Aural History:
How Music Shaped the Culture of Hawai‘i

Nā Lani ‘Ehā: The Royal Composers
Slack Key, Steel Guitar, ‘Ukulele
Hapa Haole Songs
Plantation Musics
Paniolo Songs
Honolulu Jazz
Hawaiian World Music
Pidgin English Songs
Hawaiian Renaissance Music
Rock ‘n’ Roll
Jawaiian/“Island Music”
The play of oral history, which has to do with our mouth, and aural history, which has to do with our ears, keeps us on our toes (and dancing). Oral/aural cultures in Hawai‘i, whether Native Hawaiian or local or newcomers’, are cultures of story. For humans of all times and the world over, storytelling has always been and remains our most engaging means of communication and connecting to our homes and loved ones. And a good number of these stories are songs.

Music never lies. It is a true expression of who we are as a people and a place. Even in the process of an uneasy exchange or assimilation, something of more ancient songs persists, because singing is not only about the changeable surface of life, but also about what lies beneath. When all is said and done: Aia no i ka mea e mele ana (“Let the singer select the song”), or as Mary Pukui explains, “let him think for himself” and be true to himself.

Nature itself has a voice, a song, a language. In The Living Language, David Abram says, “Every bird, every rock face, every bend in the gushing stream carries the power of speech! Ultimately, it is not we who speak – it’s the earth that speaks through us, and through the countless other styles of existence that buzz, whistle, and howl across the surface.”

How, then, is music related to the humanities? It comes from the very “human-ties” of these stories that connect us to our community, our climate and landscape, and that shape our experience and minds. The ties between poetry, music, and thinking may not be so evident to our modern ears, since it involves listening deeply, and refusing “all cooperation with the heart’s death,” as Mary Oliver concludes in her poem. T.S. Eliot put it like this: “You are the music / while the music lasts” (The Four Quartets). And even when the music stops, the connections defining us persist, the poetry still sings, and the thinking goes on.

We have a natural musical affinity, what neurologist Oliver Sacks calls “musicophilia” (a love of music), adopted from biologist E. O. Wilson’s “biophilia” (a love of life itself). Can we even imagine our life without its essential interpenetration with music, sacred and secular, popular and traditional, ancient and contemporary? Music lies deep in our nature, and our bodies, even if why and how remain a mystery.

Music is fundamental to culture. In Hawai‘i, we can even do a local slur on the theme – “fun, da mental” – for music plays in the mind, is a play of the mind, and plays with the mind. Sacks says that there is the “extraordinary tenacity of musical memory, so that much of what is heard during one’s early years may be ‘engraved’ on the brain for the rest of one’s life.” A mele composed by a kumu hula from yesteryear comes back ever fresh in the latest Merrie Monarch festival. And the red, red robin keeps bob, bob bobbin’ along.


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Hoakalei Kamanu, chanting with ipu in an Aloha Week performance; late 1940s. (DeSoto Brown Collection)
Above: “Daddy” Bray (left) and musicians who performed in the Hawaiian operetta “The Prince of Hawaii” in California; late 1920s. (DeSoto Brown Collection)

Left: Hula dancer with ipu; ca. 1935. (DeSoto Brown Collection)
Aural History: The Many Roots of Music in Hawai‘i

George Tanabe

Of the many ways in which music works its magic, recording history is often overlooked for obvious reasons. First, the lyrics of even the longest songs cannot present enough narrative detail required of the shortest of histories, and secondly, music preserves sentiments better than it logs events.

But once we admit that feelings are facts of history, then music becomes a rich primary source for recovering passions driving events, the narrative accounts of which are too often dry. Fortunately, the distinction we sometimes make between the arts and the humanities is fading in the light of what we know about the intimate connections between feeling and thinking.

In 10th-century Japan, Murasaki Shikibu, the celebrated author of The Tale of Genji, wrote an eloquent defense of art as history. Upon being criticized that writing romantic fiction was a waste of time compared to writing facts, Murasaki’s character responded by saying that there should never be a future time when the feelings of the past might be forgotten.

In our own time, Trisha Yearwood sings of the power of music to freeze a moment and preserve its embedded sentiment: For even if the whole world has forgotten, the song remembers when. We’ve all had the common experience of being transported back into our pasts, individually and collectively, by hearing a piece of music remembering when.

We often dismiss these experiences as mere sentimentalism, as if the pivotal moments of our lives are better left without their feelings, which is another way of abandoning our feel for history. The passage of time has a diminishing effect, and some of us might be forgetful of what we did, for example, in the civil rights movement of the sixties, but it all comes rushing back with We Shall Overcome. Music is aural history remembering when, keeping past feelings from being forgotten.

The panels will combine performers and interpreters playing and speaking to each other as well as the audience, and will take advantage of a unique opportunity to demonstrate that thinking and feeling work best together.

The Buddhist gathas (hymns) tell of an early twentieth-century pietism informed by Christianity and Theravada teachings as much as, if not more than, Japanese Buddhism. Portuguese in origin, emblematic for Hawaiians, and embraced by people all over the world, the ‘ukulele was and still is everybody’s instrument. Japanese-American soldiers in WWII Italy and France played the ‘ukulele, not the shamisen, to sustain their sentiments about the home they fought and died for. They sang the hapa haole Hawaiian songs that Hawai‘i exported widely at the same time it imported swing, jazz, the big bands, and the blues. Rock ‘n’ roll, folk, country and western poured into our minds and hearts, continuing to fix forever the points of our lives to specific times, places, people and events, the stuff we call history.

In the program sponsored by the Hawai‘i Council for the Humanities for the 2012 HBMF, panelists will recall the histories remembered by the various forms of music in Hawai‘i, and will parse the music to identify the diverse strands making up their sources. The panel on the royal composers will elucidate the political and social culture of the Hawaiian monarchy, the historical significance of the lyrics, the Western and native musical traditions that were combined in making music.

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They were the “four heavenly ones,” or Nā Lani ‘Ehā, David La’amea Kalākaua, Lydia Kamaka’eha (later to be named Lili’uokalani after becoming Queen), Princess Miriam Likelike, and the youngest sibling, Prince William Pitt Leleiōhōkāli. They were born of royal parents, their birth father, Caesar Kapa’akea and birth mother, Keohokalole (both descending from chiefly parents), Kamanawa II, Caesar’s birth-father, and ‘Aikanaka, Keohokalole’s birth-father, who in turn are half-brothers (being born of the same birth father, Kepo‘okalani). The two wives of Kepo‘okalani are: ‘Alapa‘iwhaine, who bears Kamanawa II; Caesar’s father and Keohohiwa who gave birth to ‘Aikanaka, Keohokalole’s father. Both Caesar and Keohokalole hence share the same grandfather, Kepo‘okalani, and in turn share the same great-grandfather, Kepo‘okalani’s father, Kame‘eiamoku. He is best known and recognized as one of the twin guardians of Kamehameha the Great, and is embedded best in our present day acknowledgement as the bearer of the kahili on the right flank of the Royal Crest of Hawai‘i.

What you have just experienced is one of the most essential practices of our Hawaiian people, the importance of being knowledgeable of one’s genealogy, or mo‘okāʻauhau. It is upon this comprehensive order of one’s connection in the succession of ancestors that the very principles of the Hawaiian value system are validated, maintained and preserved. An ancient Hawaiian saying, ‘ōlelo no e‘au states, I ulu no lālā I ke kumu — the branches grow because of the trunk, or in other words, without our ancestors we would not be here.

This concept of being totally aware of one’s ancestors and that binding relationship to the past fosters in Hawaiian thought and practice these values: Mālama, the expression of caring and seeking always the favorable welfare of others, Lōkahi, the practice of unity by balancing one’s body, mind, and spirit in relationship to all creation, Aloha, the expression of respect, humility, kindness, and belief in individuals by the expression of love, Pono, the fortitude to abhor intolerance and injustice, seeking balance and fairness as far as one’s strength can last, and lastly, Po‘okela, the commitment to do one’s very best in every aspect of life, the constant striving for perfecction.

There follows here an example of a celebrated composition by one of the “four heavenly ones,” with a brief analysis of the expression of these five values relative to the theme, showing how the poetic expression of the intention is revealed in the text of the composition itself. Our commentary will not dwell on the theoretical analysis of the melodic and harmonic practices of the royal composers. Sufficient to say that Hawaiian music composition at that time was still largely based on “plainsong,” or chant, which did not use polyphony or harmony. Hawaiian musical compositions of that era were solely focused on the poetry, while Western melodic forms were derived from or similar to church hymns, or European marches, or airs performed by Western entities, such as the marches, waltzes, and quadrilles performed by His Majesty’s Band post 1836.

