

Nana I Na Loea Hula

Kumu Hula: Leialoha Amina

Interviewer: Lovina Le Pendu

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My full given name is Donna Mae Amina, my maiden name is Lim. For the book I would rather for the hula purposes just go by Leialoha Amina, there is a reason for it. (DO YOU TEACH PRESENTLY?) Yes. I travel to the Big Island and I teach with my sister Nani. I am more as a consultant at this point. (STUDENTS?) We only teach women. They are ages between 15-39. (WHERE DO YOU TEACH?) We have been using the halls that are available at Kona, Kamuela. We also instructed at my sister's home. (HOW DID YOU START TEACHING?) Basically, the halau in 1990, Nani came to me and had asked me about my sister Lorna that she wasn't to make the age for Mis Hula and that was always her dream, but there was an alternative competition called the Kula Pakahi that was held in Maui and that was the first annual. somebody got of hold of her and she felt that we should have my sister, give her a chance since she wasn't able to make it for Merrie Monarch, so I told her okay. So what she did was she had my baby sister come down to me and we spent almost 12 hours one day and I trained my sister on her kahiko, and haku her auana, fix up make sure she understood the translations. So it started from there and it had already been foretold by Pilahi Paki who was my kako'o back in 1979. (SHE WAS YOUR HULA TRAINER?) No, she wasn't my hula trainer. I had gone to her because I needed to understand translation and translation comes from understanding the culture and so she understood and was willing to have me become one of her students. (YOU AND YOUR SISTER TEACH TOGETHER?) No, more so my sister is heading. See in 1990, she came to me and said she wanted to go the Merrie Monarch. She wanted the philosophy of the halau. She wanted to see we started the halau back in 1979-1980, okay. Na lei o ka holoku became my halau. The name was granted, endowed by Pilahi Paki. We started from there. The foundation for hula and

anything cultural started from that point. Now my sister was coming to me, back then we had a dream to be like sister halau on both islands. Maybe it was a far fetched idea, but anything is possible I told her you know we can have the halau opening on both islands, and maybe we can go to competitions together, or do something together. By doing that, you know that's a challenge, nobody's done that. I am sure it is something that's feasible, but we tried. She opened up the halau on the Big Island, the time I had one on Oahu. I was more active into it than she was and that's when I went to the Merrie Monarch to compete it for that.

(DO YOU TEACH KAHIKO AND AUANA?) Yes, I do teach kahiko and auana. (DO YOU TEACH OLI AS WELL?) No, that's my sisters expertise. (WHEN WAS YOUR FIRST TIME IN HULA?) Well, with my mom, 5-6 years old around there. My mother was a kumu hula. Basically we started learning just the steps and some of the hand motions and she was trying to teach us the auana hula, but she had no patience for that. So used to have spanking, we used to be very unhappy and she was getting frustrated so that's the reason why.. (YOU WERE LEARNING WITH YOUR OLDER SISTER?) I think it was basically Nani and I. Lorna was little younger then and I don't remember about Charmaine. We learned about 1 year or 2. (AFTER HER?) She gave up. She said you go to your aunty to learn hula. (WHO IS THIS PERSON?) Her name is Margaret Maku. At that time her last name was Tablit. Filipino. She is my father's first cousin in Kohala. She had a studio and she would also use the gym which was a huge area for a lot of students. There was a bunch of them maybe 30-40 students. (YOU LEARNED KAHIKO AND AUANA?) More auana because she had the jobs done at Maunakea Beach Hotel. We learned all kids, we learned Polynesian too from her, some kahiko, not a lot. She had us go out and learn from other instructors. She was very open minded about it. She knew she didn't have the kahiko side well endowed, so she kind of told us you go to Uncle George Naope's class, you go learn over there, you go to lolani's class and you learn from there. The first one that she had recommended

