

Nana I Na Loea Hula
Kumu Hula: Michael Yoshikawa
Interviewer: Jan Itagaki
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YOUR FULL NAME? Michael Kekaimoku Toshi Yoshikawa. HOW WOULD YOU LIKE YOUR NAME TO APPEAR IN THE BOOK? Michael Kekaimoku Toshi Yoshikawa, the full name yes. But everyone knows me as Moku, as a nickname. AT WHAT AGE DID YOU BECOME INTERESTED IN HULA? I got interested in hula at about the age of 14. My little sister was dancing hula for ^{Cissy} Cici Kaio from Carson, California. And I was always interested in hula for some reason while I was young. Doing book reports, or anything that had to do with a project, I always did it on Hawaii. And all the kids would always just know, when it came time for like art work or projects, that I'd do something on Hawaii. It was pretty automatic. And when I saw my sister dancing, I kept on asking my mother, when is Cici going to be starting with boys, so I can get there. I had to wait awhile, but that's when I started at 14. WHERE YOU BORN AND RAISED IN CALIFORNIA? I was born here in Oahu, and my parents and my family moved to California when I was 2 years old. So, from there, when I was 2 years old, until about 19, I was raised in California. Carson, California. WHEN DID YOU START WITH CICI? I started with Cici I guess at the age of 14. I think it was like in '82, '81 or '82, around then. And I remember just like hanging around, just trying to show my face, just waiting for that signal that she would be starting a boys group. SHE THEN HAD A BOYS GROUP AND YOU JOINED THE CLASS? At the time she did have a mens group, but I was too young obviously for them. So what she did was she created a teenage group. We were known as the teenagers. There was four of us. Myself and three of my other cousins. DO YOU KNOW WHO CICI'S KUMU HULA WAS? Her kumu hula was her last name was Kalama, she was from California as well. Oh gosh, I forget. She

came with her to Merrie Monarch this past year. It'll come back to me soon.

WHAT DO YOU REMEMBER ABOUT CICI'S STYLE OR METHOD OF TEACHING? I

think the one thing that I learned from Cici was that she gave me a very good base to start from. That base of hula, a very strong foundation was of humility, of ha'a ha'a, and of enjoyment of your hula. And that it wasn't just physical activity,

there's more to it than just the physical. There's an aspect of spiritual involved.

Which as I evolved, I got to know more and more. And I continue to learn more about the spiritual side everyday with the hula. It gives me such a wonderful

feeling inside. DID SHE TEACH YOU KAHIKO AND AUANA? Yes. She taught

kahiko and auana. During that time I was a teenager, I loved the dance. I made sure I knew my dances, and I would go over them all the time and remember them. But

I always pulled towards kahiko for some reason. I was always amazed by it for some reason. There was an attraction there that I didn't know what it was, but it pulled

me that way, and especially chanting, oli. WHAT KIND OF KAHIKO DID SHE

TEACH YOU IN THE BEGINNING? In the beginning, they were very simple ones.

I remember doing He No Kawika, simple mele. At the time, they were very basic,

very basic. We did a lot of ali'i, for ali'i, as well as akua. For Cici, her family is of

Pele, so we would do a lot of Pele, for the goddess of Pele. After a while that became our strong point in our kahiko, as far as doing our numbers. They were in honor of

Pele. DID YOU RECEIVE ANY CERTIFICATES FROM CICI? I never received a

certificate from Cici, but I did receive her blessings. While there as a teenager, she

saw that I had a knack for things, I remembered things quickly. I always was around.

