

Hālau Mōhala ‘Ilima  
Merrie Monarch Festival 2023  
Hula Kahiko, Wāhine Division  
**Hula Ho‘okūkū**

## Aloha Wai‘auia

*Haku Mele:* Kīhei de Silva. December 22, 2022.

Wai‘auia is the wedge of undeveloped land at the entrance to Kailua town. The mākāhā of Kawainui was once located here. Like Wai‘auia, this mele serves as a wedge of remember in the doorway of forget; it allows a bit of our past to ‘a‘e kū, to step defiantly into the present.

‘Upu a‘e ke aloha no Moanihi <sup>1</sup>	Love wells up for Moanihi
No ka wai lu‘u po‘o o ka makamaka	For the dived-in water of the loved ones
‘O Kamākāleiau a‘o La‘ila‘i <sup>2</sup>	The Mākālei branch of La‘ila‘i
‘O Kahinihini‘ula kani kuamauna <sup>3</sup>	Kahinihini‘ula singing on the mountain ridge
Ka‘i ‘āuna nā i‘a kuhikuhinia <sup>4</sup>	The fat fish are swarming,
‘Olēhala i ka wai o ke ko‘olani <sup>5</sup>	Singing joyfully in the waters of the ko‘olani
Eia a‘e ‘o Keko‘oko‘okūmailani <sup>6</sup>	Here is Keko‘oko‘okūmailani
No Wai‘auia nō he keiki ‘a‘e kū <sup>7</sup>	From Wai‘auia is the kapu-trampling child
Na ke kupuna ‘oe i mālama iho	You have cared for your kupuna
Ua hi‘i ‘ia mai ma mua o kō alo <sup>8</sup>	She has been carried in front of you
Aloha Kailua kau a ho‘oilō <sup>9</sup>	Beloved is Kailua through all seasons
Ua ‘ō‘ili hou Kalauokekāhuli. <sup>10</sup>	Kalauokekāhuli has reappeared.

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1. **Moanihi** is the name given by Samuel Keko‘owai to the once-famous bathing pool at Wai‘auia: “ke kiowai kapu o Moanihi i ke alo o Wai‘auia” (“Makalei ka Laau Pii Ona a ka I‘a,” *Kuokoa*, June 28 and August 2, 1923). The pool is referred to in other Hawaiian language nūpepa as: “ka wai luu poo” (“Keakaoku,” *Ke Aloha Aina*, May 18, 1912), “ka wai kaulana i ke alo o Ahiki” (“Hiikaikapoliopole,” *Ka Nai Aupuni*, July 21, 1906), “he wai alii kaulana i ka olelo ia” (“Lonoikamakahiki,” *Kuokoa*, December 10, 1887), “wai i auau ai o ke alii” (“Lonoikamakahiki,” *Kuokoa*, September 10, 1887), “ka wai makamaka” (“Kanikau no Wiliama Adamu,” *Kuokoa*, May 30, 1885), and “ka wai a‘e ia o na alii” (“Lonoikamakahiki,” *Ke Au Okoa*, September 4, 1865).

2. **Kamākāleiau o La‘ila‘ikalani** is one of several names given by Haumea to the fish-attracting Mākālei branch that is central to Samuel Keko‘owai’s mo‘olelo (*Kuokoa*, June 8, 1922; September 13, 1923;

January 10, 1924). The branch is used by Kahinihini‘ula, a descendant of Haumea, to call the fish of Kawainui and Ka‘elepulu into hiding, and then – at mo‘olelo’s end – to return them to their home. Both events take place at Wai‘auia at the mākāhā of Kalapaokanaka (*Kuokoa*, November 15, 1923).

3. **Kahinihini‘ula kani kuamauna** is one of the many longer names given by Haumea to Kahinihini‘ula, the “keiki ehu nuanua o ka lauoho” – child of the heaped-up ‘ehu hair – with whom she returns harmony to an out-of-balance Kailua (*Kuokoa*, August 2, 1923). The hinihini is a tree snail said to sing sweetly on the mountain ridges, hence the epithet “kani kuamauna.”

4. **Ka‘i ‘āuna** – to move en masse in a flock, herd, company – is descriptive of the response of the fish of Kailua to the call of the Mākālei. The phrase comes from a mele recorded by Keko‘owai in reference to this irresistible attraction:

Eia mai au o Makalei  
O ka laau pii ona a ka i‘a  
Ke kani kuu pio hone i ke kula  
Ka‘i auna i ke ano ahiahi  
(*Kuokoa*, January 13, 1923; emphasis mine.)

5. **‘Olēhala** – cheerful singing, as birds in the treetops – is another of Keko‘owai’s descriptors for the effect of the Mākālei on the fish of Kawainui and Ka‘elepulu: “Ua olehala mai ka i‘a ma o ma anei o ka loko i ke ku ana iho ho‘i o ka laau” (*Kuokoa*, September 13, 1923).

**Ko‘olani** – heavenly prop, supporter of chiefs – alludes to Mākālei, Ko‘oko‘okūmailani, and Kalauoke-kāhuli – three lā‘au that figure prominently in mo‘olelo of Kailua’s past. All are associated with Haumea and her powers of attraction, fertility, birth, and rejuvenation; they are sometimes described as parts or attributes of the same tree: Kamakau, “Ka Moolelo o Hawaii Nei,” *Kuokoa*, June 22, 1865; Ka Ohu Haaheo i na Kuahiwi Ekolu [perhaps one of Z.P. Kalokuokamaile’s pen-names], “Ke Pale Keiki ana i ka Wa e Hanau Ai,” *Ka Hoku o Hawaii*, April 5, 1927. The word also appears twice in a kanikau for William Adams with obvious Kailua connections:

O ke koolani kapu o ka hulu o ka manu alii  
O ka hulu i ka pane poo o Hauwahine  
O Hauwahine kamaaina o Kawainui, ua nui hoi

O ke koolani o ka lau kapu i luhe i ka wai alii  
I kapu ia wai ma kanaka o Waiāui[a] e  
 (“Kanikau no Wiliama Adams,” *Kuokoa*, April 18, 1885; emphasis mine.)

