

# Remos-Cabral `Ohana with Roots

Maria “SongBird” Remos and Damon Cabral

## *Family Story*

Growing up, each of our parents were steeped in the music of the late 1960s to mid-1980s, which had a big influence on all of their children. Maria’s dad worked at Hawai‘i’s first record store, Hungry Ear Records, where her own love for soul music began. Her mom had a show on local radio station KTUH, was a live music DJ, and waitressed for Gabby Pahinui (a widely known Hawaiian musician) concerts when she was younger.

Meanwhile, Damon’s dad was a record collector and concert promoter in Honolulu. Raised amongst the music culture as well, Damon’s personal music influence began in the local ska punk and hardcore scene -- which had a wonderfully robust group of local bands -- and soon developed an early love for reggae.

As a young adult, Maria began going to a wide variety of shows put on by a mix of artists (punk/ska/salsa/swing/industrial/hip hop/jazz/house). Not long after, she started singing with local performer Deshannon Higa, other groove improv artists, live DJs, and any other kanikapila that would have her. She soon found herself performing mainly at the St. Louis Heights jam that happened after teacher meetings at the Hālau Kū Mana charter school in Makiki. At the time, every gigging musician in Honolulu, regardless of genre, rolled through -- making any kine mele and going late into the night. Because of the open environment, both elders and youth were able to connect with the music.

From the mid-1990’s until the mid-2000’s, Hawai‘i’s local reggae music scene was major. Deep in the community, Damon put on shows where he would DJ and Maria would dance. From Dread Ashanti and Red Session, to Irie Soul and Melodic Solutions, the talent was deep and underground -- the music widely played on radio stations was an entirely different kind of local reggae.



After moving to Oregon, Damon started Took You Long Enough (TYLE) Records with Love Lives Here and Jah Gumby of Ooklah the Moc (an O'ahu reggae group). With their daughter doing the artwork for TYLE, it's a true family affair.

Our lives have always been unofficially dedicated to music, until we made it official with TYLE. To the Remos-Cabral 'ohana, music is something to look forward to, something to share with others, and something to count on. No matter where or how, we are driven by our desire to give back to our community with music, musical history, and art.

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