

Nana I Na Loea Hula
Kumu Hula: Pi'i Lani
Interviewer: Lovina LePendur
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(YOUR NAME?) It will be two names. I already wrote it how I wanted it: Pi'i is the first name and Lani is the last name. (DO YOU TEACH PRESENTLY?) Yes I do. (WHERE?) At Waimea Falls Park. (WHAT AGE GROUP?) I work with adults. (ONLY ADULTS?) Yea. Well, there are some teenagers but what I do there is I employ dancers and then, therefore, after I teach them the hula. (NAME OF THE HALAU?) Halau 'O Waimea. (WHY THAT NAME?) Well, because the department that we work for is Waimea Falls Park Hula Department, and this school of hula is a part of Waimea Valley or Ahupua'a. And so we continue the cultural heritage from the valley through our chants and dances. (DID YOU GIVE THE NAME OR DID SOMEBODY ELSE?) Rudy Mitchell, the park historian, gave the name. (YOU TEACH BOTH KAHIKO AND AUANA?) Yes. (HOW ABOUT OLI?) Oli. (ARE YOU A TEACHER OF CHANT OR DO YOU TEACH IT ONLY WITH THE DANCES?) I teach the dancing. I teach the mele that goes with the dance. And I teach the oli that goes away from the dance. You don't dance to oli. (I WAS THINKING THAT YOU HAVE CLASSES ONLY FOR OLI, BUT YOUR DANCERS LEARN THE OLI.) Yes, my dancers learn the oli as well as they learn how to

chant the dances that they do so that they can be ho'opa'a as well. (HOW

MANY YEARS HAVE YOU BEEN TEACHING?) 20 years. (HERE?) No. (WHERE?)

Originally I taught from home in Hau'ula and I had a halau there from keikis from 3 years old to teenagers. Then I taught for Queen Lili'uokalani Children's Center, "Hale 'Aha O Punalu'u". I taught the teenagers there. I did have some adults, too, that I taught at the same time, but not in conjunction with Queen Lili'uokalani but more on my own at home. Then I've taught the Senior Citizens in Haleiwa that belong to the association there. And then when I lived in Waialua I also had a hula studio from my home there. So I've taught at several different areas. (DO YOU STILL TEACH THEM?) No. Now I just teach at Waimea Falls Park. I am also a professor for Hawai'i Loa College Pacific Islands Institute. And so I do teach the elder hostles.

(CAN YOU TELL ME AT WHAT AGE YOU STARTED HULA?) 3 years old.

(UNDER WHICH TEACHER?) My mother, Ku'ualoha Terry. (DID SHE TEACH AT HOME?) She taught us at home and she did teach hula to others at home. She also taught at camp Kokokahi in Kane'ohe. I remember she had classes there. She had her own little studio on Aulike Street in Kailua, across from Kailua Elementary. I remember her having a studio there. (WHAT DID YOU LEARN FROM HER?) Kahiko and auana.

(CAN YOU REMEMBER THE METHODS & STYLE OF YOUR MOTHER?) Yes I do. (CAN YOU RECALL IF IT WAS A STYLE OF A PREVIOUS KUMU SHE HAD?) Yes. How she taught us was in steps. For instance, the first few dances that we learned were the basic hula dances of olapa that introduced basic hula steps, and these dances were used as drills for these steps. Like "Kawika" would be the kaholo, "Lili'u E" would be the uwehe, "Kalakaua" would be the Kalakaua. The beginning course, these dances, drilled us in those basic steps. When we got to the intermediate level, the dances would be consisting of many different steps in one dance. The form of hula that she taught us was *hula ala'apapa*, so that we were taught not to kahea the verses in those days. It was important that you, in your memory, knew exactly what verse came next; so there was no kahea being given. And when we got to the advanced stages, some of the dances would be very long, quite long. And we knew the dances that she taught us, it had been recorded when it was given to her that the hand and foot movements had not been changed for over 100 years, since the 1860's. So that we were very careful, and until today I teach some of these dances. I am very careful that the dancers that I teach know that these dances are exactly the same today in word, in melody, in timing, in hand gestures, and feet, as they were in 1860.

