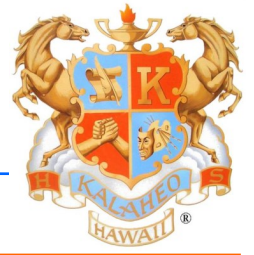




# Kalāheo High School Foundation & Alumni Association



50th Anniversary—School Edition

October 2023

## Kalāheo High School's Notable Art



Jostens', a supplier of school yearbooks and other school/graduation products, designed the Kalāheo crest using traditional heraldic symbols.

The lamp at the top is Knowledge, the quill and scroll are Scholarship, the K is Athletics, the handclasp is Unity, the palette and drama masks are The Arts and, of course, the two powerful horses are Mustangs.

Kalāheo's crest is arguably the best school emblem in Hawaii. To protect it from being altered—as once occurred—or used for profit by non-school organizations or businesses, the Kalāheo High School Foundation established trademark rights with legal use as follows:

*The Kalāheo High School crest is the registered trademark of Kalāheo High School Foundation with permission to use the mark, with or without color but otherwise unaltered, extended to Kalāheo High School, its official organizations, and persons currently affiliated with the school. Others may not use the mark without written permission of the Kalāheo High School Foundation.*



# “Graduation” by Jim Charlton

## *Painted Steel Sculpture*

**A** project of the Hawai‘i State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA), the metal sculpture named “Graduation” was designed by artist Jim Charlton and built by Thomas G. Medeiros of ORN Metal Services of Hawai‘i, Inc. The sculpture was installed in H-Building Courtyard and dedicated on the evening of May 16, 1985.

In addition to Charlton, other participants in the dedication ceremony were Rev. Robert Kesler; Principal William Tam, Jr.; Faculty Representative Karen Kanda; Students Rosanne Garden, Valedictorian, and Richard Gardner, Salutatorian, Class of 1985; Deputy District Superintendent Windward District Sakae Loo; Executive Director, State Foundation of Culture and the Arts Sara Richards; Kalāheo May Day Queen, 1985, Terri-Lynne Keola; PTSA President Pat Middlesworth; builder and installer Thomas Medeiros; DOE Art Specialist Stanley Yamamoto; State Representative John Medeiros; ASK President Rita Borges; and Committee Chair Jean Noguchi.

Many have asked, “What does the sculpture mean?”

Charlton explained:

“The work provides a needed focal point within the courtyard. As a symbol, it can be read in several ways: the graduated frame suggesting Graduation, the wing-like vanes, flight into the outer world. The open mesh triangles are suggestive of a sending or receiving instrument, transmitter, or antenna. After design, it was found that the piece relates to the use of the court as a gallery for sailing paper airplanes.”

Anticipating further questions, his speech at the dedication provided additional insight:

“To some it might look like a paper dart, to others an alien deity, or maybe an insect from Mars. It might be a tree of steel, limbs climbing skyward, their shadow a sundial by day, at night—like silent radar—a net to catch the stars.

“An artist, too, is an antenna, his senses seeking signals that others may not hear. Life itself is such a process, its meaning changing through the years. A work of art looks different to every pair of eyes, sounds different to every pair of ears.

“The title of the piece is ‘Graduation’. We can see how the ribs are graduated—a ladder to success, some might

say--and how the wings spread wide. An expanding universe is the spirit of our age. We are all, at different times, in different ways, in stages of graduation.

“The piece may be seen ascending from this courtyard to a world outside—as some will soon be doing. May this special moment help launch them on their way.”

When he presented the sculpture, Charlton wrote his speech notes on paper that he folded into airplanes and launched into the crowd. One of those papers, with the creases evident, was recently discovered in the Kalāheo Library’s Archives.

Thanks to Kalāheo High School Foundation board members who were concerned about several areas of rusted steel and contacted SFCA, ‘Graduation’ was repaired and completely restored by MIRA Image Construction over two weeks in Summer 2021. All work was funded by SFCA which has designated the sculpture a notable work of art.

