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Editor's Foreword and Cover Art Statement

Jayme Scally

University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa

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As I write this foreword it has been approximately a year since I received the news that I would be taking over the editorship of Mānoa Horizons. Having served as a member of the Editorial Board and having attended release receptions in previous years I was already familiar with the wonderful work of founding editor, Dr. Christine Beaule, as well as others including Joy Enomoto and particularly Sylvia Wu, had done to grow this publication to what is has become today.

I want to first take a moment to highlight the work done by my predecessor. Dr. Beaule first broached the idea of founding an undergraduate student journal with Dr. Verna-dette Gonzalez, Director of the University of Hawai‘i Mānoa (UHM) Honors Program, in 2015. Her proposal highlighted the then missed opportunity to begin to socialize undergraduate students into the academy and the process of sharing their products.

Needless to say, describing the process of moving into this role as overwhelming would be an understatement. An insufficient word to describe the heavy weight of taking on this responsibility and fostering new ways to continue to grow, both in our readership and in our outreach to contributing authors, while retaining the high quality standards volumes 1–3 set.

At UHM we endeavor to foster undergraduate scholarship across the academy. We excel in pioneering scholarship on Native Hawaiian history and the continuing struggles to find an appropriate voice—or voices—on related issues; we blaze the trail in Marine Biology, with highly engaged students through the Marine Option Program and the major itself; we have students getting valuable hands-on experience in the business world from practically their first day on campus (and even some before that!); and we have artists sharing their voices through theater and visual arts all around campus, and beyond.

As mentor to an Honors student majoring in Communications last year I was struck by the arbitrary bounds we, as educators, often keep students within. In my first meeting with this student she spoke at length of her love of hula and sharing it with people raised outside of the Hawaiian islands and her academic interest in intercultural competence. She spoke of these areas as completely separate, with no recognition that there could be a way to combine them. Once we spoke through her interests, she developed a very interesting project, one that allowed her to collect data abroad while at the same time bringing her passion to young people in Japan.

With all this in mind, the place of Mānoa Horizons in allowing undergraduates to see themselves as creators of knowledge, and in opening their minds to new or “non-traditional” forms of scholarship is vital. The previous volumes of Manoa Horizons have included research and creative works from a wide range of disciplines and thematic perspectives. In volume one we began with an exploration of the “Horizons of undergraduate scholarship,” unpacking the truly unlimited potential of our learners and setting a course for the unknown future of the publication. Volume two shifted from that focus on unbounded potential to an exploration of “Blank Spaces,” grappling with what that concept might actually mean and providing a venue to understand and acknowledge our students, and the work that they invest themselves in, inside and outside of the classroom.

Volume three was particularly special as a collaboration with the Lāhui Hawai‘i Research Center, confronting the question of whether UHM really is a “Hawaiian place of learning” and how so, if it is. The volume gave due focus to the myriad ways in which cultural traditions may influence accepted “scholarly traditions,” altering the forms of learning and expectations for gaining approval or acceptance of the scholarly work from the wider community and seeking to do our part to change those very expectations to support a more inclusive environment of learning and knowledge sharing.

Manoa Horizons is now transitioning into its next phase. These three previous volumes, and the strong foundation built by Dr. Beaule and Sylvia, have allowed me to carry on this wonderful work, with my fresh perspective and enthusiasm. Over the past several months, as I have grown into this role, one key thing has stood out to me through each phase of our work: the power of our language. Communication is a clear theme to any academic journal, but I have been awed by the varied and mature manner in which our students have truly brought it to task, through creative pieces as well as thorough scholarly interrogations.
At the most obvious level, an academic journal is a means of transmitting the authors’ or artists’ scholarship and creative work, but branching out from that idea of communication there is so much more. In reviewing the submissions we received for this volume I was again struck by how central communication is to so many facets of our lives and how it takes different forms for us all according to our social, cultural, and scholarly backgrounds and experience.

Language is arguably the most powerful of tools and our students are becoming more and more aware of this power, with the increased focus on creating “safe spaces” on campus, and the more common conversations about how race or ethnicity influence who is in control and the subsequent impact on those who are not. In this volume, Uncle Sam’s Language School addresses this issue directly. Kacie Manabe provides historical context on the place of both the Hawaiian and Japanese languages in Hawai’i and demonstrates how that past influences power in Honolulu, commercially, socially, and governmentally, today. As a means of advocating for more inclusive assignments, assessments, and overall education, Jennifer Brown has successfully conveyed recommendations for policy and curriculum building through poetry in Special Educational Needs for Gifted Students. In Negotiating Voice in the Writing Center Kayla Watabu delineates how expectations of language and of what we consider “scholarly writing” can strip learners of their personal identities in the classroom. In a very emotionally stirring piece, Palm, Kelly Murashige constructs the deeply sentimental communicative ability of such a simple action as raising a hand to a piece of fabric, and of the evolving power dynamic between a mother and daughter.