that we learn under was Aunty lolani Luahine and that is the lady that has had the most profound effect on hula as far as I'm concerned. Then of course Uncle George Naope, then later on when I was in college, I had the privilege of studying under Aunty Edith Kanaka'ole. (BACK TO YOUR AUNTY?) I was 7 or 8, her style is very sweet, old style, and that's what you will see a little bit in our hula today, especially our auana style, the sweetness. She had kolohe hula's too but you know just simple motions, just simple. But it was always in her expressions of how she portrayed a mele, a song. (DO YOU KNOW HER BACKGROUND?) I got a hold of her daughter because it's important that we got the ko'i for hula together for our halau and I had traces almost 6 generations back from her on kumu hula's in the Kohala area. (HOW LONG DID YOU STAY WITH HER?) I stayed with her until I left to go to the 6th grade at Kamehameha and I returned home 9th grade year. I think I have it on that sheet of paper I gave you. I resumed a couple more years with her before I went off to college. (DO YOU HAVE SPECIAL MEMORIES?) With my aunty was .. I always have pleasant memories with her as far as her dancing, now some of the profound things have been like with Uncle George Naope when we were in training with him you know how Uncle George is he can be very stern, real strict. I don't know if you know about going down on your knees and try to roll. I remember him jumping on my knees and that was so sore, everything cracked. I thought I was going to die. I remember that. (WITH UNCLE GEORGE KAHIKO ONLY?) Kahiko only. Now the most profound, although Aunty was teaching me a lot while I was learning from her. When we were sent to Aunty lolani Luahine, that was the turning point of my life, because for the first time we went to meet with her, she was talking to the class. I can almost see it as plain as day, she got up on the floor and she started to perform and dance and I was in total awe, because it almost looked like her feet weren't touching the ground and her motion, her expression it was simple hand motions, but the way she portrayed the mele, it was almost like you were captivated by her and so that has been part of what I've studied. On

how you captivate, how you touch people with what you do. (HOW LONG DID YOU STAY WITH IOLANI?) Almost 2 years. There was a break in between because she had gotten into an accident and she was out of commission until we got back with her again we performed for her at Hulihe'e Palace, I remember that. I remember her chanting on the wall those were really good memories that I have of Aunty lolani. She's just been my role model all along. (OTHER TEACHERS?) Aunty Edith, Darrel. (AUNTY EDITH?) I took it during college, it was a summer class I think, it ran for about 6 weeks. Kahiko only. (ANY DIFFERENCES?) There was a big difference with Aunty Edith, because now I understand it to be like the a'alapapa style which is you know they were very bombastic kind of dancers, very interpretive. I liked it though, I really liked it. Oh, comparing more so Aunty lolani, see I was so mesmerized by kahiko and then found out you were supposed to learn kahiko before auana because it became before, and I kind of turn off my mind to auana a bit. I wanted to pursue kahiko, that because my first love and so if I had to compare the style there is a definite difference between all three, which is Aunty lo, Uncle George, and Aunty Edith. (CAN YOU TELL ME THE CHANGES THAT YOU SAW?) With Aunty lo, she mesmerized you. She was interpretive with her eyes, her hands, her motions just her whole body she will get you involved with her dancing. With Uncle George, at that time we were learning what you call temple hula, so you know with the hula pahu, so they were more solemn and more seriousness in the way that you conducted yourself. And with Aunty Edith, the tempo was a little bit faster, you had to be more agile with your body. Those kinds of things. I did notice a difference between all 3. (DID YOU UNIKI FROM THESE PEOPLE?) No. (HOW DID YOU BECOME A TEACHER?) I always put myself in the status of a hula dancer, performer. When I married Skippy Kamakawiwaole back in '78, his sister was actively teaching. She had been from high school, not uniki but just about loved dancing hula. There was a competition coming up called the Kula Competition and I used to ask why don't you teach kahiko and she said well my

