

Star Bulletin .com

Vol. 12, Issue 131 - Friday, May 11, 2007



Island Mele

John Berger



REVIEW

From The Heart

Natural Vibrations
(Natural Vibrations - NV0005)

Two-time Hoku Award winners Natural Vibrations could easily make it a three-peat with this collection of original reggae music. It's been four years since "The Circle," the 2004 winner in the Reggae Album category, and the sextet has maintained the creative momentum. Give 'em credit for eschewing generic remakes, keeping the use of bogus imitation-Jamaican accents to a minimum, and avoiding most of the other problematic trappings of Jawaiian/ "island" music.

"Soon Come" is one of the early standouts as the group uses traditional reggae imagery in commenting on issues facing people here. "Okana Road" also addresses issues of local

concern.

A second facet of their repertoire is represented by songs that describe a sex act in relatively explicit terms.

The group addresses romantic male/female relationships elsewhere. One of the romantic songs, "Where Is the Love" -- which is an original song, not the Donny Hathaway hit, albeit with a similar theme -- is an excellent showcase for vocalist Penidean Pua'auli as well.

Local reggae and Jawaiian acts often lack the essential foundation provided by a tight rhythm section, but that's not a problem here. "Soon Come" is one of the best numbers in that respect, but the Vibes' rhythm section is an asset throughout.

www.naturalvibrations.com

MP3 Audio Clips*

- ▣ [▶ You and i](#) ▣
- ▶ [So nice](#)
- ▶ [Soon come](#)

Required: To listen to MP3 audio clips, a music player must be installed on your computer. We recommend using either [Apple iTunes](#) (Mac), [Yahoo! MusicMatch Jukebox](#) (PC), or [RealNetworks RealPlayer](#) (PC/Mac), available for free from their respective web sites.

John Berger, who has covered the local entertainment scene since 1972, writes reviews of recordings produced by Hawaii artists. See the Star-Bulletin's Today section on Fridays for the latest reviews. Reach John Berger at jberger@starbulletin.com.