David Kalākaua composed the text for Hawai‘i Pono‘ī, or Hymn for Kamehameha, and the music was provided by Captain Henry Berger, Bandmaster of His Majesty’s Band, later known as the Royal Hawaiian Band. Kalākaua, Secretary of State during the rule of Kapu‘aiwa, King Kamehameha V, heard Henry Berger perform this melody at his first concert in 1872, and in 1874 wrote the text of this ode to Kamehameha, to be inserted in Berger’s melody. It then became the national anthem of the kingdom until 1893, and then later was designated as the anthem for the Territory, which then in 1959 became the Hawai‘i State anthem.

The anthem is clearly faithful to the ancestral connection of King, chiefs, and nation. The call is for the survival of the nation to be dependent
Aaron David Mahi is a conductor, performer, and lecturer on orchestral, choral, and Hawaiian classical music. He has been the Bandmaster of the Royal Hawaiian Band, and holds leadership positions with the Honolulu Symphony Pops Orchestra, the Hawai‘i Ecumenical Chorale, and the Kamehameha Alumni Glee Club. He led the Royal Hawaiian Band in its first concert at Carnegie Hall (1988), and at the Peace Park in Hiroshima (1989). He also featured the Honolulu Symphony’s debut at the Hollywood Bowl with slack-key artists Dennis Kamakahi, George Kuo, and David Kamakahi. Mahi was honored in 2003 with the German Medal of Merit from the Republic of Germany, the Bundesverdienstkruez, for his work in fostering German culture outside of Germany. He is associated with Waihona Mele No‘eau, the selection committee for the Hawaiian Music Hall of Fame, the Honolulu Symphony Society and the Friends of the Royal Hawaiian Band. Mahi performs regularly with slack key artists George Kuo and Martin Pahinui at the Waikiki Beach Marriott Resort and Spa.

Pualani Mossman playing the ‘ukulele at Lalani Hawaiian Village in Waikiki; ca. 1935. (DeSoto Brown Collection)
Except for the ʻūkēkē (mouth bow), string instruments are a relatively recent phenomenon in Hawai‘i. They began arriving around two centuries ago with British naval vessels, which carried fiddlers onboard to provide sailors with a bit of exercise every evening. The popular term for a jam session, kanikapila (sound the fiddle) points us back to that dynamic era when innovation mixed with tradition, both expanding and reaffirming the local music scene.

Along with choral singing (another early 19th Century import), string instruments expanded the roles of melody and harmony in Hawaiian music. They also helped initiate the idea of purely instrumental music, instrumental soloing and leisure dance. String instruments even helped foster the idea that Hawaiian music could be commercial entertainment.

Of course, music is never made in a vacuum, and local musicians adjusted these foreign instruments to their own values and practices. Even today if you listen closely to Hawaiian string music, you can hear alternating low and high pitches from traditional percussion (such as ipu and pahu); syncopated rhythms from hula; chant’s quavering tones and slides and other important elements that keep faith with nā kūpuna (elders).
Guitars were the first widely popular string instruments in Hawai‘i. Sailors probably brought some earlier, but in the 1830s nā paniolo (Mexican cowboys) introduced them to Hawai‘i’s ranches. Alongside standard guitar (tuned E-A-D-G-B-E), a unique local variant called kī hōʻalu, (slack key) evolved as players added many of the traditional elements mentioned above.

The name slack key comes from the practice of loosening strings to form open chords. The most popular tuning is G Major “taro patch” (D-G-D-G-B-D), but there are at least several dozen others. Open tunings make finger picking easier, exaggerate the bass and create sympathetic vibrations that add sweetness.

Kīkā kilia (steel guitar) emerged from slack key in the 1880s. It also uses open tunings and gets its name from the metal bar that slides along the strings. While many cultures use slides, Hawaiian steel maintains a close relationship with Hawaiian singing, especially in the embellishments and heavy vibrato. Many players also incorporate jazz features, such as augmented chords and subtle variations in texture and timing.

Portuguese immigrants introduced the ‘ukulele into Hawaiian music. From the beginning it has served as a bridge instrument appealing to musicians across ethnic and style boundaries. Small and portable with a narrow neck and just four strings, the basic model is easy to play and is perfectly suited for both rhythm and chords. This makes it ideal for accompanying vocals. An instrumental style has also developed encompassing everything from pop and jazz to classical music.

Steel and ‘ukulele went international in the first Hawaiian music craze around World War One. Both caught on across the globe with the ‘ukulele (usually mispronounced!) becoming an icon of the Roaring Twenties. While the “uke” fad soon died out, steel spread its DNA into many musics, from country, blues and gospel to Indian raga.

After World War Two, steel went electric in Hawai‘i. A mellower style emerged, emblematic of the classic Waikīkī sound. You hear much more acoustic steel in bluegrass these days — perhaps because amplified steel better expresses the nahenahe (sweet) feeling Hawaiian musicians love. Still acoustic, though usually plugged into a D.I. (Direct Input), the ‘ukulele remains exceedingly popular in Hawai‘i. Thanks to virtuoso instrumentalists like Jake Shimabukuro and strumming singers, like the late Israel Kamakawiwo‘ole, it is also enjoying another round of global appreciation. Trendy rock stars play it, as do senior citizens, school kids and even concert artists. Performing clubs are springing up in unlikely places, like the mainland and Japan, and unlike places, like Malaysia and Sweden.

Steel is also spreading. Many leading masters, like Ledward Kaapana and Keola Beamer, tour widely and musicians from other genres have gotten involved, like George Winston and Daniel Ho. Its use in The Descendants soundtrack (2011) marks another step in slack key’s diffusion. How this will impact the artists and the art form remains to be seen.

As all manner of electronics get cheaper and more powerful, string instruments may lose ground in Hawai‘i. However, their value to the local sound and its global reach makes them unique and irreplaceable.

J.W. Junker teaches in the Ethnomusicology program of the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa. He also serves as Executive Director of the nonprofit National Organization for Traditional Artists Exchange. Since the early 1980s he has worked closely with many of Hawai‘i’s greatest traditional musicians in a variety of genres. His credits in the music and film industries are numerous. Most recently he served as a co-producer of the latest installment of the Na Mele television series (which he and Stuart Yamane created), the artistic director of the Waimea ‘Ukulele and Slack Key Guitar Institute (which he and Janet Coburn started), a music consultant to The Descendants, and producer for the album Return to the Source with Hindustani slide guitarist Debasish Bhattacharya. “Music: a great hobby,” he says echoing his father’s wise words to him as a youth. “It took me years to fully understand his meaning.”

Left: Keiki hula dancers “Baby” Beamer and Nona Beamer with two musicians at the Volcano House hotel; ca. 1930. (DeSoto Brown Collection)
Rejecting/Reclaiming  
**Hapa Haole Music’s History**  
Aiko Yamashiro

People who grow up in Hawai’i quickly learn the dubious skill of double vision that comes with “living in paradise.” Yes, we understand our home as a magical place of white sandy beaches, lovely hula hands, and little grass shacks. But no, none of us actually live in grass shacks. We spend more time stuck in traffic than singing or dancing. And we hardly go to Waikīkī anymore; too many tourists there.

*Hapa hale* music does not only tell us about our history, it played a crucial role in writing that history, and in writing Hawai’i for outsiders. As scholars and archivists like Elizabeth Tatar, DeSoto Brown, Adria Imada, and others have demonstrated, Hawaiian music was one of the most popular kinds of music in the world during the early twentieth century, and was shared and sold via traveling and local performances, sheet music, and the new technology of radio.

This period of exchange and movement gave birth to *hapa haole* music, a genre that mixed Hawaiian and foreign language and musical styles — jazz, swing, ‘*ukulele*, steel guitar — a kind of sweet and sad music that spoke of fleeting romance under moonlight, beautiful and strange places, arriving and departing.

By the 1930s, not many Americans had ever been to Hawai’i themselves, but thousands of them could sing “On the Beach at Waikīkī” (1915), “Sweet Leilanī” (1934), or “Hawaiian War Chant” (1936); could recognize the weird waver of a steel guitar. This music deeply moved them figuratively and literally. By statehood, when travel to Hawai’i became easier and more affordable, thousands of visitors began to arrive to claim what *hapa hale* music had promised them: an exotic island paradise, a lovely brown maiden, the invitation to possess all this. And this sudden influx of thousands of visitors to Hawai’i has forever changed our home, the way we relate to each other.

Today I hear people of my generation conflicted over the state’s reliance on mass tourism. How can we address very real social problems here when we are so committed to an identity of paradise where, by definition, problems cannot exist?

As paradise puts more of a strain on our everyday lives, it may be growing difficult to sing this song to outsiders. What would it mean if we more often sang and danced this music, defiantly, for each other? If we reclaim the love and longing professed in these songs for ourselves? When we begin to seriously ask each other what it really means to love Hawai’i, then we can also begin to think about what this love might compel us to do for our home.

