

All About Kukahi Lee

Kūkahi, whose name means ‘unique’ was born on the island of O’ahu on July 29, 1999. His first taste of music making came from the kitchen. As a baby, his parents would place him on the floor with a pair of wooden spoons and various pots and pans and let him bang away while they would cook.

His interest grew from this to the piano, where he composed his first song, “88 Keys” at the age of six. This love for making music eventually led to him playing the drums, the saxophone, the guitar, the ukulele, the harmonica and the bass guitar along with the keyboard and other percussive instruments. He began singing in front of large crowds when he was 14. Kūkahi had minor instruction while he learned these implements; he mainly picked them up and taught himself how to play because he loves music so much. These days, the 17-year-old multi-instrumentalist teaches keyboard, bass guitar, drums, and rhythm guitar to his siblings—one of who is a member of his backup band, ‘The Love Machine.’

It could be that the teenage singer/songwriter’s innate musical talent comes from his maternal great-grandmother, a gifted self-taught musician who could also pick up and play any instrument in front of her— by ear. Or maybe it comes from his five-times great-grandmother, Her Royal Highness the Queen Lili’uokalani who is celebrated for her intelligence, wisdom and grace as well as for her complex musical compositions. Or perhaps his flair for writing comes from his mother, a song lyricist, poet and novelist. Whichever it is, it is clear that his gift for music runs through his veins.

As Kūkahi’s experience with various instruments grew, so did his passion for arranging and composing original music. His first EP, “Raw” was released in 2015 when he was just 15. Subsequent releases were his first self-titled, full-length album, “KŪKAHI” (produced/engineered by Shane Lee and mixed by Dave Goetter), followed by his single, “KING MC” at the age of 16. He has performed many of these songs for large audiences in Florida, Texas, California, Washington, Vancouver BC, O’ahu, as well as on the Big Island.

Like the definition of his name, his ten-song album, “Kūkahi” is unique. It contains tracks that fuse several musical genres together. These songs are currently being played internationally in France, Australia, and Canada as well as in the United States. This debut album has also received both international and local attention—most recently the Big Island’s newspaper, West Hawai’i Today and French literary journal, “Another Whisky for Mister Bukowski” wrote feature articles about him and his music. Kūkahi is also a finalist in the Alternative category for the Nā Hōkū Hanohano Awards®, Hawai’i’s version of the Grammy Awards.®

With the songs from his current and past albums under his belt, he decided to create another record called, “HUMAN” (produced/engineered by Shane Lee and mixed by P.T. Houston). It is scheduled to be released on May 5, 2017. This feel-good album

was written with the premise that all people have the power to make a positive change in our world. Each song shares a story that is meant to outline the imperfect—yet beautiful connections that each one of us has to one another. Togetherness is the main message of this LP.

His official album release party is slated for May 4, 2017, at the Americana Lounge: 1553 Cahuenga Blvd. in Hollywood, California.

Kūkahī has called beautiful Waimea, on the Big Island of Hawai'i his home for the past four years. When he is not writing, composing, practicing, or performing music, Kūkahī is cooking meals for his family and friends, creating modern art, playing chess, studying influential films, watching cartoons, volunteering his time to entertain for charities, listening to good "old" music, and chillin' like Bob Dylan.

For more information about Kūkahī and his music, e-mail:
makaliiproductions@gmail.com