

**Martin Pahinui**  
**Ho'olohe**

One of Hawaiian music's most gifted vocalists, John Martin Pahinui has performed with a host of top performers, including his father's legendary Gabby Pahinui Hawaiian Band, The Peter Moon Band, The Pahinui Brothers, Nina Keali'iwahamana, Bill Kaiwa and slack key super group Hui Aloha (with slack key guitarists George Kuo and Dennis Kamakahi). The youngest child of Gabby Pahinui (1921-1980) and Emily Pahinui, Martin grew up surrounded by music—not only the amazing kī hō'ālu (slack key) in his family home but also the many other styles floating on the wind in Waimānalo, where he grew up and still lives.

Like many children of famous musicians, Martin is keenly aware of a double responsibility: to honor his family's musical legacy and to always be himself. “My daddy is a very big influence on all of us,” Martin says, “but he always did things his own way, and he taught us to trust our own instincts too. He loved Hawaiian music but he wasn't afraid to change something if he felt it was the right thing to do. Some people would grumble, but he'd say, ‘So what, some people grumble no matter what you do.’ He always said to respect the song and the composer and the people who taught you, but never be afraid to express your own feelings when you play.”

Recently, when the local rap group Sudden Rush asked the Pahinui family for their blessings to use a recording of Gabby's classic rendition of Hi'ālawe, Martin supported them. “They were respectful,” he says. “They first asked the family. We don't own the recording, so they could've just gone straight to the record label, but they wanted to do it the right way, and I think Daddy would've given his permission. He always said the key was to respect the culture and then do your music in the way that brings you the most enjoyment.” With this in mind, Martin has pursued a dual path in his music, performing contemporary favorites as well as classic Hawaiian standards, especially those associated with his world-renowned father.

Born July 21, 1951, Martin quickly jumped into music, picking up Hawai'i's favorite starter instrument, the *čukulele*, around age three. “I just strummed along while the others played,” Martin says. “I think the first thing I learned was vamping. They would all laugh when I did that. After awhile I started learning the songs and tried to follow along. None of us ever got any lessons but the music was always there, so if you listened closely enough you could catch on.”

By intermediate school, Martin picked up guitar, joining his brothers Bla and Cyril, bassist Baby Kalima and others in a rock band called The Characters. “We did Johnny B. Goode and all that,” Martin says. “We got a gig in Waikīkī at a club called the Monkey Pad. Daddy was playing with the Sons of Hawai'i down the street at Duke's and he, Feet Rogers and Joe Marshall would sneak over to listen to us during their breaks. They'd wear sunglasses to disguise themselves, and they'd get so carried away they wouldn't go back to their own gig. Eddie Kamae would have to come get them. It was a great time. Very free.”

At that time, Martin also picked up his nickname, Gramps. “I used to wear overalls, like the old folks,” he says, “and somehow the name stuck.”

As the Hawaiian Renaissance began to build in the mid-1960s, young people throughout Hawai'i began to explore their roots, and traditional music enjoyed a revival. "Cyril and Bla went into it ahead of me," Martin says. "They gave up electric instruments, but I held on to mine!" Martin's favorite rock group was, and still is, The Beatles. "Their songs are so extraordinary," he says. He counts as two of his career highlights meeting Ringo Starr in Los Angeles and chatting with the late George Harrison on the phone when the shy, spiritual Beatle was living on Maui. "He had a high respect for Hawaiian music," Martin says. "He said he had all of my daddy's records and a lot of other local artists. We invited him to our sessions, but he said he didn't want to interfere. I wish we could have gotten to play with him, but I can appreciate his feelings."

In the early 1970s, Martin joined his father, brothers, Sonny Chillingworth, Atta Isaacs and others in the legendary Gabby Pahinui Hawaiian Band. The group's easy-going, backyard style, with lots of room for virtuoso pāçani (instrumental solos between the vocal verses), enjoyed great popularity and inspired an entire generation of local musicians. "All of us young guys wanted to latch on to what the older folks were sharing," Martin says. He adds that while many young people continue this tradition, he's sorry the radio stations and nightclubs today market to much smaller age brackets, which limits the mixing of the generations. "Thank God, people like Aunty Genoa Keawe (1918- ) are still out there in their 80s sharing with the young people," Martin says. "My oldest son, Gabby, is going on 30, but Aunty Genoa is his idol."

After the Gabby Band, Martin returned to his rock roots, playing with Randy Lorenzo, Keliçi Kaneliçi and other young local musicians on Maui and the mainland. In the mid-1980s, he joined his brother Cyril in the popular Peter Moon Band, taking the lead vocals on such local hits as the pop ballad Flying and the hard-rocking Cane Fire. Other projects followed, including the long-awaited album, THE PAHINUI BROS. (Panini Records), which reunited Bla, Cyril and Martin in 1992 with guitarists Ry Cooder, David Lindley and other mainland friends.

Through the 1990s, Martin pursued solo gigs and played bass with the slack key super-group Hui Aloha, as well as with legendary singers Bill Kaiwa (1934- ) and Nina Kealiçiwahamana. Many of his gigs by this time included slack key master George Kuo. "I first met George when I was with Peter, and he was with the Sons of Hawai'i," Martin says. "I like his choices, the way he puts together Daddy, Sonny [Chillingworth] and Atta [Isaacs]. There are so many great ones, but George is my favorite slack key guitarist today."

