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ISLAND SOUNDS

Ex-Islander captures moods on acoustic guitar

By **Wayne Harada**

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A former Islander, now in New York, turns in an evocative instrumental album reflecting the changing seasons and the yearnings of home in a savory acoustic guitar outing reminiscent of George Winston on a smaller scale.

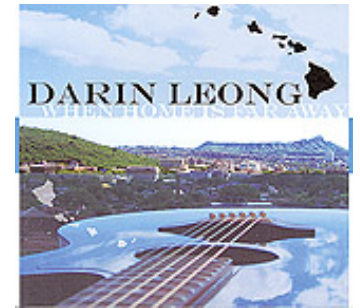


Another composer, who's lived in Hawai'i and abroad, similarly shares his moods and reflections of different places.

And a rock group easily erases rock fever — this one offering good vibrations.

"WHEN HOME IS FAR AWAY" by Darin Leong; hawaiiiguitar.com

- **Genre:** Acoustic guitar instrumentals, some ki ho'alu.
- **Distinguishing notes:** Darin Leong (Punahou '95) has been away (Pomona College '99) but lives and works in New York, where he performs solo, in a duo and with Uncle Jimmy and the Hula Dancers, a contemporary act that has gigged on both coasts as well as in Hawai'i. Leong has trained with Barry Flanagan, Lisa Smith and Bobby Moderow, and the influence has rubbed off in this collection of tranquil, reflective and romantic tunes expressing his feelings about home, life away and changing seasons. The compositions are his, evocative of anywhere home might be at the moment. "Sunshine" is aurally bright and radiant and "New Seasons" percolates with a melancholic spring mood. In contrast, "The Leaves Have Fallen" visualizes fall and the verge of winter, while "February Snow" suggests a frosty landscape, at once beautiful and chilling. "Ka'a Slack" is slack-key to the max, with a link to Hawai'i.
- **The outlook:** It's gratifying to know you can take the boy out of Hawai'i, but you can't take Hawai'i out of the boy.
- **Our take:** Sounds like a small-scale take on George Winston and his Windham Hill collections of pastoral and time-and-place acoustic treatments.



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