Looking To the Future

Aloha kākou,

Beginnings are wonderful; they give you reason to be thankful for the past, then to look with anticipation to the future.

Our last year was one of strong excitement. Your HMA board was spirit and energy filled. They came together and worked hard to present an excellent annual conference, one that was meaningful and worthy of the praise. I am grateful for the leadership of the program coordinators, each Board member who put hours, energy and enthusiasm into their jobs, and all of you who attended.

The individuals whose Board terms have expired are to be congratulated and commended for their service. Tory Laitila and Celeste Ohta - who knows better how much they have given to HMA than those of us who have depended on them, taken motivation and good thoughts from their lead, and just enjoyed their company. The HMA Board is truly indebted to them. Mahalo, Tory and Celeste!

Looking forward to the new year is a delightful task. Our new Board members will bring new perspectives, new expertise to HMA. Kippen de Alba Chu, Bronwen Solyom, and Michael Pili Pang are each and all leaders at their institutions and in their fields. We welcome them into service.

This new Board has already met, beginning to plan activities for the next year. We anticipate having a variety of activities throughout the year in order to offer more information and discussion opportunities to our membership. All HMA members are encouraged to share their ideas and to participate in these activities!

Please join your energy with ours!

Me ke aloha, Betty Lou Kam
HMA President 2007-8

Keynote speaker for the 2007 HMA Conference was prominent historian Dr. James Horton. More on the conference on page 2.

Meet New Board Members

Kippin de Alba Chu
Born and raised in Hawai‘i, and a graduate of Punahou School, the Executive Director of the Friends of ‘Iolani Palace is a historic house museum executive with over 16 years of State Government and Legislative experience, 6 years of Business Development and Finance experience, and 3 years in the non-profit sector. He holds a B.A. in International Business Administration from the American University in Paris, France.

Michael Pili Pang
Michael Pili Pang is the Kumu Hula of Halau Hula Ka Nō‘eau, a hula school located in Waimea on the Big Island of Hawai‘i and in downtown Honolulu. Prior to being appointed by Mayor Mufi Hannemann as the as Executive Director to the Mayor’s Office of Culture and the Arts, in the spring of 2005, Michael was the founder of Hawai‘i Arts Ensemble, the first professional Hawaiian touring company.

Bronwen Solyom
Since 2003, Bron Solyom has been the Curator of the Jean Charlot Collection at the UHM Library where she previously held development, cataloging and administrative positions. She recently participated as a panelist in the latest round of SFCA grant reviews and currently serves on the Board of the Society of Asian Art of Hawai‘i. She and her husband Garrett share a deep interest in Indonesian art and have curated exhibitions in a number of museums and galleries, the last, “Echoes of an Island Culture,” at the UH Art Gallery in 2004.
The 2007 HMA Annual Conference in Honolulu opened with a provocative keynote address by Dr. James O. Horton on The Perils of Public History: Controversy and Cultural Institutions. According to Horton, a prominent historian at George Washington University and the University of Hawai‘i, museums have become crucial to the education of visitors. They now offer points of view that were unavailable in the past, especially those presenting the experiences of ordinary people and minority communities. Horton recognized that museums often work “without a safety net” when tackling “uncomfortable histories” such as the institution of slavery and its legacies. Museums are thus pivotal in helping visitors to grapple with social contradictions in the past and present.

Issues raised by Horton were expanded in three conference sessions: Challenging Historical Interpretations, Addressing Historical Controversies, and Remembering Pearl Harbor: Exploring Multiple Perspectives, presented by staff from Bishop Museum, USS Arizona Memorial, Japanese American National Museum (JANM), Japanese Cultural Center of Hawai‘i, Honolulu Academy of Arts, and ‘Iolani Palace, and by an independent researcher at the University of Tokyo. The presentations emphasized efforts to deal with historical complexity and diverse interpretations.