As George points out, "Gabby, Atta and Sonny always had fun when they played. We want to perpetuate that. We're happy playing the old songs. We don't need to be cutting edge. It's the delivery that gives a song its pizzazz. We enjoy adding our own runs and improvisations without losing the melody or the Hawaiian flavor, just like the old timers used to do."

George adds that the rapport between the musicians extends beyond music. "It's been a tremendous feeling of aloha for each other," he says. "When we first met, Martin took me out fishing, and we got hooked on each other as friends."

At that time, Martin, on lead vocals and bass, and George, on slack key guitar and background vocals, often joined forces with the talented guitarist and arranger Steven Hall. When ill health forced Steven to put his music on hold, Aaron Mahi joined in on bass, background vocals and

arrangements, while Martin switched to rhythm and second slack key guitar.

Aaron Mahi is one of Hawai'i's busiest and most diverse musicians. Since 1981, Aaron has served as director of the prestigious Royal Hawaiian Band. He is also a trained classical musician and conductor, as well as a glee club director and singer. Despite an incredibly hectic schedule, he makes time whenever possible to play Hawaiian music. "Aaron says it's a great stress reliever for him to play this kind of music," says Martin. "He's so talented and so knowledgeable about the songs, the culture, the language and such a great cook! Hawaiian food, rack of lamb, you name it."

"Aaron shares such insights about the music, and we all love trading stories of the old entertainers," George says. "As Steven Hall would say, 'Every time we get together, it's our therapy.' It always brings a smile." This is truly a band where the love of the music guides everything, and each member brings a great wealth of knowledge and experience to the table, as well as great aloha and respect to supporting Martin on this recording.

Sometimes at their gigs, as on the album, steel guitarist Bobby Ingano joins the trio. He was a student of the great lap steel player from the Sons of Hawai'i, David "Feet" Rogers (1935-1983), of the prestigious Rogers musical family. Bobby is a tireless champion of the delicately beautiful and evocative "pictures on the wind" style, and he performs with many of the top traditional artists. His relationship with Martin dates back to the early 1990s. "I met him through Steven Hall," says Martin, "and I love his playing. His teacher, Feet Rogers, played with Daddy in the Sons of Hawai'i, and to me that's such a great sound."

The group performs Sunday nights at the Waikiki Beach Marriott Resort and occasionally tours Japan and the Mainland. "If this band ever gets a name, it should be the ʻŌluʻolu Gang," says George. ʻŌluʻolu can be translated into English as "pleasant, amiable, nice." "My wife Ruthie suggested calling the album HOʻOLOHE," says Martin. "That means 'to listen.' I hope that people enjoy listening to the music we share on this album. These are some of the songs we loved listening to when we were growing up, and it's such a blessing to be able to play them today."

#### On Pronouncing Hawaiian:

A is sounded as in 'ah'

E is sounded either 'ay' as in 'bay,' or 'eh' as in 'men'

I is sounded like 'ee' as in 'see'

O is sounded as in 'go'

U is sounded 'oo' as in 'too'

All syllables are pronounced separately, and most words are pronounced by sounding all the vowels. For example, kaça is pronounced 'kah-ah.'

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## ABOUT THE SONGS

### 1. *'Ahulili*

Martin Pahinui: Vocals and 6 string rhythm guitar in C Mauna Loa Tuning (C-G-E-G-A-E), and capoed up 2 frets to sound in the key of D

George Kuo: Yairi double-neck guitar with the 6 string neck in C Wahine “Leonard’s C” Tuning (C-G-D-G-B-D), and capoed up 2 frets to sound in the key of D

Aaron Mahi: Bass

Named for a mountain in the Maui ranching lands near Kaupō, this paniolo (Hawaiian cowboy) favorite plays off the mountain’s name and the word lili (jealous). In the song, someone plucks a flower to string a lei that will never be forgotten, a popular image for romance in Hawaiian composition. Meanwhile, another suitor may be lili because he’s not always there in the mist of the mountain (another popular Hawaiian image for love). Scott Haçi of Kaupō is credited with the original version of this song in the early 1900s, though there have been several variations since.

In the spirit of pānaçi like (give and take), which is so important in slack key, both Martin and George take solos, building off of each other and freely expressing themselves. Martin plays here in the C Mauna Loa Tuning, his favorite tuning. Mauna Loa Tunings are based on a Major chord with the two top-pitched strings tuned a fifth interval apart. This way the two thinnest strings can be played in sixth intervals producing the recognizable sweet sound that Mauna Loa Tunings bring out. (In many other tunings, where the four highest pitched strings are tuned a fourth, Major third or minor third apart, the sixth intervals are played on first and third highest pitched strings, or on the second and fourth strings.) The sixth intervals on the top two strings can also be “fraid” (strummed rapidly) with the index finger, producing another characteristic sound of this tuning.

