

Isle model/entertainer "Josie" Over dies at 49

By Wayne Harada

Advertiser-Entertainment-Editor

Josephine Nunez "Josie" Over, whose rainbow heritage and beauty lured visitors to Hawaii on brochures and posters and in numerous filmed-in-Hawaii television shows, died Tuesday night at her North Shore beach home.

She was 49. For many years, she was a premier model and a featured dancer and choreographer in Waikiki and Mainland Polynesian shows. As an actress, she appeared in scores of TV shows. In more recent times, Over enjoyed success as a water colorist and was well known for her philanthropic work with her husband, Don Over, bringing physically impaired children from the South Pacific here for corrective treatment.

Don Over said his wife had been in a coma but died after uttering his name, ending a three-and-a-half-year battle with rare multiple myeloma, a



"Josie" Over

cancer that affects the platelets in the blood.

Josie Over has worked for many years with the Tihati Polynesian revues as a dancer and choreographer.

"We have lost a special

friend," said Jack Eli Thompson, also known as "Tihati." "She would always call me Eli, and whenever we had show rehearsals, she would always tell me, 'Let's do it one more time, Eli, for Josie, one more time,' because she had a hard time catching a Polynesian phrase. We always did it one more time for Josie."

Her colleagues will remember her in a new Tihati production opening May 1 at the Sheraton Princess Kaiulani Hotel, with a song based on a poem by her friend Patricia Lei Anderson Murray and recorded by Tihati host Joe Recca. The song, "Haleiwa Moon," will be played for the first time at her funeral next week.

Cha Thompson, a vice president of Tihati, recalled that she started dancing in Polynesian shows with the then Josie Nunez at the Club Bora Bora in San Francisco.

"We started out together, dancing with Tarita, Marlon Brando's wife at the time, in San Francisco," said Cha. "She

was always a genuine friend." Josie and her husband, a former editor of the Builders Report Pacific, always had a house full of hanai (adopted) children, remembered Sheila Donnelly, a public-relations executive.

"She was a rather amazing little woman, raising all those 26 kids," said Donnelly. "In the last three years, she never discussed her pain. She would always ask how you were instead."

Over continued to work even after her cancer was diagnosed, completing roles on "Jake and the Fatman" and "L.A. Law." She also had credits on "Magnum P.I." and "Hawaii Five-0" and had a recurring role on

"Big Hawaii," another island-based series in the late 1970s. She also appeared on episodes of "Cagney & Lacey," "Eight Is Enough," "McCloud," "Quincy" and "Little People."

Because of her cosmopolitan looks — she was Filipino, Portuguese, Chinese and Spanish — Over was a popular model, appearing in numerous commercials, a Honolulu Magazine cover, an International Market Place poster and even on the 1971 Hawaiian Telephone directory.

Funeral services are set for 11 a.m. April 2 at the Over residence, 59-407 Kamehameha Highway, to be conducted by Alex McAngus, a Waikiki entertainer-turned-minister. Color-

ful aloha attire is suggested. Borthwick Mortuary is handling arrangements.

Besides her husband, Josie Over is survived by sons, Tai, Tau and Terry Over; daughters, Elvina, Martine, Ida, Fillette, Francois, Suzanne, Maire, and Tiare; brothers, Richard, Frank and Joseph "Flip" Nunez; sisters, Stella Borja and Mary Orculla; and many nephews, nieces and grandchildren, as well as numerous hanai children.

Her cremated remains will be scattered at sea. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in her name to St. Francis Hospice or the Hawaii chapter of the American Cancer Society.

March 26, 1992

NOBODY

SHELLY AUTO SQUARE

HAWAIIAN DELTA

SHELLY NIMITZ AIRPORT

Actress Nancy Walker dies at 69

'Josie' Over, isle actress, model and choreographer, dies

□ She and husband Don raised 11 kids, seven of them hanai

Star-Bulletin staff

Josephine Nunez "Josie" Over came to the islands more than three decades ago to dance.

But she left behind a legacy that goes far beyond the magazine covers, the television shows she performed in or the Polynesian shows she choreographed.

With her husband, Don Over, the couple raised 11 children — seven of them were hanai.

Elvina Fisher, who now lives in Los Angeles, said it took "teamwork; lots of teamwork because there were at least 10 of us at home at a time."

"My mother kept the household running all the time, making sure everyone's needs were met along the way," said Fisher, who was legally adopted by the Overs.

"Josie" Over, 49, died Tuesday at her Oahu North Shore home after losing a three-year fight with cancer. She was born in Los Angeles.

"One of the last things she said to me," said close friend Sheila Donnelly, "was that 'I think I caught a miracle and beat this.'"

Besides being one of Hawaii's premier dancers and models, Over was "a fabulous cook and a wonderful athlete," Donnelly said.

"She also was one of the most giving and inspirational human beings I have ever known."

Over was the featured dancer and choreographer of various Waikiki and mainland Polynesian shows and

national television programs.

Fisher recalled that her entire family in one way or another performed or worked on the "Tihati" show, which began at the Moana Hotel more than 15 years ago.



Josephine Over

and "Jake and the Fatman." In recent years, she gained success as a water-color artist and was well

known for bringing handicapped children from the South Pacific for corrective treatment.

A service will be held at the Over's Sunset Beach home at 59-407 Kamehameha Highway beginning at 11 a.m. next Thursday. Colorful aloha attire is requested.

Funeral arrangements are by Borthwick Mortuary.

The family requests that in lieu of flowers, donations be made to the St. Francis Hospice or the local chapter of the American Cancer Society.

Besides Fisher, other survivors include husband Don; sons Tai, Tau and Terry; daughters Ida Teiti, Martine McCullom, Fillette Bollag, Françoise Willard, Maire Cosco, Suzanne Puirau and Tiare Tiche; brothers Richard, Frank and Joseph "Flip" Nunez; and sisters Stella Borja and Mary Orcullo.