



Hōkū Zuttermeister was born and raised in Kāneʻohe, Hawaiʻi, to parents Carl and Susan Zuttermeister. He attended Windward schools – from Benjamin Parker Elementary to King Intermediate and Castle High. Hōkū has 3 siblings: sisters Tiffany and Hone, and brother Makana. At a very young age, Hōkū started dancing hula, and in intermediate school, progressed to teaching himself how to play the ʻukulele, guitar and bass. Hōkū comes from a Hawaiian family dynasty that encompasses both the hula and music communities. His great-grandmother, Kauʻi Zuttermeister penned the beloved song, “Nā Pua Lei ‘Ilima,” and his great-aunt is Kumu Hula Noe Zuttermeister.

As Hōkū grew into his musical abilities, he and his friends found an innate desire to play the music that their kūpuna listened to and performed; the music of the Hawaiian renaissance as broadcast on the old KCCN 1420AM. As these friends grew closer, they honed their musical skills, and during Hōkū’s senior year in high school, Kānaʻe was born. Ioane Burns, Marcus Ontai, Kekoa Kaluhiwa and Hōkū formed this singing group in 1992, at a time when traditional Hawaiian music was faltering in its popularity and Jawaiian music filled the airwaves. They realized that they were the only young group of musicians performing the nahenahe style of Hawaiian music. The music of Linda Dela Cruz, Genoa Keawe, Sam Bernard, Darrell Lupenui, Kekua Fernandez, The Brothers Cazimero and many other Hawaiian music artists shaped Kānaʻe’s, and in turn, Hōkū’s musical style. Through the years, the group has changed its lineup, but Hōkū and Ioane still play together as Kānaʻe to a large following of fans that seek them out whenever they perform. It is from this following that word of Hōkū’s talent started to spread throughout the islands, as well as the Mainland US and Asia.

After high school, Hōkū continued his growth as a musician by performing with such Hawaiian music greats as Kuʻuipo Kumukahi, Jerry Santos, Sean Naʻauao, Raiatea Helm, Nā Palapalai, Mahela Ichinose, Hoʻokena and Side Order Band. It is from these musicians, and others too many to name, that Hōkū learned the intricacies of starting and maintaining a musical career. Hōkū credits all of these influences as the pieces that have come together to form his musical style; a style that he describes as being “Hawaiian, but with a more contemporary flair”.

Hōkū continues that his music is “more about the heart and feel of the song more so than the notes and chords”. Some of the songwriters whose compositions Hōkū enjoys playing the most include Frank Kawaikapuokalani Hewett, Kawena Pukuʻi and Maddy Lam, among many others. Hōkū takes their songs to heart and re-interprets them with his own style and has created a signature sound that will become instantly recognizable to anyone willing to spend a moment with his music. Hōkū’s voice is deep and resonating, yet when he switches to the crystal-clear highs of falsetto, to the delight of his listeners, he shows the enormous vocal range that he has worked so hard at perfecting. Behind his

amazing voice comes the versatility of his instrumentation. Again, many years of practice and performance have helped to shape Hōkū's guitar, bass and 'ukulele playing abilities and these instruments form the base of all of his music.

After all these years, and through the support of friends like Jerry Santos, Robert Cazimero, Auntie Genoa Keawe, Les Ceballos and many others, it was apparent that the time had come for Hōkū to step into the spotlight and record his first solo album. Hōkū's highly-anticipated debut album, “‘Āina Kūpuna”, was released on March 27, 2007, to brisk sales and glowing reviews. In the April 6, 2007 edition of the Honolulu Star-Bulletin, John Berger says “Hōkū Zuttermeister's long-awaited album lives up to the high standards expected of it. A welcome addition to the relatively short list of traditional Hawaiian releases in recent months, it is a perfect showcase for Zuttermeister as a solo artist and would represent Hawaii quite well at the Grammy Awards next spring.” From the Honolulu Advertiser, Wayne Harada exclaims “This is the kind of auspicious debut that evokes admiration and endorsements, and ultimate stardom. Simply put, this is Hawaiiana at its best and an early contender to sweep the awards next year.”

Hōkū is a young man in his early 30's, but he has been a part of the Hawaiian music industry for a very long time. The way he keeps his outlook fresh is by keeping one thing in his heart...friendship; it is friendship that brings meaning to all of his music and keeps the music 'fun'. Hōkū's outlook toward the future includes sharing his music and experiences and he hopes to provide a platform for future generations of Hawaiian musicians to stand on and to help guide them on a road that is sometimes rough and filled with twists and turns, but whose reward is the knowledge that they will be bringing the past forward to a very bright future.

In June 2008, the Hawai'i Academy of Recording Arts bestowed Hōkū's debut album, “‘Āina Kūpuna”, with 10 Nā Hōkū Hanohano Award nominations in which the album won 6. This prestigious award is Hawai'i's equivalent to the Grammy Award and Hōkū is very appreciative for this recognition by the members of the Hawai'i Academy of Recording Arts. The categories which “‘Āina Kūpuna” received Nā Hōkū Hanohano Awards in are as follows:

- Male Vocalist of the Year
- Hawaiian Album of the Year
- Most Promising New Artist
- Hawaiian Language Performance
- Favorite Entertainer of the Year
- Liners Notes