

## Kaohikukapualani Kinimaka Alquiza

Kaohikukapualani Kinimaka Alquiza began teaching in 1983 at her home in Hanapepe. She currently teaches at four different locations on Kaua'i.

I first started hula at the age of five. I came from a very large family of sixteen children and as we grew up, hula was a part of our lives. For myself, I wasn't one to really enjoy hula. I only did it because when we'd perform, I would get five dollars. I stuck with it for many years and it sort of grew with me and I never thought that I would be the one to teach.

My first kumu hula was Auntie Lovey Apana. She taught me at her home in Wailua. She taught us kahiko and 'auana and a very little bit of Tahitian. I remember sitting on her front porch in her little hale near the river. I stayed with her until I was about eleven or twelve.

I then went to Uncle George Kahaulilio. He was a master chanter as well as an entertainer and choreographer. He taught hula 'auana and kahiko and he was also very versatile in other Polynesian dances. His style was very traditional; the old style with puffed 'uwehe, very low hula and very simple and beautiful. I stayed with Uncle Joe until I got married and had children, ~~That's~~ the reason why I stopped hula for a while.

Auntie Lovey and Uncle Joe must have thought that I was the worst student of all. I had two left feet and I remember Auntie Lovey's sister calling me deaf ear and blind eye because I could never follow instructions the right way. It kind of amazed me because I could remember almost everything that I was taught.

In 1982 I was invited to participate in the Merrie Monarch Festival and as we were practicing the dances, my daughter was following us step by step. She was three years old and her interest in the hula inspired me to find a hula class for her. I really wanted to find her someone that would be very similar to Uncle Joe and Auntie Lovey. I could not find anyone, so I decided to go into teaching. I contacted Uncle Joe Kahaulilio since he was my last kumu to seek his blessings. After dinner and a few drinks, I finally had the courage to ask him. I expressed my feelings of wanting to teach because of the frustration of finding a kumu for my daughter. When I asked him if it would be alright to continue his teachings in hula and Hawaiian culture,

he looked me straight in my eyes, he put his hand on my cheek and he <sup>asked</sup> said, "what took you so long.?" He felt all this time that I was going to be the teacher. I was very surprised, but happy at the same time. We finished up the evening with good feelings and blessings from Uncle Joe and I knew in my heart that whatever I do I will do in his name as well as Aunty Lovey's.

I started commuting back and forth from Kaua'i to O'ahu to visit with Uncle Joe at his home. He wasn't very well at the time, but he made time to see me. I called him up for advice and guidance because I didn't want to do the wrong things or offend anyone by doing something that was not proper. He taught me chants and less than a year later, I decided to take that step and start teaching hula. On August 6, 1983, I started my first class in my garage at my home in Hanapepe Heights with twenty students.

Uncle Joe advised me to stay away from certain rituals to protect my family. I stressed to him that I would like to go into kahiko because I feel that is part of our culture and the root of hula. He told me to take my steps very carefully and to watch what types of chants and hula that I decided <sup>use</sup> to go into. He shared with me chants of the land, the sea, the mountains and people but not too much of the worshiping type of ritual hula. I respected his advice and I don't dwell into it.

Besides Aunty Lovey and Uncle Joe, I have to give credit to three other kumu hula. I feel fortunate to have worked with Palani Kahala because he is unique in his own style. He taught me a different world of kahiko when we first met in 1984. I appreciate his innovative style and so did my students. Before his passing, Palani Kahala helped me a great deal in proper protocol. Kepā Maly and Pōhaku Nishimitsu on the other hand are traditionalists. They are very simple and traditional in their dancing. Their momentum of dancing is a lot slower paced opposed to Palani Kahala's rhythmic type of dancing. Kapa Maly helped me for about four years in my training of kahiko. He shared with me chants he had learned from Aunty Mary Puku'i. He had a very unique style of 'oli. Pōhaku Nishimitsu and I have become good friends and I feel comfortable with him to be able to approach him to ask him for assistance.

I teach presently at four different locations here on Kauai. My base is my home, and I also teach in Lihue, Kapa'a and Koloa. My students range from the age of three years old to adults. Right now I have a little over one hundred fifty students.

The name of my hālau is Na Hula O Kaohikukapualani. Kaohikukapualani is the name that was given to me by my parents. It translates to "the dance of the secret heavens". I gave my hālau this name mainly to instruct and inform the children that it is of my teaching, through my kumu that I would like them to continue on the culture through this hālau. } ?

I think that hula has changed today. Hula kahiko, like hula 'auana has been very competitive. The kumu of today are very different. They are innovative, creative, original, and wild.

The greatest accomplishment as a teacher is being able to develop a great amount of patience <sup>in</sup> with myself as well as with the students, ~~And~~ being able to understand where they're coming from and what they are trying to achieve through my teachings. With patience, I ~~am~~ able to teach what my kumu hula has taught me and hopefully, enhance it even more.

I think my dancing style <sup>comes from</sup> is a variety of kumu hula, but basically <sup>reflecting</sup> the styles of Aunty Lovey and Uncle Joe. We as students can learn from our kumu hula and duplicate their teaching or their style of dancing. When it comes to expressing ourselves and teaching, <sup>however,</sup> it comes from within ourselves and not from our kumu.

My hula career is dedicated to Uncle Joe Kahaulilio and Aunty Lovey Apana for their wonderful thoughts of wanting me to continue <sup>e</sup> even though I was the worst student <sup>in</sup> around. They unselfishly gave their time to me.