

Coline Aiu

I look upon my mother's halau as a bridge from the modern world to a past world. We have tried to make the hula kahiko accessible to a modern generation. There is a responsibility in passing on the kahiko but the methodology of the study of the hula has to adapt to a new age, a new era, a new generation.

My first formal teacher was my mother and the first two things I learned were respect and discipline. Respect for the things that I learned and discipline in myself to make a commitment to learn the hula correctly. You have to be committed to certain goals and not be swayed by popularity and trends.

As a child I would help my mother make leis, press costumes, and clean the halau so the hula was something that became second nature to me. I think as you participate, you study so my childhood became an unconscious apprenticeship. I didn't attend classes regularly until I was in high school and that's when I began to perform. Other jobs started to come and in order for me to take them I had to attend classes to keep up my knowledge of the songs.

In 1974 my mother became ill and I began to teach the teenagers for her because they were wild and energetic. I uniki as a teacher from my mother in 1972 but I don't think I realized at that time the difficulty of teaching people. All of these minds are coming to learn from different levels and you have to find a way to communicate the knowledge so that it will be understood by all.

Up until the age of fifteen, the students in our halau must wear a uniform. They have to learn that they are not the teacher, they are coming to the teacher and that there is one mind and one voice to listen to in class. In their first month students are taught basic foot movements, the definition of a halau, basic hand motions, basic vocabulary, and on the last week of the month are tested on all of this.

If they pass they are introduced to our dance notation system through simple hapa-haole songs and eventually Hawaiian songs. For every song that they learn, a research report must be turned in and the students are tested every month.

The first year we translate the songs literally even if it's in pidgin because pidgin is here to stay. We rotate hapa-haole and Hawaiian songs because too many times people forget the auwana defines the kahiko and vice versa. Throughout all of this the students's vocabulary is replenished weekly and is relevant to the songs they are learning.

A halau takes a student from ground zero and trains them. The students have to know that they are not just going to a studio but a school that develops the mind, body, and spirit, and that it's going to take a great amount of patience on their part.

All the books, teaching methods, mimeographed information, and songs are categorized into four distinct levels of expertise. There is a method that has been developed by Martha Graham on how to study modern dance and that is what my mother and I have tried to do for the hula. Create a modern methodology that is orderly, logical, accessible, and yet loyal to the hula.

p.s.

Dear Coline:

Would you and your mother please indicate ^{how} you wish your name to appear in the publication. If you prefer your full name or any variation from the above, please call our office before JUNE 17, 1983 and supply us with the required information.

Coline
Ann

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