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Kûkulu Kauhale o Limaloa:  
A Kanaka Maoli Culture Based Approach  
To Education Through Visual Studies

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A thesis submitted in fulfillment of the requirements of the Degree of  
Doctor of Education

Massey University  
College of Education

2006

## Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my children  
John Kaleimakali'i Thornton Clark and  
Ruby Kalâhikiola Amelia Clark

## Acknowledgements

*‘A‘ohe pilo uku*

*Even a small gift is appreciated*

This thesis contributes to the collective efforts of many individuals and groups who have long been engaged in the struggle to revive the form and function of Kanaka Maoli visual culture within the political and social context of Hawaii’s occupied and colonized space. This effort, however small, joins with other movements both indigenous and non indigenous alike that strive to counter oppression, colonization and marginalization of indigenous culture, knowledge and society throughout the Pacific and the world.

In Hawaii, the struggle to introduce and engage Kanaka Maoli visual culture and image making within an educational context has long been led by artists Imaikalani Kalahahele, Kauka DeSilva, Hali’imaile Andrade, April Hokulani Drexel, Kapulani Landgraf, Chuck Souza, Meleana Aluli Meyer, Ka’ili Chun, Kawai A’ona-Ueoka, Carl Ka’aila’au Pao, Alike McNicol and others. I wish to acknowledge their vital contribution over many years to the ongoing effort to create space for Kanaka Maoli Visual Culture Studies within the academic settings in Hawaii. Their struggles, undertaken against great odds, unacknowledged and at great personal and professional risk, have contributed to the incremental advancement of Kanaka Maoli contemporary culture through the Arts. To them I extend my sincerest appreciation and admiration for their efforts as well as my deep thanks for their friendship and support through the work of this research.

The journey of this thesis began well before the formalized process of EdD study. I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank those individuals from Hawai`i and beyond who encouraged and supported my effort to engage and apply Kanaka Maoli cultural perspectives and values in education by way of visual image making. From the University of Hawaii, Dr. Charles Araki, former Dean of the College of Education, who long encouraged my pursuit of doctoral study in Education, retired Professor Clemente Lagundimao from the Department of Art, whose challenges through the discipline of Design education and research continue to resonate in my teaching practice today, Dr. Margie Maaka from the College of Education at the University of Hawaii, who facilitated valuable opportunities for research, conference presentations, publication and applied practice in Kanaka Maoli teacher education approaches through visual culture and image studies, Dr. David Kekaulike Sing from the University of Hawaii at Hilo for the years of his guidance and encouragement with my research interests in Kanaka Maoli education and to Dr. Karen Kosasa from the Department of American Studies with whom I have long shared a common vision for Art, Visual Culture and Education in Hawaii. To my students in EDCS 640, who all agreed to participate in this study, my sincere thanks to all of you for your willingness to support my research project.

I have been fortunate through the years of my academic journey to have been given support, direction and encouragement from a number of prominent indigenous artists and educational researchers from around the world. To them I would like to extend my

thanks and appreciation. From the University of New Mexico, Professor Gregory Cajete, Professors Graham Hingangaroa and Linda Tuhiwai Smith from the University of Auckland and Dr. Norman Sheehan from the University of Queensland. Maori artist/educators Cliff Whiting, Fred Graham, Sandy Adsett, Alan Wihongi, Manos and Alex Nathan, Colleen Urlich, Bob and Huia Jahnke, Kura Te Waru Rewiri, Ngatai Taepa, Safron Te Ratana, Rachel Rakena, Darcy and Gary Nicolas, Brett Graham, and Selwyn Muru, Pacific Island Artist/Educators Fatu Feu'u, and John Pule.

I would like to acknowledge my colleagues from the College of Education at Massey University and in particular to Pro Vice Chancellor Dr. James Chapman for his encouragement and generous support of my study. My thanks also to Professors Pat Nolan and John O'Neil for their time and insight as well as to my colleagues from the Department of Art and Language Education and Te Uru Maraurau, the School of Maori and Multicultural Education, who patiently abided and supported my research and writing work. A special acknowledgement to the members of my Ed.D cohort who contributed so much to the positive experience that has been my doctoral study at Massey University. To Jill Brandon, my former HOD I extend my heartfelt thanks and appreciation. It was for Jill's broad vision for Art Education in New Zealand that I chose to join the faculty at Massey University and it was for her encouragement and nurturing leadership approach that I was able to maintain the pace and focus of my research effort to complete this thesis. To Gary Whiting, my thanks for his friendship, support and willingness to serve as a sounding board for my ideas about visual culture studies and Pacific Design Education through this study. A special acknowledgement for the encouragement and

mentorship I received from the late Dr. Don Miller. I deeply regret that he will not read the word of this thesis which he so patiently guided my writing through. What a gift it was to have known this true master teacher.

The task of doctoral supervision is both complex and demanding under the best of circumstances. In the case of this study, both of my supervisors were further challenged by the circumstance of my background as an international student, an indigenous visual artist and a faculty of education colleague. My supervisors performed this difficult task to high standard; offering me their insight, experience, organizational clarity, patience and humour for which I am most grateful. My gratitude to Professor Arohia Durie who provided me with the crucial indigenous supervision, mentorship and Polynesian cultural perspective that sustained and buttressed the foundation of this study. My learning sessions with Professor Durie never failed to resonate with the values, approaches and perspectives of my own family and ancestral culture of Hawaii. To Dr. Ruth Kane, a special thanks for her encouragement, critical review and analysis of my writing and professional mentorship particularly through my early phases of my EdD study.

To my extended family in New Zealand; Jean Clarkson, Arthur Baysting, Rosie and James Baysting, B.J. and Awei Ewen, the Drinnan Whanau and John and Allison Brebner; my Aloha for the kindness, generosity, care and love that they have gifted to my family and I through the time of our lives in New Zealand.

To my wife Sue, artist, hard working colleague and loving partner, my deepest thanks for your patience, direction, and support through one of the most wondrous and challenging period of my life. To my children, John Kaleimakali`i Thornton Clark and Ruby Kalâhikiola Amelia Clark, my thanks for your love, patience and smiling faces that greet me at the end of each day.

This is an acknowledgement to all of my family in Hawai`i; especially my Grandfather Eric Keawepo`o`ole Vannatta, Brother John Kanaloa and sister-in-law Sherrie Clark, Aunt Anna Catherine Vannatta, and Cousins Al Pi`ikea Miyamoto, Tim Kalaeone Clark, Lilikalani Paoa and Robert Clarke Paoa, your love has sustained my connection to Hawai`i through my life in New Zealand and the undertaking of this study.

Finally, to Fern Iwalani and Herman Pi`ikea Clark; my mother and late father, thank you for your love, encouragement, guidance and never ending support. This thesis, a reflection of our family kuleana, is for you both.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Dedication .....	ii
Acknowledgements.....	iii
Table of Contents.....	viii
Figures.....	xi
Abstract.....	xii
Prologue.....	xiv-lvii
Chapter 1	
Introduction.....	1-22
History.....	7
A Kanaka Maoli Theoretical Framework for Education .....	11
Culture and Curriculum Design.....	14
Thesis Objective.....	16
Overview of the Thesis .....	17
Chapter 2	
Review of Literature .....	23-52
A History of Art Education:	
Major themes which have defined conventional practice.....	25
Multicultural Art Education.....	34
Critical Theory and Art Education.....	36
Critical Art Pedagogy, Art and Indigenous Education .....	38
Chapter 3	
Methodology.....	53-90
Theoretical Foundation: Ke Kauhale o Limaloa.....	53
Kahua .....	54
Pou .....	55
Pouhana.....	56
Kaupoku.....	58
Teaching Approach.....	61
The Setting.....	62
The Students.....	62
Course Organization .....	64
Project Brief.....	67
Image Development.....	72
Workbook Journal.....	73
Pīkai .....	74
Pule .....	76
Slow Observational Drawing.....	77

'Talk Story' .....	80
Food and Communal Eating .....	82
Design of the Class	
Research Design.....	83
Category Construction .....	88
Internal Validity .....	89
Chapter 4	
Profiles .....	91-151
`Ekahi .....	92
Image Making .....	97
Kauhale Analysis .....	99
`Elua .....	101
Image Making .....	107
Kauhale Analysis .....	108
`Ekolu .....	109
Image Making .....	114
Kauhale Analysis .....	116
`Eha .....	117
Image Making .....	132
Kauhale Analysis .....	134
`Elima .....	136
Image Making .....	145
`Eono .....	146
Image Making .....	150
Kauhale Analysis .....	151
Chapter 5	
Findings.....	152-170
Finding One:	
An Appreciation for Kanaka Maoli Culture Based Teaching .....	153
Finding Two:	
Recognition of the role of Genealogy in Kanaka Maoli Education ..	156
Finding Three:	
An Awareness of Art Education's Cultural Assimilist Aim .....	160
Finding Four:	
Distinguishing Kanaka Maoli Visual Culture from 'Art' .....	165
Finding Summary.....	169
Chapter 6	
Discussion .....	171-192
Genealogy .....	177
Kanaka Maoli Visual Culture .....	183
Limaloa, Waili'ulâ and the Kauhale Theory.....	190

Chapter 7  
Implications..... 193-204  
    Kanaka Maoli Education.....194  
    Mainstream Education .....198  
    Teacher Education .....201  
  
Epilogue ..... 205-207  
Appendices.....208-226  
    Appendix A: Course Outline ..... 208-212  
    Appendix B: Sample Student Journal..... 213-216  
    Appendix C: Personal Teaching Journal..... 217-226  
  
Bibliography ..... 227-236

## Figures

The images used within this thesis constitute part of the text. They are a visually explanative feature of the thesis which holds an equal standing to the information contained within the written text. The images presented communicate insights which are inextricably related to the meanings within the text therefore the two elements, text and image, are intended to be complimentary in the communication of information to the reader. For this reason the images within this thesis are not listed and numbered as attachments to the thesis text.

