

# nā mele hawai'i

Jordan Sramek, Series Editor

## **Ka'ahumanu**

KAAHUMANU

Composer Unknown

arr. Jordan Sramek

# ROSE PUBLICATIONS

From the archives of *The ROSE ENSEMBLE*

Daniel Mahraun & Jordan Sramek, General Editors

Source: *Ka Lira Hawaii*. Honolulu: Mea Paipalapala a na Misionari, 1844.

**About the source / general notes on genre:**

When the brig *Thaddeus* first arrived in Hawaiian waters in April 1820 carrying the Pioneer Company of the Sandwich Islands Mission, members of the company sang several psalms and hymns for the Hawaiian Royal party. Liholiho—King Kamehameha II (1797-1824)—was apparently pleased. By 1823 the Hawaiians had advanced well enough in hymn singing and in reading the Hawaiian language to warrant a printed hymnal. In that year, the mission press put out the first hymnbook in Hawaiian: *Na Himeni Hawaii: He Me Ori Ia Jehova, Ke Akua Mau* (“*Hawaiian Hymns and Songs to Jehovah, the Eternal God*”). The publication of *Na Himeni Hawaii* helped to widely promote the practice of hymn singing.

In 1834, hymn singing reached a new stage of sophistication when the great missionary Hiram Bingham (Binamu) published the first Hawaiian hymnal containing musical notation and even explicit instructions in both singing and reading music.

The hymn tunes used in the early Hawaiian hymnals were not composed in Hawai‘i, but mostly of British and American origin. This particular *hīmeni* (hymn) is an exception. It bears no European-American hymn tune name, suggesting the composition originated in Hawai‘i. It is also worth noting that the structural makeup of this three-part hymn is unique, with neither the soprano nor tenor line clearly standing out as the melody. Additionally, the striking minor key appears in no other source of *hīmeni*; its use here emphasizes the decidedly funereal text.

**Text:** Author Unknown, ed. Amy Ku‘uleialoha Stillman

**Music:** KAAHUMANU, Composer Unknown

**Editorial method/notes:**

The English translation, adapted from one by Amy Ku‘uleialoha Stillman, appears above the staff.

In the edited source text, the presence of the ‘*okina*’ consonant required rhythmic interpretation and subdivision in some places. These interpretations are based on The Rose Ensemble’s coaching with Dr. Stillman.

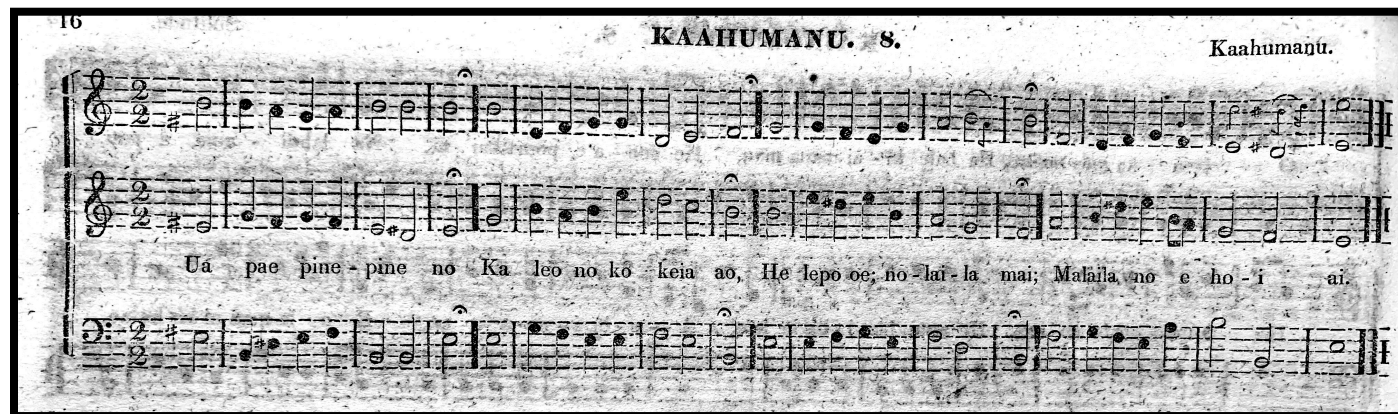
The author of the Hawaiian text deftly weaves together images from both the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament) and the New Testament that describe the fleeting nature of this life. Specific passages from those scriptures are found in the table below.

**Performance suggestions:**

Altos may sing with sopranos in the three-voice sections.

When tenors and basses are split three ways, performers may assign a mix of tenors and baritones to each of those lines. This will help maintain balance as the two parts cross.

