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Weekend of jazz to benefit YWCA

by The Garden Island
Posted: Tuesday, Aug 15, 2006 - 08:59:30 pm HST

What organizers are billing as "the most prestigious jazz concert ever held on Kaua'i" is set to groove on Oct. 27 and 28 at the Grand Hyatt Kauai and Princeville resorts.

"Jazz On the Shores" will bring two days worth of top-flight jazz performers to Kaua'i to perform in the benefit concert for the YWCA to help continue operations of the YWCA's Family Violence Shelter.

Cjazz Productions will provide the talent and format for the weekend of music. Cjazz is a promotions company based in Seattle, Wash., with more than 12 years of experience as promoters of jazz artists and producers of live concerts.

"Jazz On the Shores" promises to be a stellar production with all the bells and whistles of a concert you would see on the Mainland," said Leila Fuller of the YWCA in a press release. "We've pulled out all the stops to ensure a professional production and we hope Kaua'i jazz lovers and newcomers to the jazz genre will be talking about this event for months to come."

General admission tickets will be \$40 when obtained in advance. The cost will be \$50 per person at the door. "It's a win-win event because Kaua'i will be entertained for hours while their attendance will help keep our Family Violence Shelter for women and children in operation," Fuller said in the release.

Headlining the event will be international jazz saxophonist Jeff Kashiwa, saxophonist Euge Groove, and keyboardist Gregg Karukas, with a full back-up band. There will be a guest appearance by vocalist Raz Kennedy.

Kashiwa studied jazz at Berklee College for two years, was the featured saxophonist of the popular contemporary jazz group, The Rippingtons, for seven years and is featured on six of their char-topping releases. In addition to recording with the Rippingtons, Kashiwa has toured extensively throughout the U.S., Europe and Asia. For "Jazz on the Shores," he will be backed by an ensemble of musicians including Dave Hooper on drums, Cornelius Mims on bass, and guitarist Ray Fuller.

While earning a bachelor's degree in music at Cal State Long Beach, Kashiwa took to the road for a while with the ska/reggae/R&B outfit The Untouchables, which played MTV's first Spring Break.



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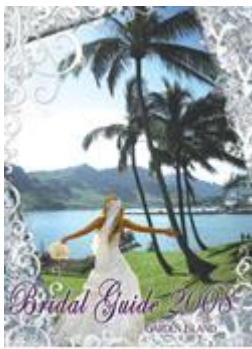
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Visitor's Guide



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Kashiwa appeared on Ripps' recordings "Welcome to the St. James Club," "Curves Ahead," "Weekend in Monaco," "Sahara," "Black Diamond" and "Live in L.A." He can also be heard on a number of soundtracks for movies and television, including the theme for ABC's "All My Children."

Euge Groove (born Steven Eugene Grove) is an American smooth jazz saxophonist with a strong Top 40 background that reviewers describe as smooth and sexy.

Groove replaced Richard Elliott in the still-popular group Tower of Power when Elliot decided to pursue a solo career.

After a four-year run with Tower, he freelanced, doing sessions and working in backup bands for clients such as Joe Cocker, Elton John, Eurythmics, The Gap Band and Huey Lewis and the News, as well as Aaron Neville, Bonnie Raitt and Richard Marx. When his debut album was released in May of 2000, he toured with Tina Turner and was named R&B's breakout artist of the year. He also earned a Jazz Trax Debut Artist honor and received a Prism Award nomination.

Gregg Karukas is a smooth jazz keyboardist, pianist and songwriter, originally from the Washington D.C.-area, where he was one of the top fusion and studio players around. Karukas has what some describe as "a relaxing smooth jazz style of music that makes him a mainstay on smooth jazz radio stations."

He has also been a guest artist on tours with Boney James, Peter White, Eric Marienthal, Ricardo Silveira and Larry Carlton and has produced a vast array of artists at his own Nightowl Studios, including Peter White, Craig Chaquico and The Pointer Sisters.

Raz Kennedy has been performing and recording in the San Francisco Bay Area for nearly two decades. A founding member of Bobby McFerrin's "Voicetra," he has also worked on projects with the June Watanabe Performance Ensemble, Toni Childs, and Oberlin Dance Collective. He has toured nationally and internationally and has recorded numerous radio, TV, and film projects including the Academy Award winning documentary, "Common Threads."

His recording credits include vocals with Al Jarreau, Bobby McFerrin, Kenny Loggins, Narada Michael Walden, Todd Rundgren, Jason Becker and others. As a vocal coach and producer, Raz has an impressive client list including Adam Duritz and other members of The Counting Crows, Clarence Clemons of Bruce Springsteen's E Street Band, Brenda Holloway, Grammy award-winning artists Los Tigres and Narada Michael Walden.

Raz served on the Board of Governors at the Recording Academy's San Francisco Chapter, organizing local seminars and clinics with an emphasis on vocal production. As a music educator, he is a long-time faculty member at three leading community musical institutions — Blue Bear School of American Music, Jazzschool and The East Bay Center for The Performing Arts.

Tickets will be available in early September at the following outlets:

- Scotty's Music, Kalaheo;
- Bounty Music, Kapa'a;
- Photo Spectrum in Lihu'e;
- Borders Books and Music in Lihu'e;
- Princeville Resort;
- and the Grand Hyatt Kauai Resort and Spa in Po'ipu.

Tickets may also be purchased through the YWCA. Call Debi Bird at 245-5959 (ext. 226) for ticket information, or send a \$40 per ticket check made payable to the YWCA at 3094 Elua St., Lihu'e, Kaua'i, 96766.

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