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Nina (Boyd) Maxwell

(1) The Boyd family was very close to the Royal family history reveals, and my father had seen the culture change tremendously. The hula in the 20's, 30's and 40's was in a sad state of affairs.

(2) When I was a young child, I was fascinated by the hula. I nagged my father to let me learn the hula but he said "No". Instead he bought me a piano and saw that I attended my weekly piano lessons with the nuns at St. Anthony School in Wailuku. I still have that piano and I never really learned to play it.

(3) I didn't give up and kept nagging finally he took me to Elizabeth Lum Ho who taught at her home in Wailuku. I think they had a talk and he wanted to discourage me because most of the hulas were noho. She began the class by singing a mele. She would then tell the story of the mele and interpret the story with the dance and if it took you three months to learn a mele, so be it. Mrs. Lum Ho taught me traditional hula which was known then as Olapa and now it is known as Kahiko. She also taught the hula that is known now as Awana. (3) I had my first Uniki five years after I had begun my training and it was so exciting.

(4) She later moved to Oahu and my training continued under Aunt Emma Sharpe. Aunt Emma had classes now in Wailuku, in a hall in back of the old Wailuku Gym. That was great because my father found the old Pali road to Lahaina just too much and too great a distance from our home in Waiehu.

(5) Many years later, my husband Charlie, kept insisting that I share my manao^{io}, with our children and the people of Maui. I decided to teach the hula because the Hula is a record of Hawaii's past and the key to the mystery and richness of our islands. And so with the permission of Aunt Emma, I was on my way to share the knowledge they had given me. Her greatest concern was the pronunciation of words. When I had my first Uniki for my haumana, I invited Aunt Emma, she came and I was thrilled

Nina (Boyd) Maxwell, Continues,

When ever I dance and Aunty Emma is there, I dance for her. I am a grandmother now and I have been with the Hula a long time. I am not through yet, I would like to share more of our culture with my students. In participating at the various Hula Festival competitions, my only hope is that we as Kumu Hula do not loose sight of the fact that winning is not everything and that the only way the Hula will survive till times end, is if it is kept in its purest form and participation with love, sharing and understanding as its finale goal. In the Hula your body, spirit , your whole self must be in harmoney. You have to feel the spirit of the Hula and not just dance to perform. The hula is a dramatic art form of Hawaii Nei and its roots are Ka Po'e Kahiko.

Nina Maxwell

When I was young I was always nagging my father to let me learn the hula. He bought me a piano instead. I learned the piano but I kept nagging him. In the late 1930's and '40's, hula was in a bad state of affairs, and was not ~~much~~ really respected. My grandmother was a lady-in-waiting for Liliuokalani so my father had seen the culture change tremendously. I don't think he wanted me involved with hula because he had been so pained by the changes in the culture. Finally he took me to Elizabeth Lum Ho who was from the "old school". There was no funny business in her class and my father was hoping the strict regimen would make me quit. Mrs. Lum Ho taught at home in Wailuku and she would begin the class by singing a mele. She would then tell you the story of the mele and then interpret the story with the dance. If she felt you should learn the entire mele then you would stay the entire day and if it took you three months to learn that one mele, you would be assigned that same mele for three months.

Mrs. Lum Ho ^{3 modern} ~~only~~ taught me traditional hula and I studied under her for ⁵ ~~twelve~~ years. When she left Maui for Oahu I went to Emma Sharpe who trained me in hula auwana. My kumu never really differed in their teaching style. Everything had to be perfect especially the enunciation and pronunciation of the mele. The knowledge was taught by constant repetition and we were expected to retain everything by simply watching and listening. I was with Aunty Emma for four years and I was trained informally during this time by Aunty Iolani Luahine in olioli.

⑦ In 1964 I began to teach with the permission of Emma Sharpe on Maui. I wanted to teach because the hula is the record of Hawaii's cultural past and the key to the mystery and richness of our islands. This is why the hula will always rise no matter how low it falls. This is what I wanted to pass on to another generation of people of all ethnic backgrounds. Mrs. Lum Ho told me that because of the kauna in the hula you have to listen to your ^{kumu} ~~kumu~~ with your heart and not your ear. You have to feel the spirit of the hula and not just dance to perform.

question being asked
The great ~~battle~~ that is ~~going on~~ today is are we teaching and learning the traditional hula for the sake of performance or the sake of knowledge? We don't know the answer because there is a great void in the knowledge of our culture. But I can't help but feel hopeful because I feel we are filling this void slowly but surely. A handful of resources are left to teach us and the Hawaiian Renaissance has helped ~~to~~ put the puzzle back together a little more. We Hawaiians have gone through great changes in our recent history. Many of us were off-balanced and confused but we've re-awakened and regained our balance and I think the young Hawaiians of today are proud of who they are.

Concl

In the hula there are three beings that must be healthy for you to dance correctly. Your body, your spirit, and your whole being must be in harmony if you are going to be able to express the dance well. That should be the first and last reward in the hula.