

Nana I Na Loea Hula
Kumu Hula: Iwalani Kalima
Interviewer: Lovina Le Pendu
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(FULL GIVEN NAME?) Iwalani Kalima. (YOU TEACH PRESENTLY?) Yes. (WHERE?) I teach in Kailua-Kona on the Big Island. I teach at a community center. This is for a low income housing, it's at a place called Jack Memorial Housing. It was given to me by a special man, a man that manages the area there. I went and asked him, how I could have the property because they didn't have anything built there and so he thought it would be a good idea to have something up there for the children, because it was a low income housing. So, instead of saying it was my halau, he put it as a community center and they had, the IEWU owns that property, they had them pay for it. Actually, the purpose was for the hula. (THE AGE OF YOUR STUDENTS?) The youngest I have taken was 2 and the oldest, well, started teaching only children, and the oldest was at like 13. Now I do have an adult class. I started that class this year of March. The oldest that I have taught was 73. (YOU TEACH BOTH KAHIKO AND AUANA?) Yes. (OLI?) I teach some, not, I don't have a special class. (DO YOU HAVE A NAME FOR YOUR HALAU?) Yes, Hula Halau O Ko Lima Nani e. (WHO GAVE YOU THAT NAME?) My kumu hula, Uncle George Naope. Uncle had retired from his school of Kona Gardens Hula Hawaiian Art and he had retired from taking that over and stuff and actually he had kind of given it to Etua and one day, I say I needed to do something with my hula and I thought about teaching at my own school and because my last name is Kalima I wanted to add something with my last name, but Uncle thought this was catchy, Ko Lima Nani e, your lovely hula hands, all the people would relate to it because of the song, lovely hula hands. And that's how it came about and we thought it was a very nice name, so we kept it. (HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN TEACHING?) Well, I've had my own school, halau Ko Lima nani e for 5 years, but I was assisting Uncle George since '82, '81 actually. (5 YEARS AT THE

COMMUNITY CENTER?) Yes. (WHAT AGE DID YOU START LEARNING HULA?) This is funny because uncle keeps saying that I was 3 or 4, I remember that I was 8 years old when I started in Uncle's hula school, and this back in Hilo. I started with Uncle George. (WHERE WAS THE HALAU AT THAT TIME?) I believe it was on Wainuinui, he had a studio. (DID YOU LEARN KAHIKO AND AUANA?) Yes, both. (DO YOU REMEMBER IF THERE WAS A LOT OF PEOPLE IN YOUR CLASS?) Yes, there were quite a few of us. They were all sisters, we had the Bronchal sister's this is Verna and Lola Bronchal, we had Dune sisters, there were 3 girls Gail, Pat and Annette. There was the Sakamoto sisters, Raylyn, Darlene and Shasa, and there was my sister and myself, so we were all sister in this group. And actually they were all older than me, actually when it started, I was in with a junior group with girls that were around my age and then uncle had moved us up and this is when I was really dancing with this group. The senior group, but I was the youngest in the senior group. (HOW LONG DID YOU STUDY WITH UNCLE GEORGE?) I am still studying with Uncle George, so what are we talking, 24 years. (DID YOU HAVE ANY OTHER KUMU BESIDES UNCLE GEORGE?) Well, I first started hula, I remember going to Johnny Lum Ho's class with my sister, but we never did anything. (YOU WERE TAKING WITH GEORGE NAOPE?) No, actually before that, but it wasn't really that we were learning anything because he only had a teenager group so we would just sit on the side, but all my teachings that really started into hula started with Uncle George and Uncle had left in '79 to go over to Honolulu, not '79, '74, and so 4 years he was in Honolulu and he came back in '79 and then I started with him again, that space that there was 4 years, I never really took from any other teacher, but I was dancing in a Polynesian Show. It was at the Crown Room, we had a show and Uncle's class he would bring over special teachers to teach us Tahitian and Polynesian. (WHAT KIND OF STYLE AND METHODS DID HE USE?) Yes, it was very basic, you had to know your feet movements. There was no half step or a side step here, it was like a full **kaholo**, your basic

