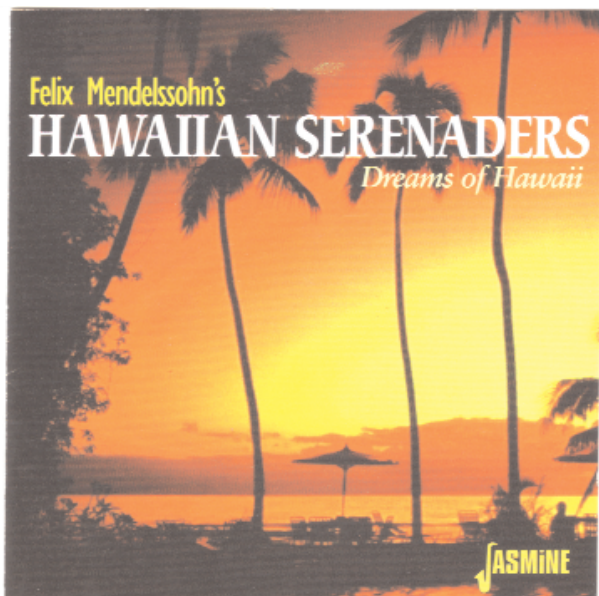


Felix Mendelssohn's Hawaiian Serenaders "Dreams of Hawaii" and "Paradise Isle"

Reviews by Basil



Dreams of Hawaii

Some good and bad point about this compilation.

First the good :- A nice cross section of the Mendelssohn's era, Featuring some of the very best of Harry Brooker and Sammy Mitchell's playing. Good vocals by George Barclay Kealoha Life and Alan Kane (who ISN'T credited)

I like the fact that most of the numbers are in the accepted keys, such a refreshing change from the present day practice of "Any key will do as long as it's easy for me"

My isle of golden dreams has a verse not often heard, but goodbye Hawaii doesn't have the version with the intro verse.

Now the bad :- Track one credits George Barclay and it's actually Alan Kane, Tracks 4 and 18 aren't Felix Mendelssohn's Serenaders but the Pulu Moe Trio. It states that Felix formed his band in 1940, it was in fact 1939. The processing isn't the best, the background noise COULD have been eliminated more thoroughly using the industry standard system "CEDAR" my own humble system has better hiss, rumble and scratch filters.

The pitch of all the tracks is correct the bad one (Mood Indigo) I put down to a bad **original** master. (The track is halfway between Ab and A, but in tune to itself, including the Piano and Marimba)

The title of the album SHOULD have been researched, because it's already in use on a definitive album, Cord International's "Dreams of Hawaii" the steel guitar compilation of Nancy and Vic Rittenband's compositions.

There is a copyright warning on the sleeve notes that's completely misleading..all the material is now in the "Public Domain" and anyone can use it..

Track Details

1. SING ME A SONG OF THE ISLANDS
2. MOON OF MANAKOORA
3. MY ISLE OF GOLDEN DREAMS
4. THE HULA BLUES
5. MOON OVER MIAMI
6. HAWAII SANG ME TO SLEEP
7. SONG OF THE ISLANDS
8. MY LITTLE GRASH SHACK IN KEALAKEKUA
9. IT HAPPENED IN KALOHA
10. TO YOU SWEETHEART ALOHA
11. YAAKA HULA HICKEY DULA
12. GOODBYE BLUES
13. SWEET GARDENIA LEI
14. HAWAIIAN WAR CHANT
- 15 MEDLEY a) DOWN ON AMI AMI ONI ONI ISLE
b) LITTLE BROWN GAL
c) ON THE BEACH AT WAIKIKI

16. GOODBYE, HAWAII
17. MEDLEY a) FORGET ME NOT
b) MY HONOLULU HULA GIRL
c) WEAVE A LEI
18. MAUI WALTZ
19. HILO MARCH
20. KALUA LULLABY
21. MOOD INDIGO
22. ALOHA OE

Available from :- Jasmine Records, Unit 8, Forest Hill Trading Estate, Perry Vale, LONDON SE23 2LX.

Catalogue: JASMC D 2557

Price Code: £5.99 + £1 P&P

Release Date: Jun-99

Bar Code: 604988 25572 0

As a matter of interest I've decided to reprint the description of this album from their web site, although what this BS has to do with either Felix Mendelssohn or Hawaii eludes me !

"Since way, way back, the beautiful Hawaiian islands have been popularly adorned with a flowery lei of romantic glamour. Described by countless visitors as 'the Paradise of the Pacific', referred to by Mark Twain as 'these enchanted islands', Hawaii spells magic! The name conjures up visions of a colourful, sincere, unique Honolulu lying languorously in the early morning sunlight, wafting fragrances of jasmine and ginger, of flower laden sun warmed valleys sweeping away into distant hills. There is the heady perfume of island gardenias and carnations, and the air is charged with excitement as the happy laughing islanders crowd to welcome the ocean liners bringing visitors to their sunny shores. Indeed, how else can one arrive other than by sea, to be greeted by sun bronzed swimmers calling for coins to be tossed into the clear blue waters."

But be aware that there is NO original recording details, i.e. Label, date or musicians. That's in stark contrast to the next album I'm going to mention.

Harlequin HQCD 162:

Felix Mendelssohn & his Hawaiian Serenaders Paradise Isle

Complete with a 20 (TWENTY) page booklet written by Kealoha Life..Amazing information about the history of the the Hawaiian Serenaders from Kealoha's perspective.

There is VERY detailed information about EACH track and who played and sang on it, as well as the recording dates.

