more personally introspective, focusing on the interior psychological life of a character and interweaving the past with the present or imagination with reality, allowing multiple levels of reality to co-exist.

Like Sakamoto, Lum has been noted for his rich pidgin dialogue which differentiates between characters in terms of age and ethnicity while marking them clearly as "local." But where Sakamoto's realistic dialogue evokes a specific time and place, Lum's dialogue is more poetic using the repetition of images to evoke the themes of his dramas. Dennis Carroll has noted that in Lum's plays, "more than with Sakamoto, negative aspects of... characters... are bared for scrutiny (*TDR* 131)." Lum's plays frequently acknowledge the racial prejudice and "clannishness" that older generations of both Japanese and Chinese in Hawai'i have occasionally been accused of; a topic that Sakamoto tends to avoid. While addressing issues such as inter-ethnic relations, Lum's plays also focus in on inter-generational conflicts, commenting upon our treatment of the aged and calling for a mutual sense of respect between young and old.

Oranges Are Lucky

While a student at the University of Hawai'i Lum took a workshop in pidgin playwriting taught by Dennis Carroll and Arthur Caldeira. The result of that was Lum's

² In *And the View from the Shore* Stephen Sumida has made some interesting observations on Lum's literary work.

first play, *Oranges Are Lucky*, which he wrote in 1975. It is a short, introspective play set in a Chinese restaurant as the family of *Ah Po*³ gathers together to celebrate her 81st birthday. Lum wrote this play in tribute to his own grandmother, “who he never understood, nor wanted - in her lifetime - to understand (Kam 1/9/96).”

The play is structured with five movements, each ending with a monologue in which Ah Po recalls events from her past that have shaped her life. In the noisy restaurant guests arrive and present their gifts to Ah Po, her daughter Esther carefully noting their monetary value. The family members busily drink toasts and eat until Ricky, an adult grandson who has been rude throughout the evening makes a scene, protesting against the Chinese custom of reverence for their ancestors. As the dinner ends Ah Po’s family presents her with a birthday cake, urging her to follow the American custom of making a wish and blowing out the candles, which she does. This external activity though, is “only a backdrop for the more important developments which take place within the main character (Carroll 1983: 62).” Ah Po’s monologues reveal the arc of her life, transitioning from a scholar’s bride in China to a shopkeeper’s wife in Hawai‘i, and finally to the aged matriarch of a large “local” Chinese family.

In the monologues Ah Po recalls her feelings of inadequacy when as a girl she learns of her parents’ intentions to marry her to Cheu Mung, a scholar of high social status, and she recollects how wise and stern her husband was when she was a young wife. In the climactic monologue Ah Po describes how her initial enthusiasm about coming to Hawai‘i quickly changed to anger and resentment because of the difference in class structure and lifestyle in their new home. Her husband gave up his scholarly pursuits and turned to more practical trades to survive in the new country. He tried to keep his wife happy, but she did not want to accept the changes in her life so she made up her mind to speak only Chinese and to hate all things American.

³ The Chinese word for “grandmother.”

The noisy reality of the dinner scenes in the restaurant are strongly contrasted by the silent, still world where we hear Ah Po's monologues. In production, this is done simply with a shift in lighting and a freeze by the other actors, so the focus is entirely on Ah Po. Ah Po is confined to a wheel-chair because her age and her bound feet make it difficult to walk. This necessarily limits her movement, so in production the portrayal of Ah Po at different ages in her life is done primarily through changes in her voice.

At the beginning of the play Ah Po is loved, but thought to be senile by most of her children and grandchildren. Through her interaction with the other characters the audience gets the same initial impression. She speaks only Chinese, sometimes doesn't recognize people, and pulls imaginary oranges from her bag to give as gifts to her grandchildren.⁴ Through her monologues, which the audience sees and hears but the other characters do not, the audience comes to a deeper understanding of Ah Po. The other characters of the play, though, continue to relate to her as a senile old lady and the audience views this with a sense of irony. In her book *Performing Asian America*, Josephine Lee comments on the irony in the play as present and past clash, but at the same time show their connectedness. Grandson Ricky's rebellion against Chinese traditions, for example, "has a parallel in the stories of Ah Po's youth (161)."

With the final breath of the play as Ah Po blows out her birthday candles, she makes a surprising wish: to be American. This final moment can seem incongruous to the audience, following so closely after the monologue in which she forswears the American lifestyle. Josephine Lee notes: "Her words resonate with irony... they seem to indicate the old woman's acceptance of an American life as now hers. But she speaks these words as her children and grandchildren pressure her into public demonstrations of unfamiliar

⁴ Citrus fruits, such as boo-look and oranges, are considered to be good luck in Chinese culture. Lum's mention of this in the play's title indicates the importance of oranges as a symbol to represent Chinese culture in general, although the use of this symbol is not integrated into the play to the extent that we will see with the metaphors in his later works.

customs, and any celebration of her 'naturalization' seems uneasy (161).” It is up to the actress portraying Ah Po to bring subtleties to the characterization which will make this final moment believable; whether as an attempt to please or to confuse her offspring, or simply as a product of her senility.

As Ah Po's life is gradually revealed to us in glimpses of her past, the drama's themes slowly emerge. The play explores the issues of immigration and cultural transition along with inter-ethnic and inter-generational respect. Ah Po's monologues describe the process of immigration and cultural transition that she underwent; and the present reality of her family shows the audience the extent to which her family has continued to acculturate to the modern Hawaiian environment even after Ah Po refused to conform any further.

Josephine Lee notes: “The younger generation does not fulfill the dreams of their elders. Ah Po's grandchildren are not shown as exemplary: their lives are depicted as unenviable, their intellectual and community achievements unmentioned, their economic successes modest at best (162).” Most of the family does not care to retain the language or the culture of China, although they retain certain Chinese customs, if mostly on a superficial level. Dennis, a young adult grandson, appears to be well adjusted in the modern “local” society of Hawai'i; he is also sweet and respectful toward Ah Po and brings gifts of *boo look* (Chinese grapefruit) for the family. Ricky, another grandson, appears in direct contrast to Dennis. Ricky is a stylishly dressed young man who works for the postal service, giving the appearance of one who tries very hard to fit into American society. But his belligerent behavior and his outburst against the Chinese custom of leaving offerings for the family's ancestors shows us the internal frustrations of a man who does not fit comfortably into the world of his family or the world of the larger society.

Ah Po has been bound all her life by traditions of the past which seem useless to the characters of the present. Ah Po's bound feet are a palpable symbol of the traditions of the

past limiting her life in the present.⁵ Her husband tried to cast off most of the old traditions when they moved to Hawai'i, and Ah Po's children and grandchildren continued the move away from Chinese traditions. But when Ah Po found adapting to a new life too uncomfortable, she clung stubbornly to her old, familiar patterns.

Ricky's rude and belligerent behavior is distressing and dis-orienting to Ah Po, and it causes her to come to an important realization about how life in America is different. She states this in an imaginary conversation with her deceased husband:

In America there are no classes. They do not listen to their elders. Respect is earned there, it is not automatic. They do not respect mere family names, they respect the person. Respect in America is better, it is earned and it is more reliable in the end... Sometimes I forget that when I expect the children and the grandchildren to listen to me. (*Oranges* 79)

Nearing the end of her life, Ah Po states her wish to make a new beginning. But because Ricky's unpleasant outburst is what triggers this response, the play ends without us knowing for certain what her true motivation is in making this statement.

Inter-ethnic relations are explored in the play through Ah Po's feelings about non-Chinese people. Ah Po's attitude toward people of other ethnicities is first brought to light when her granddaughter Debbie arrives at the restaurant with her Japanese boyfriend, Jon. Esther emphasizes to Ah Po that Jon is a nice, hard-working boy despite the fact that he is Japanese. At first Ah Po does not understand why her granddaughter is dating a Japanese boy, but she changes her mind about him after he presents her with a lei and serves her a cup of tea. Although Jon performs these gestures in a perfunctory manner, Ah Po accepts them as offerings of veneration. In a monologue she reveals that it was really her husband, Cheu Mung, who did not like Japanese people, and she disobeyed him by talking to the Japanese ice man. She feels guilty about defying her husband's wishes, and hopes that her

⁵ In China one traditional ideal of beauty was small feet, so girls' feet were bound to prevent them from growing to their full natural size. This debilitating practice made it extremely painful, if not impossible, for women to walk about freely on their own.

offspring will ensure her passage into heaven by offering prayers and burning money after her death.

The issue of inter-generational respect is explored through the other characters' attitudes toward Ah Po. Most of her off-spring treat her with love and affection, but do not think that she has anything worthwhile to offer. Esther's nephew Dane is an exception. Dane is very interested in recording Ah Po's oral history but because he cannot speak Chinese he asks Esther to help him with the endeavor. Esther, on the other hand, has no interest in the project and assures Dane that it would be a waste of time: "Ass all old stuff, no good talk about long time ago. No use, ancient history (*Oranges* 72)."

The language used in the play is a Chinese American pidgin English throughout. All of the characters speak this dialect, with the exception of Ah Po during her private monologues. During these monologues she speaks formal English. The intent is to show that Ah Po speaks primarily Chinese, with a very limited pidgin English vocabulary. To convey this, Ah Po communicates with the other characters through her daughter, Esther, who presumably speaks both Chinese and pidgin English. Ah Po tries to say a few words directly to the others, but she does not respond to what they say to her unless their words are translated through Esther. Unfortunately, because there is no clear distinction between the language that Esther uses with Ah Po and the language Esther uses with the other characters, in performance it reads as if Ah Po is hard-of-hearing rather than as if there was a language barrier.

Throughout the play the mood shifts abruptly back and forth between the brightly lit, noisy reality of the restaurant and the shadowy, silent, wistful reality of Ah Po's musings. At the culmination of the play, a middle ground between the two extremes is

reached as the lighting is brought back up and the family members tone down their energy to focus on their matriarch while Ah Po fully steps into their reality with her decision to become an American citizen. The final mood of the play is one of compromise, although whether this is a positive step or a resignation is open for interpretation in production.

Kumu Kahua Theatre co-produced the play's premiere with and at Leeward Community College Theatre in 1976. In 1981 Kumu Kahua produced the play again, this time at the University of Hawai'i's Kennedy Lab Theatre alongside another short play, *All Brand New Classical Chinese Theatre*.⁶ Both of these plays were included in the 1983 publication of the anthology *Kumu Kahua Plays*. In 1996 Kumu Kahua Theatre presented *Oranges Are Lucky* in their theatre at 46 Merchant Street as part of a double-bill along with Lum's newest play, *Fighting Fire*. *Oranges Are Lucky*, written twenty years previous to *Fighting Fire*, was viewed with some deference, but paled by comparison with the much more fluid and complex *Fighting Fire* (Berger 1/12/96, Rozmiarek 1/12/96, Thomson 1/24/96).

My Home Is Down the Street

In 1985 Lum wrote his first full-length play, *My Home Is Down The Street*. This is a drama about the relationship between an elderly "local" Chinese American man named Kwan Choy Lee, and his middle-aged son Bernard. The action of the play is preceded by a long monologue by Bernard as a child. The monologue is a recollection of Bernard's childhood fascination with firecrackers and the bonding experience which occurred when his father taught him how to throw a "five hundred" pack of firecrackers on his own.⁷ This monologue, filled with the crackling imagery of New Years Eve seen through a child's eyes, provides a stark contrast to the action proper of the play. This

⁶ Lee also discusses this play in *Performing Asian America*.

⁷ This fascination with firecrackers becomes a central metaphor in Lum's later play, *Fighting Fire*.

underlines the dramatic difference we see in the relationship between Bernard and his father fifty years later.

In the play Bernard places his father, a retired storekeeper who is recovering from a heart attack, in a home for aged Chinese men. Kwan Choy does not want to be there, and Bernard's cousin Douglas gently chides him for not taking care of Kwan Choy himself. Bernard admits to Douglas that he moved to Boston to get away from his family but concedes that things there remind him of home anyway. He eventually decides that he should return home to care for his father. Through flash-backs and fantasy sequences we learn about the history between Kwan Choy and Bernard, and come to understand Kwan Choy's inner longings. As the play progresses, Douglas notices that Kwan Choy is losing his grip on reality. Kwan Choy sends Douglas out to pick boo-look (Chinese grapefruit), and although Bernard is not there to hear it, the climax for Kwan Choy occurs when he asks Bernard to come home. During the last few moments of the play Bernard and Kwan Choy, in separate monologues, come to peace with each other. Bernard appears in Kwan Choy's doorway a moment later, and father and son forge a tentative truce.

The main problem between Bernard and his father is that although they love each other, they are both very strong-willed and neither can soften enough to open up and communicate with the other. Each wants to impose his will upon the other, and there is not a free-flowing exchange of affection or regard. Like Lum's other plays, *My Home Is Down The Street* addresses issues of aging in terms of familial love and respect. These issues are never approached didactically, but with sensitivity to both sides of the issue. The opening monologue of the play gives the audience a sense of the amount of love present in the relationship between Kwan Choy and Bernard, but what needs to be hashed out between the two characters during the course of the play is the issue of respect. Through his fear of being left alone and his need to control everything around him, Kwan Choy managed to drive his two sons and his daughter-in-law away. What Kwan Choy

learns is that love and respect need to flow openly in both directions; not only from the youth to the aged, but also from the older generation to the younger generation.

The sense of ownership, especially of owning his own home, is important to Kwan Choy because it represents self-sufficiency to him. It also represents something that he can pass on - or choose not to pass on - to his only living son. During a flashback scene Kwan Choy recalls Bernard's reaction when Kwan Choy told him that he would not give him the house: "I don't want your house, Daddy. You raised us and kept reminding us that this was your house... It wasn't Mama's or ours, Daddy, it was always yours (*My Home* 36)." Knowing that he has always been so possessive of his home and domineering over his family, the reversal at the end of the play is all the more poignant when Kwan Choy says, "Maybe you could stay at home... if you like. At our house. That would be good. Even if I stay ovah hea. It would be good if you stayed home (*My Home* 43)." In the final line of the play Kwan Choy goes even further with relinquishing his sense of ownership, referring to the house as Bernard's home rather than their home.

Three of the five characters in this play are elderly men, and the play reveals the playwright's sympathies toward them as they use irony, sarcasm and spunk to cope with the encroaching limitations of old age. Kwan Choy has not only the physical limitations of aging to contend with, but also the degeneration of his mind as he becomes forgetful and finds it hard to distinguish between memory and imagination. Kwan Choy has a great deal of love for his son Bernard, but they have difficulty spending any time together without fighting, and Bernard blames Kwan Choy's overbearing personality for the disintegration of their family. The two younger characters in this play are Bernard, an unmarried physician in his fifties, and his cousin Douglas. Although Douglas is not Kwan Choy's son, his mother's sense of obligation to her older brother forces Douglas to perform the duties of a son since Bernard chooses to live so far away.

The language that Lum uses in this play not only captures the sound of the local Chinese pidgin, but it is poetic at the same time. The moment before the final scene of the play, where Kwan Choy and Bernard finally attempt to bridge the gap between them, is handled in an oblique but effective way. Kwan Choy is talking to himself, and Bernard is having a flashback to the firecracker scene of his youth. Neither character speaks to the other, they are not in the same physical space, they are not even talking about the same thing, yet they somehow connect:

Bernard: ...And my hand wasn't fighting yours anymoa and we went throw da firecrackers da same way we went practice and da stuff was spitting sparks and fire in da air. Like one rocket. And while was still in da air, it started fo pop: POP, POP, POP, PRAAWK!

Kwan Choy: Ass awright. I no need go Boston. But you tink you can come home? Home, Bernard. Home. Right down there.
(points)

Bernard: And your hand went let go mines...

Kwan Choy: Down da street. Ass your home, Bernard. Down da street.
(*My Home* 43)

Neither character expresses it directly, but the combined monologues are saying, in essence, that if Kwan Choy can love Bernard without trying to control him, Bernard would stop fighting him. Kwan Choy's final line in this scene indicates that he has, indeed, relinquished control and simply wants to love his son.

There is a bittersweet feeling to this play, emphasized through the image of Kwan Choy's prized boo-look tree which is a point of friction between he and his son. The boo-look could be a metaphor for the relationship between Kwan Choy and Bernard. Bernard describes to Douglas how he always hated that tree because of its leaves, thorns, bugs, and bitter fruit. Kwan Choy, on the other hand, feels that people do not appreciate its goodness: "Nobody eat. People forget. Forget how to eat... Dey throw away. So wasteful. Nobody take care (*My Home* 42)." Near the end of the play when father and

son reconcile, Bernard relates his experience when he tries eating a boo-look for the first time after a long absence: “You know, wasn’t bad. Half sweet, half sour...” That could also describe his new approach to his relationship with his father. Although there is some bitterness in their relationship, there is also love and a willingness to give it one more try.

Lum’s initial inspiration for this play was his experience with an uncle: “What stuck was that voice, a character that could talk and talk (Manuel 11/5/86).” This developed into the character of Kwan Choy, but his verbosity did not prove to be dramatically effective on stage. After losing two actors who “decided the extensive memorization was too much (Manuel 11/5/86),” Dando Kluever stepped into the role and Kumu Kahua Theatre premiered *My Home is Down The Street* in November of 1986, cutting out a great deal of excessive dialogue that was contained in the original script. Reviewers were impressed with Kluever’s acting and Bryan Furer’s makeup design (Viotti 11/13-19/86). The *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* hailed the production as “a beautifully written, expertly performed play - one of Kumu Kahua’s best ever (White 11/7/86).”

While agreeing with other reviewers’ assessments of the work of Kluever and Furer as well as Lum’s eye for details in fleshing out human relationships and everyday life, the *Honolulu Advertiser’s* critic, Joseph Rozmiarek zeroed in on the second act as being prolonged and static:

Theater demands physical action. We want to see things happening. While there is psychic movement in Lum’s script, we sorely miss the conflict and the fireworks that could result if he brought his principal characters head-to-head. (11/7/86)

While Rozmiarek objected to the indirect manner in which Kwan Choy and Bernard reach their tentative reconciliation, this was (as discussed on page 184) what I felt to be one of the most poetic aspects of the play.

A Little Bit Like You

Lum's next play also takes a bittersweet look at aging, but with a different emphasis. This play, entitled *A Little Bit Like You*, was commissioned under a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation by the Honolulu Theatre For Youth in 1991. *A Little Bit Like You* is a complex play, but it is essentially a story of women who learn to love and accept themselves after coming to peace with the father-figures in their lives. It is simultaneously the story of Kay and of her grandmother Kiyoko. Like Lum's previous plays there is more than one level of reality at work here. But in *A Little Bit Like You* these different realities occur simultaneously, sometimes clash, and can be experienced by several characters - not just the elderly. In fact, it is often one of the youngest characters, Kay, who is able to see and hear things which the others cannot.

In the play Kay visits her comatose Grandpa Jiro in the hospital and discovers that she alone can communicate with him. He is angry because he wants to die, but cannot. He and Kay argue, and at this point the ghosts of Kay's great-grandmother (Bachan) and a mysterious manapua peddler begin to interact with her.⁸ Kay is transformed into her grandmother Kiyoko as a child, whose history is revealed in scenes that are interwoven with the present. We learn that the manapua vendor, Ah Sook, was actually Kiyoko's father through an extra-marital affair, although Kiyoko has denied this fact her entire life. In the present, the spirits of Bachan and Ah Sook try to tell Grandma Kiyoko that she is half-Chinese, but she still refuses to hear them. The two spirits do, however, make Kay understand how much her own Grandpa Jiro loves her. After Kiyoko's daughter Emi

⁸ Lum includes a glossary at the end of the play in which he explains: Manapua (possibly a bastardization of the Hawaiian term "mea 'ono pua'a," meaning pork cake) refers to the steamed Chinese pork-filled bun (char siu bao) usually eaten for lunch. The buns and other kinds of dim sum (sometimes all are generically referred to as "manapua") were commonly sold since the mid 1800s by a manapua man who carried his wares to the various neighborhoods and plantation camps by carrying two large lard tins (about the size of five gallon cans) hung from each end of a wooden staff about four feet long which was balanced across his shoulders. He might have been dressed like a stereotypical "coolie" with a conical straw hat tied under his chin and a plain smock and loose trousers. (*Little Bit* 48)

admits that she met Ah Sook before his death, Grandma Kiyoko finally hears Bachan tell her that Ah Sook was her father and that he loved her. Grandpa Jiro then passes away. Together Kay and Grandma Kiyoko sort through Jiro's belongings and discover items which showed how much they were loved by both Grandpa Jiro and Ah Sook.

Although the play is about Kay and Grandma, the action is framed by Grandpa Jiro, whose collapse precipitates the inciting incident and whose death immediately follows the climax. It is as if, when Grandpa falls into a coma, he enters the shadowy realm between life and death. In doing this, he opens a portal whereby the occupants of both worlds can exist simultaneously and are able to communicate. This involvement of the spirit world is foreshadowed in the play's first few scenes when Kay and her friend Bunny encounter Bachan and hear the voices of Bachan and Ah Sook, although they don't initially recognize the significance of this.

The juxtaposition of past with present, ghosts with flesh-and-blood, is highlighted by the fact that the actress who plays Kay also portrays her grandmother Kiyoko as a young girl. Bachan, Bunny and Grandpa also play characters in addition to themselves. The only characters who remain as themselves throughout the play are Ah Sook, Grandma Kiyoko, and her divorced daughter Emi (Kay's mother).

Kay's character is fairly straightforward. She is a "local" teenager of Chinese and Japanese ancestry, who just wants to enjoy doing teenage activities like hanging out at the mall with her best friend. Initially she feels that her Grandpa Jiro, with his habit of collecting empty cans for the money he can earn recycling them, is an embarrassment. She also feels that her Grandpa doesn't really care for her because he often scolds or teases her. It is only at the end of the play, after she has gained an understanding of their past, that Kay shows a greater love and respect for her grandparents.

Grandma Kiyoko is the most complex character in this drama. Her conflict of identity ties into the two major themes of the play. The first is the matter of interracial

marriages which produce *hapa* off-spring.⁹ The second issue is the sense of rejection that women must contend with when they do not have a loving father-figure in their lives. Both Kay and her Grandmother Kiyoko grapple with this problem.

Kay's father is absent since her parents are divorced, and her grandfather does not know how to provide the warmth and affection she needs. In a conversation with the spirit of her great-grandmother Bachan, Kay complains that her grandfather treats her: "Like I'm not good enough for him. Like I'll never be good enough for him (*Little Bit* 35)." But as she learns before her grandfather dies, he really did love her. While Grandpa is in his coma he admits that he has never known how to express his feelings for Kay: "...I wish I no yell so much... I tink maybe I scold you too much. Maybe tease you too much, eh (*Little Bit* 43)?" After Grandpa has passed away and Kay helps Grandma sort through his things, she discovers that Grandpa's habit of collecting cans, which had caused her so much embarrassment, was actually done for her. Grandma reveals to Kay that Grandpa saved all the money he earned from cans in a special savings account to give to her.

Kay is fortunate to have been able to find closure in her relationship with her Grandpa. Grandma Kiyoko's issues of abandonment with the men in her life are more pronounced and have affected her throughout her life. First, the man who she thought was her father was dead, although her mother did not acknowledge this fact with her for many years. As a child, Grandma describes her feelings about this: "Mama always tell me bumbye he come home, but I wait fo him and he no come home. Ma-ke die dead, I tink. Maybe he ma-ke because I was bad. Maybe he don't want me anymore (*Little Bit* 36)." This speech emphasizes the self-blame and self-doubt that was ingrained into Grandma Kiyoko's personality as a result of what she perceived as rejection from her father.

When Kiyoko was a child her mother hid the fact that she was the illegitimate daughter of the manapua vendor, and even as an adult Kiyoko refuses to acknowledge this

⁹ *Hapa* is the Hawaiian word for half; in this context meaning to be of mixed ethnicity.

fact about herself. This is a point of contention between Bachan (Kiyoko's mother) and Ah Sook (Kiyoko's father). Ah Sook tells Bachan, "One day she gonna know. One day, you gotta tell her... (*Little Bit* 15)." But as the spirit of Bachan says to the spirit of Ah Sook, "She don't wanna listen to me. She don't wanna know (*Little Bit* 8)." Up until the end of Bachan's life she was unable to make Kiyoko hear or accept the fact that Ah Sook was her father.

Kiyoko was afraid of the man who actually was her father, so she was unable to replace the absent father with another father figure who could have provided her with the warmth and security she needed. This, in turn, affected the relationships she formed with males as an adult. Her marriage was tinged with insecurity, and a single incident where Jiro asked another girl to dance on the night he met Kiyoko has continued to haunt her decades later. Compounding Kiyoko's sense of inadequacy was the fact that as a wife she was never able to produce a son.

The confusion Kiyoko felt about herself as somehow undeserving of a father's affection became transformed from a gender prejudice to a racial prejudice. Instead of feeling that she was unworthy because she was a female, she began to feel that she was unworthy because she was half-Chinese and not pure Japanese. This translated into feelings of animosity toward anyone of Chinese ancestry. Ever since she was a little girl she had an aversion toward people of Chinese ancestry in spite of, or perhaps because of, the fact that her mother used to entertain the Chinese manapua vendor in their home. This prejudice carried through her adult years, when her daughter Emi married a Chinese man and produced a part-Chinese daughter. The fact that Emi is now divorced could partly be blamed upon Kiyoko's hostility toward their marriage, although Kiyoko uses it as a point of argument to show that Emi was wrong to marry a Chinese man in the first place.

Grandpa Jiro was friendly with Ah Sook and knew that Grandma was half Chinese. In fact, his term of endearment for Grandma Kiyoko was "China Doll," although

she hated that. We also discover that Jiro took their daughter Emi to meet Ah Sook before his death. But this still had to be kept a family secret as Emi later explains to her daughter Kay, “It’s like I had to keep this secret of Grandpa’s and at the same time pretend that Grandma was right, that she was pure Japanese (*Little Bit* 38).”

Grandma Kiyoko’s racial prejudice is inextricably intertwined with the shame of her birth as an illegitimate child, and she would prefer to reject her entire family rather than accept a part of her identity which she has been trying to suppress for her entire life:

(bitterly) You folks wanna be pa-ke, you go head. Be pa-ke. Jes take me home! I can take care myself. I no need you folks! I not gonna let you get rid of me, jes like Bachan wanna get rid of me. I can take care myself... all da kids used to tell me dat little mo Bachan give me away to da pa-ke man! He wanna take me away! You tink I stupid? (stands, begins to take off layers of clothing) You tink I donno who my fahdah? You tink I wanna go wit him? How come me? How come not one of da other children. How come, huh? I tell you why, cause I get pa-ke blood. She was gonna give me away cause I was pa-ke baby. Dirty. You no can jes peel da skin like one manapua and make um clean. Pau. Poho. When you one bastard, you no can erase. Nobody want one bastard. (*Little Bit* 39)

Kiyoko’s racial prejudice caused her to reject Ah Sook, herself, her daughter Emi for marrying a Chinese man, and her granddaughter Kay who is actually 3/4 Chinese. Of course, although their Chinese-ness makes Kiyoko uncomfortable, she cannot completely reject her own offspring. In the end, it is the love of family that brings Kiyoko around to an acceptance of herself. It is her granddaughter Kay who brings her to this realization, “Sometimes you just have to be who you are, Grandma. Look Grandma, look in the mirror. You look like me. I mean, I look like you. Little bit like you (*Little Bit* 47).”

The play’s title, *A Little Bit Like You* is reiterated repeatedly throughout the play as the family resemblance between characters is commented upon. This emphasizes the family element in the issue of interracial marriage and multi-ethnic offspring. The play personalizes the issue of racial prejudice by showing how it affects individuals within a family. The following dialogue highlights this point:

- Bachan: (laughs) When you're related, you're always here. When you related jes like you little bit me and I little bit you.
- Kay: There you go again... why does everybody have to be like somebody else? Why can't you just be who you are? And you're forgetting one small detail, you're dead.
- Bachan: You can be yourself, but part of who you are is your family. You part of dis family. Otherwise you never know who you are... you always going be lost...(Little Bit 34)

But the issue of racial prejudice affects people on a much larger scale than just within the home. Ah Sook reflects the concern of the playwright with this issue when he says, "Ai-ya, ai-ya. (to Bachan) You see. You gotta tell her. Errybody same-same. Allasame... (Little Bit 32)." In other words, we need to look beyond our ethnic differences and recognize the essential goodness in each human being no matter what their skin color might be or where their parents might have been born.

All of the characters in this play speak pidgin, and they are generationally differentiated according to the type of pidgin they speak. Lum explains his technique in a note at the end of the play:

Bachan and Ah Sook speak pidgin English, their second language. Grandma and Grandpa speak Hawaii Creole English, HCE, (sometimes also called pidgin English) and are more fluent in English presumably because they were born in Hawaii. Creole is their first language. Their speech however is more likely to include traces of their parents' first language, Japanese. Bunny and Kay also speak creole but with less Japanese language references and are more adept at switching between standard English when they talk to each other and pidgin when they talk to Grandma and Grandpa. Note that pidgin and creole is not "broken English" and like any other language has its own structure, grammar, and rhythm. (Little Bit 48)

What Lum refers to as "standard English" when Kay and Bunny speak to each other, I would still characterize as a light (acrolectal) pidgin because although they use more standard English sentence structures than the preceding generations in Hawai'i did, their dialogue is still peppered with more slang and occasional Hawaiian, Japanese or Chinese words than are found in standard English.

The constant presence of Bachan and Ah Sook in this play provides an interesting challenge in production as one must distinguish between the ghostly and the physical frames of reality. The frequent switching between spirit world and living world, past and present, and the convergence of these worlds at times, can best be evoked through creative lighting design. Because the play switches quickly back and forth among a number of locations, the set must be flexible and neutral, using simple props or set pieces to suggest locale. Kay's costume needs to be neutral enough to serve either in the present action or in the past when she portrays her grandmother Kiyoko. Other characters who play more than one role also need to have relatively neutral costumes. Ah Sook's costume provides the most concrete visual tie to the past; the playwright suggests he be dressed in a traditional "coolie" outfit with his manapua tins suspended from each end of a stick balanced across his shoulders.

The most prominent element of this drama is the contemplative and otherworldly mood evoked by the presence of the spirits from the past who comment upon and influence the action of the present. But the playwright fights to prevent this mood from entirely dominating the play. The scenes between Bunny and Kay are bright and lively, and Bunny provides comic relief whenever she is present on stage. Although it is primarily Kay who can see and communicate with the spirits Bachan and Ah Sook, as well as with her comatose grandfather, occasionally Bunny or Emi also get a glimpse of this world. But again, instead of getting drawn into the otherworldly aspect of the drama, Bunny deflects the mood by denying what she saw. An example of this comes near the end of the play when Emi thinks she heard something:

Mother: There was this voice I heard. Did you guys hear it? (looks around quizzically)

Bunny: Voice? (looks at Kay)

Kay & Bunny: (in unison) Nah! (all exit) (*Little Bit* 41)

In this way the playwright deliberately deflates the mood and brings us back to the present physical reality.

In November 1991 *A Little Bit Like You* was given its world premiere by Kumu Kahua at Chaminade's Croarkin Theatre, co-sponsored by Honolulu Theatre for Youth. J. Scott Botelho directed the production. Reviewer Jerome Landfield complimented the skillful blend of elements which comprised the production, and aside from a desire to see stronger, tighter action toward the end and a wish for an intermission, described the play itself as a sensitive, universally relevant drama (11/25/91). *Ka Leo O Hawai'i, Honolulu Weekly* and *The Hawaii Herald* also praised the play (Yin 12/4/91; Koeur 12/4/91; Muromoto 12/6/91). The *Honolulu Advertiser*, on the other hand, criticized the "rather aimless production style," and a script that lacked focus (Rozmiarek 11/27/91).

Kumu Kahua produced the slightly-revised play again in May 1993, this time at Tenney Theatre. This production was designed to be taken on tour that summer to Kona, Lihue, Hilo, and Windward Community College, so it was deliberately more spare than the original production had been. This proved to be an advantage. Reviewer John Berger appreciated the "effective, minimalist sets" designed by John H.Y. Wat, and also noted, "it takes longer than necessary to hammer home its point, but the quality of Lum's writing makes much of the meandering enjoyable (5/29/93)." Rozmiarek praised the second production, from the strong central focus of the script to the "sensitive and lyric interpretation by director Keith Kashiwada (5/29/93)."¹⁰

¹⁰ The differences between the first and second versions of this script were minimal. Lum made some changes during rehearsal to parts that didn't seem to be working, but he credits the strength of the second production to director Keith Kashiwada's understanding of the script (Lum 2/22/02).

Fighting Fire

In 1995 Lum was commissioned by Kumu Kahua Theatre to write a play as a companion piece to his earlier one-act, *Oranges Are Lucky*. The result of this was the short play *Fighting Fire*. This is a surrealistic play about two elderly Chinese American men, nicknamed Gunner and Cowboy. As youths these two were members of the same YMCA boys club and basketball team. The club has continued through the years, but Gunner and Cowboy are the only two original members still alive. Framed by the action of the two men planning their own funerals while at the same time investing in Gunner's scheme to get rich selling illegal fireworks, the play examines Cowboy's memories and self perceptions as he looks back upon what he considers to be a mediocre life.

As the play opens, Cowboy is shopping for his coffin while grumbling with Gunner for persuading him to invest his money in fireworks. The next two scenes are surrealistically interlaced. As Gunner and Cowboy unload the shipment of fireworks Cowboy's father, a spirit figure, weaves in and out of the action and describes his fears and worries as he worked aboard a ship for passage to America. Simultaneously, Cowboy recalls his anxieties on his honeymoon cruise. The two realities continue to intermesh as Cowboy plays a late night game of basketball against Gunner and recalls the frustration of his father trying to teach him to play baseball. In scene 4 Cowboy and Gunner rehearse their funerals while Cowboy's father interjects derogatory comments about his son. In the final scene Gunner's store has burned down, probably because Gunner left a lit cigar there. Insurance will not cover the damages because the fireworks were illegal, so Cowboy and Gunner have lost everything except one last box of firecrackers. Gunner allows Cowboy the honor of setting off the last of the fireworks in a glorious finale of smoke and noise.

Present reality and memory overlap and intertwine not only through the physical presence of Cowboy's father as a spirit, but also through the overlapping actions and

dialogue in which Gunner and Father mirror words, actions and phrases while talking at the same time to Cowboy about different things:

- Cowboy: Wait (out of breath), I gotta rest. (Stops holds box again.)
- Father: Yeah, you rest. Too fat. Too slow. Waste time. Jes like all dese firecracker. Waste time.
- Gunner: (voices overlap) No waste time. What you doing? Counting your money already? Let's go.
- Father: Let's go. No mo all day. (*Fighting 7*)

In this example Gunner is talking to Cowboy about loading the boxes of fireworks into his store-room, while Cowboy's father is throwing boxes to him and talking to him about catching baseballs. The language used in this play varies little from one character to another because they are members of the same ethnic group and same social circle. Even Cowboy's father does not sound markedly different. They all speak mesolectal Chinese pidgin English, although very few Chinese words are used.

At the heart of it, this play examines two contrasting approaches to life. Clarence "Gunner" Loo has always been willing to take big risks in the hope of a big payoff. He is a gambler, and more often than not, he wins. He was nicknamed "Gunner" because of his propensity to shoot for the hoop while playing with his basketball team. He is married, although the only reference to his wife comes late in the play when the two men do a dry-run of their funerals. He is now the owner of Chinese curio store and an import-export business, a line of work in which financial risk is inherent but profit can be great. He walks with a cane, an infirmity resulting from heart surgery which has left a large zipper-like scar down his chest.

The more cautious Edward "Cowboy" Lee is a few years younger than Gunner. He is married and has sons, although again there are only brief references to his wife or children. Cowboy, now a retired salesman, was nicknamed as a youth for his bowed legs. While Gunner is a gambler, willing and able to take big risks with his money, Cowboy is

more concerned with providing security for his family. Investing two thousand dollars into fireworks with Gunner is equivalent to giving up his life's savings. Cowboy feels a slight sense of competitive animosity toward Gunner because Gunner has always received the glory for making the winning moves. Cowboy points out to Gunner though, that at least in the game of basketball, Gunner's glory was achieved because other people made it possible for him:

- Cowboy: You may have been the Gunner on the team, but that's because I kept feeding you.
- Gunner: Cause you never wanted to shoot! Gotta take a chance, gotta shoot. You was too cock-eye. I had da touch.
- (The game gets more serious.)
- Cowboy: Gimme da ball Gunner... gimme da ball...
- Gunner: You no can shoot Cowboy, just watch the back. Play defense.
- Cowboy: No Gunner, you gotta gimme da ball... it's my turn.
(*Fighting 10*)

Cowboy has been the cautious one all his life, and he wants to have a shot at glory once before his life is over. But Gunner argues that Cowboy never had the skill to win at gambling, which is why he always played it safe. After Gunner's store has burned down, when they have nothing left to lose, Gunner gives his cigar to Cowboy who is holding the only salvaged box of firecrackers so that Cowboy can, for once, take the shot by setting off the last of the firecrackers.

