

Hawaiian History Month 2021
Sep. 29 Biographies

Joshua "Baba" Kamoani'ala Tavares is a native Hawaiian actor from Kona on Hawai'i Island, with his most recent credit being Angel in the 20th Anniversary National Tour of RENT. He trained at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo as well as the American Musical and Dramatic Academy in New York City. During Covid he returned home and taught papa 'ekahi (first grade) at Ke Kula 'o 'Ehunuikaimalino. He recently joined the board of directors at The Aloha Theatre where he has served as the Hawaiian Cultural Specialist and performed in *Songs for a New World*. Currently he is working on getting his Masters in Acting with a focus in Hana Keaka (Hawaiian Theatre) and is thrilled to be in *He Leo Aloha*, premiering this Fall at the Kennedy Theatre. @babatavares

Iasona Kaper is a translator and theatre artist from Kāne'ohe, O'ahu. He has been active in the local theatre community since 2006, most recently working with Hawaiian Mission Houses, Kumu Kahua Theatre, and Hilo Community Players. He is currently a student in the Hawaiian Theatre MFA program at UH-Mānoa.

No One'ula, Honouliuli mai 'o **Ākea Kahikina**, a he kama'āina ho'i 'o ia no Kuli'ou'ou, Kona. Ua puka maila 'o ia mai ke kula ki'eki'e 'o Kamehameha ma Kapālama a me ke kulanui 'o The University of Miami me ke kēkelē BFA no ka hana keaka mele. He haumāna laeo'o 'o ia ma ke Kulanui o Hawai'i ma Mānoa ma lalo o ka polokalamu hana keaka Hawai'i a me ko ka hālau 'ōlelo Hawai'i 'o Kawaihuelani. Ma kēia 'Apelila a'e, e ho'opuka 'ia ana kāna papahana laeo'o 'o *Ho'oilina* ma Kennedy Theatre, he mo'olelo ho'omake'aka ua papahana nei e pili ana i kekahi 'ohana Kanaka Maoli a me ka heluhelu palapala ho'oilina. 'O kona hoihoi, 'o ia nō ka ha'i mo'olelo 'ana e pili ana i ka "māhūi," 'o ia ho'i nā leo o ka po'e māhū mai kikilo mai a i kēia wā e holo nei.

Hi'ilani Kim-Dela Cruz Okimura is a second year graduate student at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. She is pursuing an MFA in Hawaiian Theatre, with a focus in acting. Her first experience in performing Hana Keaka was the Fall 2019 production *'Au'a'ia: Holding On*, when she was in her undergrad. She is currently in the Fall 2021 production *He Leo Aloha*. Hi'ilani is excited to be part of the Hana Keaka program, and hopes to see more hana keaka produced and performed both in the university and the Hawai'i theatre community

Kaipulaumakaniolono hails from the Pali Hāuliuli o ke Ko'olau, the verdant Kahalu'u, O'ahu in the center of the Hawai'i archipelago. His studies in the MFA for Hawaiian Theatre program at UHM currently engages practices of indigenous futurity in reshaping and remembering traditional narratives. His research focuses on Mo'olelo Ka'ao, traditional storytelling, song and chant. Kaipu has appeared in the productions of *Kamapua'a* (2004, 2005, 2007, 2008), *Lā'ieikawai* (2015), *'Au'a'ia: Holding On* (2019-2020) and as "Maui" in the Hawaiian language

version of Disney's *Moana* (2018). In 2019 he served as assistant director in the production of *Mo'olelo o ke Koa* and is currently directing his thesis production *He Leo Aloha* set to debut in Fall 2021. In addition to his work as a theatre artist, Kaipu composes Hawaiian chant and poetry. His vocal talents were featured at the *Art of the Chanter* (2017) and his latest composition is available on Nā Palapalai's *Back to the Patch* (2019).

Tammy Haili'ōpua Baker is an Associate Professor in the Department of Theatre and Dance at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. As a Director/Playwright/Theatre Educator/Scholar, her work centers on the development of an indigenous Hawaiian theatre aesthetic and form, language revitalization, and the empowerment of cultural identity through stage performance. Baker is the artistic director of Ka Hālau Hanakeeka, a Hawaiian medium theatre troupe based on O'ahu. Originally from Kapa'a, Kaua'i she now resides in Kahalu'u, Ko'olaupoko, O'ahu with her 'ohana.