I made myself available, because I wanted to learn so much, absorb as much as I

could. As she saw that, and as I developed that, she saw me wanting a little bit

more. And she would slowly give duties, duties such as I would get involved in

making costumes. That's why I know how to sew costumes to this day, as well as

slowly getting into the mens. After I got up to age 16, then our teenage group

blended in with the older men. It was at that time that I started to slowly, she started to incorporate me as maybe like an alaka'i from there. And as I did alaka'i for a while, like running classes, running basics, basically. I would watch, I would watch all kinds of halaus and the Merrie Monarch tapes, because we were in the mainland. So, I would watch Merrie Monarch tapes to no end and developed a very good sense of, eye. An eye for whatever it may be, costuming, steps and stuff like that. And from there, she just kept on slowly, she did it in a very graceful way, that I could develop on my own. When I got to the age of about 18, that's when she let me become like a kokua kumu. Which that was a very young age to have a duty like that, but I developed quite rapidly in that area. And through experiences of teaching at such a young age, I guess she felt that I was ready for that. It was interesting that I was so young and the other men in the class were much older than I. So, the clash there of teaching older men, their philosophies were set. And to have a young man come in and tell them what to do was different for them, as for me too. To tell my elders what to do. And I was always very respectful towards my elders. DID SHE GIVE YOU A SPECIFIC CLASS TO TEACH? Yes, eventually the mens class became mine. She would just come in and sit and watch me run class. Do the basics, as well as slowly incorporating, or asking me what do I think about this part, or choreograph this part of the mele. Or we would do it together as a team, and we would come up with really fun stuff, some nice things at the time. It was very enjoyable. WHERE YOU A HO'OPA'A ALSO? Chanting, yes. That's were I became the, in that area, I was the nucleus of the halau, because I was their only ho'opa'a. Well, one of many, but I was the one with the voice. Developing that at a young age as well, I had no training. Cici herself, was basically self taught her oli, and so as far as my oli, what I did was one summer my mother came home from Hawaii and she usually had nick nacks for us, but this year she had brought home a whole bunch of chanting records of many different people like the Kanakaole's from Hawaii, Kaha'i

Topolinski, Keli'i Taua. I remember them all, Mililani Allen was on that record as well. And through those records and I think Na Leo Kawakahiko, that very old one from the wax cylinders. Once I got a hold of those, what I did was I would listen to them all day, everyday, and being a person coming from a background of no Hawaiian language skills, just listening to the records consistantly, I started to pick up the mele. Like Annuciation, at the time the records came with words, so I would look at the words, and mimmick, copy and annunciate them back with the record or at the same time. And that's how I developed my oli skills. And from listening from the Merrie Monarch tapes. I listened to everyone, to every chanter that's out there. And not really, you know how they say take. I just listen, and I listen to the voice quality, and how the ennunciate, stresses here and there. And from there as a young boy, I kind of, oh that's nice, or that's nice. Like at that time I didn't even know what I'i was. And then evenutally, now I know what it is, but I would mimick it then and even sometimes make fun of it, because it was just so bizare at the time, not really knowing that that was a technique within chanting. And through the records from that point on I developed my chanting up to now. WHY DID YOU LEAVE CICI? I stayed with Cici, I think for a total of 6-8 years. It was so funny because it kind it kind of.., I came here for Merrie Monarch to dance. And I guess it was just meant for me to stay in a sense, because I did a very spontenous thing. I came to dance at Merrie Monarch, and I stayed longer. And then, for the summer, and then I just ended up living here. My aunty said that I could stay with her. I remeber one thing that Cici had told me when I was small. It was that when, it will be time for you to learn when all the knowledge here that you've learned, you have learned, and so it will probably be time for you to move on to learn other things. And I look at it that way. That the 6-8 years that I was with Cici, she gave me everything, that she could possibly give. We experienced a lot of things together as a kumu and a haumana together. And the strong base is from her, and my humility

is from her, and the love of hula, to just strive on and continue it is from her. And basically, that's why I came here to Hawaii. My yearning to learn more was great, and I figured coming here would help me even more, which it eventually did.

