

Maiki and Coline Aiu

Maiki

I think I owe my interest in the hula to my grandaunt who used to enlist us in pageants. They were known as tableaux in the old days and she was known for them. Even though we were Christian in our home she would be called upon by the churches to put together a Hawaiian ^{tableau} ~~program~~ because she knew protocol. Her name was Helen Correa. This grandaunt was very instrumental in my being associated with things Hawaiian. That's how my interest was started because prior to that our home was so straight-laced so to speak. In the Christian world, hula was not condoned. As far as my family was concerned it was a closed book.

Coline

I think I was just around the hula so much. My mom doing pageants and going up to the halau to help sweep and mop. I would help her pack her things for performances and pageants, and when she was actively performing I would type up things for her show, press her costumes, and make her leis so it was something that just became second nature to me. I was not really in a program studying of it at the time but you are studying as you participate. It is not unlike being an apprentice, an unconscious apprenticeship.

Maiki

My first formal teacher was Lokalia Montgomery. I think at that time I didn't really want to go to hula but I did go. It actually was a case of me accompanying my cousin who really wanted to go and learn. In those days to you had to be invited by the kumu. So we were and we both went. It was alright for us to go as long as we didn't have the kuahu because we were a Christian family. What Auntie Lokalia left me was the knowledge that these dances, these chants could be performed without the kuahu. In other words she explained to my tutu that it would be hula noa.

A complete release from all the rituals of the altar. Not for the dancer but for the altar. As I studied under her I learned that the old could be performed without all the rituals. You didn't have to be afraid and you didn't have to compromise your Christian faith. I went to Auntie Lokalia at 15 and finished at 18. Auntie Lokalia was the only one I uniki in the old way. I was trained only in kauhiko. All the other parts of my training have come from my tutu Helen. The hula kui was taught to my myby my tutu and Auntie Vickie. I taught me mele but not necessarily the dances to them. She taught me three dances of the hula kui period which is what I love the best. The actual dance performance of the hula is from my tutu.

The mannerisms, the attitude, the gentleness is my tutu. My teacher Auntie Lokalia didn't give me those things. She gave me chant and dance and strict discipline in order for me to finish as a young dancer and then I was asked to come back again to train as a kumu hula. By the time I finished my kumu training I had started a family. In those days nobody carried the title of kumu. Neither did Auntie Vickie. They were musicians and composers and performers. When the elders were no longer around they would improvise and put into the dance their own feelings. The title kumu hula is something completely different from somebody who gets up and teaches the hula. In Auntie Vickie's case she never claimed to be a kumu u hula. That's why she was hurt a lot. She taught yes but she taught all hula kui. At the time her peers were Auntie Io so she left it to her cousin. They're all ohana in one way or the other. But it was from her music that she taught me Kaulana Napua. Auntie Helen Alette when I had to do songs for Prince Kuhio she would share songs and chants of Prince Kuhio.

So that's another phase of my training, not necessarily teachers but consultants and teachers. and mentors. My association with Auntie Alice became very endearing because I worked with her for over ten years on her floats. I just happened to be there when she needed someone. But for 8 years on the Maui floats, and for 2 years on the Hilo floats.

This was before they took down the big floats and put up the little low things that they use today. I ahhad to learn all her songs to be dancesd and I would have to do the choreography for ~~inamp~~. the floats, help teach the d the dancers and worlk with the musicians.

Tutu Kawena is my mentor but I didn't uniki from anyone except Aut ynty Lokalaia I was invited by Pua Haaheo to study with him but he passed away before I could finish with him. I was on Kauai then. and I wrote Aloha Kauai that year.

My family comes from Kauai so it iwas my favorite island to dance on. I was the dancer for Aunty @noaGenoa. during the fifities.

Coline

My first formal teacher was my mother and the first thing I learned was respenct thaand discipline. Respect for the things that you learn and discipline in yourself to make a commitment to learn the knowledge corredctly. You have to be committed to certain goals and aspirations. and not be swayed by popularity. as to waht's going on at the time. There is a heirarchy in the hula halaua where children don't learn songs olike Minei or seweetherat songs. At that time the kahiko which was only called ancient in those days was done only by the older girls.

