

NANA I NA LOEA HULA

Kumu Hula: Johnny Lum Ho

Interviewer: Lovina LePendu

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(CAN YOU GIVE ME YOUR FULL GIVEN NAME? JUST PUT JOHNNY LUM HO?) That's what everybody know me by - Johnny. (YOU DON'T WANT TO PUT ANY OTHER NAME?) I don't have any Hawaiian name. (DO YOU TEACH PRESENTLY?) Mmhm. (HERE IN HILO?) Mmhm. (ABOUT WHAT AGE ARE YOUR STUDENTS?) We have from three years old. (UP TO WHAT AGE?) Up to 30. (YOU DON'T HAVE VERY OLD PEOPLE.) From next week Thursday I will be having adult ladies. I had to kind of stop from teaching them because I didn't have time. But there's a big bunch of them that belong to this golf club that want to take, and so. . .(YOU'RE GOING TO OPEN UP A CLASS?) Yes. So. . .to mothers. (SO IT WILL BE ANY AGE AFTER THAT?) Mmhm.

(NAME OF HALAU?) "Halau O Ka Ua Kani Lehua." (CAN YOU GIVE ME THE HISTORY BEHIND THAT?) Hilo is noted for it's rain, and in a lot of songs you hear "ka ua kani lehua". It does pertain to Hilo, and it means "the rain that patters the lehua." (SO YOU GAVE THAT TO THE HALAU BECAUSE YOU'RE FROM HILO?) I'm from Hilo. I thought it was appropriate. (DID YOU GIVE IT THE NAME OR SOMEBODY ELSE?) No. It was myself. (DO

YOU TEACH BOTH KAHIKO AND AUANA?) Mmhm. (HOW ABOUT OLI?) Only when they enter in the Miss Hula. (HOW ABOUT IN A CLASS?) No. I no teach special kind oli. (DO YOU TEACH OTHERS YOUR STYLE?) Only if they ask. (HOW MANY YEARS HAVE YOU BEEN TEACHING?) Then they going tell, "If he went teach that many years he must be this and this old." [laugh] (JOHNNY IS FOREVER YOUNG!) [laugh] Do you have to know how many years? (NO. NOT REALLY. IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME, YEA?) Many years. . . Just like one newspaper. They just took for granted that I was one certain age, and I wasn't that age but I never told them I was that age. So when they called me they told me, "Oh, you're this age?" I said, "No, I'm not. And I'm not telling you."

(AT WHAT AGE WERE YOU FIRST INTERESTED IN HULA?) I used to sing first. I used to sing for George Na'ope - I was one of his singers; and for Aunty Edith Kanaka'ole - I was one of her singers. (THAT'S HOW YOU STARTED TO GET INTERESTED IN THE HULA?) Yea, because I used to sing for different hula troupes. (SO YOU WERE WATCHING AT THE SAME TIME?) Mmhm. I used to admire and I used to enjoy singing when the hula girls danced, because if the music is good. . .(YOU FEEL THAT IT COMES FROM THE MUSICIANS TOO.) And if you going foul up in the music, if she's not a good dancer then she would just stand and look at you; but a good dancer would

just follow along with the music.

(DO YOU REMEMBER WHO TAUGHT YOUR FIRST HULA LESSONS?) I didn't take hula lessons. (SO HOW DID IT COME TO YOU?) I just watched and I made my own. (YOU JUST STARTED TO SIT DOWN AND WRITE ABOUT HULA?) I mean, because my mother spoke the language - she was full blooded Hawaiian - she spoke her mother tongue more than she spoke English. So every time I needed to know what the meaning of one word was I would ask her, and then I would just make my own motions. If they made their rain this way, I could make my rain this way. You know, any way. (HOW DID YOU GET INTO THE STEPS?) The steps - you have the basic steps. You can see the basic steps. (SO YOUR LEARNING WAS MOSTLY BY WATCHING AND CREATING YOUR OWN?) Yea. (At that time, did you want your own style to come out?) It just came out itself, my own style. (IS THAT BECAUSE YOU KNEW THE LANGUAGE THAT IT WAS EASY FOR YOU?) It was because that's the way I felt I wanted it to be. (THAT'S HOW YOU FELT HULA SHOULD COME OUT?) Yea, from inside, as long as you do the basic steps. And if not, you know, you do something that's describing, you know, if somebody is chasing you, you 'gonna have to run. I'm going to make the motions, speaking in the language, but making all the motions, and then getting back again wherever it calls for for the basic steps. (YOU JUST GO

