

NANA I NA LOEA HULA

Kumu Hula: Denise Ramento

Interviewer: Lovina Le Pendu

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(ALOHA DENISE.) Aloha. (CAN YOU TELL ME YOUR REAL NAME, HOW YOU WANT IT IN THE BOOK?) Denise Ka'uhionamauna Kia Ramento. (WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?) It means. . .my dad always said it means "the covering of the mountain tops", you know, when there's a mist of clouds that cover right the tops of the mountain. That is what my Hawaiian name means. When I was growing up there was so many questions about my Hawaiian name, so I asked my dad to give me his mana'o. (HE GAVE IT TO YOU ?) Yeah.

(DO YOU TEACH PRESENTLY?) Yes I do. (WHERE?) I teach at. . .right now we have a hall at Waipahu called the. . .Jack Hall. The person's name is Jack Hall, and this housing area there's a hall that's named after this man. (GIVE ME THE NAME OF THE HALAU.) "Aloha Pumehana O Hawai'i Nei". When I'm into hula competition, I use that name. If I'm into Tahitian competition, then I go under "Aloha Pumehana O Polynesia". (DID YOU GIVE THE NAME FOR YOUR HALAU?) Yes. (WHY?) You know, I'm glad you asked because I often thought why I gave that name, but it was one day when I was looking towards the mountains, towards Wai'anae, and my love for

hula - I thought of my kumu hulas. I was _____ on my past experiences towards my dancing career and how I miss them: all the kupunas, the people I met, my friends, my hula sisters - we all went our separate ways. And I had this desire just to continue to love and go deeper into my hula, and I thought about a...the words just came to my mind, "Aloha Pumehana", which means "the warm love or affection. And my mind was on, my heart and my mind was on the hula. Although Tahitian dancing was a love too, but for my kupunas - I even thought about my grandparents, you know, and being raised by grandma. It was just a miss, you know, missing all of them, and the word "Aloha Pumehana" just came to my mind. So I felt, "This is what I want to do." (DO YOU REMEMBER WHEN THIS WAS? WERE YOU ALREADY TEACHING?) No. Previously, the halau name was "Pupukahi Ote'a". That was the first. When I first started in 19____... (BECAUSE YOU WERE MORE IN TAHITIAN?) More in Tahitian. Pupukahi was the name of our street where I lived. It was Pupukahi Place in Waipahu. (AND THAT WAS THE NAME OF YOUR HALAU?) My troupe, yeah, my group at that time. My dad had told us, had told me, "Why don't we name it after the street?", since we started the dancing over there in my parents' home, in the garage. But how it came to be Aloha Pumehana is I started to feel this desire to get back more into my hula, so I kind of rested or slacked off on

Tahitian and concentrated more on hula. (DO YOU REMEMBER HOW LONG AGO?) This was in 1977. (HOW MANY YEARS AFTER THE ORIGINAL NAME?) About 4 years. . .4-5 years, yes.

(DO YOU TEACH KAHIKO AND AUANA?) I teach kahiko and auana, yes. (DO YOU TEACH OLI TOO?) I don't actually teach oli, but we review the words and try to put it in oli style. I review that so the girls get strength on their voice and their pronunciation, enunciation, all of that. (BUT YOU DON'T HAVE SPECIAL CLASSES?) No. I don't have special classes. (HOW MANY YEARS HAVE YOU BEEN TEACHING?) I've been teaching. . .with the other name, "Kahi Ote'a", and "Aloha Pumehana", 20 years will be this year, 1992. I started right after high school. I was asked to get a few girls. I had a lot of friends in school that didn't have anything to do and they heard that I was dancing, and when they saw me dance they asked me to teach them something, so I taught them and I used to dance in school a lot for assemblies, so a lot of the students, a lot of my friends today, they remember me because I used to dance in school. (WHAT SCHOOL WAS THAT?) Waipahu High School. So that's how I began.