WHO DID YOU GO TO AFTER THAT? After I came from California, I figured that I would stay out of the hula scene for a while. I had experienced a lot as a young boy in California coming to Merrie Monarch as well with the California group, and doing well. I tried to extinguish the little fire that burned inside of me, the hula fire. But, it only lasted for a couple of months. And then I started seeking, but not really seeking though. I kind of was thinking and contemplating where I would like to go, who I would like to go to. And eventually an opportunity came ^{where} ~~were~~ I could go to Palani Kahala to visit one of his classes. HOW DID YOU APPROACH PALANI, WAS IT NEW REGISTRATION? Yah, they were recruiting at the time. I had met his alaka'i. And the alaka'i invited me to come to the halau. So I came down and I watched class I believe that first night and maybe did basics for them. Of course, I hadn't had danced in a long time being that I was ho'opa'a with Cici, so I had a very strong desire to dance again. And so I wanted to dance very well. So when I got there, Palani was impressed by me, because the stereotype of oh, look a mainland boy dancing so well in a sense. But, they not knowing my background too much and knowing that I had years of experience prior to that. Also with Palani he had, before I joined he was very respectful towards Cici. He had said that I had to let her know that I would be joining his halau and to get her blessings. So I did that in request of my new kumu. And I called Cici and she gave me her blessings, and she only wishes the best for me and to reach higher levels. One thing that stayed with me or that I continue to now, is that I work with Cici still to this day and it's kind of nice, because now I go back and I give workshops to her haumana, and I give oli classes and I teach them kahiko, I teach them auana. And it feels really, really nice to look back and see where I started and then venture out into the

world and come back to where I started and to give just as freely as I was given to. And it makes me feel really good to go home and to share with the people there.

TELL ME ABOUT YOUR TIME WITH PALANI, WHAT CLASS DID YOU START IN? The mens class, the were well advanced, his mens class. They were very well advanced. Of course at the time I was joining Palani he was in his prime of Merrie Monarch Competitions, doing very well at that level, competitive level. What Palani taught me, it was very interesting, because I look back at it, I ponder upon it now and then. Palani refined me. He smoothed out all of my rough edges, that needed to be smoothed. My costuming, his costume was always impeccable, it was always precise. That's what I try to continue. Language. He stressed the fact of learning language which I still am trying to achieve here in Hawaii. Percision. He was a very percision kumu. Very disciplined as well. Though I, when I was in California teaching there, I taught disicipline in a very disciplined manor. So, coming to another halau that had stong discipline, I really liked it. Instead of enforcing that disicpline, I was under that discipline. It was very nice, I just like ate it up. He opened up even more so my creativity level. Palani was of course a very liberal, very creative person in the hula realm. He always had an idea. He always strove to push himself up to higher levels, or higher goals. And those are the things that he instilled in me. To strive, to do well, to also, to enjoy at the same time. There has to be the enjoyment, or why do it, if there is no enjoyment for yourself. WHAT WAS YOUR ADVANCEMENT IN THE HALAU? My advancement in his halau, well, at first I started as haumana, and haumana, you just show up and dance basically. He did have an uniki process that you could go through to uniki, so once I heard about that, I said that would be nice to achieve. But, for some reason, I was always, the first time I went to olapa, from haumana, you went to olapa, and olapa for him was a more informed haumana basically. I wasn't based on physical, it was based on intelligence of the hula, which was really

nice. So, it took me three attempts to get into olapa, which is so funny, because during your canidicy for olapa, you had to be around. There were certain classes that you had to go to, either like a workshop, or an oli class, that you had to learn oli's in. You had all these differnt things to learn and to prepare for, and if you weren't there, or you missed one class then you're out of candiacy. So, of course, the first two times I missed something obviously came up. I took it too as it wasn't the time for me yet. I always look at things that way. Not to get off tangent but, now you have to ask. If you want to know something, you have to ask. Someone had told me, it was a kupuna, and I was very young, and this is on the mainland and he said, when you time for knowledge, for knowing something, when you want to know something, there's a right time for it. It will come to you when it's time. So, that always sat with me, that things will come when you're ready for it. That's why I always have a hard time to ask and I guess it comes from being humble, ha'a ha'a, I guess. It's like you ask, you're grabbing, you're grabbing. I look at it as being disrespectful to that person that you're asking, especially if it's kupuna. Because kupuna they watch. They watch you and you think they're not watching you, but they're watching you. And, if they think that you're ready for something, they'll give it to you. And that's how I base myself. I ask now and then. Now, because I feel like I fall behind like the group. Like the group of knowledge, the group of knowledge. Everyone is running and asking tutu or aunty about this. You know if was ohana yah, ohana you share, but just to go up to a stranger and ask them, well I need information about this, tell me. It's like, again, there's another saying, to ask a kupuna of their knowledge, is asking them to die, because once they've given all of their knowledge out, they have no sense of being, so they pass on. I don't know where I heard that, I don't know if I dreamt it, or if I heard it somewhere, but I remember that. It's just out of respect for someone else. If they know that you're doing a piece or something like that, you kind of push yourself out there to recieve

