



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:  
Ross Wilson Jr, Executive Director  
Kailua Village Business Improvement District  
kailuavillage@gmail.com  
808-326-7820

### **New Palani Road Mural Invigorates and Connects Kona To Its History**

#### **EMPRESS: All Wāhine Arts Festival's Murals Preserve Culture and Inspire**

*Historic Kailua Village, Kona, HI* ~ The Kailua Village Business Improvement District partnered with Lydia8 and EMPRESS: All-Wāhine Arts Festival to tell the story of Kona's famed mele (song) Kona Kai 'Opua in a visually stunning mural on Palani Road in Historic Kailua Village.

"This mele reflects the beauty and pride that Kona has for its people, land, ocean, history and stories," said Event Organizer Mahea 'Ākau. "The two portraits on the mural represent the late Uncle Clement Keli'ipo'aimoku "Red" Kanuha Sr. and the late Aunty Elizabeth Malu'ihī Lee. Kanuha was one of the original paddlers with the Kai 'Opua Canoe Club when the club formed in 1929 and the beloved Aunty Elizabeth Malu'ihī Lee was a master lauhala weaver.

The mele is a love song about Kamehameha II (Liholiho) and his lover. The song shares the deep emotion of love that reflects back to the memorable places and people of Kona.

The mural interpretation shows Hualālai wrapped in lei to signify keiki (children). The Hinano flower of a male hala tree symbolizes a fruitful time. The main hala tree whose leaves are used for lauhala weaving creates a shade for the

understory of a hala groove. The pink cumulus clouds predict good omens and seasons ahead. The Lai plant represents peace and protection. The mural closes with a calm sea and bright moonlight. The mural and the song are reminders to the community to continue to love this place and to care for it as kūpuna (elders) before us have.

“We hope that this mural will be a special reminder for everyone to learn about the significant historic and cultural sites that abound in Historic Kailua Village,” said Kailua Village Business Improvement District Vice President and Placemaking Chair Nancy Sakamoto.

Artistic creativity provided by artists Kukui Mahoney and John “Prime” Hina. Wall space provided by Aloha Kia and Allan Jose.

For more information, friend the Kailua Village Business Improvement District on Facebook, follow on Twitter, or visit [www.historickailuavillage.com](http://www.historickailuavillage.com).

###

### **About Kailua Village Business Improvement District**

The Kailua Village Business Improvement District (KVBID) is a collaborative effort between business, government and area residents to develop and implement creative solutions to improve the cleanliness, attractiveness, community and economic vibrancy of Historic Kailua Village.

The mission of the Kailua Village Business Improvement District is to make Kailua Village a model sustainable community that is a better place to invest, work, live and play. KVBID is working cooperatively to improve and maintain the physical appearance and aesthetics of public right of ways, open space and parks, increase cleanliness and security, and attract long term sustainable business and community activity in Kailua Village.

### **About Lydia8**

Lydia8 is a grassroots, community-based organization and multi-expressive platform assembled to empower and nurture wāhine (women) of Hawai‘i. It is a movement and launchpad for creatives.

Lydia8’s mission is to cultivate transformative artistic and cultural opportunities for the wāhine of Hawai‘i, to mobilize communities and create real change.

**About EMPRESS: All Wāhine Arts Festival**

EMPRESS: All-Wāhine Arts Festival uses art as a medium to invigorate identity and preserve indigenous languages and cultures while inspiring and mentoring island keiki. Their process of research, reflection, design, community outreach, painting, and curation reconnects communities to their history, to the land that they live on, to each other, and to themselves.

*Note to editors: If you are interested in high-res images contact Laura Aquino at 808-326-7820 or via email at [laura@current-events.com](mailto:laura@current-events.com)*