

Monolulu Star-Bulletin



TODAY

MONDAY, JULY 25, 2005 >> SECTION D

Nā Honu Hawai'i



COURTESY ALOHA FESTIVALS

A turtle emerges from the sea, above, in Carl Yonamine's design for the Aloha Festivals. Right, another design, shown as it will be used on a T-shirt, features petroglyph honu images.

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Festival ○ SPIRIT

Artist Carl Yonamine uses the sea turtle to capture the spirit of the Aloha Festivals

By Nancy Arcayna

narcayna@starbulletin.com

THE HONU, or Hawaiian sea turtle, is the Hawaiian symbol of longevity, peace, humility and the spirit within, according to Blaine Kamalani Kia, Aloha Festivals cultural adviser, so it is no wonder that the festival's 2005 theme, "Na Honu Hawaii — The Spirit Within," pays tribute to the sea creatures.

Artist Cal Yonamine worked with Kia to create a design that reflected the spirit of the annual festival, which begins next month on Oahu.

Yonamine began the project with a backdrop of water line drawings that represent the vast ocean. The water eventually becomes a sea turtle, leaving the impression of a honu emerging from the sea to return to the sand and give birth.

The turtle never forgets its birthplace, said Yonamine, whose design will be included on all of the promotional items for the festival.

The design was inspired by the works of M.C. Escher. Beyond the simplicity of the turtle figure is the richness of Hawaiian culture, conveyed through metaphors and illusions. "Everything has a deeper meaning than what is seen," Kia said.

At the center of another design, the turtle's form gives the appearance of "paepae," or the building mound that symbolizes the Hawaiian family, or genealogy, Kia explained. The turtles appearing from small to large are derived from ancient petroglyphs representing past, present and future; land, ocean and sky; and preservation, perpetuation and conservation.

The turtle's backbone is also a representation of Hawaiians, indicating that they, like the sea turtle, are an endangered species, said Kia.

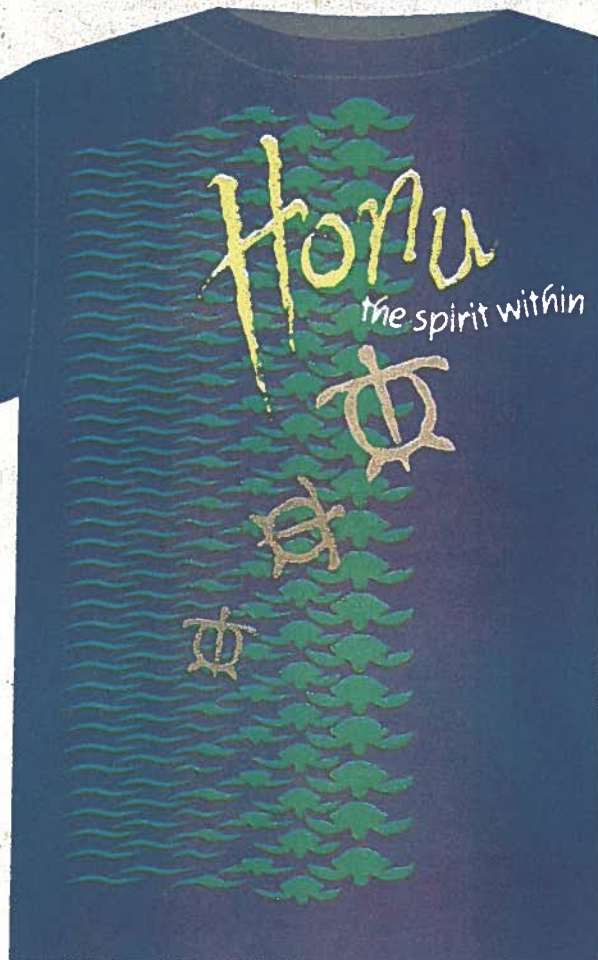
Each design component was analyzed to ensure it represents Aloha Festivals in a way that connects to its

>> A calendar of Aloha Festival highlights. D4

cultural past and perpetuates its future, said Kia, who encouraged board members to "go back to traditional concepts of graphics and symbols" for the Aloha Festival themes, which in recent years have reflected a contemporary pop sensibility.

"We need to think about what kind of message we are sending to the masses," he said. "We need to stay in focus with the Hawaiian culture. It needs to be the rule of thumb. There is no other way of doing it but from the Hawaiian perspective."

Aloha Festivals began in 1947 as Aloha Week. The event has grown to in-



clude hundreds of events on six islands spanning a two-month period. It has become a celebration of Hawaii's Pacific, Asian and Western influences, embracing all aspects of culture, from music and dance to cuisine and art. Nearly 1 million people attend the various festival events, which are intended to reflect the connection between the Hawaiian people and the environment.

Kia has worked on the festival for the 25 years, since starting as a member of the royal court.

"I've seen it from many different perspectives. I've experienced it from the inside and out. It will always be embedded in my heart. I'll never forget the wonderful things taught to me."

Of primary importance is the aloha spirit, which has survived modern distractions and stresses, he says.

"I'm overwhelmed by the everyday, simple things we can do in our life to take care of others and make others happy."

Visit www.alohafestivals.com for a schedule of events, or call 589-1771 to purchase a \$5 ribbon and 2005 program.