

## MUSIC



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Natural Vibrations played at last week's Diamond Head Crater Celebration: Peni Pua'auli, left, Wayne Enos, Kayton Macariola, Shane Abraham, Stacy Medeiros and Jehua Evans.

## Talking story from the heart

**Hawaii reggae band Natural Vibrations shares a new appreciation for its roots after a mainland tour capped by a performance in Diamond Head crater**

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FRESH OFF a 17-show West Coast tour, Hawaii's own reggae stars Natural Vibrations return home to celebrate the release of their first new album in four years.

"From the Heart" debuted at No. 5 on the Billboard reggae chart last month, and continues to hold its own in the top 10 among some of the biggest names in mainstream reggae music.

### Natural Vibrations

"From the Heart" CD Release Party

**Place:** Pipeline Cafe, 805 Pohukaina St.

Last weekend, they were invited to be part of the Diamond Head Crater Celebration and banged out a high-energy set between performances by Yvonne Elliman and Mick Fleetwood's Island Rumours Band.

**Time:** 8 p.m. Saturday

**Admission:** \$15, 18 and over

**Call:** 589-1999

On Saturday, Natural Vibrations will be joined by Black Square and Go Jimmy Go onstage at Pipeline Cafe. The Star-Bulletin spoke with band members Wayne Enos, Jehua Evans, Kayton Macariola and Peni Pua'auli in separate conversations over the past week to get their thoughts on touring, their new album, and the difference between local and mainland audiences.

Here is what they had to say:

### What was it like playing at the Diamond Head Crater Celebration last weekend?

**Peni:** I thought it was cool. After my mom had me, she never went to any more crater festivals. So it was kind of full circle for my family.

I really loved playing on the cabaret stage. If they gave that stage to us for the entire day, that would have been fantastic. But just being in the crater, my kids can now say

their dad played in the crater. Not too many musicians can say that.

**Jehua:** We were thrilled to be there. We've heard about our parents going to it. It was nice to actually go and be a part of it.

### **Your thoughts on the most recent mainland tour?**

**Peni:** It was good. Every year we go on tour, it's an educational tool. It teaches us a lot about ourselves, as well as our bond with each other. You really cannot read these things in magazines or books. It's all firsthand experience. We're proud to go out and represent the 808 state.

**Wayne:** The places was cool. The 17 gigs wasn't. And this time we had one team; we had Vertical Junkies doing the managing and all of that.

**Kayton:** It was an awesome experience. It's getting better and better every year we go mainland.

### **Did you think the band would remain intact after more than a decade together?**

**Wayne:** Oh yeah, we all knew ... we was in for the long run.

**Peni:** I hoped that we would be. ... It's taken us a long time to get to the point where we're at, but that's good because along the way we've built our reputation and foundation.

**Kayton:** Not really ... but we've survived. But you know how some people like going to the beach? That's how playing music is for me. It's really relaxing.

### **How has the songwriting process changed over the years?**

**Wayne:** Now more guys are writing. Shane (Abraham) is writing more, and Jehua wrote two songs for this latest album. Kayton and Stacy (Medeiros) wrote the last song, and I got two songs. The majority was me and Peni on the first album.

We all go at our own pace ... like Shane's song, "Never, Never." That song existed when "Balls Rolling" came out in '95. Only had the chorus ... the verses for that song came way after.

**Jehua:** We encourage everybody to write songs. The more material the better, you know?

### **Where do you draw your inspiration from?**

**Wayne:** From the heart. Something like that. I don't know, brah ... I just call it "The Vibe."

**Jehua:** It's all based on our love for these islands and where we come from. We're trying to show people that this type of sound can come out of Hawaii.

**Kayton:** I guess it's my family. ... We've always been into music.

### **What's the biggest difference between a local audience and a mainland audience?**

**Wayne:** (The mainland crowds) are kind of a little more appreciative. You know how you see the ocean every day, and after a while you take it for granted? When you go over there, it's like they never see the ocean in a long time. They never seen us in a long time. ... It's the same way.

**Peni:** Here at home, we party hard. On the mainland, they a little bit more reserved. ... They're more spiritual.

When we get spiritual, that's when we put on hula shows, like Merrie Monarch. When

(locals) think Natural Vibes, they think party.

**Jehua:** Here, we play for people who see us all the time. On the mainland ... sometimes we're playing for people who have never really heard us before. And then we'll do shows where the majority of people are from Hawaii, but they're living up there.

**Kayton:** To me, it's kind of the same, actually. When we go mainland, still get the local people!

### **Do you feel like you still have to win over new fans?**

**Peni:** Brah, there is hunger for planet domination and universal domination.

I want to play music on a spacecraft for the aliens. I want to go to some different planet and just bang 'em out over there and see what they think. That's how it's like when we're on tour -- you never know what to expect.

**Jehua:** For sure. We're trying to make ourselves available for everybody. We're constantly trying to spread our music to the masses.

### **What about the term "Jawaiian"? Do you like being labeled?**

**Wayne:** I don't try to categorize things, but if I had to ... I would say (we're) Jawaiian. I like to bump that word. Everybody else kind of shuns it, but hey, try go and Google "Jawaiian music." Who comes up at the top?

**Peni:** Anybody can label anything any way they want. But me, I hate that word. It's like a swear word to me. To me, Hawaiian is Hawaiian. I like to think of all the musicians in this state that play reggae music, they play "Hawaiian Roots."

### **Anything special you want to do this summer before the next mainland trip?**

**Wayne:** I gotta get back into surfing. Me and Jehua used to surf all the time.

**Peni:** Finish the next album, but I also want to take a little bit of time and spend it with my family. Just fall off the edge of the earth ... and spend time with them.

**Jehua:** Surf as much as I can, and we're trying real hard to make our merchandising business the best it can be.

**Kayton:** I like go Niihau. That's the only island I never go.

### **What's your favorite song on "From the Heart"?**

**Peni:** There's actually two, "You and I" and "So Nice." My daughter actually co-wrote those two songs.

Our kids right now, they're coming to the point of understanding what dad and uncle them is doing, and they want to be a part of it so bad. All they have to do is stand up and open their mouths and it's gonna come out. It's in their genes. ... They got this natural talent.

**Jehua:** It's hard (to pick one). I think there's sections of certain songs that are high points for me. "Okana Road" is a song that holds a lot of meaning for us.

**Kayton:** My song! Track number 13, "Fight the Power."