A riveting roundtable discussion, Innovative Partnerships, highlighted the importance of forging collaborative relationships. Two environmental “activist” events stood out in the presentations—a Seed Exchange bringing together the Amy B.H. Greenwell Ethnobotanical Garden with Know Your Farmer’s Alliance, a grassroots educational and activist group that provides educational materials on the importance of self-sufficient, ecological food production; and a lobbying project bringing together the staff of the Hanauma Bay Nature Preserve and its support group, Friends of Hanauma Bay (FHB). On an interesting note, in order to preserve the bay’s natural resources, the FHB organization successfully convinced public officials to restrict visitor numbers despite the loss of future revenue.

Panelist discussing Integrating Digital Projects surveyed three projects embedded within larger research efforts at HAA, JANM, and the University of Hawai‘i Herbarium. The institutions have already developed or are in the process of developing model projects that will make resources available online (e.g., Japanese woodblock prints, research on the Japanese diaspora in ten countries, herbaria collections in the Pacific).

On Thursday, two panels Understanding NAGPRA and Place-Based Education: A Community Approach touched on Native Hawaiian cultural issues. The first panel included an overview of 17 years of NAGPRA legislation and compelling case studies of local repatriation efforts. Three charismatic speakers on the second panel from Ka‘ala Farms, Kanu o ka ‘Aina New Century Public Charter School, and Nānāikapono Community School Museum described their efforts to develop educational programs focused on regional concerns and local geography.

Brief, but fully packed What’s New presentations updated conference attendees on numerous events including the opening of the Pacific Aviation Museum, repairs of Hulihe‘e Palace’s earthquake damage, and bi-cultural displays at the ‘Imiloa Astronomy Center of Hawai‘i. For nuts & bolts fans, two sessions, Archival Materials and Take Charge of Your Graphics, offered important information on a wide array of materials (and free samples!).

On Thursday evening, HMA honored Agnes Conrad with its first Ka Lama Award. In 1955, Conrad became the Territorial Archivist and is widely known for generously sharing her expertise and time with others. HMA was pleased to officially recognize Conrad for her legacy of professional and community work.

Finally, HMA offered two post-conference activities, Budget 101 for Nonprofits and Working with NAGPRA. Both sessions were well attended. For those who missed the Budget 101 workshop, HMA hopes to offer it again in the future.
Conferences & Forums

October 26, 2007
Celebrating 20 years of Volunteer Leadership in Hawai'i
The Network of Volunteer Leaders is holding their annual Professional Development Conference at the Plaza Best Western Hotel, 3253 N. Nimitz Hwy from 8:00am to 3:30pm. Keynote speaker is author and motivational speaker Gwen Fujie, “The Seven Rituals of Performance Improvement in Volunteer Management”. Afternoon program features Annabel Chotzen on “Communicating with Different Generations”. Price is $80 members, $90 for non-members includes buffet lunch. Registration Deadline September 30. For application call Steve Koolman 808-7540143 or email: education@arizona-memorial.org

October 10 - 14, 2007
Shake it Up: Museums Activate and Innovate
The Western Museums Association’s 2007 Annual Meeting at the Oakland Marriott City Center, Oakland, California. Join your colleagues in Oakland, California, on the eastern side of the San Francisco Bay and bordering the infamous town of Berkeley. The area is renowned for social activism and newsworthy events - it’s a place never lacking for attention from the rest of the nation.

Communities here are known for alternative perspectives, quirkiness of character, and a laid-back mellowness sometimes mistaken for social detachment. But when challenged, residents here speak up, act up and fire up with serious purpose to address issues and find solutions. The area has historically been in the vanguard of social movements like free speech, black power, and gay pride; lifestyle trends like organic foods, green living, and websurfing; and local innovations like the Segway, the Popsicle, the martini, the fortune cookie, and blue jeans.

In addition to sessions that teach the nuts and bolts and basics of our profession, presenters at this meeting will explore the challenging questions: How resistant are we to change? Do we advocate for our professional role in our museums and assert ethical practices? Is our museum socially responsible, and how far can we or should we push agendas and personal views? Do we stick to traditional practices, tried and true or do we explore the newest innovation and techniques? What can we say about censorship - not to mention self-censorship - when threatened by funders, media, or politicians? Are our human resource policies humane and serving our employees well? How do we make choices between social responsibility and responsible business practices?