steps were the most important thing. If you didn't know that, you couldn't do hula. That's what Uncle always used to tell us, a lot of the motions today you can see the difference. Before it was one sentence and it was only one motion, today it's one sentence and 10 different motions. Just to get the word and they try to interpret every word. Very simple as I look at it as traditional dancing because of what I had seen as before. (THIS GOES FOR BOTH KAHIKO AND AUANA?)

Well, especially the kahiko, uncle was a very, very strong hula kahiko teacher, you had to learn the kahiko first before you learned the auana. (YOU LEARNED KAHIKO FIRST?) Yes, my first hula was Lili'u e and it had all the basic steps so that you could learn this one step, like Kawika, one step. (FOR LILI'U E WHAT DID YOU DO?) We did a uwehe. Kawika was **kaaloho wehe.**

(THAT'S WHAT YOU CALL BASIC?) Yes, this is what taught us our timing. (YOU REALLY ONLY HAD GEORGE NAOPE AS YOUR KUMU HULA?) Yes, I have gone to different workshops and stuff.

(DID YOU JUST DANCE OR DID YOU ENTERTAIN WITH HIM?) I entertained, we first started out as hula, hula kahiko and auana and then in later years when I was about 11, 12 years old, we started learning Tahitian and he had brought over Ray Fonseca and Etua Lopez and this is how I met and they are considered today as my brothers and sisters or hula brothers. (RAY FONSECA

WAS BROUGHT IN THE TAHITIAN?) Yes, he was performing with Nani Loa **Hula Studio**, and I guess Uncle had asked Aunty Pauline if they could come over and teach our girls. Etua was the dancer and the teacher really and Ray was the drummer and to **perfect** everything. (YOU

STARTED TO ENTERTAIN AT THAT TIME?) We were entertaining before that, but just the hula.

A majority of the time, well, they were private parties and we would perform at the Nani Loa.

(DID YOU UNIKI WITH UNCLE GEORGE?) Yes, well, it was in 1982 when he had given me my kumu **halapala**. In uncle's class he would give 3 different kinds of certificates, one was the completion of the basic hula kahiko and basic hula auana. Then you had your diploma, the first one was a certificate, then you got a diploma, like a uniki of your hula kahiko. (1982 YOUR

KUMU CERTIFICATE?) Yes. (DID HE HAVE A SPECIAL CEREMONY FOR THAT?) Well, he, it was a special ceremony, he had a hoike and uniki. He had his group that I was helping also with Kona Gardens Hula Hawaiian Art and he decided to have a uniki and I wasn't really ready for it, but he had also graduated a couple of the other students. I believe Mahealani Perez and also every year uncle would do a hoike and at the hoike, he would sometimes give out certificates to some of his students. I don't remember exactly, but I do remember the day that I got mine. (WHAT REQUIREMENTS DID YOU HAVE TO MEET TO GET THE CERTIFICATE?) Well, that I can't tell you because that's up to your hula teacher. Uncle when he felt that it was time to give you the paper, he would. It wasn't, I guess in his eyes, and I don't know what the requirements are. (DID YOU START TO TEACH RIGHT AFTER THAT?) Well, I was teaching with him and I was like an assistant, his alakai, actually, I was teaching before that with him, but that's about when they started giving me the name as being his alakai. '86 is when opened mine. '86 is when opened mine up, my own hula school. (WHAT KIND OF INFLUENCE DID UNCLE GEORGE HAVE ON YOU?) He had all the influence, a lot of what I feel and what I teach is uncle. I think so, and I heard a lot of comments that say, my style is a lot of uncle. I even hear and this is between you and I, I even hear people say that I'm the only one that you can really see his style. (HOW DOES YOUR STYLE COMPARE TO OTHERS?) For number one, it's in my feet movements, they differ from what I see dancing on the ball of the feet. Then you have some of us that dance flat feet and uncle also always used to teach us, and that is one style that I've picked up from uncle and that's one thing that I always do. Also keeping my hand gestures. My hand gestures are very, very important. You never had lazy hands and stuff, and to keep the shoulders and elbows in line with each other and not just dropping the elbow that's one style that I feel is uncle. (DO YOU DANCE FLAT FOOT OR ON THE BALL?) Both now, but at one time it was totally flat foot, but as hula goes on, I've learned so much. I've picked up from other people and see what I like and so I kind of do my own.