For those of us trying to imagine a more *pono* and independent future for Hawai’i, we need to be able to critique our musical history as well as listen more closely to what it says not to outsiders, but to us. Then we can remember that *tūtū* Andy Cummings composed “Waikīkī” (1938) in Michigan, while deeply homesick. We can wonder how a song like “Manuela Boy” (1938) might have been a complicated answer to “My Little Grass Shack” (1933). We can be inspired by creative and resourceful artists like *kumu hula* Maiki Aiu Lake, who kept hula alive by weaving together older traditions with newer musical styles. We will be reminded that our parents and grandparents smile when they hear that gentle old tune. I think of the last verse of “Haole Hula” (1928), composed by R. Alex Anderson:

*I love to dance and sing of the charms of Hawai‘i  
And from a joyful heart sing aloha to you  
With every note I’ll tell of the spell of my islands  
For then I know that you’ll be in love with them too.*

Aiko Yamashiro is a PhD student in English at UH Mānoa, with an emphasis in cultural studies. She has researched and published on *hapa haole* music and local identity, and did an MA project looking at the histories passed down to us through the song “Manuela Boy.” She is also Project Director for various community/educational events connected to *The Value of Hawai‘i* (UH Press, 2010), and is constantly learning more about being a part of critical and creative activism. Aiko is co-editor of *Routes Vol. 1* (Kahuamanoa P, 2010), a creative anthology on TheBus in Hawai‘i, and *Vice-Versa*, an online creative journal. She is from Kāne‘ohe, and graduated from Castle High School.
Three hula dancers with pahu; ca. 1955. (DeSoto Brown Collection)
Music is often considered as escape from the everyday — sounds for relaxation and play. This is certainly true for music in the plantations, the shared experience of the major immigrant groups to Hawai‘i. As one old-timer declared, “Plantation people worked hard and played hard.” Music was often part of playing hard.

However it had other dimensions and values: it reinforced ethnic identity and provided (along with foodways) a building block for contemporary, multicultural Hawai‘i. Although the plantation era and its lifestyle have all but disappeared, its heritage still shapes social interaction, informs “local” identity, and inspires constructions of shared memory.

In this short essay I talk about how notions of community, identity and memory are imbedded in music, drawing examples from ethnic groups not otherwise featured in this series.

Music was part and parcel of socializing within the plantations. Old-timers describe weekend dances with Puerto Rican and Filipino bands. The Puerto Rican kachi-kachi bands are still a mainstay of weekend entertainment on Kaua‘i. The same conjunto may play the traditional guaracha “Malditos Besos (Evil Kisses)” and the commercial son tropical “Besame mucho (kiss me again)” in the same evening.

Filipino rondalla string bands were equally versatile. This “Filipino sound” could be heard on the Kona Coast from the Yellow Taxi Rondalla and also from the Tuxedo Band playing for taxi dancers at the Orchid Ballroom on (in)famous Hotel Street. Repertoire included hits like “Stairway to the Stars” as well homeland evergreens, e.g. “Dahil sa Iyo.”

The juxtaposition of homeland and American songs gave rise to a local musical culture aware of the mainstream but not completely overwhelmed by it. The juxtaposition fueled a vibrant local and tourist music industry that embraced jazz, middle of the road pop, country, rock and — more recently — reggae and hip-hop.

In contrast, Okinawan music had little interaction with entertainment musics — a marginalised music within a minority “Japanese” population. Okinawan minyo style differs from Western music, using a single vocal line accompanied by a single instrument (sanshin) with optional percussion. Notably, music is central to the recent Okinawan Renaissance. Third and fourth generation Okinawans are re-accessing Okinawan language, classical dance, and traditional music, while at the same time generating creative fusions with pop and rock as well as contributing to the Okinawan Wave in J-Pop.

Religious music is another hallmark for groups on the plantations. Three very different ethnicities shape their lives around the Catholic Church — the insular Portuguese from Western Europe, the insular Puerto Ricans from the New World, and the insular Filipinos from Asia. United through celebration of the Mass, each group fostered a “signature” musical tradition. For example, the Portuguese celebrated the Festival of the Holy Ghost (Pentecost) with musical processions; the Puerto Ricans with music for the Tres Reyes/Three Kings (Epiphany); the Filipinos caroling during Advent, often with kumbanchero ad hoc instruments and parol paper lanterns on bamboo poles.

Protestant Christian music was central to the original Korean immigrants recruited mostly from newly converted Christian communities in Korea. Koreans found the Protestant hegemony of Native Hawaiian and haole populations included a familiar culture of Wesley hymns and congregational singing. Korean Buddhist musical practice became significant with post-Korean War immigration.

Also related to religious belief is Chinese lion-dancing, a Taoist practice concerning chi. Its gong-and-drum sound — mixed with inevitable firecracker explosions — is distinctive. However in Hawai‘i it is more than religious. It resounds at supermarket openings, airport renovations, and cocktail parties of international conferences as well as during New Year celebrations.

Music is itself history. We can think of history as events that occur in a particular order. Events that occur earlier affect those that follow, giving them meaning. At its most elemental, music as sound is history: each note in a melody is a distinct historical event; the series of notes combine to form musical meaning which we recognize as a melody or tune. This tune in turn can trigger memories of loved ones, of milestones in our lives, or the reassuring comfort of the familiar. However remembered, music creates a lei of moments in our own histories.

For immigrants, music marked personal and collective connections to the plantation and to Hawai‘i nei, a heritage simultaneously shared and inevitably idealized. Musics (in the plural) contribute to the joys of our multicultural present; they animate the challenges of our changing, Island-focused future.

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Paniolo comes from español (“Spanish”) and originally referred to the Mexican cowboys or vaqueros who were brought to the Big Island in the 1830s by Kamehameha III to thin out the wild cattle herds. The vaqueros taught Hawaiians the techniques of riding horses, roping cattle, and other related skills, and the Hawaiian paniolo became a special breed of men. When Ikua Purdy, a young paniolo from Waimea, won the world rodeo championship in Cheyenne, Wyoming, in 1908, he inspired three of the best known paniolo songs: “Waiomina,” “Waimea Cowboy,” and “Hawaiian Cowboy.”

One name stands out among songwriters familiar with paniolo history and customs: Helen Lindsey Parker, wife of the great-grandson of the original Sam Parker, founder of the famed Parker Ranch. Although not a paniolo herself, she was an excellent horsewoman in addition to being a musician and singer with a beautiful voice (she was called “The Lark of Waimea”). It is said she wrote many “stirring cowboy songs honoring the paniolo,” but we know only of “Waiomina.” Some of the other composers, such as Charles E. King, were also not paniolo but knowledgeable about paniolo.

More contemporary paniolo songwriters from the mid-20th century onward includes Marcus Schutte, who was born and raised in Honolulu and then spent several years in Waimea before writing his first paniolo tunes in 1973. The dozen or so songs he wrote cover a range of topics and depart from the traditional Hawaiian idiom to reflect the influence of mainstream country music. His most popular tune was “Paniolo Country.” Although there were critics who said Schutte’s paniolo music sounded more like “western cowboy music” rather than traditional Hawaiian music, it enjoyed popular and commercial success. Melveen Leed’s recording of “Paniolo Country” (recorded in a hapa haole style dubbed “Hawaiian country”) became one of her biggest hits.

Musically, the older paniolo songs tended to be up-tempo and highly rhythmic. Most have sound phrases imitative of a cowboy’s yell, the songs “Kilakila O Haleakala” and “Pili Me ‘Oe” being two examples. Yodeling and falsetto are characteristics of paniolo singers.

The Hawai‘i State Foundation on Culture and Arts offered a perfect introduction to paniolo folk music in its release of Na Mele Paniolo: Songs of Hawaiian Cowboys as a boxed set of cassette tapes in 1987 (reissued on CD in 2004). In 1997, Warner Brothers/Western released Nā Mele O Paniolo: Songs of the Hawaiian Cowboy for national release as the soundtrack album of Hawai‘i filmmaker Edgy Lee’s documentary film about paniolo.

“Flip” McDiarmid and Hula Records gave the paniolo their due in 2006 with the release of a compilation album, Aloha Festivals Hawaiian Falsetto Contest Winners Vol. 7: Na Paniolo Nui O Hawai‘i (The Great Cowboys of Hawai‘i). It was the first falsetto contest winners compilation to have a theme, and a majority of the songs related in some way to the paniolo tradition. None were more traditional than the final song, 1992 contest winner Kalei Bridges’s recording of the early classic “Hawaiian Cowboy.”

Adapted from Hawaiian Music and Musicians by George S. Kanahele, Revised and Updated by John Berger, to be published by Mutual Publishing.
The influence that mainland jazz had on the musicians in early 20th-century Honolulu can reveal some interesting things about the history of Honolulu, its residents, and the manner and pacing in which jazz traveled to Hawai‘i.