Horizons exists as a venue for students such as those published in this volume, and the many still to be published in future volumes, to begin to feel as though their viewpoints are valuable and that the work they do inside and outside of the classroom has merit and can and should be shared with their peers, with their faculty, and with their families, administrators, and so many more.

It also exists as a means of letting our faculty know what their students are capable of. Teaching the same courses or subjects semester after semester can be exhausting. Through trial and error we pinpoint the assignments or source material that lets our students truly learn. Yet, with the plethora of other responsibilities we take on, it can be easy to settle, once we find what is “right” or effective in these courses. Just a quick flip through the four volumes of Mānoa Horizons will remind us of why we went into this profession in the first place, of the truly inspiring work our undergraduates are capable of, and of the promises we made to ourselves upon entering the field to support students the way we were—or wish we were—supported as undergraduates.

Jayme Scally
Jayme Scally, Editor

Photo credit: Jennifer Brown, “Woman who Holds White Feather.”
Cover Art Statement for Nighthills

Creating artwork, for me, has always been a total waking up to falling in love with color, shape, and texture. As my artistic inclinations began to emerge in childhood, a natural progression led to my exploring the inner sanctum of my deepest emotions and highly active imagination. The result was a prolific revelation of metaphorical and surrealistic compositions.

For many years I favored a more precise technique. Learning how to render, I was trained in classical styles of drawing and painting. Eventually, the tides turned. I found myself becoming more playful and experimental with various mediums. Many a day, I would cut and tear up dozens of old jeans and sit on the floor in the center of a large pile of scattered swatches of raw denim. With a palette of oil paint tints and shades, I randomly fill each unprepped canvas with absolutely no preconceived notion. I simply permit myself the complete freedom to be fully present. The only expectation is to achieve contentment within the practice itself rather than controlling and predicting an outcome.

I suppose I took all the science out of the art. It is art in, what I believe is, one of its most pure and primitive forms. It is a process of allowing where there are no accidents, happy or otherwise. For a recovering perfectionist like myself, it is the perfect remedy. Days and weeks after these pieces are dry, I return to them, and, once again, cutting and tearing the abundance of colored fragments, I transpose my experiences, dreams, and feelings into symbolic collages that are meant to be figurative and interpretational. I have completed thousands, maybe more, of these collages in addition to working in other mediums and genres.

Still completely mystified by my first experience in Hawai‘i at the age of 18, two years later I returned to Maui to live, and those were some of the most magical and happy days of my life. Maui, the island itself and the natural environment, inspired me in a way that nothing else ever had. In the first year, I lived in Lahaina and was crew on the Scotch Mist. Every day I would set sail for Lāna‘i and look upon the West Maui Mountains and the entire shoreline, gazing upon the trees and houses tucked away and scattered throughout the hills and valleys.

Four years into my education at University of Hawai‘i Maui College, I enrolled in a Hawaiian studies class that took my breath away, but not in the fantastical way Maui had always done. Learning about the destruction of the Hawaiian people and its endemic species, culture and language, and particularly having my eyes and heart opened to the desecration of iwi na kupuna, it was a horrible feeling to know that for so long I lived happily off the Hawaiian land and painted its images in such bliss, never knowing the pain the Hawaiian islands and its first peoples endured and are still enduring. Never again would my feeling about Hawai‘i be the same.

Now, my paintings of Hawai‘i, the landscapes, the collages, hold within them “the rest of the story.” I have images that go far beyond the happy little hills and their homes and flora and lush colorful valleys and swirling skies. I have two oil painting collages that show a Hawaiian woman holding up a white leaf above her head with both hands, as a metaphorical white flag. The leaf also looks like either a feather or the frond of a palm tree. The feather metaphor evoking the idea that birds are messengers between the spirit and human world. Hawaiians chant to ask for permission, and perhaps these chants are brought to the ears of the Gods and Goddesses on the wings of those that can take flight to places man is unable to ascend to.

But, Hawaiians have not surrendered. Although forces controlling the islands and its fresh water and lands continue to desecrate what belongs to the Hawaiian people, we do not forget…not those of us who aren’t born in Hawai‘i, who have sought the truth, as have I, and who are devastated by the loss and corruption of Hawai‘i and its peoples, especially its first peoples.

Jennifer E. Brown