

ho'omo'omo'o:

Piecing Together Expressions of Resistance

foreword

The term ho'omo'omo'o was given to the first beating in the traditional kapa making process, and is also appropriate for the first edition of this collection. Because women were traditionally responsible for the making of kapa (the goddess Hina was a kapa maker), a book of poems by women is well represented by a word connected to kapa making.

There is a lot of kaona in the title ho'omo'omo'o as it encompasses the word mo'omo'o, the name for the bundle of fibers which stick together. Like these fibers, the individual voices in this collection will be pieced together to make a stronger statement against the militarization of our homeland. The title can also be connected to the mo'o, protectors of sacred bodies of water, who were identified throughout Hawai'i in both 'oli and mo'olelo. These mo'o were usually identified as being women, and were revered by the people of Hawai'i. Like these mo'o who protected our sacred sites in the past, the voices of women collected in this book are meant to expose the impacts of militarization on our communities, and to protect our 'aina from further militarization.

We offer these words from women who represent the diversity of perspectives and communities in Hawai'i. The voices which resonate throughout these pages reflect the many roles women play as activists, students, educators, administrators, artists, dancers, daughters, mothers and grandmothers. Some work in the framework of oppressor, others against it.

We come from a place where colonization and militarization run under our skin, a place where many of us are drowning in contradictions. Some of us live with conflicting identities, where our voices and actions work against aspects of our lives, our families or our personal histories. For some, it is only under the shadows of words where we can speak truth freely with fierce tongues. For others, it is the words which shadow our daily struggles of resistance.

Despite our contradictions, despite our differences, the kapa must be beaten.

To overcome the vast divisions created by colonization and the impacts of western thinking, we must move forward in truth. We must be honest with each other in ways the white man and his systems have not. The poems and artwork in this collection were selected for this reason, they resonate truth. Regardless of what role we have decided to play, we are together in this weaving, it is pono and it is not made by machine. It is woven by the pain we bear, by the vision we share together as women for this place, and for future generations.

We weave these words because we listen to the earth, to our hearts and to each other.

The land is our ancestor and it speaks to us a lesson of rebirth and regeneration. With proper care, a garden that was once burned will flourish, and it is from a garden that a native forest will proudly rise in the place of those that were lost. The violence and destruction is not final. The land has the last word, and it speaks to us in many ways. The plants tell us, the sharks tell us, the pigs tell us to remember what is pono.

These poems are meant to overturn and to heal, to cradle us when we need comfort, to ignite our passions when we lack motivation, to remind us to keep going on, and to help us remember what we carry with us.

Resisting militarization in Hawai'i or anyplace can feel lonely. This gift is meant to bridge the divides between us as women, divides which further fuel the oppressor, and weaken the voices of the oppressed.

It is by way of this bridge that we offer this humbly and with great honor to the women of the world who are fighting similar battles within themselves and their communities.

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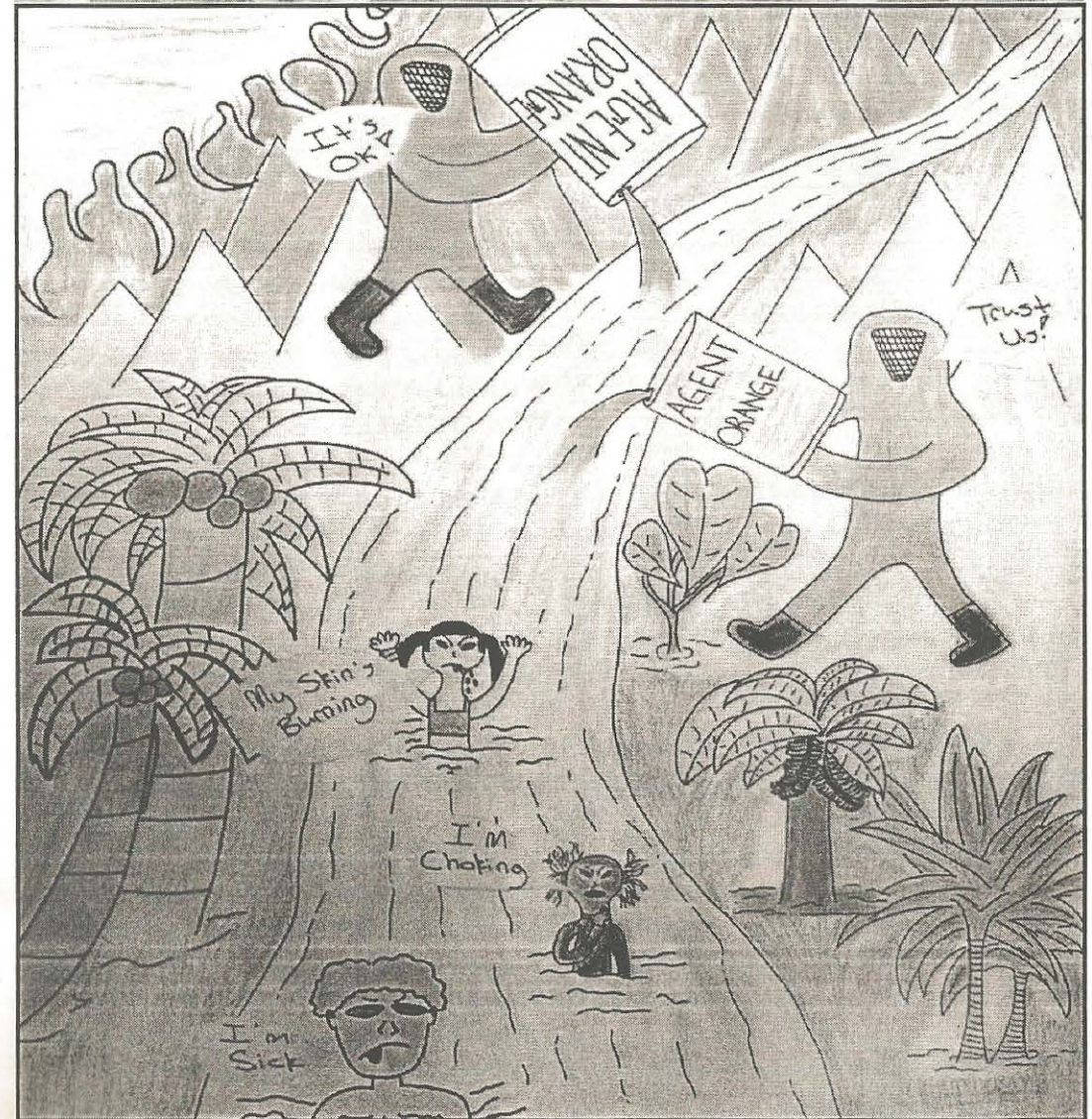
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Asia Nalani Muriko Collier

Asia is a young kanaka maoli woman, artist and singer. She was born and raised in 'Aiea and is actively involved within DMZ-Hawai'i Aloha 'Āina and Kapakaukau. She is currently attending 'Aiea High School as a 9th grader. Her drawing below was created in 2005 for the struggle against a UARC (University Affiliated Research Center) at the University of Hawai'i.



Ellen-Rae Cachola

Ellen-Rae is a scholar, poet, dancer, technology instructor and social change agent born from an immigrant Filipino family on the island of Maui. Currently she is in San Francisco attending CIIS as a Social and Cultural Anthropology graduate student. She contributes her thinking to social movements with babae San Francisco and Women for Genuine Security. For income, she is a Bilingual technology instructor at the Homeless Prenatal Program. In addition, she is a Philippine dancer with Barangay Dance Company and has performed at the 2006 Ethnic Dance Festival, 2006-2007 Pistahan, 2006 Samahan Fest, and other Filipino-American community events in the Bay Area. In Honolulu, she has performed poetry at various venues and aired original videos through Olelo Community Television. She was among three Hawai'i delegates to attend the International Network of Women Against Militarism in November 2004.

