

# KALANI PE'A

Singer/Songwriter

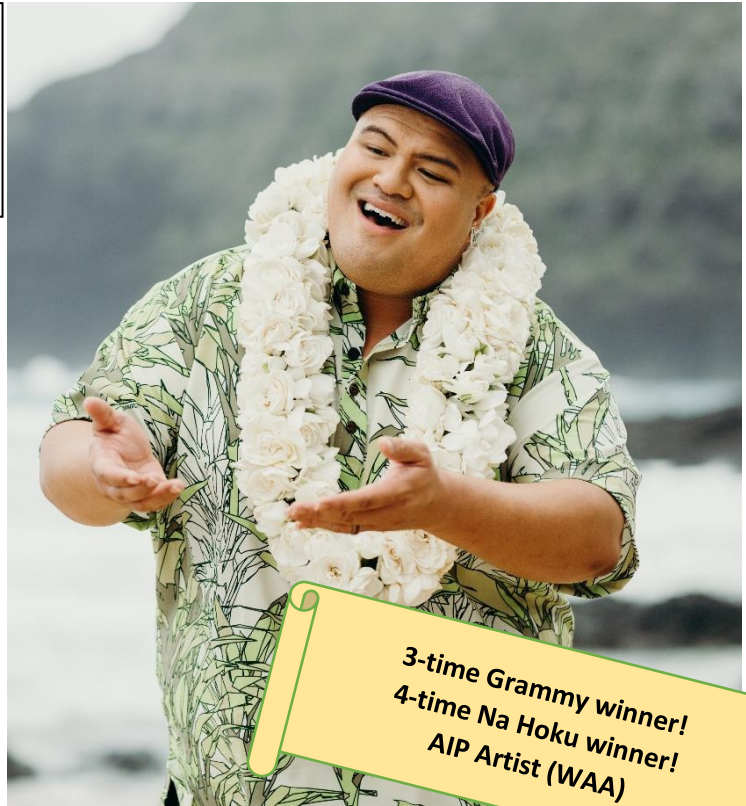
★ **3-GRAMMY® Awards**

*Only Hawaiian artist to win in Regional Roots category*

★ **Male Vocalist of the Year 2022  
(Nā Hōkū Awards)**

*“Gifted with a gorgeous voice and a flair for composing resonant Hawaiian songs, [he’s] a major, innovative figure in contemporary Hawaiian music.” – Maui News*

*“Kalani Pe 'a holds an important place in the history of Hawaiian music... [His] third album...displays the depth and breadth of his talent as a vocalist and songwriter in vivid style.” -- Honolulu Star-Advertiser*



3-time Grammy winner!  
4-time Na Hoku winner!  
AIP Artist (WAA)



Kalani Pe'a's third and most recent release *Kau Ka Pe'a* garnered his 3rd Grammy win in Regional Roots, and also won him 2 more Na Hoku Awards, including the coveted Male Vocalist of the Year and Song of the Year. He took home his first 2 Grammy Awards for his second CD *No 'Ane'i* [We Belong Here], a 2019 release that hit #1 on iTunes World Music Charts and #11 on Billboard's World Music Charts, and for his debut album *E Walea* in 2017 for "Best Regional Roots Music Album", which also received the 2017 Na Hoku Hanohano Award (Hawai'i's "Grammy") for Best Hawaiian Contemporary Album, making Hawaiian music history as the only album ever to win both a Grammy and Na Hoku. *The Maui News* praises "[his] distinguished...flair for Hawaiian language composition, a talent for fusing traditional and contemporary elements into his music and his wide, expressive vocal range."

February 2020 saw his New York debut, at a sold-out performance at Jazz at Lincoln Center for Lincoln Center's American Songbook, the first Hawaiian artist to be featured on the series. His song *E Na Kini* was featured on the 2021 Netflix release *Finding 'Ohana*. In 2019, he made his debut appearance at the prestigious Merrie Monarch hula competition, with an original song for Hula Halau 'O Kamuela, the top winner that year.

Self-described as "Hawaiian contemporary soul", Kalani Pe'a's is garnering awards and recognition: Native Arts & Cultures Foundation Fellowship, Artist in Business Leadership Fellowship by the First Peoples Fund, Distinguished Alumni Award by his alma mater Colorado Mesa University, and a WAA Native Launchpad Award in 2020. In May 2021, Kalani was selected as a featured artist for Spotify and Amazon Music campaigns during AAPI (Asian-American Pacific Islander) month, gracing billboards on over 120 transit shelters in New York and San Francisco. He was nominated for a Folk Alliance International Artist of the Year Award in 2022.



For booking, contact:  
**Pasifika Artists Network**  
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# KALANI PE'A • BIO

**Singer/Songwriter,  
3-time Grammy®-Winner! (2017, 2019, 2022)**

Kalani Pe'a sings everything from classical, musical, ballads, R&B, soul to traditional and original Hawaiian music, displaying his wide-ranging talents as a songwriter and music composer. His talent for lyrics and Hawaiian language fluency is on display in his original Hawaiian songs alongside his affectionate bilingual arrangements of R&B favorites.