George Kuo plays here in the C Wahine Tuning. Wahine Tunings contain a Major Seventh note, which has two functions: it can easily be “hammered on” (an ornament produced by plucking a note and immediately fretting above that note to reach a second tone) to produce the root note of the tonic chord (here the C Major chord), and it serves as the open third interval of the dominant seventh chord (here the G Seventh chord). According to producer George Winston, this particular Wahine Tuning is known among many slack key guitarists as “Leonard’s C” in honor of the legendary Leonard Kwan (1931-2000), who most prominently used it.

Martin says he chose this song because it was always one of his favorites growing up. “My daddy’s way of playing it was all his own,” Martin says. He adds that Aaron helped him learn the song. “He’s always so helpful,” Martin says.

George plays a beautiful solo introductory verse, inspired very much by the late, great slack key guitarist Leland “Atta” Isaacs (1930-1983), who was a close friend of the Pahinui family and played with Gabby for many years. George uses the Atta-inspired G Ninth chord (here sounding as an A Ninth chord because of the capo on the second fret),

with the voicing of the notes A-B-F-A on the fourth, third, second and first strings respectively. Atta used this voicing in his C Major Tuning (C-G-E-G-C-E), and George converted it to the same voicing in the C Wahine Tuning (C-G-D-G-B-D) that he uses here. Note the beautiful sixth intervals at the end of his first instrumental solo, the two-finger rolls played with his thumb and index finger in the second verse of his second instrumental solo and his retarding, almost poignant, ending of the song.

George also recorded this song as a solo instrumental medley with Wai O Ke Aniani, in the G Major “Taro Patch” Tuning (D-G-D-G-B-D), on his album ALOHA NO NÄ KÜPUNA (Dancing Cat Records), and in the same tuning as a duet with the late Barney Isaacs (Atta Isaacs’ brother) on acoustic steel, as a medley with Nani Wale Nä Hala, on their album HAWAIIAN TOUCH (Dancing Cat Records). Gabby Pahinui also recorded it twice: around the 1950s, in the C Mauna Loa Tuning (C-G-E-G-A-E), on the album THE BEST OF HAWAIIAN SLACK KEY WITH GABBY PAHINUI (Waikiki Records 340); and in 1961, in the G Major “Taro Patch” Tuning (D-G-D-G-B-D), on his album PURE GABBY (Hula Records 567 – released in 1978).

## 2. *Beautiful 'Ilima*

Martin: Vocals and 6 string rhythm guitar in C Mauna Loa Tuning, fingering in the key of G and capoed up 2 frets to sound in the key of A

George: Yairi double neck guitar with the 6 string neck in G Major “Taro Patch” Tuning (D-G-D-G-B-D), and capoed up 2 frets to sound in the key of A

Aaron: Bass and back-up vocals

This beautiful and poignant ballad was written around 1873 by the Princess Emma Alexandria Kanoça De Fries who wrote the song honoring her first born son, John Alexander Liholiho Kalani-noho-pono-o-Lunalilo, a name given to him by both his mother and Queen Emma, his godmother. The original title of the song was Liholiho. Emma De Fries named her son after Queen Emma’s husband, King Alexander Liholiho Kamehameha IV, and to distinguish the difference between the two Liholihos, gave her son a slightly different name. This was because only the king, who had passed on, could give his name to the boy and by altering it slightly, it was permissible according to protocol.

It expresses very traditional images such as fragrant flowers and the misty dew, and later became known as Beautiful çllima, because of the familiarity of the English words. It was a common practice around the late 1800s to have some English lyrics in Hawaiian songs, as in this one. çllima flowers are also associated with one that is beloved, as well as aliçi (Hawaiian royalty), and with the island of Oçahu.

The version that is heard today may have been arranged around the 1890s or earlier by Henry Berger (1844-1929). Though born and raised in Prussia, he spent most of his professional life in Hawaiçi, where his leadership of the Royal Hawaiian Band from 1872 to 1925 had a profound impact on local music (especially on Hawaiian marches, among other things). A trained military band master as well as an alumnus of the great Viennese orchestra of Johann Strauss, Jr., Berger popularized new Western music forms in the islands and worked just as diligently to preserve traditional Hawaiian compositions and

aesthetic values. He also composed a great number of songs, including the Hawaiian national anthem, Hawaiʻi Ponoʻī.

For Martin, the song brings back fond memories of a group of friends in Waimānalo who played golf and fished together. “This was our song,” he says, “like our alma mater. We’d sing it at parties. It’s so beautiful, but then all Hawaiian songs are beautiful, especially when you know the story behind them.”

The song begins with a soulful rubato verse with just George’s guitar and Martin’s vocal, before it goes to tempo. Aaron comes in with the bass on the first chorus. Again notice George’s beautiful introduction, again influenced by Atta Isaacs, with the chords of C Major with an E bass, to E Flat Diminished, to the G Seventh. On his beautiful instrumental break, notice his rolls between two strings, played with his thumb and index finger.

Gabby recorded it under the title of Liloliho with the Sons of Hawaiʻi on their 1964 album MUSIC OF OLD HAWAII (Hula Records 506). Martin’s brother Bla Pahinui also recorded a version in the “Dropped D” Tuning (D-A-D-G-B-E), with brother Cyril Pahinui on second guitar in his D6/9 Tuning (D-A-D-F#-B-E), on Bla’s 1981 album BLA (Pua Lani Records – out-of-print).

