

Kalena Silva teaches hula and chanting  
as part of the curriculum of the Hawaiian Studies

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of the Hawaiian Studies curriculum at the University  
of Hawaii in Hilo.

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## KALENA SILVA

'Ano 'ē nō paha ko'u komo 'ana i loko o kēia hana 'o ka hula. Ua ho'omaka au ma ka noho ho'opa'a 'ana no kekahi mau haumāna hula a ma hope mai, komo pū akula au ma ia hana 'o ka hula.

I ko'u manawa e hele ana i ke kula ki'eki'e 'o Kamehameha, ua 'ōlelo mai 'o Aunty Winona Beamer e lilo au i ho'opa'a no kekahi mau hoa haumāna e ho'omākaukau ana no ka Hō'ike o ka Ho'okūkū Himeni o kēlā makahiki. No ko'u ho'omapopo 'ana i ko'u nanea nui palena 'ole i ka noho ho'opa'a 'ana o Aunty Kau'i Zuttermeister no kāna kaikamahine 'o Noenoe i hula ma kekahi 'aha'aina Hui Kiwila Hawai'i i ko'u manawa he 'elima wale nō makahiki, a no laila, ua noho ho'opa'a akula au no kēlā mau haumāna hula. I loko nō na'e o ko'u noho ho'opa'a 'ana no lākou, ua 'ike nō ho'i au 'a'ole au i 'ano mākaukau loa.

A no laila, ua hele au iā Ho'oulu Richards ma Kamehameha, a ma laila au i ho'omaka ai i ke a'o i ka hula me ke oli. A pau, ua hele pū māua 'o Ho'oulu iā Aunty Māiki Aiu Lake ma ka Hālau Hula O Māiki. A hala akula kekahi mau makahiki, 'ūniki au ma kona Hālau i ka MH 1972 ma ke 'ano he 'ōlapa me ka ho'opa'a. Ho'okahi makahiki ma hope mai, 'ūniki hou au ma ke 'ano he kumu hula. Pau, hele nō ho'i au iā Aunty Kau'i Zuttermeister me kāna kaikamahine 'o Noenoe ma Kāne'ohe. Pau, hui au me Aunty Lōkālia Montgomery a, aia aku aia mai, ke maika'i kona ola kino, a'o mai nō ho'i 'o ia i ka hula.

'O Ka'upena Wong 'o ia ka'u kumu oli. 'Oia ua a'o mai ka'u mau kumu a pau i ke oli i pili i ka hula, na Ka'upena i ho'ākea a'e i ko'u 'ike ma ke a'o mai i nā 'ano mele me ke oli ma waho o ka hula. No ka nui palena 'ole o ka waiwai me ke kū'i'o o ke a'o a ka'u mau kumu a pau, a no laila, aia iā lākou ko'u ho'omaika'i me ka ho'ohanohano mau.

I ko'u wā i a'o ai i ka hula me ke oli, ua a'o au no ke kō wale 'ana nō o ko'u 'i'ini e 'apo i ia mau mea, 'a'ole no ko'u mana'o e a'o aku au i kekahi po'e. I ia wā nō ho'i e noho haumāna pū aku ana ma nā kula Haole a hiki i ka loa'a 'ana mai o ke kēkelē Ph.D. ma Ethnomusicology ma ke Kulanui o Wakinekona. I kēia manawa, ma ko'u 'ao'ao he kumu a'o ma ka Māhele Ha'awina Hawai'i o ke Kulanui o Hawai'i, he a'o au i ka hula me ke oli ma ka 'ōlelo Hawai'i.

Mana'o au ua ho'omaka ka nui o nā 'ano hula e kapa 'ia nei he "hula kahiko" ma kahi o ka hapalua like o ke kenekulia 19, a i ia manawa ua kapa 'ia ho'i he "hula ku'i". 'O ka hula ku'i, 'o ia ka hula he 'elua laina o ka paukū, a he "hā'ina" ko ka paukū hope, e like ho'i me "Aia Lā 'O Pele," "E Ho'i Ke Aloha I Ni'ihau," "Eia Nō Kāwika," a nui hou aku. Ua ho'oku'i 'ia ka Hawai'i me ka Haole a loa'a maila kēia mea he hula ku'i.

