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Day 2 Highlights of the 13th Festival of Pacific Arts & Culture

The second day of the Pacific Culture & Arts Festival was an exciting and enriching experience, featuring a diverse array of cultural events, performances, and demonstrations. The day kicked off with a ceremony, followed by a series of engaging activities at various locations around Honolulu. Below is a summary of the day's events:

Carving Demonstrations

Visitors at the Bishop Museum immersed themselves in the traditional arts of carving, gaining deep insights into the cultural heritage and craftsmanship of our Samoan culture.

Tile Tuala-Tamaalelagi, Ioane Taua'i, and Fitulua Matamua will be engaging in two specific carving projects and several supplementary projects over the course of the festival:

1. Hoe Uli (*foe*): a large steering paddle which will serve as symbols for navigating our futures and claiming agency over our own individual and collective destinies as people of the ocean.
2. Wa'a kaulua (*paopao*): a double-hulled canoe reminiscent of those used by our ancestral navigators

Under the direction of Alike Bumatay (Hilo, Hawai'i), carvers will also participate in the repair of several wa'a kaulua (*canoes*) used for school navigation programs ensuring the longevity of traditional navigation

Tuala-Tamaalelagi, Taua'i and Matamua are doing live demonstrations of their carving skill set at the Bishop museum from 9 am to 5 pm.

Captivating Showcase: American Samoa Dance & Choir Group's Performance

The American Samoa Dance & Choir Group delivered an unforgettable performance at the Palama Settlement in Honolulu, Hawaii, marking the inaugural showcase of their full set for the 13th Festival of Pacific Arts and Culture.

The evening commenced with the “Aufaipese a Amerika Samoa”, led by Pati Pati. It is customary in the Samoan culture to begin by praising God for his *goodness* and the overflowing blessings upon his people. Thus, the choir’s opening number was “E Lelei O Mea Uma #8,” a song celebrating the goodness of all things, setting a reflective and joyous tone for the night. The performing pieces are the “Mua O” by the renowned Namulauulu PV. Pouesi, “Manu O Le Vaveao” by HTC Maiavatele Pouono Hunkin, “Samoa Ma Si Ana Aganuu” lyrics by Toilolo Elama Palemene, and closing with “O Oe o Amerika Samoa” by High Talking Chief Fofa I.F. Sunia. Each selection was carefully handpicked to ensure recognition of composers and individuals who are from or have contributed artistically to American Samoa.

The dance group, led by Losoloso Iaulualo, followed with a series of traditional dances that captivated the audience. The highlight of their performance was “Vi’i o Salote Ma Lemalie,” a dance intricately depicting the story of two girls who mysteriously vanished and were never found. Yet, their spirits remained, forever guiding lost travelers back home, lighting the way with their gentle presence. The words of this song, composed by Aoelua Solimio Aoelua of Afonotele, added cultural depth and historical significance, bringing the audience closer to one of the many narratives that make up American Samoa. The dancers moved with grace and precision, their movements telling stories of the past and celebrating the vibrancy of their culture.

After the impressive performances, the newly crowned Miss American Samoa, Pauliana Angelfromheaven Felise Vitale, took center stage to perform the Tualuga. This traditional Samoan finale involves an elegant and expressive dance, symbolizing the conclusion of the evening.

Festival Village Opening & FestPAC Expo

The opening of the Festival Village was a crowd favorite, attracting hundreds of visitors who eagerly explored the interactive displays showcasing culture and Pacific heritage. American Samoa’s Hale housed weavers, *siapo* makers, and adornment sellers who have made it a spectacle for visitors to learn about the different traditional items American Samoa has to offer. The weaving and adornment team consists of five Territorial Administration on Aging (TAOA) staff members: Niukini Luani, Zarahemla Mamea, Losalia Ah Chee, Tiena Tamahaga, and Fataoalii Papalii. Notably the eldest member of their group is eight-year-old Tiena Tamahaga. Leading the Siapo team is Regina Meredith alongside Faitoto’a Nicholas King, Puataunofu Tofaeono, and Deliah Paopao. Completing the line up are additional adornment members from the Arts Council team: Mr. Sean Tilo, Terry Luaifoa, and Douglas Tauese.

The American Samoa delegation also made a significant impact at the FestPAC Expo, held at the Hawaii Convention Center as part of the 13th Festival of Pacific Arts and Culture. The FestPAC Expo provided a platform for nations across the Pacific to display their unique cultural and natural assets. Led by the American Samoa Visitors Bureau, under the direction of Director Taimalelagi Minnie Tuia, the delegation showcased the natural beauty and culture of American Samoa, attracting considerable attention and admiration.

Their efforts in advertising the beauty of American Samoa were evident through a unique display of "made in American Samoa" items. The Samoan elei lavalavas, handcrafted soaps, coconut oils infused with local ingredients, and our main export - Starkist Samoa Inc, Albacore Tuna brought a touch of American Samoa to Hawaii. Visitors were provided the opportunity to engage by taking a representation of American Samoa home with them.

Fashion Show

American Samoa's fashion delegates made a stunning impact at the Festival of Pacific Arts and Culture with their participation in a highly anticipated fashion show held at the Hawaii Convention Center. The team, led by the talented Tuifaasisina Korina Seiuli Lee and supported by creative co-designers Isabella Mageo, Ammon Fepuleai & Tuafaleloa Keniseli Fanolua, showcased a variety of captivating designs that celebrated the cultural heritage of American Samoa.

The fashion show was a display of creativity and craftsmanship, featuring an exquisite collection that blended traditional Samoan motifs with contemporary fashion elements. Each piece told a story, reflecting the deep cultural roots and artistic innovation of the designers.

Tuifaasisina Korina Seiuli Lee, brought her vision to life with the assistance of Isabella Mageo, Ammon Fepuleai, and Tuafaleloa Keniseli Fanolua all of whom contributed their unique perspectives and skills to the collection. The collaborative effort resulted in a cohesive and striking presentation that left a lasting impression on the audience.

The event highlighted the importance of fashion as a medium for cultural expression and pride. By incorporating traditional patterns, fabrics, and techniques, the designers honored their heritage while pushing the boundaries of modern fashion.

We encourage supporters, family and friends to come out and support our groups throughout the festival, celebrating and sharing in the rich cultural heritage of our *Motu o Fiafiaga*. Please visit <https://www.festpachawaii.org/> for more information about event details and locations.

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