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Tape

NANA I NA LOEA HULA

Kumu Hula: Carolee Nishi

Interviewer: Lovina Le Pendu

Date: 5/26/93

Carolee Nishi, yes. (DO YOU TEACH PRESENTLY?) Yes I do. I am a volunteer for the Nu'uanu YMCA and the Hawaiiana Youth Program under the YMCA of Honolulu. I know so to speak because I am part of Keiki Hula Competition. However, I teach for the department of Education as a kupuna on the Hawaiian studies. So daily I teach - Monday to Friday, to the elementary schools and on Saturdays and Sundays I teach hula, ukulele, chants to the children in the Hawaiian Youth program. (AGE OF STUDENTS?) The youngest one is 2 years old. We were always at the YMCA, except 3 children between the ages of 2 and 3. As soon as they move out we accept another one within that age. But the bulk of the children are between that ages of 6 and 16. There are some girls that are much older because they continue to take hula but most of the children are between those ages. (ELDERLY LADIES?) Yes. We have a kupuna group and they are primarily grandparents and some of the ladies that work with me at United Airlines, and we do that on Thursday evenings. It is perhaps the most unsuccessful program. Like the children, they come from the time they are 3, they come every week and they stay for years. There are so much turn over in the adult program. I find it that I could tell the YMCA that I am wasting my time. I keep it at a very minimum. It is 6:30 to 7:30 every Thursday, and it is free. You can't even pay to come, but they are not consistent, and adults are like that unless you have a real full fledged program. (DO YOU TEACH KAHIKO AND AUANA?) To the adults, I would not say that we learn heavy duty kahiko. We teach a chant or two, just so that there is a background on that, but we don't. They like real kahiko. (THE CHILDREN?) Yes. In fact, they start with kahiko. They don't learn any auana and it could be like a year or two before we go into auana. We start with steps and we start to sing. We always sing things that have to do with the monarchy and after

they accomplish maybe about 4 songs on Lili'u, 4 songs on Kawika, then we go into some Pele chants. (DO YOU TEACH THEIR CHANTING?) Yes, and we like them to understand the voice control as opposed to just singing a song. (CAN YOU GIVE ME THE NAME OF THE HALAU?) Hula Hui O Kapunahala. The meaning of the name of our Hawaiiana Youth program comes from the fact that the hui is a group and it is a group from Kapunahala, which is in Kane'ohe. (DID YOU GIVE THE NAME?) No, I didn't intend to teach hula here in Hawai'i at all. I did in the mainland because when I started working for United Airlines back in 1963, they knew I was from Hawai'i, and they asked me to teach a group of children who were the children of our employees. There we were very successful, so we went cross-country. We all had a budget fund of a large organization like United. I was able to fly home to Hawai'i for free, so I would go to Hula Supply and old man Kapu there at the time. . . gee, we're talking about 30 years ago now. The ipus were very inexpensive and the ukuleles were 15.95 for a "Kamaka". And so we had the money appropriate from the company, United, to pick up whatever we wanted. With that, I went back to the mainland and we did promotionals for my company. Sometimes were elaborate, and all the children that were recipients of that, of course, got to learn hula for free. They had absolutely no idea because they were not from the islands, but they were taught. I remember the numbers that I taught when I first started to teach in the mainland was "Moku kiakahi", instruments numbers, "Alike", with the bamboos, and an ipu number, "Na Ka Pueo". So with those numbers the children and, of course, they are all "haole". Two girls were local girls, their parents were from Hawai'i, but they never were here in the islands except to visit and they never learned the hula until I taught them up there. They were between the ages of 12 and 14 and they took teenagers and that was my first start with this group. When I came back here, my husband was in Vietnam at the time I returned to Honolulu, and the girls at the "Red Carpet Room", when I first started here in Honolulu, asked me to teach and I said, "Heavens! Why would I teach here.

