



Kinder, George

**A SONG FOR HANA &
THE SPIRIT OF LEHO'ULA**
Serenity Point Press (112 pp.)

\$29.95 paperback

June 23, 2007

ISBN: 978-0-9791743-2-2

A poetic and vividly illustrated tribute to a pristine stretch of Hawaiian beach.

Readers familiar with this certified financial planner and former tax accountant's philosophic musings and practical advice on wealth (*Lighting the Torch: The Kinder Method™ of Life Planning*, 2006, etc.) may find this ecological encomium to Leho'ula, a tiny plot of Maui coastline, an odd topic for Kinder—especially when they learn that this defense of the land has been inspired by the threat of development. (The marketing plan for the book includes a 50 percent donation of the proceeds “dedicated to save the Hana coast from development and to support traditional Hawaiian culture.”) This richly produced edition includes his own photographs, poems and short prose reflections, which summon the ancient Hawaiian gods for a metaphysical communion on this sacred ground. Says Pig God Kamapua'a, “Hana means the breath of spirit and its work.

Do your work. Master what you do. Bring the land back to the people. [...] Love what feeds you, love your resources, love your fire, love what challenges you, love your enemies—I love pigs man—but love!” Kinder's other recurrent theme emphasizes the vitality of the land in one's inner life: “This earth is a garden / Its aromas, its breezes / and its light: flavors of consciousness / Lava bridges from another world / to the one where we are meant to live.” While these messages will appeal to the ecologically minded, especially those from Hawaii, the volume's many photographs make the most convincing case for preservation. One look at the verdant grassland abutting a foamy sea or a beautifully composed silhouette of the tree line against a flaming purple sky, and even the most profit-driven developer will reconsider his plans. Includes 111 color images, 82 photos and 29 scans.

One man's homage to the place he calls home.

nielsen
.....



Serenity Point Press

Publisher of fine books & prints

Book Review

On its surface, *A Song for Hāna & the Spirit of Leho‘ula*, is a love story that unfolds across the majesty of the Hāna coast, a sacred place threatened by development. The author, lost and distracted, becomes engaged with figures of ancient Hawaii, is transformed by the experience, and comes to the spirit of the place and of himself in the hands of Leho‘ula, heroine of old Hawaii.

Leho‘ula is also a beach in Maui, and this is a hint at the multi-layered aspect of the book. Like the ocean that pervades the story, this is a tale of shifting surfaces and surprising depths. In the narrator’s mind, Leho‘ula—whether beach or personage—stands for the present moment, which is what his spiritual journey across the landscape seeks to discover. Here, the present moment is an experience of Hawaii pouring in through the gates of human sensation. And it is the present moment, as well as the land itself, that seems threatened by “developers.” The resolution of these twin threats is the deeper subject of the book.

However you approach *A Song for Hāna*, it is a feast for the senses. Open to any page and you will find full-color photographs of the landscape and scans of distinctive local vegetation to guide you along the narrator’s journey. It is a journey of the senses along a single mile of Hawaiian coastline to the hidden beach, Leho‘ula, and back. Not only are the images stunning, but the aromas of ocean and air, the touch of the earth and sand, the sounds of the birds, the wind, the ocean and the bellows of the bulls come through the prose and poetry of every page. They intermingle with the emotions of the narrator, much as the text intermingles with the images, challenging our senses and our sense of what is inside ourselves and what is outside.

Kinder’s balance of text and image has drawn as much from the *ehon* tradition of Japan as it has from William Blake. But there are also echoes of Mallarme, of Chinese scrolls, of illuminated manuscripts, even of graphic novels. The book presents visually beautiful images made deeper by poetry; likewise, the poetry feels richer and fresher dancing along and weaving through the colorful images. Sometimes you feel that you are wafted along by the “words of the wind” while reading a poem inscribed across a Hāna sky. At other times, it’s as if the reader is actually walking on the sacred land, as the printed words dance across a landscape, and each step you take is poetry.

Sometimes, *A Song for Hāna* feels more like a movie than a book—you can’t wait to turn the page to experience the next scene. The thrill of the changing visual images and evolution of the visual language become part of the narrative pull, making the story a page-turner. So enjoyable is it to read the accessible poetry designed into these beautiful images that *A Song for Hāna & the Spirit of Leho‘ula* may do for poetry what *Harry Potter* did for children’s literature. It may reawaken the general public to the great enjoyment of reading poetry.

Fifty percent of the profits from the book are dedicated to help preserve the Hāna coast and to preserve and support traditional Hawaiian culture.

Telephone: (978) 486-9372 ~ Facsimile: (978) 486-8750 ~ www.serenitypoint.org ~ PO Box 1350, Littleton, MA 01460

Maryellen Grady ~ Publisher: mwgrady@serenitypoint.org

Nadine Mazzola ~ Director of Marketing & Publicity: njmazzola@serenitypoint.org

Joanne Fanning ~ Director of Hawaiian Sales & Marketing: jfanning@serenitypoint.org