

Mikayla Matz

## Stephen Inglis “Learns Us By Heart”

This June, grammy-nominated artist Stephen Inglis released a new record, *Learning You By Heart*. Similar to Jerry Garcia, Richard Thompson, Dennis Kamakahi, and Gram Parsons, this album puts a new spin on Inglis’ style: it is much more akin to the sounds of the Grateful Dead and Townes Van Zandt; however, what really stands out is Inglis’ use of his Hawaiian Slack key guitar. Born and raised in Hawaii, his methods and melodies are authentic and distinctive.

This isn’t much of a surprise if you’re familiar with Inglis. If you’re not here’s what you need to know about him: in 1998 he formed a band with the Grateful Dead’s drummer Bill Kreutzmann named House of Spirits. After parting in 2001, he toured and recorded an album, *Waimaka Helelei*, with the late legendary Rev. Dennis Kamakahi. Not only did *Waimaka Helelei* win the highest Hawaiian award possible, a Na Hoku Hanohano Award, a copy of the record sits in Washington DC’s Smithsonian Institute.

He has also opened for renowned bands like Sublime, The Specials, and Diamond Rio. As of 2006, he has performed for every major Hawaiian Slack Key festival available, and in 2009 his song, “Redwood Slack Key”, was nominated for a Grammy. His list of accomplishments is nearly endless. As for *Learning You By Heart*, it’s a great feel good album. Thirteen tracks long, it’s whimsical but not woeful and brings a new spin on the Americana and folk genres. It released June 21st, 2015, and is available for streaming and purchase.