

HULA HALAU O NA KAIKUAHINE

MELE OHANA:

The Song of the Family Will Forever Be in the Hearts of Hawaiians

In Hawaiian culture, a solid bond of family is greatly cherished and very important. Family has a very broad meaning and is not merely confined to blood relations. You see, in Hawai'i, everybody is either your auntie or uncle! The language of hula serves to communicate Hawai'i's history and hopes to transport you to places and meanings that are universal to everyone's heart, regardless of who they are or what their ancestral background may be. Brothers and sisters, sons and daughters, mothers and fathers, all living together in one global community.

This year's concert will feature a full evening of kahiko (ancient) and 'auana (modern) interpretations of hula, as well as ancient chants. The school's Tahitian dance ensemble is back this year with a fresh choreography presented with the new addition of live drum orchestration. As a treat and due to public demand, the halau will feature a special repeat performance of their finale number from last year.

The halau (hula school) will also be performing some numbers to live music orchestration by Mixed Plate, a new and upcoming local group focusing on authentic and contemporary Hawaiian and various island-style sounds.

Who we are:

We are a local school of Hawaiian arts based here in Eugene, Oregon. Our school is called Hula Halau O Na Kaikuahine (Hula School of the Sisters). The halau started in 1997 by former Big Island resident, Leilani Beymer. Realizing the need to bring the language and art of hula into Eugene, Kumu Leilani brings to our local community the traditional method of teaching hula.

We are composed of roughly 50 students of various ages from 5- to 60+ years of age. Many of these students have come from the various islands of Hawaii. We come and meet each week to practice and learn the art of hula which has become a way for us to share our spirit of aloha and love of the land with each other.

As students become more involved in the halau, they soon realize that learning the dance is merely on the surface of what hula is all about, and that there is something deeper and more meaningful in the culture that they take with them each week to enrich their lives.

For the past few months, Eugene's local school of Hawaiian arts, Hula Halau O Na Kaikuahine (Hula School of the Sisters) has been getting ready for performances planned for upcoming events. This year's theme is Mele Ohana (The Song of the Family) and the performances will focus on messages of love for family.

Hula Halau O Na Kaikauhine presents artistic and cultural demonstrations and performances and is also a regular contributor to the annual Asian Celebration in Eugene, World Beat Festival in Salem, "May Day is Lei Day" celebration in Beaverton, as well as other events and venues in the Northwest.