6. **Ko‘oko‘okūmailani** is the long red branch used by Kahinihini‘ula, per Haumea’s instruction, to bridge the banks of the ki‘owai kapu of Moanihi while the chief Olomana is bathing in its waters below. When the boy walks along the branch and stands over the ali‘i, he establishes himself as Olomana’s superior. He is the “keiki ‘a‘e kū” (the kapu-trampling child) for whom Olomana and Ahiki (Olomana’s konohiki and aikāne) have been searching, the boy who will restore fish to their ponds and harmony to their land, the boy who will be consecrated as their ho‘okama and successor. (“Makalei,” *Kuokoa*, June 28, 1923.)

7. **No Wai‘auia nō he keiki ‘a‘e kū** is my slightly modified version of Ahiki’s response to Olomana’s “Who is it?” when the ali‘i first becomes aware of the boy’s presence on the branch above. Ahiki’s complete answer, which puns on both question and location – *owai / owai ia / no Wai‘auia* – is as follows:

“O Ahiki ia, a ua laa ia keiki nana, a i keiki hookama hoi na kuu aikane, o ka huaolelo ui ninau a kuu aikane, e lilo auanei ia olelo iiana kaulana no i keia aina a kau i ka mamō. Owai‘auia, owai ia? No Wai‘auia he keiki a‘e kū.” (*Kuokoa*, August 2, 1923; emphasis mine.)

To this, Keko‘owai adds the explanation: “Pela i puka ai ia huaolelo a Kailua keiki, a hiki mai no paha i keia la.” One of my reasons for writing “Aloha Wai‘auia” is that, contrary to Keko‘owai’s expectations, this ‘ōlelo kaena is no longer spoken by, or for, the keiki of Kailua. “Aloha Wai‘auia” is meant to help revive this practice “a kau i ka mamō.”

8. **Na ke kupuna ‘oe i mālama iho / Ua hi‘i ‘ia mai ma mua o kō alo.** These lines are meant to echo the words of Ni‘ula when she first gives the Mākālei to her grandson Kahinihini‘ula. She tells him that the branch is not to be carried behind his back, rested on his shoulders, or tapped like a cane in the dirt. “This,” she says, “is your kupunawahine, hold her firmly in your hands and carry her in front of you.”

“Eia ko kupunawahine, e paa oe iaia i ko lima...hii oe iaia mamua o ko alo...(*Kuokoa*, January 20, 1922).

9. **Kau a ho‘oilo** – summer and winter, wet season and dry – is a poetic expression for something that lasts through all seasons and for all time.

10. **Kalauokekāhuli** is the tree whose flowers, kanikawī and kanikawā, are used by Haumea to ho‘ohānau the child of Mulei‘ula, without further pain or the risk of “ke kaha ‘ana o ka opu” (caesarian section), when Mulei‘ula is in the throes of life-threatening childbirth. Kalauokekāhuli, called “the tree of changing leaves” by Martha Beckwith (*Hawaiian Mythology*, 283), is more accurately described by J.M. Poepoe as “ka laau hooahanau keiki” – the tree/medicine that induces birth – in his “Moolelo Hawaii Kahiko” (*Ka Nai Aupuni*, June 1, 2, and 4, 1906). Poepoe, Kamakau (“Ka Moolelo o Hawaii Nei,” *Kuokoa*, June 22, 1865), the author(s) of *Buke Oihana Lapaau, 1895* (cited by Beckwith in *Mythology*, 284), John Wise (“Ka Hookumuia ana o na Paemoku,” *Ke Au Hou*, April 12, 1911), and Ka Ua Haaheo (“Ke Pale Keiki ana i ka Wa e Hanau Ai,” *Ka Hoku o Hawaii*, April 5, 1927) all give similar accounts of this event: Olopana’s daughter Mulei‘ula is in agony; Haumea arrives to induce childbirth with the flowers of the tree that grows on the east side of Olopana’s royal compound; according to a convoluted history of possession and loss, the tree is Haumea’s and is “ke kino maoli” of the Mākālei branch that would later be known to all as the fish-attracting lā‘au of Kawainui.

Although several of the accounts above describe the tree as washing ashore at Oneawa in Kailua, none gives the exact location of Olopana’s compound. This location is suggested in Kaulilinoe’s “Moolelo o Kamaakamahiai” where the royal residence is situated at “ka nuku o Kawainui” – poetic language for Wai‘auia at the entrance/mouth of the fishpond. For his part, the anonymous author of “He Molelo [sic] Kaaō no Kamapuaa” leaves no doubt about Olopana and Wai‘auia; the ali‘i lived in Kailua:

ma kahi i kapa ia o Waiauwia [sic], a e waiho papu mai ana hoi i ke kula palahalaha o Alele. Ma ia noho ana o Olopana ma Waiauwia, i kaulana ai kela aina he aina alii, e like me keia olelo kaulana o kela au kahiko: “E hookaawale ae no Waiauwia ke keiki.” O ke ano oia olelo, he keiki alii ko ia aina. (*Ka Leo o ka Lahui*, June 24, 1891.)



Kailua Kau a Ho‘oilu, Wai‘auia reinterment, January 7, 2019.