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Hawai`i Island Performing Artists: We Are `Ohana - Songs of Hope

Island Beat By John Burnett

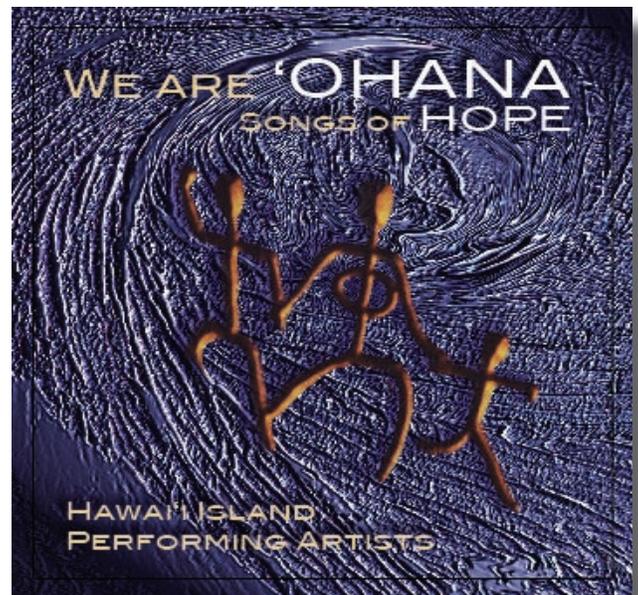
This compilation CD, which includes several of the Big Island and beyond's most talented singers and musicians, is part of a three-phase project to combat substance abuse and addiction on the Big Island. *We Are `Ohana - Songs of Hope* is the brainchild of singer-songwriter Howard Shapiro, the executive producer, and songwriter-musician-producer Gregg Perry.

We Are `Ohana covers several mostly pop genres, but nine of the 15 cuts were written or co-written by Perry and Shapiro and this is, put quite simply, in my estimation, the best written, conceived and produced pop CD recorded to date on the Big Island.

Artists include Keola and Nona Beamer, Kaliko Beamer-Trapp, Bruddah Kuz, Faith Rivera, former Big Mountain vocalist James McWhinney, Damon Williams, Living in Question front man Glynn Motoishi, Rupert Tripp, Jr. and Shapiro.

Major surprises include Motoishi singing "Winds of Change," a pop-rocker totally unlike LIQ's hard rock; and McWhinney doing a rap on "Hawaiian Spirit" and singing rock instead of reggae on "Higher Ground." Williams' "Your Heart Will Lead You Home," an adult contemporary ballad written by Shapiro, is already a local hit. Whether cast against type or typecast, it is all flawlessly executed.

We Are `Ohana is a stunning compilation of much of the island's best talent, coming together to make music and to fight the scourge of drug addiction. It is available



in stores locally, or on Perry's web site at www.pecktunes.com. The producers and artists are also available for presentations at local schools, community groups, businesses and jails and prisons. There is also a *We Are `Ohana* concert tentatively scheduled for Saturday, February 5, 2005 at Hilo's Palace Theater. There will be more details available at a later date.

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PO BOX 1050 • VOLCANO, HI • 96785
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