



TASMANIA UNIVERSITY UNION TAIKO SOCIETY

WELCOME

As a beginner, the enclosed information gives you some basic threads that will help to gradually weave together an understanding of the world of taiko. We hope your involvement will be the start of many hours of fun enjoying the challenges and rewards learning to play taiko drums with this wonderful group.



ABOUT TAIKO

Outside of Japan the word “taiko” or “wa-daiko” (“Japanese drum” in Japanese) is often used to refer to any of the various Japanese drums and to the relatively recent art-form of ensemble taiko drumming, which is sometimes called more specifically “kumi-daiko”.

Japanese drumming, known as Taiko, is a visually spectacular art form, which originated in the festivals and rituals of the agricultural society of ancient Japan. Unlike other ‘high-cultural’ art forms such as the Kabuki, Noh Dancing or Tea Ceremony, Taiko culture is community-based, and the most widely practiced ‘popular-cultural’ art form in contemporary Japanese society.

It is played as part of local festivals in virtually every district throughout Japan, and local Taiko masters have passed on its techniques orally for many hundreds of years. Most performers at such festivals are non-professional, local residents, and many of them are school children. Taiko plays a strong role in promoting a sense of community, and cultivating teamwork skills among the local residents.

Over the last fifty years, Taiko has become internationally recognised as a form performance art, and many contemporary drumming groups have been formed both in Japan and in many other countries. There are more than 8,000 Taiko groups in Japan, and several of them conduct international tours.

Taikoz, based in Sydney is Australia’s best-known professional taiko group.
<http://www.taikoz.com>

About TUUTS

The Tasmania University Union Taiko Society was formed in 2002 by Simon Vanyai & Hiroko Otsuka to create the opportunity to train, perform and teach the Japanese Art of the Drum. The TUUTS is affiliated with the Tasmania University Union and receives administrative support to provide an opportunity to University students, school students, and the general public to learn and enjoy the art of taiko.

The group received wonderful support from the Australia Japan Society and the Japan Club of Hobart in the first years of its establishment and has continued strong ties with them to help promote this fascinating Japanese cultural tradition.

The group has evolved dramatically over the last 7 years, with groups having been established in both Burnie and Launceston.
<http://www.taikodrum.com>



TAIKO DRUM FAMILY TREE

Grandmaster Daihachi Oguchi - *Osuwa Daiko - Ashura-Gumi*

Modern taiko is recognized as having been established in 1951 by **Daihachi Oguchi**. He is credited with forming the first actual Taiko ensemble referred to as kumi-daiko and starting the modern popularity of Taiko performances.

Daihachi Oguchi was originally known for his jazz drumming performances. His simple idea of putting together various Taiko of different shapes, sizes, and pitches into an ensemble much like a jazz drum set, became the foundation of modern Taiko. Daihachi Oguchi led the successful Taiko group **Osuwa Daiko**.

Oguchi is widely attributed as the Grand Master of modern Taiko. He formed or helped to form nearly 200 taiko groups in Japan, Singapore, Canada and the U.S, and unfortunately died in an accident in 2008 at 84 years old.

<http://dojotenko.gouketu.com/abosuwa.htm>

Grandmaster Seiichi Tanaka - *San Francisco Taiko Dojo*

Recognized by the Japanese government as a National Abstract Cultural Treasure, Grand Master Tanaka was the first “outsider” to be accepted as an apprentice with Grand Master Daihachi Oguchi of the Suwa Taiko.

Seiichi Tanaka, a postwar immigrant who studied taiko in Japan brought the styles and teachings to America by forming the first American taiko group, **San Francisco Taiko Dojo** in 1968. To Grand Master Tanaka, Taiko drumming can be expressed in one word—“heartbeat.” “We listen to it before we are born—it is instinctive.”

http://sftaiko.com/about_tanaka.html

Master Tiffany Tamaribuchi - *Sacramento Taiko Dan*

Tiffany Tamaribuchi joined San Francisco Taiko Dojo in 1988. In the traditional taiko realm of Japanese born and trained male performers, she has created a new powerful voice with her multicultural heritage, youth, and feminine perspective.

She established Sacramento Taiko Dan, a nonprofit organisation, in 1989. She is the founder and artistic director of three active taiko groups and her vitality reaches extremely diverse audiences throughout North America, Europe, and Japan. In 1993 she was invited to play with Za Ondekoza. In 1996 she left to study in Japan and then returned to the United States in 1998 to focus on her own groups and career there.

<http://www.tttaiko.com/tiffany.html>



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TAIKO DRUM FAMILY TREE

Master Art Lee – Ondekoza / Tokara

Art Lee is the first non-Japanese ever to obtain an artist visa from the Japanese government to lead the life of a professional taiko artist in Japan.

Art Lee first began the study of taiko in 1993 from the Sacramento Taiko Dan with whom he later became a featured performer and instructor. He later joined one of the world's most famed taiko groups, Za Ondekoza.

Art Lee became a solo performer after moving to Japan in 1998 and is director of the taiko group **Tokara**. He is leading a new generation of Taiko performers by introducing a new style of Taiko composition.