(WHAT AGE DID YOU FIRST START HULA?) I began at 7 years old, when I really started to grasp. (CAN YOU TELL ME THE NAME OF YOUR FIRST TEACHER?) My first teacher was John Pi'ilani Watkins, and at that time

his school, I remember it was at Kaimuki. I think it was either on the 14th or the 15th avenue. (AT HIS HOUSE?) It was at his home, yes. And I had two sisters. My two sisters and I were taking lessons from John Watkins. (HOW LONG DID YOU STAY WITH THIS TEACHER?) I stayed with John for about 2 years because we had to move. My parents changed residence so it was too far for us to go. (WHAT DID YOU LEARN WITH HIM?) I learned more Polynesian and auana. I don't remember learning too much of the kahiko. (WHAT KIND OF POLYNESIAN?) Polynesian - Tahitian, Samoan dancing, Maori. This was the only three that he was into. (WERE YOU JUST LEARNING OR WERE YOU DOING SHOWS TOO?) I was learning and just once in a great while, perhaps. . . I remember dancing at the Waikiki International Market Place. There was that small stage over there. Yes, I did some performing with him, going out dancing. (CAN YOU REMEMBER METHODS OR STYLES THAT HE HAD?) I don't think Uncle John had a special style. If he did, I really couldn't grasp at that time. (WHAT KIND OF SONGS WERE YOU LEARNING?) Oh, it was hapa haole and Hawaiian. More like a...he was very theatrical. A lot of this cellophane. So not really into traditional. (DO YOU REMEMBER THE YEAR?) Oh, I believe it was 1960 to 1962.

(AFTER JOHN WATKINS, WHERE DID YOU GO?) I went to Auntie Luka

and Louise Kaleiki at the 'Ilima Studio. It was under their lessons that I got more involved into the hula. (DID YOU GO RIGHT INTO IT, RIGHT AFTER JOHN PI'ILANI, OR DID YOU REST?) No. Because John Watkins was far out at Kapahulu and mom and dad moved out to Waipahu, we needed to find some place closer so I left there and went right in to move with them(?). (THERE YOU LEARNED KAHIKO?) There I had learned kahiko but under Uncle Henry Pa. (IT WAS HIS TEACHING THEN?) Yes. To my understanding, he taught Aunty Luka and we used to go into kahiko when we were getting ready for graduation. Uncle Henry Pa comes to the halau and teaches us the kahiko and then we would be getting ready for graduation, uniki. (SO HE WOULD TEACH YOU ONLY THE KAHIKO FOR GRADUATION?) Yes. Only the kahiko. (AND AUNTY LOUISE WOULD DO THE...) Auana. (AND YOU DID THAT ALL THE TIME?) It wasn't a year round thing. Only when Aunty was getting ready I could remember to get graduation together. We needed to learn the kahiko so he would come in and take care of that portion. (BEFORE THAT, DID SHE TEACH KAHIKO TOO?) She would only teach auana and polynesian. (HOW LONG DID YOU STAY THERE?) I was with aunty for about 8-9 years and it was at aunty's halau the "'Ilima Hula Sweethearts". I was an "'Ilima Hula Sweetheart". (THE STUDIO IS 'ILIMA STUDIO?) Yes. 'Ilima Hula Studio. To my understanding, only the girls that were selected to be

performing in public, at shows, and got into the first line - there was a first and second line dancers - they were actually the "Sweethearts" for aunty. (SO YOU WERE PERFORMING WITH HER AT A LOT OF PLACES?) Yes. A lot of places. And those were my memories when I started to think of "Aloha Pumehana", going back to there. (HOW MANY YEARS BEFORE GRADUATION?) Do you mean how many years of training? (YEAH, BEFORE GRADUATING.) Okay. It was about 8 years. Because we were dancing professionally at Fort DeRussy and military bases and going to Johnson Island and perform. I'd say about 5-6 years before I graduated. (WHEN DID YOU BEGIN TO HAVE CLASSES WITH HENRY PA? ONLY THAT YEAR BEFORE?) Uh, no. I remember meeting with Uncle Henry Pa for 3 years. Uncle Henry Pa would come for certain time of period, only to teach kahiko. (IS THAT BECAUSE OF THE SPECIAL GROUP?) Yes. (YOU WERE NOT THE ONLY STUDENT THEN?) No. I think in that year, the last year, the third year, there was 6 of us other hula sisters that were up for graduation. (AND AFTER THE GRADUATION YOU STAYED A BIT LONGER?) I stayed a little longer until I had to move to Maui. (SO YOU KEPT ON STUDYING?) Yes, I continued to study. (DID YOU SERVE AS AN ALAKA'I TO HER TOO?) I wish I had the privilege of serving as an alaka'i, but if I stayed at that time and was not moving to Maui. . . I was asked to become an alaka'i but my parents wanted

me to attend Lahainaluna High School, so I moved away.

