



***THE STORY OF EVERYTHING* CAST BIOS**

KEALOHA

Kealoha, born and raised in Honolulu, is the first poet laureate of Hawai‘i and the first poet in Hawai‘i’s history to perform at a governor’s inauguration. As an internationally acclaimed poet and storyteller, he has performed throughout the world — from the White House to the ‘Iolani Palace, from Brazil to Switzerland. He was selected as a master artist for a National Endowment for the Arts program, teaching artist for Hawai‘i State Foundation Culture and the Arts, Artists in Schools Program and received a Community Inspiration Program grant from the Native Arts and Cultures Foundation towards the creation of his multi-media theater piece, *The Story of Everything*, which is now a full-length film, produced and directed by Engaging the Senses Foundation that condenses 13.7 billion years into an hour and 45 minutes of various cultural elements and scientific disciplines to approach the question that has challenged humans from the very beginning: “Where do we come from?”

Kealoha is the founder of Hawai‘i Slam, which is ranked second in the nation; Youth Speaks Hawai‘i, two-time international champion; and First Thursdays, the largest registered slam poetry competition in the world with an average attendance of more than five hundred people. He was featured on HBO’s “Brave New Voices” series presented by Russel Simmons, and has also made appearances on NBC, PBS, the Food Network, National Public Radio, the Nā Hōkū Hanohano Awards, and the State of Hawai‘i’s “Can’t Fool the Youth” anti-smoking campaign, which he wrote, performed, and co-directed.

Kealoha is the poetic vocalist for Henry Kaponō’s “Wild Hawai‘i an Experience,” which was nominated for a Grammy Award. He has also been recorded on albums such as Hapa’s “Maui” (winner of four Nā Hōkū Hanohano awards and the Hawai‘i Music Award for Album of the Year), Henry Kaponō’s “Henry,” the Mana Maoli compilation (featuring Jack Johnson and John Cruz), and a full-length spoken word CD entitled “Kealoha.” He has shared the stage with Jack Johnson, CeeLo Green, Maxi Priest, Jason Mraz, Ben Harper, Kenny Loggins, Willie Nelson, Damian “Junior Gong” Marley, Michael Franti, Bootsie Collins, Fishbone, Don Carlos, Konishiki, Ohio Players, Medusa, and almost every notable slam poetry superstar. He has also collaborated with artists such as Grammy nominee Henry Kaponō, Nā Hōkū Hanohano award winner Hapa,

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slack key virtuoso Makana, Grammy nominee Willie K, multi-platinum Grammy award winner Mick Fleetwood, ‘ukulele virtuoso Taimane, and actor Jason Scott Lee.

Kealoha co-directed both *The Story of Everything* to a sold-out performance at Hawai‘i Theatre Center in 2019, and a sold-out 1,400-seat show of *The Vagina Monologues* at Hawai‘i Theatre Center in 2004, featuring luminaries such as Lois-Ann Yamanaka, Nora Okja Keller, and Joy Harjo. Kealoha conceived, wrote, cast and performed in the theater performances and the full-length film of *The Story of Everything*. Kealoha graduated from Punahou School and with honors from MIT with a degree in nuclear physics and a minor in writing, served as a business consultant in San Francisco, and was a surf instructor prior to becoming a professional poet in 2002. He gave the commencement address for MIT’s graduating 2020 & 2021 classes, to great acclaim.

<http://www.kealohapoetry.com/>

TAIMANE

Virtuoso and songwriter Taimane is best known for her fierce and inventive style of playing the ukulele, helping the hapa Samoan (part Caucasian and part Indigenous Samoan) artist garner over twenty million video views and 300,000 social media followers to date. Hailing from a musical Polynesian family including her late mother, Palepa Tauiliili Gardner (Miss Samoa 1978), Taimane’s attraction to the four-string island staple began at age five. By age ten, she regularly performed in public, busking in Waikiki every Friday night with her father (who performed security duties) and Waikiki Beach Boys (adults whose home and workplace were the beach) serving as her band. By age thirteen, Taimane landed a position in Don Ho’s show playing in the spotlight every week until Ho’s passing. Fast forward to today, and you have an artist who tours the world and has carved out a unique niche in music – merging a wide-array of genres, from Bach to rock, flamenco infernos to tribal hymns, summoning a seemingly limitless palette of emotions via an instrument previously viewed as restricted. She has toured the United Kingdom, Prague, Brittany, Paris and Grenoble, Japan, Italy, Egypt and throughout the U.S. Taimane’s newest album *Hawaiki*, four years in the making, is available now at <https://fanlink.to/hawaiki> She performed in a World Tour to the UK and US from June 19 – August 21, 2022.