knowledge and to knowledge, or search out knowledge. But, I believe that system, its always worked for me. And right around the corner someone will come up or someone will have a connection, oh yah my aunty does this, or my tutu does this. Oh can I go down and talk to her, oh yah, something like this. That works that way for me. AFTER OLAPA? After olapa I was in candiacy for ho'opa'a. And so during that time Palani was running his ho'opa'a classes, which again had a very hard schedule. Very regimented. You had to learn all these different things like mele, the kamanao behind the mele. How to pa'i the mele, and as well as how to dance that mele. And I think there was like 15-18 that he had on a sheet that he would pick at random at the time of your testing to do. And you had to be ready. Also there was a lot of other things for the ho'opa'a. You had to have language skills to a certain amount of years, and be able to slowly open yourself to choreography as well, which I was getting, which I had some experience in through Cici. During his ho'opa'a stage, that's when of course he was getting sick at the time, so classes had to be stopped until he was better. In better health. DID YOU RECIEVE A HO'OPA'A CERTIFICATE FROM HIM? No. The ho'opa'a class was not able to finish unfortunately, because of his untimely death.

AT THAT TIME THAT HE GAVE YOU HIS BLESSINGS TO TEACH, WHERE YOU ALREADY THINKING ABOUT TEACHING HERE I N HAWAII? I was still a student, and I was looking.., as a young boy learning from Cici, and then coming to Hawaii and being with him, I eventually wanted to graduate from him as kumu. That was my goal. Unfortunately because of his death, prior to his death actually, because knowing that he was going to pass on, he got together a few of his haumana, well olapa actually, that were aspiring to become kumu eventually and he talked to all of us individually. Some where, some how, at a certain time. And, these four that were in the newspaper, he had given us his blessing to go out and teach. Well, Palani's kumu is Robert, and then from Robert is Aunty Maiki, so that

lineage there, then from Palani to us, having his blessing in the beginning, I was a bit leary. Because, I knew what the community is like, kind of sort of. They're looking for credentials, you know papa⁸, pala pala for your kumuship. And myself being so young, I was in my mid 20's, 28 or so, and to be blessed, go ahead and take your halau. I think I was like 26, I think. It was quit a task, but as I matured in hula and in hula itself as far as knowledge, his blessing now was good enough for me than anything else. When your teacher says you're ready, go. You should take that as a seal of approval. That's your kumu, he has, they have the right to say those things. SO HE SPOKE TO YOU IN PRIVATE? Yes. He spoke to us as a group first. And then he spoke to me, he spoke to us in private. That was a very special time. He instilled in me just like nothing but positives, saying that to continue what I was doing. He said that I would be a very good teacher in the future. He could see me as being a very, very good teacher. At that time being young I thought in the sense of how he was, you know winning awards and stuff. But, that was the outer shell of Palani, the awards and everything was just besides the point. I think that was his way of just letting me know that he would always be there for me. And I still do believe that he's there. Anytime that I get into a delemma as all kumu do, I believe so. There's decisions to be made, or there's a crisis, I always ask for his presence. I have a picture in my living room of him. When time get a little rough, I look towards the picture, and I think of him, and I think of some of the situations that maybe I could remember from looking in, seeing him deal with certain situations, and get my strength from there.

THE NAME OF YOUR HALAU, WHERE YOU TEACH, AND HOW YOU TEACH, AND HOW YOU STARTED THE HALAU? Of course Palani knew that I wanted to teach hula and wanted to start a halau. One of the things that I didn't have at the time was a name of a halau. The name of the halau, and so I figured the name would come to men, whatever way it would come. And, it was ironic because

