

*Kinolau / 4 Bodies* is a structured improvisational piece for an ensemble of four musicians. The instrumentation is open – any combination of instruments may perform it. The basic scaffolding of the score is trans-medium, meaning that it can be performed by dance or visual artists, or a combination thereof. For the development of the piece and its first performance, it was important for composer-director Nawahineokala'i Lanzilotti that the musicians each came from a different musical tradition so as to highlight the decisions four distinct voices make interpreting the image of the Makali'i (or Pleiades constellation).

The inspiration for the Makali'i as the score in *Kinolau / 4 Bodies* came from the Hawaiian creation chant *Kumulipo*. The first section of the piece features rhythms taken from the spoken poetry of the *Kumulipo*'s first verse performed in canon. In Hawaiian cosmology Makali'i's ascension over the horizon at dusk marks the beginning of the new year (usually around late October), and the winter season of the god of peace and fertility Lono. The first verse of the *Kumulipo* references the rise of Makali'i from darkness as an allusion to the creation of the universe. The constellation serves as a metonym for creation stories held by many cultures under different names.

*Kinolau* refers to the many physical forms of a god in Hawaiian culture. The god Lono, who rules the season of agriculture and peace marked by the rise of Makali'i, can be a black pig, the *kukui* (candlenut tree) among other plants, or even natural phenomena like a cluster of dark clouds sitting over a mountain. Each musician, in representing their own musical and cultural background, stands for a manifestation of the unique representation of the underlying, unifying human quality of culture and musical expression. Throughout the piece, the coincidences and intersections of the dialogue between particular pairs of musicians creates distinct interpretive "bodies," or *kinolau*, of the score, in another microcosm-macrocosm relationship.