I was born in a place

I was born in a place
Where the ghosts of ancients
Could not name me
But I was fortunate
To be cradled by the sight
Of grandpa
Who took a photo-memory
Of a next generation
To his grave.

And subdivisions.
Pu'u kukui overshadows
His resting place
With many warriors
Who died in the
'Iao Stream
Fighting against
The invading army
Of Kamehameha:

He would whisper
In the unfamiliar land:

He was hungry for power
Because the haole said
He needed more
So he used their canons
And blew his brothers away.

"This is where my children will walk
and I will not go back to my country
but be here with them
as a marker of a new lineage."

In the Philippines
The raped ones
Continue to take the land
Of their relatives
Wanting to fill their spirits
Stolen by the hungry
Who sucked out the truth

Our blossoms are tough like a protea
With severed stems
That sits in a vase
At his grave.
The cemetery is next
To a correctional facility

Displacement traces an escape
Of being branded
No longer part of kinship,
But exiled, subordinated
Grandpa was cast away
Like warriors stabbed:
Not knowing the name
Of their destiny.
It was the time
Of a great shadow spreading
Across the world
Pitting people
Against each other
Disrupting systems of family
Made to believe
Brothers are enemies
Sisters are bodies

Across time and space
Philippines and Hawaii
Meets
At crossroads mapped
By people seeking
An insatiable wanting.

And the protea
sits
In the vase,
Severed.
Disconnected from roots
Produced by a wanting,
Surviving to remember
Why it is there
In the first place

Filipino-Americans

Filipinos in America
How did they come to be?
Across ships and planes
And tumultuous raft like
Dreams

Held together by thin rope
Of determination
Why so determined to leave?
Country bled dry
That they drank own blood
And was thirsty for more
So mesmerized by the flow of ocean
Fueling desire to swallow more
dreams
Until satisfied.
We forget how we've been bitten
Dreamin how to get our piece of the

pie.
Breaking the spell
By facing the wound
Put the dirt to the neck
Feel the sting of how it still
Poisons us here.

Poison is the medicine for poison
Ask why does it hurt
When we're supposedly
Medicated
By the dollars we wear
To bandage
Our raw calloused feet.
We choose to make it
Passing homeless black men
And cracked out white women
Just to get to housekeeping gig

Sanitize sheets
Like a blank easel
For rich folks to forget
The sight outside
And paint the life
They choose to see.

We work cause
We have mouths to feed.
Kids growing up wanting
Nikes, down jackets
And thick plastic earrings.
Talking bout hella this
Nigga that
Living my fantasy
Protected by my commitment to work
For this American Dream.
So I can pass that man
Asking for change
And hold on to my silver in a fist
As resistance?

Survival is to play the game
I was taught to play
Cause to break the rules
Is to be tortured and rape
In a land not so far away

Yet there are those who speak
By paying for peace and privilege
Upon the backs
They step to speak
Higher in the halls of power

II.
Slowly memories emerge on my skin
Surfacing calloused hands

Tight lips
Heart sealed shut
Ice cold blood
Frozen in this concrete jungle.

I learn to wear wrinkles
Like tree rings of age
Silent
Because they prey on boisterous
Youth blossoming their fragile petals

Back in the day
We trained to walk stiff
Like soldiers during martial law
Curfew was the power
That ran us like robots

Turned off, turned on
Changing fingers keep flippin
switches
Same way
When it was dark
Some escaped to another place
Only to find
New land timed
By the pocket watch
Of the all-seeing eye

They see us dance for them
But behind the smile
Eyes ungrateful
Crisp our bed sheets
Dust free are carpets
Yet I've returned home
With hits and blows
Of telephone bills
Slapping me silly

Until I've turned ill
Leaving a legacy of struggle
For our children to witness.

I adapt like the shell of an
Empty mailbox
When I retreat within
I search for letters
From another land
Instead I hear muffled
Echoes
Of street protests
My child's voice on a bull horn

I look out
Slowly
Memory emerges from my skin
It is a tear drop dripped from my eyes
My child's face opens like a blossom
Her voice is like seeds
Being carried away by the wind!

You are beautiful
When the golden rays of the sun
Kisses and embraces you,
Wraps you in radiant silk
As among the chosen ones.

They be watching us

they be watching us
like their stare going to map
our footsteps
where we going?

they connect the chalk lines
closer to our homes.
but they don't know

You are beautiful

You are beautiful
In kind words
Kind thoughts
Kind actions
That set you apart from the rest

Among the righteous leaders
Of back then
A heart of gold was your crown

You are beautiful
Let these words fly to you
Like birds that fly above
Singing
Saying
That life lives wherever
You are at

I honor you
As I learn to offer
These humble words.
Just to share with you
The joy in my life.

where we live
no longer do we live
in their pleasant
tree lined streets
or fake named
avenues
but we live somewhere
they can never go

some place they chose
to forget
they are lost
not knowing
where they came from

Somewhere
sometime
they too had a home
but it was taken
and the trauma
made them cold
that their grief
unresolved
made them take from
others
just to be warm
for a moment
and more,
hotter,

until they cook
in their greed
an empty pot
consuming
wound

they be watching us
cutting with their
strategies
to tap our lines
spy on our minds
but they can never know
where we live
unless
they have the courage
to look at themselves
and in their eyes
walk into the battered path
of past memories

Grace Alvaro Caligtan

Alter/native educator, second generation Ilocana and Kankanay Igorot, writer, producer, cultural bridge builder/ translator across difference, community organizer, and youth worker. Serving as the visionary force behind Grace Intelligence, Grace shares her talents and partners with organizations that value and understand the critical need to foster girls' and women's health and wellness as a key strategy for community and planetary healing. Her most recent play, My Body-My Space addresses the honest conversations needed between mothers and daughters to talk about relationship safety, STDs, and HIV.

*Hay(na)ku for Love in Occupied Nations
For moments when resistance means solidarity*

*In memory of the 2003 testimony given by four Pilipina women against the United States Marine Corps to use Waikāne Valley for military jungle training in Mindanao. In gratitude to Auntie Terri and Kyle for being the bridge.

bound
destinies surface

in Hawai'i's present
now

brought together
on stolen land

we
were never
meant to survive

aloha
becomes a
refuge for healing

common
wounds weaving
intimate spaces-places

thrice
occupied bodies
thrust onto plantations

Ancestors
pleading to
remember sacred ties

when
generations forget
love between us

We
pikai*
correct our distortions

purify
muddied waters
illusions of separation

no
permission to

enter, before-sharing
a
place now
on island shores

We
witness 'āina
awakening, engulfing us

land
prays open
in morning gratitude
Coral
For Hina's
Daughters, pledge to

descendents
sing anew
songs rituals protocols

for
a new
time, exhaling EA*

pikai
v. To sprinkle with sea water or salted fresh
water to purify or remove taboo,

ea
1. n. Sovereignty, rule, independence. Lā
Ho'iho'i Ea, Restoration Day. Ho'iho'i i ke ea o
Hawai'i, restore the sovereignty of Hawai'i.

