

Lilinoe Lindsey

Niece of kumu hula Joan Lindsey, Lilinoe Lindsey has been teaching hula for the past twenty years. She conducts classes at the Manana Elementary School in Pearl City, O'ahu.

The name of my halau is Ka Pa Nani 'O Lilinoe. The name was given to me by Aunty Joan Lindsey, who is my aunt and kumu hula. Poetically, it means the beautiful sounds of the rain. Lilinoe is the fine misty rain and pa stands for the sound.

Aunty Joan has been my kumu hula from the age of five years old. I have been with her all these years and we continue to have a close relationship. We actually teach at the same school with our classes running simultaneously. She is my mentor and we are an 'ohana-type of halau.

Aunty Joan taught me to dance hula at my grandfather's home where we both lived. Her classes were made up of aunties, cousins, neighbors and friends. I went with her when she started to teach at Ka Makua Mau Loa Church in Kalihi and at St. Elizabeth Church in Pearl City. She taught there until I was about twelve years old. Then I helped her teach when she opened a halau in 'Aiea and in Moanalua Shopping Center. So as I grew up, I was always with Aunty Joan. Since she didn't have children until a few years later, I was pretty much considered her daughter.

It was an unspoken law in our family that all the girls went to dance for Aunty. Our families realized the opportunity there was for us by learning hula and hopefully, teaching. So at parties and functions, all of the cousins knew how to dance.

As a teenager growing up in the 1960's, every weekend was spent dancing. We would dance on Friday nights and on Saturdays after hula classes, do three shows in the evenings. We went from one church to the next, from one side of the island to the other side. We danced in Waikiki at the Halekulani, Princess Ka'iulani and Moana Hotels. We did "Hawaii Calls" and performed at the International Market Place. This went on for about seven years. We did not

have as many opportunities to go to football games or parties as other children. You never realize how much you have learned and gained from being a hula dancer until after growing up.

I was about twenty-one when we had an 'uniki at the Neal Blaisdell Center. We all had to do our kahiko and our 'auana as part of the 'uniki ritual. Each class had to make their skirts differently. All who 'uniki, took hula for at least ten years but I had the most years with Aunty Joan.

I have Aunty's style of hula which is a basic style with flat-foot and very simple. We are very smooth and graceful and we tend to spend a lot of time developing the dancer's gracefulness and smooth transition from one motion to the next. It is similar to tai chi where your movement is a flowing style that never stops and one motion leads into the next without very much distinction. The ka holo vamp step requires that the heel of the foot be turned forward on the fourth beat. Thus forming a ninety degree angle with the toe of one foot almost meets the heel of the other foot. The 'uwehe step is done with a quick forward thrust of the knees and not to the sides. These are a few slight differences in style and execution.

For many years, Uncle George Naope has been helping us by doing workshops for our halau, especially during the time we were getting a class ready for 'uniki. He would come and share some of his chants with us. Sometimes, Aunty, my cousin and I would fly to Kona and have workshops with him.

I enjoy kahiko more than I do 'auana. I always enjoy the rhythm, the tempo and the sound of the 'ipu and the pahu. It brings me into the center of hula. I am learning the culture while dancing kahiko. For some reason, just the movement itself gives me the feeling about what our culture is all about.

I think it's important to relate to each child individually rather than just treating them as a mass group. I want each child to know that they are very important to me and their

development is important to me. I try to do my very best to help them and I always pray that I will be able to recognize their needs.

Aunty has been a great influence in my life. As I grew up, she advised me on what was best for me. I took her suggestions under deep consideration and made my decisions based on what she felt would help me throughout my life. We still go everywhere together. We do shows together and we pretty much help each other out. She impacted me to the point that I knew that hula would always be a big part of my life. And it has.

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