he came over to my apartment and said babes, he'd always call me babes, we have to sit down and talk. He had said he had been dreaming of this name, this Hawaiian name which was the name of my halau now which is Kapo Makalei Kapu A Kane. And he said he had dreamt this name not one night, not two, but three nights in a row, and it was coming to him in his sleep. And so he sat down and he says, I know you were looking for a name for your halau. And I said yes I was. And so he goes, I believe this name is for you. And I kind of said wow, and I said kumu what does it mean. And he said it means the sacred night rainbow of Kane. And I said wow. Kumu that's a very strong name, very strong name. And he says, yes babes it is. And then he says, I think you can handle it and I believe that you can handle it. And I said, you think that kumu and he says, yah. And I actually questioned that it's rare to hear the God name Kane, because in most hula halau it's usually towards Laka. And so to have Kane in there in which most people interpret as men, so far, the men of something, and then I come back and I say no, it's the God Kane, which is the God of creation and light. Which is a very appropriate name for me as I look into the name. So that's where the name comes from of the halau, it was from Palani. It was an inoa po. It was a name that came in the night. He gave me that blessing and he gave me that name and he also told me to go and get it blessed. And that's one thing that still remains with me too, is that new names, new implements, new instruments, I always get them blessed, by my kahu. I just get my blessings on them so that the name is clean and it doesn't carry any of the bad significances. Today I get a little bit, not a little bit of slack, because of how it starts out, Kapo and depending on the person, it depends on how you translate it and how you look at it, and people in the beginning were like wow. I would like kind of like cringe and kind of like not say too much, but now if anybody asks me about the name, I state what it means. I say strong and if they try and defer from my interpretation of it, then I say that's the way you see it, the way I see it is in a positive light.

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HOW DID YOU START TO GET STUDENTS? When I was an olapa, haumana and an olapa, there had been an opportunity to teach at secondary schools, after school programs. One of my hula brothers was doing that, and he told me that you should go and attach yourself to a school, and as well as kumu Palani, he told me you should go out there and get some experience, and it'll give you a good experience and prep you. So, I said thank you kumu. And so he sent me us out. He sent any of his haumana out to experience things like that in a teaching manor. So, there was a few of us that went out. I connected with a few of my hula sisters and we went to Intermediate, and I pretty much have a legacy there now, which is five, six years later. But, teaching there for a couple of years and then opening my private halau, that's were I started to pull my girls. They're at a young age, but it was a start and that's how I started. I had a few haumana, like 5-7 girls for a good year to two, but I kept head strong, not to try and get pressured from low enrollment. I figured that the 5-7 that were coming to me, were coming to me for a reason, and not to focus on what should be coming to me, but the ones there with me. WHERE DO YOU TEACH? Well, from Kawanānakoā, I was based there for a while, but now I am teaching at Shriner's Hospital. They have allowed me a room in the back, the back auditorium for my classes which is very, very nice. I guess they do it as a community service for anyone, any type of groups. So, I am based there now, for right now. My women's class that I have had for a long while, maybe about, I think 3 years, and then I eventually opened a mens class, for men. I had just recently opened my keiki's class and have a fun class, which is good fun, because being in a very regimented women's class and mens class probably because of competition. To have a fun class were people just come and enjoy is where it's at too. I just tell

them, I just enjoy you guys so much. IS THIS A KUPUNA CLASS OR JUST ANY AGE? Just any age. Basically, they are a kind of older class of women, but I get all kinds of age groups there, mothers and daughters come from all ranges. And it's growing, so we have fun, because it's only for recreational bids. I'm going to be starting also a teenager class as well, so I guess within the past year and a half or two, I have blessed to have new enrollment, to see new faces. And now our enrollment is through word of mouth, most of the time or through recruitment from the other haumana. HOW MANY STUDENTS DO YOU HAVE? I have close to 50 right now, from all classes put together. YOU HAVE BOTH MEN AND WOMEN COMPETITION CLASSES, SO THEY ARE LEARNING BOTH KAHIKO AND AUANA? Yes. Within the classes, they learn kahiko, auana as well as oli. I really haven't focused on my oli too much as far as teaching people. I've taught individuals, and I teach the groups, the different classes of oli, but I really would like to explore a little deeper in the oli. So right now I actually am creating a, I don't want to say a higher class, but it's like an advanced, a well advanced class to where it would be more than just physical. Within my classes I teach spiritual. To me spiritual ^{rides} over writes physical in my hula teaching. To dance with the spirit, to enjoy the feeling of it, goes beyond anything you can feel or see. I teach that in my regular classes and I would like to do that a little more. So, I'm creating another class, which would be very small, only a few of the haumana that I see that are ready for that or want, or having a want for that will be allowed in that class. And there I would be teaching a lot more as far as oli. Doing projects together, manao, a lot of manao, history and crafts. I do a lot of crafts. I have a lot more to offer than just physical work like a kaholo or uehe. I have a lot more. Within hula you are able to teach your haumana morals and values and I've been fortunate I guess. In the beginning, I thought I was fortunate to have younger girls, because the edge for having older women because of their maturity, as far as dancing, they're mature, so