There's so many people here who teach." And my girl Masako Muriel Murakami who was a stewardess at PanAm and had just transferred to United's Red Carpet Room because she had gotten married had a daughter 6 years old. I started with Sherry. She was my first student after I came home. Sherry is now 30-something years old, but she was the original person and she went to Kapunahala Elementary school. She and 4 girlfriends started together. That was in 1969, so that was the first that we know of Kapunahala because they went to Kapunahala elementary school. Now why we would have named that, we did not. We did not need a "Hula Hui O Kapunahala" in 1970. We were invited to "Expo 70" in Osaka. That was our first international trip. The girls appeared at the Hawaiian pavilion and it turned out. Actually, my father-in-law was the honored official for Hawai'i. Anyway, we were invited to do this and the Japanese said to me in Japanese, and in my limited way I explained to them who we were. They said, "What is the name of your group?", and I said we did not have a name, so they said from what village and I said we came from Kapunahala in Kane'ohe on the island of O'ahu. And so they themselves said "Kapunahala Hula Club". So while we were in Japan, they wanted to make me some cards, and instantly had somebody and the next day cards were delivered to me and said, "Kapunahala Hula Club", and very beautiful in vibrant orange colors, because our tour was orange and yellow. And they had yellow plumeria in the corner and in black letters it said "Kapunahala Hula Club". When I got home, more cards were made by that newspaper called "Hoeki". Another fellow that works with me at United - his name was Walter Soga - his family owns the "Hochi" and they, in turn, published cards for us, because I was still working with United, and they turned the work "club" into "Hui of Kapunahala". So it was the Hui O Kapunahala. And they said, "What kind of a hui?" I said, "It's a hula group." So somebody made the name. I didn't. And that's how it came to be "Hula Hui O Kapunahala." Now we did not need the name because we were just a small group of girls, teaching my girlfriend's daughter and her

friends from elementary school. There turned out 13 girls to join the group when I came home from Japan, so we had 20 girls for a long time, the same girls, and these girls became very diligent and we all went to YMCA because I had a friend, Alan Matsuda, who was dying of cancer. His brother, Robert Matsuda, who is the head of YMCA internationally. He was at that time just a director before Alan died. He told me my working for United was one of the more unimpressive things and if I wanted to do anything I would volunteer for the organization to help out the Youth group. I was then brought into the YMCA and I brought these girls with me from Kapunahala.

(WHEN DID YOU FIRST START HULA?) I know I was really young, probably 1950, which means I was 5 or 6 years old. I entertained at Tripler Hospital in Red Satin Pa'u top and bottom. Last week I was teaching as a kupuna for Kuhio elementary school and the lady who was the principal there. . .I didn't really remember her when I first walked into the school, and actually, I don't really know her, but she went to the Priory and so did I. She said she always remembered me and even after she had seen me after Keiki Hula Competition or different things that she remembered because we did things together and she always remembered. And at that time we were with Kent Gherrard and I said maybe you were doing something with your group and I was doing something with my group, but my mom used to take us to Waikiki and I know that Lincoln was down there and so was Kent Gherrard. And I remember some steps. But, you know, at that time my mom was not necessarily one of these Hawaiian ladies that went around and looked for the very best. She just thought it was cute if her daughter will dance the hula and those days it was really very auana. Already we didn't have really kahiko way of dancing. We were primarily taught to go to Tripler and ho'olaule'a down at Waikiki, that kind of thing. And I Must have been about 5.

(WHO WAS YOUR VERY FIRST KUMU HULA?) The first one I can say I remember is Eunice McLean, and heaven knows where she is today. But I wasn't old enough to spell or read,

and she had a home. She was in Kalihi. Right in the back of her home she had a platform with 2 steps and we would learn there, my sister and I, and I know she was responsible for putting the song of all these shows and my mom helped her a great deal. And it was at an area where Chubby Mahoe lives. (DID YOU LEARN KAHIKO?) No. We learned "Ku'u Tutu" and finally after all these years, I finally taught it to my children. I never even thought of teaching that song, but just recently we did it for mother's day. (HOW LONG WERE YOU WITH HER?) I don't really remember. Maybe 2 years. (DO YOU REMEMBER THE STYLE?) No. It could not be more than just a hula. We were not taught the words, we were just given a 78 record. We all could buy these records and my mother will put it on and we would practice to those things. We should do uli numbers and we had bamboos. My sister dropped out and I was the only one left, but not anything that I could say was inspirational. (ANY SPECIAL MEMORY OF THAT TIME?) Oh, enjoyed it myself tremendously and all the kids that were in my class, we had no real ohana about it. We did not have. . .like today we get together. We just went there and every week it was hula, real old fashioned. We went to YWCA. I don't remember who the teacher was, but I know that along with hula we had tumbling and swimming and tap dancing. It wasn't specialized and it was a six-week class. And then if we wanted to we could join again for another 6 weeks. It wasn't specialized. (KAHIKO AND AUANA?) No. Only auana. I can tell you right now we did not ever learn kahiko in those days. After YWCA it was in Kaimuki with Lilian _____ and her studio was called "Mamo Hula Studio." And I stayed there quite a while because I was always there. But in addition to her there were other things that we did. I did Tahitian. But my growing years where I was _____ serious was perhaps starting at that time. I was about 10-11 years old and my hula sisters, they were Nora, Lesley, and Gloria. They were my greatest inspiration. None of them continued to be hula teachers, but they were very good dancers and their costumes were really beautiful, you know, their pa'u when they will sew on like applique,

