



Ka Nani '90

Cover Art: Debbie Yamao: Sunset at Makapu'u
The magazine's title "Ka Nani" is Hawaiian for "The Beautiful."

Ka Nani

Literary and Art Magazine

Volume VIII

1990

Kapiolani Community College
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Honolulu, Hawaii 96816

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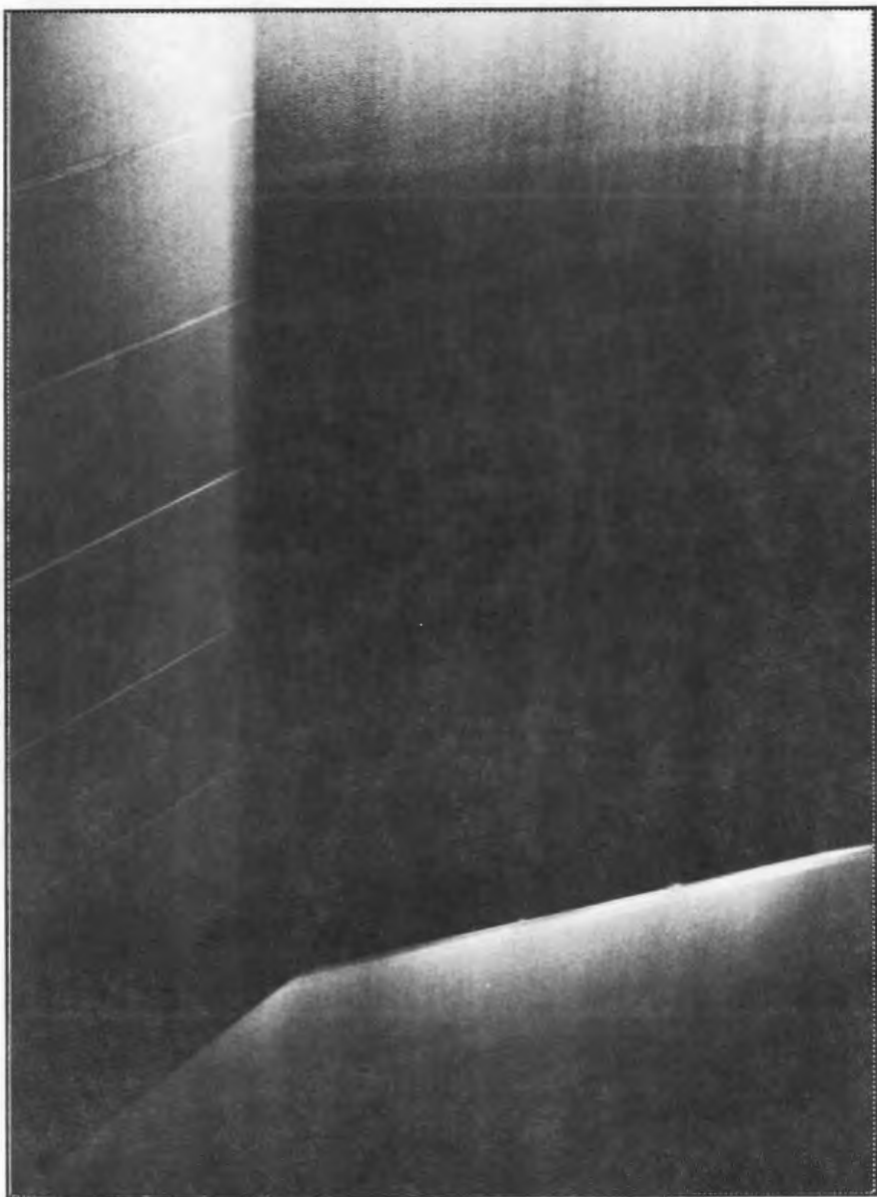
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Editor's Note: Great care was taken to ensure that the selection process was as fair as possible. All submissions were anonymous to the panel of judges. In the case of an editor's submission, the editor was prohibited from judging and the submission remained anonymous to the panel. The panel consisted of Language Arts and English Literature students and Art, Humanities, and Language Arts instructors.

All of KCC's students and faculty are welcomed and encouraged to submit their art and literature works for the next edition of Ka Nani. For further information contact KCC's newspaper, the Kapio.

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Liza Hiranaka

Untitled
(Photograph)



Liza Hiranaka

Untitled
(Photograph)

Geta

kata kata kata...

running down stone steps

kata kata kata...

cheerful red clog thongs

between tiny toes

kata kata kata...

stepping on pebbled pavement

breaking through

the still mist silent morning

kata kata kata...

Untitled

Sitting on her squeaky rocking chair,
Grandma swings back and forth
toes pushing off the rug
with each rhythmic motion.
Content in the solitude
of her thoughts.
Slowly her heavy eyelids close—
but only for a brief moment.
A gentle breeze from the kitchen window wakes her
brushing against the pleats
of her beige polyester skirt.
She slowly peeks out at a shadowy image
as it approaches her frail body.
Her young granddaughter tugs
at the triangular button
on her white knitted sweater.
Bending over to pick up the plump child,
her stiff back aches.
Cradling her wrinkled, soft arms
around her granddaughter,
again Grandma begins rocking back and forth.
With toes tapping on the rug,
she hums a lullaby
to the energetic toddler.
The curtains rub against her weary, saggy arms
as the youngster's stone eyelids fall.



John Tsukano

Dim Sum Lights
(Painting)

Grandpa

Grandpa
always ate fish for his meal
real fish
the kind with skeleton
the kind cooked in shoyu sauce
until its eye-balls popped out

Grandpa
every time he visited us
he talked about his cows
his pupils glowed
his voice danced

"Grandpa,
are you going to sleep over?"
"My cows waiting for me,"
he always said.