2. n. Life, air, breath, respiration,

Melisa Casumbal

Sumasamba sa mga ninuno namin. Melisa J. San Luis Casumbal-Salazar is a Washington, DC-born PhD student of political philosophy at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. A lover and a fighter, she is descended from 3 generations of urban petty-burgis Tagalog Manileñas, a second-generation Batangeño migrant to Manila, and an Ilokano father whom she has never met. She is the proud daughter of a union member. (Bureaukrat-Kapitalismo Ibagsak!) Her rabble-rousing includes work combating hate violence, queer intimate partner violence, anti-immigrant policy-making, misogyny in Filipino activist scenes, and US imperialist adventures in Latin America, Southeast Asia, and Hawai'i. Melisa lives in Pauoa Valley with her partner, DJ Cookiehead Jenkins, her anak-anakan, Koa Moea, and hundreds of geckos. She enjoys canoe paddling, triathloning, teaching undergrad political philosophy, buro, sorcery with other babaylan, and various sundry practices of decolonization.

this is for the weavers

this is for the weavers, the farmers, the fishers, the carvers, the paddlers,
the planters, the dancers, the surfers, the singers, the healers, the teachers,
musicians and
the tall tale spinners.
the ones who remember.
the lullaby writers.
the navigators.
the artists.

when artists cannot eat,
everyone starves.

a society
that fails to feed its artists
cannot birth
and rebirth itself,
generation to generation,
lips to nipples.

a society
that fails to feed its artists
cannot tell its own stories,
of its own places, its own times, its own people.
it ends up stealing other peoples' stories, places, and times,

or, worse yet,
ends up with no stories, places, or time at all.

a society
that fails to feed its artists
forgets
how to laugh, cry, seduce, and imagine
that which it cannot know.

when artists cannot eat,
everyone starves.

this is for the weavers, the farmers, the fishers, the carvers, the paddlers,
the planters, the dancers, the surfers, the singers, the healers, the teachers,
musicians and
the tall tale spinners.
the ones who remember.
the love song writers.
the navigators.
the artists.

when artists cannot eat,
everything starves.

a society
that starves its artists
makes anemic, desperate, 10 second love.
juice-less love.
rain-less love.
it unmakes love. it makes unlove.

a society
that starves its artists
makes bruises and junkies and prisons and chest-thumping, Christian battle.

when artists cannot eat,
everything starves.

this is for the weavers, the farmers, the fishers, the carvers, the paddlers,
the planters, the dancers, the surfers, the singers, the healers, the teachers,
musicians and
the tall tale spinners.
the ones who remember.
the blues song writers.
the navigators.
the artists.

when artists cannot eat,
every day starves.

a society
that fails to feed its artists
imagines balance as
a strong dollar, or
"both perspectives," or
black and white,
or cold war, or preemptive war.

a society
that starves its artists
cannot imagine
balance
as mountain, sky and ocean
in endless embrace,
kawayan as an ancestor,
the dead always among the living.

a society
that does not feed its artists
makes competition, credentials, and commercials...
creation.

when artists cannot eat,
everyone starves.

this is for the weavers, the farmers, the fishers, the carvers, the paddlers,
the planters, the dancers, the surfers, the singers, the healers, the teachers,
musicians and
the tall tale spinners.
the ones who remember.
the redemption song writers.
the navigators.
the artists.

a society
that fails to feed its artists
forgets that living
is a series of becomings,
which makes everyone
everyone
everyone
an artist.

4.6.2006 Pauoa Valley O'ahu

Nicki Sahagun Garces

Nicki Sahagun Garces was born and raised in Hawai'i. She earned her B.A. in Anthropology and Asian Studies and M.A. in Political Science from DePauw University and the University of Hawai'i-Mānoa respectively. She was an educator for seven years, teaching in Japan and Hawai'i. She now works for UNITE HERE Local 5, the hotel and restaurant union. On her free time, she is involved with the Filipino American Historical Society of Hawai'i (FAHSOH), Filipinos Linked in Pride (FLIP), issues on women's rights, the youth and education and reconnecting with her creative side. Nicki hopes to one day learn how to bring the same kind of empowerment her union members have to the local youth.

Michael of the Illest Rhymes

He was never a student of mine.
Reserved, it was I--"Eh, Miss"-- who broke the ice.
He shared hiStory, his life.
Born in Hawaii to a Hawaiian-Filipino mother and African-American father
they are mapped across his face.
Raised in San Diego,
--hmm, that's where the straight English came from—
His family returned to the islands when he was 14.

He attended Honolulu Community College
and worked part-time at McDonald's on Dillingham.
He periodically visited his friends, the b-boys, after school
in my classroom at Farrington.
Still carried a black and white composition notebook,
I have seen him put words on paper.

"I write my own lyrics, my own poetry," he said.
"I did Youth Speak and I go to the First Thursdays at Hawaiian Hut.
I like to read my work to an audience."
I was his audience one day and
those were the illest rhymes (as my students say) I had heard.
The notebook showed his brilliance and creativity.
A love poem to his girlfriend,
Political rants and raves against racism and the war.
"The military uniforms, tanks and the rappel presentation
down the side of Farrington's Building A do not phase me"
began an unfinished poem of his.

In mid-May, he announced,
"Miss, I'm going to boot camp."
I thought you were anti-military.
Aren't you a warrior of peace
decked out in hip hop couture?

"My pops and ma said I'm doing nothing with my life.
They disagree with me following the break dancing contests
and doing slam poetry. They don't want me to major in English."
What's wrong with creative writing
and exploring what you want to do at this age?
"I have to contribute to the family.
Working at McDonald's isn't going to cut it."
What? A young man like you risking your life for oil?
You're so young. You got so many years ahead of you
to figure things out.
A college degree will get you somewhere.
"Ma and pops think that I'm not that smart.

Why bother with college, they say."

"I'm following my pops' footsteps and joined the army.
I'm going to be a foot soldier."
Excuse me?
"I did poorly on the ASVAB test.
I'm going to be a foot soldier.
I made up my mind and enlisted."

Silence.

All I saw was fear in his eyes.
And I felt the fear in mine.
Another student recruited to fight in this unjust war.
Fort Shafter treats Farrington as a hotbed for recruits.
Enticing them with much needed funds to pay for computers,
maintenance repairs and supplies.
In return to have more students enlist.
My school is NOT a soldier-making factory!

I will pray for you, Michael.
May the Archangel protect you.

His name was Michael.
He was never a student of mine.
His name was Michael.
Michael of the Illest Rhymes.

Brenda Kwon

Brenda Kwon is a poet, writer, and educator born and raised in Hawai'i. The author of *Beyond Ke'eaumoku: Koreans, Nationalism, and Local Culture in Hawai'i* and co-editor of *YOBO: Korean American Writing in Hawai'i*, she has read her poetry in Honolulu, Los Angeles, Boston, New York, and Seoul, and her work has appeared in various journals and anthologies. In 2005-2006, she taught American Literature in Korea as a Fulbright Fellow, and saw firsthand the legacies of war and militarization overseas. She currently teaches Language Arts at Honolulu Community College.