and I think if it had not been for those 3 girls, I don't think I would have continued because they were very inspirational to me. I think even though I had surpassed more than they ever did I still think of them as inspirational and I can't remember their last names, but one was a Filipino girl, another was a hapa haole girl, and there was a Japanese girl. And actually, her influence came from Aqi Aqi, and all the numbers we did was choreographed by Aqi Aqi who by that time was very active. But she would not teach anybody. So she had two students - one Chinese girl and Lillian. (CAN YOU TELL ME A LITTLE BIT ABOUT AQUI AQUI?) Aqi Aqi was in the days of 1940's. I would say the song "Lovely Hula Hands" was written for her. I think she is quite popular in the old hula history books and the time of Johnny Noble. That was Tootsie Notley, and very auana. Aqi has since passed on, but I would say of all my dancing, she was the first one that I had. Now Chikaku. . Lillian is the youngest sister of the Chikaku. The other two were the 442 queens in the days of the beauty queen's contest, the Chikaku. There was Doreen. . They must be in their 50's now, but they were very well known in the days of the war and that's when if you were Japanese you would even change your name. So Lillian, she said that it was dangerous to be Japanese in those days. There was a lot of prejudice, especially in the hula world. She said even Iolani Luahine would not teach anybody Japanese because there was this great distance between the Japanese and the local society because of the war, of course, and my mother was telling me that too. Even our family did not like the association with Japanese. The Chinese were very close to the Hawaiians, but Hawaiians were not close to Japanese. So in those days it was very difficult. But as the years have gone by, it just phased itself out. However, Aqi was very involved with her solo way as a person, so she would not really teach. But all her numbers were given to us. (SO LILIAN ONLY TOOK FROM AQUI?) Actually, she was like an alaka'i to Aqi, and my best friend Honey Von Ald was Aqi's niece. She used to learn from her aunty. (DID YOU ENTERTAIN?) We did a lot of entertainment in those days, a lot for the

military, a lot for Waikiki. And Genoa was our musician, and so was Pua Alameida, Johnny Alameida. We did "Green Rose" all the time, and that, today, is like kahiko. Along with Lillian, we owned a place at International Market Place when it opened. I know it was in the 50's and, because of the entertainment there, I was really influenced by people like Mamo Howell because she danced at Don the Beachcomber. I learned a lot from the people that used to hang around the International Market Place. I learned Tahitian. The Tahitians there were very respected people, not just right off the street. There was a quotation to that. You did not want to do Tahitian in those days because it was kind of frowned upon, and my father did not allow that. Then I went to Bella Richards and she was a very serious Tahitian teacher, very serious, although she taught the hula too. There was Kuchi Koon who danced at Don the Beachcomber because she was the comic hula dancer. She taught me along. There were a couple of others, too, in the show. I remember. . . I can't tell you their names, but I was there every night and we had the saimin stand and the teriyaki sticks, and for 25 cents for saimin and 30 cents for teriyaki I would be learning my hula. There was _____ Stagmen and , I guess, Al Barcarse, and they did the haka and they did the stuff on stage everyday at 3, at 5 o'clock and I was always there. So that was a whole world of Polynesian dancing and that _____ for 4 years and I knew the _____ dances. I knew any happy talk songs backwards and forwards. It was the days of Ita Lyman, Marty Denny, and I knew all those people so well because I was really young - I was about 14 years old - and I was really ready to learn. Anything you taught me I would learn it. So I was very versatile in that sense. All the Maori dances in your ears, same old drumming every night, same thing over and over. Happy talking talking happy talking and they dance the hula to it. There was Ron Jacob who was a really fabulous singer, and there was Mamo Howell, and she did the hula. I sat at the show every day for years. So it just became a part of me, I guess, and I am not thinking that I'd ever be in hula. My father had not even thought for one second. There was a

