

Aia La 'O Pele



Kāhea: 'Ae, Aia la 'o Pele i Hawai'i

Verse one

(1.1) **Aia la 'o Pele i Hawai'i (lai)** *There indeed is Pele in Hawai'i*

(1.2) **Ke ha'a mai la i maukele (lai)** *Dancing in the rainforest*

Verse Two

(2.1) **'Uhi, 'uhā mai ana (lai)** *Hissing and crackling she moves*

(2.2) **Ke nome a'ela iā Puna (lai)** *As she consumes Puna*

Verse Three

(3.1) **O ka mea nani ka i Paliuli (lai)** *How beautiful is Paliuli*

(3.2) **Ke pulelo a'ela i nā pali (lai)** *(With Pele's fires) swirling along the cliffs*

Verse Four

(4.1) **Aia ka palena i Maui (lai)** *As far away as Maui (the glow can be seen)*

(4.2) **'Āina o Kaulula'au (lai)** *The land of (the ancient chief) Ka-ulu-la'au*

Verse Five

(5.1) **Ihea kāua (e) la'i ai (lai)** *Where indeed can we find refuge*

(5.2) **I ke 'Alenui a'e li'a nei (lai)** *The pathway of safety and tranquility*
(i.e. Safety across the 'Alenuihāhā channel)

Verse Six

(6.1) **Ha'ina 'ia mai ka puana (lai)** *Told is the story*

(6.2) **No Hi'iaka nō he inoa (lai)** *In the name of Hi'iaka*

'Eā lā, 'Eā lā, 'Eā A – E – I – ea

Kāhea: "He Inoa no Hi'iaka-i-ka-poli-o-Pele"

Notes on the Video:

This hula comes from my tradition as taught to me by my Kumu Hula, Lani Kalama. The hula steps used are: Double Kalākaua, kāholo, 'uehe, 'ami 'ākau and 'ami hema, 'ami kūkū 'ākau and hema, lele imua, ki'iwāwae, 'aui, and 'oniū. Our teacher is Kumu Hula Pattye Kealohalani Kapualokeokalaniākea Wright (Kumu Kea) and our dancer is Pikake Miyamoto.

The recording for this mele can currently be purchased as a music download on our website.

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Kāhea: (From 2 hds across chest, open R-hd to hula position)
'Ae, Aia la 'o Pele i Hawai'i
 Begin to assume 'aiha'a position

(Ali'i, or hula position Rt.....)
 1) Aia la 'o Pele i Hawai'i (lai)
 K-R 2X

(2 hds cntr & out softly, p/d) (2 hds cntr & out flat,p/d)
Ke ha'a mai la i maukele (lai)
 'uehe R - L - R - L

Between verses: arms in hula position Rt
 standing upright, V-R making 1/2 turn to face R)

***(Entire verse repeats in reverse as well as the vamp between verses reversing)**

(2 arms scoop with clap on R & L)(L@chest p/d, R-opens cntr to Rt,p/d)
 2) 'Ūhī, 'ūhā mai ana (lai)
 lele imua R & L 'uehe R - L

(starting @Rt, roll 2 arms low R-L, hds in fist) (L@chest, R opens cntr to R-open Rt, p/d)
Ke nome a'ela iā Puna (lai)
 'uehe R - L - R - L ***(Reverse on repeat)**

(2 hds hi Rt, R-higher, p/o, slow wrist turn at top, ending p/i)
 3) O ka mea nani ka i Paliuli (lai)
 'uehe R - L - R - L

(L-up and extended L, p/o,R-swirl over head "wind) &(L-up, R-make Pali on L)
Ke pulelo a'ela i nā pali (lai)
 'ami 'ākau 2X 'ami kuku 'akau ***(Reverse on repeat)**

(hula position R.....)
 4) Aia ka palena i Maui (lai)
 K-R 2X bringing body to facing front on counts 3 & 7

(island @ hip level,p/o)(cross fists low front,then bring both hands up for trees,fingers spread slightly)
'Aina o Kaulu - la'au (lai)
 'uehe R - L R - L ***(Reverse on repeat)**

(L@chest p/d, R- lele pos, scoop fr. behind p/d look over R-ldr)(reverse)(L@chest,
 R-open hula position R,p/d)
 5) Ihea kāua (e) la'i ai (lai)
 lele imua R & L 'uehe R & L