(DID YOUR MOTHER TELL YOU WHERE SHE GOT HER SOURCES FROM?)

[Yes. She learned from Ho'oulu. . . , well, they called her Mother Davis. It was like her nickname. (SHE HAD ONLY HER FOR A TEACHER?) No. She had other teachers too. We come from a hula line, and my grandmother on the maternal side was also very much of a hula dancer, but in the days when they danced without their top. Grandma was from Hana. There are some pictures in the Bishop Museum of grandma and her sisters sitting on the pahu drum with no tops and just skirts and stuff. Grandma never told us that she was a dancer. She became very, very Christian and, although she was a pure blooded Hawaiian, she almost frowned upon too much hula. And I guess because, maybe, she lived at that time when they were going away from the Hawaiian things and into the. . . , not so much frowned on it. No. I shouldn't say that. But more wanted us to be Christian. She did make sure my mother learned from family and, of course, the hula line continued because my mother taught me and I taught my children and my children teach their children. (DO YOU KNOW THE NAME OF YOUR GRANDMOTHER?)

Yes. Elizabeth Kawahineke'oke'ookala Ka'anana. (AND SHE CAME FROM HANA?) Umhm. And my mom was born in Hana too. (YOUR HULA DRILLS CAME FROM YOUR GRANDMOTHER?) No. Those come from Mother Davis.]

(DID YOU ONLY HAVE YOUR MOTHER AS A TEACHER OR DID YOU LEARN FROM

OTHERS?) Basically with my mother, although I did take a few things here and there, and I did dance with Kanoe Lum for 5 years, and with her that was strictly "show" auana and all of that. (AND YOU WERE DANCING IN SHOWS FOR HER?) Yes. (WHERE?) Oh, everywhere. Basically we had Fort Shafter, Fort DeRussy, Hickam officers' clubs. We did those. We did Princess Ka'iulani. (WAS IT IN THE 1980'S, 1970'S?) Oh, I was 11 years old. It was from when I was around 11 to about 15 or 16. This was a long time ago.

(DID YOU UNIKI FROM YOUR MOTHER?) Yes I did. (WHERE WAS IT?)

[The uniki was held at my home in Hau'ula, and I unikid along with my two sisters. We had completed the ancient hula course that my mother was teaching us which was finalized by a lu'au where we each did solo performances and also some dances together. At that time we were performing as a family at King's Alley Bishop Museum Heritage Theater with my mother and my two sisters and myself. (DO YOU REMEMBER WHAT REQUIREMENTS YOU HAD TO MEET TO BECOME A TEACHER?) Well, not on written paper or anything like that. It was more a course of experience, a course of training, based on how well we could execute the moves and dances and understand the *kaona* and the feeling of the chants. (HOW DID YOU BECOME A TEACHER? DID YOU CHOOSE TO? DID YOU TAKE OVER THE

HALAU?) No. [My mother never had a "halau" so to speak. It was just us kids. We always danced with the family for church things and for friends and families. And when I married the kids' father, he didn't truly approve of me dancing any longer, so I decided to teach, because the hula was such a force in me that I could not stop doing it. It had been with me practically my entire life and it is very much a part of me, so I could not stop having an involvement with it, so I chose to begin teaching. (WHAT YEAR?) Well, it must have been 1970, because that's the year we got married. So that's about 20 years now, a little over 20 years.]

(CAN YOU DESCRIBE YOUR DANCING STYLE? DID YOU KEEP YOUR MOTHER'S STYLE?) Yes, [I kept my mother's dancing style, but I also allowed myself growth as a kumu hula, as a hula teacher, because of the fact that this is 1990 and the hula is in evolution as of today. It still is a growing thing. I don't like to be stagnant, although there are things I want to keep as they were, like the dances I was telling you about that haven't changed since 1860. Those I would never touch. But I have composed many chants, and along with composing them I have put my own dancing styles and melodies to them based on the foundation I was given by mother.]

