

## CECILIA KAWAIOKAWA'AWA'A AKIM

A long time student of Hoakalei Kamau'u, Cecilia Akim teaches with her kumu at the Nu'uano Day Care Center.

*we performed ~~at~~ all over waikiki  
and different places.*

My mom took me to learn hula from Aunty Iolani Luahine when I was three or four years old. I stayed with her for about six years until she retired from teaching and moved back to Kona. The girls she taught were eight to twenty years older than me. She had me dance with all of them. <sup>^</sup> I

learned both kahiko and auana from Aunty Io. She taught <sup>us dances like</sup> "Little Brown Gal", "~~Hukilau~~" and other hapa haole hulas just so we could learn <sup>basic hula motions and</sup> how to be a little more graceful. <sup>we learned our KAHEA and MELE</sup> ~~Aunty Io made us learn the chants~~ while learning the dance. It was very repetitious. We would go over it again and again.

When Aunty Io retired ~~the first time, I was about nine years old and I~~  
~~had been with Aunty Io for about seven years.~~ I ~~then~~ went to Aunty Pele Puku'i. <sup>AFTER</sup> ~~for~~ about a year and a half, and because of my young age, she suggested that I go to another teacher. So I went to George Naope and stayed with him for over seven years until he moved back to Hilo.

I <sup>think</sup> ~~guess~~ because I was the only student my age, <sup>Aunty</sup> Pele ~~Puku'i~~ gave me private classes. Her fundamental steps were the same as Aunty Io <sup>but</sup> ~~her~~ motions were just slightly busier. <sup>Pele</sup> ~~Aunty Pat Bacon~~ <sup>REVIEWED</sup> went over a lot of the ~~songs~~ <sup>dances</sup> that I had learned with Aunty Io so that she knew which ones I <sup>had learned.</sup> ~~knew~~

and then she went into different songs. With her I learned more numbers,  
<sup>many</sup> with implements, <sup>And she worked on my chanting for the hula solo</sup>

I was just turning thirteen or fourteen at the time I started with George Naope. That was the first time that I was actually in a class with other dancers that were the same age as me. Uncle George had a studio in Kalihi <sup>A few blocks from my home.</sup> and I lived right there. So why stay home and help mother clean

house when I could go down to the hula studio and help <sup>(?)</sup> Uncle George. I

literally hung out at the studio and danced with all of his classes. <sup>We</sup> All the <sup>did shows in Waikiki and private parties and the outer islands.</sup> while I was with Uncle George, I did the shows with him. <sup>We did a lot of island travelling with him.</sup>

After Uncle George moved to Hilo, I couldn't find any other teacher.

And between school and extracurricular activities, I really didn't have much time to go to classes. So I freelanced on my own doing the shows at the International Market Place with Uncle Johnny Watkins and Aunt <sup>ies</sup> Lydia Wong <sup>and Louise FREEMAN.</sup> I also did shows with Aunt Vicky I'i and a couple of Kodak Hula

shows. After I graduated from high school, I went to the U.H. and I dropped out of hula completely. A couple of years later, I took a group made up of <sup>these</sup> four girls to do shows in the East Coast for a year and a half.

When Aunt Hoakalei started classes for the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts, I went back to hula. The object of the classes was to train dancers to <sup>be teachers</sup> teach and that's what I <sup>was doing.</sup> did. She started going over all



the fundamental hulas like "Kawika", "Lili'u",<sup>E "</sup> and Ulu No Weo". When she did "Aia La O Pele", it ~~reminded me of Aunty Io.~~ For me, it was like going back <sup>to the days of my youth with Aunty Io.</sup> ~~eight or nine years.~~ Since ~~Aunty Hoakalei had been teaching with Aunty Io the whole time I was away, it was just like going back to the time that I had started.~~ I've remained with Aunty Hoakalei since 1969 and I'm still learning with her.

Being with Aunty Hoakalei is a continuation of Aunty Io. Her style of teaching is the same. I am very comfortable with Aunty Hoakalei. ~~I think part of it is style.~~ <sup>She</sup> ~~Aunty Hoakalei~~ is a different person from Aunty Io but she's just as beautiful a person.

→ Most of ~~our~~ old chants are in Hawaiian and today's students need to <sup>understand</sup> ~~know~~ the Hawaiian language to <sup>know</sup> ~~understand~~ what they're dancing about, especially <sup>because</sup> ~~if~~ the motions are very simple. Like with Aunty Io's and Aunty Hoakalei's style, you have fundamental hulas. "Kawika" is a beautiful chant. ~~The basic hulas are gorgeous because the language is there, the poetry is there, the history is there.~~ <sup>because vocabulary</sup> ~~It's all there.~~ <sup>the romanticism, an important part of our cultural heritage, is there.</sup> But ~~how do you teach somebody who does not know the language?~~ ~~The composer wrote the words and put it on paper.~~ As a dancer, you're painting a picture. You <sup>put into motion our oral history.</sup> ~~become the artist.~~ I've seen a lot of misinterpretations <sup>of</sup> ~~on~~ dances. They don't understand the beauty of what the chant is talking about.

Aloha Jan

Here's the draft with my revisions noted.  
Please send me a revised draft. I will sign the  
release after I see the final draft before it goes  
to printing. Thank you for your patience.

A hui hou

Cecilia & Ken