I couldn't say the specific year when I began becasue I think people Misconstrue that. They think if you started at five then you were disciplined and you stayred there for the whole time and I think that's a falsity because little children go in and out of the hula. And most of them go to the hula in f the first place because their grandmothaer or mother want them to go. And I dont't think until they're about 11 or 12 or even oldr do they realize ver that they have been slowly ddeveloping this traihing. I think I got serious about the hula, about attending classes regularly when I was in highsschool.

I wanted to buy a surfboard. So during the summer I pressed clothers for my mom and did my brohters laundry but there was ajob that came up that would pay you if you danced. so Ithought instead of pressing all these clothers Iknew all the songs and I could go just one time and make themoney. Other jobs started to come and in order for me to keep it up I had to go to clasese to keep up my knowledge of the songs. That's how I really got into the hula as far as the performings side of it.

I think when people say ten years it's impressive but what is more important is the intensity of the involvement. Robert Cazimero is a good exapmple. He didn't study as longa as someof the other graduates in the Lehua class but in terems of association and working time he's been with Autny for a longer time tahn most.

could?
I think people are just overwhelmed anc coucaught up in the years of study rather than the totality and the intensity of study. The continuity of the teaching th and the philosophy is the important thing and that's what we try to teach the students. This is more importatn thantn how many songs you can dance.

Maiki

teaching
It's like what I got from my kuhu. The inner self is so improtant. When I studied under Aunty Lokalia there was no paper and pencil whe so when I came home I'd try to be like a little elephant and try to retain all what we had been taught. I'd cry at the table and say I don't think I wanna go back. Then M my tutu would explain and she would open up a whole new world to me. If I got anything from her it was that she made the knowledge of the culture very real in everyday living to me. Hula is life it is everyday livingIt emanates from your limbass and God blessed with you life I fall back on what she sahed everytime. I heazr her ma more and more when I teach. She was so God conscious and the ggoodness of the lOrd everycay. That's hula and the chants talk about great deeds and great people. and everdyday life/.

would
Sometimes everyone forgets what the hula is all about. But you come back and remember. I've forgotten many times what it really means. when I was younger. But as you get older you find that it's real and you know what's what's there. The spirit of the kupuna will always be here. Today we try to capsule the hula. The words the dance the performance the history and everything else in back of it.

teach
I began to teach in 1948. I was a young mother and I was performing in between my family life. I would dance with Pua Almeida and Aunt Lena Guerrero at the Royal, Andy Cummings and just people who needed a dancer when they entertained. What started me teaching was that my young family was growing. I had four children and as it was I knew it would be difficult for me to put money away for them to go to school. I needed to supplement the family income because I wanted my children to have the extra little things. It started in a church hall but it wasn't money at the time. I started to teach in 1946 in Blessed Sacrament Church. My grand aunt told me now that you've had training why don't you come and teach the church members. So I'd go to the church hall and I'd train them. We'd do programs and then after my grand aunt passed away. The Hawaiian society there of elders sort of dissolved and there was only young families there trying to raise their children. So they asked me to start teaching so I took a group of people. There was just ladies and they brought their children or their grandchildren. I charged them five dollars a month. and I taught in the church hall. I was so grateful that I had money for my children. I could buy them little things beside saving money for their education. They could buy ice cream now where before they couldn't afford it. I would give half of that income to the church to Father Gregory because he was always a spiritual supporter. He never expected any payment it was just something that he had extended of himself. My grand aunt lived in Pauoa Valley.

training
I had to pay 200 dollars to aunt Lokalia before I could ever begin. We had to pay so much because to many people take the hula for granted and they have no obligation. I didn't have money and it was stressful for me but I paid it.

could
The responsibility to be a teacher was handed down at the unike where there was Aunt Lokalia's mother, Malia Kau the chanter, my grandaunts. Sometimes you don't understand what it means and what it's going to do to your life.

teaching
When I married Mr. Lake I was going to give up my work and concentrate on his career. He told me there was no need. I consulted with Lokalia and my tutu and they said if you are going to give it up you have to select some students from your halau that will carry on what we passed on to you because you have brought a teaching method to the learning the hula that has never been done before. Tutu Kawena told me that we needed paper and pencil these days because we don't speak the language in our homes.

