The Restoration of a King
by Glenn Wharton, art conservator, Glenn Wharton & Associates, Inc.

In 1996 I was contracted to perform a condition assessment of the Kamehameha I monument in North Kohala. The monument is the original cast of the gilt bronze sculpture that is installed in front of the Judiciary Building in downtown Honolulu. It is located in Kapa'a, a small town near Kamehameha's birthplace on the Island of Hawai‘i. My assessment was part of a survey administered by the Honolulu Mayor's Office of Culture and the Arts, and funded through the Save Outdoor Sculpture! (SOS!) project of the National Heritage Foundation and the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

My mission was to assess the condition of a number of sculptures on various islands and make recommendations for their conservation. Before traveling to North Kohala, I was told that the bronze was probably corroded because it had once been submerged in the sea, and had subsequently been exposed to over one hundred years of rain, wind and high levels of ultraviolet light from the tropical sun. I was also told that its

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Dear HMA Member:

As you know, Deborah Pope, contracted director of the Hawai‘i Museums Association since 1994, is leaving this role to become the director of the Shangri-la estate, owned by the Doris Duke Foundation. Deborah has accomplished much during her time with HMA, and the strides this organization has made, particularly in the area of cultural tourism, are directly attributable to her hard work and expertise.

Among her many accomplishments, Deborah secured private and public foundation support to implement key aspects of HMA’s marketing plan, such as inventorying cultural resources throughout the state, and publishing a related directory and marketing brochure. To complete this important work, and with funding from the Wallace Alexander Gerbode Foundation and the Hawai‘i Community Foundation, we have contracted with Anne Smoke. Ms. Smoke was very instrumental in as inventorying cultural resources and aspects of expertise. 

In addition, Ann Hayashi has been contracted to see to the day-to-day operations of HMA. Routine correspondence or inquiries should be directed to her at HMA, P.O. Box 4125, Honolulu, Hawaii, 96812-4125. We will continue to keep the membership informed via Nuhou and our website, http://www.openstudio.hawaii.edu/hma/. Of course, as your President for this year, please feel free to phone me directly at (526-1322 xt. 14) or e-mail at glagoria@tcmhi.org should you have any ideas you’d like to share.

On behalf of the HMA board, I’d like to thank Deborah for her excellent work for HMA, welcome these new members of the HMA team, and thank you for your continued membership and involvement.

Yours truly,
Georgianna M. Lagoria, President

Aloha Charlie

Dr. Charles Lamoureux, who served on the HMA Board of Directors from 1996—2000 and as Treasurer 1999—2000, passed away in Honolulu on October 16, 2000. Charlie was Director of the Harold L. Lyon Arboretum of the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa and Professor of botany at U.H. During his many years of teaching, both in and outside the classroom, Charlie touched and inspired many people and contributed immeasurably to our understanding and appreciation of Hawai‘i’s rich natural environment and plant life. Whether lecturing, leading hikes and field studies, or presiding over the Arboretum’s many plant sales and other events, Charlie was an enthusiastic and familiar participant in the community. The HMA Board and membership appreciated his leadership relations professionals. Most recently, Anne was an associate with Sheila Donnelly public relations, and had primary responsibility for Aloha Airlines and the French Festival, among other clients.

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State Art Museum

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opportunities for collaborations.

Hawai‘i’s Civic District has always been an important symbol to the people of the State with its landmark buildings that hold the heritage and history of the people. In 1968 John Carl Warnecke and Associates completed the Capitol District and Civic Center Master Plan which provided an incremental program for land and building acquisition, design, development, and construction. The report followed the basic planning concepts of the 1965 Honolulu Civic Center Master Plan and the Goals and Objectives established by the Citizens Advisory Committee and the Civic Center Policy Committee established by Governor John A. Burns and Mayor Neal S. Blaisdell.

This long range plan was to serve as a framework to accommodate the space needs of various departments and agencies, the functions of government, the needs of public institutions, and complex interrelationships with the rest of the city. It was to provide a functional, economical, dignified, and aesthetic framework of order and beauty expressive of Hawai‘i. The goals and objectives called for the creation of a coordinating agency within the civic district to encourage cultural activities and that cultural and recreational facilities and nighttime usage should be encouraged.