Mana'o nō ho'i au he hana nui ka ho'opa'a 'ana a pa'a maika'i ka leo oli Hawai'i maoli i ka mea oli. Ua hiki i ke kumu hula ke ho'oma'ama'a aku i ka haumāna i ke 'ano o ka 'uehe, ke kāholo, ka 'ami, ke kāwelu, a pēlā aku. Eia nō na'e, i ko'u mana'o, 'a'ole nō i nui loa nā kumu i hiki ke ho'oma'ama'a aku i ka haumana i nā 'ano leo o ke olioli, ka ho'āeāe, ke kepa'epa, ke kāwele, a pēla aku. He 'ike 'ia ka hula ma ka pā'ina, ka hō'ike a me ka ho'okūkū e ho'olele 'ia ma ke kiwī. He kāka'ikahi wale nō na'e ka manawa e lohe 'ia ai ka leo oli Hawai'i maoli. 'O Ka mea nō na'e e lana nei kahi mana'o, 'o ia ka 'ike i ka māhuahua li'ili'i a'e o ka po'e nāna e 'imi maoli nei ia 'ike ku'una nani o nā kūpuna.



## KALENA SILVA

The way I began to learn the hula is probably somewhat unusual. I began as a ho'opa'a for some hula students and only later began to hula myself.

When I was a student at Kamehameha, Aunty Winona Beamer asked that I serve as a ho'opa'a for some fellow students who were preparing for the Hō'ike portion of the Song Contest that year. Because I remembered my utter and complete fascination with the power and beauty of Aunty Kau'i Zuttermeister's chanting and drumming in accompaniment to her daughter Noenoe's dancing at a Hawaiian Civic Club lū'au when I was about five years old, I agreed to serve as a ho'opa'a for those students. Despite my serving as a ho'opa'a for them, I still felt that I needed to learn more.

And so I began studying the hula and chanting with Ho'oulu Richards at Kamehameha. Sometime later, she and I went to study with Aunty Māiki Aiu Lake at the Hālau Hula O Māiki. A few years passed and I graduated from her hālau in 1972 as an 'ōlapa and a ho'opa'a. One year later, I again graduated from her hālau, but as a kumu hula this time. Later, I went to study with Aunty Kau'i Zuttermeister and her daughter, Noenoe, in Kāne'ōhe. Soon after studying with the Zuttermeisters, I met Aunty Lōkālīa Montgomery and occasionally, when she was in good health, she also taught me the hula.

Ka'upena Wong is my teacher of chanting. Although all of my teachers taught chanting that was related to the hula, it was Ka'upena who broadened my knowledge by teaching me various kinds of chants performed outside of the hula context. Because of the great value and truth in the teachings of my teachers, I shall always be thankful and indebted to them.

When I learned the hula and chanting, I did so only to satisfy my own desire to learn about these arts and not because I thought I might eventually teach others.

At that time, too, I was a student in schools of western education until I finally earned the Ph.D. in ethnomusicology at the University of Washington. Today, as a teacher of Hawaiian Studies at the University of Hawaii at Hilo, I teach hula and chanting through the medium of Hawaiian as a part of the curriculum there.

I believe that much of the kind of hula currently being called "hula kahiko" probably began at around the middle of the 19th century and was then called "hula ku'i." Hula ku'i generally have verses of two lines apiece and a "hā'ina" in the last verse. Examples of hula ku'i are "Aia Lā 'O Pele," "E Ho'i Ke Aloha I Ni'ihau," "Eia Nō Kāwika," and many others. Hawaiian and Haole elements were joined ("ku'i") to produce this type of music and dancing.

I also believe that it is difficult for chanters today to learn proper Hawaiian chant vocal production. Hula teachers can train their students in the intricacies of the 'uehe, the kāholo, the 'ami, the kāwelu, and so on. However, I believe that there aren't many teachers who are able to train their students in the intricacies of chant styles like the olioli, the ho'āeāe, the kepaKepa, the kāwele, and so on. Hula can be seen at parties, concerts, and competitions broadcast on tv. Unfortunately, proper Hawaiian chanting is heard only very rarely. Nonetheless, I have cause to be hopeful as I see that gradually more and more people are earnestly seeking this priceless traditional knowledge of our ancestors.