

Tubing on a Canal

Rick was green
in the elm's light,
laughing as he
spun. Beneath us,
long grasses waved
and insects stood
on little dents
in the water;
wasps, their bodies
jacked up, throbbing,
sucked at the edge.
Then we went under.
Stiffened and lay
back. At the grate,
a nail of light
blinded us, cars
crossed over out
bodies. Then, Silence
magnified in the tin
culvert, the dark.
We'd frown hard to see
down our tensed bodies,
or let our heads dip
back; but either way
it was blackness,
blackness—and the cool
half-moon of heaven,
the impossible light.

—Philip White



Royal Hawaiian Quilt, Lily Kama (1907-1990), Laie, Hawaii, 1937. Gift of the artist. For many years, Lily Kama demonstrated quilting at the Polynesian Culture Center in Laie. This is the first quilt she made on her own. Lily learned quilting from her family; her great-grandmother was one of the first native Hawaiian quilters.

By focusing on the symbols of Hawaii's earlier independence, this quilt expresses the longing many native Hawaiians felt for that time. In the center of the quilt is the Royal Hawaiian coat-of-arms. The two round topped sticks are "Kapu" and mean "it is forbidden to touch," an ironic symbol considering the eventual history of the Hawaiian monarchy. Surrounding the coat-of-arms are four Hawaiian flags. The form of the Hawaiian flag is a compromise between Great Britain and the United States, both of whom vied for control of Hawaii in the 1800s. The eight stripes of the flag stand for the eight islands of the Hawaiian archipelago. Courtesy Museum Church History and Art.