(DID SHE HAVE A SPECIAL STYLE?) I feel in my heart Auntie Luka and Auntie Louise had a unique style. I would say they had so much respect for Uncle Henry Pa because we were taught to have respect. They separated tradition with auana - kahiko and auana. But auntie's style was...I don't know if there's a certain word for every style, I really don't know that, but she had her own style - even her dress and her attire. (DO YOU REMEMBER SOMETHING THAT WAS VERY MUCH LIKE HER? A GESTURE, STYLE, DRESS?) I remember auntie and I'm proud to say Auntie Luka and Louise, they were known for their Missionary outfits, their Gibsons. I remember having five Gibsons in my closet, you know, of purple...I remember my favorite was a turquoise with black feathers and they had this hat and oh, we, the "Sweethearts", we felt good wearing that. But I think Auntie Luka and Louise were noted for their Gibsons. (DID THEY TEACH TOGETHER?) They were together all the time. Auntie Luka did more of the teaching and Louise did more of the paper work, business. Although she was not teaching, but she was more of the disciplinary person. (DID YOU GO TO ANY TEACHER AFTER THAT?) You know, when I was with Auntie Luka and Louise, because I was so, I think the word is "ono" for learn and everything was hula, hula, hula, at the same time while I was taking from Auntie Luka

at the Recreation Center, Waipahu Recreation Center, Ku'ulei Clark was there, and I was afraid to let Aunty Luka and Louise know that I was. . . I wanted to be with all my school friends because they were taking lessons with Ku'ulei Clark, so they kind of pushed me to come. So I went and attended Aunty Ku'ulei Clark's classes at the gym because she was teaching at parks and recreation. (IN WAIPAHU?) Waipahu. And I attended for about 2-3 months. Maybe the most would be 6 months, but that was only because my girlfriends from school were taking and I wanted to be with them. (WHAT KIND OF SONGS?) Oh, Aunty Ku'ulei, I think, was more. . . I remember learning the bamboo song, Hawaiian, but was more in a commercial, more haolified style. And that's where I found that it was so different from Aunty Luka and Louise.

(FOR UNIKI, WHAT DID YOU HAVE TO DO?) Okay. All girls, all the dancers, hula sisters, "Hula Sweethearts" that were up for graduation had to learn a number of their own. Aunty Luka and Louise chose the song and the girls that were up for graduation learned their particular song on appointment basis. It was not where everybody learned it. Like, for me, I would come in Wednesday and it's for 3 o'clock to 4. My sister would be for Thursday, 3:00. It was not where people or the other girls saw what we were dancing. (WAS IT IN AUANA?) It was in the auana style. (DID

SHE TEACH YOU OR DID YOU HAVE TO CORREOGRAPH IT?) No. She chose the song and she taught the motions. (SO IT WAS YOUR SONG?) Yes, it was mine. It was just for the individual. And if I can remember, my song was "Kau'ionalani". But today it's so contemporary so I kind of lost the air of the real traditional.

(HOW ABOUT KAHIKO? DO YOU REMEMBER SPECIAL TRAINING?)

Kahiko was through Uncle Henry Pa, but it was not where one individual did a kahiko. Just the graduating class, perhaps, did "Kaulilua". I remember "Kaulilua", "A Ko'olau au". If 6 graduates were graduating that year, just that 6 did that particular kahiko dance, and then the others would have their own.

(CAN YOU TELL ME A LITTLE BIT ABOUT YOUR UNIKI?) From what I remember, all the students participated - from children to graduates. The graduates had special songs, and I found myself spending more when you graduate, of course which is understandable. But she made us feel so special, Aunty Luka and Louise, and that's what I miss as a student. I miss them, their style, and how they went about things. (DID YOU HAVE TO PERFORM IN PUBLIC?) Yes. It was in public. (WAS IT DURING A LU'AU?) There was a lu'au, a graduation lu'au. I remember her uniki was at Ka Makua Mau Loa church. That's the church they attended - Aunty Luka and

Louise. (WHERE IS THIS CHURCH?) This is on Mokauea I believe, Mokauea Street. And I remember graduating there, and a big lu'au was given for all. (WAS IT SPECIAL FOR THE UNIKI OR WAS IT FOR ANOTHER OCCASION?) Oh, no. It was special. Tickets were sold for family and friends. (DO YOU REMEMBER THE NAMES OF YOUR CLASSMATES?) I remember Carol Smith. I remember...my sister is Alapa'i Kaleiki. She married _____, who was the brother of Aunty Luka and Louise. Valerie DeCorte - I don't know their married names, I know their maiden names. If they're married then they might be under another name. Victoria Willing - we called her "Sweetie". They were first line dancers with me and my sister. We were very close. Debbie Andrade, she was in the second. Yolanda Pagala. Jeanette Gifford. I think that's all I can remember. (ARE THEY TEACHING TODAY?) No. None of them are teaching. In fact, Debbie Andrade's daughter takes lessons from me. Yolanda Pagala, I hear she might be teaching in Florida, I'm not sure, but she got married to a polynesian dancer, so maybe that's how they started...

