



## Bronstein Music Profile: Raymond Bambao

Over the past year or so, we've been presenting profiles of the people who work and teach at Bronstein Music. We've heard from many of you who have encouraged us to continue this series of emails, so that's what we're doing. This time, we're pleased to tell you about our newest front counter employee, Raymond Bambao. I hope you enjoy reading about Raymond and his very interesting background.

Regards,  
Don Edwards  
Bronstein Music

### **Raymond Bambao**

Raymond Bambao is a third generation San Franciscan. His father was a musician (he played saxophone and piano, and was also a singer) and, no doubt served as a musical inspiration for his family. Raymond recalls singing at a very young age. By middle school, he was a member of San Francisco Boys Chorus and sang in the school choir. He also played trumpet (which he got at Bronstein Music).



Raymond attended El Camino high school, where he played trombone (bought at Bronstein) in the jazz band and symphonic band. He also sang and, in fact, won two "command performance" ratings at the California Music Educators Association (CMEA) competitions. Add to that joining a vocal jazz group and performing in school musicals, Raymond was becoming a "triple threat" (play, sing, act). He also played football (defensive lineman of the year at El Camino High School), and won the Bank of America Achievement Award in Fine Arts.

He started to dance hula and joined the "Spirit of Polynesia" group. This was the start of a long career in hula (see more below). Raymond got a full vocal scholarship to San Jose State University, where he ultimately earned in B.A. in "Improvised Music Study." At that point, he was also a member of the Oakland Interfaith Gospel Choir and performed with Tramaine Hawkins, Linda Ronstadt, Joan Baez, and recorded with Bobby McFerrin.

His hula dancing led to a number of cruise ship adventures to Hawaii and Tahiti. His group also won the 1996 hula competition at U.C. Irvine and over the next few years, Raymond joined several groups where he danced, sang, and played guitar, keyboard,

electric bass, upright bass, trombone, ukulele, and saxophone! He recorded three albums and his group made it onto the ballot for the "Na Hoku Hanohano" awards - the Hawaiian version of the Grammys (it was the first mainland group to get that distinction). His love for Polynesian music led to three tours of Japan and several more awards.

In addition to working at Bronstein Music, Raymond has been the music director for the Spark of Creation's productions of Mulan, Annie, Once on the Island, Little Mermaid, Alladin, Seussical the Musical (all performed at the Skyline College Theater). This group is currently preparing for a 2017 production of Peter Pan. Raymond has also taught dancing, singing, ukulele, and guitar, has been the music director and composer for a Tahitian group, and is currently appearing on electric bass with "The Autonomous Region," a group that fuses jazz and traditional Filipino music. The next time you're in the store, say hello to a very accomplished and humble musician, singer, dancer, actor, teacher, and more.

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