An early influence of jazz can be seen in the music of Albert “Sonny” Cunha (1879-1933). Cunha is credited with having developed the *hapa haole* sound in 1900 by mixing elements of American ragtime with songs about Hawai‘i. Ragtime music, a predecessor of jazz, was already in published form as early as the mid-1890s. Cunha may have been exposed to ragtime while he was studying at Yale, where he wrote the school’s “Boola Boola” anthem. New Orleans Dixieland style jazz was already in existence by 1900 and may have also influenced Cunha.

Johnny Noble (1892-1944) was mentored by Cunha and eventually blended jazz and blues elements with Hawaiian songs to produce a newer style of *hapa haole* music. Noble was even known as the “Hawaiian Jazz King.” In 1920, as the leader of the dance band at the Moana Hotel (the first big hotel in Waikīkī) and later at the newly opened Royal Hawaiian Hotel Monarch Room in 1927, Noble was a very influential musician in the islands. Jazz guitarist Bill Tapia (1908-2011) played in the 1927 band and spoke with great reverence of Noble’s musicianship. Tapia went on to lead several bands in Honolulu before going on the road with noted jazz saxophonist/band leader Charlie Barnet in 1936.

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Johnny Noble (1892-1944) was mentored by Cunha and eventually blended jazz and blues elements with Hawaiian songs to produce a newer style of *hapa haole* music. Noble was even known as the “Hawaiian Jazz King.” In 1920, as the leader of the dance band at the Moana Hotel (the first big hotel in Waikīkī) and later at the newly opened Royal Hawaiian Hotel Monarch Room in 1927, Noble was a very influential musician in the islands. Jazz guitarist Bill Tapia (1908-2011) played in the 1927 band and spoke with great reverence of Noble’s musicianship. Tapia went on to lead several bands in Honolulu before going on the road with noted jazz saxophonist/band leader Charlie Barnet in 1936.

*Hapa haole* music was met with some resistance by the more conservative Hawaiian musicians and composers, such as Charles E. King, who considered it a degradation of Hawaiian music. However, *hapa haole* music gradually evolved to include a serious and lyrical side, as in the very beautiful “Waikīkī” by Andy Cummings (written in 1933). This genre can now be regarded as Hawai‘i’s contribution to American pop song literature.

The tourist industry began slowly with the 1901 opening of the Moana Hotel. The success of the commercial ocean liner Malolo in 1927 led to the building of the Mariposa, Monterey, and Lurline by the Matson Navigation Co. between 1930 and 1932, “floating palaces” that brought even more tourists to the islands. When the first commercial jet planes started arriving in Honolulu in the early 1960s, tourism really took off, leading to the hotel construction boom in Waikīkī.

Before the tourist boom, local musicians were actively performing in vaudeville houses, taxi dance halls, strip joints, bars, and night clubs in downtown Honolulu (Chinatown and the surrounding areas). Outside of vaudeville houses, much of the music heard was jazz or popular standards of the day that were improvised. Dance music was regularly played at night clubs like La Hula Rhumba by big bands with names such as the Swing Dragons and the Jazz Diplomats. Of course, at the same time, there was always Hawaiian music. Some of the Hawaiian musicians were quite capable jazz players (Pua Almeida, Randy Oness, and the Kamanu brothers, to name a few), and this reflects the effect that jazz had on island musicians of all stripes.

With the tourist boom, the center of town shifted to Waikīkī. Many hotels provided not only Hawaiian music but also swing music played by dance bands. The Monarch Room still featured dance combos regularly in the ‘60s and through the ‘90s. The bands of this era played “society” and ballroom dance music and were fronted by such leaders as Moxie Whitney, Pierson Thal, and Phil Ingalls. The last big band to regularly play dance music at the Monarch Room was the Del Courtney Orchestra, which specialized in music from the swing era. The Orchestra played the afternoon “tea dance” every Monday for a year or more and was featured on at least one of the hotel’s New Year’s Eve celebrations.

A newer form of jazz has materialized in recent years: “fusion” jazz, which combines elements of jazz with elements of rock and even Latin music. While this and other offshoots of jazz may appear in the future and enjoy a degree of popularity, the allure of the traditional “swing” element in jazz and bebop and the chord progressions and musical quality of jazz standards are so strong that pure jazz will continue to exist indefinitely.

**Byron Yasui** has taught music theory and composition at the University of Hawai‘i since 1972 and retired as Professor Emeritus in 2010. He has been a jazz bassist since 1960 and has performed with a host of jazz legends. He has also served part-time with the Honolulu Symphony from 1983 to 2009 as a double bassist and utility string player (*‘ukulele, guitar, banjo, mandolin, samisen, and 2nd harp*). Since 1998, Yasui has been performing as a concert *‘ukulele soloist and has been featured twice with the Honolulu Symphony. He also serves on the board of directors of the *‘Ukulele Hall of Fame Museum* (since 2005). Yasui has performed as a classical guitar duet partner with the Brazilian virtuoso Carlos Barbosa-Lima since 1987 in recitals at the Honolulu Art Academy, Carnegie Hall’s Weill Recital Hall, and the Royal Festival Hall’s Purcell Room in London.
Roy Sang’s Hawaiianaires; ca. 1955. (DeSoto Brown Collection)
Hawaiian Music as World Music

John Berger

A half-century before ethnomusicologists began using the term “world music” to describe music that was certainly folkloric, generally but not exclusively non-Western, probably not the product of Caucasians who are native-speakers of English, and certainly not the standard mainstream popular music of the United States in the 20th century, the music of Hawai‘i was being embraced, adopted and adapted by people of many races and ethnicities in many parts of the world. Many of them did not know much about Hawai‘i but they loved what they knew of it, and they loved the music.

The dissemination of the music of Hawai‘i – some of it sung in Hawaiian, some of it sung in English – began in the final decade of the 19th century and accelerated thereafter as Hawaiian entertainers went out into the world to perform for commercial audiences. Pioneers such as Frank Ferera and Toots Paka’s Hawaiians performed across the United States in venues ranging from formal exhibitions to the vaudeville stage. In 1912 Hawaiian musicians were playing traditional Hawaiian songs in a Broadway musical, “The Bird of Paradise.”

Hawaiian musicians and their promoters did not stop there. By the mid-1920s Hawaiian musicians were touring Canada, Western Europe, Australia, Japan, the Netherlands East Indies (now Indonesia) and elsewhere. Where they travelled some decided to stay. Frank Ferera, “King Benny” Nawahi, David Nape and Keaumoku Louis are four of the many who lived out their lives on the US mainland. Other Hawai‘i-born musicians settled in Canada, Japan and Indonesia.

The other important factor in the worldwide popularity of Hawaiian and hapa haole music was the development of commercially viable recorded sound – “records” that could be mass-produced and sold at prices the public could afford. The first known commercial recordings of Hawaiian music were made in 1898, and within a few years the major record labels of the day were sending crews and equipment to Hawai‘i as well as recording Hawaiian performers on the US mainland.

The importance of the record in the worldwide popularity of Hawaiian music cannot be overstated. Musicians in other parts of the world – steel guitarists in particular – recalled years after the fact that their early exposure to Hawaiian music was primarily through records. Some self-taught musicians used records as teachers – playing along with them over and over again until they were able to approximate what they heard on the record.

The adoption and adaptation of Hawaiian and hapa haole followed a standard trajectory with people in other parts of the world playing and then recording their own arrangements of the music. Some would play the standard Hawaiian instruments in the standard Hawaiian style. Others included non-standard instruments or incorporated elements of their own culture (Swedish steel guitarist Yngve Stoor was known to “Swedenize” his arrangements). Next came musicians and songwriters creating songs with Hawaiian or “South Seas” themes in their own language. The term “hapa haole song” has traditionally referred to songs with Hawaiian themes and English lyrics, but in the broader context of Hawaiian music world-wide hapa (part-Hawaiian) songs have been written in many other languages – Dutch, French, German, Japanese and Swedish, to name five.

The world impact of Hawaiian music also includes the adoption and adaptation of the musical instruments of Post-Contact Hawai‘i. The steel guitar has become so thoroughly associated with country music that many people outside Hawai‘i think of it first as a “country” instrument. The ‘ukulele will never be known as anything other than a Hawaiian instrument but it too has had a significant, albeit much smaller, role outside Hawaiian and hapa haole music – and provided half the inspiration for the hybrid banjolele.

The adaptation of Hawaiian and hapa haole music outside Hawaii mirrors the evolution of modern Hawaiian music here. Almost all the components of modern Hawaiian music are of haole (non-Hawaiian) origin – Western concepts of harmony and melody, falsetto singing, the guitar, the ‘ukulele and the acoustic “stand up” bass among them – but have been adopted and adapted by Hawaiians in ways that make them now unquestionably Hawaiian.