mom said I am kapu from doing that, so I said oh, okay. I used to take instructions from her, watch her where she taught, and when the competition came, she came up to me she said, I want to ask you if you'd be willing to help me to train Nanakuli High School to do kahiko and enter this competition. I told her, I don't know, I never been a teacher before. I can dance, now you are talking about a whole different prospective. So she told me I want you to think about it so Darrel Lupenui was very good friend with me, so I consulted him, so he said, yah, don't worry, I'll help you. We put everything together so that's how it started. (AND WITH DARREL, HOW LONG DID YOU GET INVOLVED WITH HIM?) I met him through my husband actually. Well, he was with my husband back then, Skippy. In '76. (YOU TOOK HULA WITH HIM?) At first when we gotten to know him he said I am sorry I don't teach women. I said okay. And later on, I don't know when, I was one of the few when he made the decision to finally train women. I was chosen. There was a couple more girls too and then after that he opened his class. (1976?) It would be after that, it would be maybe 1979. See I was very close to his mama too. Darrel and I got to be very, very good friends. I don't remember what happened. Yes, mama was still alive, they had made the decision about opening up a women's halau and I don't like to say this, but I'll say it on the tape, Mama came to me and said you know because you and Darrel are so close and she said I watch you dance, she kind of deeded me her pa'u that she had and she said I want you baby to consider, be alaka'i for Darrel. You know to be his hands and his feet because you have done well with the men. Now it is not public knowledge, I never wanted to be public knowledge that a lot of what Darrel has done at the Merrie Monarch with the first men's halau was haku with me. As hands and feet, because you know Darrel was kind of big, he couldn't get up, we also, Skippy got involved and what he did is help him to do his choreography and formation that was presented at the Merrie Monarch. So we did have a hand in it, but it is not really important. It helped us with things that we would do in the future. I am not sorry for that, but she did approach me

about becoming the alaka'i and right about that time my husband ended back up in the hospital and I had declined it and told her I am sorry I cannot give you one hundred percent help because she really wanted me to help Darrel because she said he's a man that's the reason why we stick to women, he's a man. A man can teach a man, because they can feel the same things, the emotions are the same for a women. He needs an immediary so a woman can help to portray. So that's what was discussed. He first started in Nanakuli. I know he opened his classes up in Nanakuli and I was able to attend the first couple of classes then this was being discussed about you know, opening up; a halau because, he was just doing for the Park's and Recreation, but now they were getting serious about opening up a women's halau which was different from what he was doing there. And that's when only certain girls from that class were considered for instruction. I remember dancing for him when he was with the Palani Vaugh Show at the Ala Moana Americana. I remember he high jacked me getting to think that one of my other sisters was going to perform and I ended up going from town to do something, ended up at Turtle Bay, and the next thing I know, I am going to Kauai. I mean Darrel had a way to do the things I got shang hied. (WHAT YEAR?) 79-80, I don't, if you remember at the Merrie Monarch there was a young girl from Aunty Leilani Sharp Mendez that ended up dying, she was part of the halau also and it was around that time that everything was started. He started from the Nanakuli classes then so many went to dance with him. She was part of it, so it will be that time you know what i am saying, I can't remember when. I think that's when he started it. The first halau he had I'll tell you the name, it was called, our name was Maile Pakaha. I think it was called Maile Pakaha dancers. He called us that because there was 3 of us that were performing with him during the Palani Vaugh Show. It was myself, there was this girl Keoho Kong Kee, and the girl that is in the front of the hula book written by Jerry Hopkins is Darlene, she is married now, I can't remember her name back then, but those were the 3 dancers that went out when he was starting