(2-hds to either side, p/d, rolling waves 4X ending together low in front)
I ke 'Alenui a'e li'a nei (lai)
 'uehe imua R - L - R - L going to the floor ***(Reverse on repeat)**

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(hula position R.....)
6) Ha'ina 'ia mai ka puana (lai)
'ami 'akau 2X with kūkū

(hula position L.....)
No Hi'iake nō he inoa (lai)
'ami hema 2X with kūkū

*(Entire verse repeats in reverse without a vamp between)

(hula position Rt.....)
Ending: 'Eā lā, 'Eā lā, 'Eā
'uehe R - L and kū

(ki'ilima Rt)(2-hds to L-toe p/d & back to chest p/u, lele pos. L-R-L, then L@chest, R-sweep open R p/d
A - E - I - ea ~ ~ end 2 hds together hi)
Ki'iwāwae R 'auī L, lele imua L-R-L & 'ōniu back R-L-R-L-point R-toe

This mele comes from the traditions of Lokalia Montgomery as perpetuated by my teacher, Kumu Hula Kekauilani "Lani" Kalama. So that the integrity of our traditions may be honored, I ask that you retain this hula in the manner in which it was shared with me. If you choose to use another version, honor that tradition by keeping it in the style in which it was taught. In this way, the time-honored oral traditions of the various school of dance retain their distinctive and inherent identity.

Explanation of my annotation for the dance:

You will see that I place the gestures above the text, the feet below the text and underline the portion of the text involved.

Symbols Used Include:

R=right, L=left, or Rt=right, Lf+left, Plms=palms, dn=down, hi=high, hds=hands, Lf=left
p/u or p/d= palm up or palm down, w/= with.
p/i or p/i-palm in or palm out
I write the *kāholo* step as "vamp" because the "K" is used for *Kalākaua*.

Background:

While this mele may be one of the most familiar of the Pele dances. It, like our other three foundation numbers, does not come from the ancient past. It is likely that it was composed within the past 200 years or less. As in most traditional hula mele, the composer is unknown. Ownership of "intellectual property" was not a Hawaiian concept. The text was often the result of a collaboration of a group of "*haku mele*", or poets, crafting the verses.

Whoever the creator or creators were, there is no doubt that this mele is a word picture of an eruptive phase of *Kilauea* on the island of *Hawai'i*. If you have ever been privileged to view the awesome beauty of the earth giving birth to itself, you can readily relate to the vivid text of this mele.

During the fountaining stage of the eruptive process, the fountains of fire present a visual image of Pele dancing. The first verse describes this phase.

The many noises that accompany the eruptive phase are described in the second verse. The *pāhoehoe*, or smooth flowing lava, hisses and crackles as it rolls over the living vegetation. The chunky 'a'ā moves like a wall of cinders. The sound the 'a'ā makes

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reminds me of a cement mixer truck! I have been greatly surprised by how much noise the flowing lava creates.

The beauty of the eruptive phase is celebrated in the third verse as it describes the curling smoke and tongues of fire which are consuming the fertile plains of *Puna* where *Paliuli*, a legendary land of plenty, is said to lie.

Maui is Hawai'i's nearest island neighbor being separated by a relatively narrow channel of water. During the eruptive phases, the glow can certainly be seen from Maui as the fourth verse states - especially in the night sky.

In the fifth verse awe is mixed with fear for one's safety as the relentless flow of lava covers the landscape. The composer asks, "where can one flee to escape the encroaching destruction?" Perhaps escape by canoe, crossing the 'Alenuihāhā channel that separates Hawai'i Island from the safety of Maui's shores.

The *Pele* dances require the dancer to assume a much deeper 'aiha'a, or bent knee, stance. These dances are descriptive of a creative process of mother earth, thus we dance low to be nearer the earth. The *Pele* dances are also very vigorous and energetic requiring the expression of strength and fierce intention on the part of the dancer. Both the body and the face should convey this intensity and energy.

Costuming:

Whenever possible the *Pele* dances should be costumed in her colors: red, yellow, grey or black. Red is the most common choice for *Pele* costumes. The traditional *pā'ū hula* in red is always an appropriate choice.

I have seen other colors associated with the lava used very effectively as well. Yellow with red zig-zag design on the skirt is very effective. Also grey with red zig-zag to represent the movement on the lava lakes.

