Soon after the illegal overthrow of Queen Lili’oukalani’s government and U.S. annexation of Hawaii in 1898, Joe Kekuku and other Native Hawaiian guitarists embarked upon a series of transcontinental journeys that continue to ripple and resonate. This presentation will explore the origins of the Hawaiian (steel) guitar and situate its development within both the proliferation of a rich guitar culture in the islands, and within the accompanying political turmoil that led to and followed the overthrow of Kānaka Maoli rule in the Hawaiian islands.