<https://taimane.com/>

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KAU'I KANAKA'OLE

Kau'i Kanaka'ole belongs to the illustrious Native Hawaiian Kanaka'ole family, whose expertise in hula and oli are transmitted through matrilineal succession. Founded on the vibrant traditions and rich cultural heritage of her family, the Edith Kanaka'ole Foundation is a cultural-based organization established by the offspring of the late Luka and Edith Kanaka'ole to heighten indigenous Hawaiian cultural awareness, knowledge and participation through its educational programs and scholarships. Kau'i is an Ō'lapa, or expert dancer in the Hālau o Kekuhi, a Native Hawaiian dance company. She is an instructor of hula and a masterful presenter of the oli, traditional Hawaiian chants composed to record important genealogical information, like births, deaths, triumphs, losses, good times and bad.

“Hula carries forward the ancient stories, traditions and dances of our ancestors,” Kau'i says. “It is the kaula, or strong tie, that binds us to the past, present and future. As such, hula is foundational to our identity and dignity as a people.” Over the years, she has shared what she has learned of integrating traditional arts into contemporary curriculum, presenting at multiple workshops in recent years. She earned a Bachelor of Arts in English and a teaching certificate from the University of Hawai'i. She teaches Native Hawaiian arts and English in Hāna, Maui and has been awarded a sponsorship by the Office of Hawaiian Affairs to write a book on choreographic theories and the practices of kumu hula Nālani Kanaka'ole.

She is Executive Director of Ala Kukui, a community-based non-profit utilizing its retreat property and facilities to create place-based programming opportunities that inspire community, ignite potential and empower the human condition within the Hāna community and beyond.

Since its inception in 1963, Kau'i and her family have performed the renowned Hālau o Kekuhi dance for the opening ceremony of Merrie Monarch Festival, which gathers the best hula dancers from all the islands, showcasing Hawaiian intelligence, artistry, and creating a performance to serve as a rite, a celebration, a statement about Hawai'i, its people and regenerative life ways.

<http://www.alakukui.org/about/our-story/>

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JAMIE NAKAMA

Jamie Nakama is living a multifaceted, passionate life! She is originally from the island of O‘ahu where she performed with a number of local dance companies including IONA Contemporary Dance Theater, Samadhi Hawai‘i, Wai Company, and Tau Dance Theater. Jamie studied hula with Hālau Ka LŌ‘ ānohi Mai O Ha‘eha‘e (2006 – 2014) and has been training capoeira since 2002 with Mestre Kinha from Rio de Janeiro, Capoeira Besouro Hawai‘i.

In addition to her passion for dance, Jamie has been dedicated to the field of environmental education since 2001; she held positions as Environmental Educator, Curriculum Specialist, and Education Program Manager in Hawai‘i and now continues the work in northern California where she currently resides. Blessed to be part of the vibrant Bay Area dance community, Jamie is currently performing site-specific dance with Lizz Roman and Dancers and CALI & CO in San Francisco. She enjoys teaching yoga in her spare time.

Jamie holds a master’s degree in Ecological Anthropology from the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa and has been teaching cultural and biological anthropology at community colleges since 2006. She is currently a professor of anthropology at Diablo Valley College. She joined Land-Paths, whose mission is to foster a love of the land in Sonoma County, first as a board member in 2017 and then as staff in 2018. She is passionate about teaching human evolution (and our dis-evolution) in the context of our current ecological crisis and climate emergency. Her classes focus on the solutions for a sustainable and just future which are dependent on the integration of traditional knowledge systems and modern science.

JONATHAN CLARKE SYPERT

Jonathan has been performing and teaching performing arts in Hawai‘i for thirty years, since receiving his initial training from his mother who was a professional performer on Broadway. His background includes singing, dancing, acting, spoken word poetry, rapping, and puppetry, along with play-writing and musical composition. He currently serves as a Teaching Artist for the Honolulu Theatre for Youth, traveling to different public and charter schools to facilitate Creative Drama classes. He brings a pedagogy of a student-centered teaching philosophy focused on helping students achieve confidence in learning to demonstrate new-found skills and abilities in any subject matter. He was voted Best Hip Hop Teacher in Honolulu Magazine in 2009 and is a martial

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artist in Karate, Silat, and Capoeira. Jonathan is collaborating with Engaging the Senses Foundation to help navigate the development of a curriculum model based on *The Story of Everything* with Mālama Honua Public Charter School in Waimānalo, Hawai'i.

JORY HORN

Forgiveness stems from something greater and is related to a greater ancestral memory and feeling. Before we are ever born, it is in us. A destiny and a pattern, but there are lots of things that fall under our own immediate control; the fact that I have freedom and the choices to be able to just choose is a privilege. - Jory Horn

Jory Horn (April 21, 1991 - November 19, 2019), was a profoundly-gifted dance artist and choreographer who combined Cambodian dance and culture with contemporary dance as a means of advocacy to address the challenges and celebrations of the Cambodian-American community. His guidance and mentorship of the Cambodian art form, which survived through living dance masters Chayra Burt, Chey Chankethya, and Prumsodun Ok, is a true testament to the strength and resilience of his people,

Jory was a first-generation college student, graduating with a BA in Dance and a minor in Recreation Administration from CSU Sacramento. He traveled to his homeland of Cambodia for the first time in 2019 on a dance residency. He was deeply dedicated to educating others about Cambodian history. He was an exceptionally kind, compassionate soul, full of energy and a true friend to so many. He had so much love for his LBGQT community. Jory made great contributions to the Bay Area, Sacramento, and Stockton dance and cultural communities through his artistic voice, performance work, and activism. Engaging the Senses Foundation has dedicated *The Story of Everything* in part to Jory.