(HOW LONG AFTER YOU LEFT AUNTY LUKA DID YOU START TEACHING?)

I started teaching...I was asked to teach out at Waipahu, but before I went into teaching I lived in Maui. While I was living in Maui, I was dancing at the Royal Lahaina Hotel as a solo dancer and I was dancing

under the direction of Robert Kalani. (YOU WERE DANCING...) ...with his group. (BUT YOU WEREN'T TAKING LESSONS?) No. He asked me to dance as a solo at the Royal Lahaina Hotel. 'Cause I was sent away to Maui to attend Lahainaluna High School and I missed my hula, my learning, and just to keep it up he asked me to come into his... (SO YOU WOULD JUST GO AND DANCE FOR HIM. YOU NEVER TOOK CLASSES?) No. I never took classes. (YOU NEVER BRUSHED UP OR ANYTHING?) No. And I was doing song solos using Auntie Luka's songs and choreography. (SO YOU WERE TEACHING YOURSELF?) Yes. (HOW LONG DID YOU DO THAT?) For a year, because I lived in Maui for a year, and then decided to come home; and when I came home all my other hula sisters, that I was taking lessons with Auntie Luka them, they were not there. They graduated and went on. And it was different. I went back to Auntie Luka for a little while, but then it was different, and there was some kind of emptiness, and so I rested, I decided to rest. And then I was asked to teach this set of girls in Waipahu, and that's how I started to teach. (AND HOW OLD WERE YOU?) I was 18-19. It started with my own girlfriends. (SO IT WAS YOUNG GIRLS, NOT CHILDREN?) No, not children. I started with teens. (AND FROM THAT?) From that I gathered...the word went around. (HOW DID THE TAHITIAN COME?) We began with only Tahitian. (WHERE DID YOU LEARN TAHITIAN?)

My Tahitian training came from Uncle John Watkins, Aunty Luka – she had all kinds of dances: Polynesian, Maori, Samoan dancing, and watching shows in Waikiki. As you watch, you kind of better yourself; you look at their feet and all that. And so I started to train myself in Tahitian.

(WHICH OF YOUR PAST TEACHERS HAVE HAD THE MOST INFLUENCE ON YOU?) The most influential teacher of mine was Aunty Luka and Louise. They had taught me and given me a lot of desire to move on and learn more. And they were the biggest inspiration on my hula career. (WHEN YOU STARTED YOUR HALAU, WERE THEY STILL ALIVE?) Yes.

(CAN YOU DESCRIBE YOUR DANCING STYLE? DID YOU START WITH HER STYLE?) When I started, first year I started, we did only Tahitian because we were not too much involved in the hula. So my brother and I started, my brother Dennis, my twin brother. He took care of drumming and I took care of dancing. And we had hula on the side, but when we were asked to do shows they wanted Tahitian, so we did Tahitian at shows. We went on to enter the Tahiti Fete in Kaua'i. Aunty Louise called me about that. She asked me if I like to get involved with that Kaua'i fete. She sent me the application. She said, "Denise, why don't you go try it?" So I felt very privileged that my kumu hula helped support me. And that's where we first went into competition, it started at Kaua'i Fete. (DO YOU REMEMBER

THE YEAR?) 1975 was the year. (AND THAT WAS TAHITIAN?) That was Tahitian only. We were very, I would say, kind of more stronger on the Tahitian side. [END OF SIDE ONE]

(DO YOU THINK YOUR STYLE IS THE SAME STYLE AS. . .) As Auntie Luka? Yes! (OVER THE YEARS DID YOU CHANGE?) You know, I think I still have Auntie Luka's style even for the Tahitian, but in some ways I bettered it, in some ways I had bettered her style also because Auntie. . . I remember not being as fast as I used to be, but because of watching and learning from Tahitian instructors, when they say something you kind of have to study their styles too and what are they really saying. They had told me, "Keep your feet closer together, bend the knees and pump on the knees," where with Auntie Luka, it was just like more the hula *'ami* and not too much on the knees. (HOW ABOUT THE HULA STYLE?) Oh! The hula style is Auntie Luka's and Auntie Louise's, more Auntie Luka. I don't know any other way. (OF ALL THE SONGS/AUANA YOU HAD, ARE THEY HER SONGS?) You know, "Pua Ahihi" was one of my favorites that somehow that song, the motions, will never leave me. But I've never taught it to my girls. I feel "Pua Ahihi" is mine because I can only remember that song. But no, the songs, the auanas, I choose for the girls to learn I would make my own motions but keep the style. (SO MOST OF THE SONGS YOU CHOREOGRAPH