## Abstract

### Kūkulu Kauhale o Limaloa: A Kanaka Maoli Approach to Education Through Visual Studies

Herman Pi`ikea Clark Jr.

This thesis reports on the outcome of a Kanaka Maoli culture based teacher education class initiated as a research project through the University of Hawaii in the summer of 2004. With the aim to identify and engage pedagogical and curricular approaches derived from the cultural perspectives, values and aspirations of Kanaka Maoli people, this experimental class utilized image making as the principle basis for investigation and the representation of knowledge from a Kanaka Maoli perspective.

This research project set out to actively engage Kanaka Maoli approaches to teaching and knowledge construction so as to describe a viable alternative to National and State mandated education practices in Art Education which have historically overlooked and marginalized indigenous knowledge through the school curriculum in Hawai`i. (Benham & Heck, 1998) Limaloa's Kauhale, an educational model grounded in a Kanaka Maoli cultural metaphor, was developed and applied through this research project as a way of offering students the chance to learn within an educational setting where Kanaka Maoli knowledge, ways of knowing and ways of expressing that knowledge was prioritized as the principle medium of investigation.

The results of student work - images and written journal responses – were examined as a part of this research to identify the principle effects and understandings students identified as the effect of working through the Kanaka Maoli educational setting. The complete work of this thesis identifies from the experiences of students working through the Kauhale Metaphor a set of learning outcomes that arise out of a Kanaka Maoli culture based approach for education through image making.

## Prologue

*I ulu no ka lâlâ I ke kumu  
The branches grow because of the trunk*

*Eia au `O Pi`ikea,*

*Mai na Pua `ali`i a Hawai`i Nui Kua Uli,*

*Mai loko mai o Na Ali`i`aimoku o Maui Nui A Kama*

*Mai ka Pûhaka o Kaulaheanuiokamoku*

*Ka Niaupio o Kekaulike me Kekuiapoiwa*

*Mai Keawepoepoe me Kanoena*

*Hânau ka Mahoe ura o Kame`eiaumoku me Kamanawa,*

*`O Kame`eiamoku ka mea i loaai ka Lehua kea o Ka`ûpûlehu,*

*Kû mai o Kepo`okalani, noho me Alapa`i, hânau o Kapelakapuokaka`e,*

*Kapelakapuokaka`e noho me Kaua â Kûkapu, hânau o Kamakea,*

*Kamakea noho me Kaleimakali`i, hânau o Ka`ainahunali`ili`i,*

*Kû mai o Kamakaopiopio a Kaleimakali`i, noho me Paoa,*

*Paoa mai Kâlia mai, mai Kahiki mai*

*Mai te Hauraki mai, Mai Te Pito o Te Henua Mai,*

*Mai Taptapuatea mai,*

*Kû mai ka `umi kumamamalu, te ura, `O Aulani ke keikamahine*

*Noho `o Aulani me Kahikiena – Hâ`ena ka lani e*

*Hânau o Kalaeone, o Kamakaopiopio, o Pi`ikea Makua,*

*Pi`ikea Makua noho me Iwalani a Keawepo`o`ole*

*A`u ke kupu nei.*

*Kû mâkou iho nei,*

*I mua nei, I hope nei.*

For as long as I can remember, my genealogy and family history have played a central role in the shaping of my identity. As a Kanaka Maoli, an indigenous Hawaiian, genealogical histories were customarily recorded within the lines of Ko`ihonua or genealogical orations. Within the complex compositions of Ko`ihonua, an individual was connected to a family heritage which identified them with lands and communities.

The Ko`ihonua, or genealogy chant that I began this thesis locates me within the ancient bloodlines of the islands of Maui and Hawaii. My name, Pi`ikea, a name which my father and I share, reveals the specific line of genealogical descent to which we belong. Pi`ikea was the daughter of Pi`ilani, an ancient paramount chief of Maui for which that island continues to be remembered. In her time, Pi`ikea was aligned in marriage to Umi, the paramount chief of the island of Hawaii, as a way of easing generations of warfare between these traditionally adversarial island kingdoms. My Ko`ihonua recounts the names and varied achievements of my ancestors of the land; navigators, warriors, priests and chiefs, who have sustained our family and contributed the course of Hawaii's social and political history through time.

It was my father who first introduced me to my family genealogy as an eleven year old. Although he held a good amount of information about our history, my father rarely spoke of it acknowledging to others in our family that honored role. It was for this reason that I thought it unusual that my father suddenly began to speak to me about our family history. One evening as we drove along the Pali Highway on our way to our home in Nu`uanu Valley, my father began to tell me about the `Âlapa, a division of warriors who served in

the army of Hawaii in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The `Ālapa were an unusual development in the culture that emerged during the turbulent centuries of war in Hawaii's history. Through this period, the armies of rival kingdoms across the archipelago were made up of conscripted young men who were organized and lead by fighting chiefs. The kingdom of the island of Hawaii developed a special division within its army called the `Ālapa which was made up exclusively of chiefs. By virtue of their athleticism, prowess in warfare, cultivated intellect and skills for leadership, the `Ālapa were a formidable military asset used to overpower and decimate the front lines of armies who opposed the kingdom of Hawaii. And so it was in 1795 at the Battle of Nu`uanu, among the last of the large scale land battles to be fought in Hawaii, that the `Ālapa were unleashed by Kamehameha to terrible effect against the army of his rival Kalanikupule (Kamakau, 1992). As we drove along the highway through the length of Nu`uanu valley, my father described the events of the battle fought over two centuries ago in vivid detail as though it were unfolding in front of our car that very day. He recalled the action of the `Ālapa with great pride noting their stalwart contribution to victory for Kamehameha and the Kingdom of Hawaii. My father's story ended as our car neared the driveway to our home. Quiet and seemingly lost in thought, my father walked ahead of me to the door of our house and the warm aroma of an evening meal that emanated from just behind it. Just before opening the door, he turned to me and said 'your ancestors served within the ranks of the `Ālapa. Now, knowing that, what contribution will you make to our family and people in your time?' With that said, he opened the door to our home to join my mother and younger brother at the dinner table. Until his death, nearly twenty years later, my father never again spoke to me about the `Ālapa nor the challenge that he put before me that evening.

In retrospect my father's story of the `Ālapa remains one of his most valuable legacies to me as it inspired a lifelong effort to gain a better understanding of my family history and myself in the process. In undertaking to learn the stories and knowledge contained within my genealogy, I have come to recognize a consistent theme which appears across the generations and which marks a special character within my family. That theme has to do with the concept of 'making holes' or creating space through adversity for the betterment of family and people. Over the course of a thousand years of genealogical history that I have been privileged to learn, I have come to realize in the actions and values of family members across generations, a consistent intention to create space through which to advance the interests of both family and people.

There have been several examples from my genealogy of ancestors whose lives exemplified our family characteristic of making space. The first comes from the story of our ancient ancestor Paoa Makua, a priest and navigator from Tahiti who fled a rival's persecution in his homeland to establish his family on the island of Hawaii in the 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> century. Leaving all that was known, secure and certain in his world, Paoa drew upon his knowledge of navigation to sail his canoe across the unfamiliar expanse of the North Pacific. Braving storms, powerful ocean currents as well as self doubt and a fear of the unknown, Paoa found Hawaii establishing a safe home for his family in Hilo. By virtue of the depth of his way finding knowledge, Paoa Makua made space across the Pacific Ocean which enabled the survival and continuation of his family in Hawaii.