FROM THE BASIC STEPS?) Yea, go from the basic steps. (AS YOU GO FROM THE BASIC STEPS, DO YOU GO WITH THE LANGUAGE OR THE MUSIC FIRST?) I think of what the words mean, and then I do the steps. All those three things come together - the music, the words, and the steps. (DID YOUR MOTHER HELP YOU ALONG THE WAY? SHE DID ONLY THE TRANSLATIONS?) Only the translations because my mother was not a hula dancer. She was a farmer, but she could speak the language. (SO YOU WERE PRETTY CLOSE TO YOUR MOTHER THEN?) Yea. I lived with my mother 'til she passed away.

(WHEN YOU TEACH, DO YOU THINK YOU GAVE YOUR OWN STYLE?) I think I have my own style, but I think I didn't deviate from the hula. You know what I mean? (OF COURSE.) I think I have my own style and, you know, if you get your own style and you don't follow what others do, then it becomes exciting for me to do, to show. If I going do everything that everyone else does, the same way, if you see them one time then you see it all the time. (YOU SEE YOURSELF BECAUSE THAT'S WHAT YOU WANT.) Yea. And that's the way I started. You know, be yourself. Don't be two lolani Luahines, because lolani Luahine is lolani Luahine. God didn't make everybody the same. He gave each person a different talent. You know, he make you you; he made me me. And I don't expect anybody else to be. . . "There's no two Elvis'," as I always tell people. (SO YOU WANT TO BE

YOURSELF AND YOU WANT PEOPLE TO KNOW YOU AS YOU ARE?) Yes. And that's what my thoughts are, you know, how I'm translating and dancing the dance.

(IS THERE ANYONE THAT YOU ADMIRE WHO HELPED YOU ALONG THE WAY?) Oh, yea! I used to like to watch the hula dancers and I used to, in my mind, pick out which girl was the one that I admired in her style of dancing. (DO THE DANCER WAS MORE PROMINENT FOR YOU THAN THE TEACHER?) Yes, because the teacher was the teacher and the dancers were the dancers. Not all the dancers danced the same. Some expressed their feelings different. I would watch even the movement of some. I'll say, "Oh, I like how that girl. . ." (. . .CAME OUT WITH THAT MOVEMENT.) Yea. But, you know, the things that I saw with my own eyes of different hula dancers. (SO YOU'RE A LOT INTO EXPRESSION.) I liked the way she did it better than the rest. (SO YOU'RE INTO EXPRESSION MORE THAN MECHANICAL WAY OF DANCING?) Yea.

(CAN YOU DESCRIBE YOUR DANCING STYLE?) I just teach the girls the way I feel like I want it to be. Because most of the things I teach them I compose. Because that's the way I created the song because I knew that's the way I wanted them to dance. That's why I made the song. (WHEN YOU COME UP WITH THE MOTION, DO YOU LOOK AT DANCERS FOR THE STYLE OR DO

YOU STILL COME UP WITH YOUR OWN?) There are some thoughts in my mind what I like do for certain words, and then when the girls and the boys are dancing then I just tell them, "Try doing this," or "Try imitate one pig," or "Try imitate something like that," whatever they going imitate. Then I look around. So they just try among their own, then I say, "Oh, that's the one. That's the one I like." (SO IT'S FUN!) Yea. So everybody in the halau contribute. I don't take the credit alone. (DO THEY ALL HELP YOU ON THE EXPRESSIONS.) And I pick the one that I think. . . (. . . THAT WAS MOST APPROPRIATE FOR WHAT YOU'RE THINKING.) . . . appropriate from the way I had thought I wanted it to be. (PROBABLY THE CHILDREN ENJOY THAT TOO.) Oh, yea, because I give them credit too. I let them know that it was not only me that helped us through. They all helped - all us together - help us get through.