Disneylands

We all dreamed of the magic kingdom,

the land of Cinderella and Peter Pan,
where elephants flew and the Wild Wild West
was a just a few steps from tomorrowland.
We could raft like Tom Sawyer,
bobsled past abominable snowmen
in a world so complete with our dreams
that long after we'd left
we held tight to the mouse ears we wore like crowns
that transformed us into fantastic royalty.
And even after we grew,
when the tea cups shrank and Space Mountain felt
more like the hill behind your house
than the galactic everest of your infinite universe,
we still wished upon the stars
and held our breaths with wonder
when Pinocchio finally became
a real live boy.
And so it hurt a little, remember?
That moment we had to let go,
when a ride through Autotopia
felt just like driving in moderate traffic;
when we noticed the price of ice cream
at the Main Street Cone Shop;
when we saw the man
inside the mouse.
And then we couldn't help noticing
how Sleeping Beauty's Castle
came with cracks:
how colored lions lived in the jungle's ghetto,
how barbaric Arabs
cut off your ear if they don't like your face,
and even though we loved the idea of Gay Day at the Parks,
it hit us like a first wrinkle,
a first gray hair,
that realization that
it cost \$53 dollars a day,
to be in the happiest place on earth.

And so you had to leave the park behind,
leave Main Street,
Storybookland, the Pirates
and Ghosts of our innocence
and walk into the not so happiest places on earth,
where \$53 buys a family some food,
pays the electric bill,
gives you something to subsist on
while unjust wars are waged,
the president lies,
and enormous waves swallow entire villages in Southeast Asia.
When the death toll climbs every hour,
when a man who supports torture becomes our Attorney General,
I can't say I don't feel like going back to the park sometimes,
but here on the outside I've got problems to solve
and I can't make meals out of popcorn,
cotton candy, and fairy dust.
Still, the temptation to live in Never Never Land beckons,
hell, stalks us in our quest for truth,
reaches out like a claw to haul us back.
See, I guess Tokyo and Paris just weren't enough,
so Disneyland comes to these Pacific Islands,
selling admission for an Escape to Paradise.
For a package fee,
your Disney Dollars will let you
surf our waters, climb our volcanoes,
sip Lilo & Stitch Mai Tais on our beaches.
Who needs Snow White when you've got Hawai'i?
Blue Hawai'i,
South Pacific,
From Here to Eternity,
what we call home is some else's playground,
some else's movie set,
some else's fantasy.
But can Mickey tell us how
to correct the theft of this stolen nation,
to demilitarize this motherland,

to fix the damage of the bombs that struck
 Kaho'olawe
 Mākua
 Pāpōhaku
 Ōpana Point?
 Can Donald Duck can give homes to kanaka maoli
 who sleep in tents
 because the ceded lands are fenced in by guns?
 Can Pluto stop the ice from running through our veins?
 I left the park to teach our children,
 to save maybe even one woman from being a statistic,
 to warn our brothers that violence
 embraces them hard into their early graves,
 to tell our daughters they can rise like the sun
 and melt the clouds that hide their fire.
 For me, a home over our heads
 and the end of our prisons
 is a much better ride than the one through Splash Mountain,
 and my mouse ears are made of my students' degrees.
 If we could take all those dollars they spend on
 trying to forget
 that Paradise is nothing but a Hollywood backdrop;
 if we only could get folks to pay \$53 each
 so we could rebuild our schools,
 if we could take all that revenue
 to make the native people of these islands
 the royalty that they once were,
 then maybe this would be the happiest place on earth.
 But I know the difference between dreams and illusions
 and though I can wish upon the stars,
 it's a world of cash
 a world of greed
 it's a world of profits
 that makes them succeed.
 There's so much to be snared,
 that it's time we're aware:
 Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have an announcement:
 contrary to what your history books have told you,
 the frontier is wide open
 all for the taking.
 And when you're the Disney Corporation,
 it's a small world after all.

How to Leave Your Mother

In your embrace I place my steps,
 sometimes forgetting that just as I
 press down
 you hold me up.

I know a woman who will not wear
 high heels
 because she feels it separates her from
 you,
 the memory of our birth too strong to
 ignore.

A long time ago I once stopped loving
 the way
 you clung to my shoes,
 scraping you from my sole
 and calling you dirt,
 when dirt is just matter displaced.
 But it wasn't you who moved.

Skyscrapers and towers brag about
 distance
 as if you are someone to leave behind
 the way children leave their mothers.

And children leave their mothers.

It's a sign of their growth.

To leave their mother,
 they forget her.
 Never speak or listen.
 Pretend she had nothing to do
 with their birth,
 pretend they came into this world
 all on their own.
 When she dies, they sort through her
 things,
 keep what they want,
 call the rest trash.

To leave their mother,
 they cut her off.
 When she cries, they tell her, stop
 making noise.
 When she's ill, they angrily thrust her
 away.

After all, it's not their responsibility—
she can take care of herself.

She should take care of herself.

But there's another way.

Birds that leave the nest
don't go back to kill.

To leave your mother,
you unburden her,
remove the knapsack of your welfare
from her back.

You let her breathe without your
weight on her lungs.
You earn your keep to let her rest.

You let her stretch.

You protect her from rapists,
murderers, and thieves.
You accept her love and return it
tenfold
because your heart has grown that
much bigger
in the years she's raised you.
You do for her
all she did for you,
because now you can.

Doing this makes you a

Brandy Nālani McDougall

Born and raised in Upcountry Maui, Brandy Nalani McDougall is descended from the Goodness 'ohana of Maui, the McDougall 'ohana of Hawai'i, and the Kekauoha 'ohana of Kaua'i and O'ahu. She is pursuing her Ph.D. in Hawaiian Literature at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. Her first collection of poetry will be published by Kuleana 'Oiwi Press in 2008.

Papatuanuku

E ho'olohe 'oukou e nā mamo o Hāloa--

Remember who you came from,
the first hā I gave you, binding you
to me. It is my blood coursing
through you, the lush fruit of my body

woman/man/adult/leader.

Doing this makes you
strong/autonomous/self-determined/
free.

It was never she who was displaced.

She stayed with you.

She stayed with you.
Clinging to your shoes
to remind you how she will always
cradle your steps
in the palm of her hand.

Even when you leave.
Even when you leave.

Even when you've left.

Even when you've gone.

feeding you, my 'ili stretched beneath
you, its redness from which you
were formed, and my voice you hear
as your children call for you in the night,
hungry and tired with nowhere to go.

Go to them now. Hear them and hear me:
Flags hoisted, may be lowered,
spears thrown, cannons, guns,
and nuclear bombs fired, treaties
and constitutions, palapala bound
and broken. Nations rise and fall
with the tides, and their boundaries
of pepa might as well be written
in dust, for empires burn to ashes
in a fire of their own making,
and are forgotten in the end,
when only I will remain.
And through me, so will you.
He oia mau no kākou.

Melanie Medalle

Melanie Medalle was born in San Francisco minutes from the coast and was raised all over the Bay Area in California. She migrated west to Hawai'i with life's changing seasons and is still embracing the tides there--studying political science, women's studies, and environmental studies as well as working with middle school students in tutor and mentor programs at Kalākaua Middle School in Kalihi. Her ancestral lines in the Philippines can be traced to the central and west Visayas, Ilokos Sur, and Laguna. She finds solace in dance and theater performance, painting, working with soil and plants, but her place of great peace is often the word. Her shared piece reflects the weeks she recently spent traveling through the Philippines, exploring different paths to justice and understanding.

The letter speaks

a poem and letter to my sisters and brothers

A Man cursed the poor yesterday.
He said the poor are poor because they want to be,
That the pathetic choose their squalor.

I breathed in deeply and I exhaled dried and broken leaves.
They fell to the winds and sang:

Your energy moves outward, inward,
In dimensions and shapes that we have do not often see in plain sight.
And when they are made known to us,
We see them in our blindness.