Through the generations of my family following Paoa Makua, there have been numerous stories of chiefs who made space for their king and people through their loyal service. Whether through battle, political maneuver or the prudent management of natural and human resources, my ancestors worked to ensure the survival and continuity of their kingdom, their family and the people they were responsible to.

Two such chiefs from my family line, though having lived in different centuries, each made space for their chief and people through dedicated service. Ho'olae Makua, the 16<sup>th</sup> century chief of Kauiki fortress in Hana, Maui, was a loyal supporter of Lono A Pi'ilani, the heir to the kingdom of Maui from his father Pi'ilani. A warrior noted for his great strength and benevolent leadership, Ho'olae defended his king against rebellion by Kiha, Lono's ambitious younger brother. Though Kiha had gained the powerful support of rival kingdoms in his rebellion, Ho'olae remained steadfast in his support of Lono despite standing on the losing side of the war. Following a protracted battle, Ho'olae Makua was at last overpowered and killed by rebel forces. Ho'olae's hands, a symbol of his great physical strength and warrior expertise, were removed from his body and given to Kiha as a trophy confirming his victory and the end of his brother's loyalist support. As chief of Hana, Ho'olae managed for the productivity of the land and the peaceful livelihood of the people of the region. In addition to the space that he created in providing to Hana and the Kingdom of Maui under Lono a sustained a balanced continuity, Ho'olae Makua leaves the example of a warrior ethic for fierce loyalty to family, chief and kingdom.

In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Kame`eiamoku, one of the sacred twin sons of King Kekaulike of Maui, served as chief of the district of Ka`ûpûlehu in Kona. Kame`eiamoku, along with the number of high ranking chiefs of the Kona coast of Hawaii, supported his nephew Kamehameha in his ascendancy to become the ruler over all the rival kingdoms of Hawaii. When an American merchant ship, associated with an earlier massacre of over one hundred native residents of a coastal village on Maui, anchored off of Ka`ûpûlehu to secure provisions, Kame`eiamoku and his warriors captured the ship and killed all aboard except for a single sailor. The merchant ship along with its surviving crew member was seized and placed under the control of Kame`eiamoku. Obtaining the skills necessary to sail the ship and fire its guns, Kame`eiamoku offered the American vessel – along with a regiment of warriors, to his nephew Kamehameha to use in his campaigns against rival kingdoms. Kame`eiamoku's gift of the captured American ship, along with his continued allegiance to his nephew, shifted the balance of military power during the wars of the late 1700's enabling Kamehameha to become the dominant power over all of the Hawaii kingdoms. In supporting Kamehameha, Kame`eiamoku made space to preserve the political interests of his family line within the new society that emerged under the Kingdom of Hawaii.

Following the establishment of the Kingdom of Hawaii in 1810, the ancient warrior traditions became less relevant to the needs of a changing Kanaka Maoli society. Warfare, for centuries a defining characteristic of Kanaka Maoli culture, ended with the creation of the monarchy of the Kamehameha dynasty. By the latter part of the 1800's, no longer in need of standing armies to defend or expand Kingdom territory, the

monarchy of Hawaii had need only to employ a police force to insure civil safety and a regiment of palace guards to protect the residence of the King. Interestingly enough, it was my ancestor Colonel Sam Nowlien who served as the commander of the Iolani Palace guard under the rule of Queen Lili`uokalani. It was Colonel Sam Nowlien who reluctantly surrendered the Kingdom's military force to the newly formed Republic of Hawaii following the illegal overthrow of the monarchy and Queen. A year after the overthrow, Colonel Sam Nowlien smuggled guns into Hawaii from San Francisco and lead a failed coup to restore the Queen and legitimate government in Hawaii. My ancestor, along with a number of rebel leaders and the Queen were tried and imprisoned for treason by the government of the Republic of Hawaii. Though failing in his attempt, my ancestor Sam Nowlien stands as a historical example of the extent of native resistance to white supremacy and American colonization in Hawaii in the 1890's.

By virtue of this social and cultural shift, the male descendants of chiefly families in Hawaii – traditionally comprising the core of the warrior class – were compelled through this period to find other ways through which to express the aggression and competitive spirit of chiefs and warriors which their culture traditionally defined. With the advent of European and American education and schools in Hawaii came the introduction of western or American sports as part of the modern school curriculum. Kanaka Maoli were quick to learn and engage these new sports as athletic pursuit was a customary feature in the lives of Kanaka Maoli children and young adolescence. Western style athletics provided a medium through which Kanaka Maoli of this period could harness aspects of their athletic or physical character which would have been traditionally applied

to the battlefield. My family, like many Kanaka Maoli families, participated and excelled in western style sport of all types.

Competition through the sport of swimming for example came naturally for Kanaka Maoli whose traditional livelihood and physical enjoyment centered in and on the ocean. My grandmother's first cousin was the famed waterman Duke Paoa Kahanamoku. Duke was Hawaii's first Olympian who earned gold medal honors in swimming at the Stockholm, Antwerp and Paris Olympics. In 1932, at forty two and the end of his competitive career, Duke was part of the U.S. Water Polo team at the Los Angeles Olympic Games. Several of Duke's brothers and generations of athletes from Hawaii since have competed internationally in the sport of swimming and other swimming related events.

It was the sport of Gridiron or American Football that I believe enabled Kanaka Maoli men the greatest opportunity to transcend time and connect with the warrior ethic of their ancestral culture. Football is a physically combative sport which resonates with the violence of ancient battlefields. Like warriors of the past, Football players are selected to the game for their speed, strength, dexterity and willingness to express intense physical aggression against an opponent. By virtue of their general physical attributes and athleticism, Kanaka Maoli, like other Polynesians, are well suited to the requirements of the game of Football.

My grandfather was a noted football player in Hawaii during the years preceding the Second World War. The 1918 Football team at Kamehameha School, a team which my grandfather captained, never lost a contest nor were they ever scored upon. Following his graduation from Kamehameha, my grandfather went on to play the game as a semi professional in a local Hawaii league. Because of his stalwart play, my grandfather earned numerous honors, including an invitation to play in the East West Shriner's Game in California; a first for a player from Hawaii. The East West Shriner's game remains today a prestigious acknowledgment of player excellence in the sport of American Football. Known for his tough play, my grandfather was respected also as a demanding coach who was able to motivate and inspire the best talents and abilities from his players. My father and my uncle James Kalaeone were my grandfather's prodigies. Each were able to complete their college education through athletic scholarships and each successfully pursued professional careers in the U.S. National Football League before returning home to Hawaii. My grandfather, father and uncle were all inducted into the State of Hawaii's Sports Hall of Fame; a sport organization which recognizes Hawaii's most accomplished and revered athletes.

My grandfather, father, and uncle played the sport of American Football played in positions along the front line. In this role, a front line player's only purpose is to attack the defensive formations of an opposing team in order to make holes or space through it. In performing this task, a frontline player enables his team's ball carrier to advance through the created space in order to gain territory and score points. If a lineman is able

to create enough space through the opposition formation, his team will succeed in winning the game. If he fails in this task his team will likewise fail.

Like my father, uncle and grandfather and every member of my family who played the sport of American Football, I played on the front line. While attaining a measure of success as a player, I did not reach the level of accomplishment as a sportsman that my elders did. My challenges lay in other arenas and my father, who understood my nature, released me of any obligation to follow the family tradition to become a Football player allowing me to decide the medium through which my contribution to family and people would be made.

In playing the game of Football as a front line player however, I came to a tangible understanding of the space making ethic that my family for generations have endeavored toward. My life has been shaped and directed by the stories of these ancestors. The following section, the story of my own life, is intended to explain the events, experiences and circumstances that has lead me to this study and the decisions and conclusions made therein.

### *Eia au o Pi`ikea*

I was born in Honolulu, Hawaii in February of 1960. My parents were then living on the island of Moloka`i at the time and had traveled to Honolulu for my birth. Following his retirement from a career as a professional football player, my father worked as a Harbor agent on the island of Moloka`i for Young Brothers, an inter island shipping company in

Hawaii. My mother, who completed a B.S. in Nursing from the University of Hawaii, worked as a Public Health Nurse for the State of Hawaii Department of Health. Despite their very busy work schedules, my parents each contributed to creating a stable and happy environment in our home. During the first few years of my life, my mother took time away from her career to focus on my upbringing. As much as I identified with the strength and athleticism of my father, it was my mother's daily nurturing and influence that shaped much of my personality and outlook as a child.

