



*Fresh look at*  
**Principles & Mechanics of Designing**  
*with Hawaii's Flowers*

**Fresh Look Webinar**  
**Friday, November 1, 2024**



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# **HFNA 2024 Fresh Look Expo: Designing with Hawaii Grown Flowers**

## **Schedule of Events**



### **2024 Fresh Look Expo Webinar**

**Friday, November 1, 2024**

*Broadcast from the Komohana Research & Extension Center, Hilo, Hawaii*

### **Schedule of Events**

#### **Moderators**

**Hitomi Gilliam, AIFD** (*live from Bowen Island, Vancouver, British Columbia*)

**Johnny Gordines, HFNA Kauai Director** (*live from Kapaa, Kauai, Hawaii*)

- 9:15 a.m.     **Hawaiian Blessing** – Moses Kaho’okele Crabbe
- 9:25 a.m.     **Welcome**  
Eric Tanouye, *HFNA President*
- 9:35 a.m.     **Lei Making Workshop**  
With Lia & Kelsi Mercado
- 10:20 a.m.    **Special Presentation** – Eric Tanouye & Dr. Teresita Amore
- 10:30 a.m.    **Principles & Elements of Design and Mechanics**  
With Hitomi Gilliam AIFD, Lois Hiranaga AIFD, & Sue Tabbal-Yamaguchi AIFD, EMC
- 11:30 a.m.    **“Rene Style”**  
With Rene van Rems AIFD
- 12:30 p.m.    Lunch break
- 1:00 p.m.     **Fresh Look Expo Virtual Nursery Tour**  
A variety of Hawaii Island flower and foliage nurseries
- 2:00 p.m.     **Foliage Manipulation & Use in Design**  
with Phil & Cathy Rulloda AIFD
- 3:00 p.m.     **Organic Container & Structure Design**  
with Lea Romanowski AIFD
- 4:00 p.m.     Mahalo’s & Closing Remarks



## Meet our Designers



**Hitomi Gilliam, AIFD:** Hitomi Gilliam AIFD, of *Design 358*, is an internationally recognized floral artist who has guest-designed throughout North America, England, Japan, Mexico, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Bermuda, Singapore, Australia & Colombia. She was a Silver & Gold Medal winner of the *Great American Design Competition* and served 6 years on the *AIFD* Membership Review Committee and Educational Committee. Hitomi was the Program Coordinator for the 2022 AIFD ROOTS Symposium. She is also co-founder of FREESIA Challenge and FREESIA Summit for Sustainability Floristry with Colin Gilliam and Gregor Lersch.

In 1998, Hitomi became one of only eight people to receive *AIFD*'s coveted 'Design Influence Award.' As an educator, Hitomi presents numerous programs throughout North America as a *Teleflora* Educational Specialist, as well as conducting her own *DESIGN358* workshops. She is also the recipient of *American Horticultural Society*'s "Frances Jones Poetker Award" for excellence in floriculture education.

Hitomi is also co-author of the *Hawaii Neotropica Guide Book* with Lois Hiranaga, AIFD. Hitomi also authored six floral design titles including textbooks. She is a winner of the Gold & Best of Show at "Windows of the World" competition representing Canada at the Singapore Garden Festival.



**Lois Hiranaga, AIFD:** Lois Hiranaga AIFD has always been passionate about flowers. A native of the beautiful island of Maui, she grew up surrounded by flowers. Lois earned a degree in marketing and management from the *University of Hawaii* and has an extensive background in horticulture and co-authored the *Neotropica Hawaii Tropical Flower + Plant Guide*. She is an accredited member of the American Institute of Floral Designers and presented main stage programs at AIFD Symposium in 2011 and in 2022. Other appearances include presentations to the Garden Club of Honolulu, on the television program *Cooking Hawaiian Style*, and at workshops and webinars. In 2023, Lois had the honor of being one of three float judges for the Pasadena Tournament of Roses Parade. Her designs reflect a diversity of styles. She is known most for her use of intriguing combinations of tropicals and temperates to create that perfect color combination and textural blend. She is the owner of *Lois Hiranaga Floral Design LLC*, which is a Maui based studio specializing in destination weddings and corporate clients. A sampling of her work

can be found on her website: <https://loismauiflowers.com>.