WITH THE STYLE. . .) . . .with the style of Auntie Luka. (SO YOU DON'T TEACH THEM ANY SONGS THAT YOU HAD LEARNED?) No I don't. I've never taught them. I keep the style but the choreography is my own.

(ANY DIFFICULTIES WHILE YOU WERE TAKING HULA?) Only that I was sad when my parents said for me to go to Maui. The girls-my hula sisters-and I, we were so close and if one of them were sad we all felt sad for the other. I tried not to get myself in trouble with Auntie Luka and Louise. The difficulty was I dwelt myself so much into hula that I never got a chance to go to football games. Auntie Luka and Louise were very strict. If we missed a show, you couldn't dance. That was them. And we used to talk about it, the girls and I, because I remember a few of us never went to our graduation prom because there was hula. I don't know how it is. I can only say they were so strict that if you missed one performance, no sense you go in again. (YOU HAD A LOT OF RESPONSIBILITY?) Yes. It was a difficulty working with Auntie Luka and Louise. And today I can't do that with my own students because I know what I missed in school, during school, or school activities. I cannot see the kids today no could. (DO YOU THINK AT THAT TIME HULA WAS THE PRIORITY?) Yes. I didn't know if it was a good idea, but. . . (HOW MANY TIMES A WEEK DID YOU GO THERE?) You know, we were dancing Sweethearts. Auntie had a show, had a contract, at Fort

DeRussy Friday/Saturday. You know the Fort DeRussy where Hale Koa is? That was Fort de Russy officers mess. Her contract was there. In fact us, this particular breed of Sweethearts, got her that contract. We were into competition, we had to go to auditions, and nine of us girls who were the Sweethearts dancers auditioned for the show and she was able to get it. I think Aunty had that contract for 10 years. So her contract, then, was Friday and Saturday, and Sunday we were out at Bellows, the beach area. And we saw Aunty Luka maybe 3, 4 times a week. (AND THAT'S FOR HOW LONG?) That was like an hour and a half every session.

(WHAT IS THE MOST JOYFUL THING THAT YOU GET FROM TEACHING?)

You know, the most joyful thing I get from watching the kids today, my hula students, is to learn to love it as I was taught to learn to love the hula. I have a few students that are so dedicated and they really put themselves together and their heart in it. And I admire them and I feel that I've done good for them, but not to the extreme when I know that they're graduating or they're having their prom come up. If they go... I don't want them to miss that because I missed it. But I don't regret it. I only think back when my daughter would say, "Ma, how was your prom night?" And then I would tell her, "You know, mommy didn't make it." She said, "How come?" I said, "I was dancing." But I can't say much about that,

but I wouldn't want my daughter to miss her prom.

(WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST ACCOMPLISHMENT IN YOUR HULA?) The greatest accomplishment is just for them to love themselves, to love hula, to perpetuate, to know that no matter what race you are or what creed you may be, hula is in the heart. It's something there that they must learn to feel as they dance. I think that's my accomplishment is to see that dancer put her heart in it.

(DO YOU UNIKI?) No. (ARE YOU THINKING OF DOING IT?) I'm thinking of doing it in the future. But if I uniki any of my students, they really got to love it, they really gotta have it in there. (WHAT DO YOU EXPECT FROM THEM?) I tell my students to take Hawaiian language in school. I encourage them with that. If they don't get it in high school and they... I have a few of them attending Leeward Community College and I ask them to try to get into the language. I encourage them to teach a song. They have to teach the keiki, beginning with keiki, a song all in Hawaiian and choreograph their own. I prefer them to be with me not less than 5 years. They need to be with me longer than 5 years to know me. I had them pick a class and they need to not only praise but I want them to correct the students. Some of them, some students, they're afraid to correct the other students. They would come to me and ask me, "Oh, Aunty. I cannot

scold her." I would tell them, "You're not scolding her. You're correcting her mistake. How she going get better?" So if my alaka'i or student can handle all that, I think she's on her way to become uniki. (DO YOU HAVE SOME NOW?) I do. (ABOUT HOW MANY?) I have 2 ladies and also my son and my daughter help me teach the keiki class, but 2 ladies that I see is really up to being uniki, although they feel they don't deserve it.