As a practice within the Kanaka Maoli tradition, first born children were often raised by elders who possessed knowledge that was important to a family heritage. In this way, family knowledge was preserved and passed on to future generations. It must be added that knowledge within a Kanaka Maoli cultural context, was viewed not as a set of skills and understandings that anyone had a right of access to as in the western cultural context. Quite to the contrary, knowledge was held by an elder expert and given to those individuals who possessed the temperament and capacity to ensure its care and proper application. That practice of 'giving' knowledge would have taken place through a holistic process of teaching that would have occurred over the course of a lifetime (Malo, 1951; Pukui, Haertig, & Lee, 1972). First born children were usually looked upon by elders in a family to care for genealogical knowledge as well as other skills and understandings that were vital to the family. I remember that my mother and I would often visit and stay for periods of time with my mother's grandmother Anna Kanaloa Fern at her home in Ka`a`awa, O`ahu. My great grandmother, born in the late 1800's as a citizen of the Kingdom of Hawaii, lived much of her life in the traditional Kanaka Maoli

way. Although witness to incredible changes in society brought about by advances in technology, two world wars and the Americanization of Hawaii, my great grandmother remained steadfast in her quiet adherence to Kanaka Maoli culture and values.

### *Ka`a`awa*

In the valley of Ka`a`awa, my great grandmother was called 'Kanaloa,' the name of one of the four principle Akua or god ancestors in the Polynesian pantheon. Outside the valley, she went by another name. According to tradition, Kanaloa commanded the ocean realm and together with Kane, the creator of the land, sky and forest, opened fresh water springs across the islands of Hawaii. The fact that my great grandmother was referred to as Kanaloa exclusively within the valley of Ka`a`awa suggests that her family carried a chiefly status within the region. My great grandmother married twice in her life and both of her husbands carried the name Kanaloa as well.

Each morning, Honey (the name that my family would call my great grandmother) would get up before the dawn to begin the work of the day. I would often wake up to the sound of her raking leaves from the big Kamani tree in her yard. If the ocean tide was low, my great grandmother would walk along the offshore reef gathering *limu* (edible seaweed) and other ocean delicacies for our evening meal.

My great grandmother lived at Makahonu, the name of her house which was located across the road from the beach at Lae o Ka Oi'o point, a site named for the prized Oi'o fish that frequented the area. Makahonu – the eye of the turtle - was named for a coral

outcrop that could be seen in the ocean offshore that looked like a giant sea turtle.

Honey's family had lived in Ka`a`awa for generations, managing together much of the resources of the land and ocean. Over the years however, land in the valley was gradually 'lost' or sold away to foreign settlers. By the time that I was born, our family had but a few acres in the Valley upon which to live. In the afternoon, after the day's chores were done, Honey would sit under the shade of the plumeria tree in her yard with my mother teaching her how to clean limu or salt he'e for drying. Bored and with nothing more to do, I would sometimes manage the patience to sit long enough to watch them work. It was then that Honey would talk to my mother and me about our family and her life as a young person growing up in the Kingdom of Hawaii. I used to wonder who the Queen was in Honey's stories and where the Kingdom she was talking about had gone. On those afternoons, U.S. Marine Helicopters from the Kaneohe Marine Corp Station would often fly across the valley at Ka`a`awa on training missions for the war in Viet Nam. Like all boys of my age, I was fascinated by helicopters and airplanes which seemed far more interesting than listening to my mother and great grandmother talking over a bucket full of limu. As I excitedly waved at the soldiers in the helicopters flying by, I remember feeling my great grandmother gently tugging the back of my tee shirt, a subtle reminder never to forget that I was first and always a Kanaka Maoli. It was the U.S. Marines in 1893 that deployed an armed battalion in front of Iolani Palace and throughout Honolulu in support the illegal overthrow of the Kingdom of Hawaii. My great grandmother was a girl of 12 at the time yet I think the painful memory of the loss of her Queen and country was recalled each time a Marine helicopter flew over Ka`a`awa.

Honey's elder brother, Uncle Eddie Williams, lived in a house at the other end of our family land. Uncle Eddie was a Kahuna or a traditional healer who would provide for the health and spiritual needs of people who came to call on his services. As a Kahuna, Uncle Eddie must have possessed effective knowledge for healing as he always had an array of patients willing to make the long drive from town to Ka`a`awa to seek his help. On those occasions that he had visitors, I would often sneak into Uncle Eddie's home to watch and listen as he administered prayers and medicines to patients. Uncle Eddie's healing sessions, which often lasted for hours, were conducted entirely in the Kanaka Maoli language. Likewise, whenever my uncle came to visit with Honey, their lively discussions were made entirely in the Kanaka Maoli language which I could not understand. It was this experience that helped me to understand the distinct differences in cultural realities between the elders in my family and the American cultural context in which I was being raised.

### *New Zealand*

In 1965, our family moved from Hawaii to Auckland, New Zealand where my father was promoted to a management position overseeing operations for Young Brother's in New Zealand and Australasia. Our family was provided a home which was located on Paritai drive in the district of Orakei, an affluent suburb of Auckland. Our home as I recall was open and comfortable with a good sized yard to play in and lovely views of the harbor.

Living in New Zealand was a very different experience for my family. Despite the change, our family adjusted to a social and cultural context that was very different than that of our home Hawaii. New Zealand of the 1960's seemed very much an English place to our family with protocols and mannerisms that contrasted the American values that we had come to understand having come from Hawaii. Despite the many contrasts, there were moments, when our family came into contact with Maori people, that New Zealand seemed strangely familiar. This feeling of connection to Maori and other Pacific people, made apparent through my family's life in New Zealand, would remain a consistent facet within our family character long after our return to Hawaii.

I went to school for the first time in New Zealand. As my mother was brought up a Catholic, my parents chose to enroll me at St. Joseph's Catholic School in Orakei. While most of the students came from the wealthy Pakeha families of the surrounding area, St. Joseph's enrolled a few Maori students as well. My memories of St. Joseph's are all happy ones. Beyond learning to read and write, I remember Marmite sandwiches, 'pieklets' and golden syrup, playing rugby, the tap of hailstones hitting the school roof and my teacher, Mother Damien. Mother Damien was a Catholic nun who had taught at the school for many years. Whether for my American accent or unreserved and constant questions about everything, Mother Damien took an interest in me, my learning and well being. I learned to love school much for the nurturing I received from Mother Damien my first teacher.

While I remember having many friends at St. Josephs, my closest friend was a Maori boy who also carried the name Herman. Herman Makoare lived near the Orakei Marae which is today still situated on the road leading to Bastion Point, a site which became a focal point for Maori land claims in the early 1980's. Though slight of build and possessed of a lively personality, Herman had a persistent cough and continual supply of hupe which ran from his nose. Though Herman and I were the only Polynesian students in our class, I recall that he did not always receive the same amount of attention and positive nurturing that I did from my teachers and classmates. I remember this experience now as I prepare my five year old son with the 'cultural capital' required to ensure success in school for him each day.

Whether because of our similar physical appearance, personality and cultural orientation or that we were just into the same things, Herman and I became fast friends and we were inseparable while students at St. Joseph's School. Not long after our return to Hawaii from New Zealand, my family and I received a letter from Mother Damien informing us that Herman had 'gone to the angels' after a period of illness. I remember the impact of Mother Damien's letter telling me of my friend's death as though it were yesterday. This was my first experience of death and the concept of mortality which unsettled me greatly. It seemed that the children in Herman's family carried a genetic predisposition to respiratory disease. The ever present cough and *hupe* under his nose hinted of the chest infection which eventually took Herman's life. That same affliction would take several more of Herman's younger siblings in the years to come. I cried for Herman's family when I learned of his death and wondered why the life of my dear friend was cut so short.

Through the years of my growing up, I never forgot Herman Makoare; his smiling face and *hupe* nose always at the back of my mind. In 1997, after 30 years, I completed a vow that I made to myself as a young boy to someday find Herman's grave. At the Ngati Whatua Urupa across the street from the beach at Mission Bay, I found Herman Makoare's grave along with those of several of his brother's and sisters. There I said my goodbye and let him know that I would always carry fond memories of him and our time together at St. Joseph's School at Orakei.

#### *Return to Hawaii*

Though raised within the foundation of their Kanaka Maoli heritage, my parents were also brought up to participate and compete within the American context of 20<sup>th</sup> century Hawaii as well. Overcoming both overt and covert examples of racism and anti native prejudice, my parents attained a level of success through their respective careers which afforded our family a comfortable middle class lifestyle.

My parents were both University graduates; my mother completed a Master's degree in Public Health and my father a B.A. in Education as well as an Executive Certification in Business Management from the Harvard Business School. My parents were each employed in professions that reflected their educational backgrounds and career aspirations. Invested in the economic and political system of Hawaii, my parents owned their home, paid their taxes and participated in the civic duties and obligations of State of Hawaii residents.