Spanish dancer, Tito Ceson, at that time, and he had a place at Waikiki. So my girlfriend, who was his star dancer - and she owns Sansei Hawaii today, she is the one with the shirts. Well, ___ _ was an excellent Spanish dancer and Tito saw that if you dance the hula he will hire you and you could do it professionally and I was dancing pretty well by then. In fact, Lilian always used me for soloist when we did anything. If her daughter was not around, I would do it. And my father said absolutely not, never. I was never allowed to ever do anything professionally, just enjoy it as a hobby. Gloria, the daughter of my hula teacher, was a PanAm stewardess, but before she became a stewardess, she was asked to partner with me so we can go to a Lexington Hotel for a 6 week engagement, and that meant that we had to go together and that gentlemen was interested in having us go for 6 weeks. I was so happy and this is just about right after I was going to graduate, I guess 1959-60. That's when we worked together a lot, and I thought I would be able to dance professionally and my mom was all for it. But, of course, my father again was kind of determined. He said unless I graduate from college, got all the education, he will not even think of it, and I think being the last child they want you to do everything everyone else did not do. And I think it was hard for me. It was a great resentment that I could not continue, but I was fine too. It was like I was not defensive and sit home and cry and all that. I just continued to do my hula on my own. (AND AFTER THAT?) Then I was on my own. I did wait for my mom. I had all kinds, from ukulele to. . . Leimomi taught me Maori and Tahitian and Leimomi does not teach much anymore, Leimomi Chun. It was Leimomi Hula Studio. By then I was older. I got involved with a lot of people, even like Hu'i. Even Kawai will come to the YMCA to help, and throughout all that influence. . . I guess I was at the University just prior to that, and Ho'oulu Cambra then was a Beamer teacher before that, and I was very involved with the language with ___ Lindsey Kimura. I was singing with Dorothy Kahananui Gillette, and of course I did a lot of kahiko with their ensemble. I was never really involved because I started to work for United since I was out

of high school. (WHEN DID TEACHING COME IN?) Teaching came in in 1969, when I was younger, I'd say a junior/senior in high school. I would help when the teacher was sick. When I was in the mainland I was teaching for United Airlines, not seriously. It was like teaching numbers. I taught them "Little grass shack", all auana. Not kahiko at all. (WITH GENOA?) In 1974 to '79 I knew Genoa really well. I was actually with her. I never learned hula with Auntie Genoa. I played the ukulele with her. Actually, how we became close friends. . . Genoa is a very enterprising person. She wanted to start a store. She would say, "Help me write this." So we were really friends, a teacher student kind of relationship. But while we were friends, I learned how to play the ukulele over and above what my dad had taught me from the time when we were young. I knew the basics, but then it was Genoa who really taught me d7, g7, and we used to just play stuff like a vamp. We played by ear. We lived in Kailua and we had to ride home for almost 2 hours down the winding road in the 50's. So from 1947 I started living in Kailua and at that time there was no freeway, so we had an hour 1/2 of singing and playing ukulele on the way. So ukulele songs there was no problems, and Genoa taught me how to play at Kula, Hawai'i. Auntie Alice taught language, slack key and mele in that order, one hour each Tuesday and Thursday night. I was there for all 3 at Genoa Keawe's studio. So I learned a great deal at that time, I feel, and in spite of the fact that I already had a great love for hula and I had had my practice with United Airlines, there was never a time when I felt that I never needed to learn. In fact, even at the University, even though I would associate with the songs that I already knew how to sing it, when Dorothy Gillette would introduce a new song or maybe all these Hilo songs: "Hilo Hankahi," that's her favorite. She did a lot of arrangements. All kinds of songs. She would introduce even if it had a background. It was another way of looking at it. You know, like "Hano Hanalei". That was a view point from so many kinds of people that I felt you could not share with each of them even learning from the other because for each of them they all felt they

