

# Green Rose Hula

Johnny Alemeida



## Verse One

(1.1) **No ka pua loke lau ke aloha**

My love goes to the green rose,

(1.2) **No ka u'i kau i ka wēkiu.**

The blossom I esteem the highest.

## Verse Two

(2.1) **Kō 'ala onaona i 'ane'i,**

Its fragrance reaches me here,

(2.2) **Ho'olale mai ana e walea.**

Inviting my thoughts to be carefree.

## Verse Three

(3.1) **E walea pū aku me 'oe,**

Oh! to while the time pleasantly with you

(3.1) **I ka hana no'eau ho'oipo.**

In the delightful pastime of wooing.

## Verse Four

(4.1) **A he ipo 'oe na'u i aloha**

You are the sweetheart I love,

(4.2) **Ka 'ano'i a ku'u pu'uwai.**

The darling of my heart.

## Verse Five

(5.1) **Ha'ina 'ia mai (ana) ka puana**

This is the end of my song,

(5.2) **Nou nō Green Rose ke aloha.**

For you, beloved Green Rose.

**Traditions:** Original choreography by my teacher, Bella Richards. (Shared with her blessings)

**Footwork Used:** Kāholo, Hela, Double Kalākaua, Ami 'Ākau, Ki'iwāwae right and left, 'Ōniu.

**Recording Used:** Sandii's Hawai'i, Sushi Records

**Liner Notes:** Pattye Kealohalani Wright

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## Background:

Johnny Almeida was one of Hawai'i's most prolific composers of songs. He could play many musical instruments and possessed a marvelous falsetto voice. Johnny was considered quite a ladies man in his younger days, and was known for composing songs for the young women who were the current object of his attention. His compositions were always in the Hawaiian language. I am told that "Green Rose Hula" was composed for his wife, Elizabeth.

We have a real Green Rose that grows in Hawai'i. I have several plants in my yard. It has a true rose leaf and thorns, but the flower is entirely green. The fragrance can best be described as peppery. It is a flower not often seen, but highly esteemed.

## Costuming:

This number lends itself to many costuming options while still remaining appropriate to the *mele*. During the period in which "Green Rose Hula" was composed, the classic picture post card hula girl image with *tī* leaf skirt and satin tube top, *plumeria* lei head, neck, wrist and ankles, reigned as the preferred costume of the day. The girls would wear green briefs under their skirt and show lots of leg on the spins. Red satin was the most popular color for the tube top, which was tucked into the briefs. But other colors abounded. A bright Hawaiian print "bra" top was also a widely used choice for this era.

It is equally appropriate to use other types of costumes. I would, however, reserve the pareo for Tahitian dance numbers, and stick to hula traditions for this *mele*. *Pā'ū* skirts of any color, or bright print, would certainly be fine. A blouse top, tube top or other top that would compliment the skirt is fine. A *mu'umu'u* is appropriate as well, even one tied up around the hip "Hilo Hattie" style. Artificial "grass skirts" can be altered to look more realistic as I have shown you in the bonus track on making a *tī* leaf skirt.

Examples of adornments are floral materials, shells, *kukui* nuts or other permanent lei materials. Silk *plumeria* leis can be taken apart to create these adornments very realistically (assuming you do not have access to *plumeria* in your region.) The many silk lei that are being made today are more realistic looking than ever before. The rules for *'auana* are not so strict with regard to adornments as they are for *kahiko*, so it is not absolutely necessary to have adornments at head, neck, both wrists and both ankles such as it is in the *kahiko* class of hula. However, something at the head and at the neck is a must for hula.

## Thoughts for the teacher.

I find this a wonderful beginning hula for students from the ages of about 9 years to grandmothers. It has unique value because it introduces so many of the basic hula steps, but it does so one verse at a time. This leaves the student free to concentrate on the hands after the step is mastered. It is also a good first hula because it is in the Hawaiian language, and helps overcome the beginners' reluctance to deal with Hawaiian language songs. The final reason I find this such a good beginning hula is that when the number is mastered, the student has a classic hula number in their repertoire, one that is familiar to most musicians who play Hawaiian music. It gives the student a well-known hula to perform when given the opportunity to dance.

It takes four to six lessons to teach this if it is the first hula a student is learning. I find that writing the words and choreography on a white board one verse at a time as it is taught helps the student to not only learn the routine, but to associate the words with the movements. We are, after all, talking with the hands when we dance to the music. Therefore, the text is of primary importance to the dancer.

The final teaching involved with this dance is to teach the student to "*kāhea*": the first few words of each verse. This is a good thing to encourage and teach from the beginning. Even though most all musicians know this song they may be unsure about the order of the verses, and there are additional verses to this song that are seldom sung. So the *kāhea* keeps the musicians and the dancers on the same text. The *kāhea* should come on the third count of the second vamp that goes between verses. It has a very specific timing. Not too early in the vamp, but in enough time to cue the musician/chanter about the verse desired next by the dancer.

