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Island Mele

John Berger



REVIEW

"Gems Along the Way"

Lloyd Longakit
(L&L Morning Star)

Outside the Big Island, songwriter Lloyd Longakit is best known as mentor of his talented children, Loeka and Pomai. Lloyd introduced Loeka as a solo artist with "The One They Call Hawaii," a winning recording on Ron Jacobs' "Homegrown '97" album for KRTR 96 in 1997. Two years later, Loeka and his sister won a Hoku Award for their sincere, albeit oddly titled, religious album, "1st Thing's 1st." Now Lloyd steps into the spotlight with new instrumental arrangements

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of songs previously recorded by the kids -- "The One They Call Hawaii" and "A'ama Crab" among them.

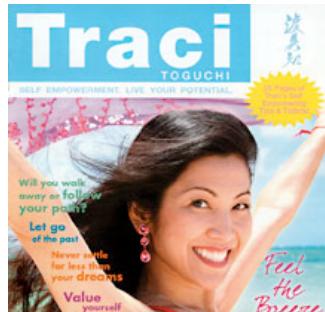
Acoustic guitar is the featured instrument, but thanks to modern studio technology he sounds like a small group rather than a solo guitarist. Some of the song titles indicate the things that inspired them, but the beauty of his arrangements -- jazz, pop or slack key -- allow the listener to imagine other scenarios.

Fans of Daniel Ho's many acoustic pop recordings will enjoy Longakit.

lloydlongqikit@mac.com

MP3 Audio Clips*

- » ["Jesus You Are The Answer"](#)
- » ["At Manele"](#)
- » ["The One They Call Hawaii"](#)



REVIEW

"Feel the Breeze"

Traci Toguchi
(Traci Toguchi Inc.)

Although this is not Traci Toguchi's first album, it marks the start of a new chapter in her colorful career. The production credits

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indicate that it was a long-time labor of love that took her to many recording studios and producers, but the resulting patchwork fits together quite well. She does beautifully with straight pop arrangements of "Over the Rainbow" and "One Moment in Time." Most of the other selections are originals that convey similar inspirational messages.

Although Toguchi has an appealing voice and the musical arrangements are exceptional for what is essentially a self-produced indie album, the music is only half the package. Where some self-help authors might include a CD of inspirational music with their books, Toguchi provides a book's worth of insights on self-empowerment in her liner notes. Good advice is where you find it, and she shares a lot of it here -- there's even a list of books and other resource materials she evidently found useful in her own search for enlightenment.

And so, despite the pop appeal of Toguchi's music, this landmark album must also be read in its entirety to appreciate everything she has to offer.

www.tracitoguchi.com

MP3 Audio Clips*

- ▶ ["One Moment In Time"](#)
- ▶ ["Over The Rainbow"](#)
- ▶ ["Feel The Breeze \(Remix\)"](#)

oversight
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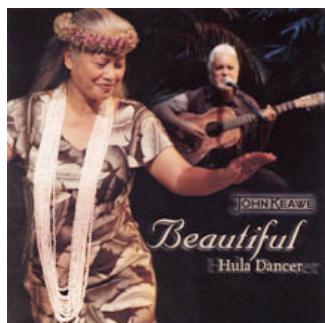
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Dept.



REVIEW

"Beautiful Hula Dancer"

John Keawe
(Homestead Productions)

John Keawe would probably be better known if he lived on Oahu instead of the Big Island, and so his albums are always welcome reminders of the wealth of talent to be found there. This one is primarily a beautiful collection of original slack-key instruments written and performed in the traditional nahenahe (sweet, melodious) style. However, Keawe also sings on occasion, and the title song is one of several that express his love for his wife.

As with all Hawaiian albums, the annotation is essential in comprehending the songs. For instance, "Aloha Pueo," inspired by an encounter with a dying owl, is a song of farewell rather than greeting, and "Nu'unau Slack Key" was inspired by the coolness of Keawe's home on the Big Island rather than the valley on Oahu. "Hana Pipi," a title he translates as "working the cattle," is not only about contemporary paniolo, but also a tribute to the Mexican vaqueros of the 1830s who are credited with introducing the guitar to Hawaii and inspiring the development of slack-key.

Keawe honors their legacy in beautiful style here.

www.johnkeawe.com

MP3 Audio Clips*

- ▶ ["Hawaii's Hope"](#)
- ▶ ["Beautiful Hula Dancer"](#)
- ▶ ["Hana Pipi"](#)

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John Berger, who has covered the local entertainment scene since 1972, writes reviews of recordings produced by Hawaii artists. See the Star-Bulletin's Today section on Fridays for the latest reviews. Reach John Berger at jberger@starbulletin.com.

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