### **About the artist:**

*Jim Charlton was a well-known mid-century modern architect and artist who designed notable homes in California and 50 homes in Hawai‘i. Several of his California houses have been designated historic landmarks.*

*He designed homes in Oahu’s upscale neighborhood of Koko Kai near Portlock. His work reflects his apprenticeship with Frank Lloyd Wright, one of the largest forces in American architecture.*

*Charlton worked under Wright to build Taliesin West in Arizona. At the beginning of WWII, he joined the Air Corps and was stationed in England as part of a bomber escort. After his service, Charlton moved to Los Angeles in 1945 and found work with architect John Lautner. By 1950, he was collaborating with architects Whitney Smith, Archibald Quincy Jones, and others on a 500-home cooperative financed by the Federal Housing Administration built in Brentwood, California.*

*In 1956, Jim established his own practice. In 1962, Charlton and his wife moved to Hawai‘i where he began to design steel-framed houses.*

*Kalāheo High School’s ‘Graduation’ is his only sculpture in Hawai‘i. He retired in 1990 and died March 12, 1998.*

# “In the Spirit of the Koolaus” by Claude Horan

## *Ceramic Frieze –Gym Entrance Portico*



The “Father of Ceramics” in Hawai‘i and also a renowned waterman, Claude Horan designed a stoneware, three-dimensional tile frieze for Kalāheo’s Gymnasium. In a *Kaleo O Kalāheo* interview, Horan said, “It’s one of the most creative things I’ve done in a ‘Coon’s Age”. He was assisted by Tony Davenport, a student from New York, in Hawaii on an apprenticeship grant from the Tiffany Foundation.

The three-dimensional tile frieze for the portico of the gymnasium has hues of tans, browns, blacks and off-whites, approximately two feet wide, and about 100 feet long.

The construction was made possible by a Capital Improvement Fund which enables the school to use up to one percent of the total cost of the gymnasium for art which was approximately \$10,000 for the gym. Principal Rosemarie Warriner explained, “One percent of the money spent on a building’s construction goes to the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts to provide artworks in new State buildings.”

In Hawai‘i, Horan created eight sculptures in public places, seven of them at Hawai‘i public elementary and high schools, the last in 1980 at Kalaheo High School.

Noting a broken section of the frieze in 2023 (left photo), Kalāheo High School Foundation president Jim Schlosser contacted Derek Erwin, conservator at the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts. While hopes were not high that repairs could be made, Erwin has found a ceramist to undertake the task of recreating the missing piece.

### **About the Artist:**

*Claude Horan (1917-2014) was born in California and became known for his figurative ceramics sculpture; graceful, glazed vessels; and for his contributions to the development of contemporary styles for that medium. His early passions were swimming, water polo, and surfing, and he was recruited by San Jose State University where he studied art. Over time, his interest in ceramics overtook his water activities. He received a BA from San Jose State University in 1942 and BA and MA degrees in art from Ohio State University in 1946.*

*At the University of Hawai‘i, Manoa, Horan had a long and distinguished career in teaching. In 1947, he initiated the ceramics program and continued to teach there until 1967 when he took a sabbatical and studied glass blowing. He then established a glass blowing studio at the university in 1968. In 1978, he became Professor Emeritus at the University of Hawai‘i.*

*James Jensen, curator of modern art at the Honolulu Museum of Art, called Horan "one of the last of the characters, because he had such an eccentric and 'out there' personality. He was just very high-spirited. You don't encounter that sort of personality too much anymore. He was full of life, and he did everything 100 percent."*



# Bronze Horse

## *H-Building Courtyard*

**U**nder a plumeria tree in H-Building Courtyard stands a bronze statue of a horse, a gift to the school from Susan Flowers, wife of Honolulu plastic surgeon Dr. Robert Flowers who, during a Mainland trip, purchased the sculpture for Susan who had grown up with and loved horses.

The sculpture was shipped to Honolulu and installed in their yard. Years later when they decided to move, there was no room for the horse at their new home.

Susan searched for a local school that had a horse for a mascot and, after arrangements were made, delivered the sculpture to Kalāheo High School.



The sculpture sat on the sidelines for a time until, on Make-a-Difference-Day in 2005, the horse was permanently pastured in one of the H-Building's courtyard planters. Almost 30 years after adopting the Mustang as its mascot, Kalāheo finally had a horse residing on the campus.