Everything is revealed and nothing is revealed. It is all in front of us and
around us and it is hidden as we stare into its face.
Energy is everything and Everything is energetic,
From the deep pulse of the Earth's core to the basalt rock rocked by ancient
waves. We cannot escape it even in the rhythmic bustle of concrete and rolling
wheels of city centers.
Be assured that everything is powered by the rhythm.

The Man who indicted the poor because he has not been with them
And has not loved the poor. TO indict something you have never known and
have never loved is unjust. Your light is lost immediately in casting another's
Out.

We must come to peace.

The poor pathetic and desperate accrue the most violent of social criticisms.
The woman curses the depravity of her parts, her sexuality—
When she decries the lasciviousness of what they call the "whore"—the sex
worker who lives every day with the sharp, close knowledge of what rests
between her legs.

You hate them because you fear the knowledge that they live inside of you.

These fears are enhanced and illuminated, nuanced and contoured by
historical fabrications and re-fabrications:
The self-perceived light does not hate the dark for the dark,
It hates how deep in its bones, it knows that it is both light and dark itself.
The social then explicates that light is this, and dark is that, and so expounds
on our weariness brought on by violent thinking, protracted through the ages.

If poison is spit, we know then that the poison was within us. Poison must

not be expelled by unpeaceful means. Poison must be meditated upon,
understood, challenged, released.

It must be contrasted lovingly by good medicine,
As it journeys from one's internal place to those realms outside of the human
body.

The problem is both ancient and unprecedented, thus we must be ancient and
unprecedented in our response,
In the ways that we inhabit our earth, our bodies, our circles.
It must be from a place of energy,
And invoking the oldest songs,
Innovating.
Sacrificing.
We will welcome it because it is love.
It is all love.

That grain is not mine until it passes through the Earth, through many hands,
and through mindscapes many miles apart. But whose hands? And at what
cost?

That is the social.

That is where we must remember to channel our wisdom and blood and
warmth.

It may be our spiritual task.

It is all love it and is all love it is all love. Love. Love. All.

NOHILI (BARKING SANDS)



KAUAI

NIHAU

OAHU

MOLOKAI

MOLOKAI H.F. RECEIVER SITE
MOLOKAI TRAINING CENTER

MAUI

LANAI

ARMY RESERVE CENTER

MAUI SATELLITE TRACKING STATION

KAHOOLAWE

(NAVAL TRAINING FACILITY)



Military Toxics Site

Cultural Site

Nuclear Waste

Marine Mammals Impacted by Sonar

Endangered Species

Electromagnetic Waves

Unexploded Ordnance

Fire Hazard



Current Use



Prior Use



Proposed Use



LIFULIE (SCHOFIELD BARRACKS)



MAKIIA (MMR)



KAHIKI (KTA)

WAIKANE



LUALIALEI (NAVAL MAGAZINE)

WAHLAWA (INCTAMSPAC)



KALAELOA (BARBER'S POINT)

MOKAPI (KANEHOHE MCBH)



KEAWALAUOPIULOA (PEARL HARBOR)

HAWAII

KAHOOLAWE (MILITARY RESERVATION)

PŌHAKILOA (PTA)



Summer Kaimalia Nemeth

Summer Nemeth (formerly Summer Mullins) is a kanaka maoli woman/teacher/activist/poet. Her mo'okū'auhau runs through several places including Mākua Valley on the island of O'ahu, which has been used for military training since the 1930's.

Nā Wahine Koa

In the time of Kū
I am . . . a woman
Shhh!
I mean . . . a word warrior

the mana of our mo'okū'auhau
under the guise of
what they consider to be
"anthropology"

Who throws words like spears
To penetrate the heart
of the tourist industry
To bore holes of awareness
through western ideology
To awaken the thoughts
of the seventh generation
To ensure a prophecy can be fulfilled

I am a woman
Who stands steadfast
in the shadows of rainclouds

To ensure a prophecy can be fulfilled
In the time of Kū
I become:

An amplifier of ideas
A blower of the pū
A uniter of youth

to call upon Kamapua'a
to uproot those
who transplant golf courses
to burial sites at Mōkapu
who erect false gods and
blatant flags of disrespect
over the 'iwi of our ancestors
in the name of "rest and relaxation"

Who stands steadfast
in the life-giving mountain mist

In the time of Kū
I am . . . a woman
Shhh!
I mean . . . a word warrior

to summon Wākea
to summon Māui
to defend us against those
who erect white balls
atop sacred slopes of
Mauna Kea
and Haleakalā
desecrating the wahi pana

Who takes an aiha'a stance
against those who threaten to take
the 'iwi of our kupuna as curios
who defile and desecrate

of Poli'ahu,
of Lilinoe
and Hina

in the name of "science"

I am a woman

who stands upon sickened shores
in tainted waters
where 'ō'io and ulua swim
and dead mollusks tell stories

to call upon Ka'ahupāhau
to protect us against
those who erect the white globe
a beacon of violence and destruction
atop ke kai mālie o Pu'uloa
the sacred uterus
ke 'awalau o Pu'uloa
once a place of nourishment
the sacred waters
once the homeland of
Ka'ehuikimanōopu'uloa

where Kaikimanōopu'uloa
was displaced
a future guardian
washed upon polluted shores
teeth grabbing hold to roots which
entagled its body
now just another sacrifice
for "national security"

I am a woman

of valley and stream
Who summons the mo'o

Kihanuilūmoku
guardian of Lā'ieikawai

to protect our wahi pana
to devour like flies those
who train soldiers
to penetrate the depths of Papa
raping her with foreign projectiles
until she bleeds rusted metal

Who calls upon Kihanuilūmoku
guardian of Lā'ieikawai

to protect our wahi pana
to lash out against those
who turn fishponds
into toxic stews
who turn fertile islands
into barren deserts
in the name of "national defense"

I am a woman

who calls upon Pikoiaka'alala
to use his skills
against those 'iole who erect
barbed wire fences as barriers
compressing culture and
conforming kanaka maoli
into wandering sprits
who roam beaches and parks
for eternity
forcing them to eat the moths
of western society

A woman

Who summons Pikoiaika'alala
to draw his bow
against those who hō'iole
who erect barbed wire fences
around the 'āina of our ancestors

claiming with ordnance
littering with toxics

our Mākua,
Lihue,
Lualualei,
Pōhakuloa,
Nohili,
Waikāne,
Waimomi
Wai'anae ...

our waiwai
our 'āina
our kai
as personal playgrounds
in the name of "Homeland Security"

In the time of Kū
I am a woman
I mean ... word warrior

Who takes an aiha'a stance
against those who erect
concrete structures
as personal invitations
to pakeha/palagi/papalagi/haole

hā'ole (those without breath)

Who takes an aiha'a stance
against those who prostitute

our culture
in the name of capitalism
selling cellophane lies
corrupting our identity
with casting calls for Sweet Leilani
in faux grass skirts and coconut bras
eroticizing young kanaka maoli
swaying their hips for a tip
to haole hula hula songs

In the time of Kū
I'm not your Sweet Leilani Barbie
I don't have arms that will bend
under pressure
Into subservient,
welcoming positions
I don't own a cellophane skirt,
a coconut bra
I don't live in a grass shack,
own a canoe
I don't sing and dance
for your entertainment

So ...
Don't ask me to be your living trophy
Don't plan to shelve me alongside
your collectibles
Don't mistake me for your:
slave,
server
Or entertainer

(Or my big blalah father
will come and sit on you ...)

* * *
In the time of Lono

When the flag of white kapa flies
I am a woman
a weaver of words

Who reinforces red feathers to capes
that connect and entwine
the blood of fallen generations
to the shoulders of young warriors
To ensure that their mana is restored
That their bones shall live

So that their bones shall live ...