(DID YOU ENCOUNTER ANY DIFFICULTIES IN HULA CAREER?) Many. Well, more so I feel on the personal side. A lot of people in your family

especially your husband, they get to feel that you're more married to the hula or that your hula family is more your family because you spend so much time with them. So there has been some times that area that needed more balance on a personal level. On a professional level, more recently because I have been at Waimea Falls Park for the last, going on 11 years, the people that I employ to dance in the halau there to do the ancient hula are of the age of 18, 19, 20, early twenties where they haven't really grasped a full commitment to responsibility. To them, some of them, it's just a job. For a lot of them it's been a halau, it's been a great love for the hula. But for some of them it's just another job. And so when I see disrespect being given the hula it makes teaching a little bit more challenging for me because you cannot make someone love the hula like you do and see how precious it is, but you can only give what you can and hope that they learned to love it and respect it and care for it like you do.

(DO YOU HAVE SOME STUDENTS THAT HAVE BEEN WITH YOU SINCE YOU'VE STARTED?) Yes. One in particular, Kepola Kahue, has been with me since I started at Waimea Falls. I uniki'd her after she was with me for 10 years. She's been the only one that I've given an uniki to. I have one girl that's dancing for me who came to me when she was 3 years old. She was in one of my original groups, so she's in her early 20's and still with me. Some

of the kids that used to dance with me at Queen Lili'uokalani are with me off and on. Most of the people that do come through "Halau 'O Waimea", whether they stay or not, really learn to love the hula and learn this respect otherwise they don't stay with me. It's one of those things. We are here to, not only to perpetuate, but to protect and preserve. And I am very committed to that. (DO YOU TEACH THINGS OTHER THAN HULA LIKE LANGUAGE, CULTURE?) I teach them everything that I can. I teach them, basically, your hula steps, how these hula steps got named, as much mana'o and background that I can give them, that I have, so that they become better at what they're doing because they understand it better. I give them their dances, I give them chanters' training so that they know how to become ho'opa. I give them oli so that they learn the difference between *mele hula* and *oli oli* and *kepa kepa*. I give them different forms of oli. I teach them the ancient Hawaiian games and their names and their uses and the reasons that Hawaiians played them and when they played them and how to make these implements, also hula implements. We make our own hula implements at Waimea Falls Park. I teach them as many crafts as I can learn or that I know. And sometimes we learn together when it comes to crafts and games and things. Something new for us or something very old that we have to research or learn from someone, so

sometimes we are learning together. But culture, history, as much language as I am able to give to them. We've had formal language classes, but then once you got past to the *maus* and *laus* then they all got a little bit confused and were not able to really use it to it's fullest. So there is a lot of Hawaiian spoken in my halau. My mother is a very good Hawaiian language speaker. I have had some background there too. Aunty Kalima, who is a part of Waimea Falls, there's a lot of Hawaiian language spoken there in our halau. (YOU INTRODUCED ALL OF THESE THINGS BECAUSE YOU ARE PART OF WAIMEA FALLS PARK?) No. It's because of my development in my "kumu hulaness" or -ship at Waimea Falls Park that I have expanded into crafts and games. Originally, when it was just my halau, the furthest that I went with them, I did give them hula as background, chanting, and oli and we did more things on the costume level. We made our own implements but, like we would make our dyes and stamp our costumes. We were more geared for that kind of thing: taking them into the mountains, which I do today too, and show them how to pick from the mountain or how to pick from the ocean, from the shorelines. Those things have always been with me. The games, strictly since Waimea. (YOU HAVE MEN AND WOMEN?) Yes. (DO YOU TEACH THEM TOGETHER?) Yes, together. (AND THERE'S NO DIFFERENCE FOR YOU?) Well, I teach different things to them.

Sometimes they do exactly as the next and sometimes they do not. But I always teach them together.

(WHAT DO YOU REQUIRE OF YOUR STUDENTS BEFORE YOU UNIKI THEM?)

