

Approaches to Authenticating Native Hawaiian Music for Wind Ensemble

Dr. Rickey H. Badua, Dr. Chad Kamei and Dr. James M. David

*The Midwest Clinic
International Band & Orchestra Conference
December 17th, 2025 – 4:30 - 5:30pm, W179*

Clinic Synopsis:

"E Ala E: Arise and Awaken" is a significant 3-movement work for wind ensemble based on Native Hawaiian chant and folk songs. The Eddie Kamae Songbook is also a Hawai'i-based commissioning project that brought together UH West O'ahu, the Hawaiian Legacy Foundation, and the Naulu Winds. This brought to life four of Kamae's songs to help perpetuate authentic Hawaiian music for bands. We will highlight our methodology of creating indigenous music through the collaboration between commissioners and composers.

Problem:

- ❖ We fear a lack of authenticity and appropriation
- ❖ Lack of significant Native Hawaiian works for wind band
- ❖ Need for change and advocacy
- ❖ Representation Matters
 - Personal connection, calling and responsibility

Methodology:

- ❖ Decolonizing the curriculum & CPP sociology cultural tour to Hawai'i (2022)

1. Cultural Respect & Awareness

- Research deeply to understand the culture, history, language, customs, and music.
- Engage respectfully with community elders, artists, musicians, and cultural practitioners.
- Recognize and honor cultural sensitivities, sacred elements, and symbols.

2. Avoid Cultural Appropriation

- Don't trivialize or stereotype Indigenous culture through musical representation.
- Avoid sacred or restricted cultural elements unless explicitly permitted by cultural authorities.
- Focus on cultural appreciation, rather than appropriation, by building genuine connections and collaborations.

3. Authentic Collaboration

- Work directly with Indigenous musicians, composers, cultural experts, and elders from the culture.

- Ensure collaborators have agency in creative decisions, representation, and acknowledgment.
- Allow Indigenous voices to guide how their culture is expressed musically.

4. Seek Permissions & Provide Attribution

- Obtain explicit permission and consent from cultural knowledge holders.
- Credit Indigenous collaborators prominently and accurately.
- Clearly acknowledge Indigenous cultural sources and inspiration.

5. Community Engagement

- Build relationships by genuinely engaging with Indigenous communities.
- Support local initiatives, educational programs, or cultural preservation efforts.
- Offer opportunities to Indigenous artists through meaningful collaborations, mentorships, or commissioned works.

6. Musical Authenticity & Context

- Study traditional instruments, techniques, rhythms, and melodies.
- Use traditional elements appropriately and sensitively, honoring their original cultural meanings and contexts.
- When introducing contemporary influences, clearly distinguish traditional sources from new interpretations.

7. Representation & Advocacy

- Accurately and respectfully represent the culture's complexities and diversity.
- Use your platform responsibly to advocate for Indigenous rights, preservation, and respect for cultural heritage.

8. Transparency & Reflection

- Be open about your creative process, intentions, and inspirations.
- Reflect continually on the impact and implications of your musical decisions.

❖ The Eddie Kamae Project: Chad Kamei & University of Hawai'i-West Oahu (2022)

E Ala Ē: Arise & Awaken for Wind Ensemble (2024)

- ❖ Hawai'i Wind Band Consortium
 - Local Support: Chad Kamei & O'ahu Band Directors Association
 - Accessible to Hawai'i connections
 - Accessible Orchestration
- ❖ Premiered at 2024 CBDNA W/NW Conference in Las Vegas, NV by the Cal Poly Pomona University Wind Ensemble - Rickey H. Badua, conductor
- ❖ Composer selection: James M. David
 - Why? Accessible & Artful in borrowing, quoting and alluding to themes/ideas
 - *Urban Light* (2021): borrowed themes & ideas from John Adam's *Short Ride in a Fast Machine*
 - *Symphony No. 1: Codex Gigas* (2020): borrowed themes & ideas from Karel Husa's *Music for Prague 1968*
 - *Flying Jewels* (2021): NBA/William D. Revelli Memorial Composition Contest WINNER
- ❖ Cultural immersion tour of Hawaiian islands: Maui and O'ahu (May 2023)
- ❖ The Composer's insights: *E Ala Ē: Arise and Awaken*
 - Authentication through Collaborations
 - Native Hawaiian connection (Rickey Badua)
 - The Kamehameha Schools (all Native Hawaiian private school)
 - Hawaiian instruments, choral traditions & percussion: Aaron Salā
 - The local connection (Chad Kamei)
 - Hawaiian chant & folk song(s) selection
 - Hawaiian choral traditions
 - The Queen's songbook
 - Historical Progression through the work
 - Each movement goes through time
 - Rehearsal Recording Collaborations