

though much of the interaction started with banter, the men quickly became sympathetic and strove to help each other heal. When Matariki sang about longing and hope and Francis sang about trust, the passion in their voices was revealing. The audience resonated with their feelings not only through the dialogue but also through the vulnerability expressed in their lyrics. The quartet disrupted static notions about Māori men that paint them as aggressive and unable to deal with the pressures of today by being forthcoming with their emotional state and working through their tribulations with each other. These songs, or types of stories, stem from the foursome's lived experiences and constitute a timely representation of Māori masculinity that is based in brotherhood, emotion, and healing.

While the Summer Pops Tour's narrative was told entirely through the eyes of four young men, this collaborative series of performances lays the foundation for broader conversations about Native identity, space, and agency. For example, the performances might prompt Māori women to consider how the garage party and other commonplace spaces have been influential in how they understand themselves. As Native people, we can reassess how our everyday sites are integral for cultural transmission. This tour also helped to open new pathways in thinking about how to reorient exclusive spaces and make them meaningful to Native peoples. Despite efforts to make the show more accessible, audiences were still predominantly older and white. Changing spaces that have traditionally excluded indigenous audiences is

an ongoing process that takes time. Thankfully, the Modern Māori Quartet's humorous and skillful shows will continue to push notions of Māori identities as complex, subtle, and rich. The dynamic stories told through their captivating music will continue to help breakdown boundaries between Māori and settlers.

The Summer Pops Tour with the Modern Māori Quartet may have ended, but this collaboration propelled the group into a busy year. Māori Television now hosts the foursome in a weekly show titled "My Party Song." Similar to the Summer Pops' narrative of the Māori garage party, each episode includes the quartet and special guest stars singing some of Aotearoa's famous party tunes. In August 2017, the quartet will take part in the Edinburgh Festival Fringe, the world's largest arts festival. The group's first studio album with original music, some of which was included in the Summer Pops Tour, will be released in September 2017 and celebrated with a nationwide promotional tour. This year offers a variety of ways to catch the excellence, fun, and skill that is the Modern Māori Quartet.

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Honolulu Biennial: Middle of Now
| Here. Multiple venues, 8 March–8
May 2017, Honolulu, Hawai'i.

This spring, the Honolulu Biennial made its debut on the global art stage with a multi-venue, two-month-long exhibition featuring both established and emerging Pacific artists, including

a contingent of Kanaka Maoli (Native Hawaiian) and Hawai'i-based artists. The exhibition also included a number of Southeast Asian artists, a few East Asian art stars, and two Middle-East-based artists, giving a first impression that the exhibition sought to emulate the "expanded regionalism" of the now well-established Asia Pacific Triennial (Queensland, Australia). Yet, at least for this first iteration, there was a clear curatorial focus on the importance of Pacific contemporary art.

The exhibition privileged photography, video, and installation pieces that revolved around a few primary themes: ongoing processes of land and cultural appropriation, the loss and revitalization of indigenous knowledge, the militarization of the Pacific, and environmental degradation. Visual conversations across these interrelated issues were framed by the title "Middle of Now | Here," which played on the common trope of Hawai'i's position "in the middle of nowhere." Parsing that phrase another way ("now here"), the exhibition at once critiqued continental-centric perceptions of the Pacific and celebrated Islander presence. In all, the Pacific-centric focus—clearly the hallmark of curator Ngahiraka Mason (formerly the curator for Māori art at the Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki before her move to Hawai'i) along with the curatorial advisory board—is what kept the exhibition from becoming simply another global-regional biennial event.

Walking into the primary venue space, called "the Hub" (a sixty-thousand-square-foot former retail space in a soon-to-be-rehabilitated area of downtown Honolulu), visi-

tors were immediately faced with invocations of Hawai'i's colonial history. Artist Drew Broderick's *Billboard I. (The sovereignty of the land is perpetuated in righteousness)* (2017) featured a detail of mist and palm trees appropriated from George Carter's *Death of Captain James Cook* (1783) blown up to billboard size. The visual and conceptual void suggested by this detail acted as a backdrop for a vintage-looking neon "vacancy" sign. The acerbic visual and verbal play of the piece created a bridge to understanding contemporary tourism as a continuation of the colonial fantasy in which Hawai'i continues to be seen as an enchanted and inviting "empty" space.

