

NANA I NA LOEA HULA  
Kumu Hula: Ellen Castillo  
Interviewer: Lōvina Le Pendu  
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Ellen Ku'uleialohapoina'ole Puka'ikapuaokalani Smith Castillo has taught hula in Kailua since 1960.

My grandmother's mother was a hula kapu, her name was Puka'i , and when I went to research about the name I found that the full name was Puka'ikapuaokalani and is the name of my halau.

I started to dance hula around nine years old ,Aunty Bella Richards was my first teacher, she used to teach at her home right in her yard I learned mostly auana , I only learn basic kahiko like Kawika. I was with aunty Bella for about 15 years, I went to other workshops and to me her style is different from others, I graduated in 1958. I left aunty Bella to branch out on my own. My kahiko comes from aunty Lani Kālāma, because I was very much into auana , I had a hard time to get acquainted to kahiko, I also took chanting from Aunty Lani. and I took workshops from George Holokai.

My joy is to see my students performed on stage because when they are rehearsing it is work, but when they finally performed on stage, it is a joy to see the finish product. That makes the beauty of the Hula. it motivates you .I try to tell my children to strive for their best, to get into Hawaiiana, the language. I myself think it is such a great loss to have lost our language. My kupuna did not speak a word of english so we grew up speaking hawaiian, and to day I lost it, my goal to day is to bring it back alive.

Hula has change such a great deal .But I think it is for the bad and the good, it depends of the individual. Kahiko for me is the dance of old , I do not like to smile in my kahiko, it is straight. I love auana To me I am still learning. I also teach tahitian and maori in my halau and I really got this from Aunty Bella.