Well, I have 3 phases that I take them to, and the uniki or graduation process that I designed was not based strictly on what happened in early Hawai'i, but also what they'll need for today. And, so, hula experience was very important and she has had quite a bit. She took from Joan Lindsey and has been in the hula all of her life. Humility. To others it may sound silly, but to me if a person cannot be humble then they cannot learn what the Hawaiian... why they had the hula, why they danced about these things. And it's not something you can teach someone to be. You either have it or you develop it on your own. So having this humility is very important. Being able to teach the hula correctly; anybody can stand up and say, "Okay, this is how it goes. You got it or what?" But you have to nurture people through the hula. If you don't nurture them correctly you may totally turn them off. They may say, "This is too difficult. This is for the birds. You can have it!" But if you've got someone who can see a flower blooming and enhance it as it grows, then you've got a teacher. They need to have the ability to teach successfully.

(CAN YOU TELL ME ABOUT THE 3 PHASES YOU TALKED ABOUT?) Those

are paper work. Those are where you have to go through your phases of researching botanical areas so that you know what plants are available, what were used before for your adornments. As much about the ancient as possible, as much about today as possible - how you got your costume, how you put your whole halau together, then and now, everything is then and now. And then the final phase is to compose, of yourself, some chants, learn some language, focus on that. (THE GIRL THAT YOU UNIKID, DID SHE START COMPOSING TOO?) Mmhm. (BEFORE SHE STARTED TEACHING?) No, as a part of her uniki. [They have to have the ability to choreograph and compose, otherwise you have these kumu hula that are out there and they just borrow chants and borrow motions and they don't know what they're saying, they don't understand the language, they have mispronunciations of the Hawaiian language, and they can't compose anything. So my understanding of a hula teacher is like a spring that shoots forth, someone that's going to help expand, preserve, protect. And if they don't have these background skills then they are really stale, they go nowhere. They're just going to teach the same 10 dances they know from somebody else. They have no way of going forward.]

(WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE TERM "HULA KAHIKO" TODAY?) I don't mind whatever terms they want to use so long as it's nothing

disrespectful. (HOW DO YOU DESCRIBE IT?) To me? (YEA.) We refer to it as "hula kahiko" because that is the language of today. You have to go with the morays(?) of what's happening, and so that's what is being said today. And I don't mind, so long as there's no disrespect shown to it. (HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE TERM "HULA KAHIKO"?) You mean what does the hula mean to me? The ancient hula? (YEA.) That's a very difficult question. The hula kahiko or the hula olapa or the dances of early Hawai'i that were done, to me it's very undescribable. It's more a feeling than a description. Like for me, I don't really need an audience. I am one of those dancers who has it so in-born that to dance, it's fulfilling for me as when there is someone there or someone not. And that's because I am so tuned-in to the story and why the chant was composed and the feeling that it's giving me while I give it out. It doesn't have to be tied to another human being watching it. More it's something that's growing in me. I don't really know how to explain it.

(DID YOU LEARN HOW TO COMPOSE OR DID YOU JUST BEGIN COMPOSING?) I took classes from Nalani Kanaka'ole and her sister when they were here, and they described specific techniques. I also took oli classes from Kalena Silva where I learned much from him about the components that were necessary while composing chants. Aunty Malia

Craver also had a great influence upon me as she composes too and has given me chants as gifts and helped me in areas. My greatest influence, though, was Charlie Kenn who I studied under for over 5 years, just before he passed away. And I don't know if you're familiar with him, but he is a great authoritarian. Mr. Kenn was half Hawaiian and half Japanese, and just a storehouse of knowledge. This gentleman, I was very fortunate to have studied under him. He gave me much of the background in the Hawaiian areas that I have today. (AS FAR AS DANCES OR LANGUAGE?) Everything because, you know, with things of Hawai'i everything is interlocked and intertwined. You cannot learn about the hula without learning about the games or without learning about the warriors, so everything goes hand in hand. And I studied under him every week for 5 years and this man just fascinated me and taught me very much. (YOU WERE BY YOURSELF OR DID HE HAVE CLASSES?) No, just me. (AT HIS HOME?) Both at his home and my home. He'd come to the park. He was a consultant for Waimea Falls Park, and he was really consulting no one. He was there in name only. And so I went to his home and he became a consultant alright. For the next 5 years we worked very hard and I learned quite a bit. He is a descendant of the Kamehameha line. (IS HE STILL LIVING?) No. Mr. Kenn passed away a couple of years ago, in his early

80's.