when I was at the church I was still a young teacher feeling my way through. The things that I was disappointed in learning. You might have a good teacher but sometimes you might want them to expand on something. Sometimes they don't do it. I would be interested in the underlying meaning the kauna and I would have to go home and talk to my tutu and she would explain that she would make it right.

teaching
I always like to sketch and when I was a boarder at St. Francis my mother would always tell me to go two chapters ahead and sketch out the material so I applied that to the hula. Aunt Lokalia was very disappointed when I had a blackboard put in. but I needed to teach vocabulary in order that my young people could understand what was being taught to them. I wanted them to be able to take home notes and study and so they could be better the next time and not suffer like me. I would have to worry before I came to class another time. Then I started to put it in book form. I put it in a section of island as and all. I began to standardize the knowledge of the hula so that it would be easy for the students to find it.

Collen has come in since and she has extended the lesson study.

Colleen

In 1974 my mother became ill and I went to go and do some classes for her.

I would only do the teenagers because they were so wild and energetic. I was dancing for zulu then and then I went back to school. In between all of this I would go in and out of ~~amhmonn~~ the halau and help. When I uniki'd in 1972 I can say that what I know today and what I knew then is very different even though I had the title of kumu back then. All of these minds are coming from different levels and you have to recommunicate what you know.

We have standardized the teaching practice in the hula. The younger students wear a certain uniform up until they are 15. Because they need to learn discipline in their dress and attitude. They have to learn that there is one mind and one voice to listen to in class. They are not the teacher they are coming to the teacher. All the books and the teaching methods are standardized.

They learn basic feet first because in order for the body to move anywhere in space it has to depend on the feet. Then they have to know where they are going. They have to know that they are not just going to a studio which is a big empty space to dance around in but they are going to a school because it develops not only the mind and the body but the spirit as well. They have to learn the basic three the moving of the feet, the halau definition and the moving of the hands. Then they learn the vocabulary and then they start off with a test on the last week of their first month of training.

Then they go on to learning songs and we start with hapa-haole songs. This is to get them introduced to our dance notation sheets. We notate all of the dances. Now we have it on Wang so we are really up to date. We first had to type and mimeograph them out separately in the beginning.

They then are given a hawaiian song and through their vocabulary which is constant and replenished every week and through their research they can understand more readily this next hawaiian song. It is an introduction to the language and the dance and the culture. They only do vocabulary that is important to the song they don't learn the grammar aspect like you do in language. But their vocabulary I would say is tremendous.

The first year we translate the songs literally even if it is in pidgin because as my mother says pidgin is here to stay. The first year we rotate hapa haole, hawaiian until they get really familiar with the system. As simple as the hapa haole songs may be there has to be a research paper turned in for each one and if you don't we drop you.

You have to take auwana with the kahiko. You can't skip from one to the other because too many times people forget the totality of what hula is. People think it's a matter of jumping around and doing a hundred uhe 300 hela and sweating a lot and they are badly mistaken.

Hula for a man and a woman should be beautiful and have energy. We have doctors lawyers business and in our classes but when they enter the doorway they are students. There is a method that has been developed by Martha Graham on how to study and train in modern dance and that is what my mother halau has tried to do in the hula for the modern world. A methodology.

A school takes the student from ground zero and trains them. and it is not existing only as a performing company. In the halau we try to teach the students to be patient and that their time will come because many students go to kumu because they are popular.

Having your hula book is an inside joke by Miki's students because every student has one. It is a collection of all your research and all the material that Auntie Maiki has given you. All the songs that are given are standardized and if you enter you will see that there are 4 distinct levels and the songs that are within each level have been taught for many years to all the students that have to come to learn.

We have many professional people who come to learn because of the pressure of their jobs and we tell them to leave their problems and enter the halau only with their hula book and themselves. The first fifteen minutes we talk the next fifteen minutes we drill then we do new material then we do old material then we drill again and then the hours over and they don't know where the hour went.

People come back and can say we left off at this particular song and we have a dance check list where we can check back and see what level that means they are at. They list what year and level they ended and we can begin right from that point.