out as a halau to perform. So you can say that we were his first women dancers. After that, that's when he started ke keala o ka laulani and that was about in '82. That is when Skippy had already passed away. (HOW LONG DID YOU STAY WITH HIM?) During those days when Skippy got sick, I mean that was it, I was totally stuck in the hospital, not stuck, but I choose to stay with my husband, because he was my husband and he was my first obligation. (YOU NEVER WENT BACK TO DARREL?) No, because in 1980, that's when I made the decision along with Pilahi Paki to start another halau, start fresh. (WHAT MADE YOU WANT TO BECOME A TEACHER?) More so it was the influence of what I was learning from Pilahi, she was giving me a foundation that I had never ever had heard of, but made so much sense to me. And it was through her influence that finally, I think I've been with her a year or so that I decided that it will be time for me to sever all relationship with anyone else and to pursue it on my own. (ABOUT PILAHI PAKI, WASN'T A HULA TEACHER?) Pilahi Paki, no. I had heard about her through Uncle Moe Keali, and his wife Carol, they were both taking classes from her, she was instructing them. I don't know if you heard about the book by Max Freida Long, the Heina, so I got kind of interested in what they were talking about so they gave me a book about Pilahi and when I read about the language and the levels of language, that's when I got really .. I said you know .. you try as much as possible to do your own haku's of mele but they are all written in 'olelo you don't speak the language, how do you .. See it was important to me back then to be able to express .. if you are doing someone's composition. How do you translate it, how do I know it was written or unwritten literature because of the kind of words of the translations was so, like people would call hybolical words was being interpreted by a different view point. So the attitudes might have been different, so I suspected that there might be something, a mist there so I said maybe I should ask her because she sounded like somebody that was real articulate about what she did and what she explained. So Kawena decided to take me down to her. (SHE WAS

A LANGUAGE TEACHER?) No. She was more like, she was a humanitarian. I can't even explain it. She knew and she had been, she called it blessed by a tutu man. Her and lolani Luahine was linked and that was kind of got me really intrigued because those two were cousins. lolani and Pilahi and they were related and this tutu Naluhine was the one that was on that she was instructed by you know done paka'o for work. She was late an author. It is works of her. She is an author, she was a humanitarian, she attended these moratoriums. She's been asked to speak all over the world, she was doing that also. (DID YOU MEET HER?) I agreed to come to classes every week with her. (WHAT DID YOU LEARN WITH HER?) I learned how to interpret, translate. I learned principles of how to work with material things like you give your respect to the author or the composers of mele and if they are alive, you go to them and you ask them for permission. And you ask them what was it that caused them to write these things, so you get the personal feel. So now the thing was I was dealing with a lot of mele that didn't have composers that were alive or I didn't know who they were, so then she taught me how to translate and also to put the right emotions. In other words what does it sound through the context of the mele that's what she taught me. She taught me, the spiritual side of the language, she taught that there are different levels and how to work with the levels and then how you take what you learn and the key is always to be able to have, shows a good teacher is one that can reach into a person and have them emote exactly what you feel and give back to you, so she said Leialoha, you have to work with that really hard. (HOW LONG DID YOU STAY WITH HER?) Three years. (SO HOW DID YOU START YOUR HALAU?) In 1979 and I had just told few people that I was considering opening up a halau and I just got barraged by, I think at that time we had about 30 students that came to the first. I was working up in town at this glass company, glass and glazing company, I asked them if I could use their warehouse to conduct hula. That's where I started then eventually we moved to Kanakapili Church. Then we would do things sometimes at my home, because there

was a field out in the back if we needed a large area to do certain things we had to do. (DID YOU HAVE WOMEN AND MEN?) Just women. I taught men, it was a class that I had down at Waianae, Buffalo Keaulana, his sons. I remember doing that it was a really fun thing. (KAHIKO?) Kahiko and auana. (YOU WERE ALONE THERE?) Yes. (HOW LONG?) We went all the way up until '84 because I was hapai at the Merrie Monarch and I gave birth to my daughter shortly thereafter and I made a goal to attempt for 3 years. After I had my daughter then I said no, I am going to put the halau on hold. I want to take care of my daughter first and I just kept the minimum amount of ladies that would perform with my husband. (SO YOU KEPT TRAINING SOME GIRLS FOR ENTERTAINMENT?) In those days, yes for entertainment, and also the Merrie Monarch for 3 years. It was a good experience. (WHO HAD THE GREATEST INFLUENCE ON YOU?) Yes, Aunty lolani. (WHY?) It is so hard to explain, even my students ask me about her I said to kind of explain to you. Her dancing I mean it just to, mesmerized by her, I say God. That's how I would like to be. That's how I would like to dance. I mean I could feel this woman. (IN YOUR HALAU DID YOU THINK YOU ACQUIRED SOMEONE'S STYLE OR IS IT YOUR OWN?) Let's put it as this, there was a time especially when I was going to the Merrie Monarch, I mean I was highly influenced by Darrel. You know Darrel has a very bombastic, more masculine style. When he first taught us, that was the style of dancing. Gosh, when I think of the things we did with that man. So the first 3 years when I went to the Merrie Monarch his influence was very emanate on what we did, but as time has passed I must say that we take portions of each one. And we have taken responsibility I mean, I told my sisters you know I used to get really creative and snappy sometimes. Yes, sister you know so I said Nani, I've got to thinking about this I said you know after doing all this research, and I do genealogy work I said sister you know what, so much has been lost because nobody thought about keeping the traditions. We were very influenced though history to change with the times and the people that were entering our shores, so I told her if we

