

Summer fun starts with a good book from Hawaii publishers

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Find these selections where books are sold and online from the publisher.

With the beach beckoning during the summer months, it's time to roll out the towels, slather on the suntan oil and immerse yourself in books that transport you to another time, place and perspective. Follow a detective on the hunt in post-war Chinatown, find out the story behind the ghostly night marchers and cheer for wahine surfers gaining respect in a man's world.

Local publishers offer a pleasing variety of choices, most of them revolving around Hawaii lifestyles and cultural pride, and a wide range of interest for teens and children that weave in life lessons. Find these selections where books are sold and online from the publisher.

ADULTS

'Aina Hanau, Birth Land"

Brandy Nalani McDougall, \$16.95, The University of Arizona Press, 2023

A collection of poems honoring Hawaiian culture, language and more centers around aina hanau (the land of one's birth.) In a combination of Hawaiian and English, McDougall, Hawaii's poet laureate, employs powerful imagery in commentary on American imperialism, social and environmental injustice, and Native Hawaiian traditions. She also gets personal on birth and motherhood.

Even the more lighthearted topics are laced with biting undertones, such as "Waikiki on Google Maps," "The Kahului McDonald's," and "College Prep Test for Those Who Will Leave Hawaii."

A sample of her critical eye in "This Island On Which I Love You: " "...the best of our lands are touristed, the beaches foam-laced with rainbowed suntan oil, the mountains tattooed with asphalt, pocked by telescoped domes, hotels and luxury condos blighting the line between ocean and sky."

"Hula"

Jasmin 'Iolani Hakes, \$32, HarperVia, 2023

In her debut novel, Hakes writes from her own experience as a hapa-haole (half Caucasian) girl who grew up in Hilo in a proud local family who is struggling to connect to her Native Hawaiian roots. Learning hula and joining a halau (school) was the only thing that grounded her identity.

Similarly, her central character, Hi'i, challenges herself to master the sacred art of hula as she aches to be accepted as truly Hawaiian. The author weaves the stories of three generations of women in a family for which hula is more

than just entertainment for tourists, but a symbol of preserving Hawaii's rich culture for future generations.

Hakes' story encompasses the complexities of her island home, exploring issues about identity and diversity at odds with corrupt politics and the vestiges of colonialism and commercialization.

“Surfing Sisterhood Hawai‘i”

Mindy Pennybacker, \$21.95., Mutual Publishing June/July 2023

Journalist, author and local surfer Mindy Pennybacker gives a firsthand account of what it's like for female recreational surfers to catch their fair share of waves in an often hostile and competitive environment. The waves are dominated by men who don't give them much respect, but the wahine are reclaiming some territory.

The book focuses on the sisterhood created by women surfers bonding and supporting one another, and how they find fulfillment and exhilarating fun in the sport. Interviews with dozens of women of all ages, backgrounds and abilities, reveal how important sustaining the community, nature, culture and a sense of ohana (family) are to them.

The book includes a comprehensive history of professional female surfers fighting for equal pay and recognition, including the achievements of Olympic gold medalist Carissa Moore and Moana Jones Wong, the first women's World Surf League champion.

“Ike Papalua: Science Fiction & Fantasy Stories from the Hawaiian Islands”

Edited by Sam Fletcher, \$16.95, Mutual Publishing, 2023

Local authors offer their wildest fantasies in 21 short stories filled with adventure, magic, ghosts, robots and shapeshifters, set in the ancient past to hundreds of years in the future.

Just a few tales: A child's birth is tied to a misinterpreted prophecy; menehune play pranks on tourists; a diver salvaging a wreck finds something lurking; and vampires harvest the remaining humans in concentration camps.

Authors include A.A. Attanasio, Gregory Norman Bossert, Alan Brennert, A.M. Dellamonica, Tom Gammarino, Darien Gee and more.

