PACIFIC HEARTBEAT
STORIES FROM THE PACIFIC ISLANDS
SEASON 8
Discussion Guide
“The Pacific Heartbeat series enriches people’s hearts and minds by sharing the stories of this growing global diaspora with the world.”

- Leanne Ferrer, Executive Director of Pacific Islanders in Communications.

Now in its eighth consecutive season, Pacific Heartbeat is an anthology series that provides viewers a glimpse of the real Pacific—its people, cultures, languages, music, and contemporary issues. From revealing exposés to rousing musical performances, the series features a diverse array of programs that will draw viewers into the heart and soul of Pacific Island culture.

https://www.piccom.org/pages/season-eight-1

Pacific Heartbeat is produced by Pacific Islanders in Communications (PIC) and distributed by American Public Television (APT), broadcast nationally on WORLD Channel and on your local PBS station.

Funding for Pacific Heartbeat is provided by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) and the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA).
PRISON SONGS
BY KELRICK MARTIN AND HARRY BARDWELL
The people imprisoned in a Darwin jail are shown in a unique and completely new light in Australia’s first ever documentary musical.

LEITIS IN WAITING
BY HINALEIMOANA WONG-KALU, DEAN HAMER, JOE WILSON
Tells the story of Tonga’s evolving approach to gender fluidity through a character-driven portrait of the most prominent leiti (transgender) in the Kingdom, Joey Mataele, a devout Catholic from a prominent Tongan family.

TE KUHANE O TE TUPUNA
BY LEONARDO PAKARATI AND PAULA ROSSETTI
A journey from Easter Island to London, in search of the lost Moai Hoa Haka Nanai’a, a statue of significant cultural importance.

CORRIDOR FOUR
BY STEPHEN TRINGALI AND MARIA BISSELL
The story of Isaac Ho’opi’i, a K9 Unit Officer who saved numerous people from the U.S. Pentagon building during the 9/11 terrorist attacks, in the aftermath of tragedy.

LET’S PLAY MUSIC! SLACK KEY WITH CYRIL PAHINUI AND FRIENDS
BY NĀʻĀLEHU ANTHONY
Master slack key musician Cyril Pahinui jams with some of the most revered and talented musicians in Hawaiʻi in intimate kanikapila style backyard performances. Rebroadcast dedicated to the memory of Pahinui, who passed away in November 2018. Also featured are Roland Cazimero, Dennis Kamakahi and Palani Vaughan Jr.
“Born out in the bush, that’s where I belong. Learning all the stories to keep my culture strong. Living by the law living for the land. Not this white man system I’ll never understand. They chuck me in this hole the try to make me climb. I’m not doing nuthin’ but the white man’s time.”
- Sung by Warunkardi

“Now I’ve been tested and suffering come. I cling to the cliff top I’m dangling from. Darkness below me God has a plan. A destiny meant for each woman and man. I know that he moves in mysterious ways. Give me the strength to get through these days.”
- Sung by Bernadine
BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Composer Shellie Morris worked with songwriter/composer Casey Bennetto to create the music featured in Prison Songs. Filmmaker Kelrick Martin encouraged them to forget about being politically correct and to use many styles of music to attract a broad audience and convey the breadth of experiences found in the prison.

They started with the transcripts from the interviews, and selected words and themes from the stories of those in prison. Then they recorded demos of each song for the participant performers. The participants had a chance to rewrite lyrics to suit themselves. This happened particularly in the case of Max and Dale and the song The Middle, which is about how they feel caught between two worlds.

Bennetto describes song as communicating from the heart, and therefore it is a shortcut into the emotional state of the person singing. Imprisonment doesn’t mean human existence stops.

INCARCERATION IN AUSTRALIA

In partnership with Change the Record, a coalition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander human rights and community organizations, Prison Songs is part of a campaign to end the disproportionate rate of Indigenous incarceration in Australia. The following statistics come from the film’s impact campaign. Source

- In the northern territory, 98 percent of juveniles behind bars are Indigenous.
- Aboriginal people represent only three percent of the total population, yet more than 27 percent of Australia’s prison population are Aboriginal.
- Since 2004, Australia’s prison population has increased by 88 percent.
- Aboriginal women represent the fastest-growing prison population in Australia.