(DID YOU HAVE ANY DIFFICULTIES IN YOUR HULA CAREER?) Like what? (ANYTHING.) I never had any difficulties because I use the basic steps of the hula but I express the dance the way I composed it and the way I wanted it to be and not anyone else would tell me. (IT'S THE WAY YOU WANT AND YOU GO FROM THERE. IT'S UP TO THE PEOPLE IF THEY LIKE IT.) Because, you know, they like it, they like it. They don't like it, they can look at another halau, and if that's what they like, fine! Because

they're not pulling me through. They're not making me happy. I'm happy with what I'm doing. (YOU'RE DOING WHAT YOU WANT.) Yes. I'm doing what I want and not what you telling me because I didn't take from you.

(WHAT GIVES YOU THE MOST JOY IN TEACHING?) Just knowing that what I had composed has been completed with the dance and the music and everything had all come together. (SO YOU PUT IT TO THE MUSIC? EVERYTHING IS YOUR OWN?) Everything is my own. (DO YOU UNIKI STUDENTS? DO YOU GIVE THEM CERTIFICATES?) If they ask. (IF NOT?) If they ask if they can have, I can give. (DO YOU HAVE STUDENTS WHO HAVE BEEN WITH YOU SINCE YOU OPENED?) Yes, and she's still with me. She's an excellent Tahitian dancer. I teach Polynesian. (YOU TEACH TAHITIAN ALSO?) Mmhm.

(DO YOU HAVE ANY STUDENTS WHO CAME OUT OF YOUR STUDIO AND BECAME A TEACHER?) There's several here and there. (DO YOU GIVE THEM ADVICE?) If they ask. (WHAT KIND OF ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO NEW HALAUS?) You mean anybody? (ANYBODY.) That's not my business to tell them anything. If they feel that that's what they want to do, that's their business. Why should I go and tell them, "It's supposed to be this way, it's supposed to be that way." I don't want anybody telling me that's not what to do because that's the way I wanted it to be, not going away from the

basic steps but sometimes you have to. . . , like when I did that slide in dance, the ti leaf slide, you don't expect me to hela and go up to the mountain. One judge told me, "Where's the hula steps?" How the hell you gonna climb up to the mountain and dance hula. Then you cannot express the dance. It doesn't make any sense, because then you're just telling them what they did in the dance but you're not actually being the climber. You're not expressing the dance with what the story is telling. And then coming back, of course there are times when you can use the steps. But you telling me if I'm gonna express about that slide, that ti leaf slide dance, I know for my own self I'm not gonna dance hula up on that hill and dance hula down that hill. My words tell me, "I struggled to climb up. I pulled and I plucked the ti leaves and I threw it down because I can carry it on, an on my way down I found an easier way to come down and it was to slide down You don't expect me to sit on that thing and do some kind of hula motions on the way down. (IN THE HISTORY THEY SAY THAT THEY SLIDE WITH THE TI LEAVES, SO IT'S PART OF THE HISTORY.) Yes! So that's what I mean! When one judge tells me, "I didn't see the hula step," how you expect me to express the ti leaf dance? Show me how! I cannot fake it. It's just as simple as that. The story is told. (WHATEVER YOU EXPRESS, THAT'S WHAT YOU CALL A HULA OF YOUR OWN?) Yes, whatever you express

and you do the basic steps when you can. Now I can't do the basic steps when I'm climbing the hill, but when I reach on the top I can. But when I'm coming down again, I cannot. I have to do what, how to get down, otherwise the dance is not complete and it's not real.

(WHAT IS YOUR DEFINITION OF HULA KAHIKO?) Same! I mean, I would do my own way using the same basic steps. (SO KAHIKO TO YOU IS NOT AN ANCIENT DANCE; IT'S JUST HOW YOU FEEL TO PORTRAY WITH THE BASIC.) Well, sure, but then you use the ipu or the pahu, you know what I mean, for the kahiko. So that's the way, but I would still use the basic steps as I would do the basic in the kahiko and in the auana. (AND IN THE AUANA YOU USE THE INSTRUMENTS.) Yes. (THERE'S NO OTHER TRUE MEANING?) To me. (KAHIKO IS ANCIENT BUT WITH BASIC STEPS?) And using the basic implements - you know, the drum or the ipu.

