

Bill Lincoln

I never learned to speak English until I went to school. The same was true for the Japanese boys that went to school with me. The teachers told us to forget our languages and just speak the English language. How can you talk to your parents when they don't know English? They couldn't understand us.

The hula in my family was something that was alright to look at but not for us to take part. Singing was alright provided you didn't overdo it but you couldn't play the ukulele unless it was outside the house. My father was a ranchhand in Kohala on the Big Island and that's where my whole family was born.

② When we turned fifteen we were expected to find real work but I stayed in school and that's where I got interested in music. In those days it seemed music was the only acceptable outlet for the Hawaiian Culture.

④ I began to listen to records by people like Sol Hoopii, and a man named Jim Marciel started to put on tableaus in Kohala and I thought he was terrific. He started to give me parts to memorize in his tableaus and that's when I first started to get interested in the hula.

⑤ When I graduated from school in 1931 I had decided to become a teacher. When I turned twenty I came to Honolulu but I didn't have the money to get a degree so I started playing music with Sam Alama and Johnny Almeida for five dollars a night.

I was living in Waikiki back then and some friends told me to open up a studio. I was working at Fort Shafter so I quit and took their advice since there was only the Betty Lei Studio in Waikiki.

I never studied under any teacher where you go through certain routines. I just watched teachers and dancers in Kohala and certain teachers like Manuel Silva, and Mary Kawena Pukui here in Honolulu. I hired teachers for my studio and after awhile they would go off on their own and I began to step in and takeover some of the teaching duties. When I taught I tried to combine the motions of Maiki Aiu, Rose Joshua, and ~~Alice Keawekane~~ into one style.

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In my day there were things you could do and you couldn't do. The style was to dance very sedately with very little flair. Only five or ten dancers would dance at a time and they would be accompanied by drumming that did not overpower the dancers. But who of us can prove that this was the style of dance of our ancestors? Creativity and change has always been a part of the kahiko. In Kohala we were never allowed to use shell, plastic, or storebought leis but when I came to Honolulu in 1931 I found that's all anybody used.

The dancing of today is very physical and that's because of the influence of television and other Polynesian dances. But who of us knows how much the kahiko of the past was changed over? There is nothing that has been kept in books or in the Archives that proves kahiko was danced a certain way. All we have are pictures of dancers in poses.

I think the most important thing was that I knew my Hawaiian. Some people get lost because they don't know the language. But it's hard for the young people to learn Hawaiian because it's a foreign language today. From birth you live and speak one language and it's hard to take on another.

Bill Lincoln

In 1947, Bill Lincoln ran the largest and most influential hula studio in ~~them~~ Hawaii, employing such teachers as Alice Keawekane, Ida Wong, and Barbara Johnson.

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The hula in my family was something that was alright to look at but not for us to take part. Singing was alright provided you didn't overdo it but you couldn't play the ukulele unless it was outside the house. My father was a ranch hand in Kohala on the Big Island and that's where my whole family was born.

When we turned fifteen we were expected to find real work but I stayed in school and that's where I got interested in music. ~~from those days on music was a normal~~ ~~part of the Hawaiian culture~~. In those days music was the only acceptable outlet for the Hawaiian Culture.

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The dancing of today is very ^{PHYSICAL} ~~physi~~ and that's because of the influence of television and other Polynesian dances. But who of us knows how much the kahiko of the past was changed over? ~~by past motion~~ There is nothing that has been kept in books or in the Archives that prove kahiko was danced a certain way. All we have are pictures of dancers in poses.

I think the most important thing was that I knew my Hawaiian. Some people get lost because they don't know the language ~~but I always knew what the boundaries were~~. But it's hard for the young people to learn Hawaiian ~~today~~ because it's a foreign language today. ~~From the day you're born you live~~ From birth you live and speak one language and it's hard to take on another.

We used to have nice dancing in my day but everything is more out in the open today. In my day there were things you can't do and things you can do. I admired Aggie Aull, Winona Love, Tootsie Notley and there are many others. The style in my time was to dance very sedately. In those days only five or ten dancers would dance at one time. Not like today with so many dancers. Even the drums were not as many and as strong as they are today. I'm stating this as an opinion not as a criticism. I've seen the Maori dance come to Hawaii, I've seen the Samoan dance, I've seen the Tahitian dance and now the Hawaiians are coming out of their shell and have come up with a hula that is as physical as any of these dances. But who of us can prove that this was not the style of dance of our ancestors? ^{definitely}

I began to teach only after a few years. My teachers after awhile would want to go out on their own so I began to step in and takeover some of the teaching duties.

I think what separates the modern and the ancient is that the ancient is there is a sacredness to the ancient. It's important to know what the chant is about and who is going to chant it. The people of my generation. The reason a wana was strong in the forties was because people were afraid of doing kahiko. They were afraid of the kickback.

In my dance I combined the motions of ~~them~~ Miki Maiki, Joshua, Alice Keawekane. The motions that they gave I combined into one style. Most of the hula that I performed came from inside me.

Mrs. Pukui would advise me to pa'i the ipu but I would have to go home and practice myself. When I look at this my mother's folks were dancers and so were my father's way back. I found out by coming to Honolulu. My parents wanted us to be something respectable. My mother's side were the Kaniho's and I found that Papa Bray was related to the Kaniho's and so were a lot of the kumu in Kohala. This was all inside of me and the music and the studio brought it out. But I think the most important thing was that I knew my Hawaiian. Some people might go off because they don't know the language but I always knew what the boundaries were. But it's hard for the young people to learn Hawaiian because now it is a foreign language. From birth you live and speak one language and it's hard to take on another. Each step has come from another. First we had the ancient and then a little flair was added to it. Each generation adds a different flair to what existed before. I think most of the stuff that we are getting to day comes from this generation watching television. When I watch the Hawaiians put on a show now the presentation is just fabulous. In my time we just danced. We had little bit flair but not like now. Even their entrances and exits have flair.