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# HILUXURY

HAWAII'S OWN LUXURY  
LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE

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# GLOBAL CANVAS

Hawai'i's artists take on the world at the 2016 Honolulu Biennial.

by NADINE KAM

**T**HE RECENT KICKOFF OF THE "CHAIN OF FIRE" EXHIBITION AND PANEL DISCUSSIONS WERE JUST THE WARM-UP ACT FOR BIGGER things to come in Hawai'i's art scene.

The exhibition that took place in Our Kaka'ako, a new neighborhood by Kamehameha Schools, was a prologue to the inaugural Honolulu Biennial to take place in 2016. The event was a labor of love conceived by co-curators KJ Baysa and Isabella Ellaheh Hughes, who combined their skills and resources with that of fellow kama'aina Katherine Tuider to

make a longtime dream come true.

"The biennial idea had been percolating in a lot of people's heads for a long time," says Baysa, a polymath Honolulu doctor who parlayed his curatorial skills on an international stage, staging exhibitions from New York to Croatia. He said it was serendipitous when he met Hughes, whose interests in the arts and curation coincided with his, and Tuider, who brought management expertise to the project.

The 2016 Honolulu Biennial, presented by Honolulu Biennial Foundation, will mark Hawai'i's entry into the global biennial circuit, putting Hawai'i's contributions to global

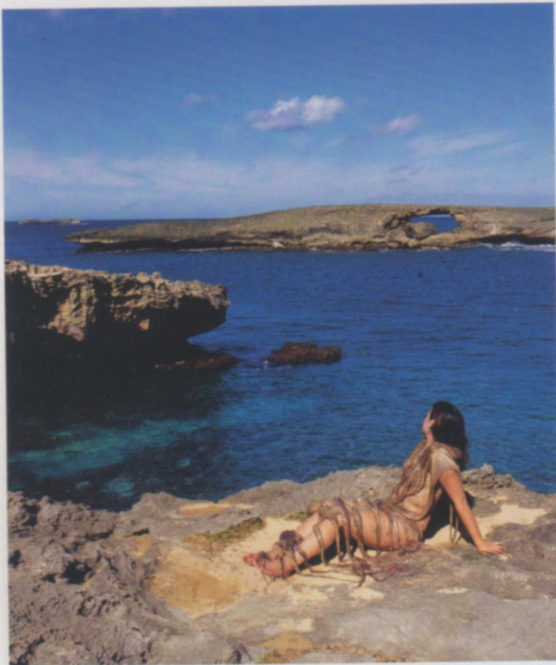
arts and culture on an international stage.

The full-scale Honolulu Biennial will be curated by Fumio Nanjo, director of Tokyo's Mori Art Museum, and aims to present groundbreaking international contemporary art, as well as provide a platform for Hawai'i artists to display their works before an audience of elite museum curators and art collectors from around the globe.

The "Chain of Fire" exhibition focused on art from Oceania, the Asian continent and the Americas, and featured 11 artists from Hawai'i to Bangladesh—Arahmaiani, Sama Alshaibi, Bahar Behbahani, Drew Broderick, Pas de Chocolat, Hasan Elahi, Shigeyuki Kihara, Almagul Menlibayeva, Adrienne Keahi Pao, Paul Pfeiffer, Mark Salvatus. The exhibition was a way of introducing the Honolulu Biennial to the community and garnering support for the larger project, which could serve as a boon not only to artists, but the greater community.

*"Depending on how people look at it, Hawai'i could be the middle of nowhere or the center of the world."* —KJ Baysa, co-founding director, Honolulu Biennial Foundation





FROM TOP: Pas de Chocolat, *Now Hear This*; Adrienne Keahi Pao, *View at Laie Point | He'e Kapa* (Squid Covering), 30" W x 36" H C-Print, 2005; Adrienne Keahi Pao, *Sunset at Sunset Beach | Napo'o ana o ka I' Kapa* (Sunset Covering) 30" x 36" C-Print, 2005







FROMTOP: Pas de Chocolat, *Noise Machine #1* (courtesy Honolulu Museum of Art); Mark Salvatus, *Current Affair\$*, 2014.

Around the globe, art tourism is a lucrative business, attracting collectors and visitor dollars.

"The amount they spend is greater than the average tourist, so these events have a great impact on the communities," says Tuidier, who cited examples, such as the Sydney Biennial that draws 436,000 visitors and generates \$53 million every two years, and Project New Orleans, which started in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, and so far has attracted 43,000 visitors and raised \$23.2 million for the Louisiana economy.

Baysa says the intent behind the Honolulu Biennial was to give something back to Hawai'i by highlighting Honolulu as a fresh destination for international

and national arts and cultural tourists, in hope that it would spark a greater cultural awakening and new global collaborations.

"Depending on how people look at it, Hawai'i could be the middle of nowhere or the center of the world," he says. Taking the latter view, he wants the biennial to position Honolulu as central to the Pacific-wide growth of arts, technology and commerce.

Aiming to reach the next generation, HBF will also be presenting youth-oriented outreach programs linking art, technology and science, leading up to the biennial. ■

For more information, visit [honolulu.biennial.org](http://honolulu.biennial.org)

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