

Rose Zook

I had a cousin who was dancing, ~~and~~ she was with Betty Jai Kula Studio and she would teach me. I was about 10 or 9 at the time. I of course had my father, my father who was always with the Hawaiians. And the Hawaiian family he was with was the Tangudon family who lived on Pensacola Street. We were always close to the Tangucons and my father loved his ~~music~~ <sup>songs</sup> and his ukulele. So mainly it was the Hawaiian music and when my cousin began at Betty Jai <sup>in Wailuku</sup> I became interested in dancing. My first teacher was Alice Gardner. I studied with Alice from 13 all through my intermediate & high school years. Her system was built on the basic steps. She was continually drilling us on the basics. I really liked her system. She was strict in the sense she made sure you danced the correct way. I wanted to go into Oapa in a deeper way so I ~~wanted to~~ <sup>went</sup> ~~get into~~ Lolalia Montgomery. She was not taking any new students at the time but Sam Nareole talked to Lolalia and so she interviewed me and accepted me into her class. As time passed

She asked me if I would go on television with her. She would chant and I would dance but at that time, I only wanted to learn. [Alice Gardner's studio was at the YWCA on Richards Street and then she moved to Bill Lincoln's Studio.] Lolalia's ~~balau~~ studio and home was on Charles Street. She would sit with me first and we would talk about all the ancient chants and Hawaiian history then we would go into her hula and go into the dances and she would explain them to me. She was beautiful. I studied with Lolalia for a year strictly private classes. I took a three-month brush-up course with Kaii Zuttemister who gave me her approval to call myself her student. [Lolalia only said she was associated with Tolani Inahine and Kawana Puhai.] In terms of my training Alice Gardner was my biggest influence because she was my first and longest kumu. She had such an inner beauty. She was what I felt a dancer should be. She had an inner beauty that seemed to radiate out through her gestures, and in her relationships with people. That's what attracted me to her.

~~I united with Alice Gardner.~~

I became a teacher in 1956. I wanted to relate <sup>the feeling</sup> to ~~students~~ what a dancer should be. I had that ambition all along as I was learning. At that time in Olapa (ancient) dancing, they did not take Orientals. But when Tokalia interviewed me she wanted to teach <sup>and that is why I feel</sup> me. The teaching of hula should have no prejudice. The main reason I began to teach was I wanted to teach the hula as a class dance. It used to be that the hula was a dime-a-dozen thing. People would just pile it up, take one course, and start dancing. There's more to it. I wanted to ~~make~~ let people see how beautiful the hula really is. Along the way when I was learning I realized that there ~~was~~ nobody could say which huna, which method, <sup>which step</sup> was the correct way. And this is sad ~~too~~. The Japanese ~~some~~ have a classical line of dancing. The Chinese have a line. What does the hula have? There who is to ~~st~~ say which hula style is the right way. I've seen so many along the way that are so sloppy and so I told myself something has to be done. I also wanted to help children emotionally. I wanted to give them confidence in themselves.

Especially the ones who are shy. I just wanted to help the little kids. ~~The~~ A kumu has to pick up the feelings and emotions of her students. You cannot teach everyone the same. ~~Some students~~ Each student has to be handled in the particular way that draws them out the best. I begin my youngest students with an introduction <sup>to</sup> ~~education of~~ what the hula is all about <sup>not the basic steps</sup>. I make it fun for them. By the time their attention span is long enough to accept my teaching then I will start to teach. I don't believe in yelling or <sup>embarrassing</sup> ~~humiliating~~ my students. I feel there has to be a better way. The #1 thing I fear is love for the dance.

I stress that in order to dance the hula beautifully you have to ~~be feel~~ beautiful inside. I feel like the children I've taught have learned that people can be patient and supportive through my behavior. My greatest accomplishment is that I feel my dancers after they leave me can accept anything or any teacher. I think if you are a good teacher you should be able to teach anyone. There is nobody who ~~has~~ has no talent.

My goal ~~was~~ throughout everything was to teach, no matter how many students I had, what I considered to be the right way of doing hula.

I feel even the hula auwama can be a classical dance. It all depends on how it is taught. My favorite kahiko mele is, "Ha'ula O'ele". I also enjoy, "Kaulilua". ~~So love my chanting but I~~. The theme song of my studio is "Dancing Kumuipo" so my students have to learn it. It was the first song that I recorded on 45.

I feel some of the hula kahiko I see today is overdone. I can only hope that they will leave it the way it really is supposed to be. I think that's the biggest change that ~~the~~ <sup>some of the</sup> kahiko being performed is not ancient hula. My personal observation is that it is not being kept ~~the~~ responsible to its roots. When I see kahiko performed today it is nothing like what was taught to me by my kumu and so I ask myself has it been changed or have I missed something along the way of my training.

I consider Kawena Pakui a grandmaster. If you look at her words in writings ~~in her books & songs~~ you can read off the translation of the lyrics and get a series of pictures ~~in your head~~ before you. Her thinking is clear, and precise. If you have to go for any information she is the ultimate resource.

~~And~~ In order to dance well you  
have to. If you are not clean  
inside the movements will be dirty.  
If you have arrogance or bitterness  
inside you your dancing will show  
it. ~~If you~~ No matter how well or  
long you are taught the beauty  
of the dance will not come out.  
~~As you dance~~ ~~for you have to~~  
~~remember~~ that If you are not  
sincere with your dancing then  
you are only a body moving side  
to side. Beauty has to come from  
within. The reason for all this is  
when a dancer dances she is  
actually talking to the audience  
in a very special way.