(DO YOU HAVE SPECIAL MEMORY WITH UNCLE GEORGE?) Oh, everything. He's about 63 now and it's just his style is amazing to me, he can never, uncle was this way, he could never teach the same song, the same way. He always felt different at that time. He would feel different about the song, so he could totally make it different, and he would never teach it the same except for the dances that he learned from traditional dances and that's the same way that I feel. I will never change the motions that I learned, or the dances that I learned. I wouldn't want to change those motions especially in the hula kahiko. (ANY DIFFICULTIES IN YOUR HULA CAREER?) Oh, yes. I was uncle's, this is private, I was at one time feeling that, uncle was very, very hard teacher, very hard teacher, he was very strict at what he felt and what he did and it was sometimes hard for you to ask him questions because you were being seen and not heard. And he would tell you when you were ready to learn this and learn that, and sometimes he would like force it on you and you don't realize it and I thought he was being mean and nasty and it was funny he would always call me dummy. I would feel like at one time I didn't want to have anything to do with hula, cause I wasn't doing everything right. Today, now I look at it and I say, now I know why because of the way my feet was moving, my posture and stuff and you don't realize just you feel sometimes that someone is nit picking at you that just picking at you, but I stuck in there and I was going to prove uncle that I could do it. (MOST JOY?) Is seeing Uncle George happy with what he's accomplished, that's the joy I see. Him smiling and that the hula will live on and that he's taught so many students and these students will keep moving forward with the hula, that's the joy I see. (YOU'VE BEEN TEACHING SINCE '86, DID YOU ENTER COMPETITIONS?) Yes. (DO YOU THINK HULA HAS CHANGED?) Maybe not changed, but has been added. Hula, Uncle has always taught me is the one with inner most feelings and it's who are we to say that they are wrong at what they are doing if there was not a teacher that could create, then the hula would not live on. I do sometimes feel that there are changes in it and about when

I'm teaching or talking to my students, I try to tell them, you know you cannot say that they're wrong, because uncle has always taught us that they are different and same like the changes, it's not a change, it's added. (DEFINTION OF HULA KAHIKO?) To me the hula kahiko is something really meaningful, it comes from within you, but it's also a part of a tradition from our ancestors. If we don't keep these dances traditional dances, there is, we loose that root that we have, and to connect us to our past, our ancestors. (DO YOU THINK KAHIKO SHOULD BE CALLED KAHIKO?) No, well we could make up another name. I don't know, as me not knowing fluent Hawaiian language, but maybe we could add a different category. Uncle had taught me in the older days that they used to call it hula kawa kahiko and so maybe we could start using that word as hula kawa kahiko being traditional dances of the old from the past and then maybe we could call todays when they create it like the old but they created their dance. Like I am in the process of doing a dance, when they have the eclipse, I had a friend that I talked to and he was a very good writer poetic and he wrote it and I am in the process of trying to because uncle always says you should create of what's happening today. (ARE YOU THINKING OF DOING THAT?) Yes, I have it in me. (DO YOU WRITE YOUR OWN CHANTS?) No, I don't feel that I am yet qualified to myself because I don't speak the language fluently and it has to come. (DO YOU THINK LANGUAGE IS IMPORTANT?) Very important. Now I wish I learned the language, because if you don't know what you're dancing, how can you explain what it is.