The Warnecke plan also made recommendations for the Armed Services YMCA. Its location, historic architecture, and open space were considered an important link between the downtown and Capitol area. The plan stated that the land and the building offered an alternative area for expansion of State government facilities. It recommended that the acquisition and use of the building could be used for cultural and civic activities such as art galleries, educational programs, and restaurant and had the potential of becoming a focal point of local cultural affairs.
State Art Museum

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History of the No. 1 Capitol District Building
The site is the original location of the Royal Hawaiian Hotel, which was purchased in 1917 for use as the Armed Forces YMCA. In 1926 the YMCA demolished the wooden building for the present steel reinforced concrete and structural steel Spanish Mission structure dedicated in 1928. Developer Chris Hemmeter purchased and renovated the YMCA in the late '80s at a cost of $47 million and later sold the building to a Japanese corporation for $80 million. The State has acquired the beautifully renovated building, which is on the national and state registers of historic places, for $22.5 million.

Planning a Home for the State’s Art Collection
In 1995 the Art in Public Places Program’s Statewide Public Art Master Plan identified the need to improve access to the State Art Collection. This master plan recognized that while the State had assembled a significant collection, the dispersed nature of displaying artworks in state buildings and offices did not allow them to be seen optimally nor allowed for interpretative and comparative contexts. The Statewide Public Art Master Plan recommended the establishment of a permanent principal location on O'ahu to exhibit the State’s Art Collection with neighbor island venues as satellites. The 1999 Legislative Audit also recommended that the SFCA improve accessibility to the collection.

In 1998 Governor Cayetano originally approached the SFCA with the concept of renovating the first floor of the Army-Air Force Exchange Services building for the SFCA’s galleries. A study was commissioned by the 2000 Legislature to investigate potential sites for the SFCA’s gallery. Fourteen sites were studied with the No. 1 Capitol District Building receiving top ranking. In addition, an environmental assessment was completed last summer, which determined the building and proposed gallery operations presented no negative impact and in fact could provide the programs recommended by the Warnecke plan.

The Galleries of the State Art Museum
The second floor galleries will showcase the State Art Collection, adjacent to the SFCA offices and gallery support area. The gracious second floor lobby surrounded by glass French doors and courtyard lanai offers wonderful opportunities to feature ceramic and sculpture displays, performing arts, literary readings, and other special events. The Diamond Head Wing will feature rotating exhibitions of new acquisitions, thematic displays from the State Art Collection, other SFCA programs, and host the Department of Education’s annual Hawai'i Regional Scholastic Art & Photography Competition. The ‘Ewa Wing will showcase a semipermanent exhibit of approximately 150 works interpreting the visual art history of Hawai‘i; reflecting the only broad, democratic, and dedicated documentation of Hawai‘i’s artistic and cultural legacy after statehood.

The SFCA’s Art in Public Places Program has been acquiring the best works of art from Hawai‘i’s most talented artists since 1967 when Hawai‘i became the first state in the nation with a “percent for art law.” Over 4,700 paintings, prints, drawings, photographs, ceramics, sculptures, and textiles document our history since statehood with depth and diversity. The State Art Collection is acquired with capital improvement program funds through the Works of Art Special Fund (1% Law) as a long-term investment to enhance Hawai‘i’s public buildings. As the collection matures, it has gained an international reputation as an historic, academic, social, and cultural resource that reflects the character of Hawai‘i, the multicultural heritage of its people, and the diverse creativity of its artists.

The State Art Museum represents a milestone that invigorates the SFCA’s mission to promote, perpetuate, and preserve culture and the arts, history, and the humanities. The State Art Collection is the public’s cultural legacy, which will be preserved and displayed for present and future generations.

Visitor Information Center
To achieve the full potential of Hawai‘i’s Capitol District, the vision includes the Capitol District Visitor Information Center that provides information, retail, and food services in the building’s entrance lobby. These services, which are standard in government buildings and cultural institutions, will benefit employees, residents, and visitors, and increase public access, provide educational programs, contribute to cultural tourism, and generate supplemental revenue. The SFCA as a coordinating agency within the civic center will collaborate with the capitol district cultural organizations to disseminate walking tour orientation, informational brochures, and encourage statewide cultural activities for students, residents, and visitors.