Unlike some songs, I find this one equally appropriate for young and old. It doesn't have a lot of romantic *kaona* (hidden meanings) or references that would make it inappropriate for youngsters to dance. It is my belief that we must be careful about what we teach the young ones. Some texts are too sexually suggestive to be fitting choices for children, in my opinion.

Another aspect of this classic hula song is the "Hawaiianess" of the text. Johnny Almeida composed solely in the Hawaiian language, and was a masterful composer of both music and lyrics. He employs a greatly admired pattern in hula poetry: that of linked assonance. This is when the last word or words of one verse mimic, sound like, or are the same as the first words of the succeeding verse. There is no linked assonance between the first and second verse, but you will see that the second verse ends with "*e walea*" and the third verse begins with "*E walea*". It makes it easy for the dancer to *kāhea* when she becomes aware of this sound alike pattern. The third verse ends with "*ho'oipo*" and the fourth verse begins with "*A he ipo*", a close sound pattern.

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There are two more verses that I have never heard sung, but I will include them here for you information. These would be verses number five and six with "*Ha'ina*" being the seventh and final verse.

*Ka ha'upu, ka hali'a, ka 'i'ini*    May recollection, remembrance and desire  
*Me 'oe mau aku no ia.*                Always be with you.

*Ho'i mai kāua la e pili*                Now, now is the time  
*'Oiai ka manawa kūpono*              For us to be together.

## Recordings:

Sandii's Hawai'i is the best on all counts, available on our website.

Genoa Keawe has a marvelous version of this on her old classic Party Hulas Album which has just been released in CD.

## Basic Chords in the Key of C

**Beginning Vamp in key of C for this song:** (G7) four counts to (C) four counts, repeat

1.        (C)                (F)                (C)  
No ka pua loke lau      ke aloh~a \_\_\_\_\_  
          (F)                (C)                (G7)              (C)  
No ka    u'i kau      i ka wē~kiu.

Vamp: G7 ~ C ~ G7 ~C

2.        (C)                (F)                (C)  
Kō 'ala onaona      i 'ane~i,  
          (F)                (C)                (G7)              (C)  
Ho'olale              mai ana      e wale~a.

Vamp: G7 ~ C ~ G7 ~C

3.        (C)                (F)                (C)  
E walea pū aku me      'oe,  
          (F)                (C)                (G7)              (C)  
I ka hana    no'eau      ho'o~ipo.

Vamp: G7 ~ C ~ G7 ~C

4.        (C)                (F)                (C)  
A he ipo 'oe na'u      i aloh~a  
          (F)                (C)                (G7)              (C)  
Ka 'ano'i a ku'u      pu'uwa~i.

Vamp: G7 ~ C ~ G7 ~C

5.        (C)                (F)                (C)  
Ha'ina 'ia mai (ana)      ka puan~a  
          (F)                (C)                (G7)              (C)  
Nou nō    Green Rose    ke aloh~a.

Vamp: G7 ~ C ~ G7 ~ C ~ G7 ~C

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## Notes on Basic Chords

We present 'Ukulele Chords in the key of **C**. This may not always be the best key for singing, or the key of the teaching music. The key of **C** is the simplest single key for guitar, 'ukulele, and piano, so we use it.

The selection of chords may also not be identical to the music used. These are Basic Chords. There are always more sophisticated ways to chord a song. These are our interpretation of the necessary chords.

Since a chord change normally takes place on a syllable, we write the first letter of the chord over the first letter of the syllable. Modern auto-formatting sometimes makes that placement inexact, but that is the intention. Chord changes that take place before the next line starts are shown to the right of the previous line. Vamps are a common example of chord changes before the next line starts.

We usually note the actual key of the music used for the teaching. That is to help you transpose the song to the key used by the artist, if you would like to play with the recording.

Below is a representation of what is called the "Circle of Chords." If you play a guitar or 'ukulele, each step is one fret. It is used as follows:

Say you find that you want to sing the number in the key of **F**. We have presented it in the key of **C**. Look at the chart below. **C** is the first note. Then we have **C#, D, D#, E, and F**.

The note called **F** is 5 steps (or frets) above the note called **C**. The entire key of **F** is therefore 5 steps above the entire key of **C**. That means that for each chord listed in the key of **C**, the corresponding chord in the key of **F** is also 5 steps higher.

A **D** in the key of **C** becomes a **G** in the key of **F**, 5 steps higher. A **D7** would become a **G7**, a **Dm** would be a **Gm**. A **G** in the key of **C** becomes a **C** in the key of **F**, counting the same 5 steps into the next octave. The chart actually loops back to the beginning, with the final **B** connecting the first **C**. That is why it is called a circle, The Circle of Chords.

Changing keys is called Transposing, and counting is all there is to it. Take the key of **C** and count the steps to the desired key. The key of **F** would be +5. The key of **B** would be +11 or -1, going backwards from the right. Read the listed chord and count the same number of steps to find the transposed chord. Write that one next to our chord and do the whole song that way.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 → 12 13  
C C# D D# E F F# G G# A A# B → C C# etc.

The numbers above indicate "Steps above C," nothing more.