### 3. *Hanohano Hawaiʻi*

Martin: Vocals and 6 string rhythm guitar in C Mauna Loa Tuning, fingering in the key of G, and capoed up two frets to sound in the key of A

George: Yairi double-neck guitar with the 6 string neck in G Major “Taro Patch” Tuning, and capoed up two frets to sound in the key of A

Aaron: Bass, back-up vocals and introduction

Bobby Ingano: Steel guitar in the standard steel tuning of C6th/A Minor Seventh Tuning (C-E-G-A-C-E)

From the most distant past to the present, nā mele o Hawaiʻi (songs of Hawaiʻi) have expressed a strong sense of place. Many mele honor specific locales, while others provide a poetic tour around an island or around the entire island chain. This traditional classic is from around the early 1900s and is sometimes attributed to J. Kealoha or A. Kaçaua. The title translates as “Famous is Hawaiʻi” or “Glorious Hawaiʻi”, and it speaks of the four most populous islands and salutes each one’s special lei: lehua for the Big Island of Hawaiʻi, lokelani (the rose) for Maui, çilima for Oçahu and mokihana for Kauaçi.

Martin says this signature song of his was requested by people who enjoy his incredibly soulful and powerful falsetto and yodeling. “I’m happy to do it,” Martin says. “For me, it’s a way to honor these beautiful islands.” He belts the falsetto out the second time around in the first, third and fifth verses.

Bobby Ingano, one of Hawaiʻi’s most preeminent and unique steel guitarists, guests on his frypan electric lap steel on this song and six other songs on this album, and he sometimes sits in with the band live. At the end of the third vocal verse Bobby plays a distinct lick using some chromatic notes that he learned from David “Feet” Rogers. The

best example of Feet playing this lick is on the song Haliçilua, at the end of his solo, on singer Marcella Kalua's classic album from around 1967, GIRL FROM PAKOLEA (Makaha Records 2052). She was backed up on this album (which also features a version of Lei Hinahina [song #5 on this album]) by the Sons of Hawaiçi, which also, at this time, included çukulele master Eddie Kamae, slack key master Leland "Atta" Isaacs and bassist Joe Marshall (1929-1993).

Martin starts off the song with a powerful rhythm, then George solos for the first verse. George's first solo features licks on the D Seventh chord, with the highest pitched open (unfretted) D note played as a drone along with the phrases (here sounding the E note because of the capo). George's second solo features phrases on the bass strings, followed by Bobby's second solo, featuring his trademark muting with the side of his right hand simultaneously damping the strings while picking, another great technique and sound he learned from Feet Rogers.

Gabby Pahinui recorded a version of Hanohano Hawaiçi on his final album as a member of the Sons of Hawaiçi (which included Feet Rogers, and founder and çukulele master Eddie Kamae) in 1971, the seminal THE FOLK MUSIC OF HAWAII – ISLAND HERITAGE (Panini 1001). Brother Bla also recorded it in his "Dropped D" Tuning (D-A-D-G-B-E), on his 1983 album BLA PAHUNUI (Mountain Apple Records), with the other title sometimes used, Nā Moku çEhā (although there is a different song with that same name). Hanohano Hawaiçi has also often been called Sweet Lei Lehua (although there is another song with that name, too).

#### 4. *Kauoha Mai* (The Keyhole Hula)

Martin: Vocals and 6 string rhythm guitar in C Mauna Loa Tuning, and capoed up two frets to sound in the key of D

George: Yairi double-neck guitar with the 6 string neck in C Wahine "Leonard's C" Tuning, capoed up 2 frets to sound in the key of D; and the 12 string neck in C Mauna Loa Tuning, capoed up two frets to sound in the key of D

Aaron: Bass and back-up vocals

Bobby: Steel guitar

A swinging party favorite by Hawaiçi's Songbird, Lena Machado (1903-1974), *Kauoha Mai* tells the story of what one can see by peeking through an old-fashioned keyhole. "Lena Machado was such a great entertainer," says Martin. "I love her voice and her songs. I have a lot of respect for her and wanted to do this one to show appreciation for her."

George's first solo uses the high sixth intervals of the C Mauna Loa Tuning on the 12 string neck, and Bobby answers with an understated, lower pitched solo. George most often uses the 6 string neck in the C Wahine Tuning for the backup to the vocals, as it is a more versatile tuning for playing chords, and then plays the 12 string in the C Mauna Loa Tuning for the instrumental break, with its more powerful tonality, creating a different tonality for the instrumental break. George plays his second solo on the 6 string, again answered with an understated solo by Bobby. Notice at the end of George's solo, just before the D Ninth chord, where he plays chromatically descending ninth chords from F

Ninth down to the D Ninth, a quote from the great 1930s steel guitar standard Sand, by steel guitarist and composer Andy Iona (1902-1966), which Bobby recorded on his 1998 album STEEL REFLECTIONS (Flying Solo Music).