A precise definition of “world music” is likely to always be elusive, let alone agreement on which parts of Hawai‘i’s music may fit that definition and which parts may not, but the music of Hawai‘i continues to make important contributions to the music of the world.
Ah Sa Ma La You: Pidgin English Songs
George S. Kanahele and John Berger

Pidgin English songs are written in a dialect spoken by various ethnic groups in Hawai‘i, for whom standard English was originally a second language. Although Pidgin English has been a sort of lingua franca since the later 19th century, its use in Hawaiian songs was infrequent through the end of the Territorial Era in 1959. One of the better-known exceptions is “The Pidgin English Hula” or “Ah Sa Ma La You” (“What’s the matter with you?”) composed by Charles E. King in 1934.

Honolulu pretty girl stop
Too muchee guru looking
Number one sweet,
Naughty eyes make oh! oh! oh!
You bet I know you no got chance
‘Nother fella she sweetheart
But today pilikia got
She too much hūhū for him.

The chorus begins with:
Ah sa ma la you last night?
You no come see mama, I tink so....
(From King’s Book of Hawaiian Melodies, 1948)

The syntax is partly Japanese, the phrases “Muchee guru” and “Ah sa ma la” are Japanese and Chinese pronunciations respectively of the English equivalents, and pilikia and hūhū are Hawaiian words which mean “trouble” and “anger” respectively.

Other examples of pidgin songs are “Manuela Boy” (made famous by the comic dancer, Hilo Hattie) and its sequel “Manuela Girl”; “No Hūhū” by Alvin Isaacs; “Number One Day of Christmas” written by Bob Magoon and recorded by Ed Kenney; “Mr. San Cho Lee” with lyrics by Keola Beamer; and Frank DeLima’s “Filipino Christmas Carol.” Kenney’s “Numbah One Day of Christmas” and DeLima’s “Filipino Christmas Carol” both enjoy renewed popularity each year during the Christmas season.

Pidgin songs are usually intended to be humorous or to provide light entertainment, and for many years it seemed that serious songs were not usually written in pidgin. By the first years of the 21st century, however, Hawaiian nationalists were expressing themselves forcefully in pidgin, various versions of African-American English and pseudo-Jamaican patois as well. “I Be Hawaiian,” written and recorded by Mana Kaleilani Caceres in 2007, is a good example of the former.

However, even though there are poems, novels, plays, and now songs as well written in pidgin that deal with very serious themes, its use can still strike many people as funny. Kent Bowman’s “K. K. Ka’umanua” (suggestive of “cow manure”) parodies old-style local politicians, and Kauhi Hill’s alter ego, Bu La’ia, is another good example. Although the early songs such as King’s “Pidgin English Hula” do not reflect the pidgin generally spoken today and therefore lose some humorous impact, certain ethnic stereotypes have remained popular in local comedy. Whatever the final assessment may be, the age of King’s song did not prevent the Makaha Sons from including it on two of their albums, Kuikawa (1996) and Live on the Road (1997).

The active advocacy of local pidgin has contributed to a significant increase in the number of pidgin songs written and recorded since the 1970s, and the overwhelmingly popular response to plays and books written in various styles of pidgin ensures that songs will continue to be written using pidgin phrases and stereotypical ethnic accents of the day.

Adapted from Hawaiian Music and Musicians by George S. Kanahele, Revised and Updated by John Berger, to be published by Mutual Publishing.

George Hu‘eu Sanford Kanahele
(1930-2000) was a Hawaiian cultural expert, historian, author, teacher, consultant, and entrepreneur. He was founder and president of the Hawaiian Music Foundation, which contributed to shaping the “Hawaiian Renaissance.” Newsletters he authored included definitive essays on ancient Hawaiian chants, modern musical instruments and songs which eventually led to the encyclopedic publication of his Hawaiian Music and Musicians. In 2000, just months before his death, he engaged music critic John Berger to collaborate with him on a new edition, which will be published later this year by Mutual Publishing.

John Berger has covered entertainment in Honolulu for 40 years. He has been writing about music, theater and social events of all types for the Honolulu Star-Advertiser (formerly the Honolulu Star-Bulletin) since 1988. In the year 2000, he began working with Dr. George S. Kanahele on a revised and expanded second edition of Hawaiian Music and Musicians, and promised—at Dr. Kanahele’s request—that he would finish the book “no matter what.” That promise has been kept and the second edition of Hawaiian Music and Musicians is being published by Mutual Publishing.
Between the years 1969-1978, the evolution of Hawaiian Music reached its peak and became known as the “Hawaiian Renaissance.” It was a period that brought out new changes in music stylings within the Hawaiian Music genre, which included the traditional style known as “Cha-lang-a-lang” made famous by Genoa Keawe, Slack Key or “Kiho’alu” with the Sons of Hawai’i, and, interestingly enough, a combination of the two styles to create a contemporary hybrid Slack Key Folk/Rock by the group known as the Sunday Manoa. It was the musical stylings of this group that exposed a young, modern, rock-oriented audience to the Hawaiian Music scene because of the driving rhythm and slack key guitar picking of Peter Moon.

Before this hybrid slack key music was brought into the Hawaiian Music mainstream, it was the Sons of Hawai’i with Eddie Kamae on ‘ukulele, Gabby Pahinui on guitar, Joe Marshall on bass, and David “Feet” Rogers on steel guitar, who set the foundation of the start of the evolution.

Music played an important role during the Hawaiian Renaissance. There were many social and cultural issues dealing with Native Hawaiian rights and social injustices. The bombing of Kaho’olawe, Native Hawaiian fishing and gathering rights, the water issues of taro farmers of Waiahole and Waikane, and the Big Island geothermal controversy were some of the most important issues of that time.

These concerns became the inspiration of songs written to reflect the concerns and discontent of those who fought these injustices against Native Hawaiian rights. The Hawaiian Renaissance brought a new-found pride to a younger generation of Native Hawaiians, who were not afraid to protest and bring to the forefront their discontent with the status quo, and found pride in being of Native Aboriginal blood. Hawaiian music set the stage for the effective changes that would come both socially and spiritually.

My involvement in the Hawaiian Renaissance began in 1969, while I was still a sophomore at Kamehameha High School. Being a member of the Concert Glee and the newly formed Hawaiian Ensemble, I had a chance to perform in various Waikīkī showrooms during the summer. This gave me insight into the direction that Hawaiian music was moving into and developing. The period between 1969 and 1971 saw a fascinating transformation of the new Hawaiian music.

It was a time when the cultural aspects of Hawai’i began to come back from a long dormant sleep. It was Winona Beamer who became the teacher that would guide me in the direction of understanding Hawaiian music, chants, and the hula. With her knowledge and expertise, she became the first of many teachers to influence Hawaiian music for a younger generation.

Upon graduating from Kamehameha High School in 1971, I began my study of classical music, composition and orchestration under William Brennan. The years 1971-1973 were the most intense for my music study. Mr. Brennan encouraged me to go back to the roots of Hawaiian music and continue my studies there. With his guidance and confidence in me, I then began to explore Hawaiian chants, Hawaiian music, and Hawaiian poetry long lost.

Through a meeting with Eddie Kamae in late 1973, I began my research of Hawaiian music. It was through Eddie that I met Dr. Mary Kawena Pukui and became a student focused on Hawaiian poetry. My time with Tutu Kawena was the most influential of my life and music career. The Hawaiian Renaissance and its new musical direction resurrected dying arts from the past.

The Role of Music in the Hawaiian Renaissance

Rev. Dennis D.K. Kamakahi

Hawaiian trio photographed at Kapiolani Park; ca. 1920. (DeSoto Brown Collection)

Dennis D.K. Kamakahi, also known as “Grey Wolf,” is a multiple GRAMMY Winner (National Academy of Recording Artists), and multiple Nā Hōkū Hanohano Winner (Hawai‘i Academy of Recording Arts). He is also a recording artist, a 2009 Hawaiian Music Hall of Fame Inductee, a member of SAG, ASCAP, and MTNA (Music Teachers National Association), MENC (The National Association for Music Education), a composer of 700+ songs in both Hawaiian and English, and a Hawaiian slack key guitar master. He was the songwriter for Eddie Kamae & the Sons of Hawai‘i from 1974-1996. His musical contributions to film soundtracks include the 1970’s television series The Little People, Lilo & Stitch II, The Descendants, and several documentaries in Hawai‘i. He is currently doing research regarding the Native Hawaiian and Native American contact along the California, Pacific Northwest, and Alaska Coasts in preparation for a future CD, book, and possible film project.
A Memphis high-school kid, who first sang at his church in Tupelo, Mississippi, heard the tribal beat of “Rhythm & Blues” on his truck radio, and as the mighty river kept on rollin’, tributaries of gospel and rockabilly morphed within the spirit, mind, and body of Elvis Aron Presley, and that’s where it all began: the roots of rock.