Fireworks are a central metaphor in this play. Early in the play Gunner says in reference to the fireworks: "People tink dis might be the last year. They wanna go out wit a bang (*Fighting 4*)!" but this could also apply to Gunner and Cowboy who want to have one last hurrah before the end of their lives. The fireworks also serve as a metaphor for Chinese people in general, and illegal immigrants in particular. Gunner says in reference to his illegal fireworks:

- Gunner: Here Cowboy, take a look at this. Hee, hee... here's my yut chin sahm bahk oong, my immigrants... my thirteen fifties.
- Cowboy: Thirteen fifties?
- Gunner: Yeah, they used to call the illegal immigrants yut chin sahm bahk oong, 1,350, I guess that's the price they paid to get in... (*Fighting 5*)

This is a double entendre, referring both to the fireworks and to those people who came to the United States as illegal immigrants from China. Soon afterward Cowboy's father reflects upon the desperation he felt aboard ship when he came to Hawai'i as an illegal immigrant:

...I dream it's going to sink and all the doors on the ship slam shut and I'm stuck inside. Pounding on the door. The ratchet noise of the mechanic, fixing something. I think they're screwing down the lid to my coffin. We will die in this stinking ship. We gonna die. Those men saw only money. They would think nothing of taking everything you had, your money, your clothes, your teeth and toss you overboard. Throw you back to China. Throw their cigarette butts after you. No one to hear your screams...
(*Fighting 8*)

His monologue evokes the imagery of death and coffins, reminding us again of the opening scene where Cowboy and Gunner shop for their coffins. Later in the play, Cowboy reflects the same fears and concerns his father had as he describes the honeymoon cruise which he won in 1947 where they were stuck in an inside cabin next to the engine room:

Yeah was like being in a steel coffin, especially when you see the hatches... I kept thinking if we sink, they gonna seal off the first class by closing these doors. We were so far down from the top deck, I think we were already underwater... and me and Florence we would die along with the rest of those pa-kes in the engine room. (*Fighting 15*)

Dennis Carroll has commented upon the central image of the fireworks in this play, explaining that fireworks "are a crucial component of Chinese funeral rites (*TDR 133*)."

Images of fireworks and coffins are reinforced repeatedly through the dialogue in *Fighting Fire*, creating the contemplative mood of one reflecting upon life as the end draws near. Cowboy, the one who wanted to shop for coffins at the beginning of the play, is ready to let go of his life and does not want to be the last of his friends and teammates to remain

alive. He is tired of struggling, and as he recalls a dream about his cruise-ship experience he confides to his friend, "... I want to let go, Gunner (*Fighting* 16)."

Like Lum's earlier play, *My Home Is Down the Street*, this play scrutinizes the relationship between a father and son. The fathers in both plays are overbearing and try too hard to control their sons. The difference is that in *My Home...* father and son come to a tentative truce before it is too late. In *Fighting Fire* the difficulties in the father-son relationship are not resolved before the father passes away, so those feelings continue to haunt Cowboy. Cowboy's problematic relationship with his father, Ah Ba, is a key reason for his dissatisfaction with his own life as an adult.

Ah Ba initially has a paternalistic concern for his son, "I worry about Mama and the baby boy when I'm working (*Fighting* 8)." But he was unsuccessful in molding Cowboy into his idealized image of a baseball-playing American kid, and this disappointment tinged their relationship permanently. Cowboy describes how his father's words haunted him even after he passed away. "Even on the ship I could still hear my father yelling at me... and I'm too scared to answer. It was like if I answered, he'd really be there (*Fighting* 13)." These feelings of inadequacy stayed with Cowboy throughout his life; as an old man he can still hear Ah Ba referring to him as "...too fat. Too slow. Waste time (*Fighting* 14)!"

Cowboy's pent-up frustration and anger with his father is vehemently expressed near the end of the play. As they rehearse their funeral rituals, Cowboy points to his father and urges Gunner to

burn da firecracker... for him. Burn um so I can feel um, so our bones they vibrate... like the mah jong tiles... like the bones of my father... I wanna feel his fear... the gamblers... the sound of the losers tossed overboard. I wanna feel him trembling at the sound of the firecrackers in his head... Throw it in his coffin so he can dance the way he made me dance under those fly balls. Chasing after his dreams. And always watching the fireworks... never really having the guts to burn them (*Fighting* 17).

This speech illustrates not only Cowboy's frustration with his father, but also how irrevocably they are connected. In the same breath he describes the vibration of his bones, his father's bones, and their bones together. Lum shows with this monologue, as he did in his earlier play *Oranges Are Lucky*, that although the younger generations may protest against such an idea, the present and past are inextricably connected.

Cowboy's sentiment about his father never having the guts - or being too stingy to spend the money - to burn fireworks although he "always caught him watching (*Fighting* 6)," also ties into his own tendency to stand on the side-lines and watch others take the dangerous - and exciting steps in life. Although his father criticized him for not being better or faster or brighter, they were actually two of a kind. His father was a small-time gambler, "Always one short of the big winner (*Fighting* 8)." As Cowboy acknowledges toward the end of the play, his father was much like him. "My father never burned the big kine... he jes watched all his life (*Fighting* 19)." Indeed, Cowboy's feelings were painfully ambivalent toward his father:

And Daddy, what fo you ma-ke? I nevah get chance for burn firecracker fo you. You nevah give your good-fo-nutting, too-fat, too-slow, no-can-catch son a chance. Wassamattah you! Waste time (*Fighting* 18, 19)!

He expresses the self-loathing which comes from constant criticism, the anger toward his father for the way he was treated, and the pain and sorrow of losing his father and not being able to honor him properly in death. The pain of paternal rejection, that was presented from a female perspective in *A Little Bit Like You*, is displayed here in Cowboy's words.

As with Lum's other plays, the surrealistic element of the drama is what provides the greatest opportunity for interesting mise en scène in production. As was the case in *A Little Bit Like You*, the interweaving of present and past, spirit and living can most clearly be evoked visually through the use of lighting. The set is meant to be flexible so that it can allow for the fluid transition of action. As the playwright describes it, the set should look

like: “a basement warehouse of a store in Chinatown. Adjacent is a narrow alley between two buildings where a basketball hoop is hung. The set doubles as a mortuary, ship’s hold, the stern of the ship, and a grave site (*Fighting 1*).” Costumes in *Fighting Fire* are also meant to be flexible in order to work equally well in the constantly shifting realities. Father, Team 1 and Team 2 are all dressed in tank-tops which alternately resemble the garb of Chinese immigrant men or basketball players. Team 1 and Team 2 are unnamed basketball teammates of Cowboy and Gunner who also play incidental roles such as gamblers or shipworkers. They support the action without calling attention to themselves as specific characters, so their costumes must be neutral throughout the play. Fireworks are integral to the plot and theme of this drama, and the use of live firecrackers provide an additional dimension to the use of sound in the play.

Fighting Fire was produced together with *Oranges Are Lucky* in January and February of 1996. John H.Y. Wat directed both plays. In general, Honolulu critics felt that *Fighting Fire* was a stronger play by far. The *Honolulu Advertiser* compared the two plays: “Each creates its own reality, although the new play is considerably more sophisticated and lyrical than ‘Oranges (Rozmiarek 1/12/96).” The *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* described *Fighting Fire* as “fast paced, sharply defined, and funny on several levels (Berger 1/12/96).” *Honolulu Weekly* was the most extreme in its criticism of *Oranges...* and in its praise of *Fighting Fire*, calling the latter “one of [the] most exciting new plays in America (Thomson 1/24/96).”

Lum’s dramas continue to interpose the past with the present and imagination with reality, focusing on the development of theme over narrative. In the words of one critic, “Each [play] travels a circular path to create a vignette, instead of taking a linear path to create a story (Rozmiarek 1/12/96).” The themes Lum addresses most often in his plays are those of inter-ethnic and inter-generational relations as immigrant characters and their descendants adjust to life in Hawai‘i, assimilating to greater or lesser degrees into the

“local” lifestyle. Lum’s poetic pidgin dialogue singles out and reiterates key images or metaphors in his plays, such as the oranges in *Oranges Are Lucky*, the boo-look in *My Home is Down the Street*, the manapua in *A Little Bit Like You*, and the firecrackers in *Fighting Fire*, reinforcing the themes of the dramas. His later plays are significantly stronger in their use of these metaphors to emphasize theme and in their ability to provide a more skillful and fluid inter-meshing of disparate realities, resulting in a more satisfying dramatic experience for audience members.

CHAPTER 5

VICTORIA NĀLANI KNEUBUHL

Victoria Nālani Kneubuhl is the niece of the late John Kneubuhl, an early pioneer in “local” theatre. While she shares her uncle’s talent for writing and concern with Polynesian issues, she has a dramatic style of her own. Ms. Kneubuhl is an important playwright to consider not only because of the scope and caliber of her work, but also because she is a part-Hawaiian playwright and one of the few women playwrights in the state whose work is regularly produced. When asked why she chose a career in playwriting, she responded:

I am a playwright because I believe the theatre provides the possibility of a communal experience which is at once both artistic and intensely human. It is a conduit into our every day world through which mystery and magic may still enter. At the same time, theatre can serve as a powerful platform for examining the social and political issues of our time. (Mattos *Meet the Playwright* 17)

Looking at her plays we will see that mystery, magic, and otherworldly qualities are used frequently as she weaves her stories around social or historical issues of contemporary concern.

The caliber of Ms. Kneubuhl’s work was recognized when she was awarded the 1994 Hawai’i Award for Literature, the highest literary award one can receive in the state of Hawai’i. In 1995 she was the first theatre artist ever to receive an Individual Artist’s Fellowship from Hawai’i’s State Foundation on Culture and the Arts. She has written a number of Living History performance projects and eleven plays, including four which were commissioned and produced by the Honolulu Theatre for Youth. Her plays have been published by the Theatre Communication Guild and by Temple University Press. Three of her plays (*The Conversion of Ka’ahumanu*, *Emmalehua* and *Ola Nā Iwi*) are soon to be published by the University of Hawai’i Press. Copies of her plays are also

housed in the Native American Women Playwrights Archive at Miami University as well as in the Kumu Kahua Theatre Archives.

Kneubuhl can be compared to Edward Sakamoto in that some of her “local” plays, specifically *The Conversion of Ka’ahumanu*, *Ka’iulani* and *January, 1893* can be associated with specific periods in Hawai’i’s history. But the approaches taken by Sakamoto and Kneubuhl are different. Sakamoto uses fictional characters and creates the historicity in his plays through references to specific places and activities as well as through the way the pidgin language is used by his characters. Kneubuhl’s plays focus on prominent women in Hawai’i’s history; she relies less on differentiations in the way her characters speak, and more on researching and interpreting specific events in history.¹

Kneubuhl has a gift for creating evocative imagery in the poetic dialogue of her plays. In this respect she can be more closely compared to Darrell H.Y. Lum, whose strength also lies in this area. The most important elements of the plays by both Lum and Kneubuhl are mood and theme, and these are created through the highly poetic images evoked by the words spoken on stage. Kneubuhl heightens the intensity of her dramas sometimes through the use of Hawaiian chants and sometimes through the use of choral voices which speak individually and in combination, repeating key words and phrases to create a strong, surrealistic mood.

Both Kneubuhl and Lum also use the surrealistic technique of overlapping realities, where reality gets mixed up with imagination, or where spirits communicate with characters in the physical realm. As with Lum, Kneubuhl’s plays utilize a fluid staging style and are typically very sparse in their requirements for sets, often because they use such a variety of times and locales that literal representation would be impractical. Costumes and lighting

¹ It could be argued that *Emmalehua* is a historical play which uses fictional characters, but there is only one moment in the play where a character mentions that it is the year 1951. The rest of the play is quite open - there are no other references to time, place or events to set it specifically in 1951.

can be used judiciously to enhance the mood and themes of her dramas, but again, these are always secondary to the spoken word.

This chapter analyzes Kneubuhl's "local" plays for adults: *Emmalehua* (1984, re-written in 1996), *Ka'iulani* (co-written with Robert Nelson, Dennis Carroll and Ryan Page 1986), *The Conversion of Ka'ahumanu* (1988), *January 1893* (1992), and *Ola Nā Iwi* (1994). Kneubuhl consistently tells her stories from a female point of view and, coming from a heritage rooted both in Hawai'i and in Sāmoa, she deals most often with subjects pertinent to Hawai'i or the Pacific Islands. She is important as an emerging voice in Hawai'i's theatre tradition, representing not only a feminist aesthetic,² but also a perspective rooted in the Polynesian way of viewing the world.³

Emmalehua

Emmalehua is a play about a young Hawaiian woman who is forced to choose between her calling to serve Laka, the goddess of hula, and her desire to fit into mainstream society through her marriage to a young engineer. Set in 1951, the play deals with the struggle to hold onto traditional cultural values in the face of encroaching modernization. The play was first produced in 1986 for Kumu Kahua Theatre, directed by the playwright's uncle, John Kneubuhl. In 1996 the play was substantially revised for a new production at Kumu Kahua Theatre, giving more emphasis to the surreal, spiritual aspects of the play. The 1996 production was directed by Dennis Carroll. This analysis evaluates the 1996 version of the script.

² Helene Keyssar describes the essential characteristics of feminist drama as "the creation of significant stage roles for women, a concern with gender roles in society, exploration of the texture of women's worlds and an urge towards the politicisation of sexuality (xi)." Kneubuhl does not prescribe to any particular feminist theory in her writing, but her plays do tend to contain the characteristics described by Keyssar to varying degrees.

³ In traditional Hawaiian thought, land and water are considered sacred, family ties are considered crucial, and generosity to strangers is considered a basic rule of behavior (Handy & Pukui 6, 28, 185-186). These values are shared in other parts of Polynesia, and are readily apparent in Kneubuhl's plays.

This expressionistic play explores the dual reality experienced by the central character, Emmalehua, as she tries to bridge the gap between her spiritual calling and the physical world. At the beginning of the play we learn that as a child Emmalehua was made sacred to Laka, but in an attempt to fill the void left by her grandmother's death and to assimilate into contemporary society, she married and refused to continue the practice of her sacred traditions. As a result of this she is plagued with nightmares which intensify early in the play after she finds her grandmother's *lei hoaka*.⁴ Her father tries to help her see that the nightmares are caused by her denial of her calling. But her husband Alika (who is having an affair with her half-sister Maelyn) is self-absorbed and has little patience for her disturbances. Emma meets a Native American man named Adrian Clearwater who works with Alika. Clearwater senses Emma's internal strife and their connection allows Emma to recognize what is happening to her and to set things right.

Adrian Clearwater is a crucial character in the play because he becomes a catalyst for the change which occurs in Emma. As with Emma, he has been entrusted with his grandparent's spiritual knowledge, which he has chosen to suppress in favor of living a "normal" life in mainstream society. And like Emma, this dichotomy eats away at him. When he and Emma meet, the sense of spirituality within them both is reawakened.

Emma's husband, Alika, represents the modern Hawaiian who lacks any link with the past. He is a veteran of World War II and like many Hawai'i veterans of that war, he returned home with a strong drive to improve societal conditions. While some veterans went into politics to change social policy, Alika went into engineering to *build* a new Hawai'i. He also wants to enjoy the fruits of his labor without being tied down by a family. He regularly goes out with his friends after work, drinking and fooling around with other women, leaving Emma alone at home. He has no concern for his wife's

⁴ A lei or necklace with a crescent-shaped pendant made of a boar's tooth. In the play, this lei is imbued with the spiritual power to summon the goddess Laka to possess the body of the dancer who wears it.

psychological well-being, and is more concerned with the fact that the neighbors might hear her cries than he is with the fact that she is plagued by nightmares.

Two other supporting characters, Kaheka and Maelyn, are also important. Kaheka is Emma's kind and nurturing father. His first wife, Emma's mother, died; and his second wife, Maelyn's mother, left him. He has a penchant for alcohol, which causes some embarrassment to his two daughters. Maelyn still lives at home with him, and their home is not far from Emma's because they pop into her house with regularity. Kaheka is always there for Emma to confide in, and he continually reminds her of the bigger spiritual picture into which she has been woven. He never tries to impose his will upon her, but serves as the anchor of reason in the stormy sea of her troubled world.

Maelyn feels that the rest of the family has excluded her because of her mother's behavior. When Emma was selected to carry on the tradition of worship to Laka, Maelyn saw this as yet another way in which she was excluded. In rebellion Maelyn embraced the seductive "Hapa Haole" hula with open arms, working professionally as a hula dancer in Waikīkī. This is an unspoken source of contention between the two sisters. Maelyn is bitterly jealous of Emma's status as "the chosen one" and covets everything that belongs to Emma, simply because it belongs to Emma. She even undermines Emma's hollow marriage through her affair with Alike. Like Alike, she represents a modern consciousness which chooses to ignore the spiritual aspects of life.

A chorus of three men and three women play a variety of incidental roles, but serve more importantly as the "voices" that haunt Emma's days and permeate her dreams. This chorus creates a mood of foreboding and urgency as they sometimes overwhelm Emma. At the end of Act I scene 1, they state the problem that she must wrestle with:

Without the womb, a child never grows. Without the gourd, water slips through the fingers. Without a lei, there is no encircling love. Without your body, Laka fades away. (*Emmalehua* 14)

The chorus reinforces the idea that Emma is the receptacle for the goddess; she is the one

who must carry on the rituals and provide the human body that allows the goddess to continue to exist within the physical realm.

There are a variety of themes that can be drawn from this play, but the most important message is that people must find a way to preserve and celebrate the sacredness in their lives, which often comes from traditions of the past, while still being able to live in the present. In a personal interview, Kneubuhl stated:

In the late 19th century, the early 20th century, a lot of Hawaiians just gave up. They would just give up and die. Doctors couldn't fathom it but it was often said "they died of a broken heart." My feeling has always been that many of our people died because they lost the spiritual connection with the earth that gave their life purpose, meaning and joy. When you take those things away from people, their lives become meaningless. When you take meaning away from people's lives, they have trouble living... I think it has to do with being disconnected from a certain validation of our own holiness and our connection with the earth and the planet. (Kneubuhl 3/29/96)

We see the playwright's concern with this issue in the play *Emmalehua* where she presents two young people from two different cultures, Hawaiian and Native American, each trying to avoid the responsibility of the knowledge that has been passed down to them. For Emma this denial results in relentless nightmares and a desperate attempt to hold together a life built on hollow dreams. For Clearwater this spiritual denial results in a sense of disconnection from both the past and the present which almost causes him to take his own life. But in each case the spirit world intercedes and in the end they realize the importance of preserving what has been passed on to them.

After Emma realizes that Alika cannot fill the emptiness created by her grandmother's death she begins, with difficulty, to reach back to her connections with the past and with the goddess Laka. She experiences a vision where her grandmother is trying to lead her but Emma cannot find her way or grasp what her grandmother offers. At the end of the experience Emma is left with the concrete image of Laka in a piece of wood

wrapped with yellow kapa.⁵ This image of Laka serves the audience as a tangible reminder of the central metaphor of the play - the hula.

In *Emmalehua* the hula serves as a metaphor representing not only the dance itself but also the Hawaiian culture as a whole. Since 1778 when westerners first began coming to Hawai'i, traditional Hawaiian values and customs were systematically stripped away until the 1970s when the hula was one of the last remaining vestiges of a dying heritage. The "Hawaiian Renaissance" of the 1970s marked a reversal in trends, and since that time people have made a concerted effort to preserve what remained of Hawaiian culture. While the Hawaiian language has experienced a dramatic resurgence and people throughout the state have made efforts to learn about other aspects of Hawaiian culture, the hula continues to be the most accessible aspect of Hawaiian culture to people in Hawai'i and around the world.

The ancient hula in Hawai'i, known commonly as hula kahiko, had many purposes. Since Hawai'i had no written language, the hula served as an important vehicle for recounting history, genealogy and myth. Hulas were also performed to honor the gods or the ruling class. According to Mary Kawena Pukui,⁶ by 1936 most of the ancient hulas had been lost for all time, but there were still at least thirty-six different types of hula (Barrère et. al. 74). These hulas could be solemn and formal, or satirical and sexually suggestive, depending upon the occasion for which they were composed. The hula kahiko, performed by women or men, was usually characterized by strong, angular movements. One of the most important aesthetics in the hula kahiko was group precision, wherein groups sometimes as large as two hundred dancers moved in absolute unison (Vancouver 5, 128-130).

Under Western influence the practice and presentation of hula kahiko was officially banned between 1824 and 1874, a period of fifty years. Even after the ban on hula was

⁵ Traditional Hawaiian cloth made from the pounded bark of a tree.

lifted it was usually done in private, away from the eyes of non-Hawaiians because foreigners continued to disapprove of the hula kahiko. What gradually appeared in its stead, for the general public, was a style of dance known as modern hula (Barrère et. al. 64-66), or hula 'auana.⁷ By the 1950s the type of hula being practiced openly in Hawai'i was quite different from Laka's sacred hula kahiko. Also known as "Hapa Haole" hula, this modern hula was sometimes soft and graceful, sometimes sassy and sexy. It was a glittery, commercialized style of dance, popularized by Hollywood images of the islands.

In Kneubuhl's play this modern hula was distasteful to Emmalehua who had been raised to revere the ancient hula honoring Laka. Rather than demean herself and her culture by perpetuating the glitzy modern hula, Emmalehua chose instead to refrain from dancing altogether. Emma's problem though, was that her grandmother did not lift her *kapu* before she passed away.⁸ So although Emma has tried to ignore her spiritual responsibilities, they have not relinquished their hold on her.

The clash between ancient traditions and modern life, represented in this play through the hula kahiko and the hula 'auana, is physically enacted in the confrontation between the two sisters in Act two, scene nine. When Emma sees Maelyn wearing her lei hoaka while dancing a lascivious Hapa Haole hula for Alika she pushes Alika away, pulls the lei hoaka off Maelyn and slaps her on the face. Although Alika thinks Emma's reaction is one of sexual jealousy, by this point in the play Emma's concern is only with Maelyn's desecration of a sacred object. Maelyn leaves the scene and Alika tries to force Emma to discard her wooden image of Laka, but Clearwater, who is another representative of ancient tradition, enters and defends her.

⁶ One of the foremost modern authorities on Hawaiian culture and hula, and a highly respected scholar.

⁷ 'Auana means to wander or drift from place to place, and is used in this case to describe the style of hula in which the dancer moves freely around the performance area.

⁸ A kapu is a sacred restriction. In this context it was a sacred restriction making Emmalehua off-limits to others. Ordinarily, the grandmother would have eventually performed an 'oki (Pukui, Haertig & Lee 174-177), a ritual to remove the kapu so that Emma could live among others in everyday life.

Because the hula is a central metaphor in the play, choreography and chant are especially important production elements. Kaleo Trinidad served as the choreographer and Hawaiian Resource Person for the Hawaiian chants and hulas that were used in the 1996 production. Consultants from the Native American Intertribal Council of Hawai'i provided choreography for the "wolf healing ritual," the scene in which Clearwater is prevented from committing suicide. The use of chant and hula is most significant in Act II scene 9, where Emma joins with her grandmother to build a shrine for Laka. This climactic scene represents the reclamation of a whole culture for Emma. During this scene the chorus is transformed into hula dancers from a *hālau*⁹ who bring mountain greenery for the shrine and perform a chant and dance together with Emma. The scene culminates with the chorus encircling Emma and Clearwater as a key line from the earlier Native American ritual emerges at the end, symbolically representing the conjoining of the two cultures as Emma and Clearwater embrace.

The mood of each scene varies depending upon the type of language spoken by the characters. Aside from the chorus when they are performing as "the voices," the majority of the characters including Emma, Maelyn, Clearwater, Alika and most of his friends speak casual, contemporary English. Kaheka speaks standard (mesolectal) pidgin English, and one of Alika's friends, Pearl, speaks with an accent to indicate that she is from Boston. With Emma, however, there are a couple of exceptions to this. One exception is in Act II scene 9 when Emma is speaking with her deceased grandmother. In this scene Emma and her grandmother speak primarily Hawaiian:

Emma: Kupuna. Kupunawahine.

Kupuna: He aha ka pilikia? (What's the trouble?)

⁹ A hula school, in former times a place where sacred traditions were imparted from teacher to students.

- Emma: Nānā 'oe. Ua make nā mea a pau. Nā maile nani, nā 'ie'ie ha'aheo, nā laua'e onaona, nā palapalai lahilahi. Ho'omake au iā lākou. (Look everything's dead. The beautiful maile, the proud 'ie'ie, the fragrant laua'e and the delicate palapalai. I killed them.)
- Kupuna: Mai, mai. Mai uē. Ho'omaka hou kāua. Ho'omaka hou ke ola. (Come, come, don't cry. You and I will begin again. Life begins again.) We just begin again. Take my hand now. (*Emmalehua* 48, 49)

Emma's use of her native language marks the moment when she finally stops fighting the spiritual elements that have been trying to reach her, and suddenly the mood is lifted. The chorus is transformed into a welcoming presence, supporting Emma's new beginning.

There is a sense of lightness and freedom from this point on in the play and Emma is able to reconcile with Maelyn. Despite Clearwater's objections Emma sends him away, realizing that they must travel different paths to preserve their spiritual heritages. The play ends with a sense of peace as Emma recalls the night her grandmother passed her breath of life on to her. In this recollection Emma is finally released from the kapu of the goddess Laka. So instead of being compelled to uphold the ancient ways, Emma is freed to honor the past in a manner that will allow her to live in the present.

One of Kneubuhl's great strengths is the imagery which she poetically weaves into her dialogue. In addition to the hula imagery throughout the play, Hawaiian and Native American symbolism and rituals are referred to repeatedly to emphasize the parallel lives of Emma and Clearwater, and in a larger sense, to draw parallels between Hawaiians and Native Americans. For example, in Act II, scene 3, Emma's father tells Clearwater about the famous *mo'o*¹⁰ associated with the fishpond that Alike and Clearwater are planning to build over. Clearwater compares the Hawaiian *mo'o* to the *minh* in Native American oral traditions (*Emmalehua* 13), and begins to have doubts about working on that project.

¹⁰ A large, lizard-like creature prevalent in Hawaiian myth, thought of as a water spirit.

Water imagery is also prevalent throughout the play. Some of the water imagery comes in the form of large, overpowering waves in Emma's nightmares, which represent the unconscious troubles inundating her conscious world. In Act II, scene 4 Kaheka tells Emma of a dream or an experience he had in which a woman emerged from the fishpond and showed him a bowl of water, and when he looked into the bowl he saw Emma. He is unable to explain to Emma what this could mean. In a personal interview Kneubuhl stated that she wanted to use this scene to add to the impression that the answer to Emma's problem is there, just under the surface, but that Emma can't see it until she is ready (Kneubuhl 3/29/96).

Water imagery also comes into the play through the work Alika is doing, drilling down into and trying to build on top of an ancient fishpond. The discussions that Kaheka and Clearwater have about the mo'ō and the minh emphasize the mythical properties of water. The fact that Alika is drilling into the pond of a famous mo'ō emphasizes his lack of concern for anything but the concrete world that he can see and touch.

The names of some of the characters also evoke water imagery: Clearwater is an obvious example, but there is also the father's name, Kaheka, which means a little tidal pool between the ocean and the land, where the sea washes in and salt forms. This represents a safe, sheltered place between the sea and the land, or between the conscious and unconscious worlds, which is the function that Kaheka serves for Emmalehua.

The visual elements used in the 1996 production of *Emmalehua* helped to emphasize the imagery in the drama. The set, designed by Joseph D. Dodd, utilized a round central platform about the size of a bed, which was called the dais. It served as a stage, a table, a bed, and a ceremonial drum. Strong elasticized cords extended in a criss-cross fashion from the base of the dais to the theatre's ceiling. These cords created the appearance of a large ceremonial drum and also served as ropes to bind or contain Emmalehua. The cords could be released at the bottom and moved around to various

effect. The lighting, designed by Wayne Kischer, also contributed to the mood of the play. Lights were set beneath the audience platforms to shine upward onto the actors, creating a ghostly effect. The poetic imagery in the drama coupled with the evocative set and lighting design, the fluid staging and the use of chant and dance created a powerful, surrealistic feeling in production.

Because the 1986 version of this script was Kneubuhl's first full-length play ever to be produced, Honolulu critics seemed to feel at greater liberty to denounce the work both in 1986 and 1996, despite the changes that Kneubuhl had made in the script for the second version. The *Honolulu Advertiser* bashed the play, calling it "a ham-handed domestic soap opera (Rozmiarek 3/9/96)," an opinion expressed by same reviewer ten years earlier. One viewer felt strongly enough about the play to write a letter to the editor expressing her own view, stating that she "attended the play with a group of 15 women. We all enjoyed it immensely... [it is a] wonderful play that in no way, shape or form resembles a domestic soap opera (Robinson)."

While the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin's* reviewer was not as harsh, he also felt that the play lacked subtlety, comparing *Emmalehua* unfavorably with Kneubuhl's recently produced *Ola Nā Iwi* (Berger 3/11/96). The *Honolulu Weekly*, on the other hand, sang the praises of the playwright: "The lifeblood of Kneubuhl's art is the sound of her words; the deep, almost embarrassingly private passion of her emotions; her poetic realism (Thomson 3/20/96)." The language was, in fact, one of the things that Kneubuhl changed the most in her revision of the script. She explains, "I liked the story and the characters. It was my writing I didn't like. I almost didn't recognize my own words (Bender 3/7/96)." The contrast between the 1986 and 1996 versions of this play provides an illustration of the growth of Kneubuhl's artistry in a way similar to that which we saw with the concurrent staging of Lum's *Oranges...* and *Fighting Fire*.

Ka'iulani

Victoria Nālani Kneubuhl is probably best known for her historical dramas, each of which depicts an important woman who has been influential in the events affecting Hawai'i. It is not surprising that many of Kneubuhl's plays reflect the history of loss and deprivation faced by the Hawaiian people. Kneubuhl vividly recalls stories her Hawaiian mother and grandmother shared with her about Hawai'i's past, and Kneubuhl herself experienced the territorial years in Hawai'i and the transition to statehood (Kneubuhl 1/4/01). She worked for many years for the Hawaiian Mission Houses Museum and Honolulu's Judiciary History Center, immersing herself in the history of a bygone era. She has also worked as a writer and researcher for a number of historical programs and video documentaries in Hawai'i. In 1994 The Hawai'i Heritage Center chose her to receive the "Keeper of the Past" award for her work in preserving and sharing Hawai'i's heritage.

Ka'iulani was originally entered in Kumu Kahua Theatre's playwriting competition as a one-act play in verse by Robert Nelson. Dennis Carroll, Victoria Kneubuhl, and Ryan Page then worked with Nelson to transform the piece into a three-part cantata for the theatre.¹¹ This co-authored work was completed in 1986. Kneubuhl was primarily responsible for most of the first part of the play, the second and third contemporary monologues, and the play's ritualistic elements, including many of the sections utilizing or adapted from traditional chants (Kneubuhl 1/4/01).

Ka'iulani is a play about the beautiful half Hawaiian, half Scottish princess Victoria Ka'iulani Cleghorn who was next in line for the Hawaiian throne when the monarchy was overthrown and Hawai'i was annexed by the United States of America. She died at the age of twenty four, shortly after the demise of her kingdom, and as such has become a symbol

¹¹ A cantata is a musical composition consisting of vocal solos, choruses, etc., often with instrumental accompaniment, used as a setting for a story to be sung. (Neufeldt)

of Hawai'i's loss. The play outlines the major events of her life during the pivotal years of Hawai'i's history from 1875 to 1899. The bi-racial Ka'iulani physically represented the dichotomy between Hawai'i and Europe, and the play emphasizes this aspect of her persona through its structure and its musical accompaniment. The music is sometimes provided by a small European orchestra of piano, flute and violin - and other times by a Hawaiian chanter and *pahu hula*,¹² depending upon which influences are most prominent at that point in the play.

Borrowing from the structure of a musical composition, the play is divided into three parts with brief breaks in the action but no intermission. Part one depicts the early years of Ka'iulani's life, ending with her father and her uncle informing her that she must go to Europe to be educated in a manner befitting a future Queen. Part two depicts the teenaged Ka'iulani in Europe, torn between her Hawaiian and European identities. The dichotomy is shown physically by using two different actresses to portray her; one haole and one Hawaiian. Isolated and helpless, she is kept far from the tumultuous events happening at home, including her uncle's death and her aunt's forced relinquishment of the throne. Ka'iulani appeals unsuccessfully to the U.S. President to undo this action and unwittingly finds herself vying with her aunt for the chance to regain the throne, after which she is again sent off to Europe. After an attempt to annex Hawai'i fails in the U.S. Congress, Ka'iulani insists that she must return to Hawai'i. This decisive action transforms her from the split personality into the adult Ka'iulani of part three, who is unable to accomplish any great feat with her return to Hawai'i. Hawai'i is annexed to the United States, and Ka'iulani succumbs to pneumonia after a fateful ride on horseback in the freezing rain. The play ends with the mourning of the Hawaiian people after Ka'iulani's death, as slides of the real Ka'iulani are projected upon an on-stage screen.

¹² A drum used by a musician to beat time in accompaniment to the dancers of the hula. There are different types, but in this case it was a drum carved from the trunk of a coconut tree, with a shark skin stretched over the top, upon which the musician played with his hands.

Each of the three movements of the play opens with a contemporary monologue from a young woman presenting a different perspective on Ka'iulani's life. The women offering these contemporary perspectives include a student, a feminist, and the granddaughter to an eye-witness of Ka'iulani's funeral. These monologues disrupt the narrative flow of the historical drama, but they bring recognition to the play's theme. The message that emerges is that if there was no apparent purpose to Ka'iulani's life, perhaps in her death there is significance. Her life was filled with frustrated attempts to do something important for her people, but it was in death that her existence attained a tragic meaning. Ka'iulani was a beacon of hope to the Hawaiian people, and with her death she became a symbol of all that had been lost. She was the last gasp for the Hawaiian monarchy, and when her kingdom succumbed to U.S. annexation, she succumbed to illness and death.

The play is performed by a multi-ethnic ensemble of ten women and four men. Each of the women in the chorus takes on the role of a central character at some point in the drama. The character of Ka'iulani is played by four different women, each representing a different facet of her personality or a different stage in her life. Each of the three contemporary monologues is presented by a different actress. The remaining three members of the chorus portray Ka'iulani's mother, Miriam Likelike; her aunt, Queen Lili'uokalani, and her governess, Miss Gardinier.

The four men in the play also perform multiple roles. The Hawaiian Chanter doubles as King Kalākaua. The actor who plays Ka'iulani's father, Archibald Cleghorn, also plays the part of her guardian in London, Theo Davies. Needless to say, an important task for these actors is to find a clear way to differentiate between the characters. The other two male actors are two young haole men who perform a variety of roles including suitors to the princess, although most of the time they play newspaper reporters. In this capacity they work and react as a team, creating a staccato effect and building the dramatic intensity of their scenes.

Because the play is structured to present a variety of perspectives on Ka'iulani, we do not arrive at a fixed interpretation of her character. Each of the four actresses portraying her represents a different aspect of her development. Each of the other characters sees her in a different way. Her mother sees Ka'iulani as part of a long line of Hawaiian royalty; but on her death-bed at age 36 Likelike foresees the fruitless life her only child will lead. Her Scottish father sees Victoria Ka'iulani as a young half-European woman who must be exposed to the world beyond Hawai'i. Miss Gardinier sees Vike as a sweet but headstrong child who must be taught not to abuse her position of authority. King Kalākaua sees her as heir to the throne, and Queen Lili'uokalani sees her as a competitor for what is left of the crumbling monarchy. The Princess' many suitors see her as a beautiful young woman who can bring them wealth and prestige. The Hawaiian people see her as their hope for the future. Ka'iulani herself struggles to understand who she is supposed to be. In her last speech of the play she muses on her identity:

...I was a woman, nothing more,
Nothing less.
They seemed to love an image
I reflected naturally.
Strange it came so clear
For I still didn't know who I was. (*Ka'iulani* 61)

What we come to understand through the different perspectives is that as a young woman who was never allowed to take the throne she was helpless to change the tragic course of events for her kingdom. As an ex-princess she might have lived out her days in comfort, but she wouldn't have been able to serve her people in any effective way. Her young life, cut short, serves as a metaphor for the Hawaiian monarchy as a whole which existed for only a few generations before being abrogated by the United States.¹³ In life she was a

¹³ The ruling class in Hawai'i is many centuries old, but these were chiefs of assorted ranks constantly vying for power. It was not until 1795 that Kamehameha I united all of the major islands under his rule, and he became Hawai'i's first reigning monarch when Vancouver and Kamehameha's English advisors Young and Davis, "indoctrinated" him as King (Handy and Pukui 1981: 41).

symbol of youthful, ideal beauty; and we will never know what could have been had she, and the Hawaiian monarchy, reached full maturity.