Grandpa
sucked the last meat
from his last skeleton
rinsed out his mouth
with still warm tea.



Doris Toda

The Family Chorus
(Ceramic)

Eating Poi Hawaiian Style Is No Shame

Eating Poi Hawaiian style
is no shame
No need spoon,
No need fork,
Jus' need two fingas
Yah, you just need two fingas
Poi look like brown glue,
thick and sticky.

First, you gotta clean yoa hands
No forget unda da finga nails
burnbye get hanabata
Sometimes you need da metal nail file
to pry those suckas out.

When dat done
you just gotta place yoa
index and middle finga together
Den dunk yoa fingas
into the bowl of poi.
Den put da fingas in yoa mouth .
Place yoa lips together and
slowly slide yoa fingas out
so dat da brown sticky stuff
is left in yoa mouth.

Yah, dat da best way to eat Poi
Hawaiian style
No need spoon
No need fork
Jus' need two fingas
da index and middle, dat all



Debbie Yamao

Chinese New Year
(Photograph)

Photographs and Memories

As the early morning fog slowly lifted its heavy gray blanket from the harbor and drifted out to sea, the sun chased the night chills away. The harbor and its inhabitants opened sleepy eyes to an embracing orange glow. Merchants lined up their catches on beds of ice as fishing boats and tugs effortlessly chugged through the bay's calm water, tooting a hearty hello to one another.

When she had left the house to go shopping that morning, she had remembered the weatherman announcing the fog would return later in the afternoon. This heavy wool overcoat takes the chill off, she thought. She was finally getting used to the brisk San Francisco mornings.

The chill nipped at her face as she inhaled the crisp air. Adjusting her wool overcoat, she picked up her pace. Along the way home she tried to think of something she might have forgotten. She definitely liked grocery shopping here at the wharf rather than standing in ridiculously long lines in the supermarket. Here she found everything she needed and more. All along the side streets she passed stores selling tourist items: t-shirts that read "Alcatraz" or "49ers," plastic Golden Gate Bridges, and 49ers football helmets. She stopped in front of a store which intrigued her. It was an old Chinese medicine shop. Through the huge picture window, she looked in to see dried up roots, pickled roots, and things she thought looked a lot like animal anatomy in a distorted way. She overheard a middle-aged couple, standing not too far away, apparently deciding on whether or not to go in.

"Harry told me that this guy has a miracle cure for my arthritis," the thin, gray-haired man said.

"Don't be silly! Dr. Howells recommended a good prescription for it already!" retorted the obese woman with frizzy hair. "Besides, this Chinaman doesn't have a degree in medicine. All he seems to know is all that organic crap. Let's go!"

The woman looked up from the conversation to find her watching them curiously. Looking her over, the woman frowned, and then rushed past her with the man closely behind.

Why did the woman say that? What does she know about the natural products that the shopkeeper sells? Oh well, to each his own, she thought, and continued her journey home.

Turning the corner, she faced the last obstacle on her way home: a hill so steep she wondered whether she should have worn hiking boots and a backpack instead of her flat sandals. The package of groceries was getting heavier. Huffing, she slowed her pace to catch

her breath and inhaled the distinct aroma of baking sourdough coming from a pastry shop across the street. The heavenly scent carried her across the street to see the delightful goodies displayed behind the window.

Just as her foot touched the yellow median of the road, a bright red Porsche roared over the hill and landed with a "kur-thunk" on the pavement. She froze and dropped the groceries. Her eyes widened to an enormous size and her mouth opened to scream, but no sound came out. The Porsche swerved to avoid hitting her. It screeched to a halt a few feet in front of her, followed by a trail of smoke and the smell of burnt rubber. When the smoke settled, she got a good look at her assailant and his car. The music was still blaring from an expensive stereo and the top was down. The driver of the red Porsche, a Caucasian male, wore a black suede jacket and Oakley sunglasses, and looked like he was in his mid-twenties. His dirty blonde hair was slicked back with a lot of gel and hair spray, or at least it looked like it, for after this ordeal nothing looked out of place. He reminded her of the local boys back home in the islands. The only difference was that those boys drove Hondas and custom-made Acuras, but the dress was the same. The guy lowered his sunglasses to get a better look at who he almost hit. His steel blue eyes narrowed when they saw her. He threw her a dirty look and muttered, "Chink! Should have kept on going!" He revved the motor, reversed, then roared past her, missing her by inches.

Her face was flushed as her eyes followed the fleeing convertible in disgust. Her hands were white clinched fists and her teeth were gritted together so hard her temples started to ache. A blast from a car horn broke her stare and brought her back to reality. She picked up what groceries were still intact and crossed the street.

"Who does he think he is going that fast down a hill and causing such a racket! Where are the cops when you need them!" she mumbled to herself. "Damn punk! Besides I'm Japanese, not Chinese!"

People here are so different, she thought to herself. It's nothing like home where everyone was much friendlier. The attitude of mainland people seems almost stern and rigid toward strangers like me, she thought.

"What is it?" she asked herself. Just like the elderly couple outside of the Chinese medicine shop. Was it because the shopkeeper was Oriental that the woman refused to go in?

"Or is it me?" she asked.

Suddenly she felt alone, so much more alone and colder than ever before. She sighed and thought about her decision to move to the mainland. "You won't make it up there on your own!" bellowed a familiar voice in her head.

"What makes you think I won't?" she answered silently to herself.

"Do you actually think it will be easier to live up there than here at home? People there don't like strangers—especially when those strangers are Oriental," came the voice again.

This was an old argument. It was the day she made the decision to experience life off the "rock" she had known for over twenty-five years. Tired of the slow-paced environment which surrounded her, she packed her bags and purchased a one way ticket to San Francisco.

