HEARD MUSEUM ANNOUNCES MAJOR NEW EXHIBITION FOCUSED ON THE
INDIGENOUS ORIGINS OF SURFING
The exhibition explores the Indigenous Hawaiian roots of surfing through historic objects and
new contemporary artwork

PHOENIX, Ariz. (July 18, 2022) — The Heard Museum is pleased to announce its forthcoming
exhibition He‘e Nalu: The Art and Legacy of Hawaiian Surfing, opening on January 6, 2023. The
exhibition explores the Indigenous origins of surfing through the presentation and
interpretation of historic material made by notable cultural practitioners as well as new
contemporary artwork and site-specific installations created by leading Indigenous Hawaiian
artists. The stories and histories of surfing will be shared through
a Kānaka Maoli (Native Hawaiian) perspective through the
process of mo‘olelo, the method of storytelling “how it came to
be.”

“He‘e Nalu: The Art and Legacy of Hawaiian Surfing will cover
2,000 years of surfing history and Indigenous creative
expression, from the earliest stories of surfer deities to
contemporary works of art addressing the complicated
relationship that Native Hawaiians have with the surfing industry
today,” says David M. Roche, Dickey Family Director & CEO.
The artists will navigate this complex relationship with the sport of surfing through its evolution into a Western-dominated industry, beginning with wave sliding as a daily cultural practice in the Hawaiian Islands. This exhibition explores themes such as the surfing stories of old, the Hawaiian monarchy, a tribute to Kānaka Maoli surfing legends, disenfranchisement of Native Hawaiians within the surfing community, sexual exploitation of women within the surfing patriarchy of the surf industry, Hawaiian roots in modern-day surfing innovations, the cultural practice of surfing in a new generation, and pressing environmental concerns regarding global marine ecosystems.

The exhibition is organized by guest curator Carolyn Kuali`i (Kānaka Maoli) and Heard Museum Assistant Curator Velma Kee Craig (Diné), with artwork by Kānaka Maoli artists Soloman Enos, Lehuauakea, Daniel Ikaika Ito, Pōhaku Kaho`ohanohano, Christoper Kahunahana, Clifford Kapono, Ha`a Keaulana, Ian Kuali`i, Nicole Naone, Rick San Nicolas, Tom Pōhaku Stone, and Cory Kamehanaokalā Taum.

“For me, He`e Nalu: The Art and Legacy of Hawaiian Surfing is more than an exhibition—it’s an opportunity to celebrate something that was always important to me as I was growing up, which was surfing,” says curator Carolyn Kuali`i. “Surfing is a cultural practice and national sport for us in Hawai`i ... I’m excited to be able to share with the visitors what is Hawaiian when it comes to surfing and feature some of the excellence that is coming from Hawai`i.”

He`e Nalu: The Art and Legacy of Hawaiian Surfing is made possible thanks to Hawaiian Airlines, Bank of America, the Arizona Commission on the Arts, the Matson Foundation, Zone Media, Arizona Commission on the Arts, and the Phoenix Office of Arts and Culture, with leadership support from patrons of the Grand Gallery Exhibition Fund and Heard Museum Members.

CONTACT: For information about the exhibition, please contact: media@heard.org.
LOCATION: Heard Museum, 2301 N. Central Avenue, Phoenix, AZ 85004
PHOTOS: https://www.dropbox.com/sh/dj1rtjm3gksgktv/AADsestBxsgrtnhN-yN6oPb5a?dl=0
About the Heard Museum
Since its founding in 1929, the Heard Museum, a private nonprofit organization, has grown in size and stature to become recognized internationally for the quality of its collections, world-class exhibitions, educational programming and unmatched festivals. Dedicated to the advancement of American Indian art, the Heard successfully presents the stories of American Indian people from a first-person perspective as well as exhibitions that showcase the beauty and vitality of traditional and contemporary art. The Heard Museum is supported, in part, by the generosity of Heard Museum members and donors, the Arizona Commission on the Arts, and the City of Phoenix Office of Arts and Culture. In association with the Smithsonian, the Heard Museum is part of a select group of museums and cultural, educational and arts organizations that share the Smithsonian’s resources with the nation.

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