Notes at the beginning of the script describe the staging envisioned by the playwrights: the stage consists of three levels of platforms and a ramp, which provides a neutral but very flexible playing space. The middle platform has a thrust at center stage which serves at different times as a funeral bier, a bed, or a table. There is no masking of any kind; none of the actors ever leaves the stage. As originally conceived, the orchestral musicians would remain at all times at the sides of the stage; Western orchestra stage right, and Hawaiian ensemble stage left. In production a two-piece Western orchestra did remain at the side of the stage, but the Hawaiian ensemble, represented solely by the Chanter, was placed center stage on the top platform.

According to the stage directions given in the script, the chorus remains primarily on the floor level throughout the play, although they occasionally retire to the upper level behind the orchestra when the aim is to make Ka'iulani's space seem empty and lonely. The three haole men occupy the central level most of the time, although each occasionally descends to the women's space when appropriate. At each side of the central platform stands a typewriter atop a high lectern, which the reporters use almost like musical instruments to punctuate or intensify moments in the scene. The Hawaiian Chanter/Kalākaua maintains a position of prominence on the top platform with his pahu hula, center stage, throughout the entire play.

Behind the Chanter is a white screen which, to those familiar with hula traditions, is reminiscent of the ancient practice of *hula ki'i*.¹⁴ This provides a subtle hint toward the

¹⁴ A form of hula involving the use of puppets behind or sometimes in front of a white kapa screen. The musical accompanist, usually a drummer, sat in front of or beside the screen, visible to the audience. Hula Ki'i was discussed briefly in chapter one.

metaphor of puppetry that we find in the play. This metaphor is incorporated into the play in two ways. Ka'iulani herself is seen by some as a puppet in the hands of her father and her guardian. In part two of the play, when Ka'iulani travels to New York to appeal to the President and the American people, her speech is "conducted" by Theo Davies, who takes a bow when she is finished (*Ka'iulani* 35, 36). The newspaper reporters comment about her speech, saying "It was evident that she was guided by her guardian. She seems to have no views to express (*Ka'iulani* 36)."

The idea that Ka'iulani could be a puppet for her father is shown through the staging later in the scene when Ka'iulani and Lili'uokalani have been arguing over how to regain the throne. Cleghorn gives a speech at a testimonial dinner suggesting that the Queen step down and allow Ka'iulani to rule under the guidance of a regent in order to reduce the animosity between the monarchy and the business community. Ka'iulani's supporters then recognize the possibility of her divided loyalties, the fact that she might be manipulated by her father, and visually show their change of allegiance by moving to cluster around the Queen instead.

Another element of the *mise en scène* which added to the puppet imagery of the play was the use of wooden poles, about five feet in length, which were used by the chorus of women. When Queen Lili'uokalani is forced to give her speech of abdication, two of these sticks are forcibly taken from the chorus and used by the two young haole men to manipulate her like a puppet. The stage directions describe the intended staging:

Tom and Dick have manhandled the *kahili*¹⁵ bearers and have hooked Liliuokalani's hands like they were fish speared, and are now hauling her arms back and forth so that she looks like a puppet that they are sadistically manipulating for their pleasure... (*Ka'iulani* 40)

The staging makes it unmistakably clear that although in her speech the Queen says that she

¹⁵ A *kahili* is a cylindrical cluster of feathers at the top of a pole, used as a standard to represent Hawaiian royalty.

is abdicating “without any mental reservation... (*Ka ‘iulani* 40)” she is in fact making this statement completely against her will.

The sticks used by the chorus add not only to the puppet imagery in the play, but also to the hula imagery. These sticks, each identical in appearance, are reminiscent of *ka la‘au*, the long wooden sticks which are used in some forms of hula kahiko. Although the sticks are not actually used as *ka la‘au* during any of the hulas, hula kahiko is used to add symbolic significance to certain moments of the play. For example, in the scene when Kalākaua has passed away and Lili‘uokalani ascends the throne, she dances a hula about the driving rains of O‘ahu’s Ko‘olau Mountains. This hula was originally composed in tribute to Kalākaua (Kneubuhl 1/4/01); but as it is used in the play the hidden meaning, or “*kaona*,”¹⁶ of this hula reveals that oppressive forces are working against Lili‘uokalani as she tries move forward with the government of her people (Carroll *TDR* 134).

The chorus’ sticks were, in fact, one of the most visually striking aspects of the production. They could be arranged in various configurations to instantaneously suggest elements of the environment: plants, ocean waves and dance partners were just a few of the things represented. The sticks could also create a feeling of fluidity as the chorus gently explored the space; or create a sense of rigidity or heightened militance depending upon the ways in which they were used by the chorus. Overall, they added to the ritualistic feel of the drama as a whole.

The language of the play is the central element which creates the mood for each scene. Poetry is used liberally throughout the drama, in both Hawaiian and Western forms. Some of the poetry is borrowed from well known originals such as the Hawaiian *Kumulipo*¹⁷ and the poem by Scottish writer Robert Louis Stevenson in honor of his

¹⁶ A mark of excellence in traditional Hawaiian song and poetry is the skillful use of words with double meanings which on the surface mean one thing, but also provide a concealed reference to something else.

¹⁷ An ancient Hawaiian chant which delineates the origin of life; the creation of the world and the living things in it.

friend, the young Ka'iulani. At other times the poetic language is the invention of the playwrights. The play fluidly interweaves choral ensembles, monologues, Hawaiian chant, staccato words and phrases barked out by the reporters, and the realistic dialogue of characters from a century ago. The only language that sounds jarringly out of place is that of the three contemporary monologues. These are used deliberately, in a Brechtian fashion, to jolt the audience out of complacent identification with the characters and to heighten their awareness of the drama's theme.

Ka'iulani was first produced by Kumu Kahua Theatre in 1987. Dennis Carroll provided a tautly directed, stylized production with a talented cast, creating "vivid pictures and sharp images (Rozmiarek 3/28/87)." Warren Cohen provided the musical direction, including the traditional chants and songs which added "a hair-raising edge to many scenes and illustrat[ed] the schizophrenic split endured by Kaiulani (Lawhead 3/26/87)." Reviews to the first production were not overwhelmingly positive; Rozmiarek felt that it lacked focus (3/28/87), but audiences supported it in large enough numbers to warrant a re-mount of the play the following season.

In 1988 a slightly revised *Ka'iulani* was presented as Kumu Kahua's annual inter-island touring production, again under Carroll's direction. Honolulu critics felt that the revised version of the script was stronger but still seemed dissatisfied with the overall form of the drama (Rozmiarek 6/6/88, White 6/2/88). The play toured to Kaua'i, the Big Island and Maui. One audience member in Hilo was moved enough to write:

I am a tough old broad and was surprised when I began to cry... When the play ended abruptly, I sat stunned and could hardly applaud... I wanted to hug them all... and anyone else connected in any way with this powerful stunning drama... I admit that I didn't know what we were going to see yesterday. I'll know next time and be first in line for tickets. (Stanlick 6/27/88)

By far the most unforgettable performance for the cast, though, occurred in the rural area of Hana on Māui. The audience was the primarily "local" Hawaiian work force of the Hana-Māui Hotel, living in a place where people rarely if ever attended live theatre. As Dennis

Carroll described it, “In spite of primitive lighting and a less-than-ideal venue, the performance in this context ironed out the ambivalence of the text and created a frisson unparalleled by any other showing (*TDR* 137).” Surrounded by people who lived the day-to-day existence of disenfranchisement described by this play, the sense of mourning in the air was palpable.

In 1990 *Ka'iulani* was taken on tour to Edinburgh Scotland, to Washington D.C. and to Los Angeles. With this tour Kneubuhl and Nelson had the honor of being the first part-Hawaiians whose work was presented internationally. In Edinburgh, reviewers were divided in their opinions. The reviewer from *The List*, who most clearly understood the theme of the drama, summarized:

[Ka'iulani's] personal struggle for self-determination mirrors that of her people, and her death, shortly after the US annexation of Hawaii, becomes a symbol of their loss. *Ka'iulani* is both a fascinating story and an exciting synthesis of theatrical traditions. (Wilson 8/24-30/90)

Other reviewers though, were frustrated with the melding of dramatic and musical forms. The reviewer in *The Scotsman* complained, “The play is constructed on a musical theme: the music itself, however, switches from powerful chants to the worst type of schmaltzy sub-Rogers and Hammerstein crooning (Lockerbie 8/16/90).” Anne Miyamoto and John Timmins reviewed the production for two different issues of the *Festival Times*, both times harshly criticizing the production for not delivering a production consisting primarily or exclusively of Hawaiian chant and hula:

The brief seconds in which we were treated to chants by an excellent Hawaiian drummer (placed irritatingly upstage and often drowned out by piano and violins) were the only highlights... It is as if Kumu Kahua is ashamed of its cultural heritage. (issue two 8/90)

The play was received favorably in both Washington D.C. and in Los Angeles, California.

The Conversion of Ka'ahumanu

Kneubuhl originally wrote *The Conversion of Ka'ahumanu* in 1988. Set during the tumultuous period around 1819-1820, immediately after the overthrow of the Hawaiian Kapu system and during the arrival of the first American missionaries, it is a two-act play about the relationship between Queen Ka'ahumanu and the missionary women who seek to convert her to Christianity.¹⁸ The drama is performed by only five women: The missionaries Sybil and Lucy, and the Hawaiians Ka'ahumanu, Pali and Hannah. The play presents the opposing points of view of the missionaries and the Hawaiians as the two sides gradually come together, centering upon Queen Ka'ahumanu and her ultimate decision to convert to Christianity.

The play's first Act provides contextual information about what brought the Missionary women to Hawai'i, and the social upheaval being experienced there. News of the arrival of missionary women reaches Ka'ahumanu in scene five as she wonders how she will guide the Hawaiian people since the kapu system has been overthrown. Ka'ahumanu rejects the missionary women's first attempt to broach the subject of a Christian God, but the women of the two cultures slowly begin to learn from one another. Both of the missionary women find their work to be extremely challenging, but where Sybil finds the work rewarding, Lucy confides to Sybil that she is revolted by the Hawaiian people. By the end of Act I, Ka'ahumanu and Hannah are interested in Christianity although Pali is still mistrustful. In Act II, illness sweeps through the villages and Ka'ahumanu worries about the disruptive effects of the haole men in their midst. Ka'ahumanu becomes deathly ill and Sybil tends to her, teaching the Queen her first Christian prayer. When Pali is discovered to be a member of the despised *kauwā* class she is immediately rejected by the Hawaiian women but embraced by the missionary women

¹⁸ This period in Hawai'i's history is discussed briefly in chapter one.

and eventually baptized.¹⁹ Lucy turns out to have breast cancer and near the end of the play she describes the agonizing process of undergoing a mastectomy without anesthesia. Pali alone reaches out to her in her pain. Gradually Ka‘ahumanu comes to recognize the positive aspects of Christianity and realizes that it may serve to protect her nation. The play ends with Hannah abandoning the new religion to return to her lover, while Pali and Ka‘ahumanu both accept Christianity as a new beginning.

Although the play tells the story of Ka‘ahumanu’s introduction to and eventual acceptance of Christianity, it is ultimately more a story of the meeting of two cultures than it is about religion in and of itself. Each character overcomes her own preconceptions about others in order to come to a clearer understanding of herself. The play’s theme, as illustrated by the personal turning points each woman comes to during the play, is that religious teachings mean nothing until they are coupled with true human compassion. This is most clearly illustrated in the interaction between Lucy and Pali during final scene of the play, where Lucy’s religious convictions and Pali’s human compassion, each incomplete on their own, are united in a single unselfish act.

In this scene Lucy, who previously admitted the revulsion she felt for the Hawaiian people, must depend upon someone to change the dressing on her wound from the mastectomy she has just undergone. Sybil tries to change the dressing, but is overcome with nausea and cannot. Ignoring both her personal revulsion at the sight of the wound, and Lucy’s previous revulsion toward her, the newly Christian Pali changes the dressing for Lucy. Lucy responds to Pali’s touch by taking her hand and saying “I will remember this kindness all my days (*Conversion* 223).” This scene is in stark contrast to Act I scene 8 when Pali first touches Lucy, who responds violently, “DON’T TOUCH ME!! TAKE YOUR FILTHY HEATHEN HANDS OFF ME!! (*Conversion* 194).” Pali’s act of

¹⁹ Kauwā were a caste of slaves, or untouchables, who lived apart from the rest of Hawaiian society and were taken for use as human sacrifices.

compassion creates a bond between the two women and shows Ka'ahumanu the potential Christianity has to bring two cultures together without destroying either one.

Each of the characters has a history and personal transformation that we are witness to in the play. Sybil and Hannah never experience complete reversals, although each comes close. Hannah is the first among the Hawaiian women to become interested in the Christian God and the Christian idea of marriage. In the end, though, she rejects the restrictions of the religion and returns to her haole lover. Sybil begins to loosen up and confide to the Hawaiian women about her fiancé who left her before she decided to come to Hawai'i as a missionary; but she soon clams up again and tries to make Hannah choose God over sex.

Act II, scene five contains the major turning point for Pali, who was severely beaten when people discovered that she is a kauwā. Ka'ahumanu and Hannah both reject Pali and quickly leave her presence, but the missionary women help her - presenting her for the first time with a personal reason to value the Christian faith.

The final scene of the play shows us the turning points for both Lucy and Ka'ahumanu. Lucy's attitude toward the Hawaiian people is transformed through Pali's act of compassion, and when Ka'ahumanu witnesses this, she decides to study the scriptures with Pali as her tutor. The dramatic nature of Ka'ahumanu's decision is magnified by the class distinctions between the two women: a Hawaiian Queen would never ask to be tutored by an outcast if it were not for the influence of Christianity. But we quickly realize that it is not simply a naïve belief in a new god that has persuaded Ka'ahumanu to accept Christianity; it is a calculated decision to use the teachings and laws of this religion to help protect her nation.

The personal versus the political reasons for conversion to Christianity are embodied in the persons of Hannah and Ka'ahumanu. In the end, after each has reversed

her original point of view, they sum up their standpoints. Hannah tries to persuade Ka'ahumanu to come back to the way things were before, and Ka'ahumanu responds:

...we cannot go back to the way things were before. I will put aside those old ways because the people need a new way for the new world which comes to us. We will have laws. We will be Christian people.
(*Conversion* 224-225)

Knowing that she must act decisively to protect her people from the degenerate influences of the ungovernable haole men in their midst, Ka'ahumanu chooses Christianity to replace the ancient kapu system, thus providing her people with a moral compass and structure of laws by which to live their lives.

This play was conceived as a chamber play, to be performed in an intimate space upon a predominantly empty stage. There is no need for elaborate scenery or special effects because the imagery is conjured up in our mind's eye by the words of the characters as they speak. One example of this is when Pali describes a strange woman who deserted her unwanted baby in the forest:

...She went far into the night and into the uplands where no one lives but the mountain spirits and the ghosts... She stopped at a place that was quiet and hidden. I watched her put the white bundle in the ground...and I watched her disappear like a thin ribbon into the night. (*Conversion* 217)

We do not need stage scenery to visualize Pali following this woman over the uneven ground in the darkness and hiding amongst the trees to watch what the woman does, or to empathize with her as she goes on to describe her desperation to find the baby when she hears its cries and realizes that it is still alive.

The language of the play is predominantly a heightened English with rather poetic overtones. This serves well to set the play historically, representing the Hawaiians who would presumably be speaking Hawaiian among themselves and the missionaries who spoke and wrote in formal English. The language is not differentiated between characters; all characters speak the same heightened English with smatterings of Hawaiian. The playwright drew upon historical sources to authenticate her characters. Some of the

writings of the real-life missionaries Sybil Bingham and Lucy Thurston are incorporated into the play as monologues to provide first-hand accounts of their experiences, and verses from the bible are quoted liberally, sometimes to profound effect as in the end of Act II scene six.

Christian teachings are juxtaposed ironically with Hawaiian experience upon occasion, as in the final scene where Pali is teaching Ka'ahumanu from a catechism book and reads, "The sin by where our first parents fell was the eating of the forbidden fruit (*Conversion* 224)." This statement comments ironically upon the fall of the Hawaiian religion, which was caused by Ka'ahumanu's public display of men and women eating together, a practice which was forbidden under the kapu system.

Traditional Hawaiian chants add to the Hawaiian perspective of the play, and Hawaiian instruments such as the *ipu*²⁰ and the *'ili'ili*²¹ serve to heighten the dramatic intensity in scenes where hula or chant are used (Kneubuhl 1/4/01). In Act II scene 3, when Ka'ahumanu is ill with fever, she chants a *mele kanikau*²² in memory of her father (*Conversion* 207). The use of this chant gives the audience an idea of how close to death Ka'ahumanu herself comes during the scene. Aside from the use of chant, Hawaiian words and phrases are scattered throughout the play, but since the intended audience is English speaking, the playwright refrains from using any extensive passages of Hawaiian dialogue.

The language of the play is structured to reflect the relationships between the five women. It begins with monologues, not only introducing us to the individual characters but also showing their isolation. As the characters start to interact with one another, the dialogue reflects this by becoming fully conversational. Most of the play consists of this

²⁰ The ipu is a hollowed-out gourd which is used as a musical instrument, held in one hand and patted or pounded upon by the other hand to produce a hollow percussive sound.

²¹ 'Ili'ili are smooth, flat pebbles used as musical accompaniment by dancers for a particular type of hula. Two of these pebbles are held in each hand and they are clicked together within the hand to produce a small, pleasant percussive sound.

²² A "mele kanikau" is a dirge, or chant of mourning.

conversational dialogue, but occasionally a monologue is interjected. Ka'ahumanu has a few short monologues throughout the play as she contemplates the implications of the new religion, and near the end of the play Pali and Lucy each has a long monologue describing a significant personal experience. These monologues have a lasting impact, not because of their length or preponderance, but because of the stark imagery which they contain.

The Conversion of Ka'ahumanu opened Kumu Kahua's season in 1988 under its original title, *The Conversion*. The production was directed by Dale Daigle. The *Honolulu Advertiser's* Drama critic Joseph Rozmiarek appreciated the thoughtful characterizations created by both the playwright and the actresses, but felt the drama was more an intertwining of monologues than a piece with strong dramatic action, and suggested that the play might be improved with the inclusion of some male roles (9/3/88).

The play was re-mounted in 1990 for Kumu Kahua's annual inter-island touring production with a slightly altered title, *The Conversion of Ka'ahumanu*. Again, Honolulu reviewers were reserved in their praise. One reviewer felt that Dale Daigle's direction did not do justice to the script or to the actresses (White 6/90). Critic Joseph Rozmiarek still seemed to be primarily concerned with the script as a "woman's play," which contained only female characters who could "react to outside events... but never place them in motion (6/7/90)." In actual fact, though, Ka'ahumanu's decision to convert to Christianity was a major event which continues to have ramifications today.

After the inter-island tour this production went on to accompany *Ka'iulani* on tour to Edinburgh, Washington D.C. and Los Angeles. Both plays were reviewed in glowing terms by a number of sources in Edinburgh (Campbell 8/21/90; Kay 8/17/90) and in Los Angeles (Loynd 9/7/90). *The Conversion of Ka'ahumanu* specifically was hailed as "a superb piece of theatre, at times chilling and moving, but always smooth and visually delightful (Nathan)."

January, 1893

Since the 1890s Hawaiians and sympathetic non-Hawaiians have tried to use the legal means available to them to restore some, if not all, of the political control that was lost to Native Hawaiians a century ago.²³ By 1993 Hawaiian Sovereignty had become not just a question, but a movement which had steadily gained momentum since the Hawaiian Renaissance of the 1970s.²⁴ The year 1993 marked the 100th anniversary of the overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy, and Hawaiian activists sought a way to mark the centennial and to educate the larger public about the wrongful nature of the events that led to the abrogation of the monarchy.²⁵ In late 1991 Victoria Nālani Kneubuhl was commissioned to write *January, 1893* to mark this centennial. The play was produced in January, 1993 on the 'Iolani Palace grounds and in the adjacent historical district by an organization called Hui Na'auao, directed by Dallas Mossman Vogeler.

Kneubuhl is one of a number local playwrights who have dealt with specific people and events in Hawai'i's history, and there is a temptation to look at these dramas as sociohistory. But as Lee points out in *Performing Asian America: Race and Ethnicity on the Contemporary Stage*:

Both history books and history plays participate in constructing ethnic and racial identity by strategically formulating the past. In this sense, no strict division between history as fact and theater as fiction is possible. Both are less reenactments of past events than a selective interpretation of details that reflect current impulses and tensions... (30-31)

In other words, a writer chooses the facts that she or he wants to emphasize in order to

²³ The years 1898-1969 were marked by futile attempts in the face of overwhelming bureaucracy on the local and national levels. The most notable event of positive impact was the 1920 establishment of the Hawaiian Homes Commission, although this, too has suffered from bureaucratic mis-management up to the present time. For a telling example of the frustrations faced by Hawaiians trying to gain access to and use the homestead land granted to them, see Charles Ka'ai'ai's "Pāhe'ehe'e Ridge" in *He Alo Ā He Alo: Hawaiian Voices on Sovereignty*.

²⁴ The Hawaiian Renaissance is discussed in chapter one, as well as in the years 1971-1981 of the history on Kumu Kahua Theatre.

²⁵ These events are described in chapter one.

present a story that is relevant today. Keeping in mind that a play, like a history book, is a specific *interpretation* of an event or a person, it is useful to look at the history plays produced by “local” writers to see the perspective they offer.

In *Ka'iulani*, for example, the playwrights' use of multiple perspectives emphasized the confusion of a young princess who wasn't really sure what her role in life was supposed to be. In *The Conversion of Ka'ahumanu*, Kneubuhl might have opted to present historical facts in such a way that either the Queen or the missionaries would have been implicated in the subsequent destruction of Hawaiian culture. Kneubuhl instead chose a middle ground, presenting the facts in such a way that no one is entirely to blame for later events. In light of the circumstances surrounding the creation and production of *January, 1893*, it is not

surprising that the play shapes the presentation of the historical facts so that by the end there is no question about where the audience's sympathies should be.

January, 1893 is a five-act play which begins with an elderly grandmother figure, called Kupunawahine, describing what Hawai'i was like before the overthrow of the monarchy. Her words conjure up images from history, and characters from the historical drama begin to appear. The events surrounding the abrogation of the Hawaiian monarchy are reenacted and at the end, as we expect, the Queen is forced to relinquish her throne. In her final speech the Queen urges her people to never give up - to “seek through peaceful, political means to unite as one people (*January* 103).” Kupunawahine, the storyteller from the beginning, exhorts her listeners to remember this story and to pass it on to succeeding generations.

The final words spoken by the Queen stress the central message of the play:

...As long as one ounce of Hawaiian blood runs in our veins, we carry our ancestors with us. And through uniting, each and everyone, we will give the breath of life to our nation's spirit and one day regain our rightful heritage and rightful government... (*January* 103)

Although Kneubuhl took some speeches from historical sources for her play, this particular speech was written by Kneubuhl to stress what she felt were the play's most crucial issues. There are three significant points that are addressed in this short speech. The first is the issue of blood quantum.

Blood quantum has been a sore point with Hawaiians especially since the 1920s when the United States government imposed a fifty percent Hawaiian blood quantum requirement to qualify for Hawaiian Home Lands (Trask *Native Daughter* 134). Because Hawaiians have inter-married with other ethnicities to such a large extent, most Hawaiians are of mixed ethnicity. So the question that comes up is, how much Hawaiian blood must one have to be considered a Hawaiian? To represent the Hawaiian people as a chanter, a dancer, an artisan, a writer, a public speaker, or in any other capacity? Kneubuhl's play answers this question unequivocally.

The second point addressed in this speech is the need for unity. One of the obstacles to Hawaiian sovereignty is that Hawaiians have not been able to come to a consensus on the best approach to take. People are being very cautious in an effort to "get it right," and to avoid any further losses. As Peter Apo stated, "...people are suspicious of government. There's a lack of trust and that's understandable (84)." This lack of unity is clearly evident when we look at the wide variety of sovereignty groups today. While their ultimate purpose is the same, no single leadership has emerged yet with the strength to unite the majority of the Hawaiian people behind a plan of action.

The third point ties in most clearly with the action of the overall play; that the Hawaiians' "rightful heritage and rightful government" will be restored when Hawaiian sovereignty is achieved. This message implies that Hawaiians had sovereignty in the past, and should indeed have the right to self-determination again.

January, 1893 is a large pageant drama with a cast of 55 speaking parts in addition to the extras who play hula dancers and U.S. Marines.²⁶ Because the cast is so large it is difficult as an audience member to keep track of individuals unless they are political icons such as the queen or the leaders of the annexation movement. The other characters of the drama are basically divided into two groups according to their political loyalties. The majority of the haoles in the play are pro-annexationists, although there are a few who side with the Queen and align themselves with “the people.” The group known as “the people” consists of a number of Hawaiians and a few people of other ethnicities who have inter-married or have other ties with them. Another pro-Royalist segment is a group of Japanese sugarcane workers who arrive late in the play, ready to fight for the Queen against their haole oppressors.

Queen Lili‘uokalani serves as the nucleus of the play although she actually only appears in five scenes: Act I scenes 5 and 6, Act III scene 1, and Act V scenes 1 and 2. She is the calm focal point of the drama while the actions of the rest of the characters revolve around her at a frantic pace. At the end of Act I when the Queen announces that she will have to postpone proclaiming a new constitution, she unwittingly provides the annexationists with the excuse they have been looking for to set into motion the overthrow of the monarchy. At the beginning of Act III the Queen makes it clear that she only has the best interests of her people at heart and urges them to avoid violence. When she appears at the end of the play it is to relinquish her throne and to encourage her people to work peacefully to re-establish Hawaiian sovereignty. These actions in themselves are calm and dignified, but they catapult the other people of the play into frenetic activity until the fifth Act when the annexationists have achieved their objective.

²⁶ The tradition of Pageant Dramas in Hawai‘i was discussed in chapter one. As Dennis Carroll states in his article “Hawai‘i’s ‘Local’ Theatre,” this particular play is far less visual and more verbal than pageants of the past (141).

The most active characters in the play are those who are working to overthrow the monarchy. Although the cast is enormous, Kneubuhl's play manages to humanize characters who are usually only seen in terms of their historical actions. Even the antagonists of the piece are presented as people who think they are doing the right thing. For example Lorrin Thurston, typically vilified in books on Hawaiian history, is presented in the play as being at least partially motivated by his American idealism in rebelling against the "tyranny" of a monarchy (*January* 31). Sanford Dole is presented as the reluctant leader of the emerging Provisional Government, accepting the position of President only after he learns that Thurston will take the post if he doesn't (*January* 61, 88). Dole's role is complicated further by the fact that he has a Hawaiian *hānai*²⁷ daughter who chastises him for the role he takes in the overthrow of the monarchy (*January* 90).

The historical re-enactments of the play are framed by the appearance of the contemporary character Kupunawahine at the very beginning and end. Kupunawahine (which means "grandmother" in Hawaiian) represents the older generation of Hawaiians - those to whom the younger generations look for their wisdom and for their knowledge of the past. This character serves to place the action of the play within the larger context of Hawai'i's ongoing history. She also serves to define the intent of the drama, to help the audience to understand what they are about to see at the beginning - and to provide a sense of closure at the end.

Several of the long speeches of the governmental leaders in the play are taken verbatim from historical sources. The dialogue written by Kneubuhl is consistent with the way people of the late 1800s spoke, except that at the time Hawaiian was the official language of the kingdom. The Queen's speech telling her people that she had to postpone

²⁷ Adopted in the Hawaiian tradition, where it was an honor and a privilege to be allowed to raise someone else's child. This tradition of adoption was by word of honor and did not involve any legal documents (Maunakea 27). It was usually a grandparent or other relative who would be chosen to *hānai* a child, and the child retained full knowledge of who his/her birth parents were (Pukui, Haertig & Lee, 49).

the establishment of a new Constitution, for example, was originally given entirely in Hawaiian; but the English translation was used for the re-enactment. For the sake of today's audiences, since most of the general public does not understand the Hawaiian language, Kneubuhl used English throughout most of the play. Hawaiian words are sprinkled into the dialogue, but made understandable through their context so that a general audience does not have trouble with the language. In production, if a character spoke more than a few words in Hawaiian he or she immediately repeated it in English.

By far the most outstanding and unique aspect of this drama is the physical and social context in which it was staged. *January, 1893* was presented as the central event of 'Onipa'a,²⁸ a five day affair that was held from January 13-17 1993 to mark the centennial of the overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy. A number of activities were held as a part of 'Onipa'a. Some of these included the offering of ceremonial gifts in 'Iolani Palace and at Lili'uokalani's statue, the lowering of U.S. flags over state government buildings, protest marches, pro-sovereignty presentations and torchlight vigils, and an official apology to the Hawaiian people from the United Church of Christ. The play itself was spread out over the final three days of 'Onipa'a, with scenes held in a variety of historically significant locales. The fact that people were re-enacting historical events on the same grounds where they occurred exactly a century before made the drama that much more powerful for spectators and participants alike.²⁹

Because the play was staged outdoors, actors were wired with microphones so that they could be heard over the noise of wind, traffic and other 'Onipa'a events. The spaces the actors used were delineated by a few props and a rope which was strung up to prevent the audience, which surrounded them on all sides, from crowding in too closely. The

²⁸ This Hawaiian word means resolute, immovable or steadfast. It was the motto of both King Kamehameha V and Queen Lili'uokalani (Pukui & Elbert 289).

²⁹ In his article "Hawai'i's 'Local' Theatre," Dennis Carroll provides an eye-witness account of the overall event, the logistics of the performance and the implications for the audience.

multi-ethnic audience, consisting of both “locals” and tourists, was free to come and go as they pleased. Some stayed for only parts of scenes, and others attended all the scenes in all of the locales over the three-day period. The audiences started out relatively small at the beginning of the first day, but by the end of the third day thousands of spectators filled the palace grounds to witness the final scenes.

The play began at 7:00 a.m. on Friday, the third day of *‘Onipa‘a*, at the old burial mound on the ‘Iolani Palace grounds. The next few scenes also occurred in various outdoor locales on the Palace grounds, under trees or near the coronation stand. In Act I scene 5, Queen Lili‘uokalani (played by Leonelle Anderson Akana) was brought by horse-drawn carriage in a procession from Ali‘iolani Hale where she had (the day before) performed a reenactment of the Queen’s last address to the legislature. The procession took her to the palace where children greeted her and sang to her before she retired inside. In scene 6 “the people” spoke among themselves under a tree until the Queen appeared at the top of the palace steps to address the crowds. While the Royalists’ scenes were usually held under trees or near the front steps of the palace, the Annexationists’ scenes were held on the deck of the coronation stand to the left of the Palace. The final scene of the day took place in the afternoon when Annexationists formulated their plan of action.

The performance resumed on the palace grounds at 9:50 a.m. the next day, as the Royalists and Annexationists rallied in support of their leaders. The performance peaked in the late afternoon near the old burial mound with Act III scene 5. In this scene, three female kahuna, representatives of the goddess Hi‘iaka,³⁰ offered to give themselves as *moepu‘u*³¹ to appease the old gods and to restore the Queen’s power. The use of an ipu

³⁰ These Kahunas say they represent both Hi‘iaka the elder and Hi‘iaka the younger. In the ancient Hawaiian religion, gods could take many forms. Hi‘iaka is said to have as many as 40 different manifestations (Pukui, Haertig & Lee 24). Pele, the volcano goddess, has twelve younger sisters whose names all begin with Hi‘iaka. The youngest and most famous of these sisters is Hi‘iaka-i-ka-poli-o-Pele.

³¹ a person who commits suicide or has himself killed in order to show love for a dead chief (Pukui & Elbert 250); a willing self-sacrifice.

provided background tempo and heightened the dramatic intensity of this scene, which ended with the performance of a hula in honor of the goddess Hi'iaka. Act III was supposed to culminate with a troupe of 162 marines wearing authentic uniforms marching down the street and stopping to face the palace while "The People" stand their ground and sing "Hawai'i Pono'i." Difficulties getting a firm commitment from the military in time for production deadlines prevented this, though (Kneubuhl 1/29/01). So this final scene of the day was accomplished through the use of "sound effects and a drilling group of fifteen 'marines' who surrounded the entrance of the building (Carroll *TDR* 146)."

On Sunday, the last day of the 'Onipa'a event, most of the day was devoted to protest marches and presentations by Hawaiian Sovereignty groups. The performance of the final two acts of the play began at 3:00 p.m. on the Palace grounds when some children told "the people" about a Hawaiian policeman who was shot. "The people" crossed the street to Ali'iolani Hale to see what was going on. At the back entrance to Ali'iolani Hale the "Committee of Safety" officially proclaimed the abrogation of the monarchy and set up their own Provisional Government, naming Sanford B. Dole as their President. Upon their arrival at Ali'iolani Hale, "the people" discovered that the U.S. Minister Stevens had immediately sent a message recognizing the new Provisional Government.

"The people" returned to the palace grounds for Act V, which contained the final two scenes of the play. Here, Queen Lili'uokalani explained the situation to her people and read the now-famous proclamation wherein she protested the acts done against herself and her kingdom, and yielded to the superior force of the United States "until such time as the Government of the United States shall, upon the facts being presented to it, undo the action of its representatives (*January* 102)." She then urged her people hold fast - 'onipa'a, and the play was brought to a close with the return of the character Kupunawahine. By this time the sun had set, 'Iolani Palace was lit from within, and the torchlight march was

approaching from Kawaiaha‘o church. As thousands of people watched in utter silence,³² all the lights of the palace were extinguished except for one in the upper-right corner - the bedroom where Lili‘uokalani was kept under house arrest.

Urgent intensity is the predominant mood throughout most of the play as the Royalists and the Annexationists struggle desperately over the fate of the Hawaiian kingdom.³³ This intensity is undercut, though, by framing the play with the character of Kupunawahine.³⁴ The goal of the ‘Onipa‘a events, including the presentation of *January, 1893* were to educate the public about Hawaiian sovereignty issues without inciting violence. Because 1993 was the 100th anniversary of the overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy, tensions were especially high among Hawaiian activists, and the eruption of violence was a distinct possibility.³⁵

The exhortation to avoid violence was made more than once by Queen Lili‘uokalani herself during the 1890s and repeated in the speech given by the actress portraying Lili‘uokalani in 1993. Early in the play, before the first scene involving “the people,” director Dallas Mossman Vogeler also made sure to remind the audience, “...these are actors. The good guys are really good guys, and the bad guys, are really good guys.”

³² An estimated 20,000 people attended the ‘Onipa‘a events, with the largest crowds on the final days (Allen et. al. 133). The Honolulu Advertiser described the enormous audience in attendance at the final scene: “A sea of people carpeted the palace lawn to King Street. They made no sound (1/18/93: A5).”

³³ Glenn Grant, a well-known local historian and storyteller, served as a commentator introducing and concluding each scene. He spoke directly to the audience, introducing scenes that were about to be presented and telling the audience where and when they could see the next scene. After each scene he engaged audience members in active dialogue, making sure they understood the impact of what they had just seen. His “character” was a pro-Royalist, and unlike the actors within the scenes, he spoke without a microphone for most of the event. Because of this, he had to yell to be heard which gave him a very commanding demeanor. His voice, demeanor and words combined to add to the play’s mood of urgent intensity.

³⁴ In his article “Hawai‘i’s ‘Local’ Theatre,” Dennis Carroll also comments upon the fact that this device “serves to underline the noninflammatory nature of the play as a whole (145).”

³⁵ Green-shirted “Peacekeepers” were trained in non-violent tactics to prepare for any disruptions that could occur during ‘Onipa‘a events (Allen et. al. 18). An audience member who was out-of-frame in the videotape of *January, 1893*, but speaking within range of the microphone commented to a friend that she had heard a rumor that “the skinheads were gonna do something (Nā Maka o ka ‘Āina, 1993). It was also rumored that the National Guard was on stand-by in case violence should erupt. Kneubuhl herself said that she knew of people who left town during the ‘Onipa‘a events for fear of the potential for violence (1/29/01).

This was reiterated several times over the three day performance by commentator Glenn Grant (Nā Maka o ka 'Āina: 1993).