they're ready to go, but I've been blessed because these teenagers that I've had are becoming women and to see them grow with you. I've had some for eight years and I'm really happy because I see that hula has given them a good path. And I tell them to incorporate that into their lives. As they look at me as I tell them what I see as goals for the halau, they can turn around and put that in their own lives. If they see themselves doing something, whether it be a lawyer, doctor, or astronaut, to go for it. And I'm really happy with the small group of girls that have stayed with me, because I see them striving and doing well. And I've seen some girls leave and go off in a tangent and not necessarily get into a bad situation, but hula could have kept them in a nicer path. So, I think it incorporates, or it actually is a part of your life if you let it, and it can help you be a lot more positive and achieve goals.

ARE YOUR METHODS OF TEACHING THE SAME AS CISSY AND PALANI? I have incorporated both. Back home in California, they basically nicknamed ^{me} my Hitler, because I was just so mean. I was young and I had to control. Not control people, but I had to control them. It was a big group, and being young I just had to show force. I was quit the disciplinary there. I'd work them out very hard. But I get comments to this day from my hula brother in California that are still dancing there, you know the time when you're here, you're very hard on us. Here, when I teach now, Palani gave very hard workouts, just about the same as in California. I run my classes a little bit lighter. Not as hard as I used to, because I don't want to have the children to loose their aloha for it. I believe, especially when their young, and you pound them very hard to learn something, they'll learn it and they'll do it, but they'll forget it within a time span. But, if you slip it in there really easily and sit down and talk to them, I think if you sit down and you talk to your haumana at the same level as them, and them knowing that there's a line that they cannot cross, they being haumana, and you being kumu has worked for me. Everyone knows that I am strict and that I am watching, so they know their duties

and when they get lazy, all it takes is for me to look, an eye or a peer. I noticed that the kupuna's do that too, it's all in body gesture and eyes. It just takes a certain look, or a certain tilt of the head, you know the rippling of the fingers on the knee, or the tapping of a toe, and then they kind of get, oh I'm doing something wrong. And then they usually break it down to that.

OF YOUR TWO HULA TEACHERS, WHO HAD THE GREATEST INFLUENCE ON YOU? I would say, I think Palani had a very great impact on my life. He was just so much full of life and knowledge and just everything. I was his roommate for a while, for quite some time. So through that I was not only a haumana of him, but I was a roommate. I still did respect him definitely as a roommate as my kumu, but there was nights that we would sit up late and talk and get very close to each other, and talk about things. And sometimes he would even ask me about hula and I felt very honored that he would ask me what do you think about this that's happening in the halau. To have him ask my opinion on things. He influenced me a lot, not only in hula though, but in my personal life as well. To do well for myself in my personal life. To be happy where I am and what I'm doing. He's very impactful in that sense.

HOW DO YOU DESCRIBE YOUR HULA STYLE? Of course there is the thing of traditional and contemporary. I kind of look at myself as being traditionally based, and I think that everyone should know that and I think that everyone evolves from that. From a traditional base. And from that you create and get in to a little bit contemporary. When you want to, kumu's have the choice, but I think for me I think I kind of just dabble in them both. Sometimes I'll do a whole piece a little bit traditional which is kahela and ^{uwehe} uehe or something like that, versus doing all these combination of steps that Palani used to do. He was very innovative, so I have that blood in me. That creativity in me. So, my styling is both traditional and contemporary, because I do have a liberal mind and when I get in the mood. Being