Maiki

If you don't know how to study learning becomes stressful.

Kahiko in itself means perpepre-whiteman, pare-Captain Cook.

The dances that honored the people, the alii, and the gods and goddesses of the time. That to me is kahiko. And it is handed down to me as a responsibility. It can be epperformed without the drum. It can be just a chant and aperformance. Nona Beamer has given a title to what the young people of today has composed. She calls it contemporary kahiko and I go along with that. A hundren d years from now what the young people today are composing will be kahiko to those poeple. But this is what has been passed dwon down to us as well. I thiknk kahiko is anything that has been passed down perre-Captain Cook. ~~Then kahiko is that~~ The hula that we look upln as kahiko today was contemporary kahiko in pre-Captain Cook days as well.

And we do encourage our uoung people today to compose from what they see around them. Today is a differen part of life a different part of history. And it has to be told of what is happenning and what is going on. This is what I would call contempororary kahko.

Maiki

The greatest change has been the number of young people who saw someone dance or studied with someone and took what they liked out of that person's training, or maybe a friend showed them something, andtetehtn from another person's training and they put all these steps and motions together and make it into another routine. That makes me sad sometimes. Baecause then you see innovatinns of all kinds of thngs happenning. Which is to them the dance and their hula. Their is no trace back to where it originally came frm. We are seeing some hu.ala today with no history no tradition no trace of any orignal source. It is as if it as has arisen from thin ari air.

Collen

I think for the kahiko it is easier to say wahat is the definition for the auwana. Because the boudnaries of kahko are getting wider and wider. Auwana there is always music added to it. There is becoming an intermerging of what is kahiko and what is auwana. There is singing in the auwana and there is instrumentatioan. There is no clear cut line today as to waht is kahko and what is auwana. Auwana is here there everywhere. Kahiko defined itself before MAIKI

Maiki

It defined itslef because there was always rituals that preceded it. Courtesies and ceremonies by the performer that we seldom see tosdlay. People will read something in Emerson's and say that is the way they were tautft. But they don't understand the kauna.

Colleen

Like any document of hisotory you have to take into account what culture did was the author raised in.

Maiki

SPhysical is last in our school. The spirit and the mind have a much higher priority. They must do the paerework or they are out, theymust pass the tests or they are out. which are given once a month. I'd like to believe that the halau is leaving somehting that the elders left me.

Tutu Helen, Lokalai, Tutu Kawana, you would never go to them and sya I want to learn. They would approach you and begin to talk about everything but the hula because to them hula was not a narrow category in life but daily living. Only at the end of the conversation would they tell you to be at their home on Friday night between 7 and 10. And that's all you would do.

Totally different way of learning back then becasue it was a different world and I don't think it would work today with today's peolple. There would be many questions that would be in m y mind and they would tell me that it would be mine to know hwhent the time comes. And I fund that it's true. Some things that were left sitting in the air I never questined I just let it go. My tutu told me that it would be meant for me if it has to be explained.

I don't consider myself a master.

Colleen

We look upon the halau as a bridge to the masters, Lokalaia, Mrs. Pukui, Aunty Vickie.

Maiki

I think the hula is going to evolve when only the students who have been trained and tutored will survive. Right now it is like a ego trip for a lot of people. The point today seems to be to get out on stage and be able to say I did a certain motion first. In the old days we could all come together including the old ones and the young ones. There was respect because we knew where we were all from.

Kumus are going to ask themselves can I keep performing for the sake of performing or do I have to do some soul searching and go deeper into the training and research of the hula.

I don't know what could have been done different the past years but I feel somehow sad when I see that the hula community can't come together like we used to. We don't look forward today. When we come together today we are only competing against each other. We are telling each other instead show me something that you can do that I haven't or can't do.

I guess if there young and you put in a competitive spirit they are going to come out that way.

Colleen

I think certain performing groups are going to merge with each other in trying to survive. The younger kumu in their thirties who have similar styles will merge to establish themselves and survive.

Makikai

I think the people of today take the name halau and kumu too lightly.

Colleen

There is a philosophy responsibility of passing of the philosophy and the attitudes of the hula. The methodology of the study of the hula has to be adaptable to every age and every era. every generation.