This is a superb compilation of many of his rarest titles, never before on LP or CD, from 1939 - 1949 including Trade Winds and six tracks from radio broadcasts and films.

Track Details

1. Strange Enchantment	8 November	1939 A	a
2. Limehouse Blues	5 January	1940 A	
3. Twelfth Street Rag	5 January	1940 A	
4. La Cucaracha	2 October	1941 B	b
5. Caravan	16 September	1943 C	
6. Blue Bahamas	14 August	1944 D	
7. Serenade To A Pagan Moon	14 August	1944 D	
8. Caprice Viennois	7 december	1944 D	
9. Intermezzo	7 december	1944 D	
10. Serenata	1 June	1945 D	
11. Paradise Isle	25 July	1945 D	c

Felix Mendelssohn & His Hawaiian Serenaders



PARADISE ISLE

12. Carefree Waltz	26 February	1946	D
13. Twilight Blues	14 January	1947	E
14. Mamula Moon	14 January	1947	E d
15. Moonlight And Shadows	3 June	1947	E d
16. Rhythm Of The Islands	31 October	1947	E e
17. Samoan Farewell Song	31 October	1947	E f
18. Trade Winds	16 March	1948	E (d&e)
19. Let Me Whisper I Love You	14 April	1949	F a
20. South Sea Sadie	17 April	1949	G g
21. Maui Waltz	June/October	1948	H
22. Sleepy Lagoon	June/October	1948	I
23. On The Beach At Waikiki	June/October	1948	J
24. Limehouse Blues	30 September	1940	A
25. Sophisticated Hula	19/20/21 June	1946	D f
26. Paradise Isle	22 September	1947	E f

The capital letters after the year represent the Hawaiian Steel Guitarist and the lower case letters the Vocalists.

Steel Guitarists

A	Roland Peachey
B	Wally Chapman
C	George Elliot
D	Harry Brooker
E	Sammy Mitchell
F	Billy Bell
G	Tau Moe
H	Pulu Moe
I	Cynthia Read
J	Kealoha Life

Vocalists

a	George Barclay
b	Kealoha Life
c	Nadia Dore's Debonaires
d	Archie Coats
e	Paradise Island Trio
f	Louisa Reyes
g	Lani Moe

Track 21 onwards seem to be an afterthought to what was intended to be a 20 track compilation.

Nothing wrong with adding extra tracks, but they could have been put in chronological order.!

Having said that, it's a good job they were added...where would they have been without the last track ? It provided the title for the CD !!

I won't reprint much from the booklet, but just to give you MORE incentive to buy this CD here's the first page :-

KEALOHA LIFE remembers the Serenaders and his own career... Throughout the 1940's, Felix Mendelssohn's Hawaiian Serenaders were one of Britain's favourite and certainly most unusual bands. They appeared on the major theatre circuits, and were mobbed by fans. They were frequent broadcasters, appeared on TV, films, and overseas programmes, and between 1939 and 1951, cut a fascinating and varied series of discs, many of which were also released in Europe, as well as India, Australia, Japan, and South Africa. (The British and South African Columbia EP-SEG7658 features my picture). Compilations on vinyl, and now CD, have brought new generations of admirers. This particular CD is the companion to HQ CD 93. It includes several rare early tracks, but focuses mainly on the second half of the Serenaders' existence, and contains some surprises. All but a couple of the tracks incredibly escaped vinyl re-issue, and Harlequin are anxious to ensure preservation of this superb material.

Felix Bartholdy Mendelssohn was born September 19th, 1911, at Brondesbury Park, London. His father was a stock-broker. Felix was educated at the City of London School, and in his youth, gave no signs of the unusual direction his life would take. He enjoyed all forms of sport, especially cricket, and years later, would play in various show-biz teams. The liner notes of HQ CD 93 provide information on Felix's early career as an outstanding publicity agent for many 1930's stars.

"Strange Enchantment", a hauntingly beautiful number, was the first title cut by Roland for Felix, but Roland was furious when his name failed to appear on the label, and on April 21st, 1940, was equally enraged, when I, (having been 'billed' in "Melodymaker" to appear as Hawaiian singer on a Serenaders' broadcast, without ever having met Felix!) attended a rehearsal at Madame Tussaud's Restaurant, and Roland complained to me in French (our common mother-tongue) that Felix had replaced the banner, "Roland Peachey and his Royal Hawaiians", with another, proclaiming in huge letters, "Felix Mendel-ssohn and his Hawaiian Serenaders, featuring" (in tiny letters)"Roland Peachey, Hawaiian Guitar", without permission.

There are 18 more pages like that with photos' and some great stories about the band and the Gigs, ladies and music. Oh how I wish Pat and I were playing then !

Back to reality, I now know where I got the verse of "Mamula Moon" from, and listening to the vocalists with Felix makes me appreciate Frank Kahili Leadon all the more. Roland's version of 12th Street Rag is "Scarey" and Harry Brooker's interpretation of Fritz Kreisler's "Caprice Viennois" shows just what a good reader Brooker was. That was a reciprocal tune!, see the booklet page 5. Harry's version of "Carefree" is different to Andy Iona's, Brooker includes the verse.

Serenade to a pagan moon is simply "Damn Difficult" Brooker's words, I promise to 'Tab' it sometime in 2006.

Sleepy Lagoon played by a lady (Cynthia Read) is different.

All in all, a priceless compilation and a definite must for any of you who take this magazine.

Available from :-

Interstate Music Ltd.

20 Endwell Road, Bexhill-On-Sea

East Sussex TN40 1EA