(WHAT KIND OF CLASSES DO YOU HAVE?) I have keikis from the ages of 5 years old. Beginners, 5 years old to 9-10. And then I have advanced. (ADVANCED KEIKIS?) Advanced keikis. And then I have beginning adult. (SO YOU HAVE CHILDREN AND ADULT?) Yes. (WHEN YOU TALK ABOUT KEIKIS, DOES THAT INCLUDE THE TEENS?) Yes, 10 years old. From 11 years old, if they haven't really grasped on they have to stay back. Only when they can grasp they can. . . (DO YOU HAVE THE TEENS MOVE UP TO ADULT?) I have promotions, yes. (HOW OLD IS THE OLDEST ADULT?) The adults I have is 40-45. But adults in Tahitian is about 55-60 years old. I have a 60 year old wahine in Tahitian. She loves Tahitian. (IN HULA?) In hula, about 45 years old. (DOES EVERYBODY LEARN KAHIKO AND AUANA?) You know, I leave it up to them. I have a package where they take kahiko, auana, and polynesian, but I break that package for those who want only hula. I find most of them like auana in my halau. They like auana and

polynesian. If they are beginners where they have learned nothing, not even the basic steps, I advise them to start with auana.

(WHAT KIND OF ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO THE YOUNG TEACHERS?)

Know what they're doing. Learn the language. Respect the kupunas.

Respect our culture. We all have our different styles because our kumu hulas all learned from different people. Don't go over the extreme of elaborating our hula. And just take it from the root. Don't forget the basics.

(WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE HULA KAHIKO OF TODAY?) I like the old kumu hulas: Uncle Henry Pa, Uncle George Na'ope, Hoakalei. (WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE THAT YOU SEE?) The difference I see is too much elaboration. I don't know how to explain it. I came from the old hula and that's my problem. In kahiko, I have a hard time elaborating like I see today. I mean, I want to be with everybody else, but I don't know how to be that way. So I might be on the real old fashioned way, but that's the way I learned it. And maybe if I put in something that's not supposed to be there, it's because I'm elaborating and I find out it was wrong. (SO YOUR KAHIKO IS JUST...) Tradition. I don't know how... (HOW YOU LEARNED?) Yes. (AND YOU DON'T WANT TO CREATE MORE.) I don't want to create more. I don't know if it's wrong or not, but because I learned it the old way, I don't

know how to be elaborate in the new way. And if I am, I'm wrong. So I don't want to get into it. I get criticized for it and I respect that because it teaches me.

(CAN YOU GIVE ME YOUR DEFINITION OF HULA KAHIKO?) Hula kahiko, to me, is stricter - to be much more respected. When I think of hula kahiko I think of Pele, I think of Lono, Kanaloa. You know, that strictness where it goes far from beyond. And yet it's strict but it's so meaningful, and I believe that that's the beginning of the hula. (DO YOU HAVE A FAVORITE CHANT IN KAHIKO?) Favorite chant? (MMHM.) My favorite chant is "Kaulilua". I love "Kaulilua". (ANY SPECIAL MEMORY/SIGNIFICANCE OF WHY YOU LIKE IT?) I cannot forget "Kaulilua" and I love it because that was the chant Uncle Henry Pa chose for us graduating girls, and it's so... I don't know how to explain it. To me it's so meaningful. It's up to the dancer to feel it. And I think I cannot forget "Kaulilua" because the day, the year we danced "Kaulilua" for our graduation it was so meaningful in that it was an inspiration right then. (HOW DID HENRY PA TEACH YOU "KAULILUA"?) I remember before we started the kahiko, the dance, he sat all of us down - and Auntie Luka was present, sitting there - and he explained about the dance. He spoke about Kaua'i because, I believe, the chant came from Kaua'i, Wai'ale'ale. And so there was many things that he

had explained about the chant and he did this every time he met us to teach us this chant. (DO YOU REMEMBER OTHER CHANTS THAT YOU LEARNED?) "A Ko'olau Au". I don't hardly hear this one - "Lanakila", you know, the Lanakila chant. "Kalakaua". I know there was a sitting noho chant with the uliulis. (WERE THESE ALL THE CHANTS THAT YOU HAD TO DO FOR YOU UNIKI?) No. All the time that Uncle Henry Pa met with us, maybe for three years, it was different chants; but the last year, our graduating year, it was "Kaulilua". (YOU LEARNED ONLY ONE CHANT?) No. (FOR YOUR GRADUATION?) Oh, for my graduation. Yes. Our group was only one. And the other girls did one, you know. . .

