

Alexa Vaught

(When I was in the third grade, Auntie Emma was one of the third grade teachers. I was raised by my grandparents so one day I went home and I told my grandfather I wanted to take hula. I came from a big family and we weren't really that rich. My parents lived in Honolulu . But we had a lot of love. My grandfather told me there wasn't any money and I told him don't worry, if I have to work I'll work for it. Things will work out.

I later discovered that Auntie Emma's husband was a grandnephew of my grandmother. And so I went to class and Auntie Emma told me that because I was family she would not charge me. Instead I would pay her a dollar a year and I would help her load her car for class, dust the room, and in this way I would pay for my lesson.)

At that time we could stay for as many classes as we wanted to. So I would stay for as long as I could keep up. I left Auntie Emma when I got married at age 21. She was very strict but yet she had a lot of patience. If she found someone that could dance and they couldn't afford to pay for the lessons, she would give them the opportunity to dance. This is what I really admired about Auntie Emma. She was a positive person. She was constantly trying to bring out the good points in a person and encourage that positive side.

When I got to high school I was assisting her in training the men and boys ~~in her classes~~ and tutus and whoever needed help in her classes. Because she had given me everything, this was my way of trying to repay her. She has been the greatest influence not only in my training but in my whole life. What makes Auntie Emma so special is that she ~~wasn't~~ is so caring.

Alexa Vaught

When Aunty Emma finds talent she tries to help it and nurture it. I would help her teach before i was in high school and when i was a sophomore she would have classes in wailuku and i would come over and help her. I would have one room and take one class and she would take another class, and we would ~~take~~ work together. When I got married and left there was a bit of hard feeling only because i didn't realize that she had planned my future and had wanted me to stay with her forever. I had married a haole and he said I should think about myself, too besides her. I definitely feel like that was the lowest point in my career.

MY whole focus at that time was hula, school was second. I think a dancer has to sacrifice a lot of her private life to be good. I did and i still do.

my biggest concern is to teach the children.

I teach and have learned a little Maori and Tahitian because the children want it but I don't care for it. But I stress that they learn hula first because hula has the basics they will need in the other polynewsian dances. I have seen how these other dances can destroy your way of dancing.

A student gains poise you come out of your shell. For some reason it helps them in their schoolwork and they contribute in discussions and their relationship with their family.

I had bothe kahiko and auwana training. Aunty Emma taught kahiko but she stayed with the common things. She didn't go deep. Not until the kids are past high school do they appreciate kahiko.

I think the biggest change has been the return th of the kahiko. to me kahiko means doing a lot fo chants and chanting. and understanding what you're doing.

I think Aunty Emma taught mainly auwana because nobody wanted to learn kahiko. Whenever she started a n acient class her students would cut the class.

It was just basically putting on a show and handing out certificates. There were no rituals or ceremonies.



ALEXA VAUGHT

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When I was in the third grade, Aunty Emma was one of the third grade teachers. I was raised by my grandparents so one day I went home and I told my grandfather I wanted to take hula. I came from a big family and we weren't really that rich. My grandfather told me there wasn't any money. I told him don't worry, if I have to work I'll work for it. I later discovered that Aunty Emma's husband was a relative of my grandmother. Aunty Emma told me that because I was family, she would not charge me. Instead I would pay her a dollar a year and I would help her load her car for class and dust the room. In this way, I would pay for my lessons.

When I got to high school, I assisted her in training men, boys, tutus, and whoever needed help in her classes. This was my way of trying to repay her. She would have classes in Wailuku so I would take one room and hold class and she would take another. I think Aunty Emma taught mainly auwana because nobody in the forties and fifties wanted to learn kahiko. If she planned any kahiko classes, students would just cut the class.

Alexa Vaught

Alexa Vaught's first and last kumu is Emma Sharpe whom she studied under from the age of 8 till when she got married at 21. ~~Born in Kalihi, Oahu she began to teach on Maui in 1961 and established the Puaala Hula Studios which is currently located in Kihei.~~

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