

Emma Sharpe

As a little girl I lived in a village with a lot of Hawaiian families surrounding us so there was always a lot of dancing and a lot of music. I used to love to listen to their singing. But going toward the fence and looking over, I would see people doing the hula. And I would always wanted to learn what they were doing. I would always see kupunas coming together and having a party and singing and dancing to their songs. That's what really interested me that if my dad could'nt send me to a dancing school---you see what I was always interested in was the ballet. But if I could not go to school for ballet than I wanted to go to a school for hula. I was about eight years old at the time.

I didn't study with a kumu until I was fifteen years old. I went to Kauhai Lipua who was aminister at that time. She told me that she was a dancer at the time King Kalakaua was reigning. I knew her daughter-in-law who lived very close to me and I asked the daughter-in-law did she know that tutu was a dancer. I wanted to learn the hula so badly because I always felt that I wanted to be a teacher, and if I was a teacher then in my teaching field I would like to teach the children my dances. At that time nobody was doing the hula only at these private parties at home. There was not one halau on Maui that I can remember. So she told me to go see tutu and that's what I did. I went up to tutu and said I understand that you're a dancer. And she said yes I used to dance. I asked her would you teach me what you know. She said no, I have kept that away, that is out of my life now. I'm a minister now. I am doing God's work. Well, I said, ~~God is in me and he has given me~~ your talent and my talent is God's you know, and tutu the way I think is that when you die all this knowledge that you have inside of you about our dance goes with you. I would like to keep it. My father doesn't want me to dance. You see my father would was being danced down on Lahaina Street and he didn't want any of his children ever becoming involved with the hula.

Kauhai is the grandmother of Eddie Kamae. She taught me for three years and it was done secretly because some members of the church were looking down at the hula ~~some were~~ and she was a minister. I was her one and only student when she taught me.

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As a little girl I lived in a village with a lot of Hawaiian families surrounding us so there was always a lot of dancing and a lot of music. I used to love to listen to their singing. But going towards the fence and looking over, I would see people doing the hula. And I would always want to learn what they were doing. I would always see kupunas coming together and having a party and singing and dancing to their songs. That's what really interested me since my dad couldn't send me to a dancing school. You see what I was always interested in was the ballet. Since I couldn't go to a school for ballet then I wanted to go to a school for hula.

I didn't study with a kumu until I was fifteen-years-old because my father didn't want me to dance. His only exposure to the hula was what was being danced on Lahaina Street and he didn't want any of his children ever becoming involved with that. I wanted to learn the hula so badly but at that time the only hula that was performed was done at private parties. As far as I can remember I don't think there was one halau on Maui at that time. A neighbor of ours told me about her mother-in-law, Kauahi Lipua, who was a dancer at the time of King Kalakaua's reign. I went to see her but she refused to teach me. Kauahi at that time was a minister for the church and she said she had danced once but she was doing God's work now. I told her we were both children of God and when she died she would take all her knowledge with her. That helped to change her mind and for the next three years she taught me in secret because of her position in the church.

I was her one and only student. She taught no one before or after me. I would go to her home three times a week and I would always bring two leis with me. One would be for myself and the other would be for the goddess of the hula. She had one big room where she kept her things and I would be taught only in that room. She would teach me only on the days that she was not preaching.

I was taught hula auwana but the words auwana and kahiko were never used back then. I never knew any other type of hula existed but modern hula because that's all that was danced on Maui. Now the auwana that was taught to me had no music to it. It was taught to me simply by chanting. She would get her little ipu and pai the beat and chant the mele to me. She would talk to me briefly about each dance and then teach me the motions. While I was learning I had to follow certain kapus. I could not go into the ocean while I was menstruating and I could not go out with men. In order to enter the halau I had to kahea a certain phrase or I would not be allowed to enter. At the end of my training she had a little paina in which my family was invited. At the end of the meal she wrapped up all the leftover food and threw it into the ocean at Makena. This was done to purify everything that had come before.

