

Beyond The Waikiki Wiggle

Contributed by Admin
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Among the first things that come to mind when people think of Hawai'i are hula girls and palm trees. However the only real things in that thought are the trees.

At the peak of the tourist season in 2006 a single airline, Japan Air Lines, brought in 1000 tourists in the morning and took another 1000 tired ones back to Japan that evening. They all arrived terribly ignorant of their 'host culture' and left in the same condition two weeks later. But there are now over a thousand 'hula' schools in that country. For the most part they are a terrible travesty on the culture they profess to honor.

However, this group is only one of many that flows in and out of the hotels and stares with glazed eyes at the passing landscape from their tour bus. And what they learn from the canned narrative of the driver is mostly unintelligible because the listeners have no context in which to fix that information.

The hula was originated and taught as a means of visually interpreting the story, prayer, commemoration or whatever meaning the accompanying oli [chant] or mele [song] contained. The wiggle in Waikiki hula shows contains little or none of that.

Among the many fun things you'll find on this site will be a regular infusion of Hawaiian culture so that when you read our stories and books, you will not only get factual information about us, but you will also build a context that will allow you to understand what you find here and elsewhere.