“Four o’clock when you hear the sign. Shoulder to shoulder in the master line. Head down low to hide your shame. Speak up once when they call your name. Tickin’ off your calendar doin’ it hard. Never let yourself get caught off-guard. Start off scared and you end up scarred.” - Sung by Max
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Have you seen a documentary about prisons in the past? How did Prison Songs feel similar or different?

- Why do you think the filmmaker chose a docu-musical format to tell the stories of the incarcerated at Berrimah Prison? What effect did the music have on you?

- What stories, songs, or statistics stood out to you? Why did these in particular make an impression?

- Aboriginal people are incarcerated at a much higher rate in Australia. What did you hear the Aboriginal people in the film say about the prison system?

- What other factors contributed to the incarceration stories of the people interviewed?

ACTION

- Take the pledge. Change the Record calls on all levels of government in Australia to invest in early intervention, prevention, and diversion strategies, which address the root causes of violence and imprisonment; and work in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, communities, services, and their representatives, to develop and implement solutions.  
  https://www.changethererecord.org.au/pledge

- Take action with Amnesty International Australia’s Community Is Everything campaign to address the over-incarceration of Indigenous children in the juvenile justice system.  

LINKS

- **Prison Songs Film Page (piccom.org)**

- **Filmmaker website for Prison Songs**

- **Change the Record**

- **Amnesty International Australia’s Community is Everything Campaign**
“As I remember my grandmother was always saying that I have always liked to dress up in women’s clothes. I wasn’t really dressing to impress. I was actually dressing up to tell them a story, to tell them that I’m here to stay.” - Joey Mataele

**EPISODE 802**

**LEITIS IN WAITING**

BY HINALEIMOANA WONG-KALU, DEAN HAMER, JOE WILSON

**PLACE**

Tonga

**THEMES**

Gender fluidity, Trans rights, Discrimination, Christianity, Faith, Belonging

**HASHTAGS**

#PacHB #MyAPALife #StandUp4HumanRights

#TransRightsAreHumanRights

**SYNOPSIS**

**Leitis in Waiting** tells the story of Tonga’s evolving approach to gender fluidity through a character-driven portrait of the most prominent leiti (transgender woman) in the Kingdom, Joey Mataele, a devout Catholic from a prominent Tongan family. Over the course of an eventful year, Joey organizes a beauty pageant, mentors a young leiti who is rejected by her family, and attempts to work with fundamentalist Christians regarding Tonga’s anti-sodomy and cross-dressing laws. Her story reveals what it means to be different in a deeply religious and conservative society, and what it takes to be accepted without giving up who you are.
BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Gender identity refers to a person’s experience of their own gender. Transgender people have a gender identity that is different from the sex that they were assigned at birth. Although often linked, gender identity is different from sexual orientation. Trans people may have any sexual orientation, including heterosexual, homosexual, bisexual and asexual. Source

Tonga is one of seven Pacific nations that criminalize same-sex relations, including Cook Islands, Kiribati, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, and Tuvalu. Source According to Tongan law, cross-dressing can result in a fine or imprisonment, and sodomy carries a penalty of up to 10 years in prison. Source

These laws for the most part are not enforced in Tonga, but they contribute to a culture of non-acceptance that makes it difficult to live and thrive as a leiti. Bullying and abuse are a part of the leitis’ daily reality. Generally speaking, trans discrimination creates barriers in all aspects of life, including healthcare, employment, education, family, religion, and basic protections by the police. Source

This was not always the case. Leitis traditionally occupied a place of esteem within the Tongan royal family since King George Tupou I established the Kingdom of Tonga in 1845. It is the only Pacific Island nation never to lose its indigenous governance or to be colonised and remains the only monarchy in Polynesia. Source

“The Royal Family have always been the custodians of Tongan culture. And as those custodians, they’ve always posited the leiti’s within that broad, that true Tongan culture context which is very accepting, very compassionate, very loving, very supportive.” - Joey Mataele

“Here in Tonga, we’re still finding our way in this modern world with lots of challenges as well as things to learn. We must stand strongly against discrimination against persons like violence and abuse, all kinds of exploitation.” - Cardinal Mafi
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- How is gender regarded in your culture? Are trans people respected and protected under your nation’s laws and customs?

- How has Christianity shaped Tongan attitudes toward the leiti community? Does your religious or spiritual community accept and affirm trans members?

- How does the patronage of Tonga’s Princess Salote Lupepau’u Tuita advance the cause of the leitis?

- What is the significance of the Miss Galaxy Pageant? How does participating in the event affect the leitis?