Schedule
The State’s vision will become a reality with the favorable approval of the 2001 Legislature to use the Works of Art Special Fund to renovate the second floor into the galleries and support areas. Construction will commence in July 2001 with the opening of the galleries in early fall 2002. The SFCA office is scheduled to move in June 2001.

The State’s investment in the Capitol District cultural infrastructure will revitalize the civic and business districts, instill greater pride in Hawai‘i residents, provide educational opportunities, build public and private collaborations, and keep Hawai‘i competitive in the tourism market. The State and the SFCA can take the lead to enhance the dignified historic and natural beauty of the district to nurture Hawai‘i into a vital Pacific center of culture, arts, education, and commerce.
The corroded bronze surface could not be seen because it was covered with paint. My goal was to develop a mechanism for removing the paint, stabilizing the corrosion, and returning the figure to the artist's original intent.

As a sculpture conservator who has worked in the field for over twenty years, this mission was standard fare. After arriving in Kapa‘au, I took documentation photographs of the monument and extracted small samples of paint and corrosion for analysis. All was going according to plan until I walked across the street to purchase souvenir post cards, where I was confronted by the shopkeeper who had noticed me standing around the monument for several hours taking notes. She wanted to know what I was up to. After I described my task, she implored me not to strip him of his brightly colored paint, and not to make him look like the cast of Kamehameha I in Honolulu. She told me that people in North Kohala paint their sculpture in lifelike colors because it helps them relate to him as a human being. She described annual celebrations on Kamehameha Day, in which Hawaiian chants are offered at sunrise, leis are draped over his shoulders, hula is performed, and a community parade is held in his honor.

As a sculpture conservator from the mainland with only a basic understanding of Hawaiian culture, I was not prepared for this. Rarely do people confront me with such strong feelings about the preserving their cultural heritage. I returned to finish my physical analysis of the sculpture, but could not get this conversation out of my mind. Here was a situation in which a community had physically altered a work of art. Was painting the sculpture a sacrilege, like adding a mustache to the Mona Lisa, or was it a local custom that should take priority over the artist's original expression? Who was I as an outsider to recommend that layers of paint and history be stripped away? What was the artist's original conception, anyway? What did it look like when it was first cast?

After returning home and wrestling with these issues, I wrote in my recommendations that substantial research needed to be undertaken, and that the community should be included in deciding how the monument should be conserved.

Four years since making this recommendation, I am now working with members of the North Kohala community in a project that is far beyond the conservator's ordinary call of duty. I have joined forces with a team of local citizens to develop community dialogue over whether the sculpture should be painted or not. We are using this question as a vehicle to engage people of North Kohala in a process of rethinking and reclaiming their past. Elementary school children are creating art projects related to the monument, high school students are holding a formal community debate, and elders are talking story in informal gatherings to invoke public memory of early celebrations of the monument. Keola John Lake has written a hula kiʻi script about the monument in Kapa‘au that is being performed by local kumu hula Raylene Lancaster and her hālau. Together we are testing the waters for a socially engaged conservation process. The aim of this article is to summarize my research on the sculpture and describe the conservation project that is currently unfolding.

The project is being administered by the Hawai‘i Alliance for Arts Education, in participation with Keahi Allen of the King Kamehameha Celebration Commission. The Alliance has been active in working with community members on related arts projects, to further engage their interests. We are working locally with the Kohala Hawaiian Civic Club, the Kohala...
The initiative was approved, and ten thousand dollars was allocated to commission the monument. A special committee of the legislature was formed “to take charge of the design and execution of a monument to commemorate the centennial of the Discovery of this Archipelago” (Anon. 1880). Walter M. Gibson was appointed chairman of the Commemorative Monument Committee, and he personally traveled to Boston where he commissioned Thomas Ridgeway Gould, an American neoclassical sculptor whose primary studio was in Florence. Not surprisingly, Gould designed the sculpture based on the classical traditions. As argued by artist and scholar John Charlot, he modeled the figure after Augustus Caesar of Prima Porta (Charlot, 1979). Gould had the monument cast at the Barbedienne Foundry in Paris, in 1879.

The Monument’s Complex Biography From its culturally hybrid origins, the monument has led an equally complicated life. Over the past few years of research and analysis, I have learned of its unusual journey to its present location and of the seemingly endless levels of cultural significance it has acquired.