The sculpture does require some care. On one occasion, a Boy Scout seeking to earn the rank of Eagle Scout, chose the maintenance of the horse as his service project. Based on his research about how to care for bronze works of art, he gave the horse a good wash and rubdown. At an evening ceremony in the courtyard, he was presented a medal and a badge to recognize his accomplishment and Eagle Scout rank.

### **About the Artist:**

*Although "P. J. MENE" is inscribed on the horse's right back leg, there is no evidence to prove it was made by the French artist named Pierre-Jules Méné (1810-1879) who was one of the leading sculptors of the 19th century. He was called an animalier who specialized in sculptures of animals.*

*Nearly all of Mene's animal sculptures were small in size for display on a desk or shelf in a home. His true signature is simply printed and is easily copied.*

*Kalāheo's horse could be a reproduction on a larger scale but is likely masquerading as an original Mene. Authentic Mene sculptures—even the small ones—sell for thousands of dollars and are often bought by museums.*

*The Kalāheo Mustang's true value resides in the generosity of the donor who took the time to seek out an appropriate public school to inherit her garden horse, a treasured gift from her husband.*



**Left to right: Principal William Tam, Jr., Cathy Domitrovits (green top), Malia McKeague (yellow boogie board), Kristine Silva (yellow swimsuit), Russ Hicks (body surfer), Leilani Duncan (on shoulders), Unknown (holding girl on shoulders), Cora Thompson (blue swimsuit),**

## “Shorebreak” by Martin Charlot

*Paint on Wood--Cafeteria Wall / Library Wall*

**M**uralist Martin Charlot’s “Shorebreak” was commissioned by Principal William K. Tam on the occasion of Kalāheo High School’s 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. As one of the better-known freelance artists on the island, Charlot was chosen by Tam to create a large mural.

Tam and Charlot discussed what the mural should look like and decided that a beach scene with students within the beach area would express the thought of people getting together and enjoying the environment. At the time, prices for 4’ x 24” murals were usually in excess of \$20,000, but \$5,000 was the agreed price. Funds were raised from individuals and businesses in the community.

At Kailua Beach, Charlot took pictures of numerous students from teacher Jean Noguchi’s art classes and then began to paint. When finished, Charlot had placed one of his sons in the mural on a surfboard.

The mural was dedicated on May 12, 1986, as part of Kalāheo High School’s 10th Anniversary ceremonies which included campus tree planting by members of all 10 graduating classes. Painted on three 4’ x 8’ wood panels, Charlot described the mural as “expressing the energy and joy of youth at play.”

In addition to the artist, those planning or participating in the day’s activities were Brenda Lowry (’76); Larry

Trela, Band Director; William K. Tam, Principal 1981-95; Rosemarie Warriner, Principal 1978-81; Moss Ikeda, Principal 1976-77; Reverend Richard Walenta; John Burke, ASK President; Cynthis Chun, Vice Principal; June Char, SASA; Marilyn Arruda, Clerk; Pat Middlesworth; Jean Baker; Pat Kenyon; Lisa Robey Phillips; Mel Shimada, Industrial Arts teacher; Cathy Sakumoto, Cafeteria Manager; Ricky Kohatsu, Head Custodian; Phil Chase, Librarian; Marilyn Nakasone, AV Coordinator; Jim Schlosser, Publications Advisor; and Jean Noguchi, Art Department Coordinator.

For several years, the mural was displayed high on a cafeteria wall where it was presumably safe from vandalism. Despite precautions, someone sprayed white paint over the lower left corner of the mural, thereby obscuring the very person who had commissioned the painting. Interestingly, the student newspaper had reported that, when Principal Tam was asked whether he thought vandals might damage the mural, he stated, “No, not in any way. I have faith.”

When members of the PTSA decided to freshly paint the cafeteria’s interior, the mural was taken down and, not wishing to re-hang a vandalized work of art, put in “storage” behind the back curtain of the cafeteria stage.

A few years later, librarian Martha Robertson learned from a parent that the PTSA didn’t know what to do with the mural and that there was no other interior wall on campus big enough for the 4’ x 24’ mural.