“Reflections in Stone and Bronze: Exploring Hawai‘i’s History & Culture Through Sculpture”

Cheryl D. Soon, \$21.95, Mutual Publishing, 2022

The Father Damien statue installed at the Hawaii State Capitol sparked controversy in 1969 over sculptor Marisol Escobar's depiction of the minister's face and body disfigured by leprosy. As a groundbreaking caretaker of leprosy patients on Molokai, Damien de Veuster was venerated as a Roman Catholic saint in 2009. His statue is one of 60 historical figures commemorated for their places in Hawaii's history and culture.

Texts and photographs make it easy to take a self-guided tour. Each sculpture is a story unto itself, involving challenges and controversies as well as portraying the lives and communities of Hawaii during particular times in history.

“Char Siu”

Scott Kikkawa, \$20, Bamboo Ridge Press, 2023

“Char Siu” is the third in a series of noir novels set in postwar Honolulu by Scott Kikkawa, a federal law enforcement officer in Honolulu. His central character is Sergeant Francis “The Sheik” Yoshikawa, a World War II veteran and the only Japanese-American homicide detective on the force.

Set in Chinatown, January 1954, Yoshikawa is reluctantly standing in as a bagman to extract protection money from gambling and brothel racketeers. But he gets caught in the crosshairs of organized crime and disorganized law.

“Retribution, a Koa Kane Hawaiian Mystery”

Robert McCaw, \$27.95, Oceanview Publishing, 2023

The fifth book in a series of “Koa Kane” detective mysteries, the Hilo chief detective investigates the back alley stabbing of a young man, revealing fingerprints on the murder weapon that are a perfect match for his younger brother.

In the meantime, a sniper tries to kill Kane’s closest colleague in a killing spree that causes him to wonder if he’s the real target.

“Snaring New Suns, Speculative Works From Hawai‘i and Beyond”

Editors Tom Gammarino, Bryan Kamaoli Kuwada, D. Keali‘i MacKenzie and Lyz Soto \$20, Bamboo Ridge Press, \$20, 2022

Interested in fantasy, science fiction and the supernatural? This collection of stories, poetry and art by 48 new and established authors and artists ventures into another realm of speculation. Creators experiment with form and mixed genres, including art, graphic stories, nonfiction and even a stage play.

Its titles give an idea of what’s on offer: “A Queer/Trans Arab Multiverse” by Ahimsa Timoteo Bodhran; “Melting Teeth” by Jocelyn Kapumealani Ng; “Let the Mango Go Viral” by Timothy Dyke; and “The Day the Land Spoke” by Zoe C. Sims.

“Voices of Hawai‘i — Volume 2, Preserving Island Culture One Story at a Time”

Jane Marshall Goodsill, \$24.95, Watermark Publishing, 2022

In her second anthology, the author and historian shares life stories from the people who keep aloha alive and perpetuate the traditions of the Aloha State, tracing Hawaii’s journey from the World War II era to the 21st century. Most of the people profiled here are usually uncelebrated and found behind-the-scenes: kumu hula, pa‘u riders, surfers, scientists, artisans and craftspeople, soldiers, builders, farmers and so many others.

A few are famous, including comedian Frank De Lima, entertainer Cha Thompson and surfing champion Fred Hemmings. Lesser known are specialists Ku'uipo Kalahiki Morales on lauhala weaving and David Young on his family's line of Hawaiian woodworking (gourds, canoes, calabashes) in chapters on artisans and ancient crafts.

“Hawaii’s Night Marchers: A History of the Huaka’i Po”

Robert Lopaka Kapanui, Tanya Kapanui, illustrated by Alike Spahn Naihe, \$19.99, Kukui Publishing, 2023

Lopaka Kapanui, best know as “Hawaii’s Ghost Guy,” has been researching and collecting ghost stories, legends and the history of Hawaii for over 25 years. With his wife, Tanya, he has compiled more than four dozen eyewitness narratives along with the history of the haunting night marchers.

The legend was first passed down orally by those who had witnessed the ghostly army’s torch-lit processions. The sightings, the authors write, are too numerous to be “shrugged away as mere hallucinations, suggestions, rumors, or fraud.”