The sculpture was transported from the Paris foundry to Bremen, Germany, where it was loaded onto the George F. Haendel, and shipped to Honolulu in August, 1880. A fire broke out on the Haendel in the midst of a storm, and the ship sank off the coast of the Falkland Islands, near Argentina. With an insurance settlement, a second cast was commissioned in July 1881. Meanwhile, the original statue was recovered from the sea by local fisherman and purchased by a British ship captain, who brought it to Honolulu and sold it to the government in January, 1883. With two identical casts, the Hawaiian Legislature decided to install the second cast in Honolulu, which now stands in front of the Judiciary Building (Ali‘i‘olani Hale) near his birth place in ‘A’inakea, North Kohala. The original sculpture was heavily restored, then transported to North Kohala, and unveiled in the presence of King Kalākaua in May, 1883. It was relocated to Kapa‘au in 1912. Over the past 117 years of outdoor installation, the bronze has suffered the corrosive action of chlorides and the tropical effects of high humidity and ultraviolet radiation.

An understanding of the Kamehameha I monument may also be approached through its complex cultural biography. From its original conception as a Pacific hero modeled in the classical tradition, the monument has accumulated other meanings. For some it has become an icon of the state, for others a symbol of local culture, or a tourist object, a quiet reminder of loss and dramatic changes that have taken place since Cook’s arrival. Among the many meanings I have found through interviews with residents in Kohala are that of a welcoming image to newcomers in the spirit of aloha, a spiritual connection to the land, a reminder of western domination, and a symbol for the return property rights.

Analysis To determine the original appearance of the sculpture, I sent samples of paint and corrosion to scientists at two analytical facilities.1 Scanning electron microscopy with energy-dispersive x-ray fluorescence spectrometry (SEM-EDS) analysis on the underside of the paint samples indicated the presence of gold on the underside of several samples. This confirmed what I suspected from reading letters written by the artist. The feathered garments on the figure were originally gold leafed, similar to the sculpture in Honolulu.

To prove this discovery beyond doubt, I opened up several small “windows” on the sculpture by removing surface paint with a scalpel and exposing the remains of gold leaf on the bronze. The knowledge that the surface was originally gilt had been completely lost in North Kohala. It was a surprise to local residents that the monument originally looked similar to the Honolulu cast.

I also discovered pockets of green corrosion, which I suspect are chloride

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induced. I have not conducted this analysis yet, but if chlorides are present, it is likely that the sculpture is experiencing “bronze disease” underneath the paint. Bronze disease is a specific form of rapid corrosion that can destroy bronze if it is exposed to oxygen and moisture. At present, the twenty layers of paint are offering at least a partial barrier from the environment.

Although further analysis is pending, I have deduced that the surface of the bronze was painted brown during the 1883 restoration to cover the corrosion that would have inevitably developed after recovery from the sea. The bronze would have experienced fairly rapid corrosion from exposure to moisture, oxygen, and chlorides from the ocean. This corrosion would have been green, and most likely caused the gold leaf to flake off of the surface. In combing through contemporary newspaper articles, I discovered the following description of the unveiling of the restoration prior to its shipment to 5/12/1883). Several sentences earlier, stands in front of the Aliiolani Hale is flake off of the surface. In combing colors of the feathered garments developed of painting the figure in articles, I discovered the following corrosion from exposure to moisture, "gilded". This corrosion would have been green, and most likely caused the gold leaf to flake off of the surface. In combing through contemporary newspaper articles, I discovered the following description of the unveiling of the monument: “This, the original statue of Kamehameha I of which the one that stands in front of the Aliiolani Hale is the replica, is all one color; that is to say, the feather cloak has not been gilded” (Pacific Commercial Advertiser 5/12/1883). Several sentences earlier, the same reporter refers to the sculpture as a “bronze figure.” Since it appeared bronze, and no gold was visible, I have tentatively concluded that the surface was painted brown during the Honolulu restoration prior to its shipment to Kohala.

The Conservation Project
My question to the community is: After chemical treatment for corrosion, do you want me to paint the sculpture or gold leaf? Do you want to honor the decisions made by the artist, King Kalâkaua, and the Hawaiian legislature in 1878, or do you want to honor the modern tradition of painting the figure in lifelike colors?