had a hold on it and to learn about the different age groups, what Aunty Alice said would never go inside with what the University was teaching. In fact, she was always upset if I brought it up, and I learned very quickly not to say to each of them, "Well so and so said. . ." She would never bring that up even till this day. You never try to correct and say, "Oh, it was done this way." All you have to do is take the knowledge, and maybe in your own way set a point to do whatever you can teach because everybody. . .and I understand now the history, which is so important, why we are so distant from each other because all these were taking away from us. So everybody just clash behind to what's left over, and that's all that they have left. Even our oldest kupuna, they each know their way of life. Someone in Ka'u, someone in Honolulu, someone in Maui; they all know the way they see it. You know when you hear this is the right way right away, that's wrong. Everybody has a different style and that's what Hawai'i really is, is that through our history it is bringing together so many different ways. There are some basics that is Hawaiian style, and that is to share the aloha. Akahai, lokahi, oluolu, ha'aha'a - different things that we say what the word aloha means. But we cannot say only this way is right. You are talking about Merrie Monarch, says the judge were saying these are the _____ people who come from the mainland. They would say, "Oh, you don't do it that way. You're doing it wrong. 'A'ole." It is not a matter of in that particular eye sight of that person they like that best and I have my best so do you, so are the other people. So my best friend has (smiled for jackets?) kind of like smash right and, you know, I really admire her. She learned from. . .you know they had the Hauoli hula girls. There was Ala, there was Leimomi Ho, there was Fishy. And you know, those ladies, along with Hu'i and ___ Flo, they were like very distant from what Maiki Aiu taught, and yet a lot of those people from Maiki Aiu are constant to the same path. They kind of push together. And Vicky wrote their own style. But there are styles super exciting like Johnny Lum Ho, and I admire all of that and I'd like for my kids to be real open and feel everything. I don't

like for any of my students to say, "This is right and that's wrong." I know there are times that we look at somebody that is really outrageously. . .maybe not what we think is Hawaiian. But that's not for us to say, you know? It is for everybody to have a good feeling for what we do.

(WHEN DID YOUR KAHIKO COME?) Ha. I guess Ho'oulu. . .well, of course there is Aunty Alice prior to her, and there was Hu'i Park prior to that. I guess it was through Genoa. I gave a testimonial for Aunty Alice in 1973. It was a great feast. We had it at NBC, but I ran that whole thing with Aunty Genoa and we sold tickets. I was very serious. I went from house to house. I was going to every business, and we made it a success. And I think it was just my youth that I had the energy and, at that time, I didn't have children. I had lots of time. All I did was work for United. I had nothing else to do. I worked as a volunteer for the YMCA, just like an outreach program, and I had lots of time. (DID YOU LEARN SOMETHING WITH HU'I?) No. Hu'i and I became friends because Aunty Genoa was kind of a mentor to her in a small way. Aunty Vicky was Aunty Hu'i's teacher. Aunty Hu'i went to teach or dance, I think, for Genoa whenever she needed an extra person. I know that Genoa will have people like Kealoha Kalama, different people often. I really met Hu'i through Genoa. (KAWAI COCKETT?) I met him before Hu'i, and I don't know where Kawai came from. I was already teaching the girls how to drum with double heke. He was very impressed by the fact that our young kids will do that. He said to me, "Oh, you give them a double heke." Well, nobody at that point, I guess, would treat their kids to that. You have to earn it and I think in my innocence in wanting them to learn at a young age to really control because of the weight and I wasn't thinking of the hard work. They should earn like after so many years of training and then Kawai came in and he really polished it all up and I had one girl that said we know the chant but we can't sing it outside for one reason or another. We had to hide everything and not do it when we did the show. But just no action but Kawai said, "No. You can do anything." At that time he was close to Ed Collier, and that's probably where I met him

because Eddie and Hu'i taught together for Aunty Genoa at her "Kula Hawai'i". There was Genoa Keawe, Kula Hawai'i with Aunty Alice for language and slack key and hula and now that I am thinking about it, that's what it was. Eddie was teaching the boys. Hu'i was teaching the girls. And, I guess, just an association with that. I still have my small group at the YMCA, and we're not really big and I was not going anywhere with this thing. It was just maintaining an outreach program and the hula hui girls, and it was just YMCA Hawaiian Youth Program.