**Duration:** 3m 30s



The Rose Ensemble’s recording, *Nā Mele Hawai‘i: A Rediscovery of Hawaiian Vocal Music*, is available on most download and streaming platforms.

Hawaiian text

1. Ua pa‘ē pinepine no,  
Ka leo no kō keia ao  
“Ke lepo ‘oe, no laila mai;  
Ma laila no e ho‘i hou ai.”

2. Ke mae nei kākou pū a pau  
E like maoli me ka lau;  
Nā pua ho‘i i helele‘i,  
Pēlā kākou e hā‘ule nei.

3. A wela iki mai ka lā,  
Mae koke kō kākou mau lau;  
No‘u mai ka ‘ino—aia kā!  
Ko kākou nani nei, ua pau!

4. Auwē kō kākou make e!  
Ma hea lā ho‘i e malu ai?  
A ‘ole anei he ola hou,  
He ola loa no kākou?

5. O kāu ‘ōlelo, e Iesu,  
He oia‘i‘o, ‘oia mau;  
Ka po‘e hahai ma muli ou,  
He ola loa kō lākou.

English translation

Often heard is  
The voice of this world,  
“You are dust, therefore,  
there you shall return.”

We are all withering away,  
Just like the leaf;  
The flowers fall, also,  
Such is how we fall.

A little heat from the sun,  
Our leaves soon fade;  
The sin is mine—there!  
Our beauty is gone!

Alas, our death!  
Where indeed shall we find shelter?  
Is there not a new life,  
A life of freedom for us?

Your word, O Jesus,  
Is enduring truth;  
The people who follow you,  
They shall have long lives.

Bible references (KJV)

“The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness...”  
(Is. 40:3)  
“...for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.”  
(Gen. 3:19)

“The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the  
spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is  
grass.” (Is. 40:7)

“...All flesh is grass, and all the goodness thereof is as  
the flower of the field.” (Is. 40:6)

“O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from  
the body of this death?” (Rom. 7:24)

“...but the word of our God shall stand for ever.”  
(Is. 40:8)  
“But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their  
strength...” (Is. 40:31)

# Ka'ahumanu

SATBB

Author Unknown  
ed. Amy Ku'uleialoha Stillman

KAAHUMANU, Composer Unknown  
arr. Jordan Sramek  
ed. Daniel Mahraun

Grave ( $\text{♩} = \text{c. } 48$ )

*Often heard is*

*The voice of this world,*

Soprano

Alto

Tenor *mp*

Baritone *mp*

Bass *mp*

1. Ua pa - e pi - ne - pi - ne e - o no kō kei - a ao Ke  
1. Ua pa - e pi - ne - ne no, Ka le - o no kō kei - a ao Ke  
1. Ua pa - e pi - ne no, Ka le - o no kō kei - a ao Ke

*"You are dust, therefore,*

*there you shall return."*

T

B

7

le - po 'oe, lai - la mai; Ma lai - la no e ho - 'i hou ai.  
le - po 'oe, lai - la mai; Ma lai - la no e ho - 'i hou ai.

*We are passing away,* *cresc. poco a poco*

*Just like the leaf;*

T *mp*

Bar *mp*

B *mp*

2. Ke mae nei kā - kou pū a pau E li - ke mao - li me ka lau; Nā  
2. Ke mae nei kā - kou pū a pau E li - ke mao - li me ka lau; Nā  
2. Ke mae nei kā - kou pū a pau E li - ke mao - li me ka lau; Nā

*The flowers fall, also,*

*Such is how we fall.*

19 *(cresc.)*

T  
 pu - a ho-'i i he - le - le-'i; Pē - lā kā - kou e hā - 'u - le nei.

Bar  
 pu - a ho-'i i he - le - le-'i; Pē - lā kā - kou e hā - 'u - le nei.

B  
 pu - a ho-'i i he - le - le-'i; Pē - lā kā - kou e hā - 'u - le nei.

*A little heat from the sun,*

*Our leaves soon fade;*

*mf*

S  
 3. A we - la i - ki mai ka lā, Mae ko - ke kō kā - kou mau lau; Mou

T  
*mf*  
 3. A we - la i - ki mai ka lā, Mae ko - ke kō kā - kou mau lau; Mou

B  
*mf*  
 3. A we - la i - ki mai ka lā, Mae ko - ke kō kā - kou mau lau; Mou

*The sin is there!*

*Our beauty is gone!*

31

S  
 mai ka 'i - no - ai - a ka! Ko kā - kou na - ni nei, ua pau!

T  
 mai ka 'i - no - ai - a ka! Ko kā - kou na - ni nei, ua pau!