(DO YOU HAVE PREFERENCE BETWEEN KAHIKO AND AUANA?) Oh, yes. I much prefer hula kahiko. (YOU DO TEACH AUANA, THOUGH?) I teach auana because when we go into competition and when we travel it is necessary that we are able to do that. And auana is fun, auana is very light-hearted and when you go to lu'aus and parties and people are always asking you to come up and dance, you need to have hula auana, it's important to have that. I'm not against it. I enjoy it tremendously. It has it's place, though. And by the time this book comes out we will be doing some auana at Waimea Falls Park, although we have been doing strictly kahiko all these years. But just so that we can show the evolution of the hula we will be doing some.

(DO YOU HAVE SPECIAL THINGS YOU COMPOSE ABOUT?) My very first chant I composed about my mother. That was a *hula naha*. And then when I got to Waimea Falls Park, I had composed things for my children and everything, but when I got to Waimea Falls Park there were no chants from early Hawai'i that I could find anywhere in my research. And that was quite sad. But there had been a large flood there and the people had all left the valley in the late 1800's. So finding even people who used to live there or the descendants who knew anything about the valley was also a

great task, although I did find a lot in the archives and places. There was nothing as far as chants went, except I did find about one legend that Kalua Ho, who was raised in the valley, had told. So I made a chant from that legend. And what I began doing then was researching the valley and it's history and putting that to chant and making dances for them and putting those in the shows and teaching the dancers those, and praising the valley and it's beauty. (SO YOU TRY TO TIE WHATEVER YOU COMPOSE INTO YOUR JOB?) Well, see, it's not just a job for me. Being a part of that valley, I have a great love for it. And so when you look at the amount of hours that you spend away from home, those are waking hours now. I spend my life at Waimea. The last 10 years I have been living there. I come home to re-energize, you know, sleep, check on the kids, have a bite to eat, and back I go. So that you develop this. . . , and because we are so tuned-in to the kahiko way, and her atmosphere up there is so that we are in the middle of all this exquisite beauty, I can really feel what it was like to live way back then, and chanting is a part of that. And so that's a natural thing for us, and composing is very easy. It just falls right into place. (DO YOU DO YOUR COMPOSING THERE OR ANYWHERE?) Composing is not something you say, "Okay, well, now I'm gonna sit down and compose me a chant." I guess words just formulate as you go. You know, did you

ever have a song stuck in your head? You gotta go to sleep and it just keeps going in your head? That's how songs sometimes happen to me. I'll see something and a phrase will come to me and pretty soon I'm chanting and then pretty soon I am adding on, and the rest is easy.

(DO YOU THINK HAWAIIAN LANGUAGE IS IMPORTANT?) Oh, very! Extremely. Without the language, what do you have? You have a group of words, a pronunciation, that stand for nothing. Like originally when the hula was done, everyone in the audience understood the language. So what happened there was that they weren't just speaking literally about something, they were actually challenging the audience, this is where the fun was, challenging the audience by saying, "Okay, I'm going to say flower, but I'm really talking about a person. You decide what happens to this person through this chant." And they had this reparte back and forth where the dancers would dance and the chanter would say to the audience, "Ha'ina 'ia mai 'ana ka puana. Now you tell me what you saw." And someone would stand up in the audience and say, "Well, you were talking about the beautiful mountain." And they say, "You. What, were you sleeping?" Then someone else would say, "No. They were talking about the trees," or something. So this was this *ha'opapa* back and forth. And so words then held an extra bonus. The Hawaiian language was a bonus for