Throughout the 'Onipa'a events thousands of Hawaiians took part in protests of various types and sovereignty groups made inflammatory speeches calling for action. But most Hawaiians share the non-violent ideology of their former Queen. Mililani Trask, the leader of one of the largest sovereignty groups explains:

It's important for people to understand that fighting for sovereignty can be violent, has been violent with other of America's native people and minorities. And it's violent all over the world. But you need to come out and say that violence is not acceptable here. If we all have one mind saying that we oppose violence, we will not tolerate it, we will not endure it, and we will not practice it, then we can prevent it from becoming a political alternative in Hawai'i. (Trask *He Alo* 118)

The final speech of Kneubuhl's play, spoken by Kupunawahine, is a call to action - but not to immediate physical action. Her last words, "May you bring only honor to your ancestors," make it amply clear that the intent of the play is non-violent. She calls upon her listeners to think about what they saw, to remember what they saw, and to share the story with succeeding generations. As the final words of the play were uttered and the torchlight procession entered the palace grounds:

they were greeted with the chanting of John Keolamaka'āinanakalāhuino Kamehameha'ekolu Lake, and the crowd's response of sorrow. The Hawaiian 'auē' cannot be described; it is grief at the loss of someone or something that is held more precious than life. (Allen et. al. 137)

A few dignitaries gave their final speeches bringing the event to a close, and all but two torches were extinguished as the crowds left quietly. The last two torches were placed at the statue of Lili'uokalani as a final offering.

Although many hoped that the 'Onipa'a events would have resulted in a more definitive action, others probably realized that the time was not yet quite right for a successful move to Hawaiian sovereignty. But the centennial events had created a heightened awareness about Hawaiian sovereignty issues among people from all walks of

life. In the months following the 'Onipa'a centennial and the production of *January, 1893* the state Legislature considered a number of bills concerning sovereignty and other issues for Hawaiians. The political interest in these issues very likely came from the great response the public had to the 'Onipa'a activities and the historical events that were portrayed in the play (Carroll *TDR* 147).

Kneubuhl received a great deal of exposure for penning this commemorative drama. The *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* named her one of the "10 Who Made a Difference" in the Hawaiian Islands during the year 1993. The Hawai'i Heritage Center also honored her, presenting her with "The Keeper of the Past" award in 1994 for her contributions in preserving and sharing Hawai'i's cultural heritage. On a national level, Hui Na'auao (the organization that produced the drama) received an Award of Merit from the American Association for State and Local History.

Ola Nā Iwi

Kneubuhl wrote *Ola Nā Iwi* under commission from Kumu Kahua Theatre in 1993, and she has said that of all her plays this is her favorite.³⁶ It is a contemporary drama inspired by an experience Kneubuhl herself had while visiting a museum in Europe where she encountered the bones of a Hawaiian in a box on a shelf. *Ola Nā Iwi* questions who has the right to determine what happens to the remains of those who have passed on before us. The play examines the attitudes of westerners who treat human remains as research objects to be used in the advances of medicine and science, contrasting this with the Hawaiian tradition of treating human bones as sacred objects to be left undisturbed.

In the ancient Hawaiian tradition human remains, especially those of the ali'i, were treated with ceremonial reverence. Human bones were secretly hidden away in caves or

³⁶ Mattos, Justina. "Meet the Playwright: Victoria Nālani Kneubuhl," *Native Playwrights' Newsletter*. ed. Paul Rathbun. spring 1996.

carefully stored in temples where no one could desecrate them. The bones of some of the most venerated Hawaiian chiefs were wrapped in kapa and bound in sennit caskets which were tightly woven into shape over the long bones and skull, encasing them in a torso-like, semi-naturalistic position (Rose 2). These woven caskets were known as *kā'ai*.³⁷

Kumu Kahua produced *Ola Nā Iwi* in November of 1994, directed by John H. Y. Wat. The production was coincidentally quite topical, as in February of that year the only two known *kā'ai* still in existence had been “stolen” from Honolulu’s Bishop Museum and reputedly taken to their rightful burial place in Waipi’o Valley on the Big Island (*Honolulu Magazine* Nov. 1994).³⁸ Over the years, Hawaiian burial sites have stopped or delayed a number of large construction projects in the islands as people have debated over the fate of the human remains that have turned up in excavation. This clash between modern progress and traditional values continues to be a hot political issue and is encapsulated in the style and subject matter of *Ola Nā Iwi*.

Both the theme and the structure of *Ola Nā Iwi* reflect Kneubuhl’s central metaphor of the woven *kā'ai*. The play is structurally complex, weaving several disparate elements together in a post-modern manner.³⁹ The central plot focuses on Kawehi, a

³⁷ Although Kamakau stated that when King Liholiho (Kamehameha II) and Queen Kamehamalu (also known as Kamāmalu) died in 1824 their remains were contained in *kā'ai* (258), there are today only two known *kā'ai* in existence. These are believed to contain the bones of Līloa (c. 1500 A.D.) and his great-grandson Lonoikamakahiki (Rose 33).

³⁸ The rightful place for these *kā'ai* is disputed. In 1828 Queen Ka’ahumanu took these two *kā'ai* from the shrine known as Hale o Līloa in Waipi’o Valley and moved them to the cave of Hō’aikū at Ka’awaloa (Rose 22, Kamakau 285). From here they were moved under the authority of Mataio Kekūanaō’a to the Royal Tomb at Pohukaina and from there to the Royal Mausoleum at Mauna ‘Ala (Rose 24, 27). In 1918, by request of Prince Jonah Kūhiō Kalaniana’ole, the two *kā'ai* were relocated to the Bishop Museum until such time as “J.K. Kalaniana’ole, the Governor of Hawaii for the time being, and the Trustees of the Liliuokalani Trust, together demand in writing that they be delivered to some one authorized by them to receive the human bones... whose receipt shall release the Trustees of the Museum from all liability in respect thereof (Rose 32).”

³⁹ Post-modernism is a movement which is still evolving in art, literature, architecture, cultural theory and other areas. For this reason, we have yet to come to an absolute definition of the term. Charles Jencks, citing the theorists John Barth and Umberto Eco, has described post-modernist writing as that which “may

young part-Hawaiian woman who smuggles a set of ancient Hawaiian bones from a museum in Berlin to her home in Hawai'i so that she can give them a proper burial. She gets past the luggage inspector at the airport by telling him that the bones carefully wrapped in her suitcase are stage props for the play *Hamlet*, which her theatre company recently performed in Berlin. In scene four Kawehi reveals to her haole boyfriend, Erik, that she has hidden the bones beneath her bed. After Erik goes upstairs to his apartment a strange woman named Nanea appears, cold and lost, at Kawehi's doorstep and Kawehi takes her in. Although this central thread is predominantly realistic, the character of Nanea provides a surrealistic touch. Near the end of the first act we discover that Nanea is actually the embodied spirit of the Chiefess Liliha who has come to help ensure that her bones find their rightful resting place.⁴⁰ Everyone who comes into contact with Nanea finds her quite entrancing. She gets a job leading historical walking tours in Honolulu, which provides an opportunity to inform the audience about historical details pertaining to Hawai'i's chiefs and the customary treatment of their sacred bones.

In scene five the comic secondary thread of the drama is introduced, in which a trio of investigators pursue the missing bones. Mina and Fatu are part-Samoan cousins who work as private investigators. Gustav is sent by the German museum to liaise with Fatu and to follow Erik in hope of locating the bones. The secondary thread is a spoof on the style of film noir, and these characters are colorful and slightly larger than life. A set of fake bones is used to throw the detectives off the trail and the plot takes several twists and

use traditional forms in ironic or displaced ways to treat perennial themes (7).” It seems appropriate, then, that Kneubuhl has taken a post-modern approach to address the issue of displaced ancestral bones. Focusing more specifically on the performing arts, Thomas Leabhart adds that post-modern performances typically contain “a political dimension, an irreverence, a self-consciousness or self-referential theatricality (109).” He continues on to define post-modernism as an art form that juxtaposes disparate elements to form a resonant whole using multi-ethnic, eclectic, and non-linear means (129). Kneubuhl's play *Ola Nā Iwi* contains each of the above-named characteristics, marking it clearly as a post-modern work.

⁴⁰ Liliha was a chiefess who served briefly as the governor of O'ahu in the early 1800s. Known affectionately as “Kuini Liliha” (Queen Liliha), she was greatly beloved by the common people although her penchant for alcohol met with disapproval from the Christian chiefs. She died in 1839, purportedly poisoned by one of her own relatives (Kamakau 351).

turns until no one except Nanea is certain where the real bones are. In the second act of the play Fatu's mother, Deidre, steps in to help make sure that the real bones end up in the right hands.

Interwoven with the first and second threads of the drama is a third thread which is largely presentational in style, in imitation of the lectures and exhibitions that were popular during the 19th century. This thread of the drama consists of a number of vignettes in which the 19th century western attitude toward bones, particularly the bones of people from another culture, is brought to light and probed. These vignettes are enacted by three "players" who perform a variety of roles. For example, in scene 9 a phrenologist at a fair announces the amazing things phrenology can teach you and offers the service for \$1 along with a cranial massage from his lovely young assistant. He also, more quietly, encourages any interested men to meet him later if they can provide heathen skulls for research. Several characters and situations are presented along this vein, including professors, a racist southerner, a grave robber, a young woman in love with an archeologist, museum curators, and a physician. Each of these characters presents a 19th century Eurocentric perspective on how the remains of non-whites should be treated.

These three distinctly different strands are woven together through their common theme. But at the same time, each of these dramatic strands has its own distinctive quality, so as the play progresses from scene to scene the audience must adjust to shifts in style and tone. The central thread focuses on a political issue from a variety of ethnic perspectives. The secondary thread provides a disconcerting comic irreverence in contrast with the serious central thread. The third thread provides a self-referential theatricality where the "players" speak directly to a 21st century audience from a 19th century perspective. This eclectic combination of genres and the non-linear structure of the drama provides a post-modern feeling to the work as a whole.

At the end of scene 14 Kneubuhl uses the metaphor of the *kā'ai* poetically when Nanea and Kawehi have shared a ceremonial cup of 'awa⁴¹ to bind themselves together in their purpose. Nanea explains to Kawehi how to begin weaving a *kā'ai*:

Here, at the very beginning, at the bottom of things, at the piko,⁴² at the center, the vertical strands radiate out while the horizontal thread makes a continuous spiral, turning over and under, over and under. Can you see? Can you see the center? (*Ola Nā Iwi* 47)

It is at this moment when Kawehi realizes who Nanea actually is. This speech also describes the structure of the play as a whole. The 19th century vignettes can be thought of as the vertical strands radiating outward, while the twists and turns in the central plot as the various characters vie for possession of the bones can be described by the horizontal thread.

Kneubuhl uses the metaphor of the *kā'ai* to represent respect for ancestral bones. The playwright's personal feelings about the issue are revealed in Act II, scene five when Nanea explains her desire to find a suitable resting place after her bones have been stored for years on a museum's cold, metal shelf:

There was a time when I would have expected more, ritual, veneration and ceremony. But time goes by and we learn to ask for less. Just a quiet place cool and dry and smelling of the earth, just a peaceful place in my own home to rest undisturbed in my own native land. What human right denies us this final resting place? (*Ola Nā Iwi* 16)

The play's theme as illustrated by this speech is that every human being deserves to rest quietly after they have passed away, without their remains being disturbed or treated with disrespect by future generations. This speech also ties into the history of Hawaiian loss that Kneubuhl has explored in one way or another in all of her "local" plays. In *Ola Nā Iwi* the playwright expresses this sentiment through the character of Kawehi as she

⁴¹ 'awa is a mildly narcotic drink made from the crushed root of a (*Piper methysticum*) shrub, used medicinally and in ceremonies.

⁴² "Piko" has many meanings, but most often refers to the navel or the umbilical cord. The word "piko" carries with it a connotation of attachment: relationships with one's ancestors and descendants (Pukui, Haertig & Lee 182).

comforts Nanea: “We all feel a terrible loss. It’s one of the things that bind us together (*Ola Nā Iwi* 31).”

As mentioned earlier, this play explores the question of how human remains should be treated from a variety of ethnic perspectives. The racist, Eurocentric attitude of the 19th century is examined from several angles and the playwright pokes fun at these attitudes in a playful way through her short vignettes. But haoles, in general, are not the villains of the drama. There are several sympathetic haole characters who would like to see the bones properly laid to rest. Among these are Kawehi’s boyfriend, Erik, and the German investigator, Gustav. Although Gustav originally comes to Hawai‘i with the intention of bringing the bones back to Berlin, the education he receives through Nanea’s historic walking tours coupled with the affinity he feels for her leads him by the end of the play to admit that he would instead have entrusted the bones to Nanea for their proper care (*Ola Nā Iwi* 51).

Another sympathetic haole in the play is Fatu’s mother, Deidre. Deidre sends faxes and instructions to Fatu and Mina, guiding their investigation from afar as Fatu comments facetiously, “More instructions from the great beyond (*Ola Nā Iwi* 53).” But later in the play we learn that Deidre is in fact the one who is guided “from the great beyond” because it was her dreams that motivated her to help ensure that Liliha’s bones were properly buried (*Ola Nā Iwi* 33). This is not the first such case that Deidre has been involved with. When Nanea asks her why she helps with these cases, Deidre answers “I was an anthropologist for a long time. My son is Samoan. It helps me to sleep at night (*Ola Nā Iwi* 32).”

Mina and Fatu, both Europeanized Polynesians, are the main contributors to the comic elements of the play. Comedy is found not only in the way these two cousins interact with one another, but also in the ridiculous situations they put themselves into for the sake of the case. Mina and Fatu also turn out to be sympathetic to the cause of returning the bones to their proper resting place rather than to a museum. In scene fourteen

Mina reveals to Kawehi and Erik that she and Fatu work with Fatu's mother to retrieve things that should go back to their proper places (*Ola Nā Iwi* 45).

Mina is also a distant cousin to Pua, another central character in the play. Pua is Kawehi's aggressive and hostile part-Hawaiian boss who works as the Education Director for the museum in Hawai'i. Pua is the only character drawn to be consistently villainous. Although Pua has been going through the motions of aiding Gustav in the investigation in order to return the bones to the Berlin museum, she reveals her true intentions in Act II, scene twelve. In a calculated move to put herself in the center of the publicity about the case and to increase her own political power, Pua demands that the bones be given to her. She does this with the intention that she will then be at the forefront of the Hawaiian community's long deliberations over what to do with the bones.

Pua not only provides the strongest element of conflict and complication for this drama, she also serves to illustrate the playwright's feelings about divisive factions within the contemporary Hawaiian community. This is articulated in a conversation between Fatu and Mina in Act I, scene 16:

Fatu: Sounds like she's got it in for Kawehi. Know why?

Mina: Could be anything from politics to the color of her hair. Most likely she's in the way of Pua's absolute control in something.

Fatu: (sniffing) Is that greed for political power I smell?

Mina: She screams about injustices done to Hawaiians, but she'd just as soon screw over a Hawaiian as anybody else if they got in her way.

Fatu: One of a growing number.

Mina: Feeling she should rule by divine right.

Fatu: What do you think she'll do?

Mina: Anything. She's capable of anything. (*Ola Nā Iwi* 52)

The playwright's dislike for people with personal political agendas of this type is emphasized further by the fact that the character has changed her name from Kelly Brooks

to Pua Ho'olale (*Ola Nā Iwi* 51), indicating that she is not as Hawaiian as she would like people to think she is.⁴³ The playwright's opinion is summed up with Mina's words of advice, "Never trust anyone who puts politics before compassion (*Ola Nā Iwi* 27)."

The language of *Ola Nā Iwi* is much like the language of Kneubuhl's other plays, except that this play also uses a small amount of German in the dialogue which adds to the post-modern sense of displacement and multiple perspectives. Gustav's first language is German, and since Liliha's bones were in the Berlin museum for many years, she eventually learned that language. When she assumes a bodily form in the person of Nanea, she is able to communicate not only in Hawaiian or English, but also in German:

Gustav: I wish to tell you, you were, how do you say in English, enchanting?

Nanea: Enchanting?

Gustav: *Sprechen sie deutsch?*

Nanea: *Ja, ein bisschen.*

Gustav: It's lucky for me they picked you for this job.
(*Ola Nā Iwi* 40)

This adds a greater sense of mystery to the character of Nanea as the other characters puzzle over her identity and do not understand how a young Hawaiian woman would come to speak fluent German. It is not until the others figure out who she really is that they understand how she learned that language.

Of all Kneubuhl's plays for adults, *Ola Nā Iwi* makes the most colorful use of props, lighting, and costumes to add excitement to the play. Two sets of human bones - one real and one artificial are interchanged throughout the play adding to the dramatic tension as the audience's stake in the fate of the real bones increases. In Act II scene 7 the lights mysteriously go out when Fatu and Mina are trying to exchange the real bones for the

⁴³ The self-chosen Hawaiian name is also ironic. Pua means flower; but Ho'olale means to hasten, incite or provoke, which can be taken in a positive or a negative way.

prop bones, which again adds to the tension and the confusion. Costumes are used most colorfully. In Act II, scene six all the characters attend a costume party for the theatre Kawehi works with. This scene not only provides opportunities for mistaken identities and plot complications, it also provides visual delight in seeing people dressed up in a variety of costumes including Elizabethan clowns, a donkey, and a mysterious woman dressed as a witch who turns out to be Deidre.

Throughout most of *Ola Nā Iwi* the mood is frenetic with various factions racing to outwit each other and gain possession of the bones to do with as they see fit. This, combined with the colorful characters and the surrealistic element of Liliha's spirit embodied as Nanea, provides ample opportunity for visual spectacle in the drama. It is only in the quieter moments between Nanea and Kawehi that Kneubuhl's poetry emerges in the dialogue, creating a more contemplative mood. At the end, when the bones have been successfully laid to rest, the various strands of the drama have been woven together into a resonant whole and the tense mood of the play is drawn smoothly into a sense of peaceful closure. Kawehi describes the serenity she has found, and Nanea appears speaking now as Liliha:

Carefully, carefully the sennit net draws around and closes. Now carry me far, far up into the hills, and find a place, a small place, clean and dry, inside the cool earth. Lay me there on a bed of green ferns, of *palapalai* and *laua'e*,⁴⁴ and maybe a bit of *maile*⁴⁵ you found on the way up. Hide the way with rocks and branches hide it so only the birds know where I am and leave me. Leave me in the breathing, beating heart of my beloved 'āina....⁴⁶ (*Ola Nā Iwi* 53)

This final monologue speaks of the peace attained when Liliha is finally home in her native earth. It also returns us to the metaphor of the *kā'ai*, which Liliha describes as drawing around and closing - as the structure of the play does just that.

⁴⁴ two types of native ferns.

⁴⁵ a fragrant vine which can be stripped from its stalk and twisted together to make a lei.

The post-modern style Kneubuhl has used with this play is inherently suited to the theme of her drama which deals with the issue of displaced bones and the desire to lay them to rest in their rightful home. Although *Ola Nā Iwi* addresses serious contemporary issues, it is also irreverently theatrical, juxtaposing an eclectic assortment of elements and using a non-linear, thematically oriented structure to examine the clash between traditional and modern attitudes in Western and non-Western cultures. As Jean-François Lyotard has explained about post-modern work:

The post-modern artist or writer is in the position of a philosopher: the text he writes or the work he creates is not in principle governed by preestablished rules and cannot be judged according to a determinant judgment, by the application of given categories to this text or work. Such rules and categories are what the work or text is investigating. The artist and the writer therefore work without rules and in order to establish the rules for what *will have been made*. (15)

Perhaps this is part of the reason why critics did not know quite what to make of *Ola Nā Iwi*, a farcical play with an assortment of odd characters which held at the core such a serious message. Various responses criticized the directing or the acting or the synoptic script, trying to pinpoint what did not work for them. Honolulu's critics did, however, agree on one thing. They found the character of Nanea to be the best thing in the play, and praised the dialogue Kneubuhl wrote for this character, saying: "The lines ring with such plain and haunting honesty that the rest of the play tarnishes by comparison (Rozmiarek 11/15/94)." Once again, Kneubuhl's poetic dialogue captured the hearts of the critics even when their minds failed to appreciate the structure of her drama as a whole.

Kneubuhl's plays have reached a broader spectrum of people than the work of any other playwright in Hawai'i. Her work includes plays for children which have been toured throughout the state by Honolulu Theatre for Youth, and plays for adults which have toured as far as Edinburgh Scotland, and have been seen by thousands of people - both

⁴⁶ 'Āina is the Hawaiian word for land. Hawaiian culture holds a deep attachment and abiding love for the land of the Hawaiian islands.

“local” residents and others from around the world. Her knowledge of Hawaiian history and culture also makes her highly sought after as a writer for documentaries and other projects.

Kneubuhl’s “local” plays present historical events from Hawai‘i’s past or contemporary issues of concern to Native Hawaiians. In either case, her work explores the disparity experienced by Hawaiians trying to reconcile their cultural heritage with the modern, Western environment that Hawai‘i has become. Her work contains a spiritual aspect that is revealed sometimes through supernatural occurrences in the plays, sometimes through the use of Hawaiian chant and hula, but most often through the symbolism in her dialogue. While her careful research on historical facts and events is a valuable aspect of her dramas, it is Kneubuhl’s poetic language that stands out in her works for the stage. Critics may quibble over the structures, themes or characters Kneubuhl chooses for her plays, but they are consistently impressed with the haunting imagery created through her dialogue which remains in the mind long after the last line has been spoken.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

Comparisons Between Sakamoto, Lum and Kneubuhl

An evaluation of Kumu Kahua Theatre's history supports the finding that Sakamoto, Lum and Kneubuhl are the three most productive and significant local playwrights of the last twenty years in Hawai'i. Edward Sakamoto was first produced by Kumu Kahua in 1974 with his earliest play, *In the Alley*. Two years later Kumu Kahua presented Darrell H.Y. Lum's first play, *Oranges Are Lucky*. It wasn't until 1986 that Victoria Nālani Kneubuhl's first full-length play, *Emmalehua*, was presented by Kumu Kahua. But after that, every season until 1997 contained at least one play by either Sakamoto, Lum or Kneubuhl; except for 1990-91 which was dominated by non-local playwrights.

As has been noted, Sakamoto, Lum and Kneubuhl are also three of the most highly recognized playwrights in the state of Hawai'i. Each has been the recipient of the Hawai'i Award for Literature, the highest literary award presented by the State of Hawai'i: Kneubuhl in 1994, Lum in 1996, and Sakamoto in 1997. All three have also received numerous other awards and have had their plays published. Lum was the earliest to be published, in a special issue of *Bamboo Ridge*. Lum and Sakamoto both had their first plays published in the 1983 collection *Kumu Kahua Plays*. In the last several years, six of Sakamoto's plays have been published by the University of Hawai'i Press. Victoria Nālani Kneubuhl has been published by the Theatre Communications Group and by Temple University Press, and three of her plays will soon be published in a collection through the University of Hawai'i Press.

In comparing the works of Sakamoto, Lum and Kneubuhl we find that while their works may sometimes overlap in terms of subject matter, dramatic technique or theme, the overall style of each playwright is quite distinct. Edward Sakamoto's "Realistic" works are most popular with "local" audiences.¹ An analysis of Sakamoto's "Realistic" "local" plays shows that these plays tend to evoke a sense of nostalgia among audience members because they are rooted in a specific place and time in Hawai'i's history. We have also found that Sakamoto has a particular talent for using the various levels and dialects of pidgin to show the differences in age and social standing of his characters. His "local" plays often deal with the themes of family obligation, and show some element of inter-generational conflict as characters struggle over the central issue, the question of leaving home and whether or not it is possible to return home once you have gone. His characters are familiar and likable, and the issues they struggle with leave the audience with a sense of ambiguity because we realize there are no clear right or wrong answers in the end.

While Sakamoto touches upon inter-generational differences in his exploration of the topic of leaving home, Lum focuses more intently upon inter-generational differences as a means to explore inter-ethnic relations in Hawai'i. Each of his plays contains elderly characters who are first generation immigrants to Hawai'i, and contrasts them with the younger, more locally integrated generations. The older characters in his plays tend to be rather clannish, preferring to associate with others of their own ethnicity, while the younger characters are more accepting of other ethnicities. In exploring the inter-generational relations within his plays, Lum, like Sakamoto, often focuses on the father-son relationship. But both playwrights have also explored the father-daughter dynamic: Lum in *A Little Bit Like You*, and Sakamoto (to a lesser extent) in *Mānoa Valley*.

¹ Sakamoto has written a number of other plays that use more stylized production techniques, but those are outside the scope of this dissertation because they are not "local" plays. One very recent play of this type, *Lava!* is "local" in subject matter, but this has not been produced in Hawai'i, and it is too new to be included for analysis in this dissertation.

While Sakamoto and Lum each present characters who are in the process of transitioning into or out of “local” life in Hawai‘i, Kneubuhl presents Native Hawaiian characters who are firmly rooted in Hawai‘i, but are in the process of transitioning from a Hawaiian to a Western way of life. These characters struggle to reconcile their ancient Hawaiian traditions with the modern, Western world that has been thrust upon them. In *Emmalehua* the central character cannot function in the modern world until she is able to find a way to honor her Hawaiian traditions while still living in the Western society of the present. In *The Conversion of Ka‘ahumanu* the Queen Ka‘ahumanu must find a way to lead her nation in the face of overwhelming change brought on by Western contact. In *Ka‘iulani*, Princess Ka‘iulani has been bred and groomed as Hawaiian royalty, but Western intervention prevents her from fulfilling this role. Queen Lili‘uokalani struggles to maintain Hawaiian sovereignty against the forces of the overthrow in *January, 1893*. And in *Ola Nā Iwi* the playwright explores Western attitudes toward ancestral Hawaiian bones.

Because she often focuses on historical characters or events, Kneubuhl can be compared with Sakamoto in the fact that her plays recall a specific time in Hawai‘i’s history; but her writing style is closer to that of Lum. Mood and theme are the most important elements in the plays of both Kneubuhl and Lum, and these are evoked through the poetic imagery in their dialogue. Kneubuhl’s plays, like Lum’s are often personally introspective and incorporate elements of Surrealism to bring that interior reality to life.

Although Surrealism was originally conceived in opposition to the tradition of Realism, toward the end of the twentieth century we have seen a gradual trend toward Realism which is infused with elements of Surrealism. This has been seen not only on the national and international level, but also with “local” drama using Surrealistic elements to express a spiritual or psychological reality beyond that which can be expressed through Realism. This increased use of Surrealistic elements is most clearly evident in “local” drama when we look at the two versions of *Emmalehua* written by Victoria Nālani

Kneubuhl. The 1984 version of the script was presented in such a Realistic style that it was called a “raw and ragged domestic tragedy (Rozmiarek 3/31/86).” But the 1996 version of *Emmalehua* puts a much greater emphasis on the spiritual realm with the elements of Hawaiian and Native American ritual that are incorporated into the drama, and with a chorus of voices that haunts the protagonist until she is able to make peace within herself.

In many of the plays analyzed here we see the element of Surrealism in the presentation of a divided psyche, which serves to create a fuller and deeper sense of characterization and cultural heritage. Often, a character’s split psyche is represented on stage by two or more actors. The play *Ka’iulani* utilizes the divided psyche with four actresses who play different aspects of the personality or different stages in the life of the bi-racial Princess Ka’iulani. During the middle of the play when Ka’iulani is being schooled in Europe she is portrayed by two actresses representing her Hawaiian self and her European self. This represents a young woman who is torn between her duty as Hawaiian royalty and her curiosity about her European heritage.

Edward Sakamoto’s *A’ala Park* also uses this Surrealistic style to present a split psyche, with the character of the older Manny through whose eyes we experience the memories of his youth. He comments upon the action of the younger Manny, sometimes participating in it and sometimes wishing he could change the behavior of his young and rash self. From the older Manny’s perspective we learn where things went wrong and how he would, if he could, go back to alter the course of his life.

In Lum’s *A Little Bit Like You* Ah Sook and Bachan are both long-dead spirits, and Grandpa is in a coma but can speak to Kay. Kay is the only character who can see and hear all of these characters. In *Fighting Fire* the spirit realm is fluidly interwoven with the physical realm as Gunner and Ah Ba (Father) interact with Cowboy simultaneously.

Cowboy's father appears as a spirit character, psychologically brow-beating Cowboy as he tries to carry-on his interactions in the physical realm with Gunner.

One way that "local" plays have changed over the years is through their use of language, and we can see this in the plays of Sakamoto, Lum and Kneubuhl. In the early 1970s when Kumu Kahua Theatre first began producing plays, the most obvious mark of a "local" play was the use of pidgin in the dialogue. Plays such as Sakamoto's *In the Alley* were remarked upon as much for their pidgin dialogue as they were for their "local" subject matter.² Throughout the 1970s pidgin was used most often for comic effect, or to provoke a feeling of familiarity and comfort. Sakamoto's *Mānoa Valley*, written in 1979, uses pidgin in this manner. But gradually, as the use of pidgin became more accepted on-stage, its purpose shifted from being a simple signifier of "localness" to being a vehicle to express more complex thoughts and emotions. During the 1980s plays such as Lum's *My Home Is Down the Street* used pidgin to explore the themes of the dramas without drawing attention self-consciously to the language itself. Sakamoto also used pidgin to more serious effect, as noted by Franklin Odo: "Sakamoto is in the front ranks of writers who legitimize its [pidgin's] value for the general public by using it in authentic contexts rather than as humor or caricature (xvi)."

While pidgin is still important, as seen in the plays of Sakamoto and Lum, in the mid to late 1980s playwrights such as Victoria Nālani Kneubuhl emerged, who used pidgin less extensively, and relied to a greater degree on standard English or Hawaiian language in their dramas. As explained in chapter one, Hawaiian language is integral to an understanding of Hawaiian culture, which explains the importance of the utilization of this language in Kneubuhl's plays. She incorporates the language into her plays by inserting Hawaiian words or phrases where they will be comprehensible to an English speaking

² Reviewers Karen Pryor and Pierre Bowman both commented upon the use of pidgin English in the play and the degree to which the various actors were able to capture the subtleties of the dialect (5/11/74).

audience through the context of the scene. She also uses traditional Hawaiian chant and hula to heighten the intensity of a scene where the use of such a device is appropriate.

Sakamoto, Lum and Kneubuhl typify Kumu Kahua Theatre's mission to create high-quality "local" plays by, for, and about the people of Hawai'i not only because they themselves come from three different ethnic backgrounds, but because their plays address themes that are relevant to "local" audiences. Sakamoto, who comes from a "local" Japanese background, Lum a "local" Chinese, and Kneubuhl, a part-Hawaiian, each draw upon their unique perspectives and experiences to create plays for Hawai'i's multi-ethnic audiences.

Kumu Kahua's Contribution to the Development of "Local" Drama

As I have argued, the existence of a "local" theatre company such as Kumu Kahua Theatre has provided a place where playwrights in Hawai'i have been able to practice and refine their craft over a period of many years. The growing professionalism of Kumu Kahua's productions over time serves as a testament not only to the developing skill of "local" playwrights, but also to the increased competence of "local" actors, designers and technical artists.

This dissertation has outlined a variety of ways in which Kumu Kahua Theatre has contributed to the development of "local" drama. In 1947 the University of Hawai'i Theatre Group began holding an annual playwriting competition, and since its inception in 1971 Kumu Kahua has used this competition as its major resource for "local" plays. Gradually, Kumu Kahua took over the sponsorship of this competition, and today this competition still provides an important avenue for encouraging playwrights to write works of "local" relevance. But Kumu Kahua has also reached out to playwrights and theatre artists in other ways.

We have seen that throughout its history Kumu Kahua Theatre has offered playreadings and workshops several times each year in an effort to help playwrights develop their work. In 1993 they began commissioning proven “local” playwrights such as Sakamoto, Lum and Kneubuhl, to create new plays. In 1994, once they had a space to call their own, they began regularly offering summer classes in playwriting and acting. In 1995 they formed a Play Development Committee whose purpose was to seek out, evaluate, and help in the development of new plays year-round. In recent years Kumu Kahua has increased its service to playwrights by offering an on-going monthly playwriting workshop and by printing “local” scripts which can be used for classroom study or be purchased by the public. Currently Kumu Kahua Theatre is working toward development of a Writer’s Endowment Fund with the goal of serving playwrights in even more diverse ways.

One playwright who has only recently become involved with Kumu Kahua Theatre deserves mention here because her work may provide an indication of what we might expect more of in the future of “local” theatre. While playwrights such as John Kneubuhl, Victoria Nāalani Kneubuhl and Alani Apio have incorporated some Hawaiian language into their dramas, it is only recently that a playwright has emerged who is fluent in the Hawaiian language and has focused upon the use of this language in her dramas. Tammy Haili’ōpua Baker’s work goes beyond the steps taken by other playwrights to incorporate the Hawaiian language into Hawai’i’s drama. Where these previous playwrights have used Hawaiian language effectively in their dramas, their work was still intended primarily for an English speaking audience. Baker’s work is earmarked primarily for the Hawaiian

speaking community, and as such has achieved great popularity throughout the islands among Hawaiian speakers, while remaining relatively unknown to the larger society.³

Baker's success in producing drama entirely in the Hawaiian language is a direct product of the recent re-emergence of the Hawaiian language. This accelerating trend may encourage a re-examination of Jean Charlot's largely ignored Hawaiian language dramas of the 1960s, and it may also encourage other playwrights to utilize the Hawaiian language to a greater extent in their own work. Already, other playwrights have become more bold in their inclusion of the Hawaiian language. In *Way of a God*, for example, Dennis Carroll included several scenes entirely in the Hawaiian language (translations provided by Baker).⁴ Baker has recently expanded her involvement with Kumu Kahua Theatre, working for them not only as a playwright, but also as an actress and a director.

Kumu Kahua Theatre and the Study of Inter-Ethnic Relations

The growing ethnic diversity of the United States' population over the past century, and the technological advances which allow and necessitate the increased interaction of people from around the world, makes the goal of positive inter-ethnic relations more important than ever. The theatre is a place where we can learn about inter-ethnic relations on a variety of levels. Because of Hawai'i's multi-ethnic environment, it occupies an important position as a site for the study of ethnic relations through theatre.

The long-term existence of a regional theatre such as Kumu Kahua makes it possible to study topics like language and inter-ethnic dynamics in the context of theatre.

³ Ms. Baker made her mark upon Hawai'i's theatre world with the 1996 production of her Hawaiian language play *Kaluaiko'olau* at the U.H. Lab Theatre. The production played to sold-out houses with a majority of Hawaiian language speaking audience members. She formed a Hawaiian language theatre company, Ka Hālau Hanakeaka, which toured this and her other Hawaiian language plays *Māui a ka Lana* and *Māuiakamalo* throughout the islands over the next few years (Baker 1/9/99).

⁴ This production is described in chapter two.

In her article entitled "The Dilemma of Multiculturalism in the Theatre," Ethel Pitts-Walker states:

[M]any institutions consider themselves multicultural and nontraditional in their approach to theatre simply by casting people of color or the disabled or females in roles normally not given to members of these groups. However, how many institutions include works by playwrights from underrepresented groups? How many have more than a token sample of people of color or the disabled or women on their boards, in management, or in technical positions? How many institutions would be daring enough to produce a whole season of diverse works? (8)

Despite the constant economic uncertainties that are common with non-mainstream theatres, Kumu Kahua Theatre has proven itself over a period of three decades to be equal to the challenge posed by Pitts-Walker. In the early years many of those who worked with Kumu Kahua Theatre were affiliated with the University of Hawai'i. Although this has continued to be true to some extent, the involvement of people outside the University system has grown steadily. This has resulted in persons not only from a wider variety of ethnic backgrounds, but also a wider variety of socio-economic backgrounds being involved with Kumu Kahua Theatre at all levels.

The people involved with Kumu Kahua Theatre are in contact with individuals from many different ethnic backgrounds on a daily basis, living and working together in Hawai'i's multi-ethnic society. It is my hope that this study of Kumu Kahua Theatre and Hawai'i's "local" plays will draw attention to Hawai'i's position as an important site for the study of ethnic relations through theatre, and encourage further scholarly attention on the unique theatre tradition in Hawai'i.