Martin also recorded this song on his 1995 album MARTIN PAHINUI (Mountain Apple Records), as well as with the Peter Moon Band on their classic 1983 album HARBOR LIGHTS (Kanikapila Records), with their great lineup of Peter Moon and Cyril Pahinui on slack key guitar, Martin on vocals and bass, and Bobby Hall on vocals and 'ukulele.

#### 5. *Lei Hinahina*

Martin: Vocals and 6 string rhythm and slack key guitar in C Mauna Loa Tuning  
George: Yairi double-neck guitar with the 6 string neck in C Wahine "Leonard's C" Tuning; and the 12 string neck in C Mauna Loa Tuning  
Aaron: Bass & back-up vocals

Building on the image of pilikia (trouble) in the love relationships of çAhulili and Kauoha Mai, the classic Lei Hinahina expresses the composer's disdain when he discovers that his beloved lei of small white hinahina flowers is being worn by someone new, who, it should be noted, can't even handle a canoe. John Kameaaloha Almeida (1897-1985), a highly regarded singer, musician, composer and, it is said, lady's man, wrote the song with his usual blend of gently swinging music and highly charged poetic language. Images of anger here include the rising of the moon and waves crashing against a cliff.

"Aaron reintroduced me to this song," says Martin. "The story is told so well. It seems like the whole town is talking about what's going on and the poor guy has no one to talk to about his troubles, so he tells his troubles to the moon."

The opposite of anger, a harmonious friendship, surfaces in the first solo, with the first verse played by Martin on his 6 string, then George answering him for a verse on the 6 string neck of his double-neck guitar.

Notice Martin's soulful frailing with his index finger over several of the middle strings at the end of the first verse of his second solo break. George answers him with a solo break on the 12 string guitar and uses some beautiful intervals in 2nds on the third and fourth strings (with the notes of F# and G# together, and G and A together) that he learned from Atta Isaacs, who played this lick in his C Major Tuning (C-G-E-G-C-E). Atta's tuning has just one string tuned differently from the C Mauna Loa Tuning that George uses here (C-G-E-G-A-E), but that one string creates a world of difference (but the third and fourth strings are tuned the same in both tunings, so the aforementioned phrases on those strings would be played the same way). George also uses these intervals prominently on the song Mauna Loa Blues, again in the C Mauna Loa Tuning, on his album ALOHA NO NÄ KÜPUNA (Dancing Cat Records).

#### 6. *Waikapu*

Martin: Vocals and 6 string rhythm guitar in C Mauna Loa Tuning  
George: Yairi double-neck guitar with the 6 string neck in C Wahine "Leonard's C"



Tuning; and the 12 string neck in C Mauna Loa Tuning  
Aaron: Bass and back-up vocals  
Bobby: Steel guitar

Many Hawaiian songs celebrate very specific places, often by referencing special landmarks, symbols or natural phenomena. Waikapū (also sometimes known as I Waikapū Ke Aloha), describes the winds associated with the four main fresh water streams on west Maui: Waikapū (water of the conch shell), Wailuku (water of destruction, in commemoration of a famous 18th century battle that took place there), Waiehu (foam water) and Waiheʻe (slippery water). Waikapū's wind blows in gusts, while Wailuku's wind is gentle. Waiehu's wind makes the skin sore, while Waiheʻe's wind is graceful.

This song is also known as ʻĪnikiniki Mālie (or sometimes called ʻĪniki Mālie, translated as “Gentle Pinches of the Wind”). With either title, it is probably based on an old chant, and is credited to James Kahale (or some sources spell it Kahele), and was popular as a falsetto vocal around the turn of the century.

“I’ve always liked this song,” Martin says, “but especially since I lived on Maui and saw the places mentioned in the song. They’re just like the song describes them. This is my way to say aloha to everybody over there. And it’s for my two sons, who were born on Maui.”

George plays the accompaniment on the 6 string neck, and after Bobby’s beautiful solo, takes his first break on the 6 string. He takes his second solo, answering Bobby, on the 12 string. Note near the end of Martin’s last vocal verse, on the D Ninth chord, Bobby’s soulful use of the volume knob on the electric steel to increase the volume of the chord after it is struck.

Cyril Pahinui also recorded this song, under the title ʻĪnikiniki Mālie, in the D Major Tuning (D-A-D-F#-A-D), with acoustic steel guitarist Bob Brozman on their 1999 duet album FOUR HANDS SWEET & HOT (Dancing Cat Records).

7. ***Kanaka Waiwai*** (Iesü Me Ke Kanaka Waiwai)

Martin: Vocals, ʻukulele and 6 string rhythm guitar in C Mauna Loa Tuning  
George: Yairi double-neck guitar with the 12 string neck in C Mauna Loa Tuning  
Aaron: Bass and back-up vocals  
Bobby: Steel guitar

Iesü Me Ke Kanaka Waiwai (Jesus and the Rich Man) is one of Hawaiʻi’s best known religious songs. Legendary musician and band leader John Kameaaloha Almeida reportedly composed Iesü Me Ke Kanaka Waiwai in 1915 for the Mormon Church, but was told at that time it sounded too much like a hula. Since then, it has gone on to enjoy great popularity.

