

Afloat: Shawn Livingston Moseley

Contributed by Catharine Lo
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Swim uninhibited in Shawn Livingston Moseley's "The Augmented Sea"

Every once and again while I was growing up, I had these moments of clarity during which I could step outside myself and recognize that whatever was happening right then was uniquely special. I'd hit pause on time and play/record in my mind, trying to convince myself that one day I would look back and remember all these definitive moments—the ones that make life worth living. Maybe it was a first kiss, maybe it was a hope that turned into a reality, maybe it was an unreal sunset. In retrospect, of course, I can't really remember what those occasions were exactly. But if I were to turn this transcendental autobiography into a film, I'd ask Shawn Livingston Moseley to write the soundtrack.

Shawn Livingston Moseley: "Searching for the Calm"

Sit in on Moseley's upcoming performance "The Augmented Sea," and you'll see that the gifted pianist has endowed his compositions with the ability to reach into your soul and pull out loose emotions. As the music rises and settles, the hints of melancholy that resonate with unresolved feelings yield to a melodic benediction, leaving the listener with a promise that individual potential, like the sea's energy, is boundless. Shawn says the music is an expression of the changing sea he observed for years from the living room of his home near Waimea Bay.

"The music often felt not like my own; rather I was just a channel by which the ocean would manifest itself into song," the reflective artist describes. "As a romantic dark and stormy day becomes a sunny afternoon, so does the music I am guided to create."

His interpretation comprises the first half of the intimate Aug. 25 concert at Atherton. Following a demonstration of the therapeutic harp by Dr. Elizabeth Chen Christenson of Sounding Joy Music Therapy will be the acoustic debut of Moseley's new band Evasive Species. Billed as "the next evolution of music in Hawai'i," Evasive Species infuses the traditional sound of slack key with the modern jazz feel of urban hip-hop.

Band members include MC Navid Najafi on vocals, Stephen Inglis on vocals and slack key guitar, Jon Hawes on upright bass, and Steve Howells on drums and electronica. Moseley will play piano and Fender Rhodes electric piano. Shawn highlights Inglis's strong background in rock, blues, and groove on electric as well as his ability to play conventional slack key in a non-traditional band, Hawes's underground rank as the best bassist in the Pacific Rim, Howells's tight grasp of rock and blues, and Navid Najafi's fresh style and easy flow.

"Navid's lyrics rank up there with early Mos Def and Black Star, among many other east coast-based conscious rappers," Shawn adds. "He can rap over anything and do it well, not to mention sound good while he does it."

Having worked with the likes of the Dave Matthews Band, Metallica, and blues legend Ron Levy, Moseley's praise doesn't come lightly. After 14 years of making records in Boston, New York and San Francisco, the veteran producer, engineer, and songwriter brought home his valuable experience and with Rodney Alejandro co-founded Aumakua Records, a label dedicated to nurturing and protecting Hawai'i artists in all genres.

“The only way to pull together a kick-ass band is with

kick-ass players,” the former Dread Ashanti (remember Dread Ashanti?) member points out. With Evasive Species, he hopes to convey a better understanding of slack key to the younger generation “who may be tired of hearing their parents’ old records all the time, no matter how good they are!” and make hip-hop more accessible to the local community. A portion of the evening’s proceeds will be donated to Sounding Joy Music Therapy to support the healing of the people of Hawai‘i through music.

Hawai‘i Public Radio’s Atherton Studio

738 Kaheka St.

Saturday, Aug. 25

7pm

955-8821

\$20 general, \$17.50 for HPR members, \$10 for students

www.shawnlivingston.com

Music notes:

“Searching for the Calm” was the opening song at Shawn Livingston Moseley’s Jun. 2 show at Mamiya Theatre.

“What Lives Below” features Pumehana Davis Wadsworth on her electric harp that she named Elvis. Shawn composed this piece as a film score for a silent underwater film by Morgan Hoestery submitted to the Hawai‘i International Film Festival.

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