APPENDIX A:

KUMU KAHUA THEATRE PRODUCTION HISTORY

1971-72				(1st Season)
Title	Author	Director	Location	Dates
The Lucifer File	George Herman	Gary Toyama	Hamilton Annex room 2	Nov 19,20,26,27 Dec 1,5
The Song of Roland & Gambit for a Broken King	Robert Baer Mel Cobb	Roger Long Min-soo Ahn	Hmltn Ann rm 2	Dec 17,18,26 Jan 2
Birthnight	William Saylor	Les Miller	Hmltn Ann rm 2	Jan 14,15,21,22, 28,29
Munger & Memory Book	James Priebe Richard Via	Atsumi Sakato & Ninette Mordaunt	Hmltn Ann rm 2	Feb 11,12,18,19, 25,26
Take It As It Is or Lump It	Chuck Chuck (Chuck Akiyama)	Chuck Chuck	Hmltn Ann rm 2	Mar. 10,11,17,18, 24,25
Dr. Bad And His Magic Time Machine	Windward Preparatory School 5th & 6th graders	Mel & Lindy Cobb	Hmltn Ann rm 2	Apr 7,8,14,15,21,22
Listen to Mr. Wizard - Improvisations around a play by Robert Baer	Robert Baer	Tony Haas & Sun-Li Shin	Hmltn Ann rm 2	May 5,6,12,13,19,20

1972-73				(2nd Season)
Title	Author	Director	Location	Dates
Aphrodite's Finger	James Priebe	Sherry Topp Matias	Kennedy Lab Theatre	Oct 19,20,21,22,27,29
Ashes	Lynette Amano	Dennis Carroll	Kennedy Lab Theatre	Nov 11,12,13,17,18
On the Tuesday Side of a Sunday & Crack in the Pot	B.J. Ursic Marshall Doi	Carol Franklin Warren Helm	Kennedy Lab Theatre	Dec 1,2,3,17,18
The Strange Black Mass of Queen Cybelle	David Larsen	David Johnson	Kennedy Lab Theatre	Dec 28,29,30,31 Jan 8,9
Instant Poi: A Birth of a Turkey; Excerpts from a Non- Existent Play; Evelyn: A Slice of Drama; The End of the News; Hello World	Chuck Chuck D.M. (Dennis) Dubin Y.W. Saylor Chris Akiyama	Chuck Chuck Dennis Dubin	Kennedy Lab Theatre	Feb 8,9,10,11,15,16
Damien	Aldyth Morris	Terence Knapp	Kennedy Lab Theatre	Mar 15-18, 24,25
Da Kine Kyogen- Improvisational Kyogen set locally	Kitty Heacox	Kitty Heacox	Kennedy Lab Theatre	Apr 5,6,7,13,14
Pigeons	Barry Rohrbach	Barry Rohrbach	Kennedy Lab Theatre	May 10,11,12,17,18

1973-74				(3rd Season)
Title	Author	Director	Location	Dates
And They Had Time For Tea	Robert Baer	Dennis Dubin	Kennedy Lab Theatre	Oct 5,6,13,14
Commonroom	William Saylor	William Saylor	Kennedy Lab Theatre	Jan 11,12,13
Mother Eve's Astounding Apple Seeds	George Herman	Linda Sun	Kennedy Lab Theatre	Jan 25-27,31 Feb 1
Halfway Road, Penang	Ghulam Sarwar	Ghulam Sarwar	Kennedy Lab Theatre	Apr 20,21,25-27
One-Act Revivals: (3 pidgin plays)			Kennedy Lab Theatre	May 10-12,17,18
Reunion	Bessie Toishigawa	Ed Kaahea		
Let's Go See the World	Kathryn Bond	Cho Yee Wong		
In the Alley	Edward Sakamoto	Dando Kluever		

1974-75				(4th Season)
Title	Author	Director	Location	Dates
Birthnight	William Saylor	Elizabeth Wichman	Kennedy Lab Theatre	Sep 20,21,27,28,29
90 Minutes From Reality: 3 one-act plays --- The Promised Man	B.J. Ursic	Cecilia Fordham	Kennedy Lab Theatre	Oct 24, 25, 26, 27
Waiting For To Go	Frank Catalano	Frank Catalano, D. Carroll		
Hatef	William Saylor	Dando Kluever		
Twelf Nite O Wateva!	James Grant Benton	Terence Knapp	Kennedy Lab Theatre & Leeward Comm. Coll. Thea.	Dec 26-29
Lana's Party! B.Y.O.	David Terrell	Jim Donohue	Kennedy Lab Theatre	Feb 21,22,28 Mar 1,2
Four Alone	Sarah Hunter	Dando Kluever	Kennedy Lab Theatre	Apr 4,5,11-13
Kapakahi	Drama 223 students of Kapiolani Community Coll.	Sara Edlin	Kennedy Lab Theatre	May 15-18

1975-76				(5th Season)
Title	Author	Director	Location	Dates
Dragon of the Six Resemblances (children's theatre)	Aldyth Morris	Anna Viggiano	Kennedy Lab Theatre	Oct 17,18,25,26
Feneste Che Lucive (Light that Shines Through the Window)	Frank Catalano	Dando Kluever	Kennedy Lab Theatre	Nov 20-24
Oranges Are Lucky	Darrell H.Y. Lum	Dennis Dubin	Leeward Community College Theatre	Jan 9,...
No Laff My Pilikia, Eh! (Improvised Kyogen)	Kitty Heacox	Kitty Heacox	Kennedy Lab & toured Oahu w/help of Hospital Audiences Incorporated	Feb 26,27,28,29 Mar 1
Pro Patria Mori	Harold Brown	Randy Carney	Kennedy Lab Theatre	April 15-19
<i>(double bill)</i> : 1) Sharing Dance and Theatre: an evening of short dances and theatre pieces 2) Lazarus and the Hatef: A Bedtime Story	Reginald Fong, Helen Hollenberg, Dando Kluever, Young Saylor, Elizabeth Wichman	Shirley Stringer, Margo Sancken, Gypsy Posten, Lester Mau	Kennedy Lab Theatre	May 15,16,20,21,22

1976-77				(6th Season)
Title	Author	Director	Location	Dates
Commonroom (revival) The Travels of Heikiki (both full-length, done in repertory)	William Saylor Charles Kates	William Saylor Keith Jenkins	Kennedy Lab Theatre & toured O'ahu w/help of Hospital Audiences Inc.	Oct 1,3,8,10,15,17, Sep 30 & Oct 2,7,9,14,16
Paradise Tours & Hapa Hau'ole	Robert J. Morris David Terrell	Barbara "Bunny" S. Hartman Dennis Dubin	Kennedy Lab Theatre	Nov 18,19,20,21
Reflection of the Mind's Eye: Short Plays and dance pieces		Betsy Abts, Emily Adams, Wayne Babineau, Margaret Copi, Chuck Kates, Chas. E. Martin	Kennedy Lab Theatre	Dec 30,31 Jan 2, 6-9
The Adventures of Stud & The Importance of Breasts	Dennis Carroll Harold Brown	Dando Kluever Leo Jones	Kennedy Lab Theatre	Mar 10-13
On Finding Freakdom	"Jeremiah Freen" (Kevin O'Leary)	Dando Kluever	UHM Campus Center Roof Garden	May 13-15,20-22
Menage A Trois: An Evening of Adult Laughter— -As Time Goes By -I Am Curious Puppet -Why Must I Be A Teenager In Love?	Kitty Heacox "Puppets Unchained" Sarah Hunter	Keith Jenkins "Puppets Unchained" Anna Viggiano	Kennedy Lab Theatre	May 19-22,26-29

1977-78				(7th season)
Title	Author	Director	Location	Dates
Hannah's Place	Shannon Patten	Charles Enos Martin	Lunalilo Theatre Bldg.	Jan 26-29 Feb 2-5
All Brand New Classical Chinese Theatre	Arthur Aw	John McShane	Kennedy Lab Theatre	July 21, ...

1978-79				(8th season)
Title	Author	Director	Location	Dates
Our Lady in Rose Doré	Diana Hansen	Barbara Hartman	Kennedy Lab Theatre	Oct 19-21,26-28
F and M: -The View Through Glass Slippers -Five Year Itch -Yin and Yang -Snap Shots	Wendy Russell John McShane Suzanne Clune Allen Cole	Doug S. Day Roseann Concannon Andy Jacobs John McShane	Kennedy Lab Theatre	Jan 11-13,18-20
Two by Two: -Now I Learn My ABC's -What Is Today's Name	Wendy Russell Carolyn Murch	Wendy Russell Carolyn Murch	Kennedy Lab Theatre	Apr 5-7,12-14

1979-80				(9th season)
Title	Author	Director	Location	Dates
A Kennedy	Michael Shapiro	Barbara FitzSimmons	Kennedy Lab Theatre	Jan 3-5,10-12
The Waters of Kane	Eric Pourchot	Teviot B. Fairservis Pourchot	Honolulu Zoo Outdoor Stage	Jan 19,20,26,27
Playreadings: -Construction Unlimited Honolulu -A Beelie Tale -Fatigue -Slippers -When Haunted Dreams Wake -Sueaki's Turn	Wendy Russell Gay Gurican Nelson Clark Linda Edlin Nelson Clark George Herman			

1980-81				(10th season)
Title	Author	Director	Location	Dates
2 Bomb Plays: -The First Annual Nuclear Weapons Beauty Pageant	Pamela Gang & Warren Cohen	Pamela Gang	Kennedy Lab Theatre	Sept 10-13
-Shelter	Michael Francis Shapiro	Teviot B. Fairservis Pourchot		
Fatigue	Nelson Clark	Virginia Jones	Hawaii Performing Arts Co.	Nov 17,18, 24, 25 Dec 1, 2
Echo II	Michael Shapiro	Barbara Kelly	Kennedy Lab Theatre	Dec 10-13
The Incredible Instant Theatre (improvisations)	Penny Bergman & the cast	Penny Bergman	Hawaii Performing Arts Co. & Anna Banana's Restaurant	Mar 23, 24, 30, 31 April 6, 7
Changing Voices (children's theatre)	compiled by Phyllis Look	Kathy Kuroda	Kennedy Lab Theatre	May 6-9

1981-82				(11th season)
Title	Author	Director	Location	Dates
And the Soul Shall Dance	Wakako Yamauchi	Barbara Fitzsimmons	revival of MFA production (at Kennedy Lab Theatre), 1st interisland tour by Kumu Performing Co.	July 17, 18, Hilo: July 24, 25, 26, 27, 28
Ashes (revival)	Lynette Amano	Barbara Kelly & James Nakamoto	Hawaii Performing Arts Co. studio series	Nov 16,17,23,24
Oranges Are Lucky (revival) & All Brand New Classical Chinese Theatre	Darrell H.Y. Lum Arthur Aw	Barbara FitzSimmons Penny Bergman	Kennedy Lab Theatre Kennedy Lab Theatre	Feb 4-6,11-13
Vanishing Shadow	Glenn Grant, Debbie Lutzky, Lynne Nakamura	Paul Jozwicki	HPAC studio series	Mar 15,16,22,23
Yoshitsune	Milton Murayama	Sidney Milburn & David Anderson	HPAC studio series	May 10,11,17,18
Oranges Are Lucky (revival) & All Brand New Classical Chinese Theatre (revival)	Darrell H.Y. Lum Arthur Aw	Barbara FitzSimmons Penny Bergman	interisland tour by Kumu Performing Co.	UHH June 25-27 Lana'i

1982-83				(12th season)
Title	Author	Director	Location	Dates
A Class 'C' Trial in Yokohama	Roger Cornish	Barbara Fitzsimmons	Honolulu Community Theatre	Nov 29,30 Dec 6,7
Strangers in Paradise (improvisational theatre) & The Harold	Penny Bergman & the cast (improvisational)	Penny Bergman	HPAC studio series & McCoy Pavilion	Jan 17, 18, 24, 25, 27-29
18's & On the Wall (two prize-winning one-acts)	Les Wilkins Les Wilkins	Jim Nakamoto Jim Nakamoto	HPAC studio series	Mar 14,15,21,22
Strangers in Paradise- or- Two Baked Potatoes Meet Three Scoops Rice (The Incredible Instant Theatre)	Penny Bergman & the cast (improvisational)	Penny Bergman	Toured interisland: Oahu-the new Coconut Grove, Ala Moana Hawaii- Kona Surf Hotel Volcano Arts Ctr. Univ. of HI at Hilo Maui- Maui Community Theatre (at Kahului Fairgrounds)	May 30-June 1 June 3-5 June 10 June 11,12 June 17,18

1983-84				(13th season)
Title	Author	Director	Location	Dates
Construction Unlimited Honolulu	Wendy Russell	Dennis Carroll	Mid-Pacific Institute, Kawaiahao Theatre	Oct. 21, 22, 23, 28, 29, 30
No Smile for Strangers	Harold Heifetz	Barbara Kelly	Mid-Pac	Jan. 20, 21, 22, 27, 28, 29
A'ala Park	Edward Sakamoto	Dando Kluever	HPAC studio series	Mar. 19, 20, 26, 27 Apr. 2, 3, 9, 10, 16, 17
Song For a Nisei Fisherman	Philip Kan Gotanda	Barbara FitzSimmons	Mid-Pac toured inter-island Lihue Parish Hall Maui Community Players Volcano Arts Ctr. & UHH	May 18-27 June

1984-85				(14th season)
Title	Author	Director	Location	Dates
The Pearl Harbor Plays: A String of Pearls Purple Hearts	Brian Clark-Kenton	Jim Nakamoto Dennis Carroll	Mid-Pac	Oct. 18, 19, 20, 21, 26, 27, 28 Nov. 2, 3, 4, 11
Foursome	Jeremy Freen	Richard MacPherson	Mid-Pac	Jan. 18, 19, 20, 25, 26, 27
Life of the Land	Edward Sakamoto	Dando Kluever	Mid-Pac interisland tour UH Kennedy Theatre	Mar. 8, 9, 10, 15, 16, 17, 29, 30, 31 June 1985 Aug 31 Benefit Perf.
The Fisher King	Daniel Algie	Barbara FitzSimmons	Mid-Pac	May 24, 25, 26, 31 June 1, 2

1985-86				(15th season)
Title	Author	Director	Location	Dates
Summer's War	Brian Clark	Dennis Carroll	Mid-Pac	Oct. 24, 25, 26, 31 Nov. 1, 2, 7, 8, 9, 10
The White Death	Daniel Therriault	Dando Kluever	Mid-Pac	Jan. 23, 24, 25, 30, 31 Feb. 1, 6, 7, 8, 9
Emmalehua	Victoria N. Kneubuhl	John Kneubuhl	Mid-Pac	Mar. 27, 28, 29 Apr. 3, 6, 11, 12, 13, 18, 19
Twelf Nite O Wateva! (revival)	James Grant Benton	Dando Kluever & James Grant Benton	Mid-Pac interisland tour: Maui-Maui Youth Theatre Hawaii-UHH Kauai- Lihue Parish UHM Kennedy Theatre	May 1, 2, 3, 8, 10, 15, 17, 22, 24, 25 June 1986 Aug. 23, 1986 benefit performance

1986-87				(16th season)
Title	Author	Director	Location	Dates
My Home Is Down the Street	Darrell H.Y. Lum	Dando Kluever	Mid-Pac	Nov 6, 7, 8, 9, 13, 14, 15, 16
Dead Ends	Brian Clark	Brian Clark	Mid-Pac	Jan 22, 23, 24, 29, 30, 31 Feb 5, 6, 7, 8
Ka'iulani	Robert Nelson, Victoria N. Kneubuhl, Dennis Carroll, Ryan Page	Dennis Carroll	Mid-Pac	Mar 26, 27, 28 Apr 2, 3, 4, 9, 10, 11, 12, 16, 18
Stew Rice	Edward Sakamoto	Dando Kluever	Mid-Pac & interisland tour: Maui Comm. Coll. Kauai Hawaii	May 7, 8, 9, 14, 15, 16, 22, 23, 24 June 19, 20

1987-88				(17th season)
Title	Author	Director	Location	Dates
Home In the Islands (a musical)	Henry Kaponu, David Talisman, Dando Kluever	Dando Kluever	Croarkin Theatre	Nov 27, 28, 29 Dec 3, 4, 5, 6, 10, 11, 12
Lucky Come Hawaii	Jon Shirota	James Nakamoto	Tenney Theatre	Jan 14, 15, 16, 17, 23, 24, 28, 29, 30, 31 + Feb 6 Governor's Dinner
Paradise Bound	Owen Hagino	Gene Burk	Tenney Theatre	April 8, 9, 10, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17
Chikamatsu's Forest	Edward Sakamoto	Ben Moffatt	Croarkin Theatre	May 6, 7, 12, 13, 14, 15, 19, 20, 21, 22
Ka'iulani (revival)	Nelson, Kneubuhl, Carroll, Page	Dennis Carroll	interisland tour: Kauai War Memorial UH Hilo Hana, Maui	June 10, 11, 12 June 24, 25, 26

1988-89				(18th season)
Title	Author	Director	Location	Dates
The Conversion	Victoria N. Kneubuhl	Dale Daigle	Tenney Theatre, St. Andrew's Cathedral	Sept. 1, 2, 3, 8, 9, 10, 15, 16, 17, 18
Overtones	Cherylene Lee	Dando Kluever	Tenney Theatre	Nov. 3, 4, 5, 10, 11, 12, 17, 18, 19, 20
O'o: Hawai'i	Peter Charlot	Paul Cravath	Tenney Theatre	Jan. 20, 21, 26, 27, 28, 29 Feb. 1, 2, 3, 5
Yamashita	Roger Pulvers	Robert Stach	Tenney Theatre	April 1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 13, 14, 15, 16
Lucky Come Hawaii (revival)	Jon Shirota	Gary Saito	Tenney Theatre, Waianae High, Leeward Comm. Coll, interisland tour	June 1, 2, 8, 10, 11, 30

1989-90				(19th season)
Title	Author	Director	Location	Dates
Manoa Valley	Edward Sakamoto	Chris Ivanyi	ETO Cafeteria, Pensacola St	Sept 28, 29, 30 Oct 2, 6, 7, 13, 14, 19, 20, 21, 22
The House of Happy Talk	David Penhallow	Robert Stach	ETO Cafeteria	Nov 30 Dec 1, 2, 7, 8, 9, 10, 14, 17
Tea	Velina Hasu Houston	Ellen Polyhronopoulou	ETO Cafeteria	Jan 18, 19, 20, 26, 27 Feb 2, 3, 9, 10, 11
Da Kine	Leigh Kim	Dando Kluever	ETO Cafeteria	Mar 8, 9, 10, 16, 17, 23, 24, 30, 31 Apr 1
12-1-A	Wakako Yamauchi	Brian Shaughnessy	ETO Cafeteria	April 26, 27, 28 May 4, 5, 6, 10, 11, 12, 13
The Conversion of Ka'ahumanu (revival)	Victoria N. Kneubuhl	Dale Daigle	Tenney Theatre, Castle High, Kauai Hilo Kona	June 1, 2, 3, 30 June 8, 9, 10 June 15, 16 June 22, 23
Ka'iulani & The Conversion of Ka'ahumanu (International Festival Tour)	Nelson, Kneubuhl, Carroll, Page Victoria N. Kneubuhl	Dennis Carroll	UH Kennedy Theatre Edinburgh, Washington, Los Angeles	July-August 1990

1990-91				(20th season)
Title	Author	Director	Location	Dates
The Chairman's Wife	Wakako Yamauchi	Xue Hua "Sherwood" Hu	Central Intermediate, Leeward Comm. Coll., Big Island	Oct 26, 27, Nov 2, 3, 4 Nov 8, 9 Nov 16, 17, 18
Biff Finds Himself in Hawaii & Paradise Tours	John W. White Robert Morris	Steve Wagenseller	Central Intermediate	Nov 29, 30 Dec 1, 7, 8, 9, 13, 14, 15, 16
Asa Ga Kimashita/Morning Has Broken	Velina Hasu Houston	Gene Shofner	Tenney Theatre	Jan 24, 25, 26 Feb 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, 9, 10
Maui the Demigod	adapted by Gary Balfantz from the Steven Goldsberry novel	Gary Balfantz	Tenney Theatre	April 11, 12, 13, 19, 20, 21, 25, 26, 27, 28
Tea (revival)	Velina Hasu Houston	Ellen Polyhronopoulou	Tenney Theatre Lihue Hilo Kona LCC WCC	May 30, 31 June 1, 2 June 7, 8, 9 June 14, 15 June 21, 22 June 28 June 29, 30

1991-92				(21st season)
Title	Author	Director	Location	Dates
Pilgrimage	Edward Sakamoto	Jim Nakamoto	Tenney Theatre	Oct 10, 11, 12, 18, 19, 20, 24, 25, 26, 27
A Little Bit Like You	Darrell H.Y. Lum	J. Scott Botelho	co-sponsored w/ HTY at Chaminade Univ. Croarkin Theatre	Nov 22, 23, 29, 30 Dec 1, 6, 7, 13, 14, 15
Christmas Cake	Velina Hasu Houston	Brian Shaughnessy	Tenney Theatre	Jan 16, 17, 18, 24, 25, 26 Feb 1, 2
Fortune	Hilary Bell	Gene Shofner	Tenney Theatre	Mar 19, 20, 21, 27, 28, 29 Apr 2, 3, 4, 5
Maui the Demigod (re-staged)	Balfanz/ (Goldsberry)	Harry Wong III	Tenney Theatre Lihue Maui (Kealani Hotel) Big Island (UHH) Windward C.C.	May 28, 29, 30, 31 June 5, 6, 7 June 12, 13 June 19, 20 June 26, 27, 28

1992-93				(22nd season)
Title	Author	Director	Location	Dates
Aloha Las Vegas	Edward Sakamoto	Jim Nakamoto	Tenney Theatre	Sept 18, 19, 25, 26 Oct 2, 3, 4, 9, 10, 11 ext. Oct 16, 17, 18
Yellow Fever	Ric Shiomi	Jo Scheder	Tenney Theatre	Nov 6, 7, 13, 14, 20, 21, 22, 27, 28, 29
Fou Lei and Fou Ts'ong	Hu Weimin	Dennis Carroll	Tenney Theatre	Jan 15, 16, 22, 23, 29, 30, 31 Feb 5, 6, 7
The Wash	Philip Kan Gotanda	David Farmer	Tenney Theatre	Mar 12, 13, 19, 20, 26, 27, 28 Apr 2, 3, 4
A Little Bit Like You (revival)	Darrell H.Y. Lum	Keith Kashiwada	Tenney Theatre Kona Lihue Hilo (UHH) Windward CC	May 27, 28, 29, 30 June 4, 5 June 11, 12 June 18, 19 June 25, 26, 27

1993-94				(23rd season)
Title	Author	Director	Location	Dates
The Taste of Kona Coffee	Edward Sakamoto	James Nakamoto	Tenney Theatre & 46 Merchant St. & Kona	Sept. 17, 18, 24, 25 Oct. 1, 2, 3, 8, 9, 10 Feb. 26, 27 Mar. 5, 6, 12, 13, 19, 20
Manoa Valley	Edward Sakamoto	Keith Kashiwada	Tenney Theatre & 46 Merchant St.	Nov. 26, 27 Dec. 3, 4, 10, 11, 12, 17, 18, 19 Feb. 26, 27 Mar. 5, 6, 12, 13, 19, 20
The Life of the Land	Edward Sakamoto	John Wat	46 Merchant St.	Feb. 11, 12, 13, 18, 19, 20, 26, 27 Mar. 4, 5, 6, 11, 12, 13, 18, 19, 20
Last Virgin in Paradise	Vilsoni Hereniko & Teresia Teaiwa	Gene Shofner & Vilsoni Hereniko	46 Merchant St.	Apr 8, 9, 10, 15, 16, 17, 22, 23, 24, 29, 30 May 1
Kāmau	Alani Apio	Harry Wong III	46 Merchant St. & Maui Comm Coll Waianae High Hilo (UHH) Lihue Kona	May 20, 21, 22, 27, 28, 29 July 1, 2, 3 June 3, 4 June 10, 11 June 17, 18, 19 June 24, 25 July 8,9

1994-95				(24th season)
Title	Author	Director	Location	Dates
Medea	Euripides	David Farmer	46 Merchant St.	Aug. 5, 6, 7, 12, 13, 14, 19, 20, 21, 26, 27, 28
Last Virgin in Paradise (revival)	Vilsoni Hereniko & Teresia Teaiwa	Gene Shofner & Vilsoni Hereniko	46 Merchant St.	Sept 1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 9, 10, 11, 16
Specs	Bob Okasako (Bert Narimasu)	Harry Wong III	46 Merchant St.	Sept. 30 Oct. 1, 2, 7, 8, 9, 13, 14, 15, 16, 20, 21, 22, 23
Ola Nā Iwi	Victoria Nalani Kneubuhl	John H.Y. Wat	46 Merchant St.	Nov. 11, 12, 13, 18, 19, 20, 25, 26, 27 Dec. 1, 2, 3, 4
Talk Story	Jeanie Barroga	Kati Kuroda	46 Merchant St.	Jan. 13, 14, 15, 20, 21, 22, 26, 27, 28, 29 Feb. 2, 3, 4, 5
Matsuyama Mirror	Velina Hasu Houston	Pam Sterling	Tenney Theatre (co-sponsored w/ HTY)	Mar. 3, 4, 10, 11, 16, 17, 18, 24, 25, 26
Chibariyo!	Les Wilkins	James Nakamoto	46 Merchant St. Maui Hilo	April 7, 8, 9, 14, 15, 16, 20, 21, 22, 23, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30 May 12, 13 May 19, 20, 21
Think of a Garden (replaced Banzai Darling in the season)	John Kneubuhl	David Farmer	46 Merchant St.	May 19, 20, 21, 26, 27, 28 June 1, 2, 3, 3, 8, 9, 10, 11

1995-96				(25th season)
Title	Author	Director	Location	Dates
Stew Rice	Edward Sakamoto	James Nakamoto	46 Merchant St.	Sept. 6,7-10, 13, 14, 16, 17, 20, 21-24, 27, 28-30, Oct. 1, 4-8, + ext: Oct 11, 12, 13, 14
World War nllhau	Alan Sutterfield	Sean T.C. O'Malley	46 Merchant St.	Nov. 9-12, 16-19, 24-26, 30, Dec. 1-3, 6-10
Oranges Are Lucky & Fighting Fire	Darrell H.Y. Lum Darrell H.Y. Lum	John H.Y. Wat John H.Y. Wat	46 Merchant St.	Jan. 11-14, 18-21, 25-27, Feb. 1-4, 7-11
Emmalehua	Victoria Nalani Kneubuhl	Dennis Carroll	46 Merchant St.	Mar. 7-10, 14-17, 21-24, 28-31, Apr. 3-6
The Watcher of Waipuna	Keith Kashiwada, adapted from Gary Pak's novel	Keith Kashiwada	46 Merchant St.	May 2-5, 9-12, 16-19, 23-26, 30, 31, June 1, 2

1996-97				(26th season)
Title	Author	Director	Location	Dates
Othello	William Shakespeare	Victoria Racimo	46 Merchant St.	Sept 5-8, 12, 14, 15, 19-22, 26-29, Oct. 2-6
Peregrinasyon	Chris B. Millado	Chris B. Millado	46 Merchant St.	Nov. 7-10, 14-17, 21-24, 29, 30, Dec. 1, 4-8
Wild Meat and the Bully Burgers	John H.Y. Wat & Keith Kashiwada, adapted from Lois-Ann Yamanaka's novel	John H.Y. Wat	46 Merchant St.	Jan. 9-12, 16-19, 23-25, 30, 31, Feb. 1, 2, 5-9
Yankee Dawg You Die	Phillip Kan Gotanda	Phyllis Look with David Furumoto	46 Merchant St.	Mar. 6-9, 13-16, 20-23, 27-30, April 3-6
A'ala Park	Edward Sakamoto	James Nakamoto	46 Merchant St.	May 1-4, 8-11, 15-18, 22-25, 29-31, June 1

1997-98				(27th season)
Title	Author	Director	Location	Dates
Eating Chicken Feet	Kitty Chen	Kati Kuroda	46 Merchant St.	Sept 4, 5, 6, 7, 13, 14, 19, 20, 21, 25, 26, 27, 28, Oct. 2, 3, 4, 5
Kāmau A'e	Alani Apio	Harry Wong III	46 Merchant St.	Nov. 6, 7, 8, 9, 14, 15, 16, 21, 22, 23, 28, 29, 30, Dec. 4, 5, 6, 7
Comfort Woman	John H.Y. Wat & Keith Kashiwada, adapted from Nora Okja Keller's novel	John H.Y. Wat	46 Merchant St.	Jan. 8, 9, 10, 11, 16, 17, 18, 23, 24, 29, 30, 31, Feb. 1, 5, 6, 7, 8
Easy Street	Darryl Tsutsui	Keith Kashiwada	46 Merchant St.	Mar. 5, 6, 7, 8, 13, 14, 15, 20, 21, 22, 26, 27, 28, 29, April 2, 3, 4, 5
Way of a God	Dennis Carroll	Harry Wong III	46 Merchant St.	Apr. 30, May 1, 2, 3, 8, 9, 10, 15, 16, 17, 21, 22, 23, 24, 28, 29, 30, 31

1998-99				(28th season)
Title	Author	Director	Location	Dates
Da Mayah	Lee Cataluna	R. Kevin Doyle	46 Merchant St.	Sept. 3, 4, 5, 6, 12, 13, 17, 18, 19, 20, 24, 25, 26, 27 Oct. 1, 2, 3, 4
Mele Kanikau	John Kneubuhl	D. Scott Woods	46 Merchant St.	Nov. 5, 6, 7, 8, 12, 13, 14, 15, 19, 20, 21, 22, 27, 28, 29 Dec. 3, 4, 5, 6
Island Skin Songs	Sean T.C. O'Malley	Lurana O'Malley	46 Merchant St.	Jan. 7, 8, 9, 10, 14, 15, 16, 17, 21, 22, 23, 28, 29, 30, 31 Feb. 4, 5, 6, 7
Flipzoids	Ralph B. Peña	Naoko Maeshiba	46 Merchant St.	Mar. 4, 5, 6, 7, 11, 12, 13, 14, 18, 19, 20, 21, 25, 26, 27, 28 April 1, 2, 3
All I Asking For Is My Body	Milton Murayama	Harry Wong III	46 Merchant St.	April 29, 30 May 1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 9, 13, 14, 15, 16, 20, 21, 22, 23, 27, 28, 29, 30

**APPENDIX B:
KUMU KAHUA BOARD MEMBERS**

1971-72

Advisor - Dennis Carroll
Min Soo Ahn
Mel Cobb
Tony Haas
Les Miller
Ninette Mordaunt
Atsumi Sakato
Gary Toyama
Gay Wood

1972-73

Advisor - Dennis Carroll
Jemm Kerr
Teresa Neilson
Bill Saylor
James Utterback
Elizabeth Wichmann

1973-74

Advisor - Dennis Carroll
Kitty Heacox
Edward Kaahea
Jemm Kerr
Dian Lopez
William Saylor
Linda Sun
Elizabeth Wichmann
Cho-Yee Wong

1974-75

Advisor - Dennis Carroll
Linda Bredin
Frank Catalano
Sara Edlin
Joan Gossett
Kitty Heacox
Jemm Kerr
Dando Kluever
Dian Lopez
William Saylor
Elizabeth Wichmann
Cho Yi Wong

1975-76

Advisor - Dennis Carroll
Linda Bredin
Frank Catalano
Sara Edlin
Melvin Duane Gionson
Joan Gossett
Kitty Heacox
Carol Honda
Keith Jenkins
Chuck Kates
Dando Kluever
William Saylor
Elizabeth Wichmann
(Interim Advisor while Dennis Carroll was on sabbatical: Joel Trapido)

1976-77

Advisor - Dennis Carroll
Wayne Babineau
Harold Brown
Kathy Foley
Mel Gionson
Joan Gossett
Kitty Heacox
Carol Honda
Keith Jenkins
Chuck Kates
Dando Kluever
Gwyn Lee
Charles Martin
Sarah Moon
Mary Olsen
Elizabeth Wichmann

1977-78

Advisor - Dennis Carroll
Allen Cole
Roseann Concannon
Doug Day
Vic Holliday
Miki Kim
John McShane
Carolyn Murch
Russell Omori
Eric Pourchot
Pam Robinson

1978-79

Advisor - Dennis Carroll
Allen Cole
Roseann Concannon
Doug Day
Vic Holliday
Miki Kim
John McShane
Carolyn Murch
Russell Omori
Eric Pourchot
Pam Robinson

1979-80

Advisor - Dennis Carroll
Allen Cole
Roseann Concannon
Doug Day
Linda Edlin
Pat Herman
Vic Holliday
Eugene Lion
John McShane
Ryan Nakagawa
Russell Omori
Eric Pourchot
Pam Robinson
Wendy Russell

1980-81

Advisor - Dennis Carroll
Penny Bergman
Sue Brown
Linda Edlin
Barbara FitzSimmons
Carol Honda (ex officio)
Barbara Kelly
Phyllis Look
Richard MacPherson
Russell Omori
Eric Pourchot
Teviot Pourchot
Pam Robinson
Mike Shapiro

1981-82

Faculty Advisor - Dennis Carroll
Barbara FitzSimmons (Artistic Director, Kumu Performing Company)
JanDee Abraham
Michelle d'Albrecht
Penny Bergman
Sue Brown
Tom Hitch
Barbara Kelly
Russell Omori
Richard MacPherson
Pamela Viera

1982-83

Faculty Advisor - Dennis Carroll
Barbara FitzSimmons
JanDee Abraham
Penny Bergman
Sue Brown
Michelle d'Albrecht
Tom Hitch
Barbara Kelly
Richard MacPherson
Sidney Milburn
Russell Omori
Pam Viera

1983-84

Dennis Carroll
Barbara FitzSimmons
Michelle d'Albrecht
Jennifer de Costa
Barbara Kelly
Richard MacPherson
Sidney Milburn
Carol Odo
Tam Trevino

1984-85

Dennis Carroll - Executive Director
Barbara FitzSimmons - Artistic Director
Dando Kluever - Resident Director
Warren Cohen - Musical Director
Jeni de Costa - Liaison, Specialist Reader
Bill Dendle - Grant Writer & Liaison
Precy Espiritu - Private Fundraising & Specialist Reader
Victoria Kneubuhl - Dramaturge
Richard MacPherson - Liaison, Specialist Reader
Carol Odo - Special Projects Director, Reading Consultant
Ryan Page - Dramaturge
Tam Trevino - Technical Director

1985-86

Dennis Carroll - Executive Director
Barbara FitzSimmons - Artistic Director
Dando Kluever - Resident Director
Warren Cohen - Musical Director
Jennifer DeCosta - Public Relations, Specialist Reader
Bill Dendle - Grants & Public Relations
Precy Espiritu - Private Fundraising, Specialist Reader
David Farmer - Liaison & Legal Affairs
Mary Kirkham - Subscriptions & Donations
Victoria Kneubuhl - Dramaturge
Carol Odo - Special Projects Coordinator, Specialist Reader
Ryan Page - Dramaturge

1986-87

Dennis Carroll - Executive Director
Dando Kluever - Artistic Director (ex officio)
Warren Cohen - Musical Director
Bill Dendle - Grants & Public Relations
Joseph Dodd - Designer (ex officio)
Percy Espiritu - Private Fund Raising & Special Consultations
David Farmer - Liaison & Legal Consultant
Mary Kirkham - Subscriptions & Donations Manager
Victoria Kneubuhl - Dramaturge
Ryan Page - Dramaturge
Glenda Tucker - Publicity

1987-88

Dennis Carroll - Executive Director
Dando Kluever - Artistic Director (ex officio)
Warren Cohen - Musical Director
Bill Dendle - Grants & Public Relations
Joseph Dodd - Designer (ex officio)
Precy Espiritu - Private Fundraising & Special Consultations
David Farmer - Liaison & Legal Consultant
Mary Kirkham - Subscriptions & Donations Manager
Victoria Kneubuhl - Dramaturge
Ryan Page - Dramaturge
Glenda Tucker - Publicity

1988-89

Dennis Carroll - Executive Director
Dando Kluever - Artistic Director
Gene Burk - Dramaturge
Warren Cohen - Musical Director
Dale Daigle - Acting Liaison (ex officio)
Bill Dendle - Grants & Public Relations
Joseph Dodd - Designer
Precy Espiritu - Special Consultant & Private Fundraising
David Farmer - Legal Consultant
Christopher Ivanyi - Technical Consultant
Victoria Kneubuhl - Tour Administration & Dramaturge
Bert Narimasu - Dramaturge
Juli Thompson - Dramaturge

1989-90

Dennis Carroll / Juli Thompson - Executive Director
Dennis Carroll - Managing Director
Dando Kluever / Gene Shofner - Artistic Director
Leonelle Anderson Akana - Community Relations
Gary Balfantz - Adaptation & Literary Liaison
Warren Cohen - Secretary & Music Director
Paul Cravath - Resident Director
William H. Dendle - Grants & Public Relations
Joseph Dodd - Resident Designer
Precy Espiritu - Community Relations
David Farmer - Legal Liaison
Sheila Kelly - Grants & Public Relations
Wayne Kischer - Resident Lighting Designer
Victoria Nalani Kneubuhl - Dramaturge
Bert Narimasu - Dramaturge
Susan H. Park - Adaptation & Literary Liaison
Margaret Cory Welch - Technical Liaison
Harry Wong III - Playreading & Play Competition Coordinator