“In any project I do, I try to give something back to God,” says Martin. “This song also makes me think of Mom and Dad.”

The introduction features a beautiful chord progression of C Major, D minor, E minor, F Major, E minor and D minor, reminiscent of the classic introduction to the song Kahoçolawe by the Kipapa Rush Band (with slack key guitarists George Kuo and Wayne Reis [Atta Isaacs' nephew]) on their album *HARDLY WORKING* (Kahanu Records). George takes another beautiful instrumental break on the 12 string in the C Mauna Loa Tuning. On the last vocal verse, the band sings beautiful chordal harmonies of C Major, F Major, F minor and C Major again. George plays a beautiful solo on the 12 string in the C Mauna Loa Tuning and, in his unique and unusual way, plays all of the chords of the song in this tuning.

Gabby also recorded this song in the C Mauna Loa Tuning with the Sons of Hawaiçi on their 1971 album *THE FOLK MUSIC OF HAWAIÇI – ISLAND HERITAGE* (Panini Records 1001).

8. *Lei No Kaçiulani*

Martin: Vocals and 6 string rhythm guitar in C Mauna Loa Tuning, and capoed up two frets to sound in the key of D

George: Yairi double-neck guitar with the 6 string neck in C Wahine “Leonard’s C” Tuning, capoed up two frets to sound in the key of D; and the 12 string neck in C Mauna Loa Tuning, capoed up two frets to sound in the key of D

Aaron: Bass & backing vocals

Bobby: Steel guitar

Daughter of Princess Likelike and her Scottish-born husband, Archibald Cleghorn, Princess Victoria Kaçiulani Cleghorn (1875-1899) was the only child born to any of the four royal siblings known as Nā Lani çEhā (The Royal Four). Appointed heir to the throne by her aunt, Queen Liliçuokalani, Kaçiulani grew up at her family estate, çĀinahau, before studying in Britain. In many ways, she exemplifies the cosmopolitan nature of Hawaiian society in the 19th Century. Her graciousness at the family estate, her cosmopolitan spirit (she spoke four languages and traveled in Europe and America), and her bravery in the wake of the 1893 overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy continue to earn her great affection. Known as “The Rose of çĀinahau,” as well as closely associated with the pīkake (the Hawaiian term for Chinese jasmine, named in honor of Kaçiulani’s pet peacocks), Kaçiulani is often celebrated with floral references. *Lei No Kaçiulani*, composed by John Edwards around the early 1900s, pictures white lehua blossoms entwined with delicately scented small leaf maile (the fragrant, green, traditional lei plant). The song title translates as “A Lei for Princess Kaçiulani.”

“One day when we were talking, Aaron told me a lot about Princess Kaçiulani, and that really made me want to do this song,” says Martin, “to show my aloha for her. I always loved the way Daddy did it with the Sons of Hawaiçi. It’s for him, too.” Gabby recorded it on the classic 1962 album *GABBY PAHINIU WITH THE SONS OF HAWAIÇI* (Hula Records 503), and he also recorded it on his 1972 album *GABBY* (the “Brown Album,” on Panini Records 1002), playing in the C Mauna Loa Tuning (C-G-E-G-A-E).

George starts the song off on the 6 string neck with again some beautiful Atta Isaacs

inspired chords of C Major 7/9, E minor 9, D minor 9, A Flat 9, to G7th (all sounding two half steps higher because of the capo, thus sounding D Major 7/9, F# minor 9, E minor 9, B Flat 9, to A7th). Bobby is featured on the solo, a standard feature of this song, with George very subtly playing phrases in back of him.

Cyril Pahinui also recorded this song in the C Major Tuning (C-G-E-G-C-E), with acoustic steel guitarist Bob Brozman on their 1999 duet album *FOUR HANDS SWEET & HOT* (Dancing Cat Records). Bobby Ingano also recorded it on his 1998 album *STEEL REFLECTIONS* (Flying Solo Music).

9. ***C-A-T, Pöpoki Spells Cat***

Martin: Vocals and 6 string rhythm guitar in C Mauna Loa Tuning, fingering in the key of G, and capoed up two frets to sound in the key of A

George: Yairi double-neck guitar with the 6 string neck in G Major Tuning, and capoed up two frets to sound in the key of A

Aaron: Bass and back-up vocals

Bobby: Steel guitar

Bandleader and composer Andy Cummings (1913-1995) often sang this swinging language lesson. “Daddy played steel guitar in Uncle Andy’s band back in the 1940s, and they were good friends all the way until the day he died,” says Martin. “I got to do a couple gigs with them in the early days and always appreciated how much fun they had. I wish I could have played golf with them too, but I was just too young I guess.”

George’s solo features him again using the highest pitched open string as a repeating drone note, as he did in *Hanohano Hawaiçi* (song # 3), and Bobby’s solo features his signature understated, yet profound phrasings. Also note his beautiful muted playing, combined with Aaron’s great walking bass line.