In the time of Lono

I am a woman

a teller of stories
Who recites the chants
of Hi'iakaikapoliopole
of La'amaomao
of Lā'ieikawai

Who praises the actions
of Kuapāka'a
of Kahalaomāpuana

Who remembers the struggles
of Lili'ulani
of George Helm

Who celebrates
Sovereign Sunday,
the Hawaiian Renaissance,
Pūnana leo
and Aloha 'Āina

So that these bones shall live ...

In the time of Lono

I prepare ho'okupu for the ahu:
Kalo,
'uala,
'awa
wrapped in green la'i

I give thanks
for the restoration of pono

I ask for the blessings of my ancestors

E ho mai ka 'ike ...
E ho mai ka ikaika ...
E ho mai ke akamai ...
E ho mai ka maopopo pono ...
E ho mai ka 'ike pāpālua ...
E ho mai ka mana ...

In the time of Lono

I wont forget when:

You asked me to be your living trophy
You shelved me alongside your
collectibles
You mistook me for your
slave,
server
and entertainer

In the time of Lono
I will wait
for the time of Kū to deal with you

Jamaica Osorio

Jamaica is a bi-lingual 17 year old Sr. at Kamehameha schools Kapalama. She attended Ke Kula Kaiapuni o Anuenue for 6 years where she became very interested in her culture, language and history which prompted many of her poems, especially this one. Jamaica has been writing since 7th grade and competing in slam poetry competitions since the 9th grade.

eJAMAICAtion

Canada
Alaska
Texas
California
Illinois
Oregon
Washington
Florida
DC
New York City
Tahiti

From Teachers to Deans
Students to doctors
From historians to athletes
Native Americans to Tourists
The questions are the same

Do people speak English there?
Do people live in grass huts?
Does everybody dance hula?
Does everybody surf?
Can you teach me how to surf?
Can you teach me Hawaiian?

I haven't been everywhere
But everywhere I've been
Questions follow me
Like ignorance from lack of
education
Everybody I meet
Wants to know
Or ask me about
Hawai'i
A small chain of islands located in
the world's largest ocean
It's the most geographically isolated
place on earth

And I say
Huhu Kou Hupo Iau
Your historical ignorance is at
least an irritant that led to the
invasion of my Nation
And I know it is of no significance
to you
But it's important to me
So no
I won't teach you how to surf
I won't teach you to speak
Hawaiian
But if you've got three minutes
I teach unwritten history

1779, the landing of James Cook
Began an infestation
Of disease unheard of in the
Hawaiian nation
Tuberculosis, gonorrhea, and
syphilis
Being the prime examination
In a century
One million Hawaiian people
Soon became 37,000
In 1820 our ancestors were held up
by guns filled with biblical scripture
As if that made them any more
just

In 1848 our landscape was
plagued with sugar plantations
Owned by rich men who ultimately
overthrew our nation
They shipped foreign men
Filipino, Chinese and the Japanese
To Hawai'i bringing more disease,
pollution, and population

1887 bayonets forced a
constitution
Causing bloodshed from kings and
queens
Onto new parchment declaration

1893
We became America's possession
Iolani palace was wrapped with
soldiers
And bowed by bayonets
They took ships and military force
and forced a Hawaiian nation to its

knees
And so over the years
Families have been displaced
250,000 acres of lands
Have been taken
For war
Like 250,000 mothers
Ripped away from their children
While Wakea, our God of the
heavens screamed storms
American Politicians made their
speeches
To try to confuse the people
Only to leave us
speechless

But so long as people are asking
why
So long as our history is still
wanted passed on
We won't give up without a fight
America may owe its soldiers the
best possible training
But we owe our ancestors help, show
our culture is still self
sustaining
But America is still training
Occupying more than 250,000
acres of the Hawaiian islands
And 25% of Oahu alone
We've been a military state as long
as we've been a part of the united
states
And it hurts

When a fog confusion covers the
 judgment faces, and land of native
 people
 Kanaka
 And convinces the indigenous
 people to go along
 While killing native soil people and
 foreign soldiers
 It hurts
 Those of us whose sight never
 blurred
 Who see brothers and sisters
 brainwashed
 It hurts
 When the only choices that are left
 for the indigenous people are bad

choices
 America
 Don't you dare forget that it hurts
 It hurts our land.
 Papa
 Our heavens
 Wākea
 It hurts our ancestors
 Kupuna
 Our future generations
 Pua
 It hurts our souls
 Na'au
 America
 Your ignorance hurts

Darlene Rodrigues

Darlene Rodrigues is a 2nd generation Bisaya living on O'ahu who descends from a long line of rice farmers and pineapple pickers. She speaks truth to power as a poet, writer, activist and community educator. Her work has been appeared in Amerasia Journal and Babaylan: An Anthology of Filipina and Filipina American Writers. She dedicates these poems to her cousin, SGT Myla L. Maravillosa, who died in Iraq on Dec. 24, 2005. Myla was 24 years old, in the US Army Reserves and had been in Iraq less than a month. May she and others who have died because of illegal occupations rest in peace.

4 years and 1 anniversary are enough for me

I'm here because of love and because
 Love embraced my cousin and carried her to heaven
 In the blast of an RPG
 I'm here because she was a compassionate person who loved everyone
 Even you, Mr. Bush
 Even your greed cannot take away the glory of who Myla is
 And the lessons she taught me

This may sound strange
 But I confess after reading Eckhart Tolle and the Dalai Lama

I truly love you
 I know,
 This is coming from someone who carries protest signs
 But I love you enough to tell you no more
 Tell you we must stop
 Love the world enough to know there should be no anti in my anti-war poem
 As I struggle to turn around what you spit
 Your lies, your betrayal, smoke and mirrors
 The doublespeak of greed propped as foreign policy
 Your occupation feigning as humanitarian aid

I struggle to turn around
 What you tell the mothers, fathers, and the families
 Who have paid the "ultimate sacrifice"
 I struggle to turn around when you gave Auntie a check to go with her body,
 Placed a flag on her casket
 Held choke memorial services and say we will never forget
 I struggle to turn around when you told us "we're proud and
 You should be proud" of
 Your dead daughter who died serving our country
 Even if it was for a pack of your lies

I love you enough to tell you
 You cannot buy our silence
 You will not buy our complicity
 You want our loved one's death
 To mean something
 Well, you better listen

I love you and the world enough to tell you,
 Fuck you, stop telling me I'm not proud of my loved one
 When I tell you that our country should not occupy anywhere
 Should not lie
 Should not kill and arm ourselves with nuclear technology
 Should not embargo or send in more troops
 I love you enough to tell you
 Stop spreading your bases in so many places

And clean up where you've been

I love you enough to tell you
Take back the flag you drape on the caskets
Take back your false honor
And the blind patriotism shoved down our grieving throats
We've already wept enough

I love you enough to tell you what I am proud of
I am proud of her regardless of the circumstances of her death
I am proud because she was someone who cared about the poor
Who worried about the Iraqi children and the world that they lived in
I am proud because she kept her honor by always keeping true to her word
I am proud because she wouldn't have used her own death as a reason to
oppress another human
I am proud because she knew of the conflict between holding the bible in one
hand and a gun in the other

Mr. Bush, the lesson from Myla runs deep
This comes from the love that will save this world from you when I say
Fuck you
Step back
Keep your pack of lies and dirty tricks
And listen when I say "enough already"
My words will never erase the anniversary my family will celebrate each
Christmas
We cannot erase the anniversaries of other families who've lost someone
But I love you enough to tell you no more
We need to stop making these anniversaries