"Why can't you just be happy for me and wish me well?" she remembered saying with an outraged tone in her voice. "I'm finally getting out of your hair." She ended the conversation by stomping away and slamming the door behind her.

Mother warned me about this. Was she right? I hope not!

How embarrassing it would be to go back and say Mother was right. Mother didn't and still wouldn't understand what she was trying to accomplish. All she wanted was a little independence and she felt she had done the right thing—until now.

"What would Father say?" she wondered out loud. "He understood what I wanted to do. He gave me the money to start my own life."

Her pace had slowed considerably as she looked around to see where she was. She looked back across the street and saw something which made her stop dead in her tracks. A photo of Diamond Head and palm trees near a white sandy beach and crystal blue waters. She looked both ways and crossed the street. As she approached the photo, visions of home entered her mind. Hawaii. She sure missed it. Now that she had left it behind, she realized just how much she missed it. Her eyes swallowed the photo as if trying to remember everything she had left behind to be on her own.

"You're so damn independent and hard headed!" bellowed that voice in her head. She reached out and touched the glass window, as if trying to feel the warm breezes of the islands. She could almost sense being back on the beach again; standing near the water's edge with sand sifting between her toes and water spraying her face. The images running through her mind were so distinct and clear that it seemed she was back in Hawaii.

A brisk rush of air broke her stare from the photo and brought her reeling back to reality. She looked up to see what this building was. "Smith's Tour and Travel Agency" read the bold red and white sign.

"Do you actually think that things will get better if you move away?" came that voice again. "No," she whispered to herself.

She reached for the doorknob to the travel agency and grabbed hold of the icy handle. She quickly drew her hand away as if she had just touched something hot. She wandered away from the agency. She sighed and lowered her head and continued her walk as the fog slowly rolled back in.

Thoughts of home and her mother ran through her mind. She thought of the photo at home of her mom and dad. She knew her mom, but then again she didn't. Her mother was so different from herself. She knew her mother had made a lot of sacrifices to keep the family going. Morals from Mother passed down to her were strong and true. But to be like Mother in every way; she just couldn't see herself living like that. Surely there was more to life than just work and family.

As she entered her apartment, her eyes fell upon the photo. It was taken at the Floating Chinese Restaurant in Honolulu during the celebration of her parents' fiftieth wedding anniversary. Mother had sewn the matching outfits that they had worn on that special occasion. She laughed at the outfits, knowing mom didn't like to waste a thing. The material reminded her of some old mustard colored drapery material. They stood in front of a

lavishly decorated three-layer cake with white and gold frosting. As usual, Mother wasn't smiling. Father was, but not Mother.

She remembered a joke she shared with her older sister. "Mother never likes to smile 'cause she's afraid of getting wrinkles," she said as her sister nodded in agreement. Mother always seemed to carry a habute look—a Japanese frown.

She put down the groceries and walked over to the picture. She picked it up and touched the glass that encased the precious photograph of the woman she didn't know.

With the photo still in hand, she walked over to the phone. She looked at the phone with hesitation, then looked at the picture. Picking up the receiver, she clumsily dialed a number she knew by heart. Her hands were perspiring as she brought the receiver to her ear. It was already ringing. She bit her lower lip in anticipation, while trying to think of something witty to say. It continued ringing. Slowly her anticipation was turning into disappointment. She glanced at the clock. Ten o'clock.

"Hmm, maybe it's a little too early," she mumbled. Just as she was about to hang up, the phone clicked. A meek voice answered, "Hello?"

A nervous smile spread across her face as she sat down on the floor and said, "Hi Mom. How are you?"

"Fine."

Please don't hold a grudge Mom, she thought.

"That's good to hear. How is Dad doing?" she said.

"Fine."

Was it her imagination or did she hear a bitter tone in the voice? "Did I wake you up?" she asked.

"No, I was up for a while," sighed her mother, "I just couldn't sleep."

An unnerving silence passed as the "tick-tock" of the clock on the wall she faced seemed a little too loud.

"And how are you?" asked her mother.

"Fine." she replied. Was this as far as the conversation was to go? "Is Dad there?"

"No, your father left for work early this morning," her mother said flatly.

"Well I guess I better go," she said quickly. "Goodb—."

"Wait!" Her mother paused. "Is everything okay? I mean, there isn't anything wrong is there?"

"No, everything is fine." Her voice relaxed. "Just called to see how you were. And to tell you that—I miss you."

There was another long pause.

"Mom? Are you still there?"

There were soft crying sounds coming from the other end of the line.

"I miss you too, baby!" her mother cried.

Tears started falling. It was at that moment that she felt close to the woman she had never known.

Octobers Ago

Looking through tears and pumpkins

I can always see her.

Years of candy corn, masks, and darkness

She is always there.

Such a tiny hand clutching mine

Too small for a costume

Dressed in a pillow case.

I wonder if she ever sees me.

A girl

She stood in front of the coconut tree

She leaned against it.

In her right hand

hung a Hello Kitty lunch box.

She wrote letters

M-O-M-M-Y

with the tip of her sneaker

over and over

on a quiet ground.



Suzanne Bell

Portrait of Laura
(Chalk)

Somewhere

Somewhere
down an old
country lane

Where
tall reeds
grow

In a
quiet field
of water

I am
sitting with you
on a grassy bank

Watching
the smooth
ripples

Of the
different
colors of Autumn

As they
shift between
the shade trees

I can hear
you say it won't
be long

Before
the lake
freezes over

Your face
is crisp
and vibrant

The outline
of your soft lips
are in contrast

With the solidness
of your red
plaid shirt

Drawing me
closer
to you

I can feel
your masculinity
reassuring me

As your
strong legs
stretch in anticipation

Of us
cutting sweeping
circles through the ice

Under the
shimmering silver light
of a winter moon



Jasmin
(Chalk)

Laura Manis

Kauai Visit #1

The night air parts before us
like still-warm milk
from a full, lactating moon.
Your nephew Ding's
trusty rusty Civic
slides silently over
charcoal velvet roads.

