

Māhealani Uchiyama



www.mahea.com



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Recording Artist Dancer Author Teacher

Current Position

Founder and Director, Māhea Uchiyama Center for International Dance, Berkeley

Education

1987 M.A., Pacific Islands Studies, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

1979 B.A., Dance Ethnology, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

Research Interests

Indigenous wisdom practices, Spiritual traditions of sub-Saharan Africa and Hawai'i, cultural exchange and interaction, social and cultural evolution of populations in the African Diaspora

Publications

2016 Haumāna Hula Handbook - A Manual for the Student of Hawaiian Dance, North Atlantic Books / Penguin Random House Publisher Services

2005 The Mbira - An African Musical Tradition, North Atlantic Books / Penguin Random House Publisher Services

Contributor to:

2025 Kapō Laka - Eia Au E Laka, Iho Mai E Kapō. "Laka and Kapō: A Sacred Balance", Edith Kanaka'ole Foundation

2010 DANCING THE COSMOS: Women's Stories of Spiritual Awakening and Healing through Dance. Johanna Laseho, Editor

Recordings

2025 Pōpoloheno - Songs of Resilience & Joy - A celebration of the African experience in Hawai'i

2019 Pasifika - Hawaiian and Tahitian music

2013 The Sky That Covers Us All - mbira music of Zimbabwe

2010 Ndoro - mbira music of Zimbabwe

2007 A Walk by the Sea - winner of Hawai'i Music Award for Best World Music of 2007

2005 Mele Hula - traditional Hawaiian music

2004 Tātau - traditional Tahitian music

2002 Black Pearl - Winner, Best of Festival, 2002 Berkeley Film Festival

2000 Moemoeā - traditional Hawaiian and Tahitian music

1997 Tuahine Rain - traditional Hawaiian and Tahitian music

Professional Awards and Recognition

2026 Awardee Global Music Awards Silver Medal for Outstanding Achievement.
2026 Nā Hōkū Hanohano Award Nominee for Hawaiian Music Album of the Year.
2019 The City of Berkeley proclaimed January 22, as Māhealani Uchiyama Day
2015 Berkeley Hawaiian Music Festival Person of Distinction Award
2010 Hawai'i Music Award for Best Artwork, Ndoro. Photographer Chugrad McAndrews and Designer Czelena Stovall
2008 Hawai'i Music Award for Best World Music Album, A Walk By The Sea.
2007 Aloha Spirit Award, Kapalakiko Music, Art, & Craft Productions
2002 Best of Festival Award. Producer, Black Pearl, Berkeley Film Festival
1982 - 2025 Numerous awards for excellence in Hawaiian and Tahitian dance and music: Kū Mai Ka Hula Competition of Maui, Tahiti Fete of San Jose, King Kamehameha Hula and Chant Competition of Honolulu, Ia 'Oe e Ka Lā Hula Festival, Onipa'a Hula Festival, Tahiti Fete of San Francisco, Kaleponi Hula Competition of San Francisco

Courses Taught at Colleges and Universities

Hawaiian Language, Stanford University

Polynesian Dance, Chabot College (now University) and Laney College

Courses, Workshops and Lecture Demonstrations Taught in Studios and Seminars

- Pōpoloheno Black History Month Presentation, University of Hawai'i, Hilo
- Prayer Dances: An Introduction to Sacred Dances of the World
- Hawaiian Hula
- Tahitian 'Ori
- Tahitian Percussion
- Hawaiian 'Ukulele
- Hawaiian Chanting and Drumming
- Mbira music of Zimbabwe
- Regional Dances of the Caribbean
- Dances of Egypt

Additional Specialized Skills

Dance and Music Concert Production

Performance Tours as Artistic Director of KaUaTuahine

2025 Pōpoloheno-Songs of Resilience & Joy, San Francisco CA, Honolulu HI
2024 Wai Ola - Alameda CA, Honolulu HI and San Francisco CA
2018 Ka 'Aha Hula 'O Hālauaola performance, Hilo HI
2016 Hula performance at Queen Ka'ahumanu Center, Kahului Maui
2015 Summer Sounds at the Hollywood Bowl, Los Angeles Philharmonic.
2014 Ka 'Aha Hula 'O Hālauaola performance, Kapa'a, Kaua'i
2009 Ka 'Aha Hula 'O Halauaola performance, Honolulu HI
2007 Tahitian dance performances in Tahiti, French Polynesia
2005 Tahitian dance performances in Tahiti, French Polynesia
2005 Ka'Aha Hua 'O Halauaola performance, Maui, Hawai'i
2005 Performance for Culture Moves Conference on Dance in Oceania, Wellington, New Zealand
2004 Tahitian dance performances in Tahiti, French Polynesia

Additional International Travel

2019 Rurutu, French Polynesia
2016 Harare, Zimbabwe: Intensive training with masters of the mbira
2012 - 13 Mexico: performance and teaching tours
2007 Harare, Zimbabwe: Intensive training with masters of the mbira
2006 Fiji and Rarotonga
2005 Dakar, Senegal
2000 India and Thailand

Additional Major Appearances

- Museum of the African Diaspora, A Lei For Reverend King - A discussion highlighting the historical ties between the Civil Rights Movement and the Hawaiian Sovereignty Movement, 2026
- Museum of the African Diaspora, Pōpoloheno - Songs of Resilience & Joy, a discussion on the shared values and resilience between Hawaiian and African peoples
- Kōkua Maui, a concert in support of Lāhaina fire recovery, 2024
- Museum of the African Diaspora, Book Reading - The Mbira, An African Musical Tradition, 2022
- Ho'olaha: Hula Spans the Globe, a concert of classical and contemporary hula 2015
- Mahea Uchiyama Center for International Dance 20th Anniversary Concert

- Hawaiian Music Concert, Mexico City, 2013
- Black Choreographers Festival, 2006, 2007, 2011
- Collages Des Cultures Africaines
- San Francisco Ethnic Dance Festival, 1985, 1987, 1994, 2004, and 2005.
- People Like Me (Children's Multi-Cultural Educational Performance Tour), Northern California, 2003
- Merrie Monarch Hula Festival as a chanter and drummer, Hilo Hawai'i, 1986

Professional Service

Panelist, New England Foundation For The Arts (NEFA), 2024

Artistic Director, San Francisco Ethnic Dance Festival, 2017 - 2020

President, World Arts West, 2014 to 2017

Vice President, MBIRA The Non Profit Organization, 2012 to 2020

Adjudicator, San Francisco Ethnic Dance Festival, 2005, 2007, 2009, 2010

Panelist, San Francisco Arts Commission Cultural Equity Grants, 2007

Affiliations/Memberships

Broadcast Music, Inc. (BMI).

The Recording Academy, San Francisco Chapter

Hawai'i Academy of Recording Arts

Websites

www.mahea.com

www.facebook.com/mahealani.uchiyama

<https://www.instagram.com/mahealaniuchiyama/>