The advent of rock ‘n’ roll music on the radio has been tied to the title song from the movie, Rock Around the Clock. From it came Bill Haley & The Comets’ hit single. In 1956, deejay Tom Moffatt played it on KIKI’s Uncle Tom’s Cabin, a “remote” broadcast from a soundproof booth located in a Kaka’ako teenage hangout, The White Top Drive-Inn, where Ward Warehouse is now.

Hawai‘i was special from the get-go. In November 1957, The King appeared in two electric concerts that filled the old Honolulu Stadium. Billed as his “second home,” Hawai‘i was the site of three Elvis movies and a trio of concerts, including the legendary 1973 Aloha from Hawai‘i, the first live global satellite telecast of a rock concert. Presley’s unrivaled showmanship on stage pushed his hits on AM radio and jukeboxes around the land, causing rock to go “viral” for every recording star in his enormous wake.

It’s one thing to push a record by Chuck Berry from East St. Louis on Hollywood Boulevard. Getting it spun in a Waikīkī studio across from what is now the Hawai‘i Convention Center was an incredible feat. A “coffee pot” of a radio station, K-POI was not high priority in the music biz. It was just the biggest fish in this tiny eight-outlet market. And, the Poi Boys, as the station’s deejays were famously known, eagerly awaited each arrival of the record promotion men — and one woman, Skippy Hamamoto (with Columbia Records) — who delivered the records.

When a shipment arrived fresh off those wikīwikī new jet planes, the disc was hustled first to K-POI and, depending on the heat it generated, was instantly spun into the hearts of every “normal” teenage kid in the Territory. A tsunami of Fats Domino, Elvis Presley, Sam Cooke, Little Richard, Buddy Holly, and all who captured the top of the pop charts hit Hawai‘i.

Meanwhile, in the K-POI “big studio,” teen performers such as Ronnie Diamond, Lance Curtis (Dick Jensen) and The Royal Drifters recorded and produced songs guaranteed to be Hawai‘i hits through constant airplay, which propelled them into opening the Show of Stars concerts that packed the Civic Auditorium in the 1950s and 1960s.

In 1959, K-POI Radio became the first fulltime station in Hawai‘i to broadcast rock music in a Top Forty format synthesizing elements from mainland stations. Only Hollywood could top Waikīkī when it came to attracting stars, and virtually every person enshrined in the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame visited the Poi Boys and greeted their local fans. Nonstop rock music on FM was also born and broadcast from the same studios when 1970s AOR (album-oriented rock) hit the air.

The first record from Hawai‘i to become a national hit was written and recorded by Punahou student Robin Luke, whose song (named after her sister), Susie Darlin’ climbed to #5 on the national charts in 1958. Many other keiki o ka ‘aina (Island-born) artists have surfaced since, perhaps none more so than Radford High School’s Bette Midler, whose version of The Rose (though not a rock song) made it to #1 internationally in 1980.

Radio’s influence throughout the mainland and in Hawai‘i has greatly diminished since its heyday. What keeps rock music alive in Hawai‘i now are the frequent appearances of virtually every major headlining performer at Honolulu’s major venues. Several Hawai‘i youngsters have made it to the top tier of American Idol. Most recently, a Roosevelt High School grad now known as Bruno Mars has become a major force on the rock music scene, winning awards and, like hot malasadas, selling millions of records and thrilling concert and YouTube audiences with his performances.

So with Mars orbiting the rock universe while Punahou’s Barry Obama has taken to singing Al Green’s “Still in Love with You,” the state of rock on these rocks keeps rollin’ right along.

Ron Jacobs turned pro as an all-night DJ at Honolulu’s KHON radio station, and in 1957 he learned with Tom Moffatt at the new KHVH station, where the young deejays broke with mainstream traditions by programming a steady stream of rock ‘n’ roll music. In 1959, he moved on to K-POI, where his astonishing success resulted in a story in Newsweek magazine. In 1962, he moved to California, where he created pop radio’s most influential sound in the 60s. As vice-president of Watermark, Inc., Jacobs created American Top 40, which became the most widely syndicated radio program in history, produced the award-winning Elvis Presley Story, and released the 13-album series, Cruisin’: A History of Rock ‘n’ Roll Radio. Jacobs has also promoted Hawaiian artists such as Noellani Cypriano, and has been recognized with many local and national awards. He is the author of Obamaland: Who is Barack Obama?, the #1 best-selling nonfiction book in Hawai‘i this century. On July 29, 2012 at the Paliku Theatre, he will perform a one-man show, What Was I Talking About?
Jawaiian is an extremely popular style of contemporary hapa haole music first created in the 1980s primarily in imitation of the reggae music and Caribbean-English patois of black Jamaicans, and to a lesser extent, of African-American rappers, singers, and “urban” vocal groups of the mainland United States. The term “Island music” has been adopted as a euphemism and/or replacement term by those who deemphasized its Jamaican and Rastafari roots.

The first notable examples of this new type of hapa haole music incorporated the distinctive reggae rhythm in fresh contexts: Billy Kaui’s “Mr. Reggae” in 1977; Henry Kapono’s solo debut hit, “Stand in the Light,” in 1981; Brother Noland’s brilliant “Coconut Girl” in 1983; and Gordon Broad’s “Sweet Lady of Waiahole” (recorded by 3 Scoops of Aloha) in 1985. Although these songs utilized a new haole (non-Hawaiian) rhythm, they were Hawaiian or hapa haole in their perspective, presentation and lyrics.

When the Peter Moon Band recorded “Guava Jelly” (1982), originally a hit by international reggae legend Bob Marley, Moon rearranged it as a contemporary Hawaiian song and did not attempt to make the band sound Jamaican. The reggae-beat releases of Henry Kapono and Brother Noland were not only popular hits on radio, but have become contemporary standards.

Kapena and Simplisity, the latter a veteran local bar band, were also among the pioneers. One of Kapena’s early hits was a stripped-down remake of the English reggae band UB40’s remake of Neil Diamond’s “Red Red Wine.” Simplisity appears to have been the first to perform an early Jawaiian political medley that combined “Waiting in Vain,” yet another Marley classic, with “Hawaiian Lands,” a song that called on Native Hawaiians to “keep Hawaiian lands in Hawaiian hands.”

When Bruddah Waltah & Island Afternoon recorded “Tiny Bubbles” with a basic reggae beat on his debut album Hawaiian Reggae in 1990, it was something of an original idea. The album received a Nā Hōkū Hanohano Award as Contemporary Album of the Year in the spring of 1991. The success of the album inspired a generation of young local musicians to use it as a template for their own efforts. Jawaiian, that is, Jamaican Hawaiian music, got an additional boost when KCCN/FM 100 adopted an “island music” format on May 14, 1990.

A backlash, however, became evident in the middle of 1991. Car bumper stickers appeared with the word “Jawaiian” crossed out. Some critics worried that Jawaiian was pushing Hawaiian music into the background. Others decried the ever-greater emphasis on remakes. Reggae purists felt that the “kanakafarians” were ripping off the music of Afro-Caribbean artists. They felt that local artists should create music from their own culture instead of plagiarizing Jamaica. Despite these criticisms, Jawaiian/Island Music still has its supporters, and is a part of the repertoire of performers like Sean Na‘auao, O-Shen, Fiji, the duo B.E.T. (Big Every Time), and other artists.

The history of Hawaiian music since 1778 shows that almost everything that is now considered Hawaiian was originally haole (non-Hawaiian). We must assume then that music using some form of Jamaican/reggae rhythms will eventually be accepted as “Hawaiian” as well, if it hasn’t been already. Jawaiian/Island Music is unquestionably a major presence in the Hawaiian music industry.

Adapted from Hawaiian Music and Musicians by George S. Kanahele, Revised and Updated by John Berger, to be published by Mutual Publishing.

Left: Hawaiian musician; ca. 1955. (DeSoto Brown Collection)
Gabe Baltazar was born in Hilo and raised in Kalihi-Palama. He is one of the most influential jazz musicians of Hawai‘i, having risen to national and international acclaim as the lead alto saxophonist for the Stan Kenton Orchestra from 1960 to 1963, when the group recorded over a dozen albums and won two Grammy Awards. In the following years, Gabe worked as a valued studio musician in Los Angeles, recording with Dizzy Gillespie, Ray Charles, and Oliver Nelson, among others. Gabe returned in 1969 to work as assistant director for the Royal Hawaiian Band, a post he held for seventeen years. Since his return to the islands, he has fulfilled the role of Hawai‘i’s premier jazz artist, recording many albums as leader and sideman. At 82, Gabe remains active in jazz education and still performs occasional gigs. His autobiography, *If It Swings, It’s Music*, will be released shortly from University of Hawai‘i Press.