Country night.
Sweet country smells and sounds.
Just you, me, the moon
and the bugs, who
make quiet concerted cacophony.
Are they some kind of crickets
that make that high-pitched
buzzing sound?
When they stop
the silence hurts my ears,
makes them feel stuffed with cotton.

No need for streetlights while
cream is being poured
from that uncanny, ethereal pitcher
as we glide slowly higher
and the air begins
to cool our city-warmed faces.

No need, either, for filler talk;
we're like a pair of old slippers
with matching worn
foot impressions -
you the left, me the right.

Unnerved by lunar contours
I want to leave the Honda
behind and take a milk bath.
But the car keeps me
safely grounded in 1985.

My dozens of mosquito
bites begin to prickle.
Just so
Kauai must have looked
hundreds of years past
to those who walked here and were
one with their surroundings -
as though all who shared
the land
also shared a single immense consciousness.

Chicken skin.
"I don't belong here."
Did I say it aloud?
Do you feel it too?
Is your Hawaiian half
out walking with those
who watch?
I slide a sideways glance at you
from under lashes.
You're lost to me
just driving.

Should I say something?
Or has the city
leached that part of you as
dry as Kaho'olawe
where your niece and nephews
once camped in protest?

Rejected by the landscape, I hear
ancient bones call out condemnation.
More chicken skin.
Do I hear
the Night Marchers?

Or is it only
collective haole guilt
and the Honda's
moon milk slipstream?

I open my mouth to say
something - anything.
And you beat me to it.
Pointing like the dutiful
tour guide
that other haoles before me
have reduced so many to, you say,
"Up ahead's one
heiau."
You know what is
heiau?"

I can only shiver,
as the tour guide speech
echoes mockingly from vast distances
before merging with the primeval moon.



Steven R. Greb

Choices
(Photograph)

Snow

It was one of those mild April days in the northeast, the time when winter's frozen stillness willingly surrendered to spring's warm activity. Earth, dark and half-frozen, supported melting snow slowly seeping into thirsty soil. Seeds, bulbs, and roots, dormant during the long winter, awoke and thankfully soaked in life-giving liquid. Once again growing leaves and sprouting seeds danced on the wind. Nature's elements appeared to co-exist everywhere.

Eddies of air, warm and fragrant like my father's greenhouse, swirled about my face as I dragged myself to school that morning. On the wind were rich, ripe scents of snow-dampened earth—pungent, cool, and alive. Suddenly, a mischievous gust of wind snatched my hat and threw it in a large patch of melting snow. Not wanting to wet my shoes, I stood wishing for a miracle.

A warm voice broke the spell. "Hi Brock. Whatcha doin'?" It was Ray, the new boy in class. "My hat's in the snow."

"I git 'em fo' ya." Ray ran into the snow, retrieved my hat, and proudly returned it to me. His face, full of smiles. His eyes, full of hope.

"Thanks."

Ray smiled, reached into a crumpled brown bag, and asked, "Y'all want some corn bread?"

"Uaaah ... okay." I felt uneasy taking and eating his food—yet somehow it seemed natural.

"Mama make 'em. We havin' hotdogs fo' supper. Y'all wanna eat with us?" Ray's begging eyes asked the question—his color answered it.

"I can't," I said turning away, then quickly running to school.

It was 1955. Civil rights and Little Rock were in the news, but current events were of little interest to the third graders of Southold, an affluent little hamlet on Eastern Long Island. It had the best of everything: stores, houses, beaches, schools, teachers, and people. Mrs. Grant, who could trace her family back to the founders of Southold, was one of the best. A plump, jovial woman with snow-white hair, she had been teaching third grade since the school was built. She was well-liked and respected throughout the community and always gave presents to her class at Christmas. One weekend in late March she had all of us over to her house for an Easter egg hunt. All of us, that is, except Ray. He was black, from the South, and had never seen snow or felt its bitter chill—until recently moving to Southold.

Shoving the last bite of corn bread into my mouth, I entered the third floor classroom before

Ray, and sat at my favorite seat next to the window. I could gaze out at endless fields of dry grass waiting for the first warm days of spring to entice life, at farmland waiting to be planted, and at forests waiting to be explored. The bell rang and I was jolted back to reality—school and learning. Mrs. Grant told us to take out our math homework, then she asked for a volunteer to go to the blackboard and write the answer to the first question. As usual Ray immediately raised his hand. The teacher didn't call on Ray very often. I thought it was because of the way he talked.

"All right Ray, you may go to the blackboard, but write so we can understand the answer," Mrs. Grant sighed impatiently.

"Yes 'um," Ray spurted as he scurried to the front of the room.

Giggles and whispers swirled through the air. A wet, spotty trail followed Ray. The giggles continued as Ray wrote the answer on the blackboard. The whispers grew louder as he proudly returned to his seat—followed by the wet, spotty trail. Visibly proud, Ray sat down holding his homework like a sacrifice.

"Ray peed his pants," someone announced.

Ray's expression of happiness and belonging turned to bewilderment. Someone else pointed to the puddle under Ray's feet and said, "Look, it's running down his leg!" By now most of the class was laughing. I felt I should tell the class that the puddle was from the snow that had stuck to Ray's shoes when he rescued my hat. But, like most of the class, I thought it would end with Ray just being laughed at. So I remained silent—like the snow.

Suddenly, the teacher was standing over Ray. "Don't you know how to use a bathroom?" she bellowed. "Pigs like you must be taught!"

THUD, THUD!

