

PRAISE FOR KALANI PE'A



Kalani Pe'a and band perform at Lincoln Center's American Songbook with guest hula dancers

Kalani Pe'a notes in Honolulu Magazine, "From a Hawaiian perspective, we don't believe in just Kūlia I ka Nu'u, striving for the highest mountain and you get to the top and that's the end. We continue to soar and continue to climb. In Hawaiian, we call it 'akahi a ho'omaka, the beginning of every journey. We don't believe there's a start and finish line, like a marathon. This is just the start for me, even though I've been singing for nearly 30 years."

"The praise has been mounting for this gifted, passionate artist, who is fluent in Hawaiian" --
Jon Woodhouse, Maui News Scene

"Gifted with a gorgeous voice and a flair for composing resonant Hawaiian songs, his debut album established him as a major, innovative figure in contemporary Hawaiian music." -- *Maui News*

"It is vital that Native Hawaiian culture and the arts be perpetuated for future generations: Kalani Pe'a is a touchbearer and we recognize his accolades, accomplishments, and continued work on behalf of Native Hawaiians."-- *Hawai'i State House of Representatives official proclamation, 2017*

"For this acceptance speech he spoke completely in Hawaiian acknowledging his people, his lāhui Hawai'i. He was effusive in his praise of the culture and in encouraging Hawaiians to believe that they can be whatever they want to be." - *Hawaiian Airlines Hana Hou Magazine*

"Kalani Pe'a is in a category virtually all his own. He has the pipes and energetic stage presence of Broadway favorite, Bette Midler." -- *Hawai'i Magazine*

Kalani Pe'a's new album delivers depth, style

John Berger, The Honolulu Star-Advertiser

Jun. 27—"Kau Ka Pe 'a "

Kalani Pe 'a Pe 'a Records & Entertainment Kalani Pe 'a holds an important place in the history of Hawaiian music. In 2017 he became the first Hawaii-resident artist to receive a Grammy Award after the award for Hawaiian music was eliminated in 2011. Two years later he won the best regional roots category for a second time. Pe 'a's third album lives up to the high expectations set by his first two. It displays the depth and breadth of his talent as a vocalist and songwriter in vivid style.

Pe 'a, who is Native Hawaiian, opens with "Kulaiwi, " a modern Hawaiian standard, and closes with "Bring Him Home, " the Broadway megahit from "Les Miserables." In between those bookends are two other English-language remakes, five Hawaiian originals Pe 'a wrote or co-wrote and a newly-written gem by kumu hula Frank Kawaikapuokalani Hewett.

Amy Hanaiali 'i joins Pe 'a on a bilingual remake of "When I Fall in Love, " the pop standard that was first a hit for Doris Day in 1952. With newly written Hawaiian lyrics added the song becomes "When I Fall in Love (E Mau Ke Aloha E)." Hanaiali 'i and Pe 'a do a beautiful job conveying the emotional interplay within the lyrics.

Kalenaku De Lima, Ikaika Blackburn, the Pandanus Club (Kenneth Makuakane, Roddy Lopez and Alden Kai 'aokamalie) and Kimie Miner join in elsewhere.

Pe 'a honors the musical legacy of Loyal Garner with a straightforward arrangement of her musical signature, "Ha 'a Hula, " the song sometimes known as "Shall We Dance." His originals pay homage to Kamehameha III and Queen Kalama, Kalakaua, Kamehameha the Great, the goddesses Poli 'ahu and Lilinoe, his parents and kupuna, and his husband and business partner, Allan B. Cool.

T. Ilihia Gionson's annotation goes well beyond the basics required in any credible Hawaiian album. The basics—Hawaiian lyrics, English translations, composer and production credits—are all there, of course. The additional information deepens the listening experience.

For instance, the opening song, "Kulaiwi, " isn't there only as a statement of modern cultural pride. It's a song Pe 'a learned as a Hawaiian immersion school student. "Bring Him Home " isn't there only to demonstrate the breadth of his musical horizons and his range as a vocalist. It is also the song he sang successfully in a college singing competition.

Gionson's annotations reveal other things that would not be apparent even for listeners fluent in the Hawaiian language. Pe 'a shares more information about the theme and concept of the album with a liner-notes essay.

His "Kau Ka Pe 'a " is another musical milestone in contemporary Hawaiian music.