Beneath the seemingly conventional expression of middle class values however, my parents retained their identity as Kanaka Maoli and a firm sense of obligation to improve the condition for their family and larger community. Prior to his death, my father served as the government affairs representative of a large land trust which was created over a century ago by a Kanaka Maoli chiefess. My father's work ensured that the interests of the trust was represented and protected within both the political and community arenas. My mother, in turn, completed her career in Public Health as the director of the Office of Hawaiian Health, an office created to coordinate government funded programs initiated to address the very poor health conditions of Kanaka Maoli people. Able to function in both the Kanaka Maoli and American cultural context, my parents provided a powerful example to me of what effective bi cultural Kanaka Maoli leadership could be.

By virtue of the hard work of my family, I enjoyed a privileged childhood. My parents sent me to two of the best private schools in Honolulu in order to develop and maximize my academic, athletic and artistic talents. Despite all advantages, my family made sure that I understood that the opportunities I enjoyed were hard earned. Their only expectation of me was that I use this opportunity to the benefit of my family and community at large. In time I grew to understand that the opportunities I enjoyed were not ones experienced by most Kanaka Maoli children.

## *Schooling*

Like my parents before me, I went to Punahou School; one of Hawaii's most established and prestigious of private schools. Founded in 1841 by Protestant Missionaries, Punahou was built upon land which was gifted to the Protestant mission by Boki, a high ranking Kanaka Maoli chief. Punahou's founding mission was to educate and prepare the children of missionaries for university entrance. By virtue of Boki's land grant, admission to the school was extended to include Kanaka Maoli children as well. Since 1841, Punahou has maintained a reputation for being one of the best college preparatory schools in the United States. Alumnae of Punahou are well represented among the leaders in Hawaii's and America's business community as well as the legal and medical professions. As a student at Punahou, I was nurtured through a diverse array of academic subjects by a group of dedicated and enthusiastic teachers. I gravitated to History and the Visual Arts as my favorite subjects. The study of History contextualized my learning generally and the practice of visual arts offered me a voice through which to express those understandings. The visual arts were especially strong at Punahou through all grade levels. Maintaining a strong emphasis on the Arts as an important vehicle for student learning and development, Punahou offered its students a broad array of two and three dimensional media studies within its course offerings. I took many of those classes through the years that I was a student at Punahou spending a good amount of time working with my teachers to develop my image making skills. My art teachers, proponents of the theories of Dewey and Lowenfeld, encouraged open ended inquiry for their students and as such, facilitated a learning environment where students produced

works that were both aesthetically rich and diverse in form and content. Their pedagogical practice remains a foundational example to my own teaching practice today.

Beyond academic and artistic pursuits, I played Football for Punahou like my father, uncle and cousins, becoming part of a century long athletic heritage at the school. The game of Football exerted pressures which physically, intellectually and emotionally challenged me far beyond the context of the classroom and art studio. In its stark brutality, the game of Football taught me about myself; my strengths and weaknesses. I was awarded All State league honors as a graduating senior despite struggling for many years to reconcile my place and personality within the game.

As much as I enjoyed and prospered within the rich learning experience at Punahou, I became aware that the Kanaka Maoli knowledge I had experienced and learned from my family was not part of the content of the school curriculum. While there was an acknowledgement of Kanaka Maoli culture at Punahou, little if any of it found its way into the curriculum of the school. I interpreted this to mean that Punahou considered the knowledge of my ancestral culture to be of less importance to the knowledge contained and conveyed within academic subjects. In the college preparatory aims of Punahou School, Kanaka Maoli knowledge appeared to hold little relevance.

To its credit, Punahou maintained an excellent library collection on Hawaii which it housed as a separate reference collection. I frequented the Hawaii Collection in the undertaking a self prescribed reading program aimed at filling the void in my education.

about my own history and culture as a Kanaka Maoli. Given that the information I was obtaining was contributing to my self understanding, I began to place a greater emphasis on this part of my learning rather than that of my required study at Punahou. Under the guidance of the Hawaiian Collection Librarian, Ms. Jackie Rath, I read books about the history of my homeland which allowed me to contextualize my family genealogy. I was introduced to the writings of Samuel Kamakau, John Papa I'i, David Malo and Zephrene Kepelino, Kanaka Maoli scholars from the 1800's who wrote our people's history for the first time. It was astonishing to read their words and to experience the facility with which they recorded and theorized aspects of our ancestral history and culture into a foreign language. I wondered why I had never heard of these scholars before and why the curriculum of one of the finest schools in Hawaii had overlooked their important and very academic contribution. In undertaking this self directed study to broaden my understanding of my own culture and history, I began to feel for the first time out of step with the college preparatory focus to which Punahou was directing me. Even the study of Art, which gave me an important vehicle for self expression, raised questions as to whether my involvement in it would allow me to remain consistent with the leadership traditions of my family as I perceived them. Art objects, after all, were objects of luxury commoditized by the wealthy to reflect and maintain their elevated social and economic status. The role of Art in society seemed contrary to the community development and service aims that my parents and ancestors had dedicated themselves.

The feeling of discontent with my education followed my graduation from Punahou when I enrolled as a post graduate student at Phillips Andover Academy in Massachusetts.

Founded in 1778, Andover had become one of the most prominent of schools in the U.S. educating the elite of American society for over two hundred years. Having schooled Presidents, Senators, Business, Legal and Medical leaders and their children for generations, Andover offered me an opportunity to mature as a football player, improve my average academic background and heighten my prospects of matriculating into a prestigious east coast university. It was my belief that I needed Andover and an elite academic credential of an East Coast education in order to better serve my community at home. It had not occurred to me until I was a student at Andover that the definition of success and the process that I had adopted to pursue it were defined along terms and values of American society rather than my own. This awakening to the extent of my own colonial conditioning would continue to confront and challenge my thinking for many years to come. Despite the great opportunity that the experience provided, I never felt compatible with the culture and values at Andover. So often on nights when I walked alone across the misty school quad, would I feel my great grandmother's gentle tug on my shirt reminding me again of my Kanaka Maoli identity and urging my return home.

I graduated from the University of Hawaii with Bachelor of Art's degrees in Hawaiian Studies and in Studio Art. My return to Hawaii from Andover prompted me to embrace the subjects of Hawaii history and visual art studies, the disciplines which long captivated my interests and talents. The Bachelor Degree program in Hawaiian Studies gave me a foundation of knowledge about my ancestral culture, history and language well beyond that of my self directed study at Punahou while the Studio Art program enabled me to formalize my background in image making that I had begun at Punahou. While I enjoyed

learning aspects of art history along with visual media techniques, it was visual art which allowed me to conceptualize, manifest and express my ideas through visual media, thus influencing me to undertake degree studies in the subject. At no time during the four years of my undergraduate study at the University did the curriculums or my work in the two disciplines ever intersect.

Upon completion of my university study, I sought employment in the area of education for Kanaka Maoli development. It was my belief then as it is now that education is a vital component of Kanaka Maoli development and I wanted to begin my professional career working in a field where I could make a positive contribution. For several years after the completion of my undergraduate study, I worked for the Kamehameha Schools as a student counselor. Kamehameha Schools is a private school in Hawaii which was founded in 1887 for the education of Kanaka Maoli children. Kamehameha School is supported through an endowment established by Princess Bernice Pauahi Bishop, a member of the royal family of Hawaii. My work aimed at supporting Kanaka Maoli students in their pursuit of higher education in Hawaii's Colleges and Universities. The educational statistics in Hawaii have long indicated that Kanaka Maoli have performed poorly at all levels of education when compared to other ethnic groups. The poor statistics prevail as well in other economic and social indicators such as social welfare, economic viability and housing. As education counselor, my job focused on improving both the recruitment and retention of Kanaka Maoli University students; facilitating their advancement and exploring ways to improve their learning process through academia.

I have a natural inclination toward image making. I drew and painted regularly as a child and continued to do so as I grew up. While the formal study of Art broadened my ability to express myself, so have the images which I have put forth. The image process – doodling and sketching with a pen or pencil, helps me to think out and visually analyze a problem or idea.

I began to use this process in my work with Kanaka Maoli students to support their ability to analyze, process and express. Demonstrating in small group sessions, I would draw or sketch ‘mind maps’ or images of my own ideas and thoughts, and would invite my students to do the same. With few exceptions, I found this process of visual mapping or visually describing thoughts and emotions, well received and most supportive to the learning process for the Kanaka Maoli students with whom I worked. It is important to acknowledge that throughout my meetings with students, I communicated with them as a Kanaka Maoli rather than a western school teacher, counselor or academic. While I realize at this juncture that I lacked the theory and education research background to understand the dynamics that were occurring, I continue to reflect on the successes of this initial teaching encounter.

