



April 2, 2026

MEDIA CONTACT:

Stryker Weiner & Yokota Public Relations, Inc.
Krislyn Hashimoto
Ph.: (808) 722-4384
krislyn@strykerweiner.com

Bishop Museum Presents *Ea Mai 'Eiwa: Patterns of Practice*

*Powerful new exhibition will feature the work of Nālani Kanaka'ole,
Sig Zane, and Kūha'o 'īmaikalani Zane*

Members of the press are invited to a pre-opening Media Preview of the exhibition
on Thursday, April 16 from 1-4 p.m.; please see details below.

Honolulu, Hawai'i — [Bishop Museum](#), the State of Hawai'i Museum of Natural and Cultural History, is proud to present [Ea Mai 'Eiwa: Patterns of Practice](#), opening in the J. M. Long Gallery on Saturday, April 18, 2026. This powerful new exhibition will feature the work of Nālani Kanaka'ole (1946–2026), Sig Zane, and Kūha'o 'īmaikalani Zane — a Hilo-based family of artists whose creative practices are deeply rooted in hula 'aiha'a.*

*Hula 'aiha'a is a low-postured, vigorous, bombastic style of hula that springs from the eruptive volcano personas of Pele and her sister Hi'iaka, characteristic of Hawai'i Island's creative forces.

As dedicated members of [Hālau o Kekuhi](#) in Keaukaha, Hawai'i, the artists' work across visual and performing arts is continually charged and sustained by hula. From Nālani Kanaka'ole's art direction and choreography to Sig Zane's photography and textile design, and Kūha'o 'īmaikalani Zane's graphic design and immersive installations, each artist channels 'ike (knowledge, wisdom) carried through generations.

The exhibition title references "Kūha'imoana," a chant describing the migration of shark gods from Kahiki (ancestral homeland) to Hawai'i. *Ea Mai 'Eiwa* reflects the strength, resilience, and environmental knowledge embodied in these ancestral stories.

Bringing together new and existing works alongside botanical specimens and cultural treasures from Bishop Museum's collections, the exhibition weaves themes of migration, community resilience, and environmental stewardship — offering insight and inspiration for today.

Ea Mai 'Eiwa: Patterns of Practice is a group exhibition; in addition to the three artists, the show was co-curated by Sarah Kuaiwa, Ph.D., Bishop Museum curator for Hawai'i and Pacific Cultural Resources, and co-curator Kumu hula Kau'i Kanaka'ole, and designed by DeAnne Kennedy, Bishop Museum exhibit designer.

“The artists interpret the meaning of ‘Ea Mai ‘Eiwa’ as ‘structures of nine,’” shares Kuaiwa. “It refers to the nine sharks described in ‘Kūha‘imoana.’ The nine sharks can be interpreted as nine waves of people migrating to and settling in Hawai‘i from their homeland, Kahiki.”

“‘Patterns of Practice’ was suggested by Sig Zane as a way of representing how the artists hone their skills,” Kuaiwa adds. “Through repetition, deep study, and consistent practice, mastery is achieved. As practioners of hula, the artists have continued to deepen their understanding of the natural and spiritual world, which has in turn inspired their art practices. They aim to produce art in various visual media not only to educate, but to also be aesthetically celebrated and enjoyed.”

“‘Kūha‘imoana,’ for me, has many layers to it,” said Kūha‘o‘īmaikalani Zane. “On a first take, it’s a migratory chant that compares migrations to waves of ocean-navigating sharks. That metaphor sets out the tone of connectivity between our natural environment and the beings that inhabit it.”

“‘Kūha‘imoana’ is an example illustrating metaphorical depth within Hawaiian poetry,” said Sig Zane. “The importance of navigation surfaces in day-to-day cultural practices. This archaic chant reveals nuanced content, giving us a peek into hierarchy, dualities, and familial belief systems.”