the people, not only did you understand literally, but you could play with it and work on your *kaona* level or your symbolic level. Today you have none of that, so your thinking doesn't expand either. You're learning your Hawaiian language or your basics utterances, and pretty soon that's as far as you get so that's as far as you can work with. But when you can have the full understanding of the Hawaiian language, and I'm not even there myself, it's a long road. When your mother tongue is not your "mother tongue", you gotta learn English, pretty soon you come to the realization that, "Hey! I am a Hawaiian born in Hawai'i and I speak English. Something is not right here." So learning the language is a difficult process. It's not easy. It's not a hand-me-down in your own family; although there was someone who spoke it in my home, it wasn't spoken fluently. So today you don't get the depth of the Hawaiian language, whether it's being used in chant or in hula or even conversationally, because of the fact that we are only working with basics. (DO YOU TAKE HAWAIIAN LANGUAGE?) I have taken Hawaiian language in the past. And it got to be futile for me because I had no one to practice speaking with. And then I would go and try to give to my students what they had. . . , they're so focused on the hula and trying to pick up what language that they could that there wasn't that conversation factor happening with us at the halau. My mother speaks. My

sister speaks. There's some of that there, but I finally decided to put more of my energies into teaching successfully what I needed to teach as far as basic, and then let them grow from there and if they can grow along and I can help them, great. But I wasn't going to spend my time on anymore language. I felt I went as far as I possibly could, as far as using it. (WHEN YOU COMPOSE, DOES EVERYTHING COME TO YOU IN HAWAIIAN OR ENGLISH?) Sometimes both. Sometimes a Hawaiian phrase will come or something that sounds good together and feels good together, and other times you want to say something but you don't know how so you have to find out.

(ARE YOU INVOLVED IN THINGS OTHER THAN HULA?) Yes. I teach the elder hostiles. I work for Hawai'i Loa College. I am a professor in Hawaiian Studies and Pacific Island Institute are my employers there. And what I do is I teach elder hostiles who come to Hawai'i not just the hula, but culture and some of the language and history.

(WHO DO YOU CONSIDER MASTERS OF HULA?) Iolani Luahine to me, in my time, was the only person I met that exuberated the feeling of a master when she did the hula. Whatever she did, she made me feel that she was a part of this ancient "kumu hula - master of hula" type of living, type of teaching, type of sharing. I don't really think there's anyone today

who measures up to that. Of course I'm not saying they don't. I am just saying that they don't give me that "awe" kind of a feeling. Sam Ka'ai does, but we're not talking hula. Sam Ka'ai is more a master of the arts, and I have a great amount of respect. He also gives me that "awesome" feeling. But other than that... I'm not one of those people who sticks my nose in any other peoples things, so I'm really not aware of what else is going on. And anyway, to me, a master... anybody can say, "I've mastered something," but to me, master usually stands for somebody whose been there and back many times.

(WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT WORKSHOPS?) I don't think there's enough of them. (EXPLAIN?) I think there should be much more workshops in the hula. (FOR STUDENTS OR KUMU?) Both. I went to Seattle, Washington last November where they had the "Hui O Na Kumu Hula" from Seattle had sent me there, and there's quite a large number of halau there that gathered together under one leadership, although they are independent too, and each year they send in a visiting kumu, which I was very fortunate to be sent over there. As a visiting kumu, every night I taught the kumu, and then the last few days, which was the weekend, I taught all the students. Here are all these people who are Hawaiian and Hawaiian alike, living far away from home, that have hula as a priority in their lives, and

they really work hard to learn and protect and preserve and respect what they have. And I see them doing so much to do that through workshops. They even share with one another. And here in Hawai'i it's dwindled to the point of, "Is there any workshops anymore?" I know I give some. I know that Kualoa, they are having a hula camp, a workshop. Palani Kahala and I used to change, halau exchange, and Kaha'i Topolinski, I've taught workshops for him. He does workshops too. But I've gone a couple of workshops with Keahi Allen them; we go over to Kalapa and we have a retreat and those are just excellent. But those I don't know if they have it anymore. So the learning has to continue if people are going to learn. The teaching has to be offered. I think that's our weaker point. (WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO LEARN FROM WORKSHOPS?) Well, I am interested in things like... like Kaha'i, I would love for him to come and teach. He said he would come and teach my men how to wrap their malo *pa'u pa'u* style, but different types of wrapping, costuming. Like the *olona*, how it was used in the hula. The *ye'ye* with the Mahi'oles, someone to teach that. Those are the areas that I would definitely want to be signed up for.