When we were growing up, we did learn motions, we didn't know what we were dancing a lot of the time and with uncle, after being with him 17 years, I said to myself, what do I know, I don't even know the name of the dance and stuff and I never could ask, and he could never tell us.

Actually you could've known but you didn't know how to ask because there was a time and place that you had to ask him and we didn't realize that. Now, with my students, I want them to know, I want them to learn. When it took me 15 years to learn all these dances I want them to learn it

in 5 years. The kids today, I want them to come because they want it and not because they are forced to. I try to teach the girls everything I know and even being as a teacher, we are not perfect and we still learn, so I try to, when there's a new chant that I want to learn, I do the research and I find out everything about it. I find out what it's all about and who wrote this chant, how they feel about it and do it according to how they... If I don't know the chant I don't really mess with it, especially the hula kahiko. (WHEN YOU DON'T KNOW ABOUT THE HULA, DO YOU OR YOUR STUDENTS DO THE RESEARCH?) I have done, because my girls are at the young age it's kind of hard for them to do that kind of research and because we come from Kona which is a very small area, I don't. I have them do some of the research, but the big part is where it comes from and who it is, I do myself. (IN YOUR HALAU, DO YOU MAKE THEM DO THEIR IMPLEMENTS, COSTUMES, LEIS?) I teach them strictly hula. I design most of their costumes. Right now I have one of my students that's been with me for 5 years or since I started school and she's been like my right hand. She to me will be the next one to teach my teachings, she's that much into hula, but I'm training her at the same time I brought them over for my workshop to teach them as if they want to learn it then their going to come and then I spend the time, I push them to do it. (YOU DESIGN THE COSTUME, BUT YOU HAVE SOMEONE MAKE IT?) Yes. (THE LEIS?) No, they learn their own leis, I always tell them, if they don't know how and cannot learn how to pick their things and stuff, then their not as an olapa to me, that is important learning how to make your things, take care of your things. (DID YOU HAVE THE SAME TRAINING WITH UNCLE GEORGE?) Yes, uncle never really did his own. He could tell you how to do it, but he couldn't really do it, because he would always have people that would help him like my step-mother. this is how I went through hula. My step mother would sew for Uncle George or for our group and this is what we pay for our hula tuition, but as far as making our hula skirts, and our plumeria leis, and our even liko, we made it ourselves. It took months to learn

and years to learn.

(DO YOU PREFER HULA KAHIKO?) Yes. I like hula kahiko. (DO YOU HAVE A FAVORITE CHANT?) A favorite chant. I have a few favorite chants, one of them is Kauialua, because of it's meaning, to me uncle has always taught me that that was that dance was a hula pahu a temple dance and it makes me feel that I can go back in their time and with emotions and everything of the being traditional. He, it's been from generation to generation. I feel that this dance is been to uncle that way too, and taught to me. (FAVORITE HULA AUANA?) One that uncle and I really relate to is Keaukaha, and that he taught me and that I did when I had graduated, uniki. He taught me that in 15 minutes and made me do it, and it seemed like I was learning it for years and years. I have only taught one other person this dance and it's like my mark and everybody asks em to do that song and because uncle and I both come from Keaukaha. (BESIDES HULA DO YOU DO OTHER THINGS?) Yes, well I used to work with Lanakila Bret, he taught me all the Hawaiian implements and instruments, kahanaho, Hawaiian hand crafts. I worked there for about 1 1/2 years with him. Through Alu Like is how I got into the program. Usually uncle tells me what chants to teach. (IS IT MOSTLY KAHIKO?) Yes. (MOST OF THE TIME YOU TEACH HIS STYLE?) Yah, but within these past few years, I've kind of done on my own done some of my own motions to different chants that I've gotten a hold of, not that uncle has taught me or anything. So I have done my own and sometimes he says, oh, I like that. So he tells me to teach it. (THE WORKSHOPS THAT YOU TEACH, DO YOU TEACH CHILDREN OR ADULTS?) They vary, I've taught some teachers. We did, last year, this year in April they had the hula pakahi in Maui and they asked me to teach and I had two teachers in my class, but a majority of them were adults. I've taught maybe two or three workshops with the children, the rest adults. We go to Seattle Washington and do workshops up there. (USUALLY YOUR WORKSHOP IS ONE OR TWO DAYS?) Yes. (DO YOU FEEL THAT YOU CAN LEARN SOMETHING IN 2 DAYS?) Yes. You can if it is put to