1990-91

Juli Thompson Burk - Executive Director
W. Dennis Carroll - Managing Director
Leonelle Anderson Akana
Gary Balfantz
Paul Cravath
Bill Dendle
Joe Dodd
Precy Espiritu
David Farmer
Sheila Kelly
Wayne Kischer
Vicki Kneubuhl
Jim Nakamoto
Bert Narimasu
Susan Park
Gene Shofner
Junior Tesoro
Mary Thompson
Margy Welch
Harry Wong III

1991-92

Juli Thompson Burk - Executive Director
W. Dennis Carroll - Managing Director
Gene Shofner - Artistic Director
Leonelle Anderson Akana - Officer
Paul Cravath - Officer
Bill Dendle III - Officer
Joseph D. Dodd - Officer
Sheila Kelly - Officer
Wayne Kischer - Officer
Victoria Nalani Kneubuhl - Officer
James Nakamoto - Officer
Bert Narimasu - Officer
Sheila M. Kelly
Junior Tesoro
Mary Thompson
Margie Welch
Harry Wong III

1992-93

W. Dennis Carroll - President
James A. Nakamoto - Vice President
Paul Cravath - Secretary
Sheila M. Kelly - Treasurer
Tammy Anderson
William H. Dendle
Joseph D. Dodd
Ronald Encarnacion
Prescila L. Espiritu
Janice Itamura
Margaret Jones
Keith Kashiwada
Wayne Kischer
Bert Narimasu
Jo Scheder
Hermenigildo D. Tesoro, Jr.
Mary Thompson
Harry Wong III

1993-94

W. Dennis Carroll - Board President
Gene Shofner - Artistic Director
Tammy Anderson
Paul Cravath
William H. Dendle
Joseph D. Dodd
Ronald Encarnacion
Prescila L. Espiritu
Janice Itamura
Margaret Jones
Keith Kashiwada
Sheila M. Kelly
Wayne Kischer
James Nakamoto
Bert Narimasu
Jo Scheder
Hermenigildo D. Tesoro, Jr.
Mary Thompson
John White
Harry Wong III

1994-95

W. Dennis Carroll - Board President
Gene Shofner - Artistic Director
Tammy Anderson
Paul Cravath
William H. Dendle
Joseph D. Dodd
Ronald Encarnacion
Prescila L. Espiritu
Janice Itamura
Margaret Jones
Keith Kashiwada
Sheila M. Kelly
Wayne Kischer
James Nakamoto
Bert Narimasu
Jo Scheder
Hermenigildo D. Tesoro, Jr.
Mary Thompson
John White
Harry Wong III

1995-96

Dennis Carroll - President / Treasurer
Paul Cravath - Vice President / Secretary
Bill Dendle
Joe Dodd
R. Kevin Doyle
Precy Espiritu
Vilsoni Hereniko
Jan Itamura
Margaret Jones
Keith Kashiwada
Wayne Kischer
Justina Mattos
James Nakamoto
Bert Narimasu
Lisa Omoto
Marcus Oshiro
Ron Perry
Jo Scheder
Hermen Tesoro
John Wat
Harry Wong III
Wendell Yim

1996-97

Dennis Carroll - Artistic Director
Paul Cravath
Bill Dendle
Joseph Dodd
R. Kevin Doyle
Precy Espiritu
Jan Itamura
Margaret Jones
Keith Kashiwada
Wayne Kischer
Justina Mattos
James A. Nakamoto
Bert Narimasu
Lisa Omoto
Marcus Oshiro
Ron Perry
Jo Scheder
Dann Seki
Doris Taitano
Hermenigildo T. Tesoro Jr.
Darryl Tsutsui
John H.Y. Wat
John W. White
Harry Wong III
Wendell Yim

1997-98

Keith Kashiwada - President
Dennis Carroll
Paul Cravath
Bill Dendle
Joseph Dodd
R. Kevin Doyle
Precy Espiritu
Jan Itamura
Gerald Kawaoka
Wayne Kischer
Justina Mattos
James A. Nakamoto
Bert Narimasu
Lisa Omoto
Susan Park
Ron Perry
Dann Seki
Doris Taitano
Marya Takamori
Darryl Tstutsui
John H.Y. Wat
John W. White
D. Scott Woods
Wendell Yim

1998-99

Keith Kashiwada - President
Bulldog
Dennis Carroll
Paul Cravath
Bill Dendle
Joseph Dodd
R. Kevin Doyle
Rolinda Emch
Precy Espiritu
Karen Hironaga
Craig Howes
Jan Itamura
Gerald Kawaoko
Wayne Kischer
Chris Millado
Bert Narimasu
Celeste Ohta
Lisa Omoto
Ron Perry
Dann Seki
Doris Taitano
Marya Takamori
John H.Y. Wat
John W. White
D. Scott Woods

APPENDIX C:

KUMU KAHUA THEATRE BOX OFFICE SUMMARIES

YEAR	TITLE	VENUE	TOTAL AUDIENCE SIZE	# OF PERFORMANCES	AVG. AUD. SIZE PER NIGHT
1980	Fatigue	HPAC		6	
1983	Strangers in Paradise	Maui Comm. Theatre	194	2	97
1983	Construction Unlimited Honolulu	Mid Pac	130	6	22
1984	No Smile for Strangers	Mid Pac	420	6	70
1984	A'ala Park	HPAC	921	10	92
1984	Song for a Nisei Fisherman	Mid Pac? (not incl. tour)	393	6	66
1984	The Pearl Harbor Plays	Mid Pac	1029	14	74
1985	Foursome	Mid Pac	224	6	37
1985	Life of the Land	Mid Pac (not incl. tour)	1322	9	147
1985	The Fisher King	Mid Pac	327	6	55
1985	Summer's War	Mid Pac	1033	10	103
1986	The White Death	Mid Pac	538	10	54
1986	Emmalehua	Mid Pac	425	10	43
1986	Twelf Nite	Mid Pac (not incl. tour)	1358	11	124
1986	My Home is Down the Street	Mid Pac	857	8	107
1987	Dead Ends	Mid Pac	545	10	55
1987	Ka'iulani	Mid Pac	1631	13	126
1987	Stew Rice	Mid Pac (not incl. tour)	1017	9	113
1987	Home in the Islands	Croarkin	1134	10	113
1988	Lucky Come Hawaii	Tenney	1414	11	129
1988	Paradise Bound	Tenney	597	8	75
1988	Chikamatsu's Forest	Croarkin	599	10	60
1988	The Conversion	Tenney	508	10	51
1988	Overtones	Tenney	398	10	40
1989	O'o: Hawai'i	Tenney	683	10	68
1989	Yamashita	Tenney	134	9	15
1989	Manoa Valley	ETO cafeteria	981	13	76
89-90	House of Happy Talk	ETO cafeteria	352	9	39
1990	Tea	ETO cafeteria	843	10	84
1990	Da Kine	ETO cafeteria	875	10	88
1990	12-1-A	ETO cafeteria	791	10	79
1990	The Chairman's Wife	Central Intermediate (not incl. tour)	383	5	77
1990	Biff & Paradise Tours	Central Intermediate	298	10	30
1991	Asa Ga Kimashita	Tenney	916	10	92
1991	Maui the Demigod	Tenney	935	10	94

YEAR	TITLE	VENUE	TOTAL AUDIENCE SIZE	# OF PERFORMANCES	AVE. AUD. SIZE PER NIGHT
1991	Pilgrimage	Tenney	796	10	80
1991	A Little Bit Like You	Croarkin	772	10	77
1992	Christmas Cake	Tenney	906	10	91
1992	Fortune	Tenney	675	10	68
1992	Maui the Demigod	Tenney & WCC (not incl. tour)	556	7	79
1992	Aloha Las Vegas	Tenney	2,271	13	175
1992	Yellow Fever	Tenney	929	10	93
1993	Fou Lei and Fou Ts'ong	Tenney	690	10	69
1993	The Wash	Tenney	1,348	10	135
1993	A Little Bit Like You	Tenney & WCC (not incl. tour)	926	7	132
1993	The Taste of Kona Coffee	Tenney (not incl. perf. in Kona)	2,210	10	221
1993	Manoa Valley	Tenney	1,773	10	177
1994	The Life of the Land	46 Merchant St.	1,030	9	114
1994	Hawai'i No Ka 'Oi Trilogy	46 Merchant St.	686	8	86
1994	Last Virgin in Paradise	46 Merchant St.	1342	12	112
1994	Kāmau	46 Merchant St. (not include. tour)	1014	9	113
1994	Medea	46 Merchant St.	817	12	68
1994	Last Virgin (revival)	46 Merchant St.	861	9	96
1994	Specs	46 Merchant St.	1319	14	94
1994	Ola Nā Iwi	46 Merchant St.	974	13	75
1995	Talk Story	46 Merchant St.	1252	14	89
1995	Matsuyama Mirror	Tenney	906	10	91
1995	Chibariyo!	46 Merchant St.	1604	15	107
1995	Think of a Garden	46 Merchant St.	900	14	64
1995	Stew Rice	46 Merchant St.	3404	28	122
1995	World War nIhau	46 Merchant St.	1262	21	60
1996	Oranges... & Fighting Fire	46 Merchant St.	2325	29	80
1996	Emmalehua	46 Merchant St.	1301	21	62
1996	The Watcher of Waipuna	46 Merchant St.			
1995	Othello	46 Merchant St.	1303	21	62
1996	Peregrinasyon	46 Merchant St.	1773	25	71
1997	Wild Meat & the Bully Burgers	46 Merchant St.	2877	26	111
1997	Yankee Dawg You Die	46 Merchant St.	1085	21	52
1997	A'ala Park	46 Merchant St.	1756	21	84
1997	Wild Meat (remount)	46 Merchant St.	1583	16	99
1997	Eating Chicken Feet	46 Merchant St.	2009	19	106
1997	Kāmau A'e	46 Merchant St.	1447	18	80

YEAR	TITLE	VENUE	TOTAL AUDIENCE SIZE	# OF PERFORMANCES	AVE. AUD. SIZE PER NIGHT
1998	Comfort Woman	46 Merchant St.	2621	27	97
1998	Easy Street	46 Merchant St.	1594	19	84
1998	Way of a God	46 Merchant St.	1432	19	75
1998	Da Mayah	46 Merchant St.	2916	29	101
1998	Mele Kanikau	46 Merchant St.	1195	19	63
1999	Island Skin Songs	46 Merchant St.	1587	20	79
1999	Flipzoids	46 Merchant St.	1220	20	61
1999	All I Asking For Is My Body	46 Merchant St.	1874	25	75

APPENDIX D:

LOCAL PLAYWRIGHTS AND LOCAL PLAYS

This index, while not exhaustive, is as complete as possible to the best of my knowledge. Some of the playwrights listed here are no longer living in Hawai'i, but were local residents at the time of writing their plays. Local playwrights' works are included whether or not their subject matter has local relevance. Plays by non-local playwrights are included only if they relate to some aspect of life in Hawai'i.

The majority of the plays here can be found at the University of Hawai'i's Hamilton Library in the following collections: *College Plays*,¹ *University of Hawaii Plays*, and *Theatre Group Plays*, which became *Kumu Kahua Contest Plays* from 1982 onward. Many plays that have been produced or considered by Kumu Kahua Theatre can be found in the Kumu Kahua Theatre Archives. A few "local" plays are also housed in the University of Massachusetts Library under the *Roberta Uno Asian American Playwrights* script collection. Plays that are housed in the above mentioned collections are indicated by the following:

CP	=	College Plays (at the University of Hawai'i)
TGP	=	Theatre Group Plays (at the University of Hawai'i)
UHP	=	University of Hawaii Plays (at the University of Hawai'i)
KKCP	=	Kumu Kahua Contest Plays (at the University of Hawai'i)
KKTA	=	Kumu Kahua Theatre Archives 1971-1997
UML	=	University of Massachusetts Library

Some of the plays listed here are not part of the above collections, but are included because of my personal knowledge of a production that was done or the work of a particular playwright, or because of references I came across in miscellaneous newspaper or newsletter articles. In this case, I will indicate the organization through which the work was developed and/or produced:

KKT	=	Kumu Kahua Theatre
HTY	=	Honolulu Theatre for Youth
HCT/DHT	=	Honolulu Community Theatre, now known as Diamond Head Theatre
HCP	=	Hilo Community Players
UHM	=	University of Hawai'i at Mānoa
UHH	=	University of Hawai'i at Hilo

Plays which have been published will be indicated by the abbreviation "publ." followed by the name of the publishing company through which the work can be found.

¹ Volume 9 of *College Plays* (1953-54) is titled *University of Hawai'i Plays*.

- Abel, Richard Wayne..... *Circus in the Sea* [TGP1964-65]
(The) Gentle Messenger [TGP 1964-65]
(The) Gimmick [UHP 1964]
(The) Pharoah and the Toad [TGP 1964-65]
Rots of Ruck on You Election, Pseudo-Chinese Momma [UHP 1964]
- Aday, Gary..... *A Journal of the Plague Year* [UHP 1966-69]
(The) Anniversary [UHP 1966-69]
Better Homes and Gardens [UHP 1966-69]
- Adcock, Douglas..... *A Little Play by Bill and Dave* [TGP 1969]
Tom's View [TGP 1969]
- Aitken, Mary.....*He Will Take Care of You* [CP 1946-47]
- Akana, Leonelle Anderson.....*Island Love*
- Akimoto, Mary..... *By And By* [CP1949-50, UML]
Strangers [CP 1949-50, UML]
- Akiyama, Chris..... *And Baby Makes 31* [TGP 1968]
Christ Without a Cross [UHP 1966-69]
(The) Dahlai Lama Lives in Bloomington's Quarry [TGP 1968]
Have You Heard the End to the Story of Damon and Pythias?
[UHP 1969-70]
Hello World [KKT]
Jennifer/Strawberry E13 (co-written with B.J. Ursic) [UHP 1969-70]
- Akiyama, Richard..... *(The) Return* [UHP 1986 fall]
- Akuna, Sami..... *(The) Seeds of the Universe* [UHP 1991-92]
- Alana, Glenn..... *Sunset* [TGP 1946-49]
- Alday, Angela..... *Hush, Little Baby* [UHP 1996 fall]
- Alexander, Alika L. *Do You See What I See?* [UHP 1993]
- Algie, Daniel..... *The Fisher King* [KKTA]
- Allard, Janet..... *Painted Rain* [HTY]
Sand Dragons [HTY]
- Allen, Nancy..... *Bellview's Bargain Basement Bonanza* [UHP 1980-81]
- Altiery, Mason..... *The Day's Work* [CP/UHP 1953-54]

- Amano, Lynette..... *Ashes* [KKTA, publ. UH Press]
Hotel Street [UHP 1970-71]
- Amemiya, Chan..... *(The) Encounter* [UHP 1975-76]
- Anderson, Tracy J. *Soldier of Art* [KKCP 1987-88]
- Angel, Angela Q. *My Old Man* [UHP 1986 fall]
- Antill, Sara..... *Through a Rebel's Eye*
- Aoki, Dance..... *Angels in the Sand* [HTY]
Butterfly Girl [HTY]
Fat Boy [HTY]
- Aoki, Diane..... *Island Space* [UHP 1991-92]
Ka 'Ikena [KKTA]
(The) Taotaomonas and the Two Sisters
Wind Dances
- Aoki, Sharon..... *Kodomo No Tame Ni / For the Sake of the Children* [KKCP 1985-86]
- Apio, (Scott) Alani..... *Happy Valley* (co-written with Christine Flanagan) [KKTA]
Kāmau (developed with assistance from Harry Wong III, Margaret Jones & John H.Y. Wat) [KKTA, publ. Palila Books]
Kāmau A'e [KKTA, publ. Palila Books]
Kāmau 'Ana (early draft of *Kāmau A'e*) [KKTA]
Little Boy Wars [UHP 1985 spring]
Nā Keiki O Ka 'Āina [Maui Academy of Performing Arts 1992]
Pauoa (early draft of *Happy Valley*) [KKTA]
- Arizumi, Marylei..... *James Fisher and Grace Watanabe: The Ties That Bind*
[UHP 1979-80]
- Armitage, Kimo..... *Ola Ka Lau* [KKTA]
- Arthur, Stephanie..... *Theatre Magic* (co-written with Tamara Hunt, Mark Boyd, Jodi Belknap, Louis Burbank, Chandra Gero, Moneeza Hashmi, Lynn Isono, Mark Jeffers, Pamela H. Jezierny, JoAn Lum, Teffie Ma'ake, James Nakamoto, Kathryn Zimmerman, Max Nu'uhiwa, Naomi Okuma, Marcus Pottenger, Bonnie Towne, Cheryl Willoughby, and George Yokoyama)
- Ashby, Clifford..... *Korean Aftermath* [CP 1951-52]
Missile to Moscow [CP 1951-52]
Mommy Isn't Dead [CP 1951-52]
There Are Burglars and Burglars [TGP 1951-53]

- Ashby, Sylvia..... *A Regular Mish-Mash* [CP 1951-52]
(The Citron Tree [CP 1951-52]
(The Family [CP 1951-52]
(The Little Squirrel Who Managed Somehow [TGP 1951-53]
- Aspinwall, Dorothy..... *To Go or Not To Go* [TGP 1951-53]
- Atlas, Leopold..... *EL - or - Life in the Big City*
- Au, Larry Chew Chong..... *(The Green Hell* [KKCP 1988-89]
(The Sex Tiger [TGP 1978-79]
- Auerbach, Steven..... *(The Golden Dream* [UHP 1985-86]
- Aw, Arthur..... *All Brand New Classical Chinese Theatre*
[KKTA, UHP 1973-74, publ. UH Press]
Caught Dead [TGP 1976-77, 77-78]
- Babineau, Wayne..... *Nuclear* [UHP 1974-75]
Triptych [UHP 1974-75]
- Baer, Robert..... *And They Had Time For Tea* [KKTA]
(The Birth of Paul Bunyan [TGP 1969, TGP 1969-71]
Heavenly Bananas [TGP 1969]
Life With Father [TGP 1969, TGP 1969-71]
(The Lion Sleeps Tonight [TGP 1969, TGP 1969-71]
Listen to Mr. Wizard [KKT]
(The Song of Roland [KKTA]
Yes [TGP 1969-71]
- Baines, Jimmy D. *Charley*(co-written with Bobby Joyce Smith) [UHP 1966-69]
(The Oak of Tabor (co-written with Bobby Joyce Smith)
[TGP 1966-67]
- Bairos, Ellen..... *There Was Another Man* [CP 1937]
What So Proudly We Hailed [CP 1937]
- Baker, David..... *In the Wake* (co-written with Kekoa Kaluhiokalani) [KKCP 1987-88]
Inside Al
Inside Out
Omnibus (co-written with Kekoa Kaluhiokalani) [KKCP 1987-88]
- Baker, Mary..... *Hawaiian Ghost Story* [KKCP 1987-88]

- Baker, Tammy Haili'opua R.G. ... *Kaluaiko'olau: ke kā'e'a'e'a o nā pali kalalau (Kaluaiko'olau: the Hero of the Cliffs of Kalalau)* [UHM, Hālau Hanakeaka]
Kupua [KKTA]
Ma'alili [UHM]
Māui a ka lana [Hālau Hanakeaka]
Māui a ka Malo: ka ho'okala kupua o ka moku (Māuiakamalo: The Great Ancestor of the Chiefs) [UHM, Hālau Hanakeaka]
Mōhala ka Lehua / The Lehua Blossoms [UHM, UHP 1995-96]
Nānākuli [Leeward Community College]
Nāwahi, A Hero Remembered [Hālau Hanakeaka]
- Bakkerud, Richard..... *(The) Assassin* [TGP 1968]
(The) Day the Stock-Broker Danced in the Park [TGP 1968]
Foot TGP 1968]
- Balaz, Joseph P. *Da Seventh Dimension* [KKCP 1986-87]
- Balfantz, Gary L..... *Maui the Demigod* (adapted from the novel by Steven Goldsberry)
[KKTA]
- Ball, Mikel..... *A One Act Play: (In the Manner of Thought)* [UHP 1965]
Made in the Shade [UHP 1965]
- Balzer, Stephanie..... *Selling the House* [UHP 1993]
- Banks, Carol..... *Bumie* [KKCP 1985-86]
- Barrett, James D. *(The) Process of Elimination* [UHP 1983 spring]
- Barroga, Jeannie..... *Talk Story* [KKTA, publ. Temple Univ. Press]
- Barrows, Eddy..... *(The) Night Blooming Cereus* [UHP 1985-86]
- Basham, Jerry A. *Solitaire* [KKCP 1987-88]
- Bass, T.M. *(The) Devil and Walter Shiltz* [UHP 1961]
Ding Dong Death [UHP 1961]
- Bastable, George..... *It's a Date!* [UHP 1997 spring]
(The) Last Thing We Ever Do [UHP 1996 fall]
- Baumgartner, David W. *(The) B Girls of Da Kine* KKCP 1985-86]
- Beagle, Peter S. *The Last Unicorn*

- Beard, Pat..... *(The) Bad Tempered Wife*
Benjy and the Bookworm
Christmas at Magnolia Manor
(The) End-of-Summer, Back-to-School Kiddie Bash Puppet Show
Extravaganza
(The) Most Beautiful Mouse in the World
Spacey's Christmas Journey
Witch or Wizard
- Belknap, Jodi..... *An Arch in the Rainbow* [UHP 1985-86]
Theatre Magic (co-written with Stephanie Arthur, Mark Boyd, Tamara Hunt, Louis Burbank, Chandra Gero, Moneeza Hashmi, Lynn Isono, Mark Jeffers, Pamela H. Jezierny, JoAn Lum, Teffie Ma'ake, James Nakamoto, Kathryn Zimmerman, Max Nu'uhiwa, Naomi Okuma, Marcus Pottenger, Bonnie Towne, Cheryl Willoughby, and George Yokoyama)
- Bell, Hilary..... *Fortune* [KKTA]
- Bell, James..... *Tomorrow's Another Day* [UHP 1975-76]
- Bell, Ku'uana..... *C'est Bon?... C'est Magnifique!* [TGP 1953-55]
(The) Conquerors [TGP 1949-51, CP 1950-51]
(The) Malo Maker [TGP 1953-55]
Ripper Revolts [TGP 1951-53, CP 1950-51]
Situation: Desperate Lazy May [TGP 1953-55]
- Bell, Mary S..... *Escape at Lahaina Roads*
Ke Ali'i 'Umi
(The) Miracle of the San Fernando Mission
- Bellacera, Carole..... *Divine Mission* [KKCP 1987-88]
- Bennett, Jay M. *(The) Birthday* [UHP 1983 fall]
- Benton, James Grant..... *Twelf Nite O Wateva!* [KKTA, publ. UH Press]
- Berrigan, Desiree..... *Saint John in Exile* [KKCP 1982-83]
- Berrigan, Donald..... *A Dream of Jeannie* [TGP 1957-59]
A Play in One Act [TGP 1955-57]
A Small Song At Sawtooth [TGP 1964-65]
(The) Dark Night [CP 1954-55]
Hear Me, O My People [KKCP 1982-83]
Leaves Ad Infinitum [TGP 1955-57, CP 1954-55]
Power in the Blood [TGP 1957-59]
Reluctant Brotherhood [CP 1954-55, TGP 1955-57]

- Bishop, Patrick..... *365 Days A Minute* [KKCP 1984-85]
Wanna Go Moon Dancing? [KKCP 1983-84, KKT]
- Blum, Gloria..... *Jenny "Faking It"* [KKCP 1989-90]
- Boles, David..... *(The) Bayou Bijou Carnival* [KKCP 1988-89]
- Bollweg, Chris L. *When I Let You Go* [UHP 1980-81]
- Bond, Kathryn..... *Three Rural Sketches: Cane Fire* [CP 1937]
Hannah [CP 1937]
Let's Go See the World [CP 1937, KKT]
- Bonk, Lucile Harrington..... *Regrets* UHP 1981-82]
- Bose, Emery..... *(The) Link* [UHP 1984 spring]
- Botelho, J. Scott *The Jules and Jim Learning Piece* [KKTA]
- Bowman, Jesse Y..... *And I Will Tell You Mine* [TGP 1971-73]
(The) Guinea Jingling [TGP 1966-67]
- Boyd, Mark..... *Theatre Magic* (co-written with Stephanie Arthur, Tamara Hunt, Jodi Belknap, Louis Burbank, Chandra Gero, Moneeza Hashmi, Lynn Isono, Mark Jeffers, Pamela H. Jezierny, JoAn Lum, Teffie Ma'ake, James Nakamoto, Kathryn Zimmerman, Max Nu'uhiwa, Naomi Okuma, Marcus Pottenger, Bonnie Towne, Cheryl Willoughby, and George Yokoyama)
- Bradley, John..... *Avenue B* [UHP 1985 spring]
Escort [KKCP 1985-86]
(The) Rice Wire [UHP 1985-86]
- Bradshaw, English..... *Black Over Black*
- Brandon, James R. *Hoichi: Dark Tales of the Heike* [UHM]
(The) Road to Kyoto! (co-written with Kathy Foley) [UHM]
- Brash, Lisa..... *Waikiki 1973* [TGP 1976-77]
- Bren, Sheldon..... *Critics Ain't Cricket* [CP/UHP 1953-54]
(The) Party Line [CP/UHP 1953-54]
- Brillande, Karen..... *Patchwork: It's a Great Day* (co-written with Tamara Hunt, Mark Jeffers, Gwynne Lee, Lynne Nakamura, Mary Olsen, and Anna Viggiano)
- Britos, Peter..... *Loving Allen* [UHP 1987-88]

- Bro, Margueritte Harmon..... *Progressive Education*
- Brodie, Douglas..... *Matinée* [UHP 1979-80]
When It Rains It Pours [UHP 1980-81]
- Brown, Bertha Blomfield..... *Ai-Noa* [CP 1937]
- Brown, Dennis..... *Chinatown Is Home* [UHP 1976-78]
- Brown, Dorothy..... *(The) Children's Crusade* [TGP 1964-65]
Mama-San and the Russian Toast [TGP 1946-49]
(The) Road to Damascus [TGP 1965-66]
(The) Tolerant [TGP 1946-49]
(The) Underprivileged Planet
- Brown, Harold..... *(The) Importance of Breasts* [KKTA]
Pro Patria Mori [KKTA]
- Brown, Suzanne..... *Nourishment* [UHP 1981-82]
- Brucker, Daniel M. *Big Business* [UHP 1972-73]
- Bruschi, Bruce..... *Snapping* [KKCP 1989-90]
- Burbank, Louis..... *Theatre Magic* (co-written with Stephanie Arthur, Mark Boyd, Jodi Belknap, Tamara Hunt, Chandra Gero, Moneeza Hashmi, Lynn Isono, Mark Jeffers, Pamela H. Jezierny, JoAn Lum, Teffie Ma'ake, James Nakamoto, Kathryn Zimmerman, Max Nu'uhiwa, Naomi Okuma, Marcus Pottenger, Bonnie Towne, Cheryl Willoughby, and George Yokoyama)
- Burgess, Lynn..... *Bold is the Fool* [CP 1947-48]
Poi Cocktail [1947-48, script lost]
- Cain Jr., John L. *Two of a Kind* [UHP 1974-75]
- Caldeira, Arthur..... *An Act of Assassination* [TGP 1957-59]
Be It Ever So Humble [TGP 1949-51, CP 1950-51]
Brothers [CP 1950-51]
(The) Buddies [TGP 1949-51, CP 1950-51]
- Calvin, Darla..... *Booby Prize* [UHP 1994-95]
- Cannon, Glenn..... *Betrayal* (co-written with Ellen Pelissaro, Marlene Sai, Tremaine Tamayo, Mark Tankersley and Edward Kaahea)
- Carr, Bill..... *Homeward Bound* [UHP 1998 fall]
- Carr, Kevin..... *(The) Scorpion Jar* [UHP 1985 spring]

- Caraway, Nancie..... *Hapa* [KKTA]
Soulmates: The Passion of Petra Kelly
- Carroll, Dennis..... *(The) Adventures of Stud* [KKTA]
Hawaiian Chain I: Oahu [UHP 1963]
Hawaiian Chain II: Maui [UHP 1963]
Ka'iulani: A Cantata for the Theatre (co-written with Victoria
Kneubuhl, Ryan Page and Robert Nelson) [KKTA]
Spur [KKTA]
Way of a God [KKTA]
- Carvalho, Ralph R. *Watch the Cane Burn* [UHP 1976-78]
- Carvalho, Suzanne..... *Cover Me Up* [UHP 1987-88]
- Cassity, Kathleen..... *Croydon Curry* [UHP 1993]
- Castillo, Stephanie..... *Candles for Angels* [KKCP 1983-84, UHP 1983 fall]
- Castle, Mrs. A.L. *(The) King*
- Catalano, Francis John..... *America Oh America* (playwright used the name Frank Catalano)
[UHP 1974-75]
Evolution (playwright used the name Frank Catalano) [UHP 1974-75]
Feneste Che Lucive (The Light that Shines Through the Window)
[KKTA]
(The) Four Sides of Bub Dugud (playwright used the name
Frank Catalano) [UHP 1974-75]
Waiting For To Go (playwright used the name Frank Catalano) [KKT]
- Cataluna, Lee..... *Aloha Friday* [KKTA]
Da Mayah [KKTA]
Super Secret Squad [KKT]
Ulua: The Musical [KKTA]
- Cathey, Alyce..... *Monologue on a Forest Noon* [TGP 1959-61]
Phillip's Place [TGP 1959-61]
- Chaitlal, Wendy..... *Aloha Prisoners* [UHP 1985 spring]
- Chan, Leilani..... *Mama* [KKT, UML]
- Chang..... *The Root of Evil* [mentioned in CP 1951-52]
- Chang, Thomas..... *All That Money Can Buy* [TGP 1951-53]

- Chappell, Wallace..... *Folktales of the Philippines* [HTY]
Halloween Tree [HTY]
(The) Magic Circle [HTY]
Maui the Trickster [HTY]
Momotaro and Other Japanese Folktales [HTY]
Tales of the Pacific [HTY]
- Charbonneau, Clement V. *Never Look Back On Love* [UHP 1973-74]
(The) Seximental Block [UHP 1973-74]
- Charles, Robert..... *Nam* [TGP 1981-82]
- Charlot, Jean..... *Na'auao(The Light Within)* [publ. UH Press]
U'i a U'i (Beauty Meets Beauty) [publ. UH Press]
Moa a Mō'i (Chicken Into King) [publ. UH Press]
Laukiamanuihahiki: Snare that Lures a Farflung Bird [publ. UH Press]
Nā Lono 'Elua (The Two Lonos) [publ. UH Press]
Spirit Island [TGP 1963-64]
Two Lonos [TGP 1964-65]
- Charlot, Martin..... *Finger Tree* [TGP 1961-63]
- Charlot, Peter..... *A Land Survey of Lanai* [Hawaii State Theatre Council]
A Vigil for the Queen [Queen Lili'uokalani C.C. Committee]
(The) Boy Who Found Himself Floating in Space [Story Book Theater]
Dishes [Hawaii Public Theater]
(The) King of Oxen [Story Book Theater]
Koko Coda
Land & Other Living Things I [Department of Education]
Land & Other Living Things II [Department of Education]
Little Red Riding Hood: Unabridged [Junior League of Hawai'i]
Mo'o: A Modern Legend [HTY]
Nani i ke Kumu [Hawaii Homes Commission]
O'O: Hawai'i [UHH, KKTA]
'O Ka'ahumanu [Kalihi-Palama Culture & Arts Society, KKT]
O'O: Oahu [Leeward Community College]
Rumors [Hawaii Loa College]
Shakespeare No Ka Oi [Department of Education]
Through the Looking Glass with Us [Junior League of Hawai'i]
To the Heart of Captain Cook [Volcano Art Center]
(The) Vision of a Scientific Missionary [Volcano Art Center]
When I Was Your Age [HTY]
- Chen, Kitty..... *Eating Chicken Feet* [KKTA]
- Chen, Lee..... *Freedom of Love* [UHP 1995-96]

- Cheong, John H. *Brillig and the Slithy Toves* [UHP 1979-80]
- Chinen, Margaret..... *Aftermath* (playwright also known as Lee Mei Ling)
[TGP 1946-49, UML]
All, All Alone [CP 1947-48, UML]
- Ching, Geri..... *Children of the Night* [KKCP 1986-87]
Dreamer (co-written with Julian Cowley, Frederick Kull &
Trinh Nguyen) [KKCP 1983-84]
Fallen Angels [KKCP 1985-86, UHP 1985 spring]
(The) Walkman [UHP 1985-86]
- Chock, Eric..... *Dragon Smoke*
- Chow, Vivian..... *Meters* [UHP 1995-96]
- Choy, Eileen..... *Sidney Bernstein* [TGP 1971-73, UML]
- Chuck Chuck..... *Excerpts from a Non-Existent Play* [KKT]
Take It As It Is or Lump It (playwright's real name: Chuck Akiyama?)
[KKT]
- Chun, Henry..... *Kindness to Cobras* [CP 1951-52]
(The) Man They Left Behind [CP 1951-52]
Ng Ga Pi [TGP 1951-53]
- Chun, Wai Chee..... *(The) Acorn* (playwright also known as Wayne D.S. Chun)
[UHP 1963]
For You a Lei (playwright also known as Wai Chee Chun Yee)
[CP 1937, UML, publ. Bamboo Ridge Press]
Go Tell It on the Mountain (playwright also known as
Wayne D.S. Chun) [UHP 1963]
Marginal Woman [CP 1937, UML]
- Chun, Wayne..... *(The) Death of Rimbaud* [TGP 1965-66]
- Clark, Brian..... *A String of Pearls* (playwright used name Brian Burr Clark) [KKTA]
Dead Ends [KKTA]
Down Came the Rain [Starving Artists Theatre Co.]
Hats [Starving Artists Theatre Co.]
Island of the Blue Dolphins
(playwright used name Burgess Clark) [HTY]
Purple Hearts (playwright used name Riley Clark) [KKTA]
(The) Summer Season: June, July, August (a trilogy)
Summer's War [KKTA]
Talking Story (playwright used name Brian Clark-Kenton)
'Tis the Season (playwright used name Brian Burr Clark)
[UHP 1983 spring]
(The) Velveteen Rabbit (playwright used name Brian Clark-Kenton)

- Clark, Nelson..... *Fatigue* [KKTA]
When Haunted Dreams Awake [TGP 1979-80]
- Clear, Stephen..... *Checkmate* [UHP 1980-81]
- Clements, Colin..... *I Can't Make Up My Mind* (co-written with Florence Ryerson)
- Cloud, Darrah..... *The Stick Wife* [KKTA]
- Clune, Suzanne..... *Auditions for Revolution* [UHP 1978-79]
(The) Office Chair [UHP 1978-79]
Yin and Yang
- Cobb, Mel..... *Gambit for a Broken King* [KKT]
Waltz in the Past Tense [UHP 1970-71]
- Cohen, Warren..... *The First Annual Nuclear Weapons Beauty Pageant* (co-written with
Pamela Gang) [KKT]
- Cole, Allen..... *Snapshots* [KKTA]
- Collins, Kathleen..... *Islands: Further, Farther and Beyond*
Nā Keiki Haku Mele O Ka 'Āina
- Conklin, Daryl G. *Seeing You* [CP 1948-49]
- Conrad, Judith..... *But For You...* [UHP 1966-69]
- Cook, Mary Sailsbury..... *Ali Baba*
God So Loved the World
Treasure Island
- Cooper, Earl..... *A Musical* [TGP 1971-73]
- Coria, Davo..... *Dreams* [UHP 1988-89]
- Cornish, Michael..... *She's a Wench* [UHP 1987-88]
- Cornish, Roger..... *A Class "C" Trial in Yokohama* [KKTA]
- Corsco, Gloria..... *Decision* [UHP 1961]
Glass Mountains [UHP 1961]
- Cosh, Greg..... *Jackpots Are Grand* [KKCP 1988-89, UHP 1988-89]
Plantation Hula [UHP 1988-89]
- Costa, Dion..... *No Wea Fo' Go* [UHP 1993]
- Couch, Philip..... *Dad's Gone* [UHP 1987-88]

