



## Sounds Like Hawaii

Plan your next Hawaiian vacation around the music of the islands. By Thea Marie Rood

WHETHER YOU MAKE an annual trek to the islands or just dream of going during our foggy Sacramento winters, you know the drill: endless beaches, balmy breezes, warm water, an easy pace. But if you want a truly authentic Hawaiian experience, you need one more ingredient: music.

Catching island music on Oahu can range from the simple (free Sunday afternoon concerts at Ward Warehouse Stage, for instance) to the celebrity-filled (the Eighth Annual Hawaii Music Awards at the Hilton Hawaiian Village Resort). And Hawaii certainly has no shortage, at the moment, of island celebrities. With the new Hawaiian music Grammy category, several of its native sons and daughters are attracting national—even international—attention.

“We used to be shuffled off to other musical categories—folk or world music,” says Keali’i Reichel, nominated for a Grammy this year for his album *Ke’alaokamaile*. “But Hawaiian music reflects our thoughts and feelings as a people. So this is much bigger than any of us individually. It’s a good thing for Hawaii.” Reichel is known for his traditional-style songs with Hawaiian-language lyrics, many of which honor or were inspired by his ancestors.

Another 2005 Grammy nominee is Amy Hanaiali’i Gilliom, whose rich voice lends itself well to both upbeat numbers (“I Ali’i No ‘Oe”) and romantic ballads (“Aloha No Kalakaua”), all sung in her native language. She agrees there is a special significance to the new recognition Hawaiian music is receiving. “It really means a lot to me to represent Hawaiian culture,” says Gilliom, who recently toured throughout the United States and Europe with another Hawaiian artist, Willie K. “I feel like I’m also representing all the women who came before me, like my grandmother, who passed away last year.” Jennie Napua Woodd, Gilliom’s grandmother, choreographed major motion pictures set in Hawaii in the ’30s and ’40s. (And it’s not just Gilliom’s female ancestors who gained fame in show business: Her grandfather, Lloyd B. Gilliom, played trumpet with Sammy Kay and Tommy Dorsey.)

Both Reichel and Gilliom have upcoming performances in Oahu. Planning a trip around one of these events or the scores of other concerts and festivals scheduled this spring adds a cultural kick to your island vacation.

Although Reichel is one of the biggest names in the islands—and has performed in Japan, up and down the West Coast and at Carnegie Hall—he rarely leaves his Maui home. “You have to get on a plane, fly 2,000

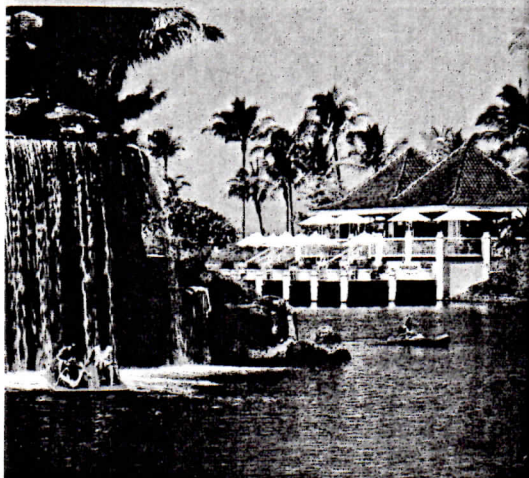
Growing Up With Song—Most Hawaiian artists were raised with, and influenced by, a tradition of *pa’ina*—backyard family parties where neighbors, aunts and uncles sing, dance and play instruments. There also is a traditional art of *oli* or chanting, indigenous Hawaiian music that preserves many cultural stories of Hawaii’s past in poetic form.

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miles away," he laughs. "To move a small band, it ends up being a lot of work." So what's your best bet?



Catch Reichel on his home turf: On May 27 and 28, the Honolulu Symphony Pops Concert will showcase Reichel at its season finale.

On May 31, Gilliom will perform at the annual Lantern Festival, a traditional Japanese memorial service in Ala Moana Beach Park on Oahu. "It's really spiritual, really beautiful—1,100 lanterns are set adrift on the water at 6 p.m.," she says.

Where to stay if you plan to attend one of these concerts? One option is the Royal Hawaiian, affectionately known as the "Pink Palace" because of its turreted pink stucco exterior. Built in 1927, this art deco hotel invented the mai tai cocktail in its beachfront bar of the same name. The bar fronts a roped-off stretch of sand—one of the only private beaches in Waikiki. The rooms are elegant, particularly in the historic section—some with four-poster beds and ocean views, all with pink sheets and towels. At the on-site, 7,000-square-foot Abhasa Waikiki Spa, you can try thalassotherapy or other organic body treatments. And once you're soothed and relaxed, the Royal Hawaiian Shopping Center is right outside the hotel's lobby doors.

