

yourself dancing & hear
You would see the kumu hula ~~dancing~~ ^{chanting}
in your head and the next morning
we would all go to class. The
kumu hula would come out, bang
the ipu, and we would all hula
and we would all dance
together. She was emphatic about
all of this, ~~and I often asked her~~
She talked about the cleansing ceremonies
before the recitals. Back then they
didn't call it umi's they had
another name for it. They had
an open lanai with coconut leaves
on the top. In the middle
of the room there was a
fire pit where they had a fire.
~~They~~ She made it a point to
tell me that the haumana
didn't go home and sleep,
they slept with their kumu,
and when they slept their feet
were always pointed toward the
fire. Before the recitals the kumu
and the haumana would stay up
and pray all night long. I
never questioned her why they slept
with their feet towards the fire but
my sister Kalili told me ~~certainly~~
~~because~~ that's where they believed
their strength came from, the
feet. My mother always told
us that when you look at a hula
dancer you look at the feet. If
the feet is good ~~the~~ the rest
of the dance will be beautiful.

She used words like kahiko & auwau
but her steps had different names.
She used two steps, kii pa & kii
wawae, that I don't see used by
other kumu. Her favorite steps was
u'ehe for kahiko and kuu for
auwau.

In 1945 we moved to Honolulu and
we lived next door to Lena Guerrero Guerrero
and she had a hula group. ~~She~~
~~lived on Wai'anae St. in Kapahulu.~~
We lived just below Kahelili's
heiau ~~in~~ in Maui. ~~to~~ since
the ~~area~~ area we lived in had been
Kahelili's practice ground for combat.
Today it is the Hawai'i Homestead Land
and it is a big plain confined by
hills like a horseshoe. Our house
~~was~~ back then was the only house
in there and all of that was our
playground.]

Lena used to see me walking around the
yard and one day she asked me if I
danced. I said yes so she invited
me to come learn with her and at
21 she asked me to dance at the
Royal Hawaiian. I ~~was~~ would stay
at the Royal for 16 years after that.

In those years danced many places
in one night so we would dance
at private parties, the Moana Hotel,
On the Beachcomber, etc.

You might start at the courtyard here at the Moana then go to a 9⁴⁰ o'clock floor show at the Royal Hawaiian then come back for the last floor show at the Moana then go back to the last show at the Royal. You had to change in the car in the end. When you came to a stoplight, you looked around and you put on the other blouse. When you came to the next hotel you just grabbed your things and ran from the car onto the stage just in time to the accompaniment of the musical fanfare. They didn't have that many hula dancers before. Back in the 40's & 50's the hulaers were never called hulaers, they were called hula troupes. These troupes back then thought nothing about sharing their haumana with each other. If Bill Lincoln had a show that already took up all of his dancers and he had ~~an~~ another order for a show he would ask another teacher. Everyone thought nothing of it. The biggest change has been the young men coming to the hula. Before you couldn't even get ^{young} people near the hula. Today the hula is being learned by people of all races some with more interest than the Hawaiians themselves.

The wonderful thing about the hula is it is bringing the Hawaiian to the fore. For so long we have been depicted as always lagging behind, or always having someone else do things for us and complain. The hula has been one way the Hawaiians have brought ~~can bring~~ themselves out of themselves to move forward. It has also helped other ~~people~~ races to understand the Hawaiian socially so it makes for a better blend.

Alice Keawekeane, ~~Tolani~~ ~~Leahine~~ was at the same time as Iena G. She was more auwana. Iena was kalihilo and had learned from the Beays. On the shows we always performed kalihilo & auwana. We would open w/ kalihilo & close w/ auwana. From Tolani, Joseph Kahanelio, & Sally Wood I learned a few numbers. Because I had so many ~~daughters~~ sisters I didn't really have a close friend. So when it came to learning the hula I did it all on my own. ~~there was~~ ~~no one~~ There was a desire in me, a light for the hula ~~that~~ that made me seek out training on my own.

I began to teach at 21 on my own. I would set up classes at a court across Punahou School and hold classes in one of the teacher's apartments. I told them to learn one kalihilo chant because once you learn one kalihilo, the auwana will be easier to understand but they were interested in modern hula.

Every summer it was a must for me to go home and teach my family. I would go back for 3 mths every year and every day the kids would come at 2 PM to 4 PM. The SFCA had me going around the schools as an artist-in-the-schools teaching traditional dances & chants.

I encourage creativity. Some of the old learners feel there is only their way of dancing that traditionally you don't veer from the ~~had~~ hand or foot movements, handed down from gen. to gen. But if everything has been passed down the same it would be so monotonous. I don't believe that's the way it was done because it does not explain the great variety we have in our chants & dances. I encourage my learners to create what they feel. Our ancestors must have created on their own or we wouldn't have such diversity. They say we have lost a lot but we still have a lot left. We can't be worse off than they were. If ~~the~~ our ancestors were here today they would be writing chants about things that inspire them of today. So why can't the young of today continue that tradition.

People today will dismiss a kahiko chant unless it's ~~old~~ ancient. They say the writer ~~don't~~ ^{doesn't} know what he's doing. But even the oldest chant probably went through the same criticism as the new kahiko chants of today.

I think a lot of the kapu dances arose because a kumu wanted to protect his/her ideas & dances from being stolen by other jealous kumu. It's not that there is a curse on it at all.

Hula kahiko is a record of the Hawaiians emotion, historical & everyday events, his love life, his entire life. That was Hawaii's way of preserving history.