- Coughlin, Dianne..... *Crossfire* TGP 1974-75, UHP 1973-74]
(The) Leavetaking [UHP 1973-74]
- Cowell, Michael..... *Mark Twain in the Sandwich Islands*
- Cowley, Julian..... *Dreamer* (co-written with Geri Ching, Frederick Kull & Trinh Nguyen)
[KKCP 1983-84]
- Cox, Tonya..... *Dementia Praecox* [UHP 1996 fall]
- Crabbe, Matthew Mamana'opono.. *Taro Traditions* [UHP 1990]
- Cronin, John C. *A Tropical Illusion* (also see Jay Gurian) [UHP 1978-79]
- Crowl, Janice C. *Ma Belle* [KKCP 1983-84]
- Culbertson, Scott..... *Lapniappe: A Little Something Extra* [UHP 1990]
- Curry, Christie..... *(The) Promise* [UHP 1990]
- Dacey, Kay..... *Dancing Star* [KKCP 1988-89]
Everyone is Feeling Fine Who Lives at the Corner of Willow and Pine
[UHP 1965, TGP 1966-67]
Scarred Tissues [UHP 1965]
- Danks, Bill..... *(The) Final Liberation of Mao Tse Tung* [KKCP 1983-84]
Like a Phoenix From Its Ashes [KKCP 1986-87]
Man Among the Monkeys [KKCP 1983-84]
Relative Tolerance [KKCP 1984-85]
Songs of Women Strange as Time [KKCP 1983-84]
- Davis, Dan..... *Where the Hell Are We, Vietnam?* [TGP 1981-82, UHP 1981-82]
- de Costa, Jennifer M. *Laka's Canoe and the Flying Taro* [KKCP 1982-83]
- de Courcy, Antony..... *Ballet Rehearsal* [TGP 1951-53]
Motley Interlude
- de la Cruz, Edgardo..... *(The) Artillan House* [UHP 1965]
(The) Seance [UHP 1965]
- De Maios, Rosaly..... *Chicken Bones on the Floor* [UHP 1961]
Two Vignettes [UHP 1961]
- Des Jarlais, Dean..... *Bill of Rites* [UHP 1975-76]
- Dickens, Kinohi E. *(The) Man Who Memorized Diamond Head* [KKCP 1982-83]

- Dierdorff, Ross..... *Day of Infamy* [KKCP 1989-90]
- Dion, Philip Jean..... *To See Me* [UHP 1964]
(The) Way It Is [UHP 1964]
- Doi, Marshall..... *A Crack in the Pot* [UHP 1969-70, KKT]
- Donnelly, David..... *(The) Door* [TGP 1959-61, UHP 1960]
Mourning Due [TGP 1959-61]
(The) Puppetmaster [TGP 1961-63]
Ride, Ride the Bumper Cars [TGP 1963-64]
Shirley Ann [TGP 1959-61]
- Dooley, Sharon..... *Choices* [UHP 1985 spring]
- Doyle, R. Kevin *The Slaying of Gavaka!* [KKTA]
- Dubin, Dennis..... *Evelyn: A Slice of Drama* [KKT]
- Duerr, Robert..... *A Day Without Moonshine Is Like A Day Without Sunshine*
[KKCP 1988-89]
Auntie's Got Money [KKCP 1990-91]
G.I. Joey and His Barbie Dolls [KKCP 1987-88]
Long Night's Journey Into Day [KKCP 1989-90]
- Duggan Jr., E.F. *Sovereign* [UHP 1996 fall]
- Dulek, Marvin..... *Waking* UHP 1978-79]
- Dunne, Charles..... *Three and Play On* [UHP 1984 spring]
- Dux, Bettejo..... *(The) Burning Barn* [TGP 1964-65]
Marsh Mallow Hill [TGP 1969]
That Kind of Woman [TGP 1963-64]
- Eaton, Dorothy..... *(The) Shrimp Wiggle* [TGP 1975-76]
(The) Spears of King Kamehameha [TGP 1975-76]
- Eder, Jonathon..... *Crossing the Border* [UHP 1991-92]
- Edlin, Linda..... *Slippers* [KKTA]
- Edlin, L.M. *Hale Ohana* [UHP 1978-79]
- Edstrom, Elaine..... *Haiku and the Princess Kawelu* [TGP 1979-80]
- Edwards, Phillip..... *(The) Next Van Gogh* [UHP 1995-96]
- Ehlen, Liysa..... *A Pattern in the Print* [UHP 1984 spring]

- Elbern, Angela Lee..... *(The) Substitute* [UHP 1994-95]
- Elliott, Malia..... *The Wise and Ancient Menehune from Mokolana* (co-written with
Leon Siu)
- Ellison, Frances..... *A Christmas Nightingale*
Beauty and the Beast (co-written with Jack Vaughn)
Cinderella (co-written with Alfred Wheeler)
(The) Dragon of the Moon (co-written with Jack Vaughn)
(The) Emperor's New Clothes (co-written with Jack Vaughn)
Jack and the Beanstalk (co-written with Alfred Wheeler)
(The) Magic Hat
- Elwell, Russell R. *Coming To Terms* [UHP 1983 spring]
- Ent, Holly (pen name)..... *(The) Good Woman of Setzuan Revisited* [TGP 1968]
- Erickson, Mitchell..... *(The) Burial* [TGP 1946-49, CP 1947-48]
Libretto [1947-48 script lost]
Ticket to Shanghai [1947-48 script lost]
- Esser, Carl..... *Always Room for One More* [TGP 1955-57]
- Evans, Betty..... *Land of the Long Twilight* [KKCP 1983-84]
- Evans, Steven..... *Scene of the Crime* [TGP 1975-76]
- Faumuina, James..... *(The) Closet* [UHP 1993]
- Faure, Janet..... *Comeback* [TGP 1959-61]
(The) Finishing Touch [TGP 1955-57]
Man and Littleman [TGP 1957-59]
Not For Love Or Money [UHP 1958]
(The) Way Out [UHP 1958]
- Fellers, Ruth..... *Summer Mutation* [CP 1954-55]
Tentacles of Love [CP 1954-55]
- Fernandez, Marsue M. *All Mama's Fault* [UHP 1966-69]
- Ferrar, Derek..... *(The) Waialua Hilton* [UHP 1987-88]
- Field, Kristine (pen name)..... *(The) Last Word* [TGP 1968]
- Fischer, Kathy..... *(The) Advice* [UHP 1990]
- Flanagan, Christine..... *Happy Valley* (co-written with Alani Apio) [KKT]

- Fleece, Jeffrey..... *Across the Hedge* [TGP 1957-59]
End of Secrets [TGP 1957-59]
(The) First Oyster [TGP 1955-57]
Forgive and Remember [TGP 1961-63]
Kalau and the Magic Numbers [HTY 1960]
Manjiro's Journey
Quandary in Space [TGP 1959-61]
(The) Shaming of the True [TGP 1957-59]
Teatime [TGP 1955-57]
- Flower, Wild..... *(The) Island* [TGP 1976-77]
- Foley, Kathy..... *The Road to Kyoto!* (co-written with James R. Brandon) [UHM]
- Fong, Reginald..... *Lazarus and the Hatf: A Bedtime Story* (co-written with Helen Hollenberg, Dando Kluever, Young Saylor and Elizabeth Wichman) [KKT]
- Foster, Richard..... *Hic and Ille Continued* [TGP 1976-77]
- Frampton, Felicity..... *A Fresh Start* [TGP 1976-77]
- Frazier, Larry..... *City* [UHP 1966-69]
Sam and Janet Evening [UHP 1966-69]
- Freen, Jeremiah..... *Animal, Vegetable or Mineral* [TGP 1980-81]
Foursome (playwright's real name: Kevin O'Leary)
[KKCP 1982-83, KKTA]
Freakdom Too [TGP 1978-79]
In George's Backyard [KKCP 1986-87]
On Finding Freakdom [TGP 1975-76, KKT]
- Friedland, Ronald..... *Out of the Pianoforte Endlessly Rocking* [TGP 1963-64]
- Funakoshi, Yoshihide..... *(The) Mustard Dream* [UHP 1969-70]
- Furumoto, David..... *From Okuni to Danjuro: A Kabuki Retrospective*
- Gabrial, Steven..... *(The) Ride* [TGP 1968]
- Galvan, Roman..... *No Act, Eh?*
Rumors: I Heard it on the Grapevine
Stagefright Cable Network
Villains, Victims, Heroes and Clowns
- Gang, Pamela..... *The First Annual Nuclear Weapons Beauty Pageant* (co-written with Warren Cohen) [KKT]

- Garner, L. Ross..... *Idyll* [CP 1946-47]
M4 Medium [CP 1946-47]
- Gavrell, Kenneth..... *Sparrow, Sparrow* [TGP 1965-66]
- Geandrot, Judith E. *I Tried, Didn't I?* [UHP 1965]
That's What Sisters Are For [UHP 1965]
- Gentry, Lee..... *King's Point* [UHP 1959]
Mei's Daughter [UHP 1959]
- Gerritsen, Terry..... *Wednesday Night at Chinaman's Bar* [KKCP 1984-85]
- Gero, Chandra..... *Theatre Magic* (co-written with Stephanie Arthur, Mark Boyd, Jodi Belknap, Louis Burbank, Tamara Hunt, Moneeza Hashmi, Lynn Isono, Mark Jeffers, Pamela H. Jezierny, JoAn Lum, Teffie Ma'ake, James Nakamoto, Kathryn Zimmerman, Max Nu'uhiwa, Naomi Okuma, Marcus Pottenger, Bonnie Towne, Cheryl Willoughby, and George Yokoyama)
- Gesang, John..... *State of the Art* [UHP 1990]
- Gibbs, Russell..... *Going Steady* [TGP 1951-53]
- Gilman, Julia..... *(The) Fix-it* [UHP 1997 spring]
Match Park [UHP 1995-96]
- Glass, Stephanie..... *A Brief Passion for Two Players* [UHP 1981-82]
- Goddess, Taurie K. *(The) Seduction of the Hourglass* [UHP 1998 fall]
- Goodman, Richard..... *(The) Downeasters* [TGP 1961-63]
- Goodrich, Dorri..... *Lawakua Wahine* [UHP UHP 1979-80]
- Gotanda, Philip Kan..... *Ballad of Yachiyo* [KKTA, publ. Theatre Communications Group,
publ. American Theatre Feb. 1996]
Fish Head Soup [publ. Univ. of Washington Press]
Song For a Nisei Fisherman [KKTA]
The Wash [KKTA, publ. Theatre Communications Group]
Yankee Dawg You Die [KKTA]
- Goto, Terri..... *Starstone Manor* [KKCP 1982-83]
- Grandy, Christopher P. *Ka Moi* [mentioned in KKCP 1987-88]

- Grant, Glen..... *Shave Ice* [KKCP 1984-85]
Vanishing Shadow (co-written with Debbie Lutzky & Lynne Nakamura) [KKTA, TGP 1977-78]
- Green, Ariston..... *One Fell Swoop* [UHP 1996 fall]
- Green, Carleton..... *Aloha 'Oe* (co-written with Helen Topham) [TGP 1959-61]
(The) Backyard (co-written with Helen Topham) [TGP 1957-59]
(The) Chaldecott Case [TGP 1969]
Sidewalk Cafe (co-written with Helen Topham)
- Green, Harold..... *Last Outpost* [TGP 1959-61]
- Griffin, Kimberly..... *Hanging On a Line* [UHP 1986 fall]
- Gurian, Jay..... *A Mighty Fortress Is Our God* [TGP 1969-71]
(The) Beelie Tale [TGP 1978-79]
Crashing Blood [TGP 1969-71]
(The) Ladies of the Porch [TGP 1957-59]
(The) Meeting of the Mamasans [TGP 1978-79]
People to People [TGP 1969-71]
(The) Tropicall Illusion (also see John C. Cronin) [TGP 1978-79]
Williwai [TGP 1976-77, 77-78]
(The) Winter in the Pass [TGP 1957-59]
- Gurican, Gay..... *A Beelie Tale*
- Gutierrez, Gina..... *A Mild Form of Mnemony* [UHP 1986 fall]
- Haftel, Ray..... *Paragon of Virtue* [CP 1949-50]
Study Hour [CP 1949-50]
- Hagino, Owen..... *Paradise Bound* [KKCP 1986-87, KKTA]
Scientific American [KKCP 1984-85]
Winter Rules [KKCP 1986-87]
- Hagius, Susan..... *End Zone* [UHP 1965]
No One Is Losing [UHP 1965]
- Hall, Nick..... *Mixed Doubles* [TGP 1965-66]
- Hancock, David..... *Chevy Death* [KKCP 1983-84]
- Hansen, Diana..... *Our Lady in Rose Dore* [KKTA]
The Type Writer(written under married name, Diana Hansen-Young)
[KKTA]
- Harrington, Sharon L. *(The) Perfect Picture* [UHP 1980-81]

- Harrison, Elizabeth..... *If That Horse and Cart Fall Down* [UHP 1993]
- Harrison, Robert..... *Choices* [UHP 1991-92]
- Harrison, Susan..... *A Fresh Start* [UHP 1975-76]
- Hashmi, Moneeza..... *Theatre Magic* (co-written with Stephanie Arthur, Mark Boyd, Jodi Belknap, Louis Burbank, Chandra Gero, Tamara Hunt, Lynn Isono, Mark Jeffers, Pamela H. Jeziorny, JoAn Lum, Teffie Ma'ake, James Nakamoto, Kathryn Zimmerman, Max Nu'uhiwa, Naomi Okuma, Marcus Pottenger, Bonnie Towne, Cheryl Willoughby, and George Yokoyama)
- Hatton, Christopher..... *(The) First Landing of Well-Dressed Men On the Moon*
[UHP 1991-92]
- Hausman, Clifford..... *Sunday Morning Street Corner Blues* [UHP 1983 fall]
Untangling [UHP 1984 spring]
- Hazzard, Elaine..... *Seer from Saigon* [UHP 1991-92]
- Heacox, Kitty..... *As Time Goes By* [KKT]
Da Kine Kyogen [KKT]
No Laff My Pilikia, Eh! [KKT]
- Hedeman, Christian..... *Hysteria* [TGP 1963-64]
(The) Interval [TGP 1961-63]
- Heifetz, Harold..... *Harry Kelly* [KKTA]
No Smile for Strangers [KKTA, KKCP 1982-83]
- Heirich, Beverly..... *Beautiful Dreamer* [UHP 1983 spring]
- Hendricks, Fay..... *Fat and Skinny Had A Race* [UHP 1965]
(The) Passing of Pollyanna [UHP 1965]
- Hereniko, Vilsoni..... *A Child for Iva* [publ. Mana Publications]
Don't Cry, Mama [publ. Mana Publications]
Fine Dancing
Last Virgin in Paradise (co-written with Teresia Teaiwa)
[KKTA, publ. Mana Publications]
Love 3 Times [KKTA]
(The) Monster [publ. Mana Publications]
Sera's Choice [publ. Mana Publications]

- Herman, George..... *A Stone for Either Hand* [TGP 1974-75]
At The Summit: Station One [TGP 1977-78]
An Echo of Wings
(The) Dungeon Master [KKCP 1982-83]
(The) Hidden Place [TGP 1980-81]
(The) King Has Gone to Tenebrae [TGP 1974-75]
(The) Lucifer File [KKT]
Madame and the Thursday Wall [TGP 1971-73]
Mother Eve's Astounding Apple Seeds [KKT, TGP 1971-73]
(The) Nine Dragons [TGP 1978-79]
(The) Short, Quick Dream of Ahi Williams: an epic in one act
[mentioned in TGP 1977-78]
Staying the Night [TGP 1980-81]
Sueaki's Turn [KKT, TGP 1979-80]
- Higa, Ine Arashigo..... *In the Old Days* [TGP 1976-77, 77-78]
- Hilderbrand, Mark..... *In the Cool Evening Breeze* [KKCP 1986-86]
- Hill, Michael F. *Gently, Brother, Gently, Pray* [UHP 1963]
Jesus Saves [UHP 1963]
- Hirakawa, Mary..... *Blood is the Victor* [TGP 1951-53, UML]
- Hirota, Yumi G. *Garden* [UHP 1994-95]
- Ho, R. Reiko..... *Blind Eyes* [UHP 1988-89]
Bye Bye Hāna Buttah Days (co-written with Alfie Huebler, Tamara
Hunt, Robert Ito, Lisa Matsumoto, Natalie McKinney, Bert
Narimasu, James White)
Paper Walls [UHP 1988-89]
- Hogue, Thomas M. *Captain Obediah and the Law of the Splintered Paddle* [UHP 1963]
(The) Plot of the Vampire [UHP 1963]
- Hollenberg, Helen..... *Lazarus and the Hatef: A Bedtime Story* (co-written with Reginald
Fong, Dando Kluever, Young Saylor and Elizabeth Wichman)
[KKT]
- Holloway, C. Robert..... *(The) American Nightmare* [mentioned but not included in
TGP 1971-72]
- Holmes-Smith, David..... *Tabernacle Liturgy* [UHP 1990]
- Holt, John Dominis..... *Kaulana Nā Pua, Famous Are The Flowers: Queen Lili'uokalani and
the Throne of Hawai'i, A Play in Three Acts* [publ. Topgallant]

- Honda, Carol..... *Sexpectations* (co-written with Tremaine Tamayose, Dando Kluever and Elizabeth Wichmann)
- Hoskins, M.J. *A Matter of Principle* [UHP 1962]
Twisted Scarlet [UHP 1962]
- Houston, Darrell..... *Pity The Panderer* [CP/UHP 1953-54]
- Houston, Velina Hasu..... *Asa Ga Kimashita / Morning Has Broken* [KKTA, publ. Temple Univ. Press]
Christmas Cake [KKTA]
Kapi'olani's Faith [KKTA]
(The) Matsuyama Mirror [KKTA]
Tea [KKTA, publ. Univ. of Massachusetts Press]
- Huang, Hai-yen..... *Who Is Directing the Barefoot Dance?* [UHP 1991-92]
- Hubbell, Heidi A. *Pandemonium Theatre* [UHP 1983 spring]
- Huebler, Alfie..... *Bye Bye Hāna Buttah Days* (co-written with R. Reiko Ho, Tamara Hunt, Robert Ito, Lisa Matsumoto, Natalie McKinney, Bert Narimasu, James White)
- Huggins, Joan S. *(The) Daughter of the Ambassador* [CP/UHP 1953-54]
(The) Secret Places [CP/UHP 1953-54]
(The) Security Officer [TGP 1953-55]
- Hunkins, Jayne M. *A Question of Morals* [UHP 1986 fall]
- Hunt, Tamara..... *Adventures in a Garden*
Bye Bye Hāna Buttah Days (co-written with Alfie Huebler, R. Reiko Ho, Robert Ito, Lisa Matsumoto, Natalie McKinney, Bert Narimasu, James White)
Jingo the Circus Clown
Patchwork: Friends, Feelings, & Me (co-written with her students at UH)
Patchwork: It's a Great Day (co-written with Karen Brillande, Mark Jeffers, Gwynne Lee, Lynne Nakamura, Mary Olsen, and Anna Viggiano)
Theatre Magic (co-written with Stephanie Arthur, Mark Boyd, Jodi Belknap, Louis Burbank, Chandra Gero, Moneeza Hashmi, Lynn Isono, Mark Jeffers, Pamela H. Jeziorny, JoAn Lum, Teffie Ma'ake, James Nakamoto, Kathryn Zimmerman, Max Nu'uhiwa, Naomi Okuma, Marcus Pottenger, Bonnie Towne, Cheryl Willoughby, and George Yokoyama)
- Hunter, Sarah..... *Ceilbert's Christmas*
Four Alone [KKT]
Why Must I Be A Teenager In Love? [KKT]

- Huntley, Lou..... *My Son* [CP 1949-50, TGP 1953-55]
Tomorrow and Tomorrow [CP 1949-50]
- Huntsberry, William..... *(The) Cat* [TGP 1949-51]
Devil Take Me [TGP 1949-51]
Who Picks A Pretty Plum [TGP 1949-51]
- Hurd, John..... *Homer Sapiens* [UHP 1961]
(The) Letter [UHP 1961]
- Hurwitz, Louis..... *Escape* [CP 1937]
- Hutchinson, Jim..... *Scrooge!* (Adapted from Charles Dickens' classic. co-written with
Emmett Yoshioka) [HCT/DHT]
- Hutchinson, P.L. *Wildflowers* [KKCP 1989-90]
- Huwe, Dorothy..... *Each Decade Has A Rhythm* [UHP 1979-80]
- Ibeagwa, Christian..... *Students in the Act of Doing Business* [UHP sp 1985]
- Ichida, Karl K. *(The) Path to the Ocean* [TGP 1976-77, 77-78]
- Iezza, Cora..... *(The) Perfect Wife* [UHP 1994-95]
- Ihara, Matthew..... *Dear Miss Madison, Blagh!* [UHP 1964]
(The) Long Way Home [UHP 1964]
- Ihrie, Jana Lindan..... *(The) Note* [UHP 1980-81]
- Ikeda, Miyoshi..... *Barrack Thirteen* [CP 1951-52, UML]
Lest We Forget [CP 1951-52]
- Illo, Maria..... *Maricel* [UHP 1965]
- Imata, Michelle..... *1974* [UHP 1972-73]
- Inake, Sharon..... *Encore* [UHP 1983 fall]
- Ince, Dixon..... *(The) Prettiest Place In Anywhere* [TGP 1953-55]
Where the Love Tree Grows [TGP 1953-55]
- Irikura, James K. *Broadminded* [CP 1947-48]
- Isono, Lynn..... *Theatre Magic* (co-written with Stephanie Arthur, Mark Boyd, Jodi
Belknap, Louis Burbank, Chandra Gero, Moneeza Hashmi,
Tamara Hunt, Mark Jeffers, Pamela H. Jezierny, JoAn Lum,
Teffie Ma'ake, James Nakamoto, Kathryn Zimmerman, Max
Nu'uhiwa, Naomi Okuma, Marcus Pottenger, Bonnie Towne,
Cheryl Willoughby, and George Yokoyama)

- Ito, Robert..... *Bye Bye Hāna Buttah Days* (co-written with Alfie Huebler, Tamara Hunt, R. Reiko Ho, Lisa Matsumoto, Natalie McKinney, Bert Narimasu, James White)
- Ivanyi, Christopher..... *(The) Final Show* [KKCP 1985-86, UHP 1985-86]
Koolau, the Hero of Kalalau Cliffs [UHP 1986 spring]
- Jackson, Heidi S. *Chacatura!* [UHP 1998 spring]
- Jacobs, Andy..... *Paterson* [UHP 1978-79]
- Jacosalem, Brice..... *Juno's Destiny* [UHP 1983 fall]
- Jacques, Rodney P. *Till Death Do Us Part* [UHP 1988-89]
- Jeffers, Mark..... *Patchwork: It's a Great Day* (co-written with Tamara Hunt, Karen Brillande, Gwynne Lee, Lynne Nakamura, Mary Olsen, and Anna Viggiano)
Theatre Magic (co-written with Stephanie Arthur, Mark Boyd, Jodi Belknap, Louis Burbank, Chandra Gero, Moneeza Hashmi, Lynn Isono, Tamara Hunt, Pamela H. Jezierny, JoAn Lum, Teffie Ma'ake, James Nakamoto, Kathryn Zimmerman, Max Nu'uhiwa, Naomi Okuma, Marcus Pottenger, Bonnie Towne, Cheryl Willoughby, and George Yokoyama)
- Jenkins, Wilhelmina..... *Cousin Leonard* [CP 1947-48]
(The) Sentence [TGP 1946-49, CP 1947-48]
- Jensen, Walter..... *Go for Broke* [1947-48 script lost]
- Jezierny, Pamela H. *Theatre Magic* (co-written with Stephanie Arthur, Mark Boyd, Jodi Belknap, Louis Burbank, Chandra Gero, Moneeza Hashmi, Lynn Isono, Mark Jeffers, Tamara Hunt, JoAn Lum, Teffie Ma'ake, James Nakamoto, Kathryn Zimmerman, Max Nu'uhiwa, Naomi Okuma, Marcus Pottenger, Bonnie Towne, Cheryl Willoughby, and George Yokoyama)
- Johnson, Jackie Pualani..... *Final Harvest* [Big Island Resource Conservation & Dev. Council]
Robin Hoodwinked [UHH]
- Johnson, Linda..... *(The) Alibi* [UHP 1962]
(The) Chase [UHP 1962]
- Johnson, Ronald B. *First Man First* [UHP 1979-80]
- Johnston, Loretta..... *No Rest for the Wicked* [UHP 1958]

- Johnston, Robert..... *Dingle's Window* [UHP 1961]
Michael's Last Moon [UHP 1961]
- Jones, Margaret..... *(The) Season of Yellow Ginger* [KKT]
- Joseph, J. *(The) Burning Earth* [KKCP 1989-90]
- Jovinelli, Gerardo..... *Ana Kaulani* [TGP 1965-66]
General Wings Incorporated [TGP 1964-65]
Helen in Sparta: Variations in Pink and Blue [UHP 1963]
(The) Paratroopers [TGP 1965-66]
Turn On the Lights, Please [UHP 1963]
Variations in Pink and Blue
- Kaahea, Edward..... *Betrayal* (co-written with Ellen Pelissero, Marlene Sai, Tremaine
Tamayose, Mark Tankersley and Glenn Cannon)
- Kahi, Ekapu..... *(The) Secrets of the Sacred Awa* [TGP 1976-77]
- Kahn, Elithe..... *Once There Was a Queen* [KKCP 1986-87]
- Kaluhiokalani, Kekoa..... *In the Wake* (co-written with David S. Baker) [KKCP 1987-88]
Omnibus (co-written with David S. Baker) [KKCP 1987-88]
- Kamakawiwo'ole, G. *Cast the First Stone* [KKCP 1984-85]
- Kanemitsu, Daniel..... *A Class in Ethics* [CP 1947-48]
Portrait of a Lady [CP 1947-48]
- Kaneshiro, Jason..... *Kathy Furumoto's Funeral* [UHP 1997 spring]
Satan Is A Word for Mother [UHP 1994-95]
- Kanetake, Irene..... *Who's Going to Rebuild the Grave?* [UHP 1990]
- Kaplan, Thomas A. *A Long Way Home* [UHP 1993]
- Kapono, Henry..... *Home In The Islands* (co-written with David Talisman) [KKTA]
- Karl, Kurt Eric..... *Mother Eve's Astounding Apple Seeds* [KKTA]
- Kashiwada, Keith..... *Comfort Woman* (adapted from the novel by Nora Okja Keller. co-
written with John H.Y. Wat and Michelle Kim.) [KKTA]
Love... bu Knockout [UHP 1983 fall]
(The) Watcher of Waipuna (adaptation from Gary Pak's novel. co-
written with John H.Y. Wat) [KKTA]
Ricepaper Airplane (adapted from the novel by Gary Pak. co-written
with John H.Y. Wat) [KKT 2002]
Wild Meat and the Bulby Burgers (adaptation from Lois-Ann
Yamanaka's novel. co-written with John H.Y. Wat) [KKTA]

- Kashiwamura, Masae..... *(The) River Sai* [TGP 1946-49]
- Kates, Charles R..... *Tin Can Alley* [TGP 1976-77, 77-78]
(The) Travels of Heikiki [KKTA, UHP 1975-76, publ. UH Press]
- Kaya, Douglas..... *(The) Case of the Stolen Poi Pounders*
Don't Throw It Away [TGP 1961-63, UHP 1961]
This One Doesn't Work [TGP 1961-63, UHP 1961]
- Kearns, John..... *I Fear The Greeks Bearing Gifts* (playwright also known as Yokanaan Kearns) [UHP 1980-81]
(The) Lady Doth Protest (playwright also known as Yokanaan Kearns) [UHP 1980-81]
- Kearns, Yokanaan..... *How Kitty Got Her Pidgin Back* (playwright also known as John Kearns) [KKTA]
Pidg Latin (playwright also known as John Kearns) [KKTA]
- Kershaw, Baz..... *Trees* [TGP 1969-71]
- Kidder, Wayne..... *(The) Train to Hawai'i* [KKCP 1988-89]
- Kilby, Howard Lee..... *In God's Own Time* [UHP 1978-79]
- Kim, Bonnie..... *Hide and Seek* [UHP 1995-96]
- Kim, Leigh..... *Captain Beyond* [UHP 1973-74]
Da Kine [KKTA]
- Kim, Michelle..... *Comfort Woman* (adapted from the novel by Nora Okja Keller. co-written with John H.Y. Wat and Keith Kashiwada.) [KKTA]
- Kim, Scott.....*Mirror Images* [UHP 1990]
- Kim, Susan..... *(The) Joy Luck Club* [KKTA]
- Kimura, K. *Gecko Woman* [KKCP 1985-86]
- King, Duke..... *Welcome Aboard the Adventure* [TGP 1976-77, 77-78]
- King, Jean Sadako..... *Confetti* [UHP 1964]
Encounter -or- The Way It Really Was [UHP 1964]
Whither Thou Goest [TGP 1964-65]
- King, Oliver H. *Chicago Interlude* [CP 1949-50]
Murder as a Plot [CP 1949-50]

- Kluever, Dando..... *(The) Clown* [UHP 1974-75]
Lazarus and the Hatef: A Bedtime Story (co-written with Helen Hollenberg, Reginald Fong, Young Saylor and Elizabeth Wichman) [KKT]
Sexpectations (co-written with Tremaine Tamayose, Carol Honda and Elizabeth Wichmann)
Spirals [UHP 1973-74]
- Kneubuhl, John..... *A Play: a play* [UHH, publ. UH Press]
(The) City is Haunted [HCT/DHT 1947]
Harp in the Willows [HCT/DHT 1946, KKTA]
Hello, Hello, Hello!
Max: 1950
Mele Kanikau: A Pageant [KKTA, publ. UH Press]
Point Distress [HCT/DHT 1950]
(The) Sound of Hunting [HCT/DHT 1948]
(The) Sunset Crowd
Think of a Garden [KKTA, publ. UH Press]
- Kneubuhl, Victoria Nālani..... *Arrangements* [UHP 1983 spring]
(The) Conversion (early draft of *The Conversion of Ka'ahumanu*) [KKTA]
(The) Conversion of Ka'ahumanu [KKTA, publ. Temple Univ. Press, forthcoming publ. UH Press]
Emmalehua [KKTA, UHP 1984 spring, forthcoming publ. UH Press]
Fanny and Belle [KKT]
January 1893 [Hui Na'auao]
Just So Stories [HTY]
Ka'iulani: A Cantata for the Theatre (co-written with Dennis Carroll, Ryan Page and Robert Nelson) [KKTA]
Ka Wai Ola [HTY]
Ola Nā Iwi [KKTA, forthcoming publ. UH Press]
Paniolo Spurs [HTY]
(The) Story of Susanna [UHM, publ. Theatre Communications Group]
Tofa Samoa [HTY]
Veranda Dance [KKCP 1983-84, UHP 1983 fall]
- Knight, Alanna..... *The Private Life of Robert Louis Stevenson* [KKTA]
- Ko, Lisa..... *(The) Talking* [UHP 1985-86]
- Kohler, Christine Faye *(The) Teacup* [KKCP 1985-86, UHP 1985-86]
- Kollman, Sandi Chang..... *Someday Peanuts, Someday Shells* [UHP 1979-80]
- Kong, Verna Leilani..... *Checkmate* [UHP 1976-78]
- Kooyer, Garrett A. *Brooks Peerless: Ace Sleuth* [UHP 1980-81]

Kovach, Marion..... *(The) Heroine* [UHP 1979-80]

Krasniewski, Keith..... *Lost At Motel 6* [UHP 1994-95]
Untitled [UHP 1994-95]

Krauss, Wilma..... *Azowolo* [UHP 1964]
(The) Mark [UHP 1964]

Krautheim, Carol..... *Hate a Happy Birthday* [UHP 1963]
Roses Are Red, Violets Are Blue, Sugar is Sweet, But Life Isn't
[UHP 1963]

Kubojiri, Clara..... *Country Pie* [TGP 1951-53, CP 1951-52]
Hale O Olelo Nane (House of Fable) [CP 1951-52]

Kull, Frederick..... *Dreamer* (co-written with Geri Ching, Julian Cowley &
Trinh Nguyen) [KKCP 1983-84]

Kupau, Marlene..... *Because I Love You* [UHP 1998 fall]
Torn [UHP 1998 spring]

Kutaka, Claude K..... *The Late Adventures of Captain Sure-Shot and Adonis*

Kwiatkowski, Mark..... *Kahana's Day* [UHP 1990]

Kwock, Laureen..... *Nine Course Dinner* [KKCP 1984-85]

Kwon, Margaret C. *I Fear Not Pele* [CP 1937, UML]
Mama's Boy [CP 1937, UML]

Ladd, Alan (pen name)..... *Why?* [TGP 1968]

Lake, John M. *Halfway* [UHP 1988-89]

Lancaster, Marion..... *Oh, Joy* [UHP 1960]
(The) Wedding Dress [TGP 1959-61, UHP 1960]

Lane, Pat..... *It Just Isn't Done* [TGP 1955-57]

Langhans, Edward..... *Honeymoon* [TGP 1949-51]
(The) Nightmare [TGP 1949-51, CP 1949-50]
Opening Night [TGP 1949-51, CP 1949-50]
Operation Sharkbait [TGP 1949-51, CP 1949-50]

Lappin, T.J. *(The) Courier's Manikin* [TGP 1974-75]

Largosa, Joseph..... *A Christmas Fantasy For Three* [TGP 1965-66]

Larsen, David..... *The Strange Black Mass of Queen Cybelle* [KKT]

- Lea, Fanny Heaslip..... *About Women* (playwright known locally as Mrs. H.P. Agee)
Lolly
Mariana
- Lee, Cherylene..... *Overtones* [KKTA, UML]
Pyros [KKTA]
- Lee, Gwynne..... *Patchwork: It's a Great Day* (co-written with Tamara Hunt, Karen
Brillande, Mark Jeffers, Lynne Nakamura, Mary Olsen, and
Anna Viggiano)
- Lee, Kenneth..... *Hawai'i: My Play My Play My Play* [KKCP 1990-91]
- Lee, Tracey..... *(The) Defective Crane* [UHP 1987-88]
- Leibowitz, Judy..... *Jennifer Lyn and the Astrobug* [UHP 1965]
Over the Kitchen Sink [UHP 1965]
- Leiter, Sam..... *Pretty Mouth and Green My Eyes* [UHP 1963]
Tomorrow the Mailman Comes Again [UHP 1963]
- Lencioni, Mina..... *Pipedreams* [UHP 1978-79]
- Leon, Leslie..... *(The) Peacemonger* [TGP 1961-63]
- Leong, Lavonne..... *Black-Moon Dowry* [UHP 1993]
- Leow, Puay-Tin..... *Family* [UHP 1985-86]
- Leseur, C. Celeste..... *Exiled Heart* [UHP 1995-96]
- Levin, Beatrice..... *Queen Emma, Blossom of Hawai'i* [KKCP 1990-91]
- Lewellen, Kirby..... *S-E-X* [UHP 1970-71]
- Li, Gladys (Li Ling-Ai)..... *The Law of Wu Wei* [UML, publ. Hawaii Quill Magazine]
(The) Soga Revenge
The Submission of Rose Moy [UML, publ. Hawaii Quill Magazine]
(The) White Serpent [UML, publ. Hawaii Quill Magazine]
- Li, Loretta..... *(The) Bridge* [CP 1952-53, UML]
Painting on Velvet [CP 1952-53, UML]
- Lim, Genny..... *Bitter Cane* [KKTA, publ. Kalamaku Press Honolulu, publ. Temple
Univ. Press]
Paper Angels [KKTA, publ. Kalamaku Press Honolulu, publ. Univ. of
Massachusetts Press]
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- Lindsey, Joan..... *(The) Good Little Manager* [CP 1952-53]
Mixture [CP 1952-53]
- Linn, James..... *Brek* TGP 1951-53]
- Lister, Larry..... *Slight Uncle is Glancing at You: The President's Selection Committee*
[KKCP 1984-85]
- Liu, Ronald..... *Mooo* [TGP 1966-67]
- Long, James D. *An Inquiry Into the Last Voyage and Subsequent Death of Captain*
James Cook [KKT]
- Longo, Chris..... *Piccola Memoria* [TGP 1964-65]
H.P. Is Dying in the Valley
I Hear Ya Knockin' But Ya Can't Come In
(The) Terra Cotta Bird Baths [TGP 1964-65]
White Tennis Shoes -or- The Twentieth "Bed" Anniversary
- Look, Phyllis..... *Changing Voices* [KKTA]
In a Very Special House
- Love, Kermit..... *Chopsticks*
Grandfather's Chair
- Lowell, Lee..... *Yukibirra* [TGP 1969]
- Lubben, Anita A. *(The) Evil Acre* [UHP 1975-76]
- Lucas, Keoni..... *Waipa Taro* [UHP 1994-95]
- Ludlow, Christopher..... *Kindred Deliverance* [UHP 1998 spring]
- Ludwick, Sandy..... *Pollution* [TGP 1976-77]
- Lum, Benjamin..... *Theatre of Destiny* [UHP 1972-73]
- Lum, Charlotte..... *Mistaken Nonentity* [TGP 1946-49, CP 1948-49, UML]
These Unsaid Things [TGP 1946-49, CP 1948-49, publ. Bamboo
Ridge Press]
- Lum, Darrell H.Y..... *A Little Bit Like You* [KKTA, HTY]
Ching Chong Chinamen: A Collage of Chinese American Voices
[KKCP 1987-88]
David Carradine Not Chinese [KKT]
Fighting Fire [KKTA]
Magic Mango [HTY, publ. Bamboo Ridge Press]
My Home is Down the Street [KKTA, KKCP 1985-86]
Oranges Are Lucky [KKTA, publ. UH Press]