- How did the leitis create their own sense of belonging and community? Describe a time when you felt a strong sense of belonging.

ACTION

- Find out which Christian denominations worldwide are affirming to the LGBTQI community. GayChurch.org has compiled an unofficial list of denominations to get you started: https://www.gaychurch.org/affirming-denominations/

- If you cannot find a church that accepts trans members, you can choose to connect with the the international online faith community created by QueerTheology, a support network for Queer Christians and straight supporters: https://www.queertheology.com/community/

LINKS

- **Leitis in Waiting Film Page** (piccom.org)
- **Tonga Leitis Association**
- **Pacific Sexual and Gender Diversity Network**
- **National Queer Asian Pacific Islander Alliance (NQAPIA)**

“There were times that I feel I’m not worth it. It’s like I don’t have a sense of belonging. You know it got to the point that I, almost took my life away. When I finally put myself together, I think it made me a stronger person. And then I decided to come and face the world with it. And I promised myself that I will be somebody. And I will never, bend my life to anyone’s policy.” - Joey Mataele
EPISODE 803

TE KUHANE O TE TUPUNA
BY LEONARDO PAKARATI AND PAULA ROSSETTI

PLACE
Rapa Nui, Easter Island

THEMES
Ancestry, History, Culture, Artifacts, Moai, Mana

HASHTAGS
#PacHB #MyAPALife #EasterIsland #Moai

SYNOPSIS

Te Kuhane o te Tupuna (The spirit of the Ancestors) is a journey from Easter Island to London, in search of the lost Moai Hoa Haka Nanai’a, a statue of significant cultural importance. It explores the social and political landscape of the island of Rapa Nui as the people attempt to claim back what is rightfully theirs: their land and a lava-rock image of tremendous presence, representing one of the world’s most extraordinary cosmological views.

“Since our very first encounter with the westerners, hundreds of sacred pieces from the old Rapa Nui, were spread out around the world. We were fooled. The Moai, living faces of our ancestors, are a part of our family and they keep the mana of our ancestors.”

- Leo, son of Mahatua, grandson of Te Hare Kai Mamoe, great grandson of Ure a Potahe, the first to be called Pakarati

“The things the scientists have taken away from here, it’s important they send them back to their origins. Because that mana is here. It’s important for us to teach that to our children, do you understand?” - Aunt Isa
BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Rapa Nui, known by most westerners as Easter Island, lies in the South Pacific Ocean approximately 2,000 miles from the Chilean continent. It is the most remote inhabited island known to seafarers. According to oral histories, Polynesian voyagers landed on the island about 1500 years ago. Source

From the 10th to the 16th century, Rapa Nui people constructed massive shrines in honor of ancestors. Rapa Nui’s coastline is said to have more than 300 Ahu (ceremonial platforms) and 900 Moai (colossal statues). Source

Since the first European landed on the island in 1722, Westerners have been fascinated with the Moai. According to the film, 45,000 pieces have been removed from the island. The Hoa Haka Nanai’a is perhaps the most well known piece. It was said to be taken by a British captain in 1868 as a gift for Queen Victoria. It now resides in the British Museum. Source

Colonization and environmental depletion devastated the Indigenous people of Rapa Nui during the 18th and 19th centuries. When colonizers began arriving to the remote island in 1772, they brought with them disease that killed thousands and set-up farms that fenced off Rapa Nui from their ancestral land. In 1888, Chile annexed the island, yet conditions remained poor. In 1964, Alfonso Rapu led a movement against Chilean military rule prompting its first free elections.
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What is the story you have heard about Easter Island? How were the stories that Leo and others shared in the film similar or different to the story you have heard?

- How would you describe mana after watching the film? Does your culture believe in mana, or something similar by a different name?

- Why is returning the Moai significant for the island’s future? What do the Rapa Nui believe will happen when the mana returns?

- How did it feel to see the artifacts pulled out of the museum collections? What was it like to witness Mikaela, Bene, and Leo seeing the Moai for the first time?

- What did Mikaela’s relationship with Aunt Noe tell you about the Rapa Nui people’s relationship to ancestors?

