

H-S-B

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# Artifacts That Tell a Story

**'HAWAII:** The Royal Isles" is home for Christmas. After a two-year, seven-city tour of the Mainland to reviews that were occasionally less than glowing (a national news magazine called it "airport art" although it was generally well-received by anthropologists if not by art critics), the exhibit opened Sunday at the Bishop Museum. It will remain on view through August 1983.

Exhibited are Hawaiian artifacts and other items of historical importance dating from pre-contact with European explorers through the Monarchy and concluding with a few contemporary works by Hawaiian artists. Some of the most interesting pieces are pictured here.

This was the first time most of the objects have left the Hawaiian Islands. It is also the first time an exhibition of Hawaiian artifacts has focused on Hawaiian culture and values to demonstrate the

traditions that have endured and the customs and beliefs that have been lost.

If there as been controversy over the art exhibited, nobody has had an unkind word for the catalog. The 250-page book includes 274 photographs, 68 in full color, a brief history of each item in the exhibit and an intriguing essay, "The Persistence of Tradition" by Adrienne Kaeppler.

This is a concise cultural history of Hawaii, and the catalog would be a welcome addition to any collection of Hawaiiana. It was written by Roger G. Rose, anthropologist and archaeologist on the staff of the museum who organized most of the exhibit, and by Kaeppler, who was his co-director at the beginning of the project and is now curator of oceanic ethnology at the National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution. The catalog is available at the Bishop Museum gift shop for \$18.

—Lois Taylor



## Early Images

Four hundred and 50 miles northwest of Kauai lies tiny Necker Island, thought to be unknown to the early Hawaiians. But exploration of

the rocky pinnacle in 1894 turned up the first of fewer than 20 mysterious and rigidly conventionalized male images. These differ dramatically from stone carvings found elsewhere in the Hawaiian archipelago, in the full treatment of face

and limbs, and seem to represent an early phase of Hawaiian culture with roots in southeast Polynesia. It is uncertain whether they were left before the 13th century, by early Tahitian contacts, or by some other source yet to be explained.