After I graduated I wanted to learn kahiko and the kumu I wanted to learn from was Joseph Ilalaole. He lived in Honolulu so in the next three years I asked him four times to teach me a chant. Each time he turned me down and it hurt because I was so eager to learn. The next time I went to Honolulu I asked Aunty Ka Treadway to speak to him for me, so she brought me to his house. He was sitting on the lawn on a white settee with his brother who was a minister. Uncle Joe's brother rose when I entered and told him that I had provided entertainment and helped set up benefit shows for all churches on Maui and I deserved to be helped. At that point his wife who I think had the last say all along told Uncle Joe to take me in. From that day on I was his student. I would come to Honolulu every summer to teach at the University of Hawaii and I would live with Uncle Joe for one week before classes started. He taught me only kahiko and I wish he had lived long enough to teach me the hula kapu. I learned from Uncle Joe by just watching and listening. First he would show me the dance, then explain the mele, then he would pai the drum and this is how I learned. He sent me to Kawena Pukui and I would show her a mele from Uncle Joe and she would give me the background on it. She used to kid me because I was always writing and drawing everything down but I told her when she and Uncle Joe passed away there would be something to pass on to the next generation.

I see steps today that I've never seen before. Steps are not precise and controlled today but long and outstretched. People uehe outward today rather than upward and I've never see an ancient dance before where the dancer falls to the floor and lays there. But this is what I'm seeing today. The hula of my time was not done for entertainment only but mainly to share the culture. I believe the Hawaiian people must teach and share their own culture. If we create, we must acknowledge what is a modern creation because the modern audience left uninformed will believe they have seen a traditional dance. The big problem of today is that many of our Hawaiian people themselves don't know what is and is not traditionally Hawaiian in the hula.

but I wanted to learn the ancient hula. But in those days the kumu told the student what they would learn.

When I started with him he called Kaweana Pukui and told her I was his student and that now and then I would be coming to her. She taught me some of the chants and some of the dances. She told me she ~~was~~ could help me but Uncle Joe was the teacher. She was a cultural resource more than a hula teacher. I would bring my mele in Uncle Joe's book and she could show me how to chant and perform it. I was always asking her about the background of each chant. After ~~awhile she asked me why and I told her when she was gone there would be something to pass on to the next generation.~~

I learned from I from just watching and listening. He would chant the mele and dance the steps at the same time. First he shows me the dance, then he explains the mele, then he would hit the drum. When I drum my hands go high because I really love it. I'm almost in a trance. I used to be ashamed because I got so carried away but Uncle Joe told me don't be ashamed. This is your style and don't listen to people knocking you down. He gave me a little

along with his wife to recognize my graduation from his line. Pukui, I try to keep the same motions that I was taught. I was always kidded for writing and drawing everything down. The hula offer the young people of today poise, memorization, ~~rythem~~ rhythm.

I see steps today I've never seen before. I never saw a hula where the dancer lay ~~down~~ down on the stage and reached out. People uche with their feet outward now. Steps are not precise and controlled today, but long and outstretched. I go up to the boys and tell them to shorten their steps because they are beautiful dancers. I am not trying to go against their teacher, but it hurts one so to see the change in steps.

The hula of my time was not done mainly for entertainment, but to share the culture. I think the Hawaiian people must teach their own culture, I wish the show in Hawaii would keep their shows Hawaiian.

If they create they should say this is my creation because the audience is foreign and if you don't tell them they believe they've seen a Hawaiian dance. Our own Hawaiian people don't know what is and is not Hawaiian. I think the hula will change from a graceful dance into a fast-paced dance..