Mrs. Grant's clenched fist hammered the back of Ray's neck. Blood dripped from his nose. Trembling, he held up his homework in a desperate attempt to catch the bright red drops. As the teacher stood over Ray like a cat over a half-dead bird, blood covered the homework he had so proudly produced. Ray looked over at me. His eyes, filled with terror, were asking "Why?" The snow had turned to pee—or so it seemed. A deafening silence filled the room. Every breath I took burned.

After Ray was thrown out of the classroom for bleeding on the desk and his blood wiped away along with his feelings, the teacher announced, "His kind has to be treated that way in order for them to learn how to live and get along with the rest of humanity. Remember what you learned today, we might have a test on it Friday."

As I walked home from school that day I thought about the test we might have Friday and what I had been taught—that black people were to be treated like dumb animals, and that white people had to beat them so the poor creatures could learn to live in a white world. Branded on my brain was the look in Ray's eyes as his blood, hopes, and dreams drained from his wilting body. Could this pillar of knowledge known as a teacher be guilty of wrongdoing? Not to most third graders.

Walking to school the next morning I noticed patches of snow refusing to melt and give life

to the soil. I noticed barren areas where the frozen earth would not let the snow that did melt seep in. I saw patches with no future. I saw the school.

I entered the classroom and looked towards Ray's desk. "Hey Brock!" Danny called. "Come and look at the blood."

I went to the desk and looked at the spots on the seat.

"That's not blood. They were there already," I said.

"It's Ray's blood, I know it is," Danny insisted.

"My mother says he got what he deserved," someone added.

"He should have known better."

"His kind has to be trained."

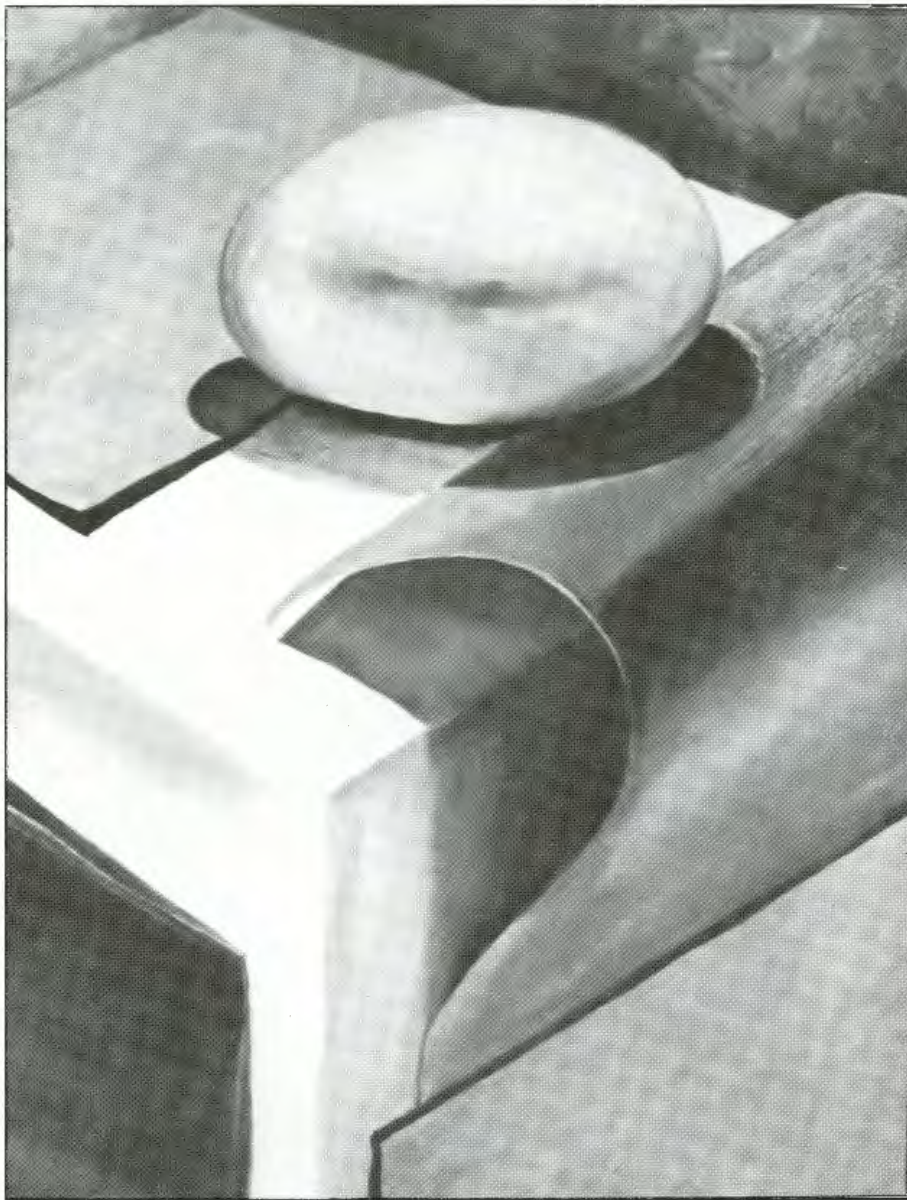
"My father says his family cleans sewers."

This sharing of freshly acquired knowledge went on until the teacher entered the room. We scattered to our seats.

"Ray will not be in our class anymore. He has been sent back to second grade," Mrs. Grant announced. "Now let's try to forget about unpleasant affairs and learn how to divide uneven numbers."

We never had a test on Friday, but I never forgot what I had learned. After that day Ray was always clinging to the shadows and seemed afraid to talk. Whenever I passed him in the halls he was always looking down at his feet—perhaps to see if there was any snow. I never saw him outside of school; someone said that he walked through the forests so no one would see him—perhaps so he would see no one.

There was snow that smothered the dark earth. Snow that was callous, cold, and oblivious to other elements of nature. Snow that would never experience the enchantment of nature's coexistence. There was snow that would not melt.