(DO YOU THINK YOU HAVE YOUR OWN STYLE?) I definitely have Aqui's auana style, her choreography. I do a lot of things which I can't get out of me. It is like I do a song like "Keep your eyes on the hands" and "Beyond the Reef" that we actually did for a competition and catch the eyes of the judges that year at Kamehameha. I did exactly how Aqui would put it out and, of course, we had a tape, and in those days there wasn't such things. But I think there is a tape on it now. Aqui had a really soft way of dancing and not. . . I see hands moving but I think Aunty Hu'i's influence, she would always say she did not have enough girls. She would take my YMCA girls, and I would have to say I don't know that my kids today can dance as well as my oldest girls because I had time and they were taught everything because I had time. They pick up a kind of a _____ between Aqui Ald and Aunty Vicky's style. I would say, through Hu'i, I went on a trip to New Zealand because, of course, of my closeness to Aunty Genoa and Ala and Flo and Fishy. The 3 of them were the dancers. Hu'i wasn't on that. And from those 3 ladies, I know the whole time they were dancing how close their style was immediately to Hu'i's style. And at that time there was Val Kepelino and Pua. She was a musician with Aunty Genoa. But that trip was very influential to me too because I started to realize those were the very basic hulas and where the styles came from. And prior to that, it did not bother me. You danced, you danced. I started to notice you can tell this came from Maui. It was Emma Sharpe's kind of style. I started to notice people dancing. As soon as you dance I would say to myself, "I bet I know where they learned hula." I think at

that time I started to become more impressed by different styles of dance and started to work on ours, not just teach the hula and to make sure that you dance it correctly and kind of perfect what you know, but my choreography. . .I can't say even till this day. It is really an Aquia Ald style.

(WHAT DO YOU THINK OF UNIKI?) I think that in the old days you can say that and I think today a lot of people are serious. I will never graduate somebody. I never graduated myself. I don't think there is an end to learning. I think if you want to say that you had graduated, I will hope that is like graduate from college and realize there is a master's, a doctorate, and a life to live after that. There is so much to learn. For my feeling is that basically you will never know all. There is no one that knows it all, but there is one person that has more knowledge than the other, and definitely I respect all those who have a great deal of work within the field. I don't feel I am one of them.

(WHERE DO YOUR STUDENTS GO AFTER THIS?) They stay and volunteer to teach the rest of the kids. They keep passing on what they know. The thing about money is a real problem. As far as people that come from the YMCA, you know there was a time when somebody said to me, "You should start your own studio because you are waisting your time here." We had so much material and I do. I have computerized my kids volumes of books. I put in the computer daily. I will say for the last 12 years. . .my husband came home with the first Mac because of his job at Hawaiian Tel. They asked him to look it over. He and I could use it. The day I started to use it, I never quit. I can do so much with it, the knowledge that my daughter has because I know she grew up watching us do this, and we don't have a T.V. so what else do you do but computerize yourself. I have every song, I have pictures, I have everything on computer; and some of that I'll pass on to my kids. Hours were put into trying to make right what so much was wrong. Not to be critical, but like Larry Lindsey Kimura used to say in class, "If they only knew what they

are talking about when they are singing. And listen to 'Royal Hawaiian Hotel'. Gabby does know how to sing, but he does not know Hawaiian language." Well, as a language teacher, he has the right to say that because he is trying so hard to get the language developed, and he has done an excellent job. Sid _____ na leo like he did is a great deal in credit, but I would like to be in the same shoes as him, not to be critical, but whatever we know to pass on what is correct.

(HOW DO YOU SEE YOUR CAREER IN THE FUTURE?) I have lots of kids already that do. .in fact, right now I have three very strong kumu kokuas, and the way I see it, they are sincerely indebted in not worrying, not being paid, and I know that you should be because I know at that age it is hard to maintain unless it is a hobby. But if you like to do this, either it has to be funded terrifically. . .but I had the fortune of having an excellent job. (SO YOU TRAIN YOUR CHILDREN TO CONTINUE?) Oh yeah. In fact, Alyssa Malo was one of them that attended your workshop. She and Dora and Mandi. I understand. . .or they feel they did well. I don't know. I was not there. Dora, the oldest of the 3 girls. . .she is 22 years old. As soon as she came back she said to me, "Aunty, Alyssa was bad in their own language." She said, "Had 11 verses, and you know what? She could remember the whole dance." And I said, "Well, I am sure everybody else could because they are all masters." She said, "Not," but they feel good about what they do and something like your workshop really inspires them, and I never hold them back to only what we learn. Go everywhere. Learn everything you can. Do everything you can possibly do. Don't just waste your energy playing Nintendo. I hate those things. I hate things that are not constructive to learning. Sure, you can control these machines, but for my diligent children that are there teaching, I hold all the things that they learned and they are passing it on.