An alternative is the Turtle Bay Resort, located on Oahu's North Shore, 45 minutes from Honolulu. The "country side" of the island might be the perfect spot to continue the mood of, say, Gilliom's performance and those peaceful floating lanterns. The 880-acre resort has two pools and its own day spa (Spa Luana), where you can achieve *pono*—body, mind and spirit in perfect harmony. You can horseback ride, golf, play on miles of private beach or learn to surf. In fact, Turtle Bay is minutes from some of the most legendary surf spots in the world. Watch the pros catch a wave at Sunset Beach, the Banzai Pipeline or Waimea Bay. The resort also is close to the Polynesian Cultural Center, filled with waterfalls, tropical hiking trails and dance demonstrations. Be-

cause the hotel sits on a stretch of land that juts out into the ocean, every one of its 401 guestrooms and 42 beach cottages has an unbeatable ocean view. (A private butler service is available for the remote cottages.) Watch the sun set from your private lanai, wander down to one of the resort's six restaurants or clubs for dinner or a nightcap, then close the plantation shutters and fall asleep to the rhythmic sound of waves.

A third possibility is the JW Marriott Ihilani Resort and Spa at Ko Olina. Located 25 miles west of Honolulu in the secluded Ko Olina area, the resort features the 35,000-square-foot Ihilani Spa, with an open-air lap pool. The hotel has a pure-white exterior, making the blue-and-white striped towels by the

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pool pop, along with surrounding acres of lush, green gardens and colorful orchids. Tennis courts, garden pathways and a shark pond are other amenities. The 15-story, marble-floored atrium hotel lobby welcomes guests with, of course, Hawaiian music. Rooms have soaking tubs, private lanais and—on the upper floors—panoramic ocean views.

Can't include more than one island in your musical adventure? There is a lot going on in Maui this time of year, too: Catch the Maui Classical Music Festival May 9–21, for instance, or the Great Hawaii Jazz and Blues Blowout May 21–22.

## 2005 GRAMMY NOMINEES IN THE NEW HAWAIIAN MUSIC CATEGORY

*Some Call It Aloha... Don't Tell*  
by The Brothers Cazimero

*Amy & Willie Live*  
by Amy Hanaiali'i Gilliom and Willie K

*Cool Elevation* by Ho'okena

*Ke'alaokamaile* by Keali'i Reichel

*Slack Key Guitar, Volume 2*, a multiartist compilation; Charles Michael Brotman, producer (winner)





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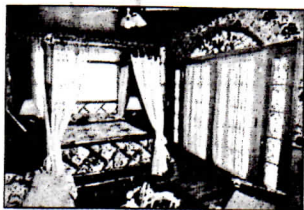
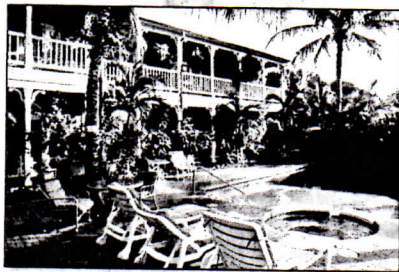
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Where to stay on this island? Reichel, who was born and raised in Maui, recommends the Four Seasons, where he says "you can't go wrong." Bet he's right: At the hotel's Fountain Pool, which has an ocean view, attendants bring you iced water, chilled towels and Evian water spritzes. You can play golf, dine under the stars or enjoy a couples' massage on the beach.

Watch the sun set from your private lanai, wander down to one of the resort's six restaurants or clubs for dinner or a nightcap, then close the plantation shutters and fall asleep to the rhythmic sound of waves.

For a more old-Hawaii feel, check out Reichel's other recommendation, a place he sends friends and families visiting him on the island: the Old Wailuku Inn at Ulupono. Built in the 1920s by a wealthy banker as a gift for his daughter-in-law, this historic house has been restored by its island-born owners. The

### FINDING HAWAIIAN MUSIC LOCALLY

Can't make it to the islands this spring? Here's a suggestion: Fire up the tiki torches, rev up the barbecue, put on your Tommy Bahama shirt, and pretend. The secret ingredient, again, is the music. Catch Hawaiian music on Nevada City's **KVMR 89.5 FM** every Sunday, 9 a.m.–noon, or start your own collection of island CDs. Here is a list to get you going:

**Keali'i Reichel:** *Ke'alaokamaile* (2004), *Melelana* (1999), *E O Mai* (1997), *Lei Hali'a* (1995), *Kawaiupunahale* (1994).

**Amy Hanaiali'i Gilliom:** *Amy & Willie Live* (2003), *Pu'uhonua* (2001), *Nostalgia* (2000), *Hanaiali'i* (1999), *Hawaiian Tradition* (1998), *Native Child* (1997).

**Ho'okena:** *Cool Elevation* (2003), *Treasure* (2001), *Home for the Holidays* (2000), *Ho'okena 5* (1999), *Ho'okamaha'o* (1996), *Na Kai Ewalu* (1993), *Choice of the Heart* (1991) and *Thirst Quencher* (1990).

**The Brothers Cazimero:** *Some Call It Aloha... Don't Tell* (2003), *Cazimero Christmas Favorites* (2000), *The Best of the Brothers Cazimero Volume III* (2000), *Destination Paradise* (1998), *20 Years of Hoku Award Winning Songs* (1997), *Proud To Be* (1995), *Caz Live—Take Me Home to Hawai'i* (1993).