(HOW DO YOU COMPOSE? HOW DOES IT COME TO YOU?) Just the slightest thought of when they mention something or if I see something. If I hear something in Hawaiian, as I'm driving around or as time goes by, day after day and if I see something then I go, "Oh! That would be good for one dance." Maybe somebody just told me something. Like when my mom was alive, she mentioned this thing, "wahine po'u pou pau hana nu'u." And I go, "Oh!" So as time went along I want to make one dance with that. It

talks about the sharks, the girls, things like that there. Then, you know, you dress them that way. Then you make the song that tells about the advantages and the disadvantages of that shark's stout grill(?). Simple words, knowing the story, being playing about it, and just. . . (. . .GO FROM THERE.) Yea. (DO YOU SIT ALONE TO DO IT?) Sometimes if someone is with me and if they interested in the same thing. . .we like music, we like singing, we like dancing, then I always carry a pen and I put um down. Things like that, I put um down - the words. Just like last night I was up here thinking about that song and these words come to my mind, and then I will put it, and I have it written down on the envelope over there what I shall add to that song. But I didn't compose the song yet. But the title alone already tells me what kind contents is going to be included. (SO THE TITLE COMES FIRST FOR YOU?) Yes. The title comes. And then you make, from the title, then you work down, then you work down, you work, you work it down. (SO WHEN YOU HEAR SOMETHING OR YOU SEE SOMETHING THAT BECOMES THE TITLE?) Yea. Then I start doing it. Like if I enter the Merrie Monarch next year I had already knowing what I wanted to name the girls' dance. (IS THAT BECAUSE YOU SAW SOME GIRLS?) It just came to my mind and I know what girls I will use. These are very young girls. They so dainty when they dance, so I named this song "Dainty Hula Me Ka

No'eau" - "a dainty dance danced skillfully."

(DO YOU THINK THAT HAWAIIAN LANGUAGE IS VERY IMPORTANT IN THE HULA?) Oh, for me at least. (SO THE LANGUAGE IS ONE OF THE BASICS FOR YOU?) Yes, because from the language then you can do the rest. (DO YOU PUT THE LANGUAGE INTO THE MUSIC FIRST?) No. I just write the story. Then I know how exciting the title tells me it should be and the beat that I should take. And then I just go by the words. Sometimes I have to eliminate some words. Like maybe I say, "Far across the deep, blue waters." Then I have all that down, "Far across the deep, blue waters," but then the way I had tried to sing the melodie was not as long as that whole thing, so I can cut off, like, colors. You cannot describe colors, so I cut off the "blue - "Far across the sea." (WHEN YOU COME UP WITH SOMETHING, IS IT ALWAYS IN HAWAIIAN FIRST?) Almost always in Hawaiian and I used to go home and ask her [his mother] what this means. Sometimes I don't even know if there is a meaning. But then I would look in the book first and sometimes the book doesn't have them and I ask my mother - there is something. Sometimes even what she say does not go in the book. The way they say is different from what the book puts. Because my mom. . . (SHE LIVED THE HAWAIIAN WAY.) Yes. That was her mother language. And they asked her to go to Hilo college. She was there until she passed away.

And they tell me they have so many tapes of her. They tell me that she was an asset to them. They learned a lot. Kelena was one of them who told me this, and the professor over here, Pila Wilson, told me the same thing.