### *Graduate School*

I decided to return to Graduate School at the University of Hawaii to begin a study in the area of Visual Communication Design. My aim was to complete a Master of Fine Arts degree, the terminal qualification in the area of Art and Design Study. Although I had a background in Art, my coursework focused primarily on drawing and painting as a course

of study. As an undergraduate student, my aim in Art study was to develop an ability to draw and paint. As a graduate student however, my aim became focused more on design for communication and meaning making through visual media rather than on mere expression. This was an exciting time for me, where I felt the diverse pieces of my life puzzle begin to fit together into a recognizable whole. It is worth noting that at the time that I began my advanced study program, I was the only Kanaka Maoli in the graduate program for Visual Communication. As such, there were no other Kanaka Maoli peers from whom I could draw support or seek direction. I did have support from a few mentors in the Art Department, one in particular, Clemente Lagundimao, who was not only a senior member of the faculty of Design, but the only local born member of the faculty. The other was Charles Cohan, a master printmaker from the State of Washington, in whom I perceived a sincere interest and respect for the Kanaka Maoli culture, as reflected by his teaching and in his work.

Visual Communication Design or Graphic Design is a field concerned with the development of images which transmit and convey meaning to a specifically intended audience. Through the careful manipulation of visual elements such as photographs, drawings, and paintings along with letterforms and text information, visual communication designers construct images that convey specific meaning to persuade selected audiences to behave in predetermined ways or to adopt beliefs. I came to the discipline with the motivation to contribute to Kanaka Maoli education development drawing upon the combination of my background in Kanaka Maoli studies, work experience as an education counselor, and aptness for image making. Specifically, I

undertook graduate study in Visual Communication Design to develop a theoretical base for indigenous design that would positively impact the learning needs and cognition of Kanaka Maoli students.

Believing that I needed a strong understanding of the tools of the discipline of Visual Communication Design, I decided to gain proficiency in work with the mediums associated with the field. Therefore I studied typography, the area of research and practice associated with printed letterforms as well as the broad fields of Printmaking and Graphics. Consequently, I developed an understanding of the principles of visual composition for print, and was offered a graduate assistant position in the Department of Art to teach a foundation of Design course to first year students. I enjoyed teaching at the University level because it helped me further develop my interest and ability as an artist and designer, and further satisfied my long held aspiration to serve and support the needs of my community.

To further my understanding of the applied nature of my research and work, I studied the history and theory of the field of Visual Communication Design. I immersed myself in the most comprehensive examples of written text and image samples from the discipline, studying the work of master designers and printers from the Renaissance, the Arts and Crafts movement of the Industrial Revolution, the Constructivists of the Russian Revolution, the Bauhaus and international movement of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and lastly the eclecticism of postmodern design. As interesting and inspiring as I found the developments and historical background of the discipline of Visual Communication

Design, I began to realize how completely lodged its perspective, values and philosophical foundations were to the historical and cultural context of Western European society. I found that I was not studying the development of visual communication as a human phenomenon but rather a history of visual communication as it has immersed within the context of European and American society. The pedagogy of Art and Design study at the University of Hawaii was constructed in such a way as to obfuscate this reality. Sadly, within the well documented history of the discipline which I had dedicated myself, I began to find little room for or acknowledgement of the perspectives, approaches and cultural viewpoints of cultures other than European. As I critically examined the media based programs within the Department of Art, I came to the realization that like Design, the entire discipline of Art within the academic setting of the university had been constructed from a Western European tradition. I was drawn to Art and Design study because it gave me a voice through which to express my thoughts and feelings. It is ironic however that the voice that I found myself using was not one connected to my cultural heritage but rather one that belonged to the academic discipline I had been conditioned within.

The knowledge, values and cultural perspectives of my ancestors were absent from the internal structure and content of the discipline which I had chosen to study. It seemed within this academic context there was but one choice for me to make; adopt the western historical perspective and values of the discipline of Art and Visual Communication outright or face exclusion and marginalization from it. The principle of academic freedom, a notion that I had long respected and appreciated from my experiences at

Punahou, lost a degree of meaning for me upon that stark realization. I therefore commenced uneasily to prepare for and accept the one sided terms of the Design and Art discipline in order to facilitate the completion of my graduate study.

### *Te Waka Toi*

At the same time of my ethical challenge in graduate school, an exhibition of New Zealand Maori visual art was installed at the University Of Hawaii Art Gallery. The first of its type to visit Honolulu, the Te Waka Toi exhibition presented the works of a national association of Maori artists that had several years previous successfully presented the Te Maori exhibition in New York City to rave review. The Te Maori exhibition introduced Maori Visual Art and culture to an international audience for the first time (Mead, 1984). As with Kanaka Maoli culture in Hawaii, Maori visual culture had been, through the years of British colonialism, marginalized and dismissed as the folk craft remnants of a dying race. The recognition the Te Maori exhibition received in New York validated the power and emotive character of Maori Art and Design and transformed and elevated overnight the status of Maori culture in New Zealand and the world. The Te Waka Toi exhibition continued the momentum initiated by Te Maori through the presentation of displays at a series of museums and galleries in the United States before stopping in Honolulu on its return to New Zealand.

The Te Waka Toi exhibition of Maori Art and Visual culture presented a stark contrast to the absence of an indigenous voice within the curriculum for Art and Design studies at the University of Hawaii as well as in the practice of Art in Hawaii as a whole. I was

awe struck by the strength and clarity of the work of the Maori artist's works and extremely proud of their accomplishment as Polynesian people, in giving their nation and culture a profound and authentic visual representation. Within each artist's skillful manipulation of art media, I recognized their purposeful intention to preserve Maori genealogy and history, to translate traditional values and knowledge into a contemporary context and to provide a visual critique of their people's ongoing colonial context. More importantly, the images and objects in the exhibition provided fierce and unapologetic declarations of Maori cultural and ethnic identity. Beyond formal aesthetics, I came to the realization that it would be these factors that would distinguish indigenous art and design from its mainstream western counterpart. I saw in the works of Te Waka Toi, a connection to my own ancestral culture and recognized in it so much of what I aspired for in my work both as an Artist/Designer and Educator.

The Te Waka Toi exhibition provided an example of how a Polynesian people could contemporize their cultural expression by way of the discipline and mediums of the western art tradition. It demonstrated that indigenous knowledge could be used to subvert and transform the hegemony of the perspective of western knowledge and culture institutions to become relevant to the educational and cultural sustainability needs of indigenous communities and people. I was motivated to learn more from the Maori example of Art and Design pedagogy, as it offered me one of few examples in the Pacific where indigenous knowledge and culture was allowed space within the field of Art and Education to determine its own form, audience and intention. If I could learn from the

experience of Maori, I could adapt that knowledge to develop curricula and teaching processes designed to advance the needs of Kanaka Maoli education and visual culture in Hawaii.

### *Wananga*

In 1995, Te Waka Toi organized an international hui or gathering of indigenous artists which was hosted at Apumoana Marae in Rotorua. This gathering was intended to bring together 40 Maori artists and 40 indigenous artists from around the Pacific to work together, exhibit and share ideas about the state of indigenous visual culture and art in the world. I was one of several Kanaka Maoli artists from Hawaii to be invited along with 40 others international artists from Asia, Australia, North America and the Pacific. The gathering at Apumoana Marae was a life changing event for me. Situated on a Marae, the hui or gathering was carried out within an atmosphere and setting that was determined along Maori culture and protocols. Despite the differences in our cultural and ethnic backgrounds, there was a positive commonality of indigenous heritage among the participants. Because of this similarity and dedication to contribute to the development of our people through Art and Design, it was a charged and active environment of learning which typified the hui.

Though I went to the hui anticipating that I would be introduced to a range of indigenous techniques for image making, I was directed to making connections with genealogy and ancient knowledge contained within them. From the moment of my return to New Zealand since leaving with my family in 1967, I experienced a series of events that

reminded me of the nature of indigenous knowledge and learning. These experiences, often of a spiritual nature, challenged the conventional understanding of both knowledge and teaching as defined within western educational practice.