John Berger (see essays, *Songs from Paniolo Country, Hawaii Music as World Music, Ah Sa Ma La You: Pidgin English Songs, Hawaiian*"Island Music")

Jerry Brocklehurst, a life-long musician, composer, recording engineer, and Nā Hōkū Hanohano-nominated producer, is president of the Kaua‘i Music Festival Songwriter Conference, now in its tenth year. He earned his BSEE from Purdue University, went on to a successful high tech career in California, and now lives full-time on Kaua‘i since 2005. Jerry has orchestrated and judged songwriting contests and workshops for years, helping songwriters of all ages to find resources to better their craft. Jerry is executive director for Leadership Kaua‘i, president of Jerry Brocklehurst Productions, a member of HARA and NARAS, and a guest lecturer for songwriting classes at UH Mānoa.

Benny Chong is a founding member of the Ali‘is, a group that rose to international fame in the 1960s along with Don Ho. With a love for local music, jazz and pop, he has played ‘ukulele since childhood, finding his main inspiration in the jazz stylings of California bassist turned ‘ukulele player Lyle Ritz. Benny has developed an exciting and influential style of his own, full of interesting chord inversions and fluid improvisations. Benny has taken jazz ‘uke playing to a new level that will be very difficult to surpass because of his challenging repertoire and the complexity of his left and right hand techniques that no one before him or currently has ever mastered or even thought about. His harmonic, melodic and rhythmic sense is on a par with the very best jazz musicians in the world.

Ron Jacobs (see essay, *Rock and Roll in Hawai‘i*)

Jeff Junker (see essay, *Strumming Through History: String Instruments in Hawai‘i*)

Eddie Kamae was born in 1927 and has spent his entire life in the Hawaiian Islands. Through the years he distinguished himself as a singer, musician, composer, a documentary director, and author. He has been a key figure in the Hawaiian cultural renaissance, which found one its earliest and strongest voices in the Sons of Hawai‘i. This charismatic band, was formed in 1959 by Kamae — already famous as a ‘ukulele virtuoso — and the legendary singer and slack-key guitar master, Gabby Pahinui. The band became known for its authenticity of feeling and music. Many of their songs were the result of Kamae’s research into the archives of long-neglected Hawaiian melodies and lyrics.

Casey Kamaka is a third generation ‘ukulele maker from the Kamaka Ohana. Growing up around the shop with his father Sam Kamaka Jr., he has been around ‘ukulele-making his entire life. He was taught the craft by his father and learned the work ethic and ingenuity that his grandfather Sam Kamaka Sr. and his father

### The Panelists

Alan Akaka received his BEd in music and MEd in administration. Alan had a long stint at the Halekulani and Waikiki Beach Marriott and Spa, and taught at Kahuku High & Intermediate, University Lab School and the Kamehameha Schools. He was president of the Hawaiian Steel Guitar Association. He established the Na ‘Opiopio Singers and Ensemble program at the Kamehameha Middle School, and is a master traditional artist in the Folk Arts Apprenticeship Program of the Hawai‘i State Foundation on Culture and the Arts. Akaka made numerous appearances on television and radio as well as on Japan Airlines’ in-flight program. Akaka has been featured in local and mainland publications, and was invited in 2000 to perform in Washington D.C. for President Clinton, and later at the Kennedy Center. In 2009 Akaka established Ke Kula Mele Hawai‘i o Akaka, a school for nurturing Hawai‘i’s rich musical heritage, and for developing creative and musical ideas.

Henry Allen has spent a lifetime as a master artist-teacher, musician, composer, recording artist, producer and music educator, and has been appointed by the Mayor of Maui as Maui’s Commissioner for Culture and the Arts. He has travelled widely promoting Hawai‘i, and has taught at the University of Hawai‘i and public schools. At home in both worlds of Hawaiian music and jazz, Henry has been recognized as a top jazz guitarist from Hawai‘i. He has received awards from the Hawai‘i State Foundation on Culture and the Arts, the Hawai‘i Academy of Recording Artists, and the Governor of Hawai‘i. Henry has published several books (one forthcoming from Mutual Publishing), and has released ten CDs along with a new set of 82 songs. His own 4th Annual Henry Kaleialoha Allen Hawaiian Steel Guitar Festival was held in April for the preservation and perpetuation of the only true Hawaiian stringed instrument. Henry has intimate knowledge of music and performers in Hawai‘i from the 1930s till today.

Carlos Andrade is Associate Professor at the Kamakakūokalani Center for Hawaiian Studies and is currently serving as Director of the Center. Dr. Andrade returned to the university at age 43 to earn a B.A. in Hawaiian Studies at Hilo (1989), an M.Ed. in Educational Counseling (1993) and finally a doctorate in Geography at Mānoa (2001). He is a father of three, grandfather of six, lived as a submarine fisherman and farmer, worked as a musician and professional boat captain before returning to school. A crewmember aboard Hōkūle‘a on journeys from Aotearoa to Tonga and Samoa (1985), and from Rarotonga to Tahiti and home to Hawai‘i (1993), he now teaches courses about Hawaiian perspectives in geography, resource management, traditional Hawaiian relationships with the ‘āina, as well as teaching classes in non-instrument navigation as practiced by the Polynesian Voyaging Society, Hawaiian astronomy, meteorology, and Oceanic canoe design. He is the author of *Haena: Through the Eyes of Ancestors*.
He is author of \textit{aspora}, as well as issues related to 20th century Western music. Hawai’i, and has published widely on traditional Chinese music, search in the PRC, Thailand, Singapore, Continental US, and Western, and Asian music. He has conducted ethnographic re-

d Frederick Lau is an ethnomusicologist interested in Chinese, Western, and Asian music. He has conducted ethnographic re-
search in the PRC, Thailand, Singapore, Continental US, and Hawai’i, and has published widely on traditional Chinese music, music and politics, music and nationalism, Chinese music in the di- aspora, as well as issues related to 20th century Western music. He is author of \textit{Music in China} (Oxford University Press 2008) and co-editor of \textit{Locating East Asia in Western Art Music} (Wesleyan University Press 2004) and \textit{Vocal Music and Cultural Identity in Contemporary Music: Unlimited Voices in East Asia and the West} (Routledge 2012). His articles have been published in academic journals and as book chapters. His current research deals with musical hybridity and Chineseness in music. Lau is director of the Center for Chinese Studies and Professor of Music (ethnomusicology) at the University of Hawai’i at Mānoa.

\textbf{Dennis Kamakahi} (see essay, \textit{The Role of Music in the Hawaiian Renaissance})

\textbf{Ed Kanoi} was born and raised on Oahu, although a few years were spent on the mainland as a military brat. His father was a saxo-

\textbf{Richard Kennedy} was raised in Berkeley, California and earned a PhD in South and Southeast Asian Studies at the University of California, Berkeley. He was given an honorary Doctorate from Connecticut College in 2007. From 1988 to 2009 he was a cura-
tor at the Smithsonian Institution’s Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage where he also served as deputy director and finally as acting director. At the Center he co-curated Smithsonian Folklife Festival programs on Hawai‘i, Indonesia, Thailand, Philippinnes, Russian Music, Tibetan Culture, the Silk Road, Oman, the Mekong River region and Bhutan. Before working at the Smithsonian Kennedy was Assistant Director of the National Council for the Traditional Arts. For 12 years during his career in Washington D.C. he was chair of South Asian Area Studies at the U.S. State Department’s Foreign Service Institute. Richard retired to Honolulu where he volunteers and serves on the boards of a variety of local organizations.

\textbf{Faye Komagata} was born in Hawai‘i and was raised in Hawai‘i and Los Angeles. She attended and taught at the Zenshuji Betsuin Sunday School (Los Angeles), and also served as an officer of the Southern California Buddhist Federation. She is now the President of Hawai‘i Jizoku-kai, the board of advisors to the United Hawai‘i Soto Shu Women’s Association, of which she has been a member for 31 years. Her background experience includes being a graduate of UCLA Oriental Languages and Studies, Researcher for UH Ethnic Studies Oral History program, and a translator for the Governor’s Office of the State of Hawai‘i. She is also an instructor in Kumon, Baika and Taiko.

\textbf{Aaron Mahi} (see essay, \textit{The Royal Composers})

\textbf{Kenneth Makuakāne} is a prolific songwriter, producer, and recording artist whose compositions have been recorded by the Brothers Cazimero, Na Leo, Kapena, The Pandanus Club, Amy Hanaiali‘i Giliom, as well as international artists and others. As an innovative and award-winning producer, Makuakāne has worked with Hapa, Na Leo, Amy Hanaiali‘i Giliom, Raiatea Helm, Obrian Eselu, Jeff Rasmussen and many others. He produced a track on Kenny Loggins’ “More Songs From Pooh Corner,” and his music was on the soundtracks of “Honeymoon In Las Vegas” and “Parent Trap In Paradise.” Makuakāne’s songs are performance standards at the annual Merrie Monarch Hula Festival, and he is a 12-time Hi ‘Iiku Hanohano Award winner (Hawaiian equivalent of the Grammy Awards). Born on the Big Island, he is a resident of ‘O’ahu.

