In this rigorously researched, cogently argued work, the author illuminates an unparalleled historical moment in an extraordinary place. In 1883, nine years into his reign as the seventh monarch of the Kingdom of Hawai'i, David Kalākaua staged his own elaborate coronation ceremony on the grounds of newly-completed 'Iolani Palace in Honolulu. Beneath the dome of a purpose-built pavilion of his own design, in front of the modern palace he had commissioned and helped plan, and facing the gilded bronze statue he had commissioned of Kamehameha I, Hawai'i's first king, installed only days before in front of the Hawaiian National Museum and Library (of which Kalākaua was the supreme patron), the king—arrayed in and surrounded by artifacts of ancient monarchs—crowned himself with a crown of his own creation.

From the multi-layered materiality of this singular occasion, the author excavates and examines the instrumentality of Kalākaua's seemingly contradictory appropriation of specific ancient artifacts and rituals to legitimate what was, in most respects, a modern and enlightened monarchy. By meticulously reconstructing the contesting social, political, intellectual, and popular discourses of late nineteenth century Hawai'i, Kamehiro succeeds in forging a case for a natively Hawaiian art history that, for a time, syncretized competing national agendas as disparate as "Hawai'i for Hawaiians" nativism and pro-American annexationist jingoism.

The author, currently an associate professor in the History of Art and Visual Culture Department at the University of California, Santa Cruz, and co-chair of the Center for Cultural Studies' Pacific Islands Research Cluster, first developed these themes in her 2000 dissertation (UCLA, Art History). Even as the current work demonstrates a mature scholar's deft mastery of complexly nuanced themes, arguments, and evidence, it never quite shakes the doggedly (re)iterative, dead-dry tone of that earlier effort. The story she tells, however, is fascinating; the book would be an excellent addition to any library collection supporting undergraduate and, especially, graduate programs in art history, anthropology, cultural studies, museum studies, or Oceania history and cultures.

Illustrations, which consist of historical and contemporary black and white photographs, several diagrams, and sixteen color plates, are well-chosen and just enough.

Scholarly accoutrements include the author's reconstruction, from historical sources, of the complete catalogs of the Hawaiian National Museum and Library; an invaluable appendix providing brief biographical descriptions of notable persons mentioned in the text; a glossary of Hawaiian terms; extensive notes and bibliography; and an excellent index. These, in total, comprise over 120 pages of text.

Kathy Edwards, Art & Architecture Librarian, Emery A. Gunnin Architecture Library, Clemson University, kathye@clemson.edu