— Our lives will be forever touched because of our connection with Jory. He lived, loved, and laughed so vibrantly that every room he entered echoed with his presence! His talent as a dancer was as great as his human character, made of equal parts compassion and sass. Jory will forever be part of our 'ohana (family). — Kealoha and The Cast of *The Story of Everything*

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ELI CLEMENS

Eli Clemens is a conga drummer who has lived in Waimānalo, on O’ahu for almost forty years. Beginning as a teenager, he studied under two master drummers for over a decade, learning the rhythms and styles of different worldwide cultures.

As the percussionist for the diverse band Quadraxonix for many years, he has performed in fifteen different countries and has recorded on four CDs with the band. Currently, he instructs private weekly classes, and performs in a variety of venues throughout the Islands. He is also an avid surfer, so when he's not drumming, you'll find him wherever the best waves are!

AARON FRIEDMAN

Aaron Friedman is a bassist and audio engineer currently living in New York City. Born and bred in Oakland, CA he took a leap across the ocean and moved to Honolulu where he immersed himself in Hawai'i's music scene. He began working with Quadraxonix while engineering their 2012 album, Blues in the Ragas. As work on the album wrapped up, he joined the band as their bassist. Aaron draws inspiration from hip hop, funk, reggae, and Latin music, citing Aston “Family Man” Barrett as his number one influence.

JONATHAN HERAUX

Jonathan Heraux is a percussionist/drummer with over thirty-five years of experience. Heraux was first introduced to the drums at age three when he was hoisted up to play congas in his father’s calypso band in Haiti. The family later moved to Panama where he learned traditional dance and drumming. After several years in the U.S. military, Heraux headed to the University of Hawai'i and became part of the university’s Leeward Jazz Ensemble, focusing on jazz drumming techniques. For several years thereafter, he was a member of ten different bands, ranging in styles from an Afro-Cuban drum collective to jazz fusion rock. Starting in 1997, he toured the west coast of the United States, playing countless festivals and venues with his band Quadraxonix. For many years, Heraux has also spent much time on stage and in recording studios supporting international ukulele virtuoso, Taimane. The two have toured the world, including Canada, United States, Central America, Europe, Middle East, Asia and across the Polynesian islands. As a percussionist, Heraux has focused on non-traditional cajon playing, melding Afro-Cuban rhythms with jazz and rock stick patterns. Add it all up, and you have a seasoned musician who has per-

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formed in over twenty-five countries and still plays every show with unbridled passion. Heraux has made clear that he will continue to do so until his last breath.

SREEDARAN SADAGOPAN

Born and raised in Penang Malaysia, Shree brings together the rich influence of his ethnic Malaysia and a deep-rooted connection to South Indian music in a collaborative genre all his own. His thirty-one years in Hawai'i have also introduced him to Classic American Blues, Jazz, and Funk. His biggest influences in music are the legendary Carlos Santana, Ravi Shankar and the stylings of Police guitarist Andy Summers. Putting this all together, he creates a psychedelic guitar sound that is picked, strummed and bowed. This is the signature sound he has brought to the touring band Quadraxonix and as the current lead of his own band BSOS or Brighter Side of SOL.

SOLOMON ENOS

Solomon Robert Nui Enos is a Native Hawaiian artist, illustrator, animator, and visionary. Born and raised in Mākaha Valley on O'ahu, Solomon hails from the well-known Enos 'ohana. A proud papa of four, Solomon credits his family as the source of his artistic inspiration and drive. A self-described "intelligent optimist," through his art Solomon expresses his own aspirational vision of the world at its best, which is, at times, deployed through poly-fantastic (science fiction) narratives. His work touches on themes of ancestry and identity, the human relationship with the Earth, and the future of Hawai'i, its people, and its resources.

Solomon has exhibited in Biennial X (Honolulu Museum of Art), 6th Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art (Queensland Art Gallery), CONTACT art exhibitions, and others. His work is held in private collections and in the public collections of the Smithsonian Asian Pacific American Center and Hawai'i State Art Museum, and his clients include Google, Disney, Hawai'i State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (HSFCA), HONOULU Magazine, Honolulu Museum of Art, The Howard Hughes Corporation, Kamehameha Schools, Malama Learning Center, Mayor's Office of Culture and the Arts (MOCA), National Ocean and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Philpotts & Associates, Research Corporation of the University of Hawai'i (RCUH), Sheraton Waikiki, and Smithsonian Asian Pacific American Center. He painted portraits of the cast of *The Story of Everything*, commissioned by Engaging the Senses Foundation.

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