



BISHOP MUSEUM

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Bishop Museum Announces Its New, Original Exhibit, (Re)Generations: Challenging Scientific Racism in Hawai‘i

Exhibition explores how the controversial Sullivan Collection has taken on new life as a genealogical source for Kānaka Maoli (Native Hawaiian) descendants

Honolulu, Hawai‘i — Bishop Museum will present an original exhibition, **(Re)Generations: Challenging Scientific Racism in Hawai‘i**, in its J. M. Long Gallery from Feb. 20 – Oct. 24, 2021. The exhibition is based on the Sullivan Collection—photographs and plaster busts of Native Hawaiians collected during the 1920s. The images and busts were originally created to measure the physical features of Native Hawaiian people in an anthropological study of race associated with the eugenics movement. In addition to serving as an exposition and rebuttal of the false and harmful claims of race science, the exhibition will show how, despite their problematic and racist origins, these photographs and busts are “regenerated” today, through Kānaka Maoli (Native Hawaiian) descendant communities doing genealogical research, revisiting these photographs, and adding their own connections, histories, and memories.

Louis R. Sullivan was a physical anthropologist employed by the American Museum of Natural History with a joint appointment at Bishop Museum from 1920–1925. One of Sullivan’s goals was to use these images and busts to identify the physical features of a supposedly “pure Hawaiian race.” Research like Sullivan’s attempted to create a scientific foundation for race and racial hierarchy. Though this research ultimately failed, it contributed to a lasting legacy of inequality with repercussions that are still felt today.

There is no biological truth to race, and research like Sullivan’s is now discredited. Despite this, the myths of race and racial superiority persist. The (Re)Generations exhibition acknowledges that Bishop Museum, like other historic institutions, has participated in activities such as Sullivan’s research that would now be considered racist and unacceptable. As such, the exhibition also hopes to be a reflective exploration of Bishop Museum’s scientific, educational, and moral responsibilities in the present and moving forward.

“We recognize that museums around the world are coming to terms with their colonial histories and are re-envisioning their role in the 21st century. This exhibit is one way for us to reveal the complexity of Bishop Museum’s past, its participation in racist ideologies and contributions to social inequities” said Melanie Ide, president & CEO of Bishop Museum. “We hope this exhibit

will ultimately help us better serve Kānaka Maoli and encourage people to think about what kind of future we want to make together.”

“The (Re)Generations exhibit will demonstrate how the Sullivan Collection can be utilized to gain new meaning today. What initially was created to further the faulty claims of race science is now able to benefit the very people it sought to objectify. Through collaborative efforts with Kānaka Maoli descendants, the collection has been “regenerated” as a vehicle for Native Hawaiians to connect with their ancestors and genealogical histories,” said Ide.

When Sullivan created these busts and photographs, he recorded the names of the people pictured, their geographic location, and categorized their “race” for scientific study. The curatorial intent behind sharing the Sullivan Collection in the (Re)Generations exhibition is to humanize the people in the photographs, and honor and celebrate their family histories and legacies. To accomplish this, Bishop Museum’s exhibition curators collaborated with the descendants of the people in Sullivan’s photographs to add new memories, stories, and histories about the people photographed by Sullivan. The exhibition will include photos and interviews with these living descendants to show how this collection has been transformed into a vehicle for deeper understandings of family and genealogical relationships.

The exhibition will trace the invention of race and “race science” from naturalist explorers in the 1600–1800s, through Sullivan’s research in the early 20th century, ultimately leading to the atrocities of the Holocaust. It will show how the legacies of race science continue to impact scientific and popular understandings of human diversity, now predominantly through DNA research. DNA has become a major foundation for measuring human variation today, and with these advances, personal genetic information has become a commodity that can easily be exploited. The exhibition questions the effectiveness of modern, take-home DNA testing kits for informing people about their ancestry by privileging the limited and easily misinterpreted information provided by such kits over the many aspects of self-understanding that come from unquantifiable factors, such as family histories, traditions, memories, and the communities one is a part of.

