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# Hawaiki Rising: Hokule'a, Nainoa Thompson, And The Hawaiian Renaissance



## Synopsis

Attuned to a world of natural signs – the stars, the winds, the curl of ocean swells - Polynesian explorers navigated for thousands of miles without charts or instruments. They sailed against prevailing winds and currents aboard powerful double canoes to settle the vast Pacific Ocean. And they did this when Greek mariners still hugged the coast of an inland sea and Europe was populated by stone-age farmers. Yet by the turn of the twentieth century, this story had been lost and Polynesians had become an oppressed minority in their own land. Then, in 1975, a replica of an ancient Hawaiian canoe – HĀ•KĀ•LEĀ – was launched to once again sail the ancient star paths and help Hawaiians reclaim pride in the accomplishments of their ancestors. *Hawaiki Rising* tells this story in the words of the men and women who sailed aboard HĀ•KĀ•LEĀ. They speak of growing up at a time when their Hawaiian culture was in danger of extinction and their future in their own land was uncertain. We join the founders of the Polynesian Voyaging Society as their vision of HĀ•KĀ•LEĀ takes shape in a Honolulu shipyard. We sail on the first voyage from Hawaii to Tahiti in 1976; experience the heartbreaking loss of Eddie Aikau in a courageous effort to save his crewmates when HĀ•KĀ•LEĀ capsized; and are present as new leaders vow to continue sailing to honor Eddie’s life. We are with Nainoa Thompson as he searches the heavens to rediscover ancient star signs and we sail with him as he guides HĀ•KĀ•LEĀ to Tahiti – the first Hawaiian to navigate the Pacific without charts or instruments in a thousand years. When Hokule’a’s crew member Sam Ka’ai carved the male ki’i (sculpted figure) that adorns the canoe’s starboard hull, he envisioned modern day Hawaiians in the figure of a blind man reaching to the heavens. “This is an effigy of how we are after so many years of oppression,” Sam tells us. “Blind to our past, we reach up to grasp heaven one more time. The same stars are rising as they did for our fathers for many, many generations. So if you lose your way - remember that you once sailed on your mother’s lap and you were never lost. The stars turned minute by minute, hour by hour, dawn and dusk and you always came home or your kind wouldn’t be here. This is an effigy of the HĀ•KĀ•LEĀ experience – the ‘Ōhāna wa’ā - the family of the canoe. He is reaching above himself, beyond himself, to the story that has not changed, the forever and ever story. He is showing that we are taking hold of the old story once again.” *Hawaiki Rising* is the saga of an astonishing revival of indigenous culture by voyagers who took hold of the old story and sailed deep into their ancestral past. (Sam Low)

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Honolulu Star-Advertiser Sunday, June 16, 2013 'Hawaiki' chronicles hopes tied to Hokule'a By Gary Kubota Sam Low's "Hawaiki Rising: Hokule'a, Nainoa Thompson, and the Hawaiian Renaissance," captures in convincing style the heartbreak, sacrifice and hopes of the crews aboard the historic double-hulled sailing canoe Hokule'a. The book takes readers well beyond the first Hawaii-Tahiti voyage in 1976 that supported the assertion that Pacific islanders could navigate the open ocean without instruments, relying on signs in nature and the heavens, well before European expeditions to the Americas. Nainoa Thompson - Hokule'a's navigator "The vision of HÅ•KÅ«le'a was conceived in 1973, so the publishing of this book marks the 40th anniversary of her creation. Sam Low, the author, has sailed with us on three voyages, written numerous articles and now, after ten years of work, has finished Hawaiki Rising. This book is an important part of our 'Å•lelo, our history, and it contains the mana of all those who helped create and sail HÅ•KÅ«le'a."Å

Sam Low served in the U.S. Navy in the Pacific from 1964 to 1966 and earned a Ph.D. degree from Harvard (in anthropology) in 1975. In 1983, after traveling throughout Polynesia, Sam produced his award winning film, The Navigators â “ Pathfinders of the Pacific, which told the story of the Polynesian settlement of the Pacific on PBS nationally and internationally on television venues throughout the world. He has sailed aboard Hokuleâ™a on three voyages from 1999 to 2007. He is the author of Hawaiki Rising, Hokuleâ™a, Nainoa Thompson and the Hawaiian Renaissance and many articles on the canoe and her meaning to Polynesians.