(WHO DO YOU CONSIDER HULA MASTERS?) You know, I just respect everybody else. (THE SAME WAY?) Yes, and I don't want to say anything that's not nice about them. Because if I could tell you something nice about someone else, and then you can go over there and add one word and it changes the whole thing. So just say nice things or don't say nothing at all. (FIRST TIME I HEAR A POLYNESIAN SO HUMBLE!) I was brought up differently. Humility is one of the things that. . ., you know, I'm a Christian too. Because what comes out of your mouth hurts more than I can go over there and slap your face. The pain will go away, but things that going come out of my mouth I cannot shove it back in, especially if hurt you. And even if you go and you tell them you sorry. . . (IT STAYS THERE LONG TIME.) Yes. It's up for that person to forgive you. But if you're sorry you better make sure you don't do that again, and mean that you're sorry. And the person who going forgive you, even if they don't, but as long as you know you clean because we all make mistakes and we know that our tongue is the worst. Because you can't shove it back in your

mouth after it came out. If they were deaf then you didn't have to have anything to worry about.

(HOW DO YOU FEEL BEING A JUDGE OVER PEOPLE YOU HAVE COMPETED WITH?) I sit there as one judge and I make myself feel that I used to be there too. So I have to, in my own mind, you give credit where credit is due and whether you like the person or not, and if you don't like the person and you're there and then you gonna give him or her a lower score because you don't like them, then you get no business sitting there because. . .in fact that's a sin to me to sit there and steal something away from what the person had and just putting it on the side when you think that they deserve what they get [the higher score]. They deserve what they get, I give them what they get. (SO YOU TRY NOT TO SEE THE PERSON BUT JUST SEE THE DANCE.) Yes. You can see the person too, but then it's good to see them this way, then when you see them your feelings is. . .you do not hate them. I mean, even before you sit down on that chair it should be there. You may think of some people who don't like you, but that doesn't matter that you have to go and sit there and have your chance to seek revenge. That's a sin because you know you're taking away what the person deserves and throwing it away so that someone else gets it.

(DO YOU THINK WORKSHOPS ARE GOOD?) I think so; you know, some

students, if they learning. But my own self. . .I know the basics already. I really didn't care to go to learn because I'm interested in things that I want to do, not what had been handed down, handed down. An the things that I want to do excites me and I feel comfortable with and I feel. . . (. . .OPEN WITH IT.) . . .open and I feel satisfied. It gives me great satisfaction.

(DO YOU HAVE STUDENTS WHO DISAGREE WITH YOU?) Yes. The girl that has been with me the longest. Once I was going to do, after my mom passed away, for the auana I was going to do one song that has been un-recorded because I liked the mele. But, you know, the melody is the same each verse. I started to teach them and then the girl came back to me and she told me, "Uncle Johnny. You don't think you can compose one song. That song is nice, but why don't you go make something about grandma?", you know, my mom. And I said. . .I didn't say. In my heart I said, "Oh. I don't want it to be a sad song." So as the day went along, I told her, "Well, I see." So I kind of didn't teach them again, the dance. And as the day went along I kept thinking, "Now what can I do about my mother. If she's gone I don't want to make a sad song." Then the thought came to my mind, a lot of things my mother showed me as far as medicine and Hawaiian things they did, how to prepare. And the delightful things that my mother

liked is what I added to that song. You know, just the delightful things. Nothing sad about it. Everything was delightful. And I won that year, the overall, and sung about my mother. (I SEE, THEN, YOU RESPECT WHOEVER COMES TO YOU AND TALKS TO YOU.) Because you have to think of their feelings. I just cannot think, "I'm the boss. You do what I teach you." Then they won't have feelings to do it. They'll dance it but not with the feeling. . . (. . .BECAUSE THEY DIDN'T ENJOY THE FIRST TIME.) They didn't enjoy it. That song is recorded and other people do it so. . .they'd rather do original and nice things. (ONCE THEY'RE WITH YOU THEY'RE SO USED TO YOUR STYLE AND YO8UR ORIGINALITY. . .) And I respect them for that. (IT'S HARD TO GO BACK TO A SET, MECHANICAL WAY OF DANCING.) If she didn't come up and suggest it, I wouldn't have composed that song. I wouldn't have done it, and everybody else were more interested in that song than the song that I originally taught. So you see how the rest of them help me even by just suggesting? You know, I'm always open to suggestions.