The exhibition then opened to installations by Beatrice Glow and by Alfredo and Isabel Aquilizan, both of which established another important thread in the exhibition that put Islanders from Southeast Asia in direct conversation with those from Oceania. From the far back wall, the voice of Marshallese poet and activist Kathy Jetñil-Kijiner beckoned. *Islands in a Basket* (2017) is Jetñil-Kijiner's first video installation. Her three videos seemed a bit disjointed and tried to do too much at once to relate the dire problems of Micronesia (militarism, a polluted and toxic environment caused by US nuclear testing, capitalist-induced climate change, and a population seeking refuge, reparations, and health care). But the poet's spoken word and subtle demarcation of space with lauhala (pandanus) mats suggested intimacy. Visitors were invited to walk barefoot across the mats to look at photographs of Bikini Island's devastated landscape and read

related texts. The images and documents were cradled in a number of banonoor (small coconut-leaf baskets with two handles) in the corner, just below a video that focused on the process of making the baskets. At this moment, the layered meanings of the creation myth referenced in the title, the customary practice of weaving the baskets (which are commonly used to share food with others in the community), and climate justice issues of the here and now all came together in a powerful way. The complex weaving of form and significance resonated in a number of other works throughout the biennial—the textile installation by Kanaka Maoli artist Marques Hanalei Marzan, a documentary film by Micki Davis tracing the revival of Chamorro navigation, and Sean Connelly’s material study of loulu (*Pritchardia*) palm thatching at Foster Botanical Garden located a few miles from the Hub, to name a few.

The issue of migration in the Pacific was picked up on the other side of the Hub venue with two videos by New Zealand-based Tongan artist John Vea. *She Sows This ‘Āina with Her Younger Siblings, Yet She Cannot Inherit That Same ‘Āina* (2016–2017) offers an allegorical commentary about the bind of Vea’s mother, forced to migrate from Tonga to Aotearoa/ New Zealand as the capitalist property system made it impossible to survive in Tonga, but with no recourse to claim landownership in Tonga under the constitution’s rules of patriarchal inheritance. The video focuses on a game in which family members play a version of “Eggs in a Basket” with four piles of rocks in the four corners of a small backyard (referenc-

ing a house foundation). Each player has a pile and steals as many rocks as possible from another player’s pile to put in his or her own, while all the other players do the same. In the video, there is no clear outcome, and although everyone is laughing at the absurdity of the game, a melancholic undertone is clearly palpable, making it one of the most emotionally complex pieces in the biennial.

Vea’s other video, *Concrete Is as Concrete Doesn’t* (2017), was inspired by sharing stories (talanoa) with Kanaka Maoli artist ‘Īmaikalani Kalahela during one of Vea’s research trips to prepare for the biennial (it also references the title of an essay by philosopher Brian Massumi). Like Jetñil-Kijiner’s work, it uses sound to great effect. Noises of gently clinking concrete paving stones draw viewers toward a video wall with six screens. In one of the screens, two men are slowly moving a five-foot section of pavers up a hill, taking a brick from the back and moving it to the front with a painstaking perseverance. When they eventually disappear from one frame, they reappear in another. The piece demands concentration and time to understand both the futility and the persistence of migrant labor in an urbanizing Pacific.

Other exciting moments in the show also moved toward opening the position of “here and now” to truly inquire as to “where” and “when” community is formed—and across what implicit cultural lines. Lisa Reihana’s two-channel video *Tai Whetuki—House of Death, Redux* (2016), installed in the Pacific Hall of the Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum, for instance, merges the gods’ time

(from which we came and to which we return at death) with historical time and Māori mourning rituals with Tahitian ones. The video was mounted near the Tahitian chief mourner costume that had inspired its making. In public conversations with the other biennial artists, Reihana spoke about the inherent vulnerabilities opened by making and showing a piece in such a way as to potentially activate the ritual objects within the space of the ethnographic museum. Even more importantly, the piece openly addressed and connected Reihana's Ngāpuhi, Ngāti Hine, and Ngāti Tū genealogy with multiple bloodlines and communities across the Pacific. In the context of the Honolulu Biennial, she and others were able to confront, if not resolve, the distinctiveness of particular cultural identities with Oceanic solidarity.