The red *lehua* is the lei of choice for head, neck, wrist and ankles. If this is not available, other red flowers could be substituted. Green ferns or other natural greens are also acceptable. *Kukui* nuts can be used also – either whole, or the *kukui* halves strung *kūpe'e* style.

The newly developed eye-lash yarn lei can look very realistic. I have seen very good representations of the red *lehua* among feathery greens done in this style. I have used them myself when nothing else was readily available for my dancers.

As always, in the *Kahiko* class of hula a full compliment of *lei* should be worn: head, neck, both wrists and both ankles.

Thoughts for the teacher:

This is the final hula in our series of four foundation numbers as taught by my Kumu, Kekauilani "Lani" Kalama. I recommend the foundation numbers be taught in the order of (1) Kawika, (2) Lili'u E, (3) Kalākaua, (4) Aia La 'O Pele. This assures the dancer has perfected the footwork necessary to master this energetic dance. A mastery of these four numbers should produce an accomplished hula dancer if careful attention to technique and smoothness is given to each number.

All four of these numbers use *ipu heke* to accompany the dancer. If you, as a teacher or leader, are putting together a traditional hula program, you will want to put the *Pele* number(s) first as they are for the gods. The mele for the kings and queens would follow since they are the *ali'i* numbers. However, if it is simply a program interspersed with various kinds of hula, you need not follow this protocol.

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This number is equally suitable for males or females, adults or children. The level of skill of the dancer is the only limiting factor.

Recordings:

Music download for this recording available on our website.

Posture, body, arms and hands:

Body:

The *'ai ha'a* position has the head directly over the feet, the back is arched and the *kikala* or *'ēlemu* (buttocks) is lifted behind. It looks a lot like the posture in the carvings of the Hawaiian temple figures. This is the position of greatest power and balance. This position was used in the *lua* training which was the school for learning the art of defense and aggression. *Hula* and *lua* are very closely tied in body position because of the importance of balance. The head is held high, shoulders back, rib cage lifted, pelvis tipped back and up.

Arms:

In our tradition, the hands move with the body for the *kahiko* and opposite of the movement in the *'auana*. The arms are carried off of the shoulders and very slightly to the front of the body. The arm is never stiff or rigid, but has a slight flex in it so that the elbow faces the back. The hand extends the same line. The opposite arm is bent across the chest, but does not allow for the fingertips to extend beyond the center of the body. The hand does not touch the body, being held some three or more inches away from the chest.

Hands:

In our tradition, the hands are never stiff or motionless. There is always a slight undulating of the hands. The movement for the hands is actuated from the wrist, not from the fingers. It is more a matter of putting tension in the hand and fingers and relaxing that tension as it flows from the wrist to the end of the fingers.

We are taught to avoid facing the palms or the soles of our feet toward the audience. The palms face the body, the floor, face upward or to the sides, but not toward the audience as this is considered uncouth. The same is true for the soles of the feet. It is considered uncouth to turn them outward to the audience at any time unless the gesture specifically calls for it.

The head and eyes follow the gesturing hand. If both hands are doing the same thing on opposite sides, the head turns in the direction of the leading foot

Explanation of footwork specific to this dance

'Ai ha'a:

To dance with bent knees, to dance low. Our traditions are in the *'ai ha'a* style whether for *'auana* (modern hula) or *kāhiko* (traditional hula). The deeper the knee bend, the better the hips can move which is also an important hallmark of our hula style as perpetuated by my teachers.

'Ami:

A revolution with the hip. The step can be executed as an *'ami ākau*, *'ami hema*, or *'ami kūkū*. The *'ami* always moves to the back first, never to the front which is called an *'ami 'ōpū*. The *'ami 'ōpū* is considered crude and in bad taste unless being used in a comic way.

'Ami ākau - the weight is on the left foot, and the hip is on the left. The rotation pushes toward the back, going to the right on count of one and returns to the left for count two.

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'Ami hema - weight starts on right and is on left on the count of one (pushing toward the back first).

'Ami kūkū 'ākau/hema - this is three fast revolutions with the hip

(* In our tradition it is called *'ākau* if the weight is moving from the left foot to the right foot, just as it is a *kāholo 'ākau* if you travel with the right foot first. The weight must be on the left if the foot is going to travel to the right. Other teachers may refer to it in the opposite way, the execution of the step is the same, but the reference to right and left differs with the teachers thinking about the movement of the hip. Our *'ākau* is moving to the right.)

