

# Gandhi Jayanti in Honolulu Nei

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By Marsha Joyner

Mahatma Gandhi's birthday is a holiday in India. People around the world marked the 145<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi's birth, October 2, 1869.

In Honolulu, Hawai'i at the magnificent bronze Gandhi Statue, across the street from the beautiful white sand beaches of Waikiki at the edge of the Pacific Ocean, The Gandhi International Institute for Peace produced the 9th Annual Celebration of Mahatma Gandhi's birthday and The International Day of Peace & Nonviolence Interfaith Event for World Peace.

The International Day of Non-Violence was established by the 15 June 2007 United Nations General Assembly resolution A/RES/61/271.

The resolution created a mechanism to "... disseminate the message of non-violence, including through education and public awareness" and reaffirms "... the universal relevance of the principle of non-violence" and the desire "...to secure a culture of peace, tolerance, understanding and non-violence."

The Hawaii State 27<sup>th</sup> Legislature also passed a "Resolution Designating October 2 Of Each Year As 'The International Day Of Non-Violence' In Hawaii In Honor Of Mahatma Gandhi On October 2<sup>nd</sup>".

Inasmuch as Gandhi was not the originator of the principle of nonviolence; he was the first to apply it in the political field on a large scale; Gandhi led India to independence and inspired later movements for civil rights and freedom around the world. Across the vast sub-continent of India as well as in Hawaii, people gathered to observe Gandhi Jayanti by offering flowers on Gandhi's pictures and statues, lighting candles and by singing songs and prayers.

In Hawaii, the Gandhi International Institute for Peace included a wide



**The Indian National Anthem sung by from L-R, Marsha Joyner, Saleem Ahmed, Harendra Panalal, Ram Das Lamb, Raj Kumar, Saundarananda Das, Vrindavan Das, Mangala Devi Dasi**

array of ethnic, racial, and spiritual participants in the celebration. Including The American National Anthem, the India National Anthem and Hawaii Pono'i were played by The Royal Hawaiian Band; which is the oldest and only full-time municipal band in the United States. The Band is a department of

the City & County of Honolulu. The Royal Hawaiian Band has been entertaining Honolulu residents and visitors since its inception in 1836 by Kamehameha III.

Guru Jyoti Rout- Ambassador of Odissi Dance -Founder-director of the Berkeley-based 20-year-old college of Indian classical arts in the USA performed the invocation. Odissi Dance was originally developed in Orissa, India, as a form of worship in temples. Many dance pieces retell stories about Krishna and other deities through hand gestures and facial expressions. Jyoti Rout is actively performing throughout the United States, India and internationally.



**Guru Jyoti Rout**

In 1946, after years of struggle Gandhi negotiated with the British Cabinet Mission, which recommended the new constitutional structure and

independence. One year later in 1947, Gandhi was assassinated in Delhi trying to stop the Hindu-Muslim conflict in Bengal.

Therefore, the Gandhi International Institute for Peace orchestrated a dialogue of nonviolence and faith with clergy from Hawaiian, Judaism, Buddhism, Eckankar, Sufi and Hindi. Kahu Kaleo Patterson performed a traditional Hawaiian Blessing, presenting an Indian style six foot garland for Raj Kumar, President of the Gandhi International Institute for Peace to place on the Gandhi Statue.



Hula - Ipo Lavern Cullen



The Gandhi Statue designed & sculpted by Stephen C. Lowe, donated to Honolulu in 1990 by Gandhi National Memorial Fund the Jhamandas Watumull Foundation, is nestled under a Banyan tree, which is native to India and considered holy in several religious traditions of India.

Gandhi's life was an example of simplicity and devotion. Inasmuch as Mahatma Gandhi loved music as well as writing; in fact the New York City Library has 98 volumes written by Gandhi.

The Hawaii celebration was filled with original poetry, songs and dances. "Kindness, the Butterfly Effect" is an original poem of peace written by Jordan Caputy. Original Indian dance choreographed by the beautiful



Willow Ching. “One by One Dance for Universal Peace” the dances of universal peace created by Sufi teacher and Zen master Samuel L. Lewis. The dances set scriptures and sacred phrases from the world's spiritual traditions to music and movement.



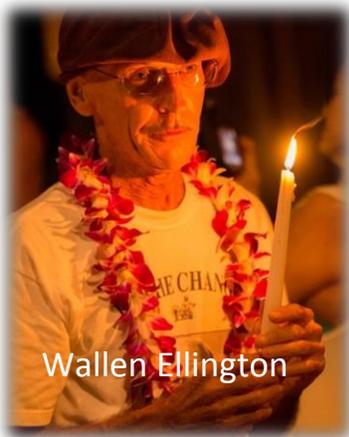
Callie Cayaban, Matt Moore, Ariana Kakugawa

“Sing! For Peace Song” – an original song composed by Adela Chu & Espiritu Libre, a Latin Jazz fusion group from Hawaii, accompanied by the “Sign Language” children from the Moments Unforgettable Performing Academy.

As the sunset behind the white billowing clouds, Kealapono Richardson performed the Meditation for Inner Peace- "It is not by philosophy, religion, science, etc. that we show others the way. It is through the path of each unique individual embracing their own way and sharing the experience. And as water on rocks, this communion inspires each other infinitely closer to peace."

"A thousand candles can be lighted from one candle".

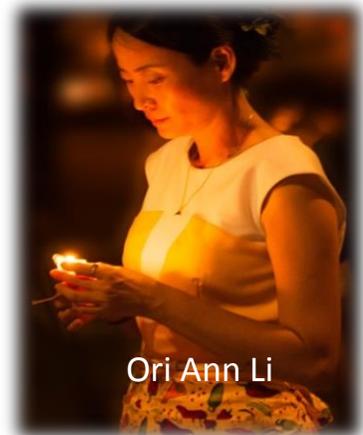
Candlelight Ceremony- The sun had set and Dr. Terry Shintani asked that we make a big circle holding hands. Handing out the candles and asked everyone to say a silent prayer for peace to be symbolized by the candle. The Board of Directors of the Gandhi International Institute for Peace began to light everyone's candle.



Wallen Ellington



Raj Kumar, President



Ori Ann Li