(ANYTHING YOU WANT TO SAY?) Well, I have traveled all over the world doing the hula, not every little spot but I've been many places: Korea, Figi, Mexico, all over the U.S. and many places giving the hula,

sharing the hula, even all the islands. But like they say, there's no place like home. And I just wish that there was much more respect being given the hula here and not so much competition. Although I'm not talking about competition the one where you get out there and win a prize. That's not the competition I'm talking about. I wish that there was more a sense of comradery. We all love the same thing, we all do the same thing.

(SHARING.) Yea. And a dignity being given one to the other. Because we all belong in the hula, we give dignity to one another and we give respect to one another. And there is that to a degree, but I think that's also a weak point. I wish that there would be more a sense of. . . I don't know how to explain it. It's just a feeling that I wish people weren't so competitive. Like, "Oh, she has 12 Hawaiian bracelets. Let me have 24." Do we always have to be better than the next?

(TELL US ABOUT THE HULA COMPETITION IN WAIMEA.) Rudy Mitchell and I, because I had taken the dancers prior to my employment at Waimea Falls Park, I had taken dancers over to Merry Monarch. So Woody and I were talking about competition. He said, "You know, you should have your own solo competition over here." So he gave the idea. So I took the ball and ran with it. (WHO?) Rudy Mitchell who was our park historian. He named the competition. So basically he gave the idea and he gave the name

and I have remained and I have always been the sole coordinator of it, you know, the inviting of the judges, and the securing of the prizes and the leis, and the _____ the emcee and I work with him, and I work with the contestants. It's my little baby, and I really love it. It's one of my great joys of the hula is to be able to see people growing because of the hula, and in this instance we use competition as a spirit of motivation to inspire them to practice further and to compose their own. This year one of the girls that are entering has been in the hula maybe 12 years and she's composing her very first chant so that she can enter this chant into the competition. That's my trophies. Those are my rewards, when you see those things happening. (SO IT'S NOT REALLY COMPETITION. IT'S LIKE A SHARING OF WHAT YOU WANT FROM HULA.) Before the competition starts, all of us contestants and kumu hula, we gather backstage and I sing the "Lord's Prayer" in Hawaiian or I've asked my mom to do that. We all hold hands. We wish each other well. We encourage you to get out there and enjoy yourself while you are sharing the hula. And everyone kisses everybody good luck, good luck, good luck, and when they get out there and dance they're all cheering for one another, and it's not this... (PULLING APART.) No. It's a pulling together and a real giving of one another. (WOULD YOU CALL YOURSELF THE FOUNDER, CREATOR?) No. I would just

say coordinator because I really wouldn't have ever thought to take on
such a thing. And when Rudi gave me the idea and I told him I had
formulated and invited judges and we were going to do it, he named it and
he kind of guided me through that first year, and I've been on my own. We
have committees and we sit down talk about the makahiki as a whole but
that's my baby. (WHAT YEAR DID YOU START?) 1981. (WILL YOU HAVE
ANOTHER ONE THIS YEAR?) Oh, yea. It's here to stay. It's the only singles
ancient hula competition where men can compete against women in the
same category. We were probably the first only singles ancient hula
competition, but then others brought up and this is great. They have auana
or they have men only categories. I don't mind. The difference is great.
They're out there doing it. Each island should have it. (DID YOU LEARN
OTHER POLYNESIAN DANCING?) Yes. When I danced with Kanoe Lum we did
Tahitian, we did Marquesan, Maori, we did Japanese, Chinese, Philipino.
(YOU HAD TO LEARN ALL THOSE?) Yes. (DID YOU LEARN IT WITH HER?) Yes,
with her. We did some jazz. Oh, we were snappy. We did it all!