LINKS

- Te Kuhane o te Tupuna Film Page (piccom.org)
- Filmmaker website for Te Kuhane o te Tupuna
- The British Museum collection page for the Moai Hoa Haka Nanai’a

“Today, the current community is spread, they’re not united, so the mana’s forces are separated. And it’s hard to make that mana, that power unite again. Who has to make that happen? The same natives, with the same sentiment of the past. Unite and focus on the values that our ancestors left us.” - Alfonso Rapu, first major of Rapa Nui
A nationally recognized K9 Unit Officer, Isaac Ho’opi’i is responsible for saving numerous people from the Pentagon during the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. Countless articles were written about his heroism following 9/11. He was photographed by Richard Avedon for a spread in USA Today. He appeared on NBC’s Today Show. And he ran the Olympic Torch on its way to Salt Lake City for the 2002 Winter Olympics.

“We just played for fun, we called it kanikapila, getting together and just having some fun playing music and music is our, how we kind of bond a little bit together.” - Ace Kaleohano

“I know he will always have scars on his heart about what he saw and what he did or what he didn’t do. But I kind of felt it was my job to, to take loads off him and get him back to normal. And part of being normal for Isaac is playing music.” - Gigi Ho’opi’i
“It’s like a pride thing, so you know, when you start thinking that people are going through some psychological challenges, most of them don’t want to say anything because they just don’t want people to think something is wrong with them.” - Sgt. Isaac Ho’opi’i

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

On September 11th, Officer Isaac Ho’opi’i was with his K-9 Vito on duty at the Pentagon when he received the distress call over the radio that a plane had crashed into the building. For the next 36 hours, he pulled people from the burning building, beaconing survivors to safety by calling out; “This way! Come toward my voice!”

For months after that, he and Vito worked double shifts alongside colleagues, sorting through the wreckage. In March 2002, Ho’opi’i was awarded the Congressional Medal of Valor, the highest honor bestowed on law enforcement. Not long after that, his beloved K-9 partner Vito passed away from a stroke. Source

Ho’opi’i, now a Sergeant with the Pentagon police, never sought counseling for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) after 9/11. PTSD occurs in people that have experienced a traumatic event and have prolonged symptoms of jumpiness, flashbacks, trouble sleeping, and negative thoughts that disrupt someone’s ability to live and work.

One study found that close to 13 percent of police officers who responded to 9/11 reported PTSD symptoms over a decade after the attacks. Of those who had PTSD symptoms, 72 percent also reported problems with depression and anxiety. Source Across all law enforcement, more police have died from suicide than have been killed in the line of duty for the past three years straight. Source

A strong support network is an essential element in recovering from PTSD. The film shows Ho’opi’i healing through the love of his family, his native Hawaiian roots, coaching football at the Hawaiian school, and inviting his band over for a kanikapila (jam session) circle to play slack-key songs on the 30-year-old Takamine guitar he was given by his father.
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Had you heard or read news about Ho’opi’i before seeing Corridor Four? If so, what do you remember about his story?
- Is there a stigma around seeking counseling in your culture or context? Has mental healthcare been easily accessible in the places you’ve lived?
- Were you surprised to learn about problems with PTSD and suicide in the law enforcement field? Why or why not?
- How do you think law enforcement could improve on mental health services that they provide officers?
- In what scenes did you witness Ho’opi’i finding joy and relief? How does his Hawaiian culture help him build resiliency?

HELPLINES

- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is available 24/7 in the US by calling 1-800-273-TALK (8255) or chatting online at: https://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/
- COPLINE National Law Enforcement Officers Hotline offers confidential, 24/7 support from retired law enforcement trained mental health crisis response. Call 1-800-267-5463 or visit: http://www.copline.org/

LINKS

- Corridor Four Film Page (piccom.org)
- National Alliance on Mental Illness - Hawai‘i
- Mental Health America - Asian American/Pacific Islander Communities and Mental Health
“I don’t care how many years you study music, there is nothing like Hawaiian music. Hawaiian music is extemporaneous.” - Dennis Kamakahi
BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Cyril Pahinui is one of four sons of the celebrated Hawaiian musician Gabby Pahinui, affectionately known as Pops. The Pahinui brothers have carried on the kī hō'alu (slack-key guitar) style popularized by their father during the Hawaiian cultural renaissance of the 1970s.

The one-of-a-kind sound of slack-key comes from loosening -- “slackening” -- the strings of the guitar to match the tuning of the player’s voice. When Gabby wasn’t playing gigs, he would host a kanikapila (jam session) in the backyard of his home on O‘ahu Island in the rural village of Waimānalo, at the foot of the Ko‘olau Mountains. Friends would gather to play slack-key, steel guitar, ukulele, and other string instruments seen in the film, in an improvisational style. Cyril fell in love with the music listening to his father and friends play together, and he later started the Gabby Pahinui Waimānalo Kanikapila festival in tribute to this early musical influence.

