

Alice Namatoku

I was not really interested in the hula. But a child does what his parents say. So I got started right in the home. My parents were not entertainers. I was singing when I was 3 years old because one family ~~had~~ prayer services in the morning & evening. We would sing at these family prayer meetings and that's where I learned to sing.

My first exposure was in the church. ~~When I was 5~~ I was the kind of child who could grasp things quickly, so I absorbed all the things that was taught at home & in the church. My parents sang for themselves & family gatherings. Hula was only for men until after the missionaries came. Most of the things we see today started with Kalaikana.

There were no such things as studios. Only Keahi Leatone, I met her through church socials down at Kalaikana where her church was. I was born in Honolulu.

I came to Oahu when I was 9 in 1901. My uncles taught me how to dance. In 1908 my uncle advised me not to dance, if I were to dance, leave the old behind, stick to current. If you do, you might forget or muddle the words or the gestures and if you are doing hula kapa you will get in trouble. My nickname was "kiki'i" because ~~the boys~~ were ~~so~~ ~~my~~ ~~complaint~~ because of my niece. One time was ~~at the edge~~

of a forest in the trees and  
birds were my companions.

I started to teach for the Parks & Rec

I only taught the dances performed w/ in not park. 1935. I taught

for 24 years. I am now 89. I still teach friends and relatives

off and on ~~after that~~ I am basically a freestyle, auwana style learner.

My uncles traveled around the is land ~~entertaining~~ people. I always ask

my students when they begin do they want to become an instructor,

an entertainer or do they just want to do it for fun (learn a few

numbers for parties?). I teach them the mele & the translation & then

I train them on the paimala handkerchiefs. If you can dance or

that you are a dancer. You must be able to perform everything in

that space.

Some of them when they do the kavolo (vamp) they jump, because they have seen other things. If you want to learn from

me you forget what you <sup>already</sup> have in your mind and eyes. If you cannot,

then I cannot. The uwehe should always

Turning your back to the audience is impolite.

go up for women not outwards.

In 1929 I lost my husband. I started to work at a stand down at the market. <sup>on Maunakea.</sup> Someone gave a job because I had to take care of my family. Pinnies (Sammualena) stopped by my store & tried my paku. We were joined by the congress of (Margy Harris) (Polins) "Hotel", I + happened next this was the day we were leaving Hawaii for lunch. So we gave the remaining bottle of paku. The driver returned immediately & told Alice everything there is Paku, it is all sold to her. And I made for her until she passed away.

The paku of today is all different from the Hawaiian paku. There is not much remaining that people my age can enjoy. They are making their own steps up. Anybody can create.

In 1906 I became involved w/ Liliuokalani (sings for her.)

The elderly people that are still around cannot understand this new paku, we feel so lost, we don't know how to understand this new paku. I don't consider what is being done today hula. I + is only exciting. Only commercial, To keep modern audiences happy. I don't see the hula being Hawaiian in the years to come. Re (Kama Pauhanga) today don't know the Hawaiian

language. I don't want to send my hula instructor because they have a right to create, but there is no one around today to keep them in line. They are on their own. They make the call the way they want, you make the call the way you want.

As we lost Hawaii, we lost a great amount of our songs and dances and chants and we are continuing to lose it. Today we are losing everything Hawaiian about ourselves; our language, our dress, etc.

In 1908 when I got married, music, dance, everything ended because my husband didn't allow. I could also not see my parents, I could not go to church.

The advice I would give to the young ~~people~~ <sup>from dancers</sup> of today is listen to the elders. If a kupuna comes up to you and corrects you on a word pronunciation, etc., don't assume they are putting you down. There are many kupuna that try to help, want to help but we are mistreated when we try to share the knowledge we have.