(DO YOU THINK LANGUAGE IS IMPORTANT IN HULA?) It's excellent. You cannot do a number without learning. You cannot express yourself unless you know the meaning. You know, a kid at 2 years old is taught in our class "iluna", and not even just "iluna, maluna", but "luna,

lalo, loko, waho, mua, hope"; and then you learn "iluna, ilalo, maluna, malalo, maloko, iloko, mawaho, iwaho". You know, as soon as you sing a song to these kids and as soon as we have those words, their motions just automatically go. They are so ma'a to all the words already. We teach them directions, parts of your body, basic words - mahina, la, wela, anu. We don't teach it with the word "ka makani", you know. They can think the word "ka" belongs to "kamakani". But we like to teach them "makani, ka makani, mahina nui" - you know what I mean? - so that they know the basics of the language. It is hard to teach children out of the book because they don't even know their basic English language. How can you tell them, "give me all the adjectives or the verbs"? You can't. So you have to say, "Hele, lohe." You just have to give them those words and then they know. This little girl, when we went to Maui, she knew right away when we gave her the whole chant for that Maui chant and that's why she knows her basic words. And I used to ask her, "Do you know what that means?" She said, "I know kind of part of what it means, but I don't know what all that other stuff means. I know that 'ninau' means question and I know 'ia ia' means to her." But she knew that kind of stuff.

(WHAT DO YOU THINK OF HULA TODAY?) I don't think it has changed as much as it's become popular and more polished and more perfected. I think it is getting a little bit too critical because there are so many segments and everybody is saying, "This is right, that's wrong." Who is to say that's right and that's wrong. I don't know. We have judges and they are the ones. It is like who is the judge on Supreme Court that can say drugs is good or drugs is bad. I still think that if you are a judge and you are honored as a judge, yes you can say that. We are all personally involved in creating the perpetuation of these things, not to waste our energy to say who is right and who is wrong. But on the same token, we need to create people who are. . . you don't choose the word "kumu hula". I don't know, but I remember when I used to say, "Don't call me kumu hula. I don't want you to call me that title. I just want to be me trying to help

people perpetuate whatever we know well, not to pass on something that you don't know.

Sometimes, in the light of not wanting to admit that we don't know something, we do something so that the students think. . .I tell my students, "I don't know it all, and if I can't answer your questions, I will help you find it; and if I can't find it I will tell you where to go and you go because I don't have the time." One of my older students had gone far beyond me. I mean they can speak very well. My daughter's boyfriend came to us. . .whether he was inspired by us we will never know. But when he came he could not even play the ukulele. He could not sing a Hawaiian song. He did not know any Hawaiian words, and that was 3 years ago. He graduated Sunday in Hawaiian studies in the course of three years. Whatever made him do this and chop architecture after 4 years and nearly graduated, you never know. I can feel good about that. How his parents feel is another thing, and I know that was not their destiny to have him do this. However, if I look from my point of view and not really think of theirs. . .and I should consider that and I hope he goes on to do well later in other areas. I feel that we had served a purpose. I feel that somehow we influenced some people in looking into the Hawaiian culture. What is this? Everyday I teach at Dole, and everyday I teach one lesson - "Why do we speak English today?" Kids don't know why. They don't. I even know there are Hawaiian teachers, sit there and listen to them. That's right and it started back with Ka'ahumanu, the wife of Kamehameha the first who said, "Toss the images out and bring in the missionaries. Don't speak Hawaiian. We're going to learn the Bible. In order to learn the Bible we need to learn English." They sent all the Hawaiians far away. Now it started as far back as then, and because of those words, 'til this day we try to speak our Hawaiian again. It didn't start yesterday. Two hundred years ago as a matter of fact.