10. ***Moloka’i Nui A Hina***

Martin: Vocals and 6 string rhythm guitar in C Mauna Loa Tuning

George: Yairi double-neck guitar with the 6 string neck in C Wahine “Leonard’s C” Tuning; and the 12 string neck in C Mauna Loa Tuning

Aaron: Bass and back-up vocals

Bobby: Steel guitar

Each island in Hawaiçi proudly maintains a host of distinguishing symbols, including leis and special songs. This classic anthem for great Molokaçi, child of the goddess Hina, speaks of the legendary chief Piçilani; the kukui nut lei, which represents the island; and important landmarks on the Friendly Isle: the kukui blossoms of Lanikäula and the majestic Hälawa Valley set among the cliffs, described as the favorite spot of the anonymous author (sometimes also attributed to Matthew Kane). The song title translates as “Great Molokaçi of Hina.”

“This has always been one of my favorite songs,” says Martin. “Daddy used to play it with Andy Cummings. I recorded it before, but I love doing it with the new arrangement Aaron made. The bass singing he does really adds to the old time feel.”

George starts the song with a short strumming-based solo on the 12 string neck. Bobby plays beautiful muted steel in back of the first vocal verse, and later in back of George's next strummed-based solo on the 12 string. Then in back of Martin's next vocal verse, Bobby plays artificial harmonics (chime-type tones produced on the steel guitar by lightly laying the heel of the right hand generally on the twelfth or fifth fret above the position of the steel bar held with the left hand and simultaneously picking with the right hand), playing the first part of the verse with the harmonics picked twelve frets above the steel bar, and the second part of the verse with the harmonics picked five frets above the bar, producing harmonics an octave higher than the ones played twelve frets above.

George's second solo later is in his normal picking-oriented style, and he plays the first half of the solo on the 12 string, then switches quickly to the 6 string neck for the second half of the solo, again supported by Bobby's muting for the first half of the solo. Note their jazzy use of the F Seventh chord instead of the normal F Major chord in the last part of the solo.

Martin also recorded this song on his 1995 album MARTIN PAHINUI (Mountain Apple Records). Gabby recorded it with Andy Cummings around the 1950s on the album THE BEST OF HAWAIIAN SLACK KEY WITH GABBY PAHINUI (Waikiki Records 340). Cyril Pahinui recorded it as a powerful solo instrumental on 12 string guitar in the C Major "Atta's C" Tuning (C-G-E-G-C-E), on his album titled 6 & 12 STRING SLACK KEY (Dancing Cat Records).

#### 11. *Na 'Ono Ia Na Kupuna*

Martin: Vocals and 6 string rhythm guitar in C Mauna Loa Tuning, playing in the key of G

George: Yairi double-neck guitar with the 6 string neck in G Major "Taro Patch" Tuning

Aaron: Bass and back-up vocals

One of the many highlights of the legendary album GABBY PAHINUI WITH THE SONS OF HAWAII (Hula Records 503), this paean to the old-time pācīna (dinner party) celebrates the famous and tasty traditional dishes that the kūpuna (elders) enjoyed – when they still had their teeth! Martin learned the song from his father Gabby, who learned it from the wonderful singer, guitarist and composer (and mother of singer Nina Kealiʻiwahamana), Vickie Içi Rodrigues (1912-1987), who may have composed it, or it may have been composed by Abraham Kaulia, a cowboy from the Island of Lānaʻi. The song translates as "Delicacies of the Elders," and is also sometimes called Nā ʻOno O Ka ʻĀina (translated as "Delicacies of the Land").

An excellent chef, Aaron Mahi joins in on vocals. Another fine cook, George Kuo handles the guitar solos on the 6 string neck of his double-neck guitar in G Major Tuning. Note the interesting chord progression in the second half of the chorus, with the unusual B Seventh chord (the III chord, which was also used in Kanaka Waiwai [song # 7] – the III chord is the E Seventh in that song, since the song is in the key of C). The chords here are G Major, D Seventh, B Seventh, C Major, G Major, D Seventh and back to the G Major.

“The theme of this song is if you enjoy something, do it now while you still can,” says Martin. “It’s got a great, catchy melody. I learned it from Daddy’s recording. Aaron and George kidded me about it because I’m losing my teeth...no more raw crab!”

## 12. *Panini Pua Kea*

Martin: Vocals and 6 string rhythm guitar in C Mauna Loa Tuning

George: Yairi double-neck guitar with the 6 string neck in C Wahine “Leonard’s C” Tuning; and the 12 string neck in C Mauna Loa Tuning

Aaron: Bass

Also closely identified with Gabby and also featured on the album GABBY PAHINUI WITH THE SONS OF HAWAII (Hula Records 503), this flirtatious favorite by Johnny Almeida describes the effects on the heart of tasting the honey of the pānini, a white cactus flower. As the fourth verse says, “Na wai nō ʻōe e a pakele aku i ka wai o ka pānini pua kea (How can you escape its influence after tasting the honey of the white flower cactus?)” Martin says he recorded it as a tribute to the classic sound of the Sons of Hawaiʻi. Hawaiian music, like the great and deep Louisiana Cajun music tradition, has many songs like this one that go between two chords: the I chord (the root chord, here the C Major) and the V chord (the dominant chord, here the G Seventh), establishing a drone-like quality that keeps building as the song progresses.

