

DATE November 14, 2021 RELEASE NUMBER 35 | 2021

Rebirth of Kani Ka Pila Grille – Waikiki’s Home of Hawaiian Music

With a new stage, additional seating and enhanced menu – Kani Ka Pila Grille returns to Outrigger Reef Waikiki Beach



L-R: Kimo Kahoano, Sean Dee, Amy Hānaiali'i, Sean Na'auao, Mac Sanchez, Bobby Moderow, Joe Huahinui, Luana Maitland and Glen Smith

HONOLULU – Let’s play music! As part of its \$80 million transformation, [Outrigger Reef Waikiki Beach Resort](#) commemorated an official re-opening of [Kani Ka Pila Grille](#) on Saturday, November 13, 2021 with a traditional Hawaiian blessing, led by beloved entertainer Kimo Kahoano and wife Leilani.

Celebrating the rebirth of Waikiki’s Home of Hawaiian Music, guests were serenaded by award-winning Hawaiian musicians Sean Na’auao, Kawika Kahiapo and Ho’okena. It was a star-studded night, with Hawaiian music royalty in the house, including Amy Hānaiali’i, Bobby Moderow, Henry Kapono, Josh Tatofi and more – many who graced the stage in true Kani Ka Pila style.

Steeped in island-music history, Kani Ka Pila Grille first opened in 2008 and has since been a hotspot for kama’āina and visitors alike to hear live Hawaiian music nightly from award-winning artists under the stars. The name “Kani Ka Pila” translates from Hawaiian to mean “Let’s Play Music” and was bestowed on the venue by legendary slack-key guitarist Cyril Pahinui – who performed there regularly. His inspiration for the name came from the unfettered joys of backyard jam sessions with family and friends, where music was played, good food was served and laughter was heard.

Today, the tradition continues – with a new stage and enhanced seating, Outrigger guests can enjoy the comfort and company of Hawai’i’s best talent in a contemporary outdoor space. The revival includes a refresh of the menu from acclaimed Chef Rey Baysa – with signature specials including Huli Huli Chicken,

‘Ahi and Avocado Poke, Kālua Pork Quesadillas and Pineapple Crème Brule. The specialty cocktail menu is a creative mix using local spirits such as Ocean organic vodka and Kula rum, plus a variety of beers on tap from Kona Brewing Co. Ambassadors of Kona Brewing Co. “The Bruddahs” – David Bell and Blake “Brutus” LaBenz were also in attendance.

“Music plays an integral part in Hawai‘i’s history and its future; Outrigger is honored to provide a venue for both award-winning and up-and-coming Hawaiian music artists to share their craft while providing meaningful memories for our guests, said Sean Dee, EVP and chief commercial officer at Outrigger Hospitality Group. “Uncle Cyril set the bar for Kani Ka Pila Grille as a place that brought people together – we raise a glass to his legacy and look forward to further stewarding this venue as Waikiki’s home of Hawaiian music.”

Earlier in the day – Kani Ka Pila Grille held its 14th annual talent search as part of the Made in Hawai‘i Festival. The winner, Kekoa Correa, received a month-long contract to play on the brand Kani Ka Pila Grille new stage. Several past awardees have gone on to be Na Hōkū Hanohano Award winners.

Event sponsors of the Kani Ka Pila Grille Talent Search and opening night were Blue Hawaiian Helicopters, Honolulu Star-Advertiser, Kona Brewing Co. and The Orchid Lei Co. The opening celebration was also live-streamed to the Seattle Live Aloha Hawaiian Cultural Festival.

Coming Home – Sustainable Artwork: Alongside the traditional blessing of Kani Ka Pila Grille, the brand also celebrated the dedication of a commissioned, sustainable art piece called “Coming Home” by marine biologist and renowned artist, Ethan Estess. Through a partnership with Hawai‘i Pacific University’s Center for Marine Debris Research, Estess collected mounds of discarded fishing nets that were repurposed into a colorful mural now residing at the property entrance. The work is meant to inspire individuals to be more sustainable and consume less single-use plastics. As an embodiment of Outrigger’s commitment to conservation efforts through Outrigger’s ZONE (OZONE), \$3,000 USD was donated to The Center for Marine Debris Research.

The transformed Outrigger Reef Waikiki Beach Resort is a contemporary retreat, rooted in Hawaiian culture and music. From the revived Kani Ka Pila Grille to new sustainable mural – the beachfront property is a work of art. Visit www.Outrigger.com for more information or to book accommodations. Kani Ka Pila Grille is open for breakfast, lunch and dinner – with live Hawaiian music nightly, starting at 6 p.m. For restaurant reservations, call 808-924-4990 or book online at [Open Table](#).

VNR: https://www.dropbox.com/sh/8jb909hrz5mxfzi/AABu_95qAkPwE3vger1FpDa1a?dl=0

PHOTOS: <https://www.dropbox.com/t/AFA03FFWPd9Wjwg3>

VIDEO & PHOTOS COURTESY: Outrigger Hospitality Group

BROLL SHOT LIST: Lobby with Ethan Estess artwork, wide shot of Kani Ka Pila Grille poolside lanai, exterior of Outrigger Reef Waikiki Beach Resort, Sean Na’auao, Kawika Kahiapo, Ho’okena, blessing, maile lei untying, check presentation

SOUNDBITES (In this order, starting at 3:00):

- (3:00) Ethan Estess, Artist/Marine Biologist
- (3:17) Markus Krebs, General Manager, Outrigger Reef Waikiki Beach Resort
- (3:36) Luana Maitland, Director of Cultural Programs, Outrigger Reef Waikiki Beach Resort
- (4:01) Sean Dee, EVP and Chief Commercial Officer, Outrigger Hospitality Group

ABOUT OUTRIGGER HOSPITALITY GROUP

For more than 70 years, Outrigger Hotels and Resorts has charted a journey of discovery – expanding from Hawai‘i to premier resort destinations including Fiji, Mauritius and Thailand. The privately held hospitality company invites guests to ‘Escape Ordinary’ with authentic Signature Experiences and the [Outrigger DISCOVERY loyalty program](#). Outrigger’s multi-branded portfolio includes Outrigger® Resorts, OHANA Hotels by Outrigger®, Hawaii Vacation Condos by Outrigger®, Kapalua Villas Maui and Honua Kai Resort & Spa Maui while also managing select properties from top international hotel brands including Embassy Suites by Hilton®, Best Western® and Hilton Grand Vacations™. Find out more at [Outrigger.com](#) or visit @OutriggerResorts on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#).

MEDIA CONTACT

Monica Salter | VP Global Communications & Social Responsibility
Outrigger Hospitality Group
Tel: (+1) 808-921-6839 | Email: monica.salter@outrigger.com

###