Darlene Rodrigues

March 17, 2007

The Meaning of Peace

I. Gifts

This war is a gift
Bush is a gift to the world

A challenge to us
To which we must rise
Thank you, precious gem of my teacher
Myla's death and carrying her home in an American-made coffin
Is the gift of our pain
To tell the world that true security comes
Not from the point of a gun
But from the hands of our family
From the ground we walk on
From the fresh wai that feeds us
The basak full of healthy grain
When all the children are fed
When people are heard and respected
When colonizers are resisted
When the oppressed speak the truth of their existence
When the silently complicit take off their blinders and join hands

II. True Security

True security happens
When fishermen and women who have harvested
The sea in Henoko
Surround the imperial tools of destruction
And say no more
3,000 miles away we surround the Japanese Consulate
And tie red ribbons
The blood of the sea
The blood of solidarity

True security happens
When anak of the bayan
Balikbayan their ancestral souls
Carry signs and tell you GMA to get out
Stop the killing, stop the repression
When the 2nd and 3rd generation of those in the diaspora
Feel the pain of their kapatid
And tell you to stop at the FILCOM

True security happens at Makahiki at Mōkapu
And Auntie TK speaking out about her love of Ka Pae 'Āina
Embracing babaylan and holding us in sisterhood

True security is Kyle giving me
Worms to start my own bin
Learning to transform our waste back to
Nourishment for the 'āina

III. Gratitude

To these gifts
I thank you for this challenge
To the nature of our hearts

You push us hard and we
Throw you off in a move
Flowing hands in flight

Cawa Tran

Cawa is a graduate student at UH Mānoa pursuing a PhD in Zoology with the goals of teaching and research in the future, along with saving the environment and sustaining life on the planet. When she is not in the lab, she enjoys writing poetry, and believes in striving to create a community in which political activism is driven by the power of art, language, creativity, and most importantly, truth.

Between My Legs

For the Iranian women who march against violence on International Women's Day

Between my legs
I am waiting
I am waiting to unmask a face and generations of faces before me
so you can finally see me
a woman
chin lifted in your direction
eyes challenging you
mouth propped to speak
Between my legs

is a graveyard built from centuries of stones
you've lashed at my body
for the sake of what you call impurity
and bruises turn to blood
seeping into soil
buried and forgotten
Between my legs
I am weeping
I am weeping for my daughters and granddaughters after me
who you will continue to invade
until the earth runs bare
where weeds won't even tread
because all our tears have dried away
Between my legs
once ran a river that streamed through all the valleys and out to the seas
giving birth to life and humanity
where you make me now
less than human
Between my legs
I am fighting
I am fighting against all your relentless armies
who use force to penetrate my body
and my conscious being
because there is NOTHING LEFT between my legs
but most of all
Between my legs
Between these legs
I know
I know that everything that is there
belongs to me

Mahealani Wendt

Mahealani Wendt (formerly Mahealani Kamauu) has been Administrator and Executive Director of the Native Hawaiian Legal Corporation for 33 years. NHLHC is a public interest lawfirm whose attorneys assert, protect and defend Kanaka Maoli rights to land, natural resources and related entitlements. Mahealani's poetry and short stories have appeared in several anthologies and her first book, *Uluhaimalama*, is scheduled for publication by Kuleana 'Ōiwi Press later this year. She and her husband are the parents of seven children and eleven grandchildren.

A Kanaka Maoli Mother's Meditation and Prayer

I fear for my children
and declare it is wrong;
I declare it is wrong
I should fear
that my children
and their children
will perish
in a holocaust
not of their making;
I declare it is wrong
I should fear
that my children
and their children
will perish
in a conflagration
not of their making;
a holocaust,
a conflagration
in which they had
no choice --
a holocaust,
a conflagration
in which they
were innocent.
With each passing day
I see the emergence of

Hawai'i
a forward military area,
a staging area for
the unspeakable --
a theater of war.
With each passing day
I see the emergence of
Hawai'i, ground zero --
a Pacific outpost
sacrificial
by American design.
I see the Pentagon
far away
its generals
smugly issuing orders
so cavalierly
signaling death.
I see political leaders
selling the people
down the river
secreting,
shelling out
silver shekels.
I see the greed of acquisition,
savage destruction,
the poisoning of our beloved

'āina, wai, kai,
waiwai o Hawai'i Nei
sacred places, all --
Pōhakuloa, Mauna Kea,
Kaho'olawe, Haleakalā,
Makua, Waiāhole-Waikāne,
Pōka'i, Lualualei, Kāne'ohe,
Waimānalo, Nohili --
beyond counting,
a terrible enumeration.
I hear euphemisms,
military speak --
"superfund";
"strike force";
"repository";
"buffer zone";
"impact zone";
"depleted uranium";
"fire training";
"ordnance";
"installation"
all signifying death.
And death.
Only death.
We who go hungry,
we in the bilges
of America's
ship of state,
we beneficiaries
of America's
trickle-down
have been
tricked down
to the last
of who we are --
the Suffering First.
And we declare

that America is wrong;
And we declare
that America is morally bankrupt;
And we declare
that America daily sows the seeds
of its own destruction;
And we declare that we
an ancient people
proud Kanaka Maoli
will flourish!

We call upon
The Gods of our ancestors,
the All-Powerful and Mighty
Gods of our ancestors.
We ask for their protection
from out-of-control America
from global tyrant America
from world bully America;
We call upon
The Gods of our ancestors
for the sake
of ourselves
of our children
of our children's children
and all the generations
to come
mau a mau.
We call upon
the sacred and most high
'Ānalaniamamao --
we ask for Our God's forgiveness
we ask for Our God's protection
for ourselves
for our children
for our children's children
and generations to come

mau a mau.
We call upon
Kū, Kāne, Lono and Kanaloa --
Ka Ha, the four Great Deities --
we ask Our Gods' forgiveness
we ask Our Gods' protection
for ourselves
for our children
for our children's children
and generations to come
mau a mau.
We call upon
Haumea, Haumea o Nu'umealani,
sister of Kāne and Kanaloa,
progenitor of the first man --
we ask for Her forgiveness
we ask for Her protection
for ourselves
for our children
for our children's children
and generations to come
mau a mau.
We call upon
Hina, Kani ae Hina i ke ahua --
Hina proclaimed from a high place--
Companion of Kū
on the voyage from Kahiki --
we ask for Her forgiveness
we ask for Her protection
for ourselves
for our children
for our children's children
and generations to come
mau a mau.
We call upon Poli'ahu --
Goddess of Mauna a Wākea,
kuahiwi kū ha'o i ka mālie,

whose soft, snow-covered breast
America defiled
riddled with bullets
reddened with blood
we ask Her forgiveness
we ask Her protection
for ourselves
for our children
for our children's children
and generations to come
mau a mau.
We call upon Pele --
wrathful goddess,
fire goddess,
and declare that
if there be holocaust,
if there be conflagration,
we ask that You grant
that we Your children
may live forever
at Your holy fires,
mōhai ali'i.
We ask Your forgiveness
we ask Your protection
for ourselves
for our children
for our children's children
and generations to come
mau a mau.
O Goddesses with many offspring
Akua mo'o lau, e --
O Mo'inanea,
O Kihawahine,
O Waka,
O Kihanuilūmoku,
O Hauwahine,
O Kaikapu,

We ask Your forgiveness
we ask Your protection
for our ourselves
for our children
for our children's children
and generations to come
mau a mau.
E Kini o ke Akua
E ka lehu o ke Akua
O forty thousand Gods
O four hundred thousand Gods
O forty thousand times
four hundred thousand Gods
of our ancestors
we ask your forgiveness
we ask your protection
for ourselves
for our children
for our children's children
and generations to come
mau a mau.
E Nā 'Aumakua
ancestral guardians
you who keep us close
who watch over us
in this earthly realm
day-to-day
We ask your forgiveness
we ask your protection
for ourselves
for our children
for our children's children
and generations to come
mau a mau.
O ye Host of Gods
Almighty and Most Excellent
All of You

we your humble people
ask your protection
forever and forever
we ask that You rain down
Your vengeance, Your wrath,
Your fury, against our enemies
if they would visit
death upon us
if they would visit
destruction upon us
we ask that You first
deflect this death
deflect this destruction
protect us from all of this
return it to them in kind!
return it to them in kind!
return it to them in kind!
Amama wale! Ua noa! Lele aku!