One of those experiences occurred not long after my arrival into New Zealand. The eight and a half hour flight from Honolulu arrives in Auckland in the morning. As soon as I had collected my luggage I, along with the rest of the group of Kanaka Maoli artists, I was taken aboard a van for the drive to Rotorua. The gathering was held in January at the height of the New Zealand summer and the weather that day was sunny and clear. Soon after leaving the airport, our driver traveled south on the motorway to Rotorua, a drive that would take about three and one half hours to complete. Not long after leaving the urban setting of Auckland, our drive took us through the most picturesque of rural farmlands which fronted the great and winding Waikato River. I sat in the front seat of the van with the window open to enjoy the smell and feel of the New Zealand country air. As I enjoyed the scenery of land and river, the pleasing aroma of the grassland was suddenly interrupted by an acrid odor which I identified as the smell of gunpowder smoke. Nothing in the passing scenery suggested a cause for such an odor as there was no evidence of a military base or a shooting range in sight. The rest of the members of the van were enjoying the ride, and seemed totally oblivious of this strange odor, which was beginning to make me nauseous. As abruptly as it began, the odor dissipated, and I was left wondering whether I was imagining things or had experienced a post flight reaction of some type. A few days later, a senior Maori artist was sharing with me some history of the New Zealand Wars, fought between the British Army and the Maori in the

mid to late 1880's. He related that in 1863, the tribes of the Waikato region resisted the advance of the British Army at various points along the banks of the Waikato River. One of those tribes was Ngati Paoa, who fought gallantly during those campaigns. When I related to my senior friend my Paoa lineage in Hawaii as well as my experience of smelling gunpowder smoke during the drive along the Waikato River, he commented after reflection of some time, that perhaps the ancestors were attempting to remind me, through the subtlety of the smell of gunpowder smoke, of the expansive connectedness of Polynesian genealogy and the legacy of resistance and cultural preservation that it carries. This was one of a number of instances throughout the duration of this gathering where it was reaffirmed for me that indigenous knowledge recognizes the spiritual and metaphysical aspects as important components of the whole. This concept is not new to me, having been raised in a family where kupuna who were skilled in the art of La`au Lapa`au and La`au kahea – healing arts. Such extended knowledge is usually given to those individuals who show the capacity to be responsible for it, and are willing to share it as a service to their fellow man.

The hui gathering also allowed me the opportunity to meet with senior Maori artists and educators who had been working in the field of Maori Visual Art and Design Education for over 30 years. These artists and educators formed the core of what I describe as the senior generation of contemporary Maori art. This generation had much to do with the development of Contemporary Maori visual art and culture in New Zealand and its international appeal. In the 1960's, this group of artists formed the core of a cohort of Maori Art Advisors under the guidance of Gordon Tovey, the National Art Education

Supervisor for New Zealand. Originally educators who had studied art, this Maori cohort was then directed by Tovey to experts in the field of Maori carving and weaving traditions where they were taught the use of media as well as the genealogical history and knowledge the media practice contained. The cohort of Maori Art Advisors was then released to school districts to engage the development of curriculum and teacher education initiatives through art making that directly impacted educational practice in Maori communities. Maori and non Maori students and teachers benefited from the work of the Maori Art Advisors. Under Gordon Tovey, Art Education in New Zealand led the world in its innovation. In some cases, cohort members eventually departed from their teaching duties to pursue careers as practicing artists, while others remained in education or became involved in tertiary level teaching and the development of national educational policy. In comparison to the state of education in Hawaii, New Zealand appeared well advanced in its acknowledgment and application of indigenous knowledge and culture as a component of education and community development. The gathering allowed me the invaluable opportunity to meet and discuss with many of the senior generation the Tovey initiatives in Maori education and the subsequent development of the Contemporary Maori Art and Design movement. Through these discussions I was able to theorize those parts from the Maori Art context that could be translated into a curriculum and pedagogy for Hawaii and Kanaka Maoli visual art and culture education. I was able to learn from those who lived and applied the experience of the Tovey initiative into the context of Maori education. The encouragement I received from those of the senior Maori Artists generation buttressed my thoughts for what needed to be done in Hawaii for Kanaka Maoli education.

*Ka Maka o Ka Ihe*

Upon my return from the gathering in New Zealand, I went through a brief period of depression and uncertainty. At the gathering I experienced an environment where indigenous knowledge and learning was embraced and celebrated. Upon my return to Hawaii however, I reentered an environment that marginalized and disregarded Kanaka Maoli culture and knowledge. As much as the tourist industry in Hawaii drew upon concepts of Kanaka Maoli culture, particularly those associated with hospitality and generosity, its recognition of Kanaka Maoli knowledge was but a veneer to the commercial interests which underpinned its objectives. As for education and culture, the field which I was part of, Kanaka Maoli knowledge and culture was historically something to overcome and eradicate. The residue of this assimilative history is still expressed in the hidden curricula of schools and universities. This realization left me feeling both angry and concerned for the situation of my culture and people. Without the inclusion of indigenous culture in Education, Kanaka Maoli students (as well as the broad range of students from multi-ethnic and cultural backgrounds in Hawaii) would be left with no other choice but to comply with the assimilative objective of conventional education in Hawaii. Educational processes would fall short in recognizing or addressing other ways of learning and the dismal indicators of Kanaka Maoli underachievement in Education would continue unabated.

As with most departments at the University of Hawaii, the Department of Art had little if any Kanaka Maoli content within its course offerings or Kanaka Maoli members of

faculty. What course offerings the Department did offer were anthropological, established from a perspective that observed and interpreted Kanaka Maoli culture and history from the safe distance of a Euro- American cultural platform. There was no course offering within the program of study that built its curricula or pedagogy on a cultural perspective and heritage other than European and American. To counter the mono cultural perspective within the curricula and pedagogy of the Department of Art, I initiated the start of a student organization to support Kanaka Maoli learning and cultural development through visual art study. Called Ka Maka O ka Ihe, the Tip of the Spear, (a metaphor for the role that contemporary Kanaka Maoli visual art could make in piercing holes through the status quo in order to bring forward critical development of 'new' indigenous culture.) this student group would regularly meet in my studio space to discuss student concerns, their work and the cultural issues related to their learning and image development. My background as a student counselor was useful to this process in helping students to identify and overcome the obstacles to their advancement within their educational process. All too often I found the challenges and difficulties for students came about due to the inability of the Department faculty to understand or acknowledge the Kanaka Maoli cultural outlook in their teaching approach. Ka Maka O Ka Ihe sessions gave students a chance to positively acknowledge and engage the indigenous cultural content and viewpoint in each other's work which was a powerful affirmation for all involved.

Among other positive aspects of the group meetings was that they offered students an indigenous cultural based alternative to the western viewpoint of their instructors and

department curriculum. Ka Maka O Ka Ihe not only enabled students to contribute their ideas and cultural understandings to discussions but it recognized the value of Kanaka Maoli knowledge as an equivalent and viable alternative to conventional views promoted by their teachers. Through the group meetings, Kanaka Maoli students would for the first time have the means by which to develop the conceptual foundation and language necessary to defend their works against the overriding imposition of western perspectives and knowledge through the hidden curriculum of the Art Department. Ka Maka O Ka Ihe provided a service to Kanaka Maoli students which supported their learning and enabled the completion of their study without having to relinquish their cultural perspective and identity. Ka Maka O Ka Ihe provided for me an important lesson in the value of indigenous knowledge in the shaping of my pedagogical approach. The experience of leading discussions, supporting student learning through the use of my background and understanding of Kanaka Maoli culture and knowledge affirmed my emerging role as an indigenous educator and researcher.

By the end of my graduate study I had endured several years of the mono-cultural viewpoint of my discipline and department. Though I achieved the goals that I set out to accomplish in undertaking my advanced study, my sense of accomplishment was tempered as I came to understand that the process of education in Art and Visual Communication Design – particularly advanced study - was designed to acculturate students into a western cultural framework. Although advocating for change as a graduate student, my appeals to faculty were ignored and their ambivalence to the mono-cultural practices of the department continued. Without change, Kanaka Maoli students

would be left with no other choice but to conform to the assimilative objective of conventional education in Hawaii. Action needed to be taken to address the educational and cultural needs of Kanaka Maoli students in the Department of Art or they would be completely turned away from our ancestors and identification as Kanaka Maoli.

### *Graduate Exhibition*

My graduate study culminated in a solo exhibition which I installed within the building of the Department of Art at the University of Hawaii. As a graduate student, I was required to produce an exhibition which represented the culmination of research undertaken through the three years of my graduate study at the University of Hawaii. My exhibition, entitled Ho`okumu Hou / To Create Again, more a contemporized ritual than exhibition, reflected my dissatisfaction and concern over the mono-cultural viewpoint and content of the curriculum for Art study promoted at the University.

I chose to use the opportunity of my graduate thesis exhibition as a platform to challenge the Department of Art Department on their adherence to a mono cultural viewpoint in curriculum and resistance to inclusion of Kanaka Maoli knowledge or cultural viewpoints. My graduate exhibition, timed to align with the advent of Makahiki, the Kanaka Maoli New Year, was an interpretation of an ancestral creation story. The installation involved several life scale elements including a 20 foot by 20 foot human figure floor piece made from volcanic stones flanked at each appendage by four 15 foot Anu`u towers representing the four principle gods from the Kanaka Maoli pantheon. The figure and the towers were positioned to align with the four cardinal points of the

earth. When the installation was set up on the roof of the Art building, a performance of male hula and chant made live the environment through ritual. The performance and the installation on the building top were put forward as a challenge to the University and the Department of Art to reach beyond the limitations of the 'ceiling' that western Art conventions conventionally imposes over education in Hawaii.