- Lum, Dwight..... *(The) Constant Virgin* [UHP 1980-81]
Gothic [UHP 1979-80]
- Lum, JoAn..... *Theatre Magic* (co-written with Stephanie Arthur, Mark Boyd, Jodi Belknap, Louis Burbank, Chandra Gero, Moneeza Hashmi, Lynn Isono, Mark Jeffers, Pamela H. Jezierny, Tamara Hunt, Teffie Ma'ake, James Nakamoto, Kathryn Zimmerman, Max Nu'uhiwa, Naomi Okuma, Marcus Pottenger, Bonnie Towne, Cheryl Willoughby, and George Yokoyama)
- Lum, Robert..... *Contempt* [TGP 1951-53]
(The) Girl Who Had Everything [TGP 1951-53]
- Lutzky, Debbie..... *Around the World at Paradise Park*
(The) Dancing Frog of 'Iole Farm
Kapakahi Tales
Laka and the Menehunes
Revival [UHP 1974-75]
Vanishing Shadow (co-written with Glenn Grant & Lynne Nakamura)
[KKTA, TGP 1977-78]
- Ma'ake, Teffie..... *Theatre Magic* (co-written with Stephanie Arthur, Mark Boyd, Jodi Belknap, Louis Burbank, Chandra Gero, Moneeza Hashmi, Lynn Isono, Mark Jeffers, Pamela H. Jezierny, JoAn Lum, Tamara Hunt, James Nakamoto, Kathryn Zimmerman, Max Nu'uhiwa, Naomi Okuma, Marcus Pottenger, Bonnie Towne, Cheryl Willoughby, and George Yokoyama)
- MacCosham, John..... *Sextet in a Flat* [UHP 1963]
- Macdonald, Ian D. *Alex* [KKCP 1990-91]
- Machado, Jessica..... *Whose Turn Is It To Deal?* [UHP 1998 spring]
- Mac Pherson, Richard..... *(The) Mechanical Mr. Lincoln* [UHP 1979-80]
- Madlener, Mike..... *(The) Big Date* [UHP 1987-88]
Jaimy's Christmas Eve [UHP 1987-88]
- Mahoney, Tim..... *Fig Newton, Too* [UHP 1976-78]
- Makishi, Stacy Fujiko..... *Moiiliili* [UHP 1985 spring]
- Maloney, Sally..... *As the Grass* [TGP 1959-61]
- Manchego, Mary..... *A Case For Divorce* [UHP 1962]
(The) Escaped Conflict [TGP 1961-63, UHP 1962]

- Maney, Florence..... *A New England Fantasy*
Agatha's April [TGP 1946-49, CP 1946-47]
Desire's Plaything [1947-48 script lost]
Edward [CP 1946-47]
- Manginsay, Haunani K. *Two Schools* [UHP 1985 spring]
- Martin, Alexander..... *Paradise Therapy* [UHP 1991-92]
- Martin, Theresa..... *Making Friends* [UHP 1987-88]
- Matsui, Jason..... *Baab and the Antichrist* [UHP 1994-95]
- Matsumoto, Lisa..... *Bye Bye Hāna Buttah Days* (co-written with Alfie Huebler, Tamara Hunt, Robert Ito, R. Reiko Ho, Natalie McKinney, Bert Narimasu, James White) [UHM]
Das How Come [UHM]
Deep in a Hawaiian Rain Forest [Kipapa Elementary School]
Fun with Fables [Ohi'a Productions]
Happily Eva Afta [HCT/DHT]
I Wish... Wishing Tales from Around the World [Ohi'a Productions]
In the Clear Blue Sea [Ohi'a Productions]
Legends of the Pacific [Ohi'a Productions]
On Dragonly Wings [Ohi'a Productions]
Once Upon One Time [UHM, HCT/DHT]
Once Upon One Noddah Time [UHM, HCT/DHT]
(The) Princess and the Iso Peanut [HCT/DHT]
Under the Hawaiian Sky [Ohi'a Productions]
Voices of the Rain Forest [Ohi'a Productions]
- Matsuura, Joy..... *Nobody Listens to "The Shadow" Anymore* [UHP 1980-81]
- Mattison, David..... *(The) Song of Charlemagne* [UHP 1971-72]
- Mattos, Justina..... *Aurora* [Performing Arts Learning Center Hilo]
By Choice
(The) Gambler
Hilo Rains [Mahina Productions]
'Iolani: A Christmas Story [KKT]
Nā Pua'a Li'ilī'i 'Ekoḷu [HCP]
Whodabuggah: The Case of the Sharkbait Sailor
- Mauricio, David..... *(The) Devil You Know* [UHP 1998 spring]
- Mayer, Phil..... *Star Light, Star Bright* [UHP 1972-73]
- Mayhew, William..... *(The) Flaming Cloak* [UHP 1966-69]
- Mayo, Don..... *Small Talk After Dark* [CP 1946-47]

- McAuliffe, William..... *Draw One For Tea* [CP 1950-51]
Strata [CP 1950-51]
- McCartney, Julia..... *A Fair Exchange* [CP 1948-49]
Pay 'n Take It [CP 1948-49]
(The) Sins of Their Fathers [CP 1948-49]
- McCully, John (pen name)..... *Recreation Period* [TGP 1968]
- McDermid, A.L. *(The) Execution* [UHP 1990]
- McKenzie, Shawn T. *(The) Warehouse* [UHP 1984 spring]
- McKinney, Natalie..... *Bye Bye Hāna Butah Days* (co-written with Alfie Huebler, Tamara
 Hunt, Robert Ito, Lisa Matsumoto, R. Reiko Ho, Bert
 Narimasu, James White)
- McMillin, Cie..... *(The) Devils of the Dark* (co-written with Penny Mueh)
 [KKCP 1988-89]
- McNarie, Alan Decker..... *Maria of the Waters* [KKCP 1990-91]
- McKnight, Jennifer..... *Dust in the Wind...* [UHP 1984 spring]
- McShane, John..... *Five Year Itch* [KKT]
- Merriam, Robin A. *(The) Spirit of Happiness* [UHP 1978-79]
- Merrington, Tom..... *Peter, the Piper* [UHP 1965]
- Metzger, Laurence..... *(The) Three Sexes* [KKCP 1984-85, UHP 1984 spring]
- Michel, Susan..... *(The) Will* [UHP 1981-82]
- Millado, Chris..... *Peregrinasyon* [KKTA]
- Miller, Hugh..... *Red Mud* [CP 1949-50]
Too Much for Papa [CP 1949-50]
- Millholland, Carl..... *(The) Synthetic Association* [UHP 1973-74]
- Mishima, James..... *Ho'omalimali* [TGP 1955-57]
Sumo [TGP 1955-57]
Sunao [TGP 1951-53]
There Should Have Been Such a Time [TGP 1957-59]
- Mitura, Karen..... *Cry of Silence* [KKCP 1988-89]
- Miyasato, Bill..... *Living Will* [KKCP 1988-89]

- Miyauchi, Marquis..... *In Three Acts* [IHP 1971-72]
- Moffat, Ben..... *Floating World*
From the Land of Lotus Blossoms
- Momota, Keith..... *No Rice in the Desert* [UHP 1984 spring]
- Moniz, Wayne..... *Stillborn: A Modern Legend of Kaho'olawe* [KKCP 1990-91]
- Montney, Marv..... *Heavy, Heavy as Gold* [UHP 1984 spring]
- Morales, Rodney..... *Power Play* [UHP 1973-74]
- Morioka, Karen..... *Echoes* [UHP 1975-76, UML]
- Morris, Aldyth..... *A Clinging Heart*
Captain James Cook [publ. UH Press]
(The) Clone [TGP 1971-73]
Damien (multi-character version and one-man version)
[UHM, publ. UH Press]
(The) Damien Letter
Dangerous Enemy
Dragon of the Six Resemblances [KKTA]
Fingernail of my Beloved
Firepit
(The) Fourth Son (also called *The Carefree Tree*)
Harvest Time
Kimo [TGP 1951-53]
Lili'uokalani [publ. UH Press]
Neither Kith Nor Kin
Our Lila [TGP 1949-51]
Rattigan
Robert Louis Stevenson - Appointment on Moloka'i [publ. UH Press]
(The) Secret Concubine
(The) Sign [TGP 1949-51, CP 1950-51]
Sword and Samurai
(The) Wall [TGP 1949-51, CP 1950-51]
Without Purse or Scrip
Yours in Exile
- Morris, Ray and Aldyth..... *The Lonely Rock* [TGP 1946-49]
- Morris, Robert J. *Paradise Tours* [KKTA, publ. UH Press]
- Moser, Rex..... *(The) Letter* [UHP 1959]
(The) Sale [TGP 1959-61, UHP 1959]
- Moss, Nancy P. *Thomas Jefferson Still Survives!* [KKCP 1986-87]
Tristram Shandy [KKCP 1987-88]

- Mrantz, Maxine..... *(The) After Hours Club* [UHP 1971-72]
- Much, Penny..... *(The) Devils of the Dark* (co-written with Cie McMillin)
[KKCP 1988-89]
- Mullen, J.J. *Aloha, Mr. Phipps* [TGP 1946-49]
- Mulligan, Patrick Shane..... *God's Hell* [KKCP 1989-90]
- Murayama, Milton..... *All I Asking For Is My Body* [KKTA]
Yoshitsune [KKTA]
- Murch, Carolyn..... *What Is Today's Name?* [KKTA]
- Nakagawa, Mark..... *When You Wish Upon a Star...* [UHP 1983 fall]
- Nakahara, Ron..... *Chicken Skin*
- Nakamoto, James..... *Theatre Magic* (co-written with Stephanie Arthur, Mark Boyd, Jodi
Belknap, Louis Burbank, Chandra Gero, Moneeza Hashmi,
Lynn Isono, Mark Jeffers, Pamela H. Jezierny, JoAn Lum,
Teffie Ma'ake, Tamara Hunt, Kathryn Zimmerman, Max
Nu'uhiwa, Naomi Okuma, Marcus Pottenger, Bonnie Towne,
Cheryl Willoughby, and George Yokoyama)
- Nakamura, Lynne..... *Patchwork: It's a Great Day* (co-written with Tamara Hunt, Karen
Brillande, Gwynne Lee, Mark Jeffers, Mary Olsen, and
Anna Viggiano)
Vanishing Shadow (co-written with Debbie Lutzky & Glenn Grant)
[KKTA, TGP 1977-78]
- Nakamura, Maybelle..... *Asu Wakaru (Tomorrow Will Tell)* [TGP 1953-55, UML]
- Nakamura, Richard J. *Black and White* [CP 1952-53]
Decision [CP 1952-53]
We Wait For You
- Nakano, Dennis..... *Eh, Only Joke...* [UHP 1976-78]
Eh, We Was Only Kiddin', Brah [TGP 1975-76]
Lucky You Stay Hawaii [UHP 1975-76]
- Nakasone, Travis..... *I'm Insane, You're Insane* [UHP 1995-96]
Perfect Day [UHP 1997 spring]
- Nakatsu, Jared..... *(The) Art of Dying* [UHP 1997-98]
Hall of Mirrors [UHP 1987-88]

- Narimasu, Bert..... *Bye Bye Hāna Buttah Days* (co-written with Alfie Huebler, Tamara Hunt, Robert Ito, Lisa Matsumoto, Natalie McKinney, R. Reiko Ho, James White)
Haole Ko'a [UHP 1986 spring]
Sawdust [UHP 1985 spring]
Specs (written under pen name Bob Okasako) [KKTA]
- Nasca, Philip James..... *Wings to Fly* [UHP 1980-81]
- Nelson, Robert..... *Ka'iulani: A Cantata for the Theatre* (co-written with Victoria Kneubuhl, Dennis Carroll and Ryan Page) [KKTA]
(The) Princess [KKCP 1985-86]
- Neogy, Lily..... *Zizi's Party* TGP 1971-73]
- Nguyen, Trinh..... *Dreamer*(co-written with Geri Ching, Julian Cowley & Frederick Kull)
[KKCP 1983-84]
- Nigro, Don Lee..... *American Provincial* [KKCP 1987-88]
It Don't Mean Nothin' [KKCP 1988-89]
Jeffrey [KKCP 1983-84]
- Nobori, Raplee..... *(The) Death of Keōua* [UHM]
Makapō & Pepeiao [UHM]
'Umi a Līloa [UHM]
- Nu'uhiwa, Max..... *Theatre Magic* (co-written with Stephanie Arthur, Mark Boyd, Jodi Belknap, Louis Burbank, Chandra Gero, Moneeza Hashmi, Lynn Isono, Mark Jeffers, Pamela H. Jezierny, JoAn Lum, Teffie Ma'ake, James Nakamoto, Kathryn Zimmerman, Tamara Hunt, Naomi Okuma, Marcus Pottenger, Bonnie Towne, Cheryl Willoughby, and George Yokoyama)
- O'Brien, Elliott..... *A Life in the Day of 1968, A Film* [UHP 1969-70]
- Ochiaie, Halbert..... *Poor Harvey* [UHP 1969-70]
- Odegaard, Olaf..... *A Peony from David* [UHP 1963]
A Queer Day for a Man to Cry [UHP 1963]
(The) Devil Who Comes [TGP 1961-63]
Even the Greeks Did It [UHP 1962]
Poet of the Dying Spring [UHP 1962]
- Ohukama, Denise..... *Just Another Ordinary Day* [UHP 1988-89]
- Okasako, Bob..... *Specs* (playwright's real name: Bert Narimasu) [KKTA]
- Okawa, Laurie Lynn..... *Voices From the Basement* [KKCP 1987-88]

- Okuma, Naomi..... *Theatre Magic* (co-written with Stephanie Arthur, Mark Boyd, Jodi Belknap, Louis Burbank, Chandra Gero, Moneeza Hashmi, Lynn Isono, Mark Jeffers, Pamela H. Jezierny, JoAn Lum, Teffie Ma'ake, James Nakamoto, Kathryn Zimmerman, Max Nu'uhiwa, Tamara Hunt, Marcus Pottenger, Bonnie Towne, Cheryl Willoughby, and George Yokoyama)
- O'Leary, Kevin..... *Animal, Vegetable or Mineral* [TGP 1980-81]
Freakdom Too [TGP 1978-79]
Ichiban Hideaway [KKCP 1990-91]
In George's Backyard [KKCP 1986-87]
On Finding Freakdom [TGP 1975-76, KKT]
- Olsen, Ralph D. *Allie Robinson's White Hand* [TGP 1969-71]
- Olsen, Mary..... *Patchwork: It's a Great Day* (co-written with Tamara Hunt, Karen Brillande, Gwynne Lee, Lynne Nakamura, Mark Jeffers, and Anna Viggiano)
- O'Malley, Sean T.C..... *Island Skin Songs* [KKTA]
To the Last Hawaiian Soldier [KKTA]
Traincome Time [KKTA]
- Omori, Russell M. *Spring Snow* [UHP 1980-81]
- Ornellas, Dick A. *(The) Re-write* [UHP 1990]
- Oshima, Dawn K. *Checkmate* [UHP 1980-81]
- Oshiro, Bert..... *Hairdressers* [UHP 1983 fall]
Soldier Boys [UHP 1984 spring]
- Oshiro, Sandra..... *Someone's Drowning* [uhp 1970-71, UML]
- Oshiro, Wynn..... *1953* [TGP 1971-73]
An Unnatural Death [UHP 1988-89]
(The) Cave [KKCP 1988-89]
Costs of Living [KKCP 1988-89]
Eggshell Heart [KKCP 1984-85]
Female Trouble [KKCP 1988-89]
Grads [TGP 1980-81]
Graduation [TGP 1975-76]
Kitchen [KKCP 1986-87]
Pass/Fail [TGP 1981-82]
Sam and Kirby [KKCP 1987-88]
Tribal Rites [TGP 1979-80]
- Ou-yang, Sherry..... *Life, Interrupted*

- Pacheco, Robert A. *Fun and Games with Tom and Meg* [UHP 1990]
- Page, Ryan..... *Agape* [KKCP 1983-84, UHP 1983 fall]
Coda [KKCP 1982-83]
Ka'iulani: A Cantata for the Theatre (co-written with Victoria
Kneubuhl, Dennis Carroll and Robert Nelson) [KKTA]
Passage Work [UHP 1983 spring]
Simon Says [UHP 1984 spring]
- Pak, Gary..... *Beyond the Falls* [HTY]
Only the Wind's Home [KKCP 1989-90]
(The) Watcher of Waipuna [KKTA]
- Palmore, Paul D. *Blood Brother* [UHP 1983 fall]
- Pare, Edward..... *Closer to Paradise* [TGP 1951-53]
(The) Vanguard [TGP 1949-51]
- Park, Dale..... *In the Middle of Your Dial* [UHP 1981-82]
- Park, Susan..... *Going Home* [UHP 1990]
- Parola, Gene..... *(The) Bridegroom* [UHP 1960]
Bye Bye Black Sheep [TGP 1959-61]
Regarding the Reunion [UHP 1960]
- Patten, Shannon..... *Hannah's Place* [KKT]
Squeeze Play [UHP 1976-78]
- Patterson, Frank L. *Behind the Lines* [UHP 1976-78]
- Pavalko, Frank..... *A God for Young Fools* [TGP 1961-63]
- Pavilonis, Andrew..... *Men are All Alike* [UHP 1990]
- Payne, Ruth..... *Assignment in Psychology* [CP 1954-55]
- Pelissero, Ellen..... *Betrayal* (co-written with Tremaine Tamayose, Marlene Sai, Mark
Tankersley, Edward Kaahea and Glenn Cannon)
- Peña, Ralph B. *Flipzoids* [KKTA]
- Penhallow, David..... *Banzai Darling* [KKTA]
(The) House of Happy Talk [KKTA]
Listen to the Stars [KKTA]
- Pepper, Peter PCV..... *Malheur Two* [UHP 1971-72]

- Persson, Cherie *Ah For the Life of a Bird* [UHP 1963]
You Got to Know the Essentials Before You Can Solve the Problems
[UHP 1963]
- Peterman, Thomas..... *(The) Last Supper* [UHP 1981-82]
- Peters, Lucille G. *(The) Kahuna Lapa'au (The Healer)* [UHP 1973-74]
- Peterson, Lucia..... *(The) Unfolding* [UHP 1979-80]
- Phillips, Kay..... *Janey* [CP 1937]
- Phillips, Paul C. *A Day in the Life of Lieutenant Allen* [UHP 1972-73]
Rape [UHP 1974-75]
- Pinkosh, Mark..... *Fitting In*
Help Wanted
- Pirics, Eva..... *Invitation to a Laundry* [TGP 1969]
- Pisculli, Tony..... *(The) Speed of Sound in a Vacuum* [UHP 1997 spring]
Water From the Moon [UHP 1995-96]
- Planas, Peter..... *Back to Da Real World* [UHP 1981-82]
- Poage, Deborah..... *Brides and Butterflies* [UHP 1998 fall]
- Pollard, Clifford H..... *Sea Stories and Fairy Tales at J.J. 's Bar and Cafe* TGP 1971-73]
- Pollard, Jennie..... *Mango Picking* [UHP 1983 fall]
- Poppler, Kyra..... *Life's Little Problems* [UHP 1995-96]
- Pottenger, Marcus..... *Theatre Magic* (co-written with Stephanie Arthur, Mark Boyd, Jodi
Belknap, Louis Burbank, Chandra Gero, Moneeza Hashmi,
Lynn Isono, Mark Jeffers, Pamela H. Jezierny, JoAn Lum,
Teffie Ma'ake, James Nakamoto, Kathryn Zimmerman, Max
Nu'uhiwa, Naomi Okuma, Tamara Hunt, Bonnie Towne,
Cheryl Willoughby, and George Yokoyama)
- Potts, Bruce..... *Pardon Me, But Have You Seen a Menehune?*
- Pourchot, Eric..... *(The) Sandstone Idol* [TGP 1979-80, UHP 1979-80]
(The) Waters of Kane, a Family Musical [TGP 1978-79, KKT]
- Pratt, Leah M. *Leslie* [UHP 1970-71]
(The) Youthful Sea [UHP 1970-71]

Price, B.J. *A Pageant* [UHP 1965]
Chandelier [UHP 1965]

Price, Bruce..... *A Pageant Fades* [TGP 1966-67]

Priebe, James..... *Aphrodite's Finger* [KKT]
Munger [UHP 1969-70, KKT]
Tarot Root [UHP 1969-70]

Pulvers, Roger..... *Yamashita* [KKT, publ. Currency Press]

Query, William..... *The Preemie* [TGP 1966-67]

Quimby, E.D. *Little Summer Community* [UHP 1961]
(The) Right Direction [UHP 1961]

Quin, Shirland..... *(The) Caricature* (playwright known locally as Mrs. D'Arcy
Northwood)
Dragon's Teeth
(The) Late Rebellion

Quiring, Amy..... *(The) Essential End* [UHP 1983 fall]

Radford, David..... *Sea / Fire Mythology*

Rahim, Nipa..... *Wo/Man* [UH 1987-88]

Ranta, Cougar..... *Cook's Return* [KKCP 1987-88]

Raphe, Wade..... *Scraps* [TGP 1976-77]

Ratkowski, Diane..... *Sunday Service* [UHP 1963]
Surely Not Laura! [UHP 1963]

Rector, Gladys Eppy..... *And the Twain Do Meet* [KKCP 1986-87]

Reeves, Ruth..... *Cherish the Thought* [TGP 1946-49, CP 1947-48]
Kalihi New York

Reid, Richard..... *(The) Ten Dollar Bill* [TGP 1961-63]

Reitz, Theodore..... *(The) Debate* [UHP 1976-78]

Rey, Elaine..... *(The) Garage Sale* [KKCP 1985-86, UHP 1985-86]

Reynolds, Joy..... *Christmas Turnabout* [UHP 1979-80]

Rice, Cindy..... *Tenure or Bust* [UHP 1985-86]
Ti Leaves [UHP 1985-86]

- Rice, Sara..... *Cucumber Madness* [UHP 1990]
- Riley, Claudia..... *(The) Bluebird of Happiness* (adaptation) [HCP]
Fledglings of the Night [HCP, KKCP 1985-86, KKCP 1986-87]
On Shimjuku Intersection [KKCP 1987-88]
- Robinette, Joseph..... *A Savage in the Sandwich Isles* [TGP 1981-82]
- Robinson, Barbara B. *(The) Case for Eve* [KKCP 1990-91]
(The) Screaming Ghost of Hanauma Bay [mentioned in KKCP1990-91]
- Roeben, Scott..... *A Comedy of Heirs* [UHP 1983 fall, KKCP 1983-84]
(The) Hot-Damn American Dream [UHP 1984 spring]
- Roeder, Eric..... *Valet* [UHP 1987-88]
- Roeder, Gil..... *(The) Kaimiloa* [TGP 1979-80]
- Roffman, Maryan..... *(The) Graduation Party* [TGP 1957-59]
Odai [TGP 1959-61]
(The) Silver Set [UHP 1958]
Summer's End (Shadowed Sabbath) [TGP 1961-63]
Tomorrow Is A Mirror [UHP 1958]
- Roffman, Max..... *An Incident of Embezzlement* [TGP 1961-63]
(The) Day That War Was Declared [TGP 1966-67]
His Brother's Keeper [TGP 1966-67]
(The) Lie Detector [TGP 1966-67]
(The) Man Who Cut Off His Nose [TGP 1963-64]
On A Bench In A Park In Hawaii [TGP1964-65]
- Rohrbach, Barry..... *A Seesaw Table* [UHP 1971-72]
Pigeons [KKTA]
- Rusch, Christine..... *Mele* [KKCP 1989-90]
- Russell, Wendy..... *Construction Unlimited Honolulu* [TGP 1978-79, KKTA]
Now I Learn My ABC's [KKTA]
(The) View Through Glass Slippers [KKTA]
- Rust, Chris..... *No Choice* [UHP 1984 spring]
- Ryerson, Florence..... *I Can't Make Up My Mind* (co-written with Colin Clements)
- Sai, Marlene..... *Betrayal* (co-written with Ellen Pelissero, Tremaine Tamayose,
Mark Tankersley, Edward Kaahea, and Glenn Cannon)

- Saiki, Patsy..... *(The) Return* [UHP 1959, TGP 1975-76, UML]
(The) Return of Sam Patch [TGP 1966-67, UML]
Second Choice [UHP 1959, UML]
Tom, from Ohio [TGP 1975-76]
- Sakai, Edward..... *And Never the Twain Shall Meet* [CP 1947-48]
C'est La Guerre [CP 1947-48]
- Sakai, Lillian..... *(The) Back Yard*
(The) Family Tie [UHP 1958, UML]
- Sakamoto, Edward..... *A'ala Park* [KKTA, publ. UH Press]
Aloha Las Vegas [KKTA, publ. UH Press]
Chikamatsu's Forest [KKTA]
Dead of Night [KKTA]
In the Alley [KKTA, TGP 1961-63, publ. UH Press]
Lava! [KKTA]
(The) Life of the Land [KKTA, publ. UH Press]
Mānoa Valley [UHM, KKTA, publ. UH Press]
Our Hearts Were Touched with Fire [UHM]
Pilgrimage [KKTA]
(The) Redeemers [UHP 1961]
Stew Rice [KKTA, publ. UH Press]
(The) Taste of Kona Coffee [KKTA, publ. UH Press]
That's the Way the Fortune Cookie Crumbles
Voices in the Shadows
Yellow is my Favorite Color
- Sakata, Sean..... *Dark* [UHP 1998 spring]
- Salvador, Normie R. *Angels Wear Leather* [UHP 1997 spring]
(The) Promise of Souls [UHP 1995-96]
- Samarawickrama, Vijaya..... *For Theirs Is The Kingdom* [UHP 1969-70]
- Sambueno, Fran..... *(The) Visit to the Pig Farmer* [TGP 1981-82]
- Sarwar, Ghulam..... *Halfway Road, Penang* [KKT]
Suvarna-Paoma or The Golden Lotus [UHP 1973-74]
- Sato, Daniel K. *Bachi* [UHP 1984 spring]
Fathers, Sons and Ghosts [UHP 1983 spring]
Inside Straight [KKCP 1983-84]
- Sato, Tracy..... *Marionette Man* [UHP 1998 spring]

- Saylor, (Young) William..... *Birthright* [UHP 1971-72, KKT]
Commonroom [KKTA]
(The) End of the News [KKT]
Hatef [KKT]
Lazarus and the Hatef: A Bedtime Story (co-written with Helen
Hollenberg, Dando Kluever, Reginald Fong and Elizabeth
Wichman) [KKT]
Mindsweeper or, Fogbend [UHP 1971-72]
- Sayre, Aeoma..... *Fantasia Impromptu* [CP/UHP 1953-54]
Room for Improvement [CP/UHP 1953-54]
- Sayre, Connie..... *Burglar's Bluff* [CP 1952-53]
- Sayre, Willas..... *(The) Lovers* [CP 1952-53]
Tea and Cakes [CP 1952-53]
- Scheuer, Alice..... *Thy People and My People* [CP 1951-52]
- Schweickert, Eileen A. *(The) Six O'Clock News* [TGP 1981-82]
- Scollon, Suzanne..... *No Mo Mada* [KKCP 1987-88]
- Scott, Larry F. *(The) Haole* [KKCP 1983-84]
- Scott, Patrice..... *In the Lap of the Gods* [UHP 1995-96]
- Scott, Robert L. *Low Lands* [TGP 1951-53]
(The) Philosopher's Stone [TGP 1951-53]
- Scoville, Shelagh..... *After Work* [CP/UHP 1953-54]
(The) End of Summer [CP/UHP 1953-54]
One Dollar and Fifty Cents [TGP 1955-57]
Wharf [TGP 1953-55, CP/UHP 1953-54]
- Scribner, Aphrodite..... *The Second Mrs. Chatterton* [CP 1952-53]
- Sen, Noel..... *(The) Crusader* [UHP 1987-88]
One Day Und' da Clouds [UHP 1987-88]
- Sete, Michelle Y. *(The) Big Twist* [UHP 1988-89]
- Severance, Carol..... *Sail to the Edge of the Moon* [KKCP 1988-89]
- Shapiro, Michael Francis..... *A Kennedy* [KKTA]
Echo II
Shelter [KKTA]
- Sharketti, John L. *A Nightmare, A Dream and a Fantasy* [UHP 1981-82]

- Sharpe, Kip..... *A Piano Player By Heart, A Jack-of-all-trades by Need*
[UHP 1966-69]
A Round Trip Home [UHP 1965]
(The) Gold War [UHP 1966-69]
Strange People Just Aren't Allowed to Roam the Streets [UHP 1965]
Trotter's Odyssey [TGP 1966-67]
- Shelgren, Margaret..... *Lei Summer* [TGP 1978-79]
- Shell, Molly Tani..... *Where Dwells the Heart* [TGP 1953-55, UML]
In the Tide of Times [TGP 1953-55]
- Shepardson, Roland R..... *Ke Kuapuu Alii (The Royal Hunchback)* [UHM]
- Shibata, Michael Zen..... *A Gracely Reunion* [KKCP 1985-86]
- Shibley, Gena..... *(The) Old War Horse* [UHP 1959]
Tonight At Midnight [UHP 1959]
- Shield, Phyllis..... *At King Arthur's Court*
Hawai'i... We're a State
Mother Goose Town
Red Hood and Wolf-San
St. Nick's Merry Space Christmas
Sugar and Spice
(The) Camel's Christmas Present
(The) Song of the Boy, Asrah
(The) Spindle of Magic
(The) Star Grinder
(The) Sultan's First Christmas
(The) Three Pinkie Pigs
(The) Toymaker and the Enchanted Peacock
(The) Twelve Days of Christmas
They Lived Happily Ever After
Wish Upon a Christmas Eve
- Shimabukuro, Lisa..... *Foreign Affairs* [UHP 1985 spring]
- Shimonishi, Chad..... *(The) Piece* [UHP 1996 fall]
- Shinoda, Elizabeth..... *Back Roads* [TGP 1971-73]
- Shiomi, Ric A. *Uncle Tadao* [KKTA]
Yellow Fever [KKTA]
- Shirae, Derek..... *Heth and Ruby* [UHP 1998 spring]

- Shirota, Jon..... *I Hear You*
(The) Intruder Was Tofu
Leilani's Hibiscus [KKTA]
Lucky Come Hawai'i [KKTA]
Pineapple White
Ripples in the Pond
This Land is Kapu [KKTA]
- Shreve, Nelson..... *(The) Vancouver Triangle* [KKCP 1985-86]
- Simon, Amy..... *Bleeding Roses* [UHP 1984 spring]
- Simpson, Paula..... *Al Modo Americano*
(The) American Way [TGP 1946-49, CP 1948-49]
Dear Randy [CP 1948-49]
Puzzle [TGP 1946-49, CP 1948-49]
- Sindico, Mercedes..... *Longer Than Forever* [UHP 1966-69]
(The) Wedding Date [UHP 1966-69]
- Singer, Yvonne..... *A Noise Like Feathers* [UHP 1986 fall]
- Singer, Georgeanna..... *Love for Sale* [UHP 1963]
Tomorrow's Tears [UHP 1963]
- Siu, Kam Wen..... *Gabriel, or, The Shortest Way* [KKCP 1986-87]
- Siu, Leon..... *The Wise and Ancient Menehune from Mokulana*
(co-written with Malia Elliott)
- Slaughter, Howard Key..... *Cathie* [CP 1949-50]
Christy's Choice [CP 1949-50]
- Sloman, Chelsea..... *(The) War Within* [UHP 1981-82]
- Smart, Ray A. *En La Noche* [UHP 1963]
(The) Yellow Balloon [UHP 1963]
- Smith, Bobby Joyce..... *Arizona Smith and the Molten Mountain* [KKCP 1984-85]
(The) Buddha's Nook [UHP 1966-69]
Charley(co-written with Jimmy Baines) [UHP 1966-69]
(The) Oak of Tabor (co-written with Jimmy D. Baines) [TGP 1966-67]
- Smith, Felix..... *(The) Pilot's Paradise* [UHP 1985 spring]
- Smith, Kenneth..... *(The) Altar Society* [UHP 1962]
(The) Living Dead [UHP 1962]

- Smith, Kirk..... *Fritz and his Magic Piano* [TGP 1968]
I Like My Coffee Black [TGP 1968]
- Smith, T.E.W. Jr. *It's Up to You* [UHP 1969-70]
- Snoopy (pen name)..... *(The) Fantastic Foolybear* [TGP 1968]
- Snyder, Jim..... *Safety Zone* [KKCP 1987-88]
- Solmssen, Franz..... *Classroom* [KKCP 1990-91]
Dinner [KKCP 1990-91]
- Solt, Victor R. *Mrs. Marcel's Judgement* [UHP 1986 fall]
- Sparks, Bob..... *The Ram* [TGP 1953-55]
- Speakman, Cummins Elliot Jr. ... *Ka-ahu-manu* [TGP 1979-80]
- Spencer, Anna Just..... *Feyleen* [CP/UHP 1953-54]
Life's Little Tragedies [TGP 1953-55]
- Spring, Anne..... *Inheritance* [CP 1948-49]
(The) Perfect Crime [CP 1948-49]
What Is The World Coming To [CP 1948-49]
- Stacey, Sharone..... *Kapu* [TGP 1981-82]
Through the Looking Glass [UHP 1972-73]
- Stack, Eric..... *Kuahu* [KKCP 1987-88]
- Stanton, Joseph..... *Noh: A Verse Play for Readers' Theatre* [KKCP 1988-89]
- Stanton, Susan..... *(The) Piano Lesson*
- Steed, Louis..... *Fill the Grave* [CP 1949-50]
(The) Netherworld vs. Hitler and Laycox [CP 1949-50]
- Steinhoff, William D. *Chief Pontiac* [UHP 1975-76]
(The) Unwelcome Guest [TGP 1974-75]
- Stetson, Lee..... *A Play Is A Play Is A Play* [TGP 1968]
- Stewart, Constance Han..... *The Passing of Joey's Father* [TGP 1957-59]
- Stilliams, Nancy..... *(The) Hours Rise Up* [TGP 1963-64]
- Stone, Lloyd..... *In this Hawaiian Net*
- Stout, Lewis..... *Journey to Bakuhl*

- Strait, W. David..... *A Spin in the Dark* [UHP 1972-73]
- Strauss, David..... *A Typographical Error* [KKCP 1985-86]
(The) Early Morning Dip [TGP 1980-81, UHP 1979-80]
- Stroup, Shelley..... *(The) Feast of Mr. and Mrs. Field* [TGP 1969]
- Stubblefield, Charles..... *Big Coal Is Best* [CP 1948-49]
Brainchildren [CP 1948-49]
Next To Her [TGP 1946-49, CP 1948-49]
- Stube, David Bennett..... *Lubang Buaya (The Crocodile's Lair)* [KKCP 1990-91]
- Sugano, Miyoko..... *Issei Woman* [UHH 1994]
- Sugihara, Cara..... *Tides* [UHP 1975-76]
- Sugiyama, Jean Y. *Kona* [UHP 1972-73]
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Big Boys Don't Cry
Family Laundry
It's School Brah
Local People: An Oral History Experience
Lovetown
'Onolulu
Sexpectations (co-written with Dando Kluever, Carol Honda and Elizabeth Wichmann)
(The) Smartest Little Girl in the World
Sparks I
Sparks II

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Give A Man A Book He Can Read [TGP 1955-57, CP 1954-55]
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Calabash Capers
Christmas Windows
Family Soup
Laughing All the Way
Looking for Uncle Meter
(The) Magnificent Metric Family
(The) Saints
Three Wise Men
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Paddington Bear Plays Santa Paws
Paddington Bear Rescues Santa
Paddington Bear Surprises Santa
Paddington Bear Wishes You a Beary Merry Christmas
Patchwork: It's a Great Day (co-written with Tamara Hunt, Karen
Brillande, Gwynne Lee, Lynne Nakamura, Mary Olsen, and
Mark Jeffers)
Sweet Dreams of Christmas
- Vinluan, Ermena Marlene.....*(The) Frame-up of Narciso and Perez*
Isuda ti Immuna
Tagatupad
Ti Mangyuna
Visions of a Warbride
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Ka'iulani [UHH]
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Rip Van Winkle
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 Hunt, Robert Ito, Lisa Matsumoto, Natalie McKinney, Bert
 Narimasu, R. Reiko Ho)
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