**Kelsi & Lia Mercado:** Kelsi and Lia Mercado, sisters, grew up in Hilo and are currently residing in Kamuela. They started out with Tootsie Weller of *Kaleo Napua o Hawaii* in 2007 and forming *Ainahua Florals* in 2008 with her daughter, Jillian Moniz.

Lia is the current Director of Operations, specializing in design and Kelsi is the Creative Director specializing in Lei.

## Meet our Designers



**Lea Romanowski, AIFD:** Floral artist and designer, Lea Romanowski, has always been a creative force continuously transforming ordinary things into striking design. During her 30+ year career in the floral industry, Lea has made an art out of pushing the boundaries of design. In 2000, she founded Designing on the Edge and began her full range of services including structural floral art and small to large scale event design and decor.

Thinking out of the box is too limiting for Lea, so she prefers to build the box. Her extensive skill set of carpentry, painting, metal work, electrical, and sharp design sense inspired Lea's nickname of MacGyver. Lea is the "fixer" of all things visual and is guided by the principle that no task is impossible, you just might need to build the solution...literally!

Lea has been recognized by the following floral and event industry associations and publications: Interflora World Cup in Manchester - Canadian Competitor, top 10 in the FSFA Design Challenge International; winner of the HFNA Wedding Celebration 2022 Bridal Bouquet Competition and the Maple Leaf Cup of Canada, took third place in the Gateway to the Americas Cup, and first place in the Fern Trust Foliage Category - Gateway to the Americas Cup. Lea has had articles in publications such as Fusion Flowers Magazine and Flowers & Magazine.

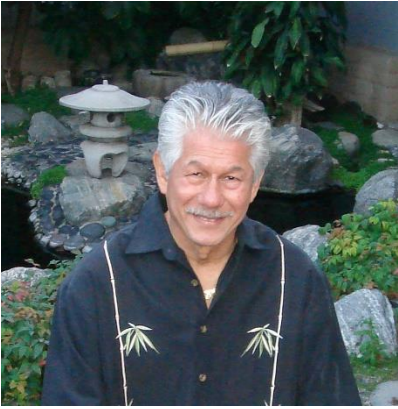


**Sue Tabbal-Yamaguchi, AIFD, EMC:** Sue began her floral business after opening a retail gift shop in 1992. During her first year, customers would always ask "do you sell flowers?" so in 1994 she started "selling flowers." Being in retail since before graduating from high school, having her real estate license and going to nursing school, Sue realized that making flowers and seeing customers' reactions was something she enjoyed. Sue began doing weddings and then was offered exclusive contracts at high end stores and hotels, but that was not the path she wanted to take. Starting as a self-taught florist, Sue wanted something more.

In 2013 she achieved her CFD and in 2015 she was inducted as a member of the American Institute of Floral Designers (AIFD) in Denver, Colorado. In 2016 she received her European Master Certificate (EMC) in Belgium. She has also competed in a few competitions and received top honors. Sue's passion in floristry has taken her on a path of sharing the love of flowers. Sue loves helping others to achieve their goals. She has been honored to assist behind the scenes for many programs at AIFD main stage programs and workshops, Fleuramour in 2015, 2016,

2018 and 2022 at Alden Biesen Castle and is one of the presenters for the *Hawaii Floriculture & Nursery Association (HFNA)*. Sue also presented on the main stage at the AIFD Symposium in Las Vegas in July 2022.

## Meet our Designers



**Phil Rulloda, AIFD, AAF, PFCI:** Mr. Rulloda is widely acclaimed as one of America's leading floral designers, educators and commentators. He has appeared as a featured speaker and designer for the industry's world-wide events. His record of first place wins in national and international floral design competitions is unmatched by his peers. Phil was invited to the White House to assist in Christmas decorating and has been a visitor in many foreign countries at the invitations of heads of State.

