



Uncle Calvin Hoe
Artist Information Sheet
All Ages

Artist Biography:

Uncle Calvin Hoe

Uncle Calvin Hoe grew up in O’ahu Hawaii. From the time he was in high school, he started making his own instruments out of the nature where he lived. He is now considered one of Hawaii’s greatest Native crafters. His expertise is making instruments that were found in Hawaii before non-Native’s came to the islands. When outsiders began settling in Hawaii, they brought with them disease that nearly destroyed the Native population. Uncle Calvin continues the tradition of making instruments that existed in Hawaii long before European settlers arrived on the island—this work connects him to his place, people and language.

Tradition:

Indigenous Instruments & Food: Hano (nose flute), ukēkē (mouth bow), and Poi (food)

Hano: Made from bamboo trees in Hawaii, these flutes use the air from a musician’s nose to make sound and music.

Ukēkē: Made from a thin piece of wood that looks like bows used for hunting arrows, this instrument normally has one string that is plucked with a finger, while the bow is held on one end by the mouth to make the sound heard louder.

Poi: A traditional Hawaiian food made from the taro plant, which grows from a long stem in tropical areas. It is one of the oldest farmed crops and was brought to Hawaii by its earliest voyager settlers from Polynesia. Taro was a very important staple crop, essential to the nutrition of Native Hawaiians. Traditional culture held that when poi was served, people were not allowed to argue or speak in anger in respect to its sacred place in the culture.

Place:

Hakipu'u, O'ahu, Hawaii

Hawaii is a set of Islands located in the Pacific Ocean settled in the 10th century by voyagers from far away Polynesian Islands who travelled by boat using the stars to guide them. O’ahu is one of the islands of Hawaii, known for its full vegetation and beautiful nature along the coast. The significance and beauty of this area has been passed down generations through oral tradition, often described as a paradise. Hakipu`u, or “broken hill,” refers to the jagged top of the area’s high points.