(OF YOUR STUDENTS THAT GO OFF TO BE TEACHERS, DO THEY COME BACK TO LEARN MORE?) Some leave not because they want to bet because school, life has changed, they gotta go their own. Some start to raise families already and that's the end. But every so often when they come back they call; they ask me for my own advice and I give it to them the

way I feel. I had this hula studio for almost 22 years, and I still charge 10 dollars a month for everybody. (HOW MANY STUDENTS DO YOU HAVE?) Several hundred.

(IS HULA WHAT YOU DO FOR A LIVING?) No. I work at the hospital. (YOU STILL HAVE TIME TO WORK?) Yea, but I'm on leave because I got hurt from work. This [hula] is like a hobby. (WHEN DO YOU TEACH THE CHILDREN? AT NIGHT?) No, after school. 3:30. (EVERYDAY?) No. Only on Mondays is the advanced group, Wednesdays is the beginners' group, and on Saturdays the advanced group comes again and the beginners group comes. I just kept the beginners there and when they tend to get better then I send them to the advanced. (HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO PREPARE YOUR STUDENTS FOR A COMPETITION?) It's not up to me; it's up to them - how fast they can do. If they can catch on with the rest of the girls and do everything in unison, and moreso you can see them if they get the potential to dance in the Merrie Monarch, then you can just have them practice 'til the deadline comes where this is it; I mean, if it comes in February and then we gotta make the close already. And then if you cannot catch up by February, or February, March April, then I just have to tell you. (WHEN DO YOU START REHEARSING?) Depends on how soon I get the things that I really, in my heart, set already what I want to do. I don't want to

teach them something and then, all of a sudden, you drop um and do something else. I just want to work and if this settles in me I go, "This should be interesting." So that's the one that I pick. (SO FOR NEXT YEAR YOU ALREADY PICTURE WHAT YOU WANT?) Yea, and I know what and what I can do for my Miss Hula. I know what I can do for the girls. I know what I can do for the boys. Some for the ancient. Like for my Mill Hula, I already get in mind what I want her to do for the ancient and the modern. And for the men, I think I already know what I have for them to do for the kahiko only but not for the auana. (WHEN YOU ALREADY KNOW WHAT YOU'RE GOING TO DO, DO YOU EVEN SEE WHO WILL DO IT?) Yes. I know which girl I'm going to pick because then I can already see the way she's dancing. If it's that girl dancing, I know already how she going move. I know what I can tell her how to move and I know how her expression going be because I'm putting everything together for her, to match her. (SO YOU COMBING EVERYTHING WITH THAT PERSON?) Mmhm - the person, the song; it will match. You put the correct things in the correct place. (DO YOU SIT WITH THE PERSON AND TALK ABOUT IT FIRST OR DO YOU JUST TELL THEM WHAT YOU'RE GOING TO DO?) I let um know what the story going be about, and then, as we go along, I have some other girls come stay with me and then watch who give advice. You watch um and then if they making this motion

and they know what the meaning is and the other girl might move on her own, one different one, I go, "Oh yea! That's good. That looks nice. We'll do um that way." So even my thoughts, the way I thought I wanted it to be, when I saw someone else doing and it was not as close to my thoughts as I wanted, but if that one hits the spot, I'd rather do that. (SO YOU'RE ALWAYS OPEN TO ANY SUGGESTION OR FEELING THAT COMES OUT OF THAT SONG?) Yea. (YOU DON'T MAKE A CHOREOGRAPHY AND THAT'S IT.) Well, I can choreograph something, but then even if I say, "Oh, good then! That more better than this.{" So I can just cross um out. So I start from that. (YOUR BASIC IS MOSTLY EXPRESSION OF THE LANGUAGE?) Expression of the language and the motions too, but if they come up and they added something little bit to the motions, I say, "Oh, good that one! We can use that." (I REMEMBER WHEN YOU DANCE THE BROOM DANCE. . .IT'S JUST AN EVERYDAY THING IN A DANCE.) It's simple. And, you know, when they say something, "Oh, it's just a crowd pleaser." Eh! If you could captivate the crowd, you're right there because you know why? It is they who pay to go in. Those seven judges are only seven people. Even if they didn't judge for you and you didn't win first place but the crowd thought you were supposed to win. . . You're lucky. (YOU'RE THERE BECAUSE OF THEM.) You bet, because of them because they're the ones who paid, not the judges.