No scientific research is free from bias and never will be, as an individual researcher’s life history and prejudices shape the very questions they ask and the way they interpret their results. (Re)Generations: Challenging Scientific Racism in Hawai‘i makes a case for scientific research to privilege Indigenous frameworks that platform Indigenous knowledge, voices, and agency, as an alternative vision for a just and more equitable future.

This exhibition was co-curated by Dr. Jillian Swift and Leah Caldeira of Bishop Museum, and Dr. Keolu Fox of U.C. San Diego, in collaboration with Noah Dolim of the ‘ohana Ka‘aukai from Puna, Hawai‘i Island; Dean Kaiawe and Carol Gonsalves of the ‘ohana Kaleohano and Wentworth from Kona, Hawai‘i Island; Annemarie Paikai of the ‘ohana Ho‘olapa from Kona, Hawai‘i Island; Nalani Balutski and her father, Kalai Balutski, of the ‘ohana Duvauchelle from Pūko‘o, Moloka‘i; and Sharnelle Renti Cruz and Marleah Renti Cruz of the ‘ohana Akona from Kōloa, Kaua‘i.

For more information on (Re)Generations: Challenging Scientific Racism in Hawai‘i visit BishopMuseum.org/Regenerations.

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Bishop Museum Admission, Parking & Hours

To control museum capacity, Bishop Museum offers 500 daily tickets. Tickets must be reserved in advance for one of the following two time periods:

- Morning, 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.
- Afternoon, 1 p.m. – 5 p.m.

If you currently hold a pre-purchased admission ticket that is still valid, those tickets will be honored on a space-available basis on the day of attendance.

The safety and health of our visitors and employees remains our highest priority, and new measures have been enacted to keep the Museum a safe place to visit. Please visit our [Health & Safety](#) page.

General Admission

Adults: \$24.95

Seniors (65+): \$21.95

Youth (4–17): \$16.95

Children (3 and under): Free

Children age 16 and younger must be accompanied by an adult.

Hawai'i Residents, Hawai'i College Students & Military with ID

Adults: \$14.95

Seniors (65+): \$12.95

Youth (4–17): \$10.95

Children (3 and under): Free

Parking Rates Beginning March 2021

Daytime Rate: 6 a.m.–5 p.m. \$5.00

Evening Rate: 5 p.m.–10 p.m. \$3.00

Hours

Open every day from 9 a.m.–5 p.m.

Closed on Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day

Bishop Museum Café by Highway Inn offers a limited menu of bowls, sandwiches, and snacks from 10:00 a.m.–3:30 p.m. daily. Bishop Museum Members receive a 10% discount with their membership card.

About Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum:

Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum's mission is to inspire our community and visitors through the exploration, celebration and perpetuation of the extraordinary history, culture, and environment of Hawai'i and the Pacific. The museum was founded in 1889 by Charles Reed Bishop in memory of his wife Bernice Pauahi Bishop, a royal descendant of King Kamehameha I. Today, the museum thrives as a research and educational center that is widely regarded as the world's premier institution for Hawaiian and Pacific content. Its vast collections of more than 25 million objects and specimens represent nine disciplines and include more than 22 million biological specimens, over two million cultural objects, 115,000 historical publications, and one million photographs, films, works of art, audio recordings, and manuscripts. These collections tell the stories of the cultures and biodiversity of Hawai'i and the Pacific as well as the proud legacy of scholarly research spanning 130 years. Bishop Museum serves more than 200,000 visitors each year, including 20,000 children on school visits. To learn more about the museum's research, collections, exhibits, and programs, visit www.bishopmuseum.org, follow @BishopMuseum on Twitter and Instagram, become a fan of Bishop Museum on Facebook, visit Bishop Museum's YouTube channel at youtube.com/user/BishopMuseum, or call (808) 847-3511. Bishop Museum is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.