(IN HULA AUANA, ANY SPECIAL SONGS WITH SPECIAL MEMORIES? WHY?) Well, today Auntie Louise had that, uh, or listened to the tape, you know, "Mele Hula", the "Mele Hula" tape 1 and 2. In fact, Uncle Henry Pa is on that tape too. I remember auntie when she taught us "Pua Ahihi". "Pua Ahihi" is the motions I can remember today. That's the song I kind of drop my tears because it's a miss. I can remember out of all the songs that she taught us, it's "Pua Ahihi" that I can remember the motions. So I would say that's my favorite song, really, besides "Aloha Kaua'i" that auntie sings.

(DO YOU THINK LANGUAGE IS IMPORTANT?) I feel it's definitely important because it's through the language we make our motions, we

choreograph the motions, knowing what is the *ua*, what is the flower, what is, you know, *pua* and all that. Language is so important. In those days when I was taking lessons, now I know why Auntie Luka them go in so many research, and it has a lot to do with the language. (IN CLASS DO YOU USE THE HAWAIIAN LANGUAGE?) Yeah, *kahala*. I use the Hawaiian terms. (DO YOU USE A LITTLE HAWAIIAN LANGUAGE IN THERE?) I use a little Hawaiian language in there for, especially, the children because their minds are so fresh. You can tell them the "ua", or else I would tell them, "Give me the motion and the word for the flower." So they would say "pua", and they needed to say it maybe 2-3 times before we go. So we teach the motion plus the word to go with that motion and then I would say "kilakila way up" or "i luna" so they know, or "i hope, i lalo", you know, those simple ones to the kids so they know when we calling it on stage they know what's the word. (DO YOU THINK THAT'S IMPORTANT TOO?) I think it's very important. "Mino'aka", you know? (I KNOW YOU PERFORM WITH YOUR CHILDREN A LOT. DO YOU THINK THAT'S IMPORTANT IN YOUR. . .) Outside in performance? (YEAH. WHAT DOES IT DO TO YOUR CHILDREN?) I feel if taking them out dancing. . . I take my students out dancing and some people would say that's too quick. But you know, I take them when they're with me for at least 6 months and only maybe one number if they do one

show. But I explain that to the parents so they feel why I'm doing it, because some parents may say, "Well, my daughter only gonna do one number." But, you know, just that one song is so important to that child, because I find that when they're out there they learn to be stronger inside. (THEY LEARN CONFIDENCE.) Yeah, confidence. And you know, maybe just that one number she going cry. Some of them get stage fright even at 11 years old or 10 years old. The minute they get near the stairway they're crying because it's hard for them to handle, so I take them out. . .

(HOW DO YOU CHOOSE YOUR CHILDREN FOR COMPETITION?) Okay. The children have to be with me. . .you know, that's a very good question and I'm glad to answer because although maybe time is an essence when you learn. You know, if she has not been in for about a year than she shouldn't be, that's what I hear, that she shouldn't be going to Keiki Hula. But, you know, I really feel if the child really wants to go, she's gonna put out. I don't hold her because they haven't been with me for a year. If she is going to produce, why hold her back? I mean, she wants to go. We have a meeting like, "Do you want to go to Keiki Hula?" I can tell from their first expression if they don't want to go or what. "Yes aunty." I say, "Are you willing to work hard?" And she says, "Yes". I said, "You know, the kind of working hard is if you're going to summer school you go summer school in

the morning and immediately at 12:30 you have to be there, and we are going to take classes until 5:30. So they're with me for about 4 to 5 hours. I know some other kumus have been with their students for longer, but I think 4 hours is enough, so they don't get tired of me and they don't hate the song. But the students have to go through all that, answer the questions, and I do have an interview with the parents. I ask them, I would say, "You know, your daughter has been selected to go to Keiki Hula, but it's a lot of work." And someone would say, "Oh, but aunty, she's been with you for only about a year." I say, "How do you feel about that?" They say, "Well, if you feel my daughter can do it, I'll be glad to let her in." And I said, "Well, I'm not looking at just because she's been with me for a year. But she's such a good listener and she catches up so fast, I would like to have her participate. But if she goofs off then, you know, I'll just let her go." And I find that the student becomes a better student. I find that they try harder and then with praises they feel good and with corrections they know that they've been bad. So I find that my selection is my own. Sometimes I think I'm so different from others, but that's the way I feel. (DO YOU THINK COMPETITION IS A GOOD THING?) Okay. I've thought about that. Competition is good for the kids. It's a good motivation. But you know, competition should not make. . . I say "for kids" because I've been in

