

HE MELE NO KA UA

A MELE FOR LORIN GILL

Welina nö, e ku‘u kumu e!
Mai ka ua mai ka noe, ka no‘eau
Mai pa‘a ho‘i i kou leo
Ka leo o ka ua a‘o uka

Greetings indeed, e my teacher!
From the rain comes the mist, the skills
Don't hold back your voice
The voice of the rain of the uplands

Iho mai ka ua mai ka mauna
Mauna kamaha‘o o ka wahine
Akahi nö au i ‘ike maka
i nä pua like ‘ole a‘o uka

The rain moves down the mountain
The astonishing mountain of the Woman
For the first time did I witness
the many flowers of the uplands

Alaka‘i nö ka ua i ka naele
Mikinalo ‘ölali wale i ka papa
Mea ‘ole kekekele pilipili
no ke käwele ho‘oma‘ema‘e

The rain guides through the bog
Glistening sundews on the flats
No trouble is the sticky mud
for the cleansing towel

Pulupë iho i ka ua Kona kü
Hü wale ‘o ke Käne-nui
Pehea la e pakele aku?
Na ka ua lele i ke ao!

Soaked by the Kona kü rain
[Hono] Kane-nui swells
How then to escape?
By the rain suspended in the air!

Lele wale mai e pulelehua
He pule lehu a ka nahele
Ka wao nahele ‘elo i ka ua
i ka ua lele o ka ‘aumakua

Flutter toward us, pulelehua
A myriad incantations of the rainforest
The forest zone ever soaked by rain
The flying rain of the ‘aumakua

Eö mai, e ka ua a‘o uka
Ka ua kapakapa i ka mana
Ka ua häpai akaaka
Lei aka‘awa kuahiwi aloha

Answer then, rain of the uplands
Rain invoked by mana
Rain that bears clarity
A beloved lei of the uplands

Haku ‘ia e Kamuela Gon III, Okakopa 1995

Composed by Sam Gon III, October 1995

A little bit of kaona: Sprinkled throughout this mele inoa (name chant) is reference to "ka ua" (the rain), which is a name that has been associated with Lorin Gill (who tends to bring rain with him in his travels). You can guess at when the reference is to real rain, and when it refers to Lorin. The verses refer to a few memorable personal experiences with Lorin: including my first lessons in native plant identification on the descent of Mauna Loa; learning the secret of Lorin's clean legs, even in the Alaka‘i Swamp; his daring rescue of hikers stranded by a flooded river in Kohala; his special association with a certain native insect; even an obscure reference to his special lei. This tidbit is what I give, from a thousand miles away, composed on the eve of my journey to India, written with great enjoyment and equally great aloha, to one who took the time to share his knowledge with me.