B  
 mai ka 'i - no - ai - a ka! Ko kā - kou na - ni nei, ua pau!

*Alas, our death!*

*Where indeed shall we find shelter?*

*mp* solo (*ad lib.*)

S 4. Au - wē kō kā - kou ma - ke e! Ma hea lā ho-'i a ma - lu ai? 'A -

*p* (*stagger breathing*)

T *mm*

*p* (*stagger breathing*)

B *mm*

*Is there not a new life,*

*A life of freedom for us?*

43

S 'o - le a - nei he o - la ho He o - lo - a no kā - kou?

T (*mm*)

B (*mm*)

*Your word, Jesus,*

*Is enduring truth;*

*mp*

S 5. O kā - le - e Ie - su, He oi - a - 'i - 'o, 'oi - a mau; Ka

*mp*

A 5. O kau le - lo, e Ie - su, He oi - a - 'i - 'o, 'oi - a mau; Ka

*mp*

T 5. O kau 'ō - le - lo, e Ie - su, He oi - a - 'i - 'o, 'oi - a mau; Ka

*mp*

Bar 5. O kau 'ō - le - lo, e Ie - su, He oi - a - 'i - 'o, 'oi - a mau; Ka

*mp*

B 5. O kau 'ō - le - lo, e Ie - su, He oi - a - 'i - 'o, 'oi - a mau; Ka

*The people who follow you,*

*They shall have long lives.*

55

S *f* *molto rit.*  
 po-‘e ha - nai ma mu - li ou, He o - la - lo - a kō lā - kou.

A *f*  
 po-‘e ha - nai ma mu - li ou, He o - la - lo - a kō lā - kou.

T *f*  
 po-‘e ha - nai ma mu - li ou, He o - la - lo - a kō lā - kou.

Bar *f*  
 po-‘e ha - nai ma mu - li ou, He o - la - lo - a kō lā - kou.

B *f*  
 po-‘e ha - nai ma mu - li ou, He o - la - lo - a kō lā - kou.

PERUSAL

## BRIEF HAWAIIAN DICTION GUIDE

Vowels:			
Hawaiian Letter	IPA	English example	
a	[ʌ]	“sun”	Notes: The macron (kahakō or mekona, over a vowel denotes both length and syllabic stress. Only with the letter “e” does it also alter the pronunciation. The pronunciation of the macron-less “e” is less predictable, a speaker of Hawaiian should be consulted when possible.
ā	[ɑ]	“father”	
e	[ɛ] or [e]	“dead” or “day” (no diphthong)	
ē	[e]	“day” (no diphthong)	
i / ī	[i]	“eat”	
o / ō	[o]	first syllable of “obey” (no diphthong)	
u / ū	[u]	“soon”	

### Diphthongs and Vowel Combinations:

Since the Hawaiian language contains no successive consonants, vowels predominate. Hawaiian diphthongs—ai, ae, ao, au, ei, eu, oi, and ou—place the stress and length on the first vowel sound. All other vowel combinations place the length on the second. Regardless, great care should be taken to fully pronounce each vowel in such vowel combinations, “i” and “u” may occasionally be treated as glides [j] and [w], respectively. Examples include the borrowed names “Iesu” [jɛsu] and “Iehova” [jehova].

Consonants:			
Hawaiian Letter	IPA	English example	
h	[h]	“h”	Notes: The pronunciation of the letter “w” is often unpredictable; a speaker of Hawaiian should be consulted when possible. The ‘okina, “ ‘ ”, is considered a consonant and denotes a glottal stop. Because texts printed before the 1970s generally do not include this letter, Dr. Amy Ku‘uleiahola Stillman has edited the language in our editions. The letters “t” [t] and “s” [s] sometimes occur in borrowed words, such as “Mesia” [mesia].
k	[k]	“k”	
l	[l]	“l”	
m	[m]	“m”	
n	[n]	“n”	
p	[p]	“p”	
w – after i or e		“v”	
w – after o or u	[w]	“w”	
w – after a or initial	[v] or [v]*	* choice consistent through piece	
‘	[ʔ]	hyphen in “uh-oh”	

Failing consultation with a speaker of Hawaiian, we recommend the following resources:

- The Rose Ensemble’s recording, *Nā Mele Hawai‘i: A Rediscovery of Hawaiian Vocal Music*, available on most streaming platforms.
- the Hawaiian dictionaries available electronically at <https://wehewehe.org>.
- Duane Richard Karna, ed. *The Use of the International Phonetic Alphabet in the Choral Rehearsal*. Lanham, Md.: Scarecrow Press, 2012.