'Aui:

The dancer turns to the side and points out one foot once, or several times, drawing the foot well back between each pointing.

Kalākaua or Kāwelu:

This step was renamed *Kalākaua* after the Hawaiian monarch who revived the hula as a "respectable dance" in the face of missionary disapproval. It is executed on both the right and the left. When done on the right, the right foot leads, making a 1/4 turn toward the left with the right foot stepping forward on count one. On count two the weight rocks back on the left foot. If executing a single *Kalākaua* or *Kāwelu* on each side, the right foot will now make a 1/2 turn so as to face the body to the right on count three. Count four is a tap with the left foot beside the right, the body still facing right. To repeat the step on the left, the left foot now steps slightly forward repeating the entire step on the left that was just executed on the right.

Double Kalākaua:

The single *Kalākaua* may be doubled to do two *Kalākaua* on one or both sides. The lead foot would go forward and back two times before doing the half turn.

Kāholo:

The most basic of the hula steps. A traveling step that takes the dancer side to side in four counts. When done on the right side, the right foot takes one step to the right on count one, the left foot is placed beside it on the second count, another step to the right on the third count, and the left foot is brought beside it for a hold of one count, or a tap. The weight is now on the right so that the following foot movement is ready to be executed on the left.

Ki'i wāwae (Or *wāwae ki'i*, interchangeably used):

One foot points to the side, to the front and is brought back next to the other. In my experience it is almost always includes the *'uehe* on the fourth count. The hands (*ki'ilima*) follow the foot: side, front, and across the chest with the moving foot, the other hand remaining at the chest usually, p/d. This can be done right and/or left.

Ki'i lima

The movement of the hands and arms that mirror the movement of the feet for the *ki'i wāwae*. When executed on the right, the left hand will be across the chest while the right arm and hand follow the right foot being extended to the right, then to the front, then both hands across the chest for the execution of the *'uehe*, if it is included in the footwork.

Kū:

To stand upright. usually with the opposite foot in a tap position beside the foot that holds the weight.

Lele:

A forward moving step. While the right foot steps forward and stamps the heel, the opposite foot is lifted and brought slightly forward. The one foot makes a sort of half *'uehe*. This can be done on the right or left side.

'Ōniu (or *'Ami 'ōniu*)

The hips revolve in a figure eight motion, thrusting the pelvis forward

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and back in a circle on one side and continuing it forward and back on the opposite side. Shoulders remain steady, and the head doesn't bob up and down. Often used in the closing movements of a chant while stepping back three or more times.

'Uehe: ('Uwehe*)

One foot is lifted with the weight shifting to the opposite hip as the foot is lowered on the count of one; both knees are then pushed forward by the quick raising of the heels up-down on the count of two, with continued swaying of the hips from side to side. The step can be reversed for counts three and four. This is a difficult step to accomplish smoothly while swinging the hips smoothly.

(*This is the "old" spelling. Modern scholars consider the "w" redundant as the sound is made naturally in the glide from the "u" to the "e". Either spelling is considered correct.)

Notes for the Ho'opa'a:

A traditionally trained ho'opa'a has already achieved the rank of 'Ōlapa, or expert dancer. The next level of study is to become the *ho'opa'a*, or accompanist and chanter. This is a very important rank because the *ho'opa'a* is charged with the responsibility of becoming the memory bank for the words and rhythms of the numbers in the *hālau* repertoire in addition to supporting the dancer with the beat. The ability of the *ho'opa'a* to keep an even, driving beat while chanting the words can make an enormous difference in the confidence of the dancer and the quality of the performance given. It is a very important and weighty position of responsibility and requires training and practice.

In my training I was taught the basic beats, their names, and which hula footwork each beat was to be used with. (When accompanying instrument numbers such as an 'ulī'ulī number, for instance, the accompanying *pā*, or beat, is usually different from the normal hula patterns that we will speak of here.) There is a sound from the *ipu* for every part of the movement in the hula step. When a dancer hears a certain *pā*, or beat, she will have a good idea what footwork should go with that particular pattern. The most challenging part of learning to be a good *ho'opa'a* is to perfect the evenness that must go between each of the sounds on the *ipu*. The hula is done to a 4/4 tempo, and the beats are spaced very evenly throughout the 4 beat musical measure.