Keiki Hula and I've learned so much by competing in Keiki Hula. But you know, when we get ready for Keiki Hula, I try not to use the word "competition". I like to use the word better the "project". "Okay, girls. We have a project to do." Because when you use the word "competition", sometimes I notice it changes that child's attitude. They think they're better than others. I don't want that. I want competition to make them a better dancer but not an ugly kind of person. Everybody has their own way of teaching and the child learning. I've heard some very ugly negatives. I guess that's why negative things. . .that's why I thought about it these past days and I'd say, "I wonder if I'm doing right for my kids by entering Keiki Hula." But I feel this way: If the kumu hula gives the air of. . .that she. . .I try not to be like that, but humble. I think, I feel that then the students will be humble about it. (DO YOU SEE CHANGES IN THE CHILD AFTER THEY COMPETE FOR THE FIRST TIME?) Yes. (HOW?) More confident in themselves, not afraid to show what they have, and I feel that if they gonna be afraid then how can they perpetuate our culture further? But I notice that after Keiki Hula a lot of them feel they can do other things. They can further. . .and they're not afraid to take that extra step. So I find, that's what I find - positive a lot on Keiki Hula and competition that it makes the child better. But when they come out of Keiki Hula. . .for

instance, if we won/took a place, and I find that the girls had changed, I'd quickly sit down my kids and I'd let them know, "I don't like that because we all did this together," and "We all love what we're doing," and so forth. But I normally don't have those problems. They're good kids, and they've become better dancers too.

(DO YOU TEACH STRICTLY DANCE OR DO YOU TEACH INSTRUMENTS, SKIRTS, ETC.?) First of all, I found out that some of the kids don't even know how to sew a lei, so we get the lei needle and teach them how to sew a lei. And then stripping the ti leaf, their la'i skirt, scrapping it. They haven't gone into the tying yet. Braiding that rafia, getting it ready for their haku, and then they start to pile their flowers together and then they work on their haku. Some of them need. . . a lot of them need to get their fingers together on that. Yes, we do have this extra. . . (DO THE CHILDREN DO THEIR OWN LEIS?) Yes. (WHEN THEY GO TO COMPETITION?) Yes. Rosettes and all that. The parents need to take care of the flowers. My girls, the dancers, not at this point. . . they don't do their own leis. But their parents are there, mother is there, and the girl is there helping. (SO YOU HAVE YOUR PARENTS INVOLVED IN YOUR HALAU TOO?) Yes. (HOW ABOUT IN COSTUMING?) The costuming? A few of them sew their own, and if they don't sew, I have a dress maker. But, if possible, I like them to

sew their own because it keeps costs down, and then they'll learn how to do it - other kinds. (WHEN YOU WERE WITH LUKA, DID THEY TEACH YOU? DO YOU REMEMBER WHAT YOU WERE TAUGHT?) I remember, yes. In fact everything I learned, what I'm teaching the kids and the parents today of their own ti leaf skirt, we all, we find out that everybody has different style of making ti leaf skirts. Some is so far apart, some only use three bunches where Aunty Luka taught us to use 5 bunches where it's so nice and thick. But Aunty Luka and Louise taught us a lot: poi ball making; Tahitian skirt outfit making; of course, the ti leaf skirt. I don't remember, they were not much in the hakus. Those days never had so much of the hakus. (DO YOU DO THINGS OTHER THAN THE HULA IN THE ARTS AND CULTURE? YOU JUST DO POLYNESIAN?) Yes. (YOU DO TAHITIAN AND MAORI?) Tahitian, Maori, Sassa, Lapalapa. We put it on our shows when the people who's requesting for a show, they want a polynesian show that represents everything. If they want only hula and only for half an hour we just give the hula. You know, what the client requests, we try to give them that.

(WHAT DO YOU THINK OF WORKSHOPS TODAY?) Oh, I think we need more workshops. I like workshops. I like to learn. (DO YOU THINK WORKSHOPS ARE GOOD FOR KUMU HULA OR BOTH?) Oh, I think workshops is

good for both. If you have a student, like I would say. . . [END OF TAPE]