Many Hawaiians believe the night marchers “are the spirits of warriors, chiefs, and gods who are continuing in death their tasks held in life.”

CHILDREN’S BOOKS

“Mana Legends: Kamehameha”

Christopher Carvalho, \$25, Bess Press, 2023

This is the first historical fiction comic flipbook of Kamehameha the Great’s early years in Kohala and the years of training that made him into a legendary king. Written in Hawaiian and English, there are two different covers corresponding to these languages.

The detailed, lifelike drawings give a supernatural interpretation of actual events, loaded with action-packed scenes sure to appeal to ages 10 and over.

“Alohasaurus”

Vera Arita, illustrated by Jamie Tablason, \$14.95, BeachHouse Publishing, 2022

A lonely dinosaur living in a cave on Kauai dreams of making friends. No one seems to want to play with him because of his huge size and his strange noises.

But one day, a group of children sets aside its fear and asks him to play. While swimming and having fun, the dinosaur teaches them about waiting their turn patiently, sweeping up trash and speaking softly. They learn from the dinosaur’s kind and gentle ways that friends come in all varieties.

“Lei and the Fire Goddess”

Malia Maunakea, \$17.99, Penguin Random House, 2023

While living in Colorado, Anna Leilani “Lei” Kama’eahu, 12, never believed in her grandmother’s folktales about sacred flowers and mo’olelo (family legends). But during a visit with her tutu (grandmother) in Hawaii, Lei accidentally insults Madame Pele by destroying her lehua blossoms. The angry fire goddess responds with a curse and sends a giant hawk to kidnap her best friend.

Lei, who is part-Hawaiian, is compelled to embrace her Hawaiian ancestry and culture, teaming up with demigods and talking bats to save her friends and family. For ages 7 to 12.

Penguin is partnering with Hawaii’s Partners In Development Foundation to donate a book for every book preordered, to benefit Hawaiian families, up to 500 copies, from April 10 to June 6.

“The Pele Stories, Three Hawaiian Legends: A Primer”

Gabrielle Ahuli’i, illustrated by Jing Jing Tsong, \$16.95, BeachHouse Publishing, 2023

Written in English and Hawaiian, this collection includes three previously published books about Pele, the volatile volcano goddess, presented in a larger, picture book size for kids in kindergarten through second grade.

“Naupaka,” one of the best loved legends, explains how the native plant naupaka blooms only as half a flower on the beach and in the mountains. The tale starts with Nanau and Kapaka, a gentle, loving couple who took care of the plants around them. But Pele was jealous and vowed to turn their love into ash. Laka, one of Pele’s sisters, changed the couple into naupaka in order to protect them.

The other legends in the collection: “Pele Finds a Home” and “Hi’iaka Battles the Wind.”

“Wordsworth the Haiku Teacher”

Frances H. Kakugawa, illustrated by Scott Goto, \$14.95, Watermark Publishing, 2023

A little mouse known as Wordsworth the Poet needs help with his school assignment: teach haiku, the traditional Japanese form of poetry, to his classmates. In the fifth installment of a series, he enlists the help of the author, a former teacher and also his pen pal. Kakugawa explains to him the simple structure of haiku poetry — three lines of five, seven and five syllables each — and introduces writing concepts such as simile, metaphor and personification in easy-to-understand terms. Creating an image is an important way for others see, feel and taste what you are writing about, Wordsworth teaches.

“I Am a Rainbow!”

Mark Kanemura, illustrated by Richard Merritt, \$18.99 Hachette Book Group, 2023

This picture book is based on the author’s childhood in Hawaii and encourages kids to find safe spaces to be themselves. Kanemura, a professional dancer, LGBTQIA+ advocate and social media star, grows up

with a passion to put on shows, dress up and dance, but kids at school tease him about it.

His parents surprise him with a beautiful, flowing cape that makes him feel invincible and free to let his personality shine, giving him the courage to befriend kids just like him. But when Mark loses his cape, he wonders how he will shine again.