The first step was to announce the project in a public meeting called by the Kohala Hawaiian Civic Club in September, 1999. This was followed by a special meeting of the Kohala Senior Citizens Club, and presentations given to three elementary school classes and the Hawaiian Studies class at the high school with kumu hula Keola John Lake and Raylene Lancaster. Public engagement over the issues has now taken a life of its own, with many local people discussing the pros and cons of gold vs. paint at various gatherings.

On December 8, 2000, ballots came in from a community wide vote on the issue. Approximately 10% of the community voted, and the vote was 71% for paint. This vote was then presented to the King Kamehameha Celebration Commission. The actual conservation project has been scheduled for March-April, 2001. Final blessing of the project will take place on Kamehameha Day, 2001.

FOOTNOTES
1. David A. Scott, J. Paul Getty Museum, and James Martin, first at the Dept. of Analytical Services & Research at Williamstown Art Conservation Center, Inc., then at Orion Analytical, LLC.

REFERENCES
Thurston Annual (Hawaiian Almanac and Annual). 1879; Section 24. Honolulu.
Anonymous. 15 May 1880. Unpublished Report of the Special Committee of 1878 who were appointed to take charge of the design and execution of a statue to Kamehameha. Hawai‘i State Archives.
The Kaho‘olawe Collection

by Theresa Donham, historic preservation Navy technical representative for the Kaho‘olawe Clean-up and Cathy F. Riley, executive director of the Maui Historical Society

The Kaho‘olawe Collection consists of documentation and artifacts associated with all archaeological field activities conducted on Kaho‘olawe under the auspices of the United States Department of the Navy between 1976 and 1983. In 1981, a portion of this collection was transmitted to the Maui Historical Society/Bailey House Museum in Wailuku for curation. This October, the bulk of the documentation and additional artifacts was moved from Pearl Harbor to the Bailey House Museum for curation.

Navy sponsored archaeological studies began in 1976, with the Environmental Impact Statement that was prepared in connection with continued use of the island as a practice range. Archaeological inventory of the entire island was completed in 1980, and the information was used to complete the National Register Nomination of the island as an Archaeological District. That same year, emergency data recovery was begun at selected sites that were being threatened by erosion. Three data recovery projects were contracted to archaeological firms between 1980 and 1982. During the mid-seventies and eighties, Navy archaeologists also conducted field work and monitored range activities.

The materials being transmitted to the Bailey House under the new curation contract include over 15,000 photographs, over 200 laboratory and field record files, approximately 70 reports, numerous newspaper clippings, reference materials, and nine boxes of artifacts.

The curation contract does not include artifacts collected during the Kaho‘olawe Unexploded Ordinance Clearance Project. The policy of archaeological work during the current Navy project is to leave artifacts in place. When it is necessary to collect an artifact to ensure its protection, it is temporarily curated on Kaho‘olawe and returned to its appropriate location after clearance activities are completed.

The Kaho‘olawe Archival Collection currently held by the Maui Historical Society consists of photocopies of the Hawai‘i and National Register of Historic Places Site Inventory Forms archaeological reports, and other research materials created by or forwarded to the Society for use by the scientific and scholarly communities and the general public. They may be accessed through the Archival Resource Center at the Maui Historical Society. Many of the artifacts of the Kaho‘olawe Objects Collections are on display in the Bailey House Museum. This additional collection will also be displayed and available for research after curation by the Society. The provenance for the collection is the island of Kaho‘olawe. It is foreseeable that when there is a safe place for this collection on the island, it will be returned to Kaho‘olawe.
FEBRUARY
1 Deadline, Hawai‘i Council for the Humanities (HCH): preliminary regular grants beginning after May 1 (above $2500); mini-grants beginning after March 1 (up to $2500); http://planet-hawaii.com/hch/grants
22–24 Interpretation Issues and Strategies. AASLH workshop, Vicksburg, MS. Contact (615) 320-3203 or history@aaslh.org

MARCH
1 Deadline, IMLS Museums On-Line & Museums in the Community; www.imls.gov
15 Deadline, IMLS Museum Assessment Program; www.imls.gov

APRIL
3 Deadline, NEH Preservation Assistance Grants: www.neh.gov

The Hawai‘i Museums Association is a non-profit corporation dedicated to communication and cooperation among the staffs and supporters of Hawai‘i’s museums.

Membership is open to all individuals, educational institutions, historical organizations and museums interested in the growth and development of the museum profession and its activities in the State of Hawai‘i.

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