

University of Hawai‘i Working Session
Museum Studies Graduate Certificate Program
Notes on Art, Identity, Curation and Representation in Hawai‘i
July 6, 2015, 9:00 a.m. to 12 noon
IT Center, Room 105A, 2520 Correa Road

SUMMARY

This session offers a range of reflections on art and visual/cultural practices in Hawai‘i. It will bring attention to issues that have been overlooked and/or avoided in local discussions. Perhaps the art works or practices under scrutiny make people uncomfortable or defensive in unexpected ways. They may demand a sensitivity to cultural differences, a knowledge of Native Hawaiian histories and practices, an ability to address the problem of translation(s), or a willingness to interrogate and abandon widely-accepted curatorial categories based on ethnicity. They may ask residents and visitors to recognize the reality of American colonialism/occupation in the islands, and to be accountable for their unwitting participation in this brutal and duplicitous reality. The presenters—two artists, a fine arts curator, and a museum studies scholar—will describe the issues and concerns that ground and motivate their artistic, curatorial, or professional practices in Hawai‘i. Each hopes to stimulate conversations during this working session in productive and provocative ways.

AGENDA

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| 9:00-9:10 am | Welcome/Introduction
Karen K. Kosasa, Director, Museum Studies Graduate Certificate Program; Associate Professor, American Studies, University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa |
| 9:15-9:40 am | “Reading Signs of Erasure: a photograph, a museum exhibit, and settler colonialism in Hawai‘i” by Karen K. Kosasa, Director, Museum Studies and Q&A |
| 9:45-10:10 am | “Art and Ethnicity in Hawai‘i” by Healoha Johnston, Assistant Curator, Arts of Hawai‘i, Honolulu Museum of Art and Q&A |
| 10:15-10:40 am | “Ponoiki” by Kapulani Landgraf, Artist and Assistant Professor, Kapi‘olani Community College, Kalāhū, Hawai‘i, and Q&A |
| 10:45-11:10 am | “partly cloudy with a chance of thunderstorms” by April A. H. Drexel, Artist, Curator, and Associate Professor, Kamakakūokalani Center for Hawaiian Studies, University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa, Honolulu, Hawai‘i, and Q&A |
| 11:10-11:20 am | Break |
| 11:20 am-12:00 pm | Discussion led by Karen K. Kosasa, Director, Museum Studies, University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa |

PRESENTERS (Listed in Alphabetical Order)

April A.H. Drexel

April A.H. Drexel's research and responsibilities embrace Native Hawaiian creative texts, politics of "imaging", history, mythology, land tenure, and ancestral methodologies. She holds an M.F.A. (1989) and B.F.A.(1985)—in painting and drawing with academic interest in Pacific Art History from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa; an A.A. (1982)—in liberal arts with particular focus in intaglio and geography from Leeward Community College; and is a graduate of the Kamehameha Schools (1978)—Kapalama, O'ahu. She has exhibited her works regionally, nationally, and internationally.

Healoha Johnston

Healoha Johnston is the Assistant Curator of the Arts of Hawai'i at the Honolulu Museum of Art. Johnston holds a MA degree in Art History, and is completing a second MA degree in Pacific Island Studies, both from the University of Hawai'i. Her areas of interest span Hawaiian Kingdom era (19th century) visual culture to contemporary art with a particular focus in the relationship between politics and art in Hawai'i from the mid-19th century to present day. Johnston's art history research analyzed the symbols stitched onto the Queen's Quilt—the patchwork quilt Queen Lili'uokalani created during her imprisonment at 'Iolani Place, where the poignant textile resides - and considered their meaning within the political context of the time. Her Pacific Island Studies research examines Hawai'i's art historical experience from 1880 onward in light of significant political and social change.

Before joining the Honolulu Museum of Art's curatorial staff, Johnston was a curatorial assistant at the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts and spent five years working at contemporary art galleries in Southern California. She worked as the gallery assistant at Luis De Jesus Los Angeles; as an art advisor at Susan Street Fine Art; and as an independent curator for the San Diego Natural History Museum. She has also applied her research skills and museum studies experience to other areas. Johnston worked as a grant writer for the Hula Preservation Society, where she assisted in the development of museum methodology practice that observes cultural protocol as well as conservation quality methods, and as a policy specialist for NOAA's National Monuments Program where she assisted with the writing of Monument plans for the Marianas Trench, the Rose Atoll, and the Pacific Remote Islands marine national monuments.

Karen K. Kosasa

Karen K. Kosasa is the Director of the Museum Studies Graduate Certificate Program and an Associate Professor in American Studies at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. She received an MFA from the University of Hawai'i (1983), and an MA and a PhD in Visual and Cultural Studies from the University of Rochester (2002). Her areas of research include museum studies, visual culture, (post)colonial studies, public history, material culture, and critical pedagogy. She has been working on a comparative analysis of museum exhibitions of indigenous peoples and settler states in the U.S., Australia, and Canada. In the anthology, *Studies in Settler Colonialism: Politics, Identity and Culture* (MacMillian, 2011), she examines references to settler colonialism in museums in Hawai'i and the continental U.S.

In her previous life she functioned as an art teacher and artist. For over 13 years she taught drawing and painting, introductory design courses, and undergraduate and graduate seminars at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa, the University of Rochester, and Boise State University. For over 11 years she collaborated with Honolulu photographer Stan Tomita on mixed media works. She often dreams of retiring and painting small landscapes heavily obscured by footnotes.

Kapulani Landgraf

Kapulani Landgraf was born and lives in Pū‘ahu‘ula, Kāne‘ohe. Landgraf’s books, *Nā Wahi Pana o Ko‘olau Poko* (University of Hawai‘i Press, 1994) and *Nā Wahi Kapu o Maui* (‘Ai Pohaku Press, 2003), received Ka Palapala Po‘okela awards for Excellence in Illustrative Books in 1995 and 2004, respectively. Kapulani received a 2013 Visual Arts Fellowship from the Native Arts and Cultures Foundation and the 2014 Joan Mitchell Painters and Sculptors Grant. In 1996, the Hawai‘i State Foundation on Culture and the Arts awarded her an Individual Artist Fellowship in Photography. In 1999, she received the En Foco New Works Photography Award, New York. Kapulani has exhibited photo essays on the valley of Kahakuloa, Maui; the H-3 freeway; the archaeological and cultural sites of Ko‘olau Poko; the destroyed heiau of O‘ahu; the ahupua‘a of Waiāhole; the archaeological and cultural sites of Maui; the ahupua‘a of Kailua; and sand mining on Maui. She has shown her work in Alaska, Arizona, British Columbia, Florida, Hawai‘i, Indiana, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Mexico, New York, Oklahoma, Ontario, Palau, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Vermont, Washington State, Germany and Italy. She is an Assistant Professor of Hawaiian Art and Photography at Kapi‘olani Community College, Kalāhū, O‘ahu.