



The Art of the Hula (Island Treasures)

Allan Seiden

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Of all Hawaii's cultural elements, the hula has played the most significant role in establishing the island's mystique as an exotic paradise. But hula is more than a dance: it combines painstaking choreography and the epic poetry of chants, or mele, that are rooted in Hawaii's consciousness. In many ways, it's a form of worship, as hula pays homage to the gods with elaborate tales of their exploits. It's also popular entertainment, danced for appreciative audiences with themes of natural beauty, passion, and other deeply felt emotions. No matter what the subject, the hula is danced with spirituality, not in an otherworldly or moralizing sense, but as a means of expressing awe, appreciation, and homage. Filled with rare historical images and stunning full-color photographs, *The Art of the Hula* explores every aspect of this ancient art form that symbolizes Hawaii's aboriginal culture, its gods, and its spiritual beliefs.

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