in the hula realm, people feel they have to follow what's in demand. I think there is that out there. During Palani's time there was this slue of creativity stuff, the things that you can create and now it's turned into the traditional which is fine for me. It's going to change probably again, but being open to all of it makes your style a lot more pleasant. I look for simplicity though. That's my ultimate plan, usually, unless I'm doing one of Palani's pieces that he's written and then I'll use innovative, creativity. But I like simplicity, it looks, not looks nicer, but it just carries, it carries and aura of just total bliss or happiness. When you can come out and do something very simple, but it's just stunning and it's just light. That's why I tell my haumana when you go out, you should just shine like a light. And it's like a beacon and everyone turns their head toward it and they can feel that light. Then they'll enjoy your dance, not necessarily the motions, they're feeling you and your love for the hula and all the manao. When you hit the level when people notice that, then the communication is telepathic as far as manao, and the history of it all. And people come back and said I didn't know what you were dancing about, but it was beautiful, I could feel it. To me that's my rule, simplicity is where it's at.

ARE YOU STILL SEEKING MORE KNOWLEDGE IN HULA AND IN THE CULTURE? Definitely so. I'm always open. I feel that learning is endless. You learn through experiences, or you can sit down with someone. Or sometimes. someone will offer you knowledge. I tend to look towards our kupuna definitely so for knowledge. I'm more of a, I research and stuff, but I'm more of a watcher, and a listener. If there's a group of people, a group of kumu hula, if I were to walk in a room and there's a kupuna lecturing, I would be the one close to the front or maybe to the right side or the back side, and I would just sit there and be quiet and I don't know where I got that behavior. But just sitting down and being quiet and listen and you will learn. Through that, I've noticed that I learn a lot through that system, just be quiet and if you're asked a question, then you can go back to that and say your

piece. WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST ACCOMPLISHMENTS? I think my greatest accomplishment is that when, as a teacher you have your haumana go out and do a mele or a piece and they walk off stage and you can just feel the joy that they have just felt. To see the glow, just that pure love flowing through all of them at the same time. And then congratulating each other and saying we did it, we did a fine job. And besides, and this could be any performance, not necessarily competition, that would be a very memorable achievement for me. Also I think what I really enjoy too, is my chanting. I think my chanting has opened a lot of doors to experience a lot of things, and for myself, I still try to do better in my chanting and my oli. So I think those would be the highest goals. I tell my haumana as myself, achievements, the highest achievements, don't necessarily come in an award, a plaque or a trophy. Those are nice, they're kind of like icing or cherries on the top. As a group or as yourself going out and doing a good job and feeling it, that's the achievement. It's not something your going to put on a wall or a mantle and collect dust, it's nice, and it's nice recognition. It's nice to get recognition for your work, but I think all of the halau all the kumu's that go out there and do a piece and take the time to teach it, that that's all achievements there.

YOUR REASONS FOR ENTERING COMPETITIONS? Right now, I think entering competition, is just to get the haumana exposure. To get them experience, because I tell them you can't just dance in a room with four walls all your life and be an underground haumana. Some of them would like to do that, but it's not where hula should be. I believe hula should be displayed. It's a way as well, for me to send messages out to people. Not a specific person or anything, but to the public that hey, this is beautiful, this is really nice to do. It takes work, it takes hard work, and it takes commitment, but very nice to do. Going to competition for me is not necessary to be recognized with a trophy, I think for me as a kumu, it's challenging for me to come up with something very nice, very visual, simple, that people would

enjoy. Most of my pieces I try to tell a story, because that's what I was once told too. You don't just throw melees together, have this, have this and this. From beginning to end, it should have a story and if people are looking within the songs and the manao of the songs, then they'll be able to read that story as well. And then as a kumu when you sing it or you chant the piece, then you're reliving that point in time that once happened or someone else's thoughts, in honor of that person.

DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING ELSE YOU WOULD LIKE TO ADD? We're all in the same boat sort of speak and love should surround us all in what we do as far as kumus are concerned. Love should be there. And through that we should be able to communicate with each other in a very nice manor, friendly manor. To where it's malie, it's very calm. But, not just us, but the world itself. For me nature is where it's at as well. Nature, it provides us with all that we are doing right now. It give us our mana as well, the earth. We need to take care of it and look towards nature to receive energy, I think that where I always get my positive energy.