Host Chairs are Joe Brennan, Director of Facilities, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art and Lori Fogarty, Executive Director, Oakland Museum of California

Program Co-Chairs are Greta Brunschwyler, Director, Nevada State Museum and Yvonne Sharpe, Deputy Director, Craigdarroch Castle
For more information: www.westmuse.org

October 21 - 22, 2007
Director’s Forum sponsored by The Art Museum Partnership in New York City to provide the leaders of not-for-profit art institutions with networking opportunities that facilitate the sharing of information, resources and collections. The Partnership was primarily established to benefit the directors of small to medium sized museums that comprise the largest segment in the field, but are not represented by other professional organizations. For information go to www.artmuseumpartnership.org

October 23 - 25, 2007
Guardians of Language, Memory and Lifeways: The National Tribal Archives, Libraries, and Museums annual conference will be held in Oklahoma City. For more information, go to www.tribalconference.org.

November 7-10, 2007
Building Content, Building Community: 40 Years of Museum Information and Technology. The Museum Computer Network’s annual meeting will be held in Chicago, Illinois. Please see www.mcn.org for details.

April 27 - May 1, 2008
American Association of Museums 2008 Annual Meeting & MuseumExpo will take place in Denver, CO. For more information: www.aam-us.org.

National Grant Deadlines & News
The Institute of Museum & Library Services 2008 Grant Opportunities Guide provides a general overview of all IMLS grant programs and is available at www.imls.gov

October 5, 2007
NEA American Masterpieces: Visual Arts Touring grant applications due. This component of American Masterpieces celebrates the extraordinary and rich evolution of the visual arts in the United States. Through the creation and touring of major exhibitions, art of the highest quality will be made available across the nation. For more information www.neh.gov

October 2, 2007
NEH Grants for Stabilizing Humanities Collections
These grants help museums, libraries, archives, and historical organizations preserve their humanities collections through support for improved housing and storage, environmental conditions, security, lighting, and fire protection. www.neh.gov

December 1, 2007
Forms for applying to the Conservation Assessment Program FY2008 will be mailed on Friday, October 5, 2007, to museums on the Conservation Assessment Program mailing list and will also be available on Heritage Preservation’s Web site at www.heritagepreservation.org.

To be added to the CAP application mailing list or for more information, call 202-233-0800 or email: cap@heritagepreservation.org
Fall ‘07 Calendar

SEPTEMBER
5  Deadline: NEH Planning Grants for Interpreting America’s Historic Places

OCTOBER
2  Deadline” NEA Initiative: American Masterpieces: Visual Arts Touring Grant Application
5  Deadline: NEH Grants for Stabilizing Humanities Collections
10-14 WMA Annual Conference: Shake It Up: Museums Activate and Innovate. Oakland, CA
21-22 The ArT Museum Partnership Director’s Forum. New York, NY
23-25 National Tribal Archives, Libraries, and Museums Annual Conference: Guardians of Language, Memory and Lifeways, Oklahoma City, OK.
26  Network of Volunteer Leaders Annual Professional Development Conference, O‘ahu, HI

NOVEMBER
7-10 The Museum Computer Network’s Annual Meeting: Building Content, Building Community: 40 Years of Museum Information and Technology. Chicago, IL.

DECEMBER
1  Deadline Conservation Assessment Program FY 2008

The Hawai‘i Museums Association is a nonprofit corporation dedicated to communication and cooperation among the staffs and supporters of Hawai‘i’s museums. Membership, subject to approval by the HMA Board, is open to all individuals, educational institutions, historical organizations and museums interested in the growth and development of the museum professionals and its activities in the State of Hawai‘i. Individual memberships: Students $15, Out-of-State $20, Single $35 per year, Dual $65. For institutional rates and applications please refer to the website at www.hawaiimuseums.org. Complete and mail with payment to: Hawai‘i Museums Association, P.O. Box 4125, Honolulu, Hawai‘i 96812-4125.

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Niihou is the quarterly newsletter of the Hawai‘i Museums Association which carries articles of professional interest to HMA members. Submissions to Niihou are welcome, subject to editing, and should be received c/o HMA at the above address by January 20, April 20, July 20, and October 20. Photos and artwork are welcome and encouraged. HMA reserves the right to accept, reject and edit all submissions.