

Hooulu Cambra

If a person has Hawaiian blood <sup>one might presume</sup> there should be an awareness, an affinity to the culture <sup>from enabling</sup> within him. <sup>one</sup> ~~he~~ should be able to catch on to the knowledge of the hula and the chants faster than a non-Hawaiian because this is <sup>this precludes</sup> his history, this is <sup>an inherent</sup> the race's <sup>individual's</sup> past.

My life in the hula has really been an outgrowth from my training in music, Hawaiian language and chant. In 1956 I attended the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York. My first love is music and I was taught to teach it in the public schools but I began to realize that it wasn't something that I wanted to do forever.

When I returned from the Mainland in 1958 I taught <sup>piano</sup> at the Punahou Music School to make ends meet but I became restless so I took up ethnomusicology at the University (University of Hawaii at Manoa) which is a more scientific approach to the music of the world. My interest at that time was in the Hawaiian language and between 1958 and 1964 I studied under Ron Brown <sup>Dr. Sam Elliott</sup> and Edwina Kanoho <sup>who</sup> Kalani Meinecke, and Dorothy Kahanui. In 1962 I was introduced to Dorothy Gillette, the daughter of Dorothy Kahanui, and it was Mrs. Gillette <sup>on</sup> that got me excited about traditional Hawaiian chanting. I was <sup>an</sup> East-West Center grantee studying Polynesian dance and music at the time and from Mrs. Gillette I was led to Kaupena Wong who took me even deeper into the knowledge and traditions of chant <sup>in 1964</sup>.

The next logical step from the chant was to be trained in the dance. In 1971 I met Auntie Māiki Aiu Lake and she has been my greatest influence because she taught me the intricacies of teaching the hula. She gave me a methodology and a set of goals to guide myself. I went to Auntie Māiki because I felt I needed an academic, university-style regimen since I was starting my training so late in life. I needed to absorb so much so I needed <sup>at the</sup> a hālau with a strong structure. I had studied <sup>for credit</sup> under Hoakalei Kamaau <sup>in 1965</sup> but Auntie Māiki was the first regimented academic situation I had in the hula. Māiki's class was a school in that it had a curriculum and expectations. There were examinations to be passed and assignments to be completed.

I graduated <sup>as the first kumu hula of Hālau Hula Māiki</sup> from Auntie Māiki in August of 1972 in a traditional 'uniki <sup>In 1975</sup> and I went on to train under Auntie Kauli Zuttermeister for <sup>three</sup> months. I was taught to chant in the Pua Hāheo style and I found the discipline and regimentation of Auntie Kauli's hālau similar to Auntie Māiki's school. Some of my kumu have had a greater influence on me than others but I am grateful to all of them because they were all there to share with me at a time when I was hungry for their knowledge.

I began to <sup>give individual instruction in</sup> teach a traditional chant <sup>at the Music Dept. - University</sup> class for beginners in 1967 <sup>at East-West Center</sup> with the approval of Dorothy Gillette, Kaupena Wong, and Hoakalei Kamaau, and that was the start of my teaching career. I regard the hula as an art, specifically a living art that must be worked at and prepared for constantly. This is a very slow, tedious process that requires many procedures because I insist that my students study the history and culture relevant to the particular dance and chant they are learning.

It has always amazed me how the composers of these chants were able to combine major ideas and themes into a few, concise, terse lines. You can't help but respect and admire the Hawaiian culture if you know the language and can read the chants. Hula is a way of life, it is a people's inspiration. It is the Hawaiian's connection to the universe around him. That is why books and pencils have very little place in this type of school. The dilemma is of course that without paper and pencil today's students would have great difficulty retaining what I have to pass down to them.

My kumu taught me that contemporary chants and hula written in the kahiko style cannot be considered traditional. I must be handed down from generation to generation in its entirety. <sup>anana</sup> Kahiko is a <sup>convenient term</sup> modern word used more to define what is <sup>different from</sup> modern hula rather than what is traditional hula. I don't know if students are learning the vast vocabulary of the hula and the chants that are <sup>essential</sup> to its perpetuation. Our young people are very impatient and very <sup>eager</sup> for the finished product. Audiences of today seem to goad the dancer into dancing more suggestively. The more exaggerated the dancer's 'ami, the more it satisfies the audience.

The modern audience is attracted mainly to the <sup>these</sup> graphics of the dance. Their reaction to the hula māi at times is to hoot and yell. They are products of the American culture where talk of sex is suppressed and thus when they see hula māi, it's their chance to <sup>react</sup> be freely.



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