For more, visit kalanipeamusic.com.

The Maui News

Maui-based singer-songwriter Kalani Pe'a wins 3rd Grammy

Pe'a performs at Premiere Ceremony, proud to celebrate Hawaiian culture 'on a global platform'



Just before walking down the red carpet at the MGM Grand Garden Arena in Las Vegas and accepting his third Grammy Award, Maui-based singer-songwriter Kalani Pe'a said he's "*so grateful*" to represent the islands through his album "*Kau Ka Pe'a*."

While wearing a coat that honored the last reigning Hawaiian king, David Kalakaua, Pe'a on Sunday won the award for Best Regional Roots Music Album at the 64th annual Grammy Awards show.

“I’m so grateful to carry the torch of my kupuna and my makua, my mom and dad, and grandparents, my ancestors, and forefathers who continue to advocate for the perpetuation of Hawaiian language, culture, genealogy, storytelling and everything that defines and describes who we are as people of Hawaii,” he said via phone from Las Vegas. “I get to share it through music and I get to do it on a global platform — that matters to me.”

Pe’a, the only Hawaiian artist to have topped the category since it was created in 2012, had previously won Best Regional Roots Album in 2017 with his debut album *“E Walea”* and with his second album *“No ‘Ane’i”* in 2019.

After being in separate categories for several years, Hawaiian, zydeco, Cajun and Native American musical nominations were combined for the 2012 Grammys. Cajun and zydeco artists had won every year until Pe’a’s victory in 2017.



Kalani Pe’a (from left) Falu and Becky Isaacs perform at the 64th Annual Grammy Awards on Sunday, in Las Vegas.

“The accolades do not define who I am,” Pe’a told the Recording Academy backstage at the MGM Grand Garden Arena in an interview posted on Instagram. *“I’m still that big Hawaiian boy from the farm and I dedicate this to all that have shaped my identity.”*

Coming from a line of fishermen and Kalapana musicians, the Hilo-born artist told The Maui News that he lives the legacies of his kupuna, which inspired the theme of this year’s Grammy award-winning album *“Kau Ka Pe’a.”*

The album, which was produced during the COVID-19 pandemic, describes *“us setting our own sail and starting our own voyage,”* Pe’a said.

“I wrote songs about places and people I love during the pandemic,” he added. “When you lose your tours and shows in 2020, what do you do as a writer and creator? You continue singing and writing music, and record them, document them.

“The pandemic taught me how to change effectively and be effective through change, so this album talks about setting our own journey through this pandemic and how this pandemic will never stop us from creating music for the world to heal.”



Kalani Pe’a and Allan Cool arrive at the 64th Annual Grammy Awards at the MGM Grand Garden Arena on Sunday.

Through songwriting and composing, Pe'a advocates for Hawaiian language and culture, which he has also done over the years as an educator, fluent Hawaiian language speaker and publisher of five Hawaiian language children stories.

Before pursuing music full time, he was a teacher at Kamehameha Preschools in Kona on Hawaii island for four years. He later moved to Maui where he spent time as a Hawaiian resource coordinator at Kamehameha Schools Maui, according to the Kalani Pe'a Music website.

He has since performed all over Hawaii, including Maui, Hawaii Island and Kauai, as well as in California, Colorado and Japan.

For Pe'a, who has a home in Wailuku, it's always been "*Maui no ka oi.*"

Wailuku is where his great-grandparents resided before moving the family to Hawaii island, where Pe'a grew up, but "*I always love and acknowledge the fact that my ancestors do come from Keanae, Hana, Maui, so I honor them.*"

And he continued to honor them on Sunday when he performed in the opening Grammy Premiere Ceremony for the first time in the Grand Conference Marquee Ballroom.

"Being able to perform and share Hawaiian language . . . we made history sharing Hawaiian language through Hawaiian music at the Grammys," Pe'a said.

Allan B. Cool, who is Pe'a's manager and handles public relations for him, added that representing Hawaii on a global platform is "*such an honor.*"

"We're just so happy to share Hawaiian music and represent the people of our islands, our culture and the stories that we are sharing with the world," Cool said Sunday. *"It's amazing to be here. It's always an honor. The people of Hawaii have a story to tell — we are the messengers, we are just the link to the stories of our kupuna, our ancestors, Hawaiian culture and history."*

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