don't keep what we learned from our hula instructors that are supposed to be traditional hula, like Aunty Io whatever she taught us. Uncle George, Aunty Edith, and even Aunty Margaret I said, do you realize we will be responsible for not passing along tradition and I said I think we should get back to the basics. Teach our women what we learned, let them always remember that's what we started with and try to keep that portion untouched. Sacred even to the fact of being sacred. We teach them exactly as we were taught and if we are going to do anything creative, we do it with other mele that will come out because they have no hand motions to them. (ANY DIFFICULTIES IN YOUR HULA CAREER?) A lot. I was too mean, I was very .. I started off very, very strict, because that's how I remember my kumu hula to be very stern, very strict about what you did and Pilahi happened to come to one of the practices with me and I told my students if you don't make it and you are not in line, dressed and ready to go don't even bother walking into the door and 3 of these girls come running in and she saw them and I turned them right back out and she was upset with me. She said Leialoha come here. You didn't bother to ask them, some they might have a good legitimate reason you best stop doing this kind of stuff and so I remember her to recommend me for doing that she said these are human beings, they have feelings and emotions what if there was a legitimate reason and there was and I felt so bad. I was looked at as a meany, actually even my sister was afraid of me when we first started the halau on the Big Island. She thought I would be just as mean as I was before, very strict, very stern, but I seasoned with age, let's put it that way.

(WHAT KIND OF JOY DO YOU GET IN TEACHING?) My thing that I like to do, which Pilahi always told me you'll be a choreographer, she said you have to get into people. I love to work with our hula dancers, our translation and then when we start doing motions how to perform those motions, with their emotions. I love doing that. I do the same research that they do and I like to think of myself as bringing the mele alive through hula, that's my forte. That's

what I enjoy the most. (WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST ACCOMPLISHMENT?) I would have to say that with this halau that is on the Big Island right now because my sister did not know how to start them off. Pilahi Paki put into my care a chant that she had written that she said was God given. It came to her in a dream one night, what she put down in paper now, it's out here, people have access to it, but I don't think they know the history behind the chant and it is called her aloha chant or her aloha oli oli and that is the foundation of the halau, it is like a creed. I think my greatest accomplishment has been being able to have these girls I mean if you talk to our students they know everyone, like A is akahai, how to be modest. L is lokahi, how to be in unity. O is olu olu, how to be pleasant and have pleasant thoughts, and you know those things are not easy to do ha'a ha'a how to be humble a huniu how to be patient, you talk to our students they live they are always striving to live this lokahi every single one of these words is very important to them. I had never seen a unified group of haumana as tight as I have seen this one, and makes me proud to know that I had something to do with that and that the kuliana that was left with me is being passed on and through them it will live on, so that's the greatest accomplishment besides the hula part.

(CAN YOU GIVE ME THE NAME OF YOUR HALAU?) It's called "Na Lei O Kaholoku."