Alongside this installation/performance piece, I set up an exhibition in the Art Department gallery space which was a collaboration piece with all the student members of Ka Maka O Ka Ihe. Each of the students was photographed with their heads being squeezed by a pair of white hands. The photographs focused just on the white hands as they grasped the student heads. This composition was designed to convey the idea of white hegemony over Kanaka Maoli education. Each photograph was individually exhibited within the gallery along with short written statements from each student describing their experience of having to work within the Eurocentric curriculum of the Art Department. The following exhibition statement which I posted at the entry to the gallery describes the intent of the exhibition and ultimately issues a challenge to the Department administration.

Western Art Theory and practice is the standard for Art Education in Hawaii. While the opportunity to learn non-western art theory and practice in general is limited, indigenous Hawaiian perspectives have never been offered or considered worthy of artistic or academic consideration. White faculty continue to hold the numerically dominant position within the Art

department of the University of Hawaii system. It is my strong contention that race and culture profoundly influence the manner, content and form of teaching and education. Without Native Hawaiian educators, University of Hawaii Art students are robbed of an opportunity to understand Art through the eyes of the indigenous culture of these islands.

In this my graduate exhibition, I, along with the members of Ka Maka O Ka Ihe, request that the University of Hawaii take steps to end its colonial practices by hiring Native Hawaiian teaching faculty and develop courses in Native Hawaiian contemporary art and design. For the first time in the history of the University Of Hawaii Department Of Art, Native Hawaiian Artists have gathered to speak out. In this our first expression of Hawaiian Sovereignty and Art, we challenge you who are in power to respond (Clark, 1997).

#### *Kanaka Maoli Visual Studies Class*

Immediately after the installation of my graduate exhibition, I submitted to the Department Curriculum Review Committee a draft plan for a class in Kanaka Maoli Visual Culture Studies. Caught off balance by the negative public exposure and challenge of my exhibition, the Art Department faculty approved the course as an experiment.

As expected, my exhibition statement and challenge created havoc among the Art faculty. While there was strong support from students and a few members of the faculty, the expected resistance to change predominated, creating factions among the staff. Despite this, I felt change was needed in Art Education in Hawaii, and I was motivated to take the steps necessary to achieve this end – even at the expense of politically alienating myself from the current administration.

I began to teach the experimental course in Kanaka Maoli Visual Culture studies in the Department of Art. The course attracted students from several disciplines and Colleges throughout the University of Hawaii. Many of the students had little or no background in Art or image making. The course drew interest because it provided an opportunity for students to work within a Kanaka Maoli knowledge context, and allowed them to make new and individual interpretations of that knowledge through the medium of Art.

My assignment to students was to visually interpret an aspect of their genealogical history into an image or object that served as a mnemonic device – a tool to aid in the recollection of events of their past. The object of the class was to put the students through a Kanaka Maoli process of learning by way of image making. It was irrelevant what background or approach the students took in their making of Art. Whatever was produced in their research and investigation into their genealogical history was acknowledged and valued as part of their learning process. To my amazement, despite their lack of Art making experience and education, the students produced stunning visual images that represented the many and varied forms of contemporary Kanaka Maoli visual

culture. Students selected to interpret the stories of their genealogy as a focus of their class work. The inaugural course, along with the many that followed, engaged students on a level rarely seen in conventional Art Studies.

I taught the class for several years at a number of campuses of the University of Hawaii system. In all cases, the learning experiences for Kanaka and non Kanaka students were consistently positive. Regrettably those interests within the department of Art at the University of Hawaii that could not see the benefit of an alternative view to the conventional position they espoused began to gain back influence over the Art Department curriculum. Without the permanent status of a faculty member, there was nothing I could do to protect the space won for Kanaka Maoli knowledge within the Department of Art. While the popularity of the course amongst students would ensure that the space created to grow Kanaka Maoli knowledge as applied in an Art educational context would continue to exist, I knew that the course would become the site of an ideological struggle between those whose power and influence was authorized by Eurocentric knowledge traditions and those, like me, who aspired for greater inclusiveness of epistemological views – particularly Kanaka Maoli - within academia in Hawaii. Although the side of inclusion held the moral high ground, it was (and continues to be) the faction that adheres to Eurocentric conventions in Art Education that continues to hold influence over what counts as knowledge at the University of Hawaii. The University Of Hawaii Department Of Art, along with the program for Art Education, has a significant influence on the practice of Art and Art Education throughout the State of Hawaii. While my small initiative to introduce Kanaka Maoli knowledge and culture into

the curriculum would have an impact upon a small number of students who chose to take the class, my concerns began to focus more upon the broad practice of Art Education in Hawaii particularly in the public school system of the State of Hawaii where the majority of Kanaka Maoli children in Hawaii receive their education. Just as I had been conditioned to only see and value the Eurocentric cultural position in Art as a University Art student, I worried about Kanaka Maoli children in schools and the extent to which their education in Art was serving to override their cultural viewpoint as Kanaka Maoli through the assimilative process of its curriculum.

In the process of developing and teaching the experimental Kanaka Maoli Visual Culture course, I began to critically examine the actual position that I had taken in the design of the curriculum and pedagogical practice of the class. In my critical self review, I realized how pervasive the influence of western Art and Art History had had on me and my approach to teaching. Despite the fact that I was Kanaka Maoli and raised within a Kanaka Maoli context, the imprint of Eurocentric Art education left an indelible imprint upon my outlook as an Artist and Art educator. As much as I was trying to teach from a Kanaka Maoli position, I found that the perspective and language of my pedagogy was very much lodged in the conventions of Art and Art Education. As much as I had fought for the space to teach a Kanaka Maoli culture based course for visual Art/culture studies, I was concerned that if I continued to present the course to students in the way that I had initiated it, I would in fact be reinforcing the very 'mainstream' values and perspectives that I had undertaken to resist and find alternative to. I resolved then that I needed to extract myself from the Americanized context of the University of Hawaii to engage in

research that would enable me to theorize and further develop Kanaka Maoli approaches to Arts based education within an educational context that acknowledged and fostered indigenous perspectives and knowledge. To defend and extend Kanaka Maoli knowledge at this heightened level, Kanaka Maoli Visual Culture studies would need proponents who were academically credentialed and vested in the language and research culture of the Eurocentric research institution to champion its cause. For this reason, I aimed my intentions toward New Zealand as an obvious location in the Pacific to undertake my training as an indigenous academic researcher, artists and educator.

### *Return to New Zealand*

Coincidentally at this time I was offered a full time permanent position as a lecturer at Northland Polytechnic in Whangarei, New Zealand where I was hired to apply some of my ideas for indigenous education to the development of a Design curriculum there. The decision to leave Hawaii to take on this teaching position in New Zealand was a difficult one. As much as I felt obliged to stay at in Hawaii to continue the struggle of expanding the educational opportunities for Kanaka Maoli in visual Art and Design studies, I knew that I was ill equipped to sustain or expand the initiative given my lack of experience as a researcher, educator and Art/ Kanaka Maoli visual culture maker. I chose to leave Hawaii to broaden my capability to serve the needs of Kanaka Maoli education in the future. I looked to the opportunity of returning to New Zealand to further develop my experience as an Art Educator and to witness the process of indigenous Polynesian education within an environment that was independent and free of influence by United States educational policy. Of equal importance, I chose to leave Hawaii in order to

undertake research through doctoral studies in the area of indigenous education, a field of research that would be far better supported in New Zealand than in my own homeland.

In 2003, I joined the faculty of the College of Education at Massey University as an Art Education lecturer. Part of my responsibilities in taking this position was to develop Pacific culture focused curriculum and pedagogy for the visual art education program. My doctoral study has been based at Massey University. It is here that my story ends and my thesis – an effort to apply all of my life experiences and lessons into a formalized process of learning - begins.

In preparing this thesis, it was my intention to first describe to the reader my persona, the character, values and point of view that I have held through the undertaking of this research project. I felt it vital that the reader understand the background setting which has shaped my orientation and informed the decisions that I have taken in all aspects of this research. The intention of presenting my genealogy and personal story has been to illustrate the linkage between my personal struggle for meaning and that of the collective struggle of Kanaka Maoli for educational and political autonomy within the context of the colonized and occupied space of Hawaii. In presenting this story, I intended to convey the history of struggle, resistance and leadership that has been part of my family for generations and which now positions me to undertake this research. The act of presenting this history has not only aided in making sense of my life but in redirecting it toward more meaningful and effective ways of service to family and community as well.