George takes beautiful solos, first on the 6 string, then on the 12 string, and ends the song with an extended solo, again on the 12 string.

Martin also previously recorded this classic with Cyril and Bla as The Pahinui Brothers on their 1992 album THE PAHINUI BROS. (Panini Records), backed up by the great guitarists Ry Cooder and David Lindley. Gabby recorded it twice: on the 1962 album GABBY PAHINUI WITH THE SONS OF HAWAII (Hula Records 503); and a live version with the Gabby Pahinui Hawaiian Band, playing in his C Wahine Tuning (C-G-E-G-B-E), which included slack key guitarists Atta Isaacs, Sonny Chillingworth and Cyril Pahinui, on the 1974 album THE WAIMEA MUSIC FESTIVAL (Panini Records – also including live performances by other artists). Cyril Pahinui also recorded it as an instrumental, in the C Major “Atta’s C” Tuning (C-G-E-G-C-E), on his album titled 6 & 12 STRING SLACK KEY (Dancing Cat Records).

## 13. *Pua Lilia*

Martin: Vocals and 6 string rhythm guitar in C Mauna Loa Tuning, playing in the key of F

George: Yairi double-neck guitar with the 6 string neck in Leonard’s C Wahine Tuning; and the 12 string neck in C Mauna Loa Tuning, playing in the key of C for the instrumental break

Aaron: Bass and back-up vocals

George Winston: Piano

One of the most famous singing politicians in Hawaiian history, Alfred Unauna Alohikea (1884-1936), was born in Waipiʻo Valley on the island of Hawaiʻi to a large musical

family. After relocating to Hanalei, Kauaʻi, he established himself as a taro farmer, fisherman, bon vivant and one of the island's most popular entertainers. His fame, singing with the Royal Hawaiian Band and writing a number of local hits, helped him expand into politics. In 1928, he won a seat in the Territorial Legislature, promising to make laws as good as his songs.

Another signature song of Martin's, Pua Lilia (Lily Flower) showcases Alohikea's command of mele hoʻoipoipo (Hawaiian love songs), combining traditional Hawaiian repetitions and dramatic leaps with sensuous images of rain creeping silently along the cliffs. The identity of the lily flower named in the title (which woman it is and/or exactly what it represents) is obscure, again illustrating the deep Hawaiian value of kaona (hidden meaning).

George plays the introduction on the 6 string, again with beautiful Atta Isaacs-inspired chords of F9, E Flat 9, D Flat 9, to C9, while Martin plays a technique called hā kuʻikuʻi (also known as kī panipani), an unusual method of playing guitar by hammering on and pulling off with the right hand while fretting with the left hand, which he learned from his dad (and which he also does at the end of the song). Gabby can be heard doing it on the late 1950s album HAWAIIAN SLACK KEY VOL. II – WITH GABBY PAHINUI (Waikiki Records 320), at the end of the song Pācaucau Waltz. Gabby recorded Pua Lilia on the companion album (with the exact same cover—Barney Isaacs is also in the picture) HAWAIIAN SLACK KEY, VOL. I – WITH GABBY PAHINUI (Waikiki Records 319), in his F Wahine Tuning (F-C-E-G-C-E), also featuring his beautiful guitar fills in between the vocal phrases and between the phrases in the steel solo in that version, which so inspired George's playing in this version. Gabby's version also features a beautiful steel solo by Atta's late brother, Barney Isaacs, with his soulful use of the volume knob to increase the volume of the notes after they are struck, as Bobby Ingano does on Waikapū (song # 6). (Barney and George Kuo recorded a pure duet album of acoustic steel and slack key, HAWAIIAN TOUCH [Dancing Cat Records].)

Martin then comes in with his heartbreaking vocal, answered by George's poignant guitar phrases, played in the key of F in the C Wahine Tuning, again inspired by Atta Isaacs, who very often played part or all of a song in a key other than the one his guitar was tuned to (almost always the C Major Tuning [C-G-E-G-C-E]). George takes his instrumental guitar solo in the middle of the song on his 12 string neck in the C Mauna Loa Tuning, playing in the key of C, featuring rolls between two strings and sometimes intervals in thirds, the latter an unusual and beautiful technique in this tuning.

“When we were recording this, Aaron said, ‘Your daddy really got into the writer's head on this one,’ and that inspired me,” says Martin. “A lot of people tell me I sound like my dad, but I never set out to do that. The sound just comes out naturally because I know most of these songs from listening to him. I'm honored if what I do can remind people of him, but there'll never be another musician like him.”

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NOTE: The Hawaiian lyrics to some of these songs with English translations can be found at Hawaiian Hula Archives ([www.huapala.org](http://www.huapala.org)). Nā ʻŌno Iā Nā Kūpuna is listed as Nā ʻŌno O Ka ʻĀina. Lei No Kaʻiulani can be found in KING'S BOOK OF HAWAIIAN MELODIES (a reprint of the 1921, 1942 and 1948 editions [originally the one with the blue cover]), which can be ordered at [www.tropicislemusic.com](http://www.tropicislemusic.com).

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## **CREDITS:**

Recorded July 16-19, 2002, at Audio Resource in Honolulu, Hawaiʻi  
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