Similar conversations were invited by Kanaka Maoli artist Kaili Chun's *Hulali i Ka Lā* (2017), mounted in the lobby of the Prince Waikiki. This hanging sculptural installation consists of an undulating school of 850 copper fish, each one pounded into form by an employee of the Prince Waikiki during a series of community workshops. Through their participation in the forums, hotel workers (many having a migrant history relating back to Hawai'i's plantation era) learned from Chun the history of the Pi'inaio Stream, which once ran through the land now under the hotel. The resulting permanent installation shows that each fish is both a material record of an individual's energy and force and a part of something bigger. This symbolic representation of community-in-diversity also invokes one meaning of

the Hawaiian concept of makawalu (numerous, in great quantities; literally, "eight eyes"), asking us to see one thing in relation to everything else.

Sometimes, the multivalent ideas and moods of these works were hard to hear underneath more strategically strident and vigilant visual refrains against colonialism's traumatic legacies. For instance, Yuki Kihara, well known for her appropriative photographic strategies, focused on the history of pseudo-scientific photography in *A Study of a Samoan Savage* (2015). In a single room, she displayed both the historical anthropometric photographs that objectified and quantified racial difference and her own photographic responses, which worked to heighten the colonial gaze of the white anthropologist while also exaggerating the continued role of (art) photography to seduce the viewer to again objectify and fetishize her subjects. But in this case, some key photographs feature her subject, Samoan artist Ioane Ioane, returning the gaze. The strategy is echoed in Greg Semu's photographic self-portraits. In *Earning My Stripes* (2015), he features his own body undergoing the Samoan tatau process. Vernon Ah Kee's video *CantChant* (2009), with footage of a barbed wire-wrapped surfboard shot by a gun off-screen and a heavy-metal soundtrack, and Brett Graham's rigorous axiomatic space, featuring an indented and emaciated concrete rendition of the Hawaiian island of Kaho'olawe in the center of the floor, place viewers in an uncomfortable and indictable position of power. These works create a strong "now" and "here" roll call to confront injustices of the past, but

without the open-ended invitation to continue the conversation in the way that some of the others works do. Although Kihara's, Semu's, and Ah Kee's work have already been shown elsewhere, and, along with Graham's, strike the same general chord, it is perhaps understandable that Mason was compelled to include them as a way to strengthen the Pacific presence in the biennial.

Despite the strong representation of Pacific Islanders, the distinctiveness of the Honolulu Biennial (in the context of more than two hundred biennials now on the international art calendar, and many of the best ones in the Asia-Pacific region) was still not readily apparent. It seemed to waver in its desire, on the one hand, to cater to cosmopolitan audiences prepared for a fairly traditional exhibition-hall event, and, on the other, to enable more open-ended conversations and experimental artist approaches (including more community-oriented work) that could strengthen future Pacific communities to confront past and present issues. The focus on Island knowledge and Island diversity, especially in the face of the now and present dangers of globalization and climate change, was an important starting point. My hope is that these themes can be strengthened in the Honolulu Biennial's future iterations. This would help to overcome the perception that Hawai'i and its art scene are at once too "peripheral" to the continental United States and too Americanized for the Pacific and also better use Hawai'i's unique connecting space to its advantage.

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Iep Jāltok: Poems from a Marshallese Daughter, by Kathy Jetñil-Kijiner. Sun Tracks: An American Indian Literary Series, volume 80. Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 2017. ISBN 978-0-8165-3402-9, 81 pages, some text in Marshallese. US\$14.95.

I wish to dedicate this review to the late Dr Teresia Teaiwa, prolific "microwoman" (the name of her blog), scholar, and poet who led the way for me and her many other students, as well as Kathy Jetñil-Kijiner.

I took my copy of *Iep Jāltok* to the Lepindau, tiny coral islets located off the coast of Madolenihmw in Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia, where I, in the words of Alice Walker (who wrote a blurb at the back of the book), "savored" the words of fellow Micronesian (Marshallese) poet Kathy Jetñil-Kijiner. Being from a volcanic island, I needed to simulate what it must feel like to be from atolls such as Majuro, Kili, and Aur, all of which are featured in *Iep Jāltok*. I have only been to the airport in Majuro and sat on the airplane in Kwajalein, and I cannot claim to know much about the Republic of the Marshall Islands. I reclined in a small, thatched-roof bungalow and read, all the while listening to the waves and feeling the vulnerability of a world that grows warmer. I looked to the left at the ocean and to the right at more ocean and watched the land grow smaller as the tide rose higher. Frankly, the experience was quite terrifying, and anyone who is not a believer in climate change should be sent to an atoll with a copy of *Iep Jāltok*. Jetñil-Kijiner writes about her islands with the respect, fear, and love that only someone of the place can,