John Tsukano

Easter Reflections
(Painting)

The Kite

The kite dances on the wind
and blocks the sun for a moment
then glides away.
Its tail is as bright as a rainbow
and as lively as the wind itself.

The kite heads into the wind
proudly displaying its bright colors.
Shocking red and vibrant blue.

As it dances above me
it comes alive and taunts me
as I am confined to the earth.

It strains on its string
eager to be free.
With a twist its string suddenly snaps
and laughingly, the kite sails free.

Musical Instructions

Moderate Tempo- yet

Soft and delicate -

But most importantly,

With feeling.



Liza Hiranaka

Untitled
(Photograph)

My Grandma

My grandma

hard bones, hard voice

soft skin, soft touch

dark hair, light smile

strong hug, strong love.



Robert Maeoka

Portrait
(Photograph)

Creatures of the Shadow

creatures of the shadow
come crowding out of the night
ripping into the mind at midnight
clawing
tearing
their way into your dreams
they haunt your sleep
encircling
enclosed within
cowering in the mist
there's nowhere to hide
from nightmares



Brian Warren

Historic Anxiety

(Pen and Ink)

The Debbil Made Me Do It

Whaddaya say?
C'mon & dance.
Call in sick -
they'll never know -
just like they never
figured how the till
was 20 bucks short
a couple weeks back.
What'd I tell ya?

Listen,
there's a swell party
at Fred's -
so many drunks
they'll never notice
one more
who wasn't invited

Hey - no sweat -
Fred's rich;
he'll never miss that fifth
of Chivas.
Loosen up,
this is a party.
'sides, you look kinda cute
in a lampshade.
Really.

Trust me -
if ya put 50 bucks on
the Raiders,
you'll make 10 time that
& ya can pay

Ernie back that
hundred ya owe 'im.

I'm tellin' ya,
her husband
is just too damn
dumb to figure it out.
An' don't pay any
attention to what
she says -
she's been askin' for it
all night.

Relax.
Have one more for the
road.
Believe me,
when they say "55 mph
speed limit"
they expect ya t' go 60
Maybe even 65.
Shit.
Will ya stop worryin'?
You can make it through
before the light turns
red.

So.
Whaddaya say?
Huh?



Thelma Greg

Ancestral Figure
(Sculpture)

George

At the other side of the world
His thin blue voice

I shift the phone to my other hand
To sit in the low corduroy chair

"I'm in the hospital again
This time it's my upper lungs"

I listen but my mind is gone
Re-creates a picture of the past

Last week he walked slowly
Face red, eyes unseeing

Last year we sat in his apartment
The sound of Waikiki around us

His two cats leapt from the floor
At least eight feet to a closet top

That sheer force and energy
Startled me into silence

Autumn

Two become one in the fire of the sun

Leaves

Alone hanging by a cord

Drop independent, maturing on the floor

On a palette of earth, together they are painted

A mosaic in dirt, their colours untainted

But those alone, those that are free

They resist my grasp, they do not recognize me

They do not know my touch is gold, my touch is all

My paint is magic, for those who accept to fall



James Loui

World War II Memorial
(Photograph)

Philip (On Appearances)

His name says Lover of Horses,
Says: Big, athletic, tan
Tamer of animals larger than he

The name is the first illusion:
The face fair, small, delicate
Black-eyed, shell-like

Each week thins him
The nose larger
The chin longer

We gave him a scale
Bought at Sears
In a plastic bag

We said: "Fatten up"
"Eat nuts"
"Drink malts"

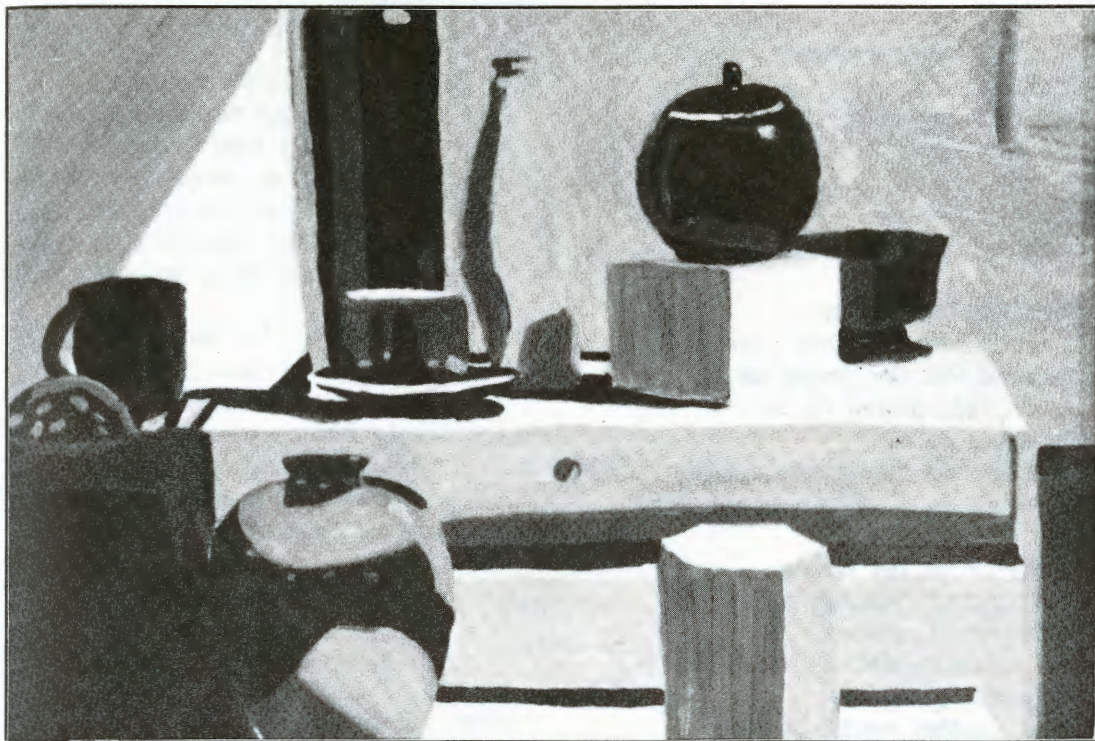
I could only pretend peacefulness—
Serenity is not for oneself
But for others to enjoy

Our stable earth flies quiet through the sky
Our moving sun stays still
We make a mask of strength to offer real love.