-- 8-14-07

Sonya Zabala

Sonya Zabala is a second generation multi-racial Filipina whose roots take her back to Dagupan City, Pangasinang , to Turtle Island of the Alonquin Nation and everywhere in between. Sonya is the mother of three miracles, Kalikolehua, Kauanoe and Kawaiola and the soul mate of Kalawaia Moore. She is an active seeker in Urban Babaylan and meets with her sisters on every full moon or Nanay Buwan. Sonya is an activist, educator and family advocate here in Hawai'i and beyond.

On Militarism.

My father joined the US Navy to become an American citizen. He was sixteen when he left home. His kuyas before him did the same; only they told my bae (grandma in pangalatok) they were going to college in Manila and they needed the family's money from the fishpond to support their studies. Several months later my father learned that his kuyas joined the US Army. He then followed in pursuit for the chance of a better something. Eventually, all thirteen of my aunts and uncles, cousins and relatives I barely knew were coming to Brooklyn New York. We spent much of my childhood month after month at the airport picking up a new relative. Little by little each auntie sponsored another family member from Dagupan or elsewhere from the barrio. Many years later my eldest brother joined the US Navy and was intractably a part of Desert Storm. My father died. My mother and family all posted up yellow ribbons. All the elders expressed their pride saying, "Like father like son." Unable to express my dismay to my family who so loved the US and who took nearly everything I said as personal attack, I took to writing. On the one hand the US military brought my family to the continental US and they were able to in turn not only support their family in the Philippines but sponsor our extended family to America as well. I wrote the following letter the year my kuya joined the US Navy.

My dear brother,

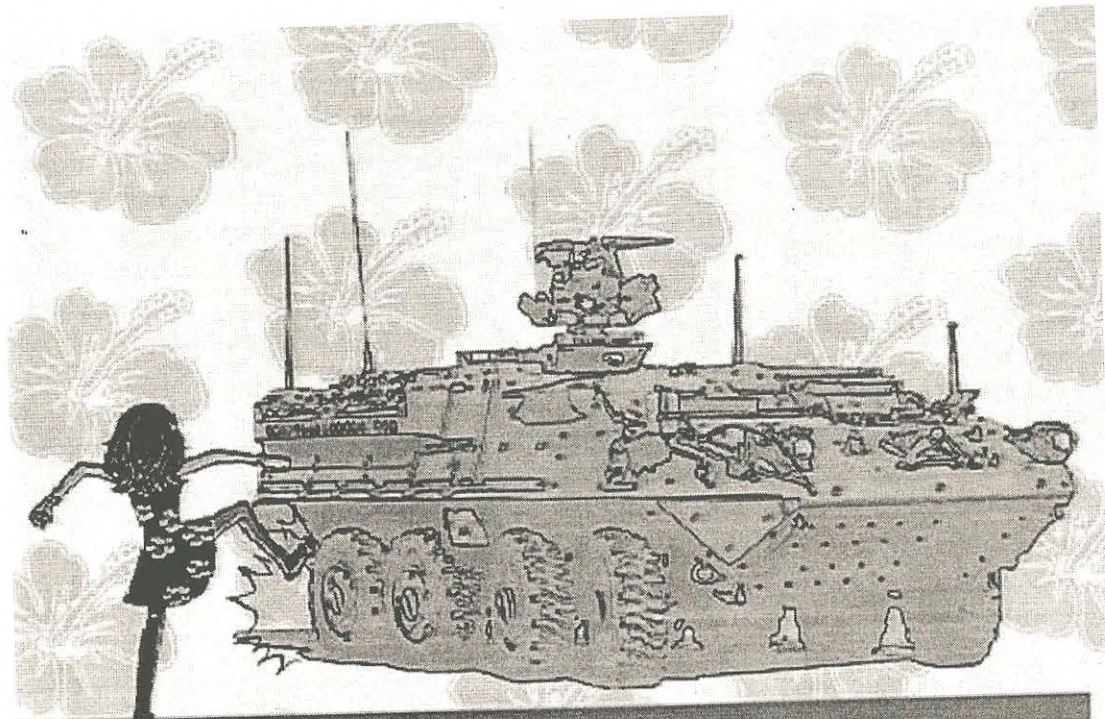
I love you. I must say that I do not believe in what you are doing and I do not think that deep down inside that you believe in what you are doing either. You and the other engineers are brilliant. I implore you to use your brilliance in ways that sustain our kin. The irrigation projects are working. The community computer classes are creating more engineers and creative thinkers. We are seeing results. But, the lands that you and your comrades invade are the skins of our peoples. The soils you plant grenades in are the wombs of our mother and grandmother. The waters you navigate through poison the stomachs of our sisters and brothers. The submarines protect no one and harm everyone. You and I have been to Subic Bay together. We found our own cousin selling her body to US soldiers. Remember that! She was not a nameless face. She was our kin. We have slept in her home, ate with her family. We blessed the food all together. We are of this land and of her people. These words are not simply metaphors. They are truths that need to be reckoned with. We are connected to the earth. We are the air. And you are NOT a yes man.

Your sister,

Sonya

Each of the covers was handcrafted to combine recycled papers, Kauna'oa for its healing properties, and fragments of kukui leaves which are kinolau, symbolic representations, of Lono. The addition of the leaves serves as a reminder that we must continue to strive for times of peace.

The na'au of each collection has been printed on 100% recycled paper, and each book handbound.



Artwork by Gaby Ray 2005

Mahalo Piha

for your contributions

Mahalo to AFSC and DMZ-Hawai'i Aloha 'Aina for the support.

Mahalo nui to our poets and artists:

*Ellen-Rae Cachola, Grace Alvaro Caligtan, Asia Collier,
Melisa Casumbal, Nicki Garces, Brenda Kwon,
Brandy McDougall, Melanie Medalle, Summer Nemeth,
Jamaica Osorio, Gaby Ray, Darlene Rodrigues,
Cawa Tran, Mahealani Wendt, and Sonya Zabala.*

**Mahalo to Leandra Wai for sharing your inspirational leo,
your kukui leaves and your kauna'oa
and to Kyle Kajihiro who shared his mana'o and volunteered as a
tour guide on a very inspirational trek.**

Mahalo nui to those who worked to put this collection together:

*Shannan Collier, Terri Keko'olani, Brenda Kwon,
Summer Nemeth, Anjali Puri, Darlene Rodrigues, and Cawa Tran*

Without you this metaphorical kapa project would not have been possible.

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