In addition, he has judged the Tournament of Roses Parade in Pasadena, the Las Floristas Headdresses Ball in Hollywood and contributed his design expertise to the 1984 Summer Olympic Games in Los Angeles. Phil was awarded the first ever American Institute of Floral Designers' Award of Design Influence, which was created to recognize individuals who made a significant impact on the art of floral design in the U.S. In 2022, Phil was honored to have a new anthurium variety named after him by the University of Hawaii College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources. He is administrator and lead instructor at the Southern California School of Floral Design in Orange County, CA.



**Rene van Rems, AIFD:** Rene van Rems has been hailed as the "rockstar" presenter by industry leaders in professional horticulture and floriculture. As a world renowned floral industry ambassador, his travels have taken him to Asia, South America, Canada, Europe and every state in the United States. As a multi-national award-winning designer and presenter, Rene has bridged life-style and floral art to the general public, working for horticultural societies, garden clubs, musea, special event shows and conventions. He is a recipient of the prestigious "Influence of Design" Award from the American Institute of Floral Designers (AIFD), which has only been awarded to nine recipients in its 50 years history. He has received awards from Society of American Florists, American Horticultural Society, California State Florist Association and the 'Governor of California Trophy' for CCFC's float in the Pasadena Tournament of Roses Parade. He is a life-time honorary member of AIFD and the National Garden Clubs of American.

Originally from Amsterdam, The Netherlands, Rene has called San Diego, California home ever since landing in 1978 as a horticultural exchange student. Educated in the full spectrum of horticulture and floriculture at the famous Aalsmeer Horticulture Institute, The Netherlands, he also studied at the Amsterdam Academy of Art after which he moved to work in London for a year before setting foot in California. He is the author of two industry best-seller books on floral design ('*Rene's Bouquets*' and '*Rene's Bouquets for Brides*'), and leads sell-out presentations and master classes on trends, the business of creativity, wedding décor styling, home décor and special event décor. Product development is his passion. He is known for his humor, quick wit and ability to hold an audience. Rene and his work have been featured in many leading industry publications, consumer media and as a guest on various TV stations and HGTV. He is frequently called upon to judge flower shows and design competitions like the famous Philadelphia International Flower Show and the Tournament of Roses Parade in Pasadena, California. As the founder and President of Rene van Rems International, a creative marketing and design consulting firm and product development services company, Rene was fundamental in the branding of the California Cut Flower Commission (CCFC), as Director of Promotion. Currently Rene is also affiliated as Creative Director for the San Diego Botanic Garden in Encinitas, California.



## Meet our Emcee



**Kathleen Yoshinaga:** My father started a retail florist in downtown Honolulu in 1934. After graduating from the *University of Hawaii*, I took over the business in 1975. We were a full-service florist. Forty years later, the business was sold in 2015.

Along the way I've learned a lot about business and farming. Currently, I still work on flowers for friends, do real estate sales and volunteer for organizations that are important to me.

Kathleen is the Oahu Director for HFNA, as well as our Public Relations & Communications Committee Chair. She has been participating in monthly segments on KHON on Local Flowers & Ornamentals since 2017.

## Special Hawaiian Blessing



**Kumu Moses Kaho'okele Crabbe:** Kumu Moses Crabbe has been affiliated with the Hawaii Floriculture & Nursery Association and other floriculture groups for a number of years doing blessings and opening floral events at various venues. He is a former Hawaiian Immersion teacher and, since 2000, was the Hawaiian Kumu of the Elementary division at the Kamehameha School's Hawaii Campus. Moses retired in 2016.

He is the Kumu Hula of Halauolaokalani and currently teaches hula kahiko and hula auana. He serves the community and performs Hawaiian blessings for community events, for homes and for land.