(CAN YOU TELL MEN ABOUT THE BACKGROUND OF THIS NAME?) Oh yah. Everybody had asked me. We were looking for a wise .. I had consulted with Pilahi they were looking for a name she calls me up and she said Leialoha I had a dream last night she said in my dream all I could see were these beautiful holokus and they were all dancing but no bodies in them, but graceful, fluid movements, beautiful, beautiful, holokus, simple one, fancy one, you know so she said I believe that's where the name needs to incorporate that because she said look at it, so I told her really! So, I said let me think of this, and that's when I came up with the "Na Lei" and then she put in "o Holoku" and when we got together we giggled, we laughed and said Aunty I came over this and she

said you know I almost came up with something close to that but I was putting "Na pua lei" I said no I don't want "na pua lei" because Ala has that name "na pua lei". So I said Na lei and our interpretation of that what we came up with is that Na means, lot of women will come to us that have had prior instruction. They come from a different tree so it is almost like a lot of different leis coming together and then trying to form one. So from different backgrounds then I said Kaholoku will define the uniqueness, the beauty and the grace of women from what you saw in your dream and I said and I think that's wonderful. (DO YOU UNIKI YOUR STUDENTS?) We're working on this group of students. (WHAT DO YOU EXPECT FROM THEM BEFORE UNIKI?) We have with this group of ladies, there is no more students that had been added and we are not taking on anymore students so we have been moving them. I mean I hate to make it sound like it is such a like a University class, but we have a course of instruction that we put together that they are going through right now and that thing was not conceived maybe until maybe 91-92, because these girls were so close and my sister noticed she could let anybody else in because what happens is if the understanding does not start together, it will not end together. So we decided to work with just this group of ladies there in order for them to be uniki first of all they need to learn our instruction. For them as far as hula, they need to know their basics well, they need to know how to translate it is very important because that's not their language. They are now in the process, my sister holds classes for them to learn olelo because they work with a lot of translations. They will be going on to learn chanting style, she took from instructor she must had told you who it was, and if she needs to bring in any other chant instructor to help, to round out this program so these girls have different exposure to different people that's what we will do. Chanting I have to say at this point we are ready to move up some girls to the alaka'i position which is going to take them from its that in between phase, it is the transitional phase between going from the hula dancers to the hula instructor and we will work with them one on one and

what they will be facing as far as eventually going on become their own kumu hula and how to handle their students so they are getting the next phase up. (HOW MANY DO YOU HAVE IN THIS GROUP?) We have I think about 25 right now consistent. Now ask me if all of them are going to make it, when I first start I told them I don't know why you are here, I said I don't know what is your conception of a halau is. (HOW LONG DO YOU THINK IT WILL TAKE?) It'll take 2 years or more. That's the reason we are trying to get as much instruction to them as possible. (WHAT KIND OF ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO A YOUNG HULA TEACHER OR HAUMANA INTERESTED IN BECOMING A TEACHER?) To pursue a hula career. I always used this, it is like this, there are things that sometimes we always wish we could be but because of who we are we don't think that much of yourself, but you know in hula like any art, it lets you express yourself and be something that you never thought you could be. To explore emotional realms that you never explored before, so be ready to pretend, I mean take somebodies story and be able to make it come alive. I think that will be the best advice I could give them just to make it just come alive with all the emotions, the beauty, the sadness what ever it is what ever the mele context is, is to portray that and portray it well.

(DEFINITION OF HULA KAHIKO?) I would be a hula accompanied by pahu, ipu heke. None of the string instruments as we know today. It can be "ohe hano iho" you know there is chanting that could be done, I mean the "ka eke eke's" any of the implements that was in existence I guess pre-Cook and now when it comes to the mele's it would be any mele composed in olelo Hawaii that you would use with instruments accompaniment to or if it is an oli, an oli is just you know the Hawaiian language the olelo being portrayed to the chanting styles of our kupuna. (HAS HULA CHANGED?) Yes, it has. (WHAT DO YOU THINK OF HULA KAHIKO OF TODAY?) One thing I think is that everybody is very creative. I think creativity is very important especially if we have mele's that don't even have ea's or don't even have motions or it's

