

## UCSD to host Hawaiian Slack Key Guitar Festival April 27

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UCSD TO HOST HAWAIIAN SLACK KEY GUITAR FESTIVAL APRIL 27

A Hawaiian Slack Key Guitar Festival featuring four unique guitar stylings will be presented at 8 p.m. April 27 in Mandeville Auditorium at the University of California, San Diego.

The performers are Hawaiians Keola Beamer, George Kahumoku Jr., and Ledward Kaapana, joined by their special guest Bob Brozman, a mainland steel guitarist currently living in Santa Cruz.

The four will bring the individualized sounds of the standard guitar, 12-string guitar, ukelele, and mandolin creating a musical thread from Hawaiian to blues to Caribbean to African music. Some numbers will include vocals, as well as improvisation by hula dancers. The performance is sponsored by the UCSD University Events Office.

The unique slack key guitar tuning evolved from Hawaiian vaqueros of the mid-1800s. After hours they began playing the guitars of the cowboys (sent from the mainland to teach them riding and roping) who often left their guitar strings slackened after playing. When the cowboys returned to the mainland, they left their guitars with the Hawaiians. Knowing nothing of traditional tuning, the Hawaiian vaqueros who had experimented with slack strings continued tuning to suit themselves. Voila! The origins of ki ho 'alu, or slack key guitar.

Today, slack key guitar is basically a tuning by slacking the strings down from standard tuning to suit an individual player or a particular tune. From the original experimenting has arisen the haunting, mellifluous melodies and open-tunings of the slack key guitar, considered an individual art, with no two people playing alike.

Each guitarist for the April 27 performance brings his own background to the art.

Beamer comes from a family of musicians. He has been recording albums in his own style since the early 1970s, ranging from traditional slack key to chart-topping Hawaiian pop. On a ground-breaking solo slack key album, Hawaiian Slack Key in the Real Old Style, Beamer plays instrumental and vocal arrangements of Hawaiian standards and original compositions. He teaches slack key both with his own instructional manual and a video, The Art of Hawaiian Slack Key Guitar.

Kahumoku began playing slack key guitar at an early age and in 1979 received the highest honor in Hawaii's recording industry for a slack key composition. He has appeared in films about the music and cultural richness of the Hawaiian Islands. He has recorded a number of albums, including Ho 'oilina--The Legacy, a family album of newly created pieces and traditional songs played with his son on slack key guitar and ukulele.

Kaapana began playing with his uncle, legendary slack key guitarist and showman Fred Punahoa. A master of slack key guitar, ukulele, bass, autoharp, and steel guitar, Kaapana performs solo and in groups. His 1988 album, Simply Slack Key, received a Na Hoku Hanohano Award from the Hawaii Academy of Recording Artists.

Kaapana collaborated with Brozman on the album, Kika Kila Meets Ki Ho 'alu, for a Hawaiian acoustic steel and slack key guitar duet. "This was improvisation on the fly," says steel guitarist Brozman, "a very natural and easy way to play music." The two will collaborate in concert at the Mandeville Auditorium performance.

Tickets for the Hawaiian Slack Key Guitar Festival's performance at UCSD are \$17 general admission; \$15 for UCSD faculty, staff and senior citizens, and \$13 for students. Tickets are available at the UCSD Box Office, 534-6467, and at Ticketmaster outlets. For further information, call the UCSD University Events Office at 534-4090.

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