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THE RITZ-CARLTON MAUI, KAPALUA ANNOUNCES 34th ANNUAL CELEBRATION OF THE ARTS, SEPT. 18-19

*Hawaiian cultural festival honors Hōkūleʻa's 50th anniversary and
features the Richard Hoʻopiʻi Leo Kiʻekiʻe Falsetto Contest*

KAPALUA, MAUI, HI — (August 24, 2026) — The Ritz-Carlton Maui, Kapalua will welcome artists, cultural practitioners, musicians, and educators from across Hawaiʻi for the 34th Annual Celebration of the Arts, taking place September 18-19, 2026. Daytime events are free and open to the public, giving residents and visitors alike the chance to experience Hawaiian culture firsthand. Guided by the theme “*Lohe mai i ke aʻo*” (Heed the Teachings), this year’s festival invites participants to reflect on ancestral wisdom and explore how Hawaiian knowledge continues to shape the future.

One of Hawaiʻi’s premier cultural festivals, Celebration of the Arts offers two days of immersive, family-friendly experiences, including hands-on demonstrations, hula and music performances, panel discussions, storytelling, traditional ceremonies such as E Ala E (a sunrise protocol) and Hiʻuwai (a cleansing ceremony), a marketplace spotlighting local makers, and opportunities for meaningful cultural exchange.

A centerpiece of this year’s program is “Hōkūleʻa at 50: Stories from the Original Crew,” commemorating the 50th anniversary of the legendary voyaging canoe whose 1976 maiden voyage from Maui’s Honolua Bay to Tahiti, guided by traditional, star-based navigation, helped spark the Hawaiian cultural renaissance. Original crew members will reunite to share firsthand accounts of the historic journey, accompanied by rare photographs and film footage.

Another signature event is the Richard Hoʻopiʻi Leo Kiʻekiʻe Falsetto Contest, honoring the late falsetto legend and contest founder Richard Hoʻopiʻi. The competition offers visitors a rare chance to hear Hawaiʻi’s distinctive falsetto singing tradition performed live, celebrating the artists dedicated to preserving it for future generations.

Held at Honokahua, a place of deep cultural significance, Celebration of the Arts serves as a gathering place for practitioners, artists and community members to share *‘ike* (knowledge), honor ancestral connections, and engage in meaningful dialogue about culture, stewardship and the future of Hawai‘i.

“For 34 years, Celebration of the Arts has been more than an event; it has been a place where Hawaiian voices lead the conversation,” said Clifford Nae‘ole, cultural advisor and founder of Celebration of the Arts. “At Honokahua, we gather not only to celebrate culture, but to honor our ancestors, learn from one another, and create space for healing, reflection, and understanding. The lessons entrusted to us by our kūpuna remain as important today as ever.”

Additional programming includes cultural panels exploring storytelling and aloha, hula performances, Hawaiian music showcases, *lā‘au lapa‘au* (plant medicine) presentations, interactive experiences with ‘awa and kalo, and a koa reforestation experience at Pu‘u Kukui Watershed Preserve, supporting Maui’s native forests.

“We are honored to welcome residents and visitors to experience the richness of Hawaiian culture through shared stories, music, art, and traditions, while deepening their connection to the people and places that make Maui so special,” said Melissa Lee, hotel manager of The Ritz-Carlton Maui, Kapalua.

Daytime events at Celebration of the Arts remain complimentary and open to the public, and reflects The Ritz-Carlton Maui, Kapalua’s longstanding commitment to preserving and perpetuating Hawaiian culture. The festival is made possible through the support of Festivals of Aloha, the County of Maui Office of Economic Development, the Hawai‘i Tourism Authority, and Hawaiian Airlines.

For the full Celebration of the Arts schedule and tickets to the Richard Ho‘opi‘i Leo Ki‘eki‘e Falsetto Contest, visit www.celebrationofthearts.org.

For more information about The Ritz-Carlton Maui, Kapalua, visit www.ritzcarlton.com/maui.

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About The Ritz-Carlton Maui, Kapalua

The Ritz-Carlton Maui, Kapalua offers 470 newly reimagined guestrooms, including 107 residential suites, inspired by the island’s heritage and natural beauty. Guests enjoy The Ritz-Carlton Spa® Maui, Kapalua with garden showers, volcanic grottos, steam and sauna therapies, and ocean-view fitness spaces. The resort features six dining experiences, a luau, a best-in-class Club Lounge, luxury cabanas, a family-friendly pool, and enhanced meeting spaces. Jean-Michel Cousteau’s Ambassadors of the Environment and robust guest programming—including cultural workshops, Hawaiian traditions, culinary events, seasonal celebrations—create unforgettable experiences. Set on 54 acres within the 22,000-acre Kapalua Resort, the property is surrounded by championship golf, award-winning dining, and historic pineapple fields.