(DEFINITION OF HULA KAHIKO?) Hula kahiko, like they say "ancient hula", when that ancient hula was. I would like to think "halau", "long house" and trained to do the rituals of what

the religious ceremonies were in the olden days. What is kahiko to me has to be very ancient and, because it was so ancient, I cannot believe that we know it all today. That's really kahiko. We are doing what we think was done. I mean, if we were in English or Chinese who have their culture, I cannot say that we know exactly what the colonial states were doing, the thirteen colonies. We portray today what Washington did in those days, and in the same way we portray what Kamehameha and those ancient "Hole Waimea" soldiers who gave us this song and do the best we can . We sing and we do. . .

(DO YOU COMPOSE?) Yes. I did in kahiko style. Definitely I could not fit kahiko because how could I say it is kahiko. I was not born in those days and nor than I was trained by those who are really of that sort. I don't even think any of these people here were so touched by that ancient legend or ceremonies that I can say, "I know Kawai knew it all and what he taught me was authentic." He learned from Aunty Rachel, who is his mother, and perhaps I can believe that's the best that I could touch, as best as I can believe. Whatever Hu'i knew that she taught me because we worked together, and she learned from Aunty Vicky and there on and on that perhaps that's the best we could do. I would never sit here and tell my girls, "This is it". And maybe I am circling now, but I am very serious in class. I always tell them that's the best I know. If you do research, go to the archives, go the the library, go and if you have a better explanation for this, go work on it.

(WHAT KINDS OF REQUIREMENTS DO YOU HAVE FOR THE STUDENTS TO BE ABLE TO TEACH?) I require, first of all - more even than hula and how well they know hula - that they have an open heart to give. They have to learn to share sincerely and not think of themselves. I have a thing about focusing on yourself. I cannot stand it in school. I move to school every week. I don't get the same class every day. The first thing I see when I told them to line up in a row, "move forward, move back," and you have all these bossy people. I used to tell them, "Listen one

minute when I am talking to you. Look straight at my eye. Nana i ke kumu. Look towards the teacher. Ho'olohe mai - open your ears, and pa'a ka waha - shut your mouth." And not the nasty way of saying it. It should be close your mouth. but if they don't listen I say, "Shut your mouth, open your ears, and look at me. I want to tell you something. In order for you to learn you must be focused - first of all on yourself. Don't waste your energy on what the other people are doing. If you sincerely focus on yourself, you will learn clearly." After they have learned they can share it because they have a very good, strong knowledge, and they will listen. It is just like at your workshops. Evidently Alyssa was listening with all her ears because to turn around and ask a question of what was just told is the most irritating thing, and lots of people don't even know that when they are learning. I get that everyday at the airport. I say, "Gate #2," and as soon as they leave again, they turn around and say, "What gate?" and "How do we get there?", because people are not trained to listen and focus. But unless these girls know how to listen and focus they cannot teach back.

(DO YOU THINK THERE IS A DIFFERENCE IN ENTERTAINMENT HULA?) Definitely, because in our society we are attracted to what makes money, and you cannot tell me that is untrue. I have worked with this hotel right here. What we come in with is an authentic program and costumes with a little more portraying what was maybe the Ka'iulani style and all these beautiful dresses right on this beach. "Carolee, you got to come out with ti leaf skirt or something like that or even with bikini or pareau or short skirt." They don't want to watch all that stuff or the kind covered. And what am I supposed to do. They donate \$2,000 to me for my costumes, which they don't like. So you've got to do back for them, and it is like that. I think you have to do that for them, but you have to tell the students what is and what was and what should be and then it is up to them to decide. You don't tell anybody, "You must do that," because when you say "you must", the minute you walk out they are going to do what they want anyway.

It is just like your kids at home.

(BESIDES HULA, WHAT ELSE DO YOU DO?) I work for the DOE for Hawaiian studies. I do contract to intermediate schools, and fortunately it is a nice personal job. I teach the intermediate. They hired me on a contract, and it is a very nice contract. They require me to show the relationship between hula and history of Hawai'i. We can do all of that for 4 weeks straight, and then I teach them simple numbers and then they perform at like a ho'ike. And I do lots of those contracts. I teach ukulele and slack key. I couldn't teach hula, I guess, if I did not know how to play the ukulele and my girls all played ukulele. It used to be the cut off was 8 years old. Now it is kind of like 10 years old, and it is getting older and older before you learn. But we are also taking 4 year olds for ukulele. But I am finding that presently it is the parents who allowed it.

(**LISTEN TO TAPE**)