

IN THE STAR-ADVERTISER FRIDAY PRINT EDITION



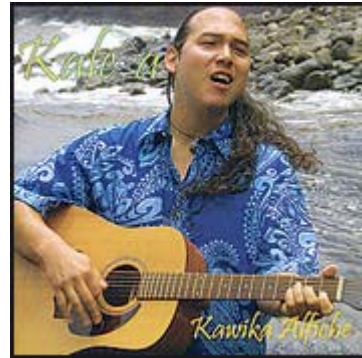
From the Bay Area, with love

'Kale'a'

Kawika Alfiche

(Keikiali'i Productions, no serial number)

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Hawaiian music has been traveling the world for more than a century — dispersed by Hawaii-born performers, by recordings and by people in other parts of the world who have adopted and adapted it just as musicians here have adopted and adapted music from elsewhere. Bay Area resident Kawika Keikiali'i ihiwahiwa Alfiche brings it home with this, his second album of Hawaiian standards and original compositions. Alfiche's album is one Hawaii can be proud of, and with recent changes made by HARA in the eligibility requirements for Na Hoku Hanohano Awards — Hawaii residency is no longer required in most categories — Alfiche could easily be a finalist, perhaps even a Hoku Award winner, in 2012.

Like Keali'i Reichel? Alfiche's arrangements and singing style are sufficiently reminiscent of Reichel that fans of the superstar kumu hula/recording artist are likely to enjoy Alfiche as well.

Alfiche gets off to a great start with two songs honoring his kumu, the late Rae Kahikilaulani Fonseca. "Mele Aloha," newly written and performed a cappella, is Alfiche's personal requiem for his kumu. "Kealoha," by Ida Malacas, is a song Alfiche and his halau performed at Fonseca's request. Taken together, the two songs display Alfiche's performing style, his commitment to the traditional music of Hawaii and his personal ties to the islands.

The simplicity of "Kaua'i Beauty" — three acoustic instruments and Alfiche multitracking the harmonies — makes it one of the stand-out selections. "Hi'ilawe," performed by four musicians playing traditional instruments, and with Alfiche and Lehua Yim harmonizing, is also nice.

Including the Hawaiian lyrics ensures that anyone learning the song will learn it correctly. English translations make the basic meaning of the songs available to the mainstream market. Background information adds to everyone's appreciation of the artist's work. This kind of documentation is essential, and it's also nice to know that Alfiche wrote "Ku'u Puni" for his young nephew and that he recorded "Pua 'Olena" because it reminds him of a beloved aunt.

["Mele Aloha"](#)

["Kealoha"](#)

["Ho'i Hou Mai"](#)