It started at age four when Pe'a was diagnosed with a speech impediment; his mother introduced him to singing and music to help him pronounce his words. His father who comes from a musical family and his mother encouraged him to take vocal lessons and choir, and by age 8, Pe'a was winning numerous talent competitions, including in men's classical and musical divisions while receiving his degree from Colorado Mesa University in Mass Communications. "From speech therapy to a college graduate in communications," laughs Pe'a's father, "Kalani can't stop talking and singing".



His debut album brought him to Dave Tucciarone, a 13-time Nā Hōkū Hanohano Award-Winning Engineer and Producer in Honolulu, leading to the **2017 Grammy® win and first Na Hoku Award**. This successful collaboration continued with Kalani's second CD, *No 'Ane'i [We Belong Here]* and 3<sup>rd</sup> CD *Kau Ka Pe'a*, both earning him **Grammy Awards**. He was featured in the Grammy Opening Premiere Concert in 2022. His 3<sup>rd</sup> release also won him **2 Nā Hōkū awards, including the honor of Male Vocalist of the Year**. Says award-winning Hawaiian vocalist Darlene Ahuna, "**His voice will take you to the heavens. His passion ...will have you rockin' in your seat.**"

A fluent Hawaiian speaker, Pe'a started his career as an educator, publishing five Hawaiian language children's stories. He taught at Kamehameha Schools in Kona, then Maui, teaching Hawaiian culture (science focus), and creating curriculum. When his Grammy wins opened the door for his performing and touring career, he was honored by the Hawai'i State House of Representatives with an official proclamation: "**It is vital that Native Hawaiian culture and the arts be perpetuated for future generations: Kalani Pe'a is a torchbearer and we recognize his accolades, accomplishments, and continued work on behalf of Native Hawaiians.**"

Self-described as "Hawaiian contemporary soul", Kalani's dynamic and charming stage presence, vocal brilliance, and range of songs from Hawaiian to R&B has brought him to the forefront of Hawaiian music for both traditionalists and a new generation. Adding a Christmas show to his repertoire, **Kalani Pe'a's Hawaiian Christmas** is a celebration of the warmth and special "aloha" of the Holiday Season, sharing much-loved songs from both western and Hawaiian roots.

**TOURS with 3-pc backup band (guitar, bass, drumkit)**

<http://www.kalanipeamusic.com/>, 

VIDEO: [No 'Ane'i](#) (Na Mele Traditions – cue to 21:14)  
[Ku'u Poliahu](#)

Photos: Antonio Agosto

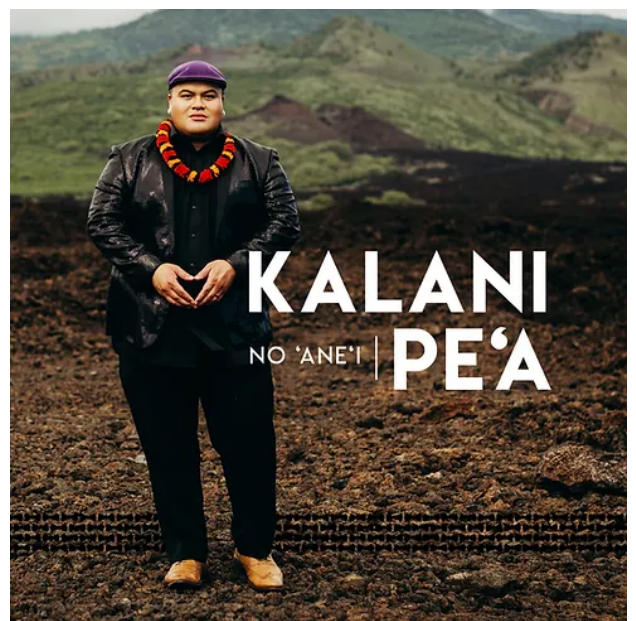


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MUSIC

# Kalani Pe 'a Music Releases



## 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."

Through his music, Pe 'a has become a genuine ambassador of aloha. He has hoisted his sail and charted his path, and he travels the world with his poetic lyrics, soulful sound, and infectious Kalani charm. ...With three Grammy-winning albums behind him, Pe'a and his music continue to light up the stage with his message of positivity, inspiration and healing." –*Maui Times*

"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*

*On being nominated for 4 Na Hoku Hanohano Awards in 2023, Kalani was quoted in The Maui News, May 17, 2023:*

“I am so honored to be a vessel and an instrument, to carry the tradition and modern teachings of my kupuna [*elders*] through Hawaiian language, music, education, and the arts. It is my kuleana [*responsibility*] to carry this torch.”

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

**John Berger, The Honolulu Star-Advertiser**

June 27, 2021 · 2 min read

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](http://kalanipeamusic.com).



AP photos

Kalani Pe'a, winner of the award for best regional roots musical album for "Kau Ka Pe'a," poses in the press room at the 64th Annual Grammy Awards at the MGM Grand Garden Arena on Sunday, in Las Vegas.

## 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'

**By DAKOTA GROSSMAN**  
Staff Writer


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



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

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.

"The accolades do not define who I am," Pe'a told the Recording

**See PE'A on Page A4**

# Pe'a

Continued from Page A1

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."

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



AP photos

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



**Kalani Pe'a** accepts the award for best regional roots musical album for "Kau Ka Pe'a" at the 64th Annual Grammy Awards in Las Vegas.

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."

■ *Dakota Grossman* can be reached at [dgrossman@mauinews.com](mailto:dgrossman@mauinews.com).