



LISETTE MARIE KAUALENA FLANARY

THE DANCER

A hula dancer whose mother is from Hawai'i, Lisette spent many childhood summers with her family on the island of O'ahu. Born and raised on the continent, it wasn't until 1998 that she began taking regular hula classes through the Hawai'i Cultural Foundation in New York City. Under instructor Michelle Nalei Akina and Janu Cassidy, she began to study hula 'auana (modern hula) in the lineage of Kumu Hula Maiki Aiu Lake, often called "The Mother of the Hawai'ian Renaissance".

In 2003, Lisette was asked to join the Papa 'Uniki Lehua class to continue her formal training in hula kahiko (traditional hula) under master hula teacher, Patrick Makuakāne in San Francisco, California. She spent three years of intensive study with the students of his halau, Nā Lei Hulu I Ka Wekiu. On September 3, 2006, she graduated as an 'olapa, or skilled dancer. During this same time, her hula teachers in New York moved back to Hawai'i and the Hawai'i Cultural Foundation announced its closure. Under the blessing and guidance of her kumu, Patrick Makuakāne, Lisette formed a hui, or a group, called Nā Lehua Melemele and continued to teach classes that perpetuate the art of the hula in New York City from 2007-2011.

In 2011, Lisette moved to Honolulu, Hawai'i to teach filmmaking at the University of Hawai'i. In 2016, she was invited to join the Papa 'Uniki Maile class to continue her formal training under Kumu Hula Patrick Makuakāne. Traveling back and forth between Honolulu and San Francisco for several years, Lisette graduated as a ho'opa'a, or skilled chanter, on August 4, 2019. Currently, she continues to dance in weekly hula classes with Kumu Hula Pōhai Souza and Hālau Hula Kamamolikolehua in Honolulu, Hawai'i.