Robertson replied, “I have a wall,” and considered how





**Left to right: Kamalu Charlot (orange surfboard), Unknown (long black hair), George Cosier (arms crossed), Roy Carlos Montgomery (yellow/orange trunks), Robert Chandler (red and black trunks), Jennifer Dyer (green swimsuit), Unknown (black swimsuit), Joy Kaopua (pink swimsuit).**

nicely the mural would fill the blank space above the library computers. She asked that the panels be brought to the library.

However, the issue of the vandalism remained. Robertson and fellow Kalāheo High School Foundation board member Suzy Churchill undertook the task of finding someone to restore the mural.

After a few false starts, new Kalāheo art teacher David Bowley was asked to have a look after which he asked that the damaged panel be delivered to his classroom.

After researching his task and several weeks of work, Bowley cautiously and meticulously removed virtually all of the offending spray paint.

Just before Winter Recess in 2007, custodian and consummate handyman Ronald “Tani” Toguchi, assisted by custodian Johnny Quia, carefully bolted the mural to the wall over the library computers where Principal Tam (far left), continues to oversee the antics of Kalāheo students who showed up for Charlot’s photoshoot at Kailua Beach.

#### **About the Artist:**

*Martin Charlot was born in Athens, Georgia, in 1944. His French-born father, Jean Charlot, was one of the famous Mexican muralists and painted murals in Georgia, Colorado, and Mexico before moving his family to Hawai‘i in 1949 when Martin was five.*

*By the age of 23 and with an international background, Martin had been recognized as a rising artistic genius*

*in his own right, with exhibits in Hawai‘i and New York.*

*Known primarily as a muralist, Martin is also a writer, actor, filmmaker, illustrator, and educator. He has been honored as a Fellow in Perpetuity by the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.*

*At the time of the Kalāheo mural dedication, Martin had already created a huge volume of art: 12 one-man shows; numerous group shows; 12 murals; one serigraph; hundreds of beautiful canvases; and illustrations for 10 books. He had also written two books and written, produced, and directed five films.*

*Martin later lost his right eye and his ability to walk unassisted as a result of spinal meningitis. He now lives and works in Burbank, California.*

*Martin’s children—Kawena, Kekoa, Kamalu, and Kipano—are all Kalāheo High School graduates.*

#### **Restorer:**

*David Bowley taught General Art and Drawing & Painting at Kalāheo High School from 2007 to 2009.*

*During his tenure at the school, he restored the vandalized mural so that it could once again be displayed.*

*After a battle with cancer, Bowley, passed away on October 23, 2011, at age 64. Most certainly, his lasting legacy to the school is the restoration of “Shorebreak.”*

# Hawaiian Birds in Their Natural Habitat

Prints by Norman Nagai, Hawai'i Wildlife Artist

**I**n a world where the purpose and motive of art can be difficult to find, the passion of Hawai'i wild life artist Norman Nagai is clear: "To present the simple yet exquisite beauty of Hawai'i's wildlife, to be shared and appreciated by all."

As a boy in Kaūmana, a rural sugar village on the outskirts of Hilo on the island of Hawai'i, Nagai roamed the fern and 'ohia forests nearby. Nagai began his art even then, with sketches and drawings of things he found.

After graduating Hilo High School in 1958, Nagai went on to study art for three years in a program conducted by Hawai'i's leading artist at the Honolulu Academy of Art. Nagai opened his own commercial art and drafting studio but soon went to work as an artist for the Department of Defense.

He has pursued his interest in art as an avocation, consistently through the years. Nagai has entered and placed in the top ten in many of the federal stamp contests, and in 1986, his entry won and became the Illinois Salmon Stamp.

Nagai's work is marked by his passion for thorough research and authenticity. He has studied taxidermy. In the process of painting particular species, he studies museum specimens, researches manuscripts of their sightings, and interviews university wildlife experts—all to insure the technical accuracy of his depictions.

In 1989, Nagai's entry, "Last Flight of the "Akialoa," won Overall First Prize in the Pacific Wildlife Art Exhibition sponsored by the Hawai'i Audubon society to commemorate its 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. It was the largest such exhibit ever held in Hawai'i.