put up as a competition, the creativity of each kumu hula comes out, it forces the creativity, it is great. (HOW DO YOU SEE THE FUTURE OF HULA?) Maybe I wasn't aware of what was going on when I was a younger girl, but I certainly seen it grown, consciousness of, like the hula competition has helped the consciousness to come and to come and to come back alive even like celebrations that we have. Like people like Kalihi-Palama Culture & Arts, Aunty Agnes Cope, you know all these people that I know to me hula is something that will sustain and it needs to sustain because it's one of the few areas and now more areas are being opened up it is one of the arts that is been preserved an now as far as changing, everything goes through evolution but I look at it this way what ever Aunty Io, Uncle Geogre, or Aunty Edith have taught me I would like to pass that on without any changes. Now how do I know that it is through kahiko? What was out of the past? I don't know, but why take the chance and eliminate it and therefore kill something off that could be kept alive. So I wouldn't take the chance as far as that, but as far as the other mele being created, I think we need to have the creativeness because it will encourage the language to be brought back alive which is important, and I would love to see our people speaking our language again. Hula will only be part of it, but it is about the biggest area we can reach a lot of students right now, a majority, a massive amount of so called people that carry the aboriginal blood. (DO YOU PREFER KAHIKO OR AUANA?) I prefer hula kahiko, but our rewards and our rewards had shown us otherwise. I prefer kahiko because of Aunty Io, what I had seen her do, and because today I understand it is the fore runner of what ever the auana is today. It's always the fore runner. And now that the records like the Bishop Museum, I been doing genealogy like I said I've been exposed to another side of knowledge that we need to acquire. (A FAVORITE CHANT? SONG?) The year that we did "Mi Nei", this has always been my favorite song, it is the song that my father loved and I would always dance for him and he would always sing for me. I learned that from Aunty Margaret because that was one of the songs that would be

used for May Day and I just admired it and my Daddy used to say, it was a special thing between me and my dad. He would sing it for me always, "Please dance for me baby," so he would sing that and I would dance it for him and he always enjoyed it.

(IS LANGUAGE IMPORTANT IN HULA?) Very much so. How can we dance hula if we don't understand the language. The mentality behind it and the attitudes. (DO YOU TEACH YOUR CLASSES IN HAWAIIAN LANGUAGE?) Yes. More so now. It was like sparse, like mapopo, ho'omaukaukau, whatever we had learned from our teachers, but now we're talking to them in olelo because we're learning the language ourselves too, we have to get back towards the language my sister, my whole family up at the Big Island as well as me down here, we are actively involved in learning olelo. (LEARNING FROM?) Keahonui Kahakalau. (ARE YOU A MUSICIAN LIKE YOUR SISTER?) No. I did not play professionally, I do know how to play the ukulele. I know how to play the guitar. I was the girl that was always away, Kamehameha, and then right and then right after college, so my brothers and sisters. (WHO DO YOU CONSIDER HULA MASTERS?) I guess it all depends on a definition. (WHO DO YOU LOOK UP TO?) I learned from Pilahi and she always tells me, always know the persons background before you praise. So many people like Aunty Kau'i I don't know them personally and I don't know what their hula background is, yet I respect her you know what I am saying. There is a respect there because these people had been there. It is even like Pat Bacon, I don't see her actively always teaching, or with a halau, but she has done some workshops but I respect these people for what they know, so give me the question again. (WHO DO YOU CONSIDER A HULA MASTER?) I guess it would have to be the older; like Aunty Pat Bacon, Aunty Kau'i Zuttermeister, there is no none particular, like Uncle George Holokai, he is family to us. Aunty Alice is family to my mother. The judges, they had earned themselves, these people that judge some of these competitions. I look at them as they have accomplished something that people will respect. I guess my key word is respect.

So I wouldn't narrow it down to just one or two and I always say to myself I could always learn something from them, so that when I talk to them they always share some wealth of knowledge that just adds to what we are doing. (BESIDES HULA DO YOU DO OTHER THINGS IN CULTURE OR ARTS?) I love to attend competitions in fact I was asked to be a judge at one competition and I took that only because they were younger children Na Opio and then the keiki, so I did that one in Maui.

****END OF TAPE****