**Artist:** Pua Aliʻi ʻIlima, Nā Kumu Hula Vicky Holt Takamine & Jeff Takamine

**Title:** ʻŌ Mai O Kalākaua

**Artwork Description**
Pua Aliʻi ʻIlima Nā Kumu Hula Vicky Holt Takamine & Jeff Takamine present a suite of traditional oli (chant) and hula pahu (musical accompaniment drum) in honor of King David Kalākaua in the newly opened Qajar Gallery at Shangri La. The performance honors the royal connection formed in the exchange of royal orders and letters of friendship and solidarity between Naser al-Din Shah of the Qajar dynasty of Iran (1779-1924) and King David Kalākaua.

**Artist Statement**
On January 20, 1881, King David Kalākaua set forth on the steamship the City of Sydney, bound for San Francisco, to become the first reigning monarch to circumnavigate the world, establishing diplomatic relationships with monarchs throughout Asia, Africa, Europe and the United States. Upon his return to Hawaiʻi on October 29, 1881, torches were lit along the coastline of Oʻahu and the lāhui (people) gathered to sing and chant his praises. Although Kalākaua didn’t visit Persia, in the 1880’s he exchanged letters and royal orders with the King of Persia, Naser al-Din Shah Qajar. Both were attempting to strengthen their world presence as independent nations. As we seek world peace and pray for our people’s health and wellness, we look to our aliʻi, who guided us through the challenges brought to our Kingdom from afar. We too can be that beacon of light for our people and the message of ʻAuʻa ʻla, to hold fast to your culture, hold fast to your traditions, child of the turning tides, child of the turning times, are as valid today as it was in the past. Through this suite of traditional oli and hula pahu, we honor King David Kalākaua and the preservation and perpetuation of native cultures around the world, including Native Hawaiian and Islamic art. What a fitting place for this performance, Shangri La’s newly opened Qajar Gallery, to honor these global connections through mutual love, respect, and solidarity.

###