



UtahPresents

PAULA FUGA

SEPTEMBER 13, 2024



Photo by Marissa Mooney



UtahPresents

Pausa Fuga

September 13, 2024 • 7:30PM
Kingsbury Hall

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Paula Fuga Vocals and 'Ukulele

Michael Grande Piano

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INDIGENOUS LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The University of Utah has both historical and contemporary relationships with Indigenous Peoples. Given that the Salt Lake Valley has always been a gathering place for Indigenous Peoples, we acknowledge that this land, which is named for the Ute Tribe, is the traditional and ancestral homelands of the Shoshone, Paiute, Goshute, and Ute Tribes and is a crossroad for Indigenous Peoples.

The University of Utah recognizes the enduring relationships between many Indigenous Peoples and their traditional homelands. We are grateful for the territory upon which we gather today; we respect Utah's Indigenous Peoples, the original stewards of this land; and we value the sovereign relationships that exist between tribal governments, state governments, and the federal government.

Today, approximately 60,000 American Indian and Alaska Native peoples live in Utah. As a state institution, the University of Utah is committed to serving Native communities throughout Utah in partnership with Native Nations and our Urban Indian communities through research, education, and community outreach activities.

“She possesses an uncommonly gorgeous voice and holds notes that wrap around a listener like a mother’s embrace.” – *Variety*

“Hawaiian Queen of Soul” – *Maui News*

“Paula has an amazing strong voice that is melodic and sweet and paints the picture of island life” – *AU Review*

Exquisite vocals, powerful lyrics and gorgeous melodies have earned Paula Fuga widespread critical praise and made her one of the most sought-after live performers in Hawai‘i. She is a songwriter of depth and passion, praised for her intense emotion with a personal style that is widely appealing, endearing audiences to her around the world. It is almost impossible to peg her into a single music genre. With a beautiful disposition, sweet island vibes, R&B, and Hawaiian roots reggae in the mix, her music has been called modern Hawaiian soul.

Her first release *Lilikoi* earned her the Nā Hōkū Award (Hawai‘i’s “Grammy”) for Most Promising Artist of the Year. Her music has continued to blend tradition, innovation, and originality, featuring soul, reggae, and jazz-infused melodies, seamlessly mixing English and Hawaiian lyrics, with Paula on ‘ukulele and backed by a 2-3 piece band. In 2021, she signed with Jack Johnson’s Brushfire record label, and released her first album under that label *Rain On Sunday*, featuring *If Ever*, her single with Johnson and Ben Harper. *Rain on Sunday* garnered two top awards at the 2022 Nā Hōkū Awards: Female Vocalist of the Year and Contemporary Album of the Year. An earlier song collaboration with Johnson, *Country Road*, was recorded for the Mana Maoli CD to benefit Native Hawaiian public charter schools.

Always expanding her professional horizons, in 2023 Paula made her theatrical stage debut as Fairy Godmother in *Cinderella* at Honolulu’s historic Diamond Head Theatre and launched her production company Mana Wahine Productions.

Born in Louisiana where her father was stationed in the Army, she grew up in Hawai‘i, her mom Native Hawaiian, French, English, Filipino, Chinese, and

Puerto Rican, her dad Samoan and Chinese. As she notes, “In Hawai’i every nationality counts.” At an early age, she faced the vulnerabilities of living homeless on the beaches of Hawai’i, seeing the destruction caused by drugs and violence. Fuga began with poetry as a platform to express her experiences. She blossomed into a songwriter when she began playing ‘ukulele in high school. Invited to audition for American Idol in 2004, she did not make the cut but was then asked to come to Hollywood to participate in a show of “rejects” (whose successes proved to outnumber those of the American Idols).

She has toured extensively with Jack Johnson, nationally and internationally, including Australia’s renowned Byron Bay Blues Festival, and recorded with reggae royalty Ziggy Marley – both are featured on her EP release *Misery’s End*. Paula dedicates much of herself inspiring the youth across the world, sharing her story of perseverance and hope. She is one of four performers in Hawai’i (with Jake Shimabukuro, John Cruz, and Alfre Woodard) in the Turnaround Arts program of the Hawaii Arts Alliance in partnership with The Kennedy Center in Washington DC.

Paula plays music for a culture, spreading the thoughtful and evocative voice of the Hawaiian people across the world. Not content to be merely a respected artist, Paula is also a cultural ambassador—using her talent as an instrument to help bring about positive social change within her islands and beyond. Says Paula: “We want to take Hawai’i to the world, show the aloha spirit to the world, loving and welcoming and inviting. We’re all connected by one ocean, even though it has many names, we’re all on this one earth.”

<https://www.paulafugahawaii.com/>

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THE HEART



OF ROBIN HOOD



BY David Farr
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theatre.utah.edu



UtahPresents

2024 2025

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THE LOST ART OF DREAMING

Sean Dorsey Dance

November 21 | 7:30PM

Kingsbury Hall

The Lost Art of Dreaming invites the audience to connect with their own joy and look towards a brighter future.

Tickets and info at utahpresents.org



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