## Meet our Tour Nurseries



BROMELIADS HAWAII, LLC

### **Bromeliads Hawaii**

35 Pau O Palae St. \* Hilo, HI 96720  
Phone: 808-959-6598 \* Royanne: 808-896-0532  
Email: royanne76@yahoo.com  
Website: <https://bromeliadshawaii.com>

*Bromeliads Hawaii is a nursery business located on the Big Island of Hawaii in Hilo. We have been in business for over 30 year. Run by father daughter team David & Royanne Shiigi. David has been a hybridizer since 1977.*

### **Green Point Nurseries, Inc.**

811 Kealakai Street \* Hilo, HI 96720  
Phone: 808-959-3535  
Email: [gpn@greenpointnursery.com](mailto:gpn@greenpointnursery.com)  
Website: <https://www.greenpointnursery.com>



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*Green Point Nurseries Inc. located on the Island of Hawaii (Big Island) right outside of Hilo in Panaewa and also in the Kurtistown area. We ship within the State of Hawaii, to the Mainland (continental U.S.), Canada and Japan. We are a producer exporter of anthuriums, tropical flowers and foliage. We are most known for our beautiful anthuriums that are available in a multitude of colors and sizes, and have a large selection of tropical flowers, foliage and ornamentals.*

### **Pacific Floral Exchange**

16-685 Milo Street \* Keaau, HI 96749  
Phone: 808-966-9427  
Website: [www.pacfloral.com](http://www.pacfloral.com)



*We are the leading local provider of tropical flowers and foliage, recognized for our commitment to quality, sustainability, and exceptional customer service, while fostering a thriving and healthy community built on family values and the spirit of "Ohana."*



### **Newman's Nursery**

HC-3 Box 11023 \* Keaau, HI 96749  
Phone: 808-966-4545  
Email: [jeffrey@newmansnurseryinc.com](mailto:jeffrey@newmansnurseryinc.com)

*Newman's Nursery Inc. is a well-established plant nursery based in Keaau, HI, specializing in a wide variety of tropical plants and trees. With a focus on quality and customer satisfaction, the nursery offers a diverse selection of plants for landscaping and gardening needs.*

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922 Auwae Road \* Hilo, HI 96720  
Phone: 808-959-7943  
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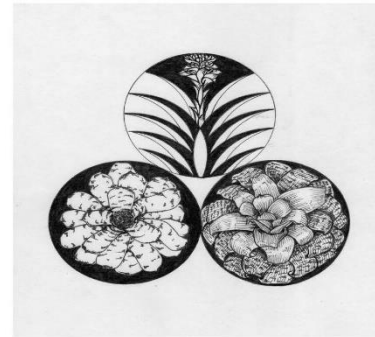
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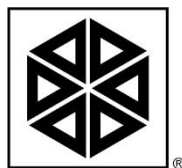


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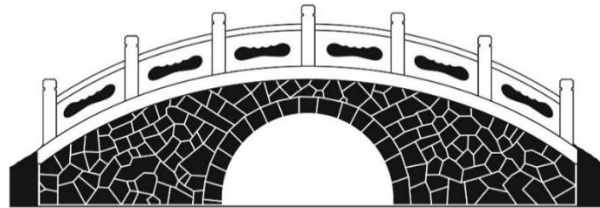


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*U.S. Department of Agriculture, Foreign Agriculture Service*  
*Hawaii Department of Agriculture*  
*Hawaii County Department of Research & Development*  
*UH-Manoa College of Tropical Agriculture & Human Resources (CTAHR)*  
*UH-CTAHR Cooperative Extension Service*

*Guest Designer Hitomi Gilliam AIFD, Design358*  
*Guest Designer Lea Romanowski AIFD, Designing on the Edge*  
*Guest Designer Phil Rulloda AIFD, AAF, PFCI, So. California School of Floral Design*  
*Guest Designer Rene van Rems AIFD, Rene van Rems International*  
*Hawaii Island Designers Lia & Kelsi Mercado, Ainahua Florals*  
*Maui Designer Lois Hiranaga AIFD, Lois Hiranaga Floral Design LLC*  
*Oahu Designer Sue Tabbal-Yamaguchi, AIFD, EMC, Su-V Expressions*



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*Videographer **Russell Galanti**, UH-CTAHR Floriculture & Landscape Extension Agent, Hawaii Island*  
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*Videography & Webinar Production **Out of the Sea Media Arts***  
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HFNA would also like to thank those numerous people who have volunteered their time and talents to help make our 2024 Fresh Look Expo into the huge success it has become. Without your valiant efforts, our program would not have been as well received and enjoyed by all who attended.



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*Congratulations to the*  
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*Designers and Attendees for making*

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