\textbf{Puakea Nogelmeier} is Professor of Hawaiian Language at the University of Hawai‘i where he has taught for over 25 years. He works extensively with the archives of Hawaiian writings and is ac-
tive in rearticulating historical Hawaiian knowledge into various fields of study. Trained in traditional Hawaiian dance, chant and lit-
erature, he mentors many young scholars and artists today.

\textbf{Francis Okano} has been involved with Hongwanji music for most of his adult life as organist and choir accompanist. He has served on the Honpa Hongwanji Music Committee for over thirty years, the past eighteen as chairman. Now retired from thirty-five years as a statistician with the State of Hawai‘i, the last eight as head of the Tax Research and Planning Office, Hawai‘i Tax Department, he devotes time to piano self-study and accompanying. He at-
tended Pearl City Elementary and Intermediate Schools, Iolani School, Yale University (BA, philosophy), and the University of Hawai‘i (MBA, business statistics).

\textbf{Jonathan K. Osorio}, Ph.D., is Professor of Hawaiian Studies at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa, a historian of the Hawaiian Kingdom, and a practicing musician and composer. He has been an advocate for the restoration of Hawai‘i’s political independence, and writes about the sovereignty movement in Hawai‘i. He and his wife Mary live in Pālolo, and have sent all of their children to public schools and Kamehameha High School.

\textbf{Aunty Noelani Mahoe} is the founder and leader of the Nahenahe Singers, which includes Mona Teves, Ethelynne Teves, and Lynette Paglinawan. Noelani, a fluent Hawaiian speaker, founded the Waimanaloi Keiki Chorus, coordinated the first Hawaiian Music Conference in 1971 and compiled with Samuel Elbert the classic “Na Mele O Hawai‘i Nei, 101 Hawaiian Songs,” Noelani Mahoe and Leo Nahenahe have been playing music together for more than 40 years, and have performed for the Queen of England, the Crown Prince of Japan, the Maharajah of Mysore and toured the world. They’ve recorded four albums, including their “Hawaiian Christmas” standard.

\textbf{Puakea Nogelmeier} is Professor of Hawaiian Language at the University of Hawai‘i where he has taught for over 25 years. He works extensively with the archives of Hawaiian writings and is ac-
tive in rearticulating historical Hawaiian knowledge into various fields of study. Trained in traditional Hawaiian dance, chant and lit-
erature, he mentors many young scholars and artists today.
Jeff Peterson, a multiple Grammy Award and Nā Hōkū Hanohano Award winner, was born on Maui and grew up on the Haleakala Ranch, where he was introduced to the rich heritage of Hawaiian music by his father, a paniolo, or Hawaiian cowboy. As a performer, Jeff has had the honor of working with a wide range of artists and groups in the fields of Hawaiian, classical, and jazz music. He has released five solo guitar recordings featuring his slack key artistry. Wayne Harada from the Honolulu Advertiser has written that “his manner is impeccable, his style exquisite: the CD is perfection.” He recently appeared on the NPR program, A Prairie Home Companion, and had the honor of performing for the Dalai Lama. At the 47th Annual Grammy Awards in 2005, “Slack Key Guitar Volume 2” featuring Jeff and other island artists won the first ever Grammy Award for Best Hawaiian Recording. Five of his songs were featured in the film, The Descendants.

Aaron J. Salā, a Nā Hōkū Hanohano award-winner, is an uncommon recording artist. Accomplished as a vocalist, pianist, composer, arranger, conductor, producer, adjudicator, and music scholar, Aaron is the consummate musician. With two CDs to his credit, he has performed around the world including such venues as New York’s Carnegie Hall, London’s Wembley Arena, Austria’s Wiltten Basilica, Tokyo’s Bunkamura Hall, and of course, Honolulu’s Hawai‘i Theatre. He is well-known for his work with such recording artists as Natalie Ai Kamauu, Nāpua Makua, Weldon Kekauoha, Raiaetea Helm, and Nā Palapalai. Aaron brings his experiences to the academic institution as an Assistant Professor in Hawaiian Music at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa, where he is concurrently working to finish a PhD in Ethnomusicology. The Mānoa position represents the University’s first concentrated effort to build Hawaiian music programming as a field of academic study.

James Kimo Stone was born in Honolulu and grew up in the rural communities of Hilo, Hawai‘i and Maunawili, Oahu. After graduating from Kamehameha Schools, he received his A.A. degree in Liberal Arts from Windward Community College, a B.A. in Political Science from UH Mānoa, and a J.D from the William S. Richardson School of Law at UH Mānoa. He trained in hula under Winona Kapualihiamonokalanilani Beamer and Henry Moikeha Pa. He is a bassist with Ku’uipo Kumukahi, Hapa Folk, and the Hawaiian Music Hall of Fame Serenaders. He was legal counsel to the Hawai’i Academy of Recording Artists (2007-2008), and is currently President of the Hawaiian Music Hall of Fame. His wife Benedyne works for the State of Hawai‘i and they have two children, daughter Kapomaika‘i and son, James III. He currently lives in Kailua.

George Tanabe (see essay, Aural History: The Roots of Music in Hawai‘i)

Catherine Toth was born and raised on Oahu, and has worked as a newspaper reporter in Hawai‘i for 10 years and continues to freelance — in between teaching journalism full-time at Kapiolani Community College, hitting the surf, hiking with her two dogs and eating everything in sight — for national and local print and online publications.

Ricardo Trimillos (see essay, Immigrant Musics and their Plantation Heritage)

Benny Uyetake, guitarist, ‘ukulele player, and songwriter, was born and raised in Hilo. He first picked up the ‘ukulele at the age of eight. His dad played the ‘ukulele, and Jesse Kalima was an early musical influence. At the age of 10, Benny began to take ‘ukulele lessons from entertainer and songwriter Al Nalei, and was also influenced by Edith Kanaka‘ole and George Naope in the Hilo Parks and Recreation Summer program. Benny received a B.A. degree in the Humanities. He continued to study music at the Cornish School of Music in Seattle, and the Berklee College of Music in Boston. Benny is a public school teacher at Kalama Intermediate School in Makawao, Maui, where he is the ‘ukulele master for the school’s ‘ukulele program. His primary goal is to teach, coach and inspire his students to enrich their lives through stage performances, and to be creative through playing music.

Aiko Yamashiro (see essay, Rejecting/Reclaiming Hapa Haole Music’s History)

Byron Yasui (see essay, Jazz in Honolulu)
# Aural History:
How Music Shaped The Culture Of Hawai‘i

Hawai‘i Council for the Humanities Pavilion

## SATURDAY MAY 5

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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Performers</th>
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<tr>
<td>10 A.M.</td>
<td><strong>We Go Jam!</strong></td>
<td>Carlos Andrade, Aunty Noelani Mahoe, Puakea Nogelmeier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 A.M.</td>
<td><strong>Buddhist</strong></td>
<td>George Tanabe, Francis Okano, Faye Komagata and Soto Mission Baika-Ko</td>
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<tr>
<td>NOON</td>
<td><strong>Hawaiian Renaissance</strong></td>
<td>Dennis Kamakahi, Jonathan K. Osorio, Kimo Stone</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 P.M.</td>
<td><strong>Ethnic Music</strong></td>
<td>Frederick Lau, Richard Kennedy, Ricardo Trimillos</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 P.M.</td>
<td><strong>Steel Guitar</strong></td>
<td>Alan Akaka, Henry Allen</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 P.M.</td>
<td><strong>Hawaiian Renaissance Now</strong></td>
<td>John Berger, Jay Junker, Jeff Peterson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 P.M.</td>
<td><strong>Waikiki Showroom Music</strong></td>
<td>Alan Akaka, Henry Allen</td>
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</table>

## SUNDAY MAY 6

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<tr>
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<td>Catherine Toth, Aaron Sala, Aiko Yamashiro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 A.M.</td>
<td><strong>The Royal Composers</strong></td>
<td>Aaron Mahi, Eddie Kamae</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOON</td>
<td><strong>Himeni &amp; Choral Music</strong></td>
<td>Aaron Sala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 P.M.</td>
<td><strong>Rock ‘n’ Roll</strong></td>
<td>John Berger, Ron Jacobs, Ed Kano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 P.M.</td>
<td><strong>Jazz</strong></td>
<td>Gabe Baltazar, Benny Chong, Byron Yasui</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 P.M.</td>
<td><strong>The Future</strong></td>
<td>John Berger, Jerry Brocklehurst, Kenneth Makuakâne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 P.M.</td>
<td><strong>‘Ukulele</strong></td>
<td>Casey Kamaka, Aunty Noelani Mahoe, Benny Uyetake, Byron Yasui</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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