Nagai does more than depict the exquisite beauty of his subjects. He also tells the story of Hawai'i's species. Thus, in "Dining on the Fly", Nagai depicts an adult 'i'iwi approaching a swarm of flies, showing a baby how to have dinner. Nagai chose this depiction because the discovery of this new adaptation by the 'i'iwi is a hopeful sign the species may adapt to its changing environment and survive.

As a leading figure in the Hawai'i wildlife art scene, Nagai's contributions are as essential as they are beautiful.

The unframed prints were a gift to the school and framed by librarian Martha Robertson. The biographical notes and descriptions were provided with the prints.

## Framed prints are displayed in the Kalāheo High School Library

### Po'ouli's Debut

The shy and endangered po'ouli was discovered as a separate species in 1974. Only a few dozen po'ouli are known to exist. They have been found in one area of about one square mile, in the remote tropical forest on the slopes of Haleakala, above the Hāna community. In "Po'ouli's Debut," Norman Nagai carefully depicts a po'ouli in side view so that its markings can best be seen. Nagai also presents a complicated forest ecological situation. Po'ouli is sitting on a banana poka vine—a vine which provides an excellent food source for this species but which is also taking over the forest to the extent that it endangers the very environment required for the po'ouli's survival. The painting is named "Po'ouli's Debut" because it is the first painting fully presenting the beautiful markings of the species, showing it in its natural environment, and conveying the message of how complicated the task can be to save the environment.





### **Last Flight of the “Akialoa**

In the “Last Flight of the ‘Akialoa”, the exquisite, but now extinct, O‘ahu ‘akialoa appears in flight from the koa trees which were its preferred native habitat, toward the barren trunks of introduced species of trees which displaced the koa and the ‘akialoa. For his depiction, Nagai studied archived specimens of the aqueously, researched manuscripts to the very shape, color, and habitat. The result was so definitive and appealing that it won overall first prize among 140 entries in the Hawai‘i Audubon Society’s 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Pacific wildlife Art Exhibit.



### **Dining on the Fly**

While it sounds somewhat less than appetizing to us, “Dining on the Fly,” actually presents an exciting positive development regarding preservation of the Hawaiian ‘i‘iwi. University of Hawai‘i researchers reported observing the ‘i‘iwi feeding upon insects while in flight. Here, Nagai depicts an adult ‘i‘iwi teaching the young bird this feeding practice.



### **The Trap**

In “The Trap,” artist Nagai depicts Hawai‘i’s o‘o, now extinct, in territorial battle with the feisty red ‘apapane over a branch. Hawaiian’s would capture the ‘apapane and stick him on a branch covered with sap of the ‘ulu, also known as breadfruit. When the o‘o would appear to reclaim its territory, it would become stuck to the branch and Hawaiians would then take his yellow tail and wing feathers to use for the capes of Hawaiian royalty.



# Kalāheo High School, H-Building

by Richard Essler

Watercolor, Administration Office Lunchroom



This painting of Kalāheo High's Administration, Library, and Classroom Building (H-Building) was discovered in the Kalāheo Library Archives several years after it was painted in 2001.

How it came to be there is unknown. No personal or family connection to the school has been discovered. All that remains is speculation about what brought Essler to the campus where he was inspired to paint this particular building, complete with trees, palms, stone wall, and flag pole. Its historical and aesthetic importance is that it depicts this building in an unblemished condition.

The building is viewed from across the campus driveway toward the green hills beyond. The painted exterior is clean and serene with a darker hue emphasizing the columns. These elements create the building's stately character and echo the important educational mission of the school.

### ***About the artist:***

*Born in 1926, Richard Essler lived in Hilton Head, South Carolina, at the time of his death in 2016. He was born and raised in Philadelphia, PA. After graduating high school in 1944, he entered the U.S. Merchant Marine academy at Kings Point where he earned his engineering degree.*

*He served during World War II as a Lieutenant for the U.S. Navy. He and his wife spent many years living overseas where he worked as a project engineer managing the design for industrial facilities. He was inspired by his love of overseas travel to pursue watercolor painting. He continued painting throughout his life and into retirement, specializing in impressionistic style landscapes and seascapes.*