Take the *kāhela* beat as an example: the first beat is to strike the floor with the *ipu*, the second beat is one slap of the hand on the *ipu*, the third beat is a second slap of the hand on the *ipu*, and the fourth beat is silence. It is the even slapping of the hand on the *ipu* that proves to be the most difficult part in keeping an absolutely even rhythm. The best method of practicing this is to count out loud while you *pa'i* so that you are sure of getting count two and count three evenly spaced.

Remembering that all knowledge does not reside in any one *hālau*, I will share the classic traditions from my hula lineage.

- Name of beat:** *Kāhela*
Description of beat: *UTT* (Tap floor for *U* & slap *ipu* for *TT*)
Steps using this beat: *Hela, 'uehe* and single *Kalākaua*.
- Name of beat:** *Pā*
Description of beat: *UT* (Tap floor for the *U* & slap *ipu* on 3rd beat, 2nd and 4th beat silent)
Steps using this beat: *Lele, lewa, ka'ō*
- Name of beat:** *Kāhela pā*
Description of beat: *UTT, UT* (See description above of

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- Kāhela and Pā)
Kāholo
- Steps using this beat:
4. **Name of beat:** *Pā Kāhela*
Description of beat: UT UTT
Steps using this beat: *Lele 'uehe*
 5. **Name of beat:** *Kū*
Description of beat: U (Strike the ipu on the floor holding ipu with two hands)
Steps using this beat: *Kū* (standing upright)
 6. **Name of beat:** *Kuolo*
Description of beat: UT (Tap floor with a rubbing of the ipu forward)
Steps using this beat: *'Ami*
The beat for 4 'ami and the signal to reverse the 'ami is
UT UT UT UTT
using the rubbing of the ipu on the pale (pad).
 7. **Name of beat:** Unknown to me.
I designate it as TT
Description of beat: TT (Slap the ipu on the first and third count)
Uses: To bring the dancer to attention before the initial kāhea; to release the dancer after the final Kāhea.

Hula Steps and the combinations used for the ho'opa'a:

Lele 'uehe: *Pā, Kāhela (UT UTT)*

Kalākaua 'elua: (double Kālākaua): *Kāhela* 3 times, and *Pā Kāhela* once
(UTT UTT UTT UT)

Ki'i wāwae: *TT, Kū*

'Aui: *TT*

'Ōniu: *U U U*

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For the Ho'opa'a:

Kāhea: 'Ae, Aia la 'o Pele i Hawai'i'

Ipu: TT.....Utt, Utt, Utt, U

Verse one

(1.1) Aia la 'o Pele i Hawai'i (lai)
Utt Utt Utt Utt

(1.2) Ke ha'a mai la i maukele (lai)
Utt Utt Utt Utt

Between verses: U - U - Utt

Verse Two

(2.1) 'Ūhī 'ūhā mai ana (lai)
UT UT Utt Utt

(2.2) Ke nome a'ela iā Puna (lai)
Utt Utt Utt Utt

Verse Three

(3.1) O ka mea nani ka i Paliuli (lai)
Utt Utt Utt Utt

(3.2) Ke pulelo a'ela i nā pali (lai)
UT(w/kuolo) UT(w/kuolo) U - U - Utt

Verse Four

(4.1) Aia ka palena i Maui (lai)
Utt Utt Utt Utt

(4.2) 'Āina o Kaulu - la'au (lai)
Utt Utt Utt Utt

Verse Five

(5.1) Ihea kāua (e) la'i ai (lai)
UT Ut Utt Utt

(5.2) I ke ale - nui a'e li'a nei (lai)
Utt Utt Utt Utt

Verse Six

(6.1) Ha'ina 'ia mai ka puana (lai)
UT(w/kuolo) UT(w/kuolo) U - U - UT

(6.2) No Hi'i - aka nō he inoa (lai)
UT(w/kuolo) UT(w/kuolo) U - U - UT

'Eā lā, 'Eā lā, 'Eā A - E - I - ea
Utt Utt U T T U - TT UT UT UT U - U - Utt U

Kāhea: "He Inoa no Hi'iaka-i-ka-Poli-o-Pele