Items from the Museum’s collection featured in the exhibition include:

- Botanical specimens from various locations across Hawai‘i Island, chosen to represent their hula ahu (altar) and the sources of inspiration that the artists frequently draw from
- Uniquely colored kūpe‘e (sea snails) shells made into adornments, as well as adornments made to look like kūpe‘e shells
- Kapa (barkcloth) made from the 19th century with dynamic designs
- ‘Awa (kava, *Piper methysticum*) cups and kānoa (kava bowl) associated with the ali‘i

“This exhibition demonstrates that the gap between historic collections and contemporary art is actually a lot smaller than people think,” said Kuaiwa. “Audiences will see how the artists use the same materials as pieces in Bishop Museum collections but in different forms. The resonance between the artist’s work with mea kupuna (ancestors) is what makes *Ea Mai ‘Eiwa* a uniquely Bishop Museum exhibition.”

“*Ea Mai ‘Eiwa: Patterns of Practice* reflects Aunty Nālani’s philosophy of practice,” said Kau‘i Kanaka‘ole. “She intentionally taught hula with depth of language, craft, and art form to encompass a full-on lifestyle commitment. This was her everyday; the way she learned, grew, and inspired.”

“I would love for guests to leave (the exhibition) with a mixture of awe, appreciation, and curiosity,” Kanaka‘ole shares. “You don’t have to understand it all to enjoy it all, just appreciate being let in to an artist’s intimate story and creative process and hopefully, it will pique curiosity into people’s own stories, history, and culture.”

Highlights of the *Ea Mai ‘Eiwa: Patterns of Practice* exhibition include:

- Nālani Kanaka‘ole’s kite installation, *Kūha‘imoana*, her last large-scale installation before her passing
- Archival hula ‘a‘ahu (hula garments) and implements designed by Nālani Kanaka‘ole and made by students of Hālau o Kekuhi
- New and archival sketches and rubylith artworks by Sig Zane from 1990 to present
- A collection of family photos from the Kanaka‘ole ‘Ohana
- Memorabilia and ephemera from the theatrical performance, “Holo Mai Pele” (1995-2000)

Ea Mai ‘Eiwa: Patterns of Practice will be presented in both Hawaiian and English, and will be on view

until Sept. 20, 2026. For more information, please visit BishopMuseum.org/Eiwa.

Invitation for News Media

- Exclusive Media Preview of *Ea Mai 'Eiwa: Patterns of Practice*
- Thursday, April 16, 2026 | 1-4 p.m. HST | J. M. Long Gallery in the Hawaiian Hall Complex
- The co-curators, artists, and exhibit designer will be available for interviews
- Please RSVP with Krislyn Hashimoto via the information above

Bishop Museum extends its appreciation to the following sponsors for their generous support of this exhibition: Hawaiian Airlines, First Hawaiian Bank, Matson, Mellon Foundation, Servco Pacific Inc., Min Plastics, OUTRIGGER Resorts & Hotels, Shibby Stylee.

###

About Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum, the State of Hawai'i Museum of Natural and Cultural History:

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 an educational center for the community and is widely regarded as the world's premier institution for Hawaiian and Pacific content.

Bishop Museum's vast collections of more than 25 million objects and specimens represent nine disciplines and include more than 22 million biological specimens, over 2 million cultural objects, 115,000 historical publications, and 1 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 proudly serves more than 200,000 visitors each year, including 20,000 children on school visits. Guests are encouraged to pre-plan their trip to #HawaiisMuseum with its [free digital guide](#), available through Bloomberg Connects.

To learn more about the Museum's research, collections, exhibits, and programs, visit BishopMuseum.org, follow @BishopMuseum on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#), visit Bishop Museum's [YouTube](#) channel, or call (808) 847-3511. Bishop Museum is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

Bishop Museum is proud to be an Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action Employer, and welcomes applicants from the military, veterans, and those with disabilities. Learn about careers at Bishop Museum at BishopMuseum.org/Careers and on its [LinkedIn](#) page.

[Bishop Museum Press](#) is Hawai'i's oldest book publisher and one of the first scholarly publishers in the Western Hemisphere, and has published over 1,200 titles and distributed over 1 million books in 72 countries worldwide. Bishop Museum hosts a restaurant and gift shop on campus, [Tūtū's Place by Highway Inn](#) and [Shop Pacifica by Nā Mea Hawai'i](#).

Past news releases can be viewed and downloaded at BishopMuseum.org/NewsRoom.