~~EMMA~~ Emma Sharpe

She taught no ~~xx~~ one before or after me. I would go to her home about three times ~~ea~~ a week. I always made two leis. One would be for myself the other would be ~~for~~ for the dance goddess. She had one big room where she kept her things. She would take out a ~~xxxxxxxx~~ and put it down on the floor then she had a little kuahu and on it she had a bla (?) and she said this is your dance now and so she didn't want to touch it. She said let's believe that this is ~~xxx~~ something that we are ~~giving~~ giving back to our traditions and I will bless the thing so that her bond(?) would not cause me any damage. I told her no because I felt I was only coming to her for help. I would only learn in that room and she would teach me only on the days that she was not preaching. Something she taught me was that a student never complains when you come to learn a dance like this. She taught me all Hawaiian auwana, but the words auwana & kahiko were never used for me. She would chant for me but any chant training would come from Joseph ~~me~~. I never knew anything else but auwana existed because all I saw on Maui was hula auwana.

Now this auwana mele had no music to it. It was taught to me by simply chanting. She would get her little ipu and pa'i the beat and chant the mele to me. She said she was only a dancer and so she taught me only the dance, and only briefly tell me about the dance. She gave a little paina for me to signify I could go out and train so I asked her if my parents could come. She said yes, but only those two. ~~A~~ this time only my mother knew that I had been learning the hula. After the paina she started rolling up all the leftovers, I told her to take it home to her family, and she said no, this was a special paina for me and she was taking it to Makena to throw it in the ocean.

I asked her why in the ocean and she said because it was clean and it would purify everything.

The first class that I uniki'd as a teacher, I invited her to be an honored guest! After I performed a dance at the end in her honor there appeared a perfect rainbow above me. She told me that the rainbow meant no one would ever be able to step on me and abuse me. She told me that she was too old to do anything she wanted and so she was bequeathing me her knowledge.

While I was learning, I had to follow certain kapus. I could not go into the ocean while I was menstruating, I could not go out with men, and I could not disobey my teacher and family. In order to enter the halau I had to kahea certain words or I was not allowed to enter.

I started teaching in the 1930's. I graduated from the halau and began with three girls. These were my guinea pigs. They would come to my house or I would go to theirs' ~~xxxxxxxx~~ and this is how my halau started. I would also put on church and community show. I wanted to learn more of the kahiko and the kumu I wanted was Joseph Ialaole in Honolulu so in three years I asked him four times to teach me a chant. Each time he turned me down. I was hurt because it was something that I was so eager to learn. The next time I went to Honolulu I asked Auntie Ka Treadway to speak to him for me. So she brought me to his house one day and he was sitting on the lawn on a white settee with his brother who was a minister a Waihee ~~xxxxxxxx~~ at the Kahuna Church.

Auntie Ka introduced me and told him what I wanted. Uncle Joe's brother stood up and told him that on Maui I helped all the churches putting on benefit shows and provided entertainment and he told Uncle Joe that I deserved to be helped.

At that time just before I met him my father passed away. And when I walked into the room I went up to Uncle Joe and told him he looked just like my father. I wasn't trying to make good with him but he had the same skin color, the same nose and I asked him could I call him Daddy. At that point his wife who I think had the last say all along rose to her feet and told Uncle Joe to take me in. From that day on I was in. He wanted to ~~give~~ give me his two ipu ~~heke~~ but I told him I must pay. He told me there was nobody in his family who was interested. He had nobody else. He had a daughter who danced but she wasn't interested. His boy that he thought would be a kumu hula died in the war. I was the only one that was interested.

I would come every summer and teach at the University. So for one week before classes started I would live with him one week.

It's only since the Merry Monarch that the terms kahiko and auwana have come into use. I was taken aback because in my time there were no names. I can only think of 9 or 10 basic steps. He taught me Hole Waimea because he knew my family was from the Kamehameha line. I wish he had lived long enough to teach me more of the specific dances. He left me a whole book of chants that I don't know what to do with. He ~~taught~~ taught me only auwana.

I also studied with Kawehu(?) because I brought food to her family. He never taught ~~me~~ one hula kapu because I never asked but I wanted to learn

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