Under an old banyan tree last week
A compassionate woman cried near my car,
"Tell me something comforting"

"All of us are dying," I said
"At different rates
At different times"

"Cold comfort!" she replied.
Such an insight needs its twin:
The only other comfort is kindness.



Lenie Bolosan

Still Life
(Painting)

Aunts

It's odd to think of aunts.
They're a strange breed—
The good ones, at least.
Not quite our mothers
Nor sisters,
Nor just friends.
Their influence is auntly.

Anne would sit silent
In that Chinese-yellow room
With me and her ginger cat
Victor. We played chess,
The three of us,
On a knitted blue-green afghan
Under pools of yellow-shaded light

Beside us on her slender
Violin-stand, shining metal
Bach's music rested
The notes mysterious, beautiful
Flagged language
From another world
Heard sometimes in silence

Anne gave the gift of a first record
Franck's Symphony in d.
Orchestral organ music
That took me down
Into the real
That helped me drown
My unnecessary self

Terry taught me fan-tan,
The pleasure of playing
Card games past midnight
(While the working world slept)
Dressed in red, cigarette dangling
Talking, enveloping us in clouds of smoke
Taught the rule of imagination

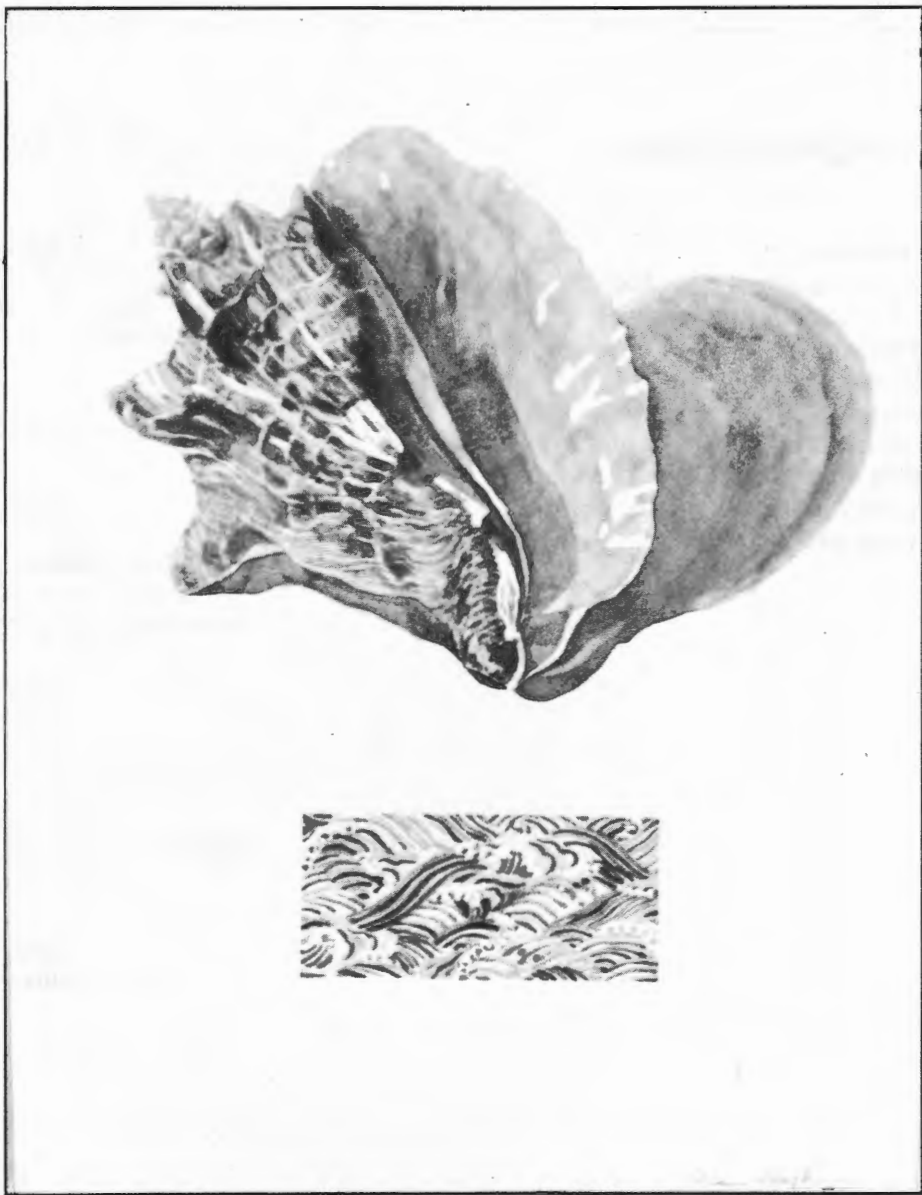
Mary at every table
Placed a candle in the night
Her fingertips held flames
Gathered flowers, set silver.
Her dress, silver on black
Her voice bell-like and elegant
She talked of travel and embassy

Her house could only be home,
Walls of hardbound books protected
Those who slept there.
For wine, silver-stemmed glasses
From Rome. For music, Tebaldi,
Gigli, Tozzi sang of love and sacrifice.
Her dwelling, the Italy of the soul.