They didn't pay to go in. They just sat there to look and judge you. And you know, and if they cannot take a hint from the crowd, because there are reliable people in the crowd and qualified people in the crowd who can sit on that chair and judge also. So who you think you? (SO YOU THINK THAT THE CROWN CAN BE JUST AS GOOD A JUDGE?) Of course! (BECAUSE YOU ARE UP THERE FOR A SHOW?) Yes. You there for a show. Then otherwise you didn't have to have crowd; just dance for the judges. (JUST HAVE SOMEBODY COME OVER AND JUDGE YOU WHEN YOU'RE DANCING?) Yea, judge you when you're dancing and that's it! And the crowd can come if they want; they can come if they don't want. But, you know, they going know who's gonna be exciting, and when you excite them that's something because not everybody can excite people. People can make fun of you but that's different from being excited. When they make fun of you, you won't get a big applaud; you only get whispers. (WHEN YOU FEEL THAT THE CROWD IS EXCITED, DOES IT MAKE YOU FEEL GOOD?) It makes you adrenalike flow more. You become more at ease knowing that you came across to them just the way you wanted it to be. . . . And the people there who came to see appreciate it. Then the Merrie Monarch, you know, they better think. If you pick the same old judges they judge the same old way and they like the same old songs. I watched one judge; she was so happy

when she saw one other halau did the same thing and won because she knows that chant. She was delighted because it spoke, you know, the sexual things like that there. She laughed knowing she knows it. I didn't even think it was exciting because I've seen it from when I was small. And what makes 1990 different? I didn't learn that song but hearing it so much I already know the words; just automatic. Nothing different. For years it was like that, but to me now it's, "Oh, when will it ever stop? When will we get something new?" I mean, you know, the stories that I make were of old, but no one, at that time, put it into a dance. The language is old, the story is old, but because I'm new then they're jealous. They heard the story, they know of the story, but they didn't want me to do it first. Otherwise, why would they have anything to say? (. . .YOU'RE INTERPRETING THE OLD STORY?) Yea. You're interpreting in an old story which has not been put into a dance in the ancient times. But just because now we decide to put it into a dance - in the old language, the old story - a young person, they get jealous. They get, "That's not kahiko!" I think it is kahiko because. . .you know, during that time, okay, the same old chants they do in public, "Kaulilua i ke anu o Wai'ale'ale." I'm sure you heard that! (YES.) That was made before. Somebody made it at the old times like that. That person died already. Maybe if the person was still alive and I was

over there at that ancient time I'd tell her, "Aunty. You can go make one song about the ghost over here?" She go, "Yea, yea, I know the style. I go make." And then she composed this "Kaulilua", then she composed this other chant too, then that would be ancient. Okay. What happen about the next 100 years down? You know what I mean? (YES.) I won't be kahiko because we did that. They can't say it. You know, just because they taught hula before you, and when they say, "That's not kahiko." The story is, the language is, but the person who did it is not. (KAHIKO MEANS "ANCIENT".) Ancient! It is an ancient story. Hawaiians knew it in Hawaiian. They spoke it in Hawaiian. But now in English, we put it into Hawaiian because it was composed of somebody else today, "that's not kahiko." But I continue to say it's kahiko.

(YOU THINK THAT THE LANGUAGE IS VERY IMPORTANT?) Of course.
(SO HULA IS A KIND OF UNDERSTANDING OF THE LANGUAGE?) Yea. The language [first], then come the music and the dance. (DO YOU TELL YOUR STUDENTS THAT THEY SHOULD LEARN SOME LANGUAGE OR DO YOU TEACH THEM SOME?) Well, I just tell um what the story is about and if they curious they ask me what this means, what that means. But I don't teach the language. The get language schools that you can go to 'cause I'm not qualified for that. (IF THEY'RE INTERESTED THEMSELVES THEY WILL

SEARCH THEMSELVES.) Yea, or you can find out for them. (YOU HAVE STUDENTS THAT COME TO YOU AND ASK QUESTIONS?) Yea. A lot of them, they take Hawaiian language in school.