Slack-key tunings were often closely held family secrets passed from one generation to the next. But as slack-key enthusiasm started to fade, Gabby developed a method of memorizing the sound and replicating the tuning in an effort to preserve the music. He passed them on to his sons for safe keeping. Cyril alone played 17 different tunings.

Popular albums featuring Gabby include Gabby Pahinui With The Sons Of Hawai‘i, The Gabby Pahinui Hawaiian Band, Vols. 1 and 2, and Pure Gabby. In 1980, the year Gabby passed away, he won a coveted Nā Hōkū Hanohano Award for his song “Slack Key Medley” off of the Pure Gabby album. Cyril won the same award in 1994 for instrumental of the year off his recording 6 & 12 String Slack Key, and went on to additional Na Hoku and Grammy Award nominations. Source

“I think we all learned from him [Gabby Pahinui], not only me, not only my brothers, but people from all over the world.” - Cyril Pahinui
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Are you a fan of Gabby or Cyril Pahinui’s music? Why is the music significant for you?

- How would you describe the slack-key sound heard in the film? What makes the music uniquely Hawaiian?

- What does the kanikapila teach musicians that other ways of learning music do not?

- What can Hawaiians do to preserve music traditions for generations to come? What can other Pacific Islanders learn from Hawaiians about preserving music traditions?

- Who are the celebrated musicians from your cultural background?

MUSIC FROM THE FILM

**HALE‘IWA HULA**
Lyrics by Jennie Napua Hanaiali‘i, Woodd & John Noble

**WAIMĀNALO**
Composed by Kawika Kahiapo

**‘ULILI E**
Lyrics by George Keahi and Harry Na‘ope

**HOLOHOLO KA‘A**
Lyrics and Music by Clarence Kinney

**HULA ‘O MAKEE**
Lyrics by William S. Ellis

**HE‘EIA (MELE INOA FOR KING KALĀKAUA)**
Music by J. Kalahiki

LINKS

- Let’s Play Music! Slack Key with Cyril Pahinui and Friends Film Page (piccom.org)
- Cyril Pahinui website
- Hawai‘i Magazine’s Essential Gabby playlist
- Gabby Pahinui website
ABOUT US

PACIFIC ISLANDERS IN COMMUNICATIONS

Established in 1991, Pacific Islanders in Communications (PIC) is the only national public media organization that supports media content and its makers to work together to promote a deeper understanding of Pacific Islander history, culture and contemporary issues that define our communities. PIC addresses the need for media content that reflects America’s growing ethnic and cultural diversity by funding independently produced media, and by providing hundreds of hours of innovative media by and about Pacific Islanders to American Public Television including its flagship series Pacific Heartbeat. For more information about Pacific Islanders in Communications and Pacific Heartbeat, visit www.piccom.org

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American Public Television (APT) is the leading syndicator of high-quality, top-rated programming to the nation’s public television stations. APT distributes one-fourth of the top 100 highest-rated public television titles in the U.S. Founded in 1961, among its 250 new program titles per year, APT programs include prominent documentary anthology series such as Pacific Heartbeat and AfroPop, performance, news and current affairs programs, dramas, how-to programs, children’s series, and classic movies -- many of which are considered some of the most popular on public television. For the complete catalog, visit www.APTonline.org

WORLD CHANNEL

The WORLD Channel delivers the best of public television’s nonfiction, news and documentary programming, including original content by and about diverse communities, to U.S. audiences through local public television stations and streaming online at worldchannel.org. WORLD reached 35.8 million unique viewers 18+ last year (55% adults 18-49) and over-indexes in key diversity demographics. Online, the WORLD Channel expands on broadcast topics and fuels dialogue across social media, providing opportunities for broad and diverse audience interaction. For more information about The WORLD Channel, visit worldchannel.org

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NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS

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CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING

The Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), a private, nonprofit corporation created by Congress in 1967, is the steward of the federal government’s investment in public broadcasting. It helps support the operations of nearly 1,500 locally owned and operated public television and radio stations nationwide. CPB is also the largest single source of funding for research, technology, and program development for public radio, television, and related online services.

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