Outside, a winter rain
Falls softly in the leaves
(The garden audible, invisible).
An occasional flash of light
Illuminates tree branches in the dark.
Rumble of gentle, distant thunder.
On my bed I write, cushioned by memory.

If Not For Woolworth's

"Are you married?"
And he managed the words, "Of course."
And I casually flashed my gold band
Straight from Woolworth's
Bought expressly for this very moment.
We held our breath
And then we were under the covers
Laughing hysterically.
We fooled him.
We are so grown up.
When can we play house again?



Chie Boykin

Queen Conch
(Water Color)

Her Once Quiet Whisper

Her once soft voice
like the ocean's sound in a seashell
Now like the thrashing of the waves
as it hits the shoreline
Each word said was
quick and loud
Her tone of voice could shatter a glass
like an opera singer's
It was a quarter past the hour when
her once quiet whisper returned.

Upon A Time

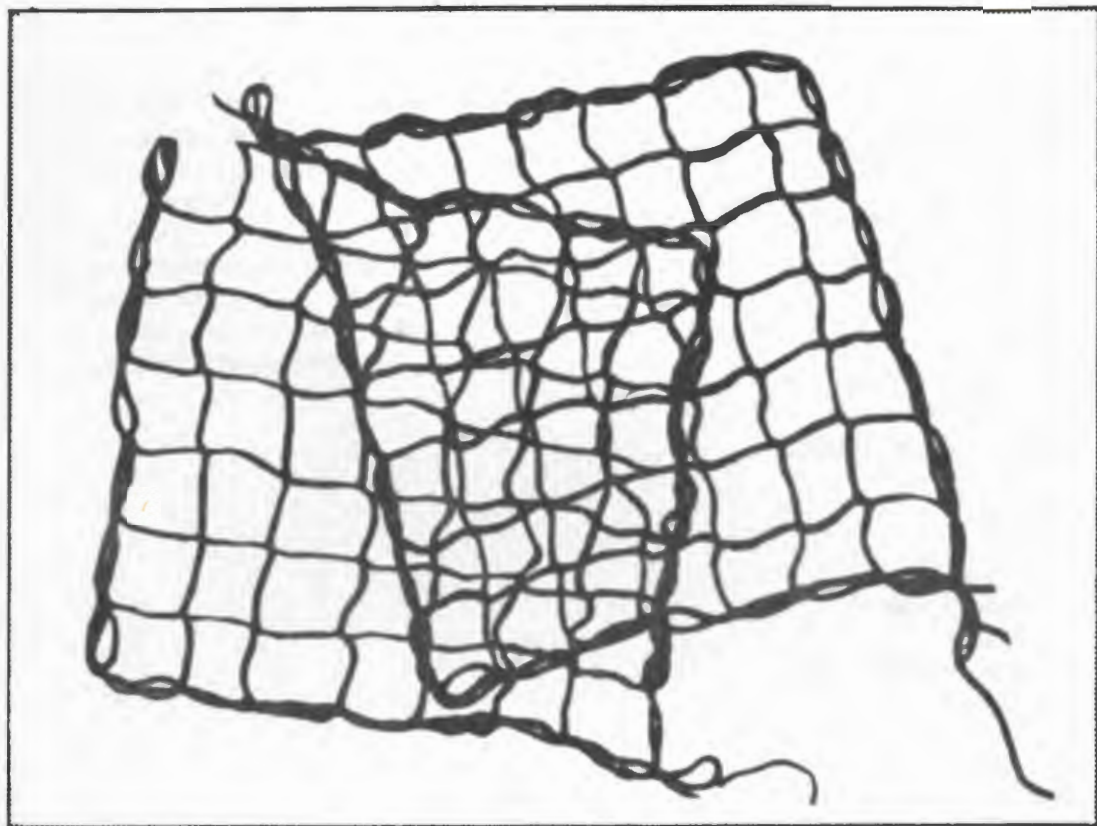
Just once
to get through
to the other side
of your indifference.

Just once to see myself
reflected in your eyes.

Just once
to hear you
take possession of my name,
trying it on for size
shaping it to your needs.

Just once
to taste
your left earlobe
the inside of your
right elbow
the palms of both hands
your eyelids.

Just once?
Who am I kidding?



Mary Jane Suyeka

Untitled
(Paper)

Just Right

It's the color of velvet

so red

so lustrous

It's the color of melting lava

so hot on my naked lips

I make a fish mouth

in front of the mirror

I wink at my reflection

It's the color of tonight

Just right.

Fire Fly

fly: (noun) 1. a small night-flying beetle that produces a soft light.
2. a garment closing concealed by a fold of cloth extending over the fastener (zipper).

Poising tensely on
a rigid blade,
He knows what happens
after dusk fades.
Spreading his wings
and Streaking through air,
He flashes his bare bottom
and does it with flair.
Blushing and giggling
she reclines on the grass,
He foolishly signals Green
and looks like an ass.
Beaming and bright
the Moon shines so,
He really loves to have
his light show.
Hoping and praying
it will be this time,
He winks like a
motel's neon sign.
Glowing and burning
with so much lust,
He does this only for a
blinking bust.



Chie Boykin

Gold Imari
(Water Color)



Liza Hiranaka

Untitled
(Photograph)

Ka Nani 1990 was "typeset" in the type face Palatino using the Apple® Macintosh™SE computer, and Apple Laser Writer® II NT, with Microsoft® Word 4.0 and Aldus Page-maker® 3.02 software. Ka Nani 1990 is published by the Board of Student Publications of Kapiolani Community College and is supported by student fees. It is printed at Kapiolani Community College Print Shop.

*Birds circle about the sky,
poise
in dipping flight
over the waves.*

Hawaiian Chant

