



BISHOP MUSEUM

July 16, 2019

MEDIA CONTACTS:

Stryker Weiner & Yokota Public Relations, Inc.
Lance Aquino
Ph.: (808) 398-0657
lance@strykerweiner.com

Kaula Piko: The Source of Strings

New exhibit explores the global influence and contributions of Hawai'i's musicians

Honolulu, Hawai'i – Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum, in partnership with Kealakai Center for Pacific Strings, presents its newest original exhibit, *Kaula Piko: The Source of Strings*, which will explore the lineage of Hawai'i's lasting contributions to world music. The pioneering influence of Hawaiian musicians in both performance styles and the actual design and construction of instruments is of international significance, yet little known. Through a collection of historical photos, rare instruments, musical artifacts and compelling multimedia storytelling, the exhibit will unveil how musicians, composers, and artisans from Hawai'i influenced the design of stringed instruments and shaped the soundscape of today's popular music. The exhibit will be on display from July 18, 2020 – Jan. 31, 2021 in the J.M. Long Gallery.

Kaula Piko will display rare and historical instruments associated with music's most influential figures from Hawai'i and beyond, ranging from King David Kalākaua to Mekia Kealakai to Johnny Cash. Numerous archival photos and illustrations from Bishop Museum's collections will be on display, in addition to objects from private collectors. A large, eye-catching screen on one wall of the Long Gallery will show film clips of performers along with interviews and musical instruction clips; and a concise, large-format timeline will illustrate the progression of Hawaiian music's international spread. Families will even be able to try their hand at lap steel guitar at an interactive station.

At the heart of the exhibit are astonishing yet seldom-told stories of the ingenuity and creativity of Hawaiian musicians and their lasting influence on popular music as we know it today. One such example is that of the electric guitar, which may not have ever come into existence if it weren't for the pioneering young Hawaiian, Joseph Kekuku. In the 1890s, Kekuku invented what became known as the steel guitar. The steel guitar – along with the 'ukulele – would eventually sweep the United States and the world in popularity. The political turmoil of Hawai'i in the 1890s, when the Kingdom was overthrown and Hawai'i was eventually made a Territory of the United States, was the backdrop for an extremely influential group of Hawaiian musicians and singers who performed in the United States and

internationally. Some of these men and women achieved huge popularity, appearing in live performances and traveling tent shows, and on radio broadcasts, Hollywood movies, and recordings. Kekuku's acoustic steel guitar remained central to the sound of Hawaiian music, and was eventually electrified in the late 1920s to amplify its sound. As popular as this invention was, its more long-term effect was to lead to the development of the modern electric guitar in the 1930s. The electric guitar skyrocketed in popularity from the 1950s and onwards with the growth of rock music, and has remained the most well-known element of American popular music heard all over the globe. All this can be traced back to the invention of Kekuku's steel guitar.

Kaula Piko: The Source of Strings was created in partnership with Kealakai Center for Pacific Strings. For more information about the exhibit, or to purchase an advance admission ticket to the museum, visit www.BishopMuseum.org.

###

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.

Special Offer: Keiki admission is free for Hawaii residents and military families through July 31, 2020.

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

\$5 per car per visit; free for members with sticker.

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 Hawaiian plates, poke bowls, sandwiches, and snacks from 10:00 a.m.–3:30 p.m. daily. 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 an educational center for the community and 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 proudly 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.