you with whoever is teaching and stuff, if they can get through to you, get you all the words and you have a tape, it can be done. (DO YOU TEACH WITH UNCLE GEORGE?) Yes, I am helping him out now, now that he's getting old, but he is 63 years old and he's moving a little different than before, so I get up there, I can dance for him. He does hand gestures and I know him and his style so well that he can talk to me and I can understand. (DO YOU ENTERTAIN WITH HIM?) Yes, still. In fact whenever he needs a dancer, most of the time he calls me. Anywhere, we gone to and traveled to Valeo, we've gone to Seattle, we've gone to Japan, Kauai. (HAVE YOU BEEN TEACHING IN JAPAN TOO?) Yes, we went over in '89. I went over for a month in Japan and had workshops and also they had Merry Monarch Japan there. It's like the Merry Monarch here, but in Japan. (DID YOU EVER SERVE AS A JUDGE?) Yes, I did. It was for the Tahiti Fete in San Fransico. (TAHITIAN OR HULA?) It was both and because of my background of being a Polynesian dancer, this lady, Gloria Fuji had given my name to this gentleman that was taking care of this Tahiti Fete in San Fransico. His name was Van Fransico and he called me up and asked me if I would love to come and judge, so I did that. I think it was '88 or '89. (DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING SPECIAL TO SAY IN THE BOOK?) I guess that everyone says this, that when you have your own studio or halau, that you remember that the children are the ones that will perpetuate and keep the hula on, so you must teach them to their fullest of their ability. Love them as they are your too, and teach them to have this haahaa, cause that is very, very to me important in hula to be haahaa. (WHAT HAS HULA TAUGHT YOU?) A whole lot, I never thought I'd become a hula teacher, when I was growing up I was a very tom boy and I liked sports, I liked doing things. Hula has taught me, #1 to respect my heritage, love my culture, respect people for what they are. How to show people what you feel inside of you without even saying a word. Just by the expressions in your hand gestures. Hula has taught me grace, poise, I am today very glad that I decided to start my own school because I see today how important it is when you live in Hawaii,

you are Hawaiian. It is really hula that's how a lot is being perpetuated and that's how you learn a lot of culture. (DO YOU THINK HAVING A MALE TEACHER MAKES A DIFFERENCE IN HULA?) Oh yes, I can picture uncle. Uncle was a soft dancer, but not a feminine dancer. He had face gestures, feature, could just by him giving one lift of the eye brow, you could see the meaning in his heart, and yet he was a male dancer, but yet he didn't dance feminine. (DO YOU THINK IT MAKES A DIFFERENCE TO HAVE A MALE TEACHER?) Yes, it does a little, but it's up to you, what you see. I can teach male dancers and I can see, I like teaching male dancing, but I can also teach woman dances. You can see the difference between both of them. (DO YOU THINK THE HAUMANA PICKS UP FROM THE TEACHER OR IT ALL DEPENDS?) Well, they pick up from the teacher definitely. So, that's why when I am teaching, I actually teach, and I get up and dance with my children, or my adult class or males, and I dance strong like a male dancer. When teaching the males. When I dance with the girls, I dance feminine and I dance with grace. (UNCLE GEORGE WAS ABLE TO DO THAT TOO?) Yes, definitely.