Aloha~I first learned about the Book Hawaiki Rising in May, 2014, when I was at Palekai Bay, Hilo,

On the Day of Departure of Mama Hokulea and Hikianalia, as they began The Malama Honua World Wide Voyage. I was at the shore, in the crowd, celebrating, waiting to Meet Nainoa and all the PWO and Crew, give Lei and say Aloha. I noticed this lady walking around getting peoples autographs in the "BOOK". I did meet and give lei on the day of departure to Nainoa, Kalepa, Bruce, but No Chad (Onohi) or Shorty...both of whom I'd meet later. The Day was epic and the departure celebration and "Make happy" time of the Sailing Sister Wa'a was a memory I shall never forget. I got on , found the book, ordered it and thus began MY journey into Hawaiki Rising...and My "Voyage" of "Malama"...of caring for ALL things LIVING. Since the day I opened the autographed copy and began reading, My world has forever changed. I have since come back to community after a decade of being hidden away working and healing my health~My Own Malama Honua Voyage had begun almost 2 years prior. I am forever thankful for all the flowers in the lei spanning our amazing Earth. I am thankful for The opportunity to be a part of Malama Honua and to Be a member of Our Ohana Wa'a. Meeting Sam Low, Meeting the PWO, the Crew, reading about Hokulea and her Voyage of Rediscovery and the Hawaiian Renaissance, I have come to learn the true value of Malama Honua...the validity of caring for each other and for Our Earth. I am still meeting the heroes written about in Hawaiki Rising. I had the opportunity to attend Imi Naauao Crew Training and work on Kauais Wa'a Namahoe with Uncle John Kruse and Uncle Marshall Mock, to meet and share time and aloha with the Voyagers, Malama the Wa'a, the PWO, The Crew, and Myself and Our Ohana Honua...I am committed to learning all I can about Ohana Wa'a...about LOVING Our Ohana Honua and BEING Courageous, Correct, PONO in All I am, All I do, ALL I give to YOU, My Wonderful Ohana. This book was a treasure trove of information for the person who simply wishes to know the Mo'olelo, but also a wonderful book of instruction into the world of Celestial Navigation and the renewal of the Ancient Ways, taught from his ancestors to Hawaii by Papa Mau, who gave Hawaiians the living lessons they needed to rediscover their voyaging roots and rich history...I will read and reread this book over my lifetime, each chapter, giving me clues to how to live, how to find magic in every days "voyage" whether on land or sea...Mahalo Nui to You Sam, and to All The Voyagers~ those who are here, those of the past, those gone, never to be forgotten. I look forward to any and all future writing from YOU Sam...and treasure the Ohana Your amazing Book Hawaiki Rising has brought to Myself and to US ALL. Malama Pono.

This is an extremely well written and objective book chronicling the long and devoted efforts of the members of the Polynesian Voyaging Society(PVS) of Hawai'i to construct and sail the traditional Hokule'a canoe using traditional methods. The book is a monument to all members of the society,

but especially to the Micronesian, Mau Piailug, who patiently taught the sacred navigation techniques of his culture to the PVS personnel, and to Nainoa Thompson who studied under Mau and who invested enormous energy translating these techniques into modern astronomical terms. It's also a monument to Eddie Aikau, who lost his life bravely trying to save his shipmates after a near disaster on the high seas. The book is based on first hand accounts, excerpts from logs and diaries of participants, and on the author's own personal experiences aboard. These sources are skillfully combined by the author in such a way that the reader feels he is actually present. Low does not shy away from the many interpersonal problems that developed in the course of this project, but he provides very balanced descriptions of all relations aboard. The book dispels, once and for all, the "theory" that the islands of Polynesia were discovered by accident: the discoveries and settlements were largely the results of systematic explorations. This book is a masterpiece: one hopes that Sam Low will continue to write further on the subject, recounting his own personal experiences! It is most highly recommended for all students of Pacific prehistory as well as for Hawaiian cultural course from the high school level and above.

Extraordinary Story. I am still reading this book. I read it in pieces because it's so extraordinary. I absorb it. It reminds me to steer by the many signs I get everyday and tells the phenomenal story of the Hokule'a but more importantly the deep, encompassing, soul searching story of navigator Nainoa Thompson. I am deeply touched by this book. I am an islander from New Zealand, but Hawai'i is my American home state. I'm also a writer and wanted to include Hokule'a coming home after her round the world voyage. And what I thought would be an interesting story and give me some good facts about the Hokule'a and her Nainoa has turned into a voyage of discovery for myself. It is so much more than a story. It's like a modern day bible for every islander who is always called home to the sea. Who feels like they're literally a fish out of water when they're not near it. Who feel like they can breathe when they're close to the ocean, in it, on it. The story of Nainoa Thompson in this is riveting. What an unbelievable man. Hearing his feelings, thoughts, ups and downs on such a real, and vulnerable level has touched me deeply. It feels like such a degree of honesty we see so rarely and one I personally value immensely. Be prepared to be taken on a journey... This book is one I will own in Hardback and always go back to refer to when I need a direction. It will be like Polaris the North Star. Mahalo nui loa. Aloha Meg Amor

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