<http://www.wadaikoworld.net/ArtLee/>

Simon Vanyai – TUUTS / Taiko Drum / Maturiki

Simon Vanyai is the co-founder, artistic director and sensei of the Society. He lived in Japan for four years, studying the language, culture and taiko. Simon trained in the way of the drum with Art Lee in Nagano Prefecture, and when he returned to Tasmania he helped form the Tasmania University Union Taiko Society in 2002 along with Hiroko Otuka.

Taiko Drum is the performance arm of the TUUTS, and can be seen at a wide variety of multicultural events and community festivals around Tasmania. Members are involved in schools visits around the state. The group also performs at corporate and private functions, and holds public drumming workshops.

Maturiki is the performance group of TUUTS that takes taiko in Tasmania to a higher level,

<http://www.taikodrum.com>



TASMANIA UNIVERSITY UNION TAIKO SOCIETY

KEEP IN THE LOOP

Taiko Drum Website: www.taikodrum.com

Taiko Drum Wiki: <https://my.pbworks.com>

Facebook

HOW YOU CAN CONTRIBUTE TO THE SOCIETY

Every member comes with different skills, and if you feel that you have the time and would like to share your expertise with the group there are many jobs and tasks that need to be done to help maintain the smooth running of the Society, then your contribution would be most welcome. These range from **maintaining the library, cleaning the dojo, keeping track of equipment, maintaining records, washing & ironing uniforms, becoming a committee member, making phone calls, making drums** and more. We would love to hear from you. Please ask an executive or committee member who will be able to guide you in the right direction.



TAIKO TERMINOLOGY

Taiko – Japanese word for Drum - ("Powerful Drum")

Wadaiko – Japanese drums / traditional style rhythms of Japan .

Daiko - the styles and rhythms of an area / region

Dojo – is the Japanese term used for a training school or room

Bachi – is the name for the wooden sticks used to play Japanese taiko drums

Kakegoe – are the shouts that taiko players use to keep time, increase their energy, and encourage one another while playing.

Hayashi / Bayashi - Ensemble music with Taiko, Fue and Atarimono (bells, cymbals)

Sansa - a parade of villagers, dancing to the rhythm of Taiko, and melody of Fue

Matsuri - a festival, often for celebration of seasonal changes, worship and gratitude to gods by the village folk

Odori - a dance

Minyo - folk song



DRUMS

O-Daiko – is the largest nagado taiko. Odaiko are so large that they cannot even be moved and reside inside a temple or shrine. In Japan they are from a single piece of wood, some odaiko can come from trees that are hundreds of years old. Odaiko are played on stands in a horizontal position, often with a drummer on each side of the same drum. “O” means “big” in Japanese

Nagado daiko – is the most common taiko, with the taiko body length equal to, or longer than the diameter and are made from a single log of wood in Japan. They can be played upright resting on their end, or on a stand in either a horizontal or diagonal position. The name literally means "long drum."

Okedo daiko – is a large taiko with 2 hooped heads held with rope. Okedo are played on a stand ("kagami uchi"). These drums were originally made from buckets or barrels called "oke."

Katsugi daiko – is a lightweight drum that is easy to carry for long periods. It has a strap attached that is worn over the shoulder. The drum is played laterally and allows a great deal of mobility.

Hira daiko – literally means “flat drum”. The diameter of the head is always larger than the depth of the drum shell. They are made in the same way as a nagado daiko with the drumhead tacked to the rim of the body.

Shime daiko – is a small high pitched taiko that often plays the back beat or "jiuchi" of a song. The name comes from the word "to tighten," since the skins are traditionally held with rope (sometimes bolts) and can be tuned.



Drum positions

Tachiuchi - upright standing position

Nanameuchi – high diagonal position

Suwariuchi – low diagonal position

Yokomenuchi - horizontal position

Other instruments

Kane - is a bell and is played with a single stick called a "**shumoku**" that traditionally has a piece of deer antler on the end. The kane often helps to keep the backbeat of a song.

Chappa – are small hand cymbals that are used in place of a Kane to keep the "jiuchi" or basic rhythm of a song.

Fue - bamboo flute in pentatonic scale, and also called shinobue.

Shakuhachi - a special Japanese flute made of a long piece of bamboo. Shakuhachi have a low breathy sound.

Dora - a gong.

Taiko Uniform

Happi – are the short coats that are usually worn with an obi (belt). Often the happi bears the name and logo (called "mon") of the taiko group.

Obi - the belt worn with a kimono or happi coat.

Tabi - shoes worn by taiko players with the big toe separated like the thumb of a mitten.

Hachimaki - the head band worn by taiko players.



TAIKO NOTATION

Hara - centre of the drum
Fuchi - edge of the drum
Ko - body of the drum

Taiko	Shime daiko	Meaning & Musical Value
Don (Kon)	Ten (Ken)	A single loud beat to the center of the drum. Notes played with the right hand on a taiko are called " Don ", and notes played with the left hand are called " Kon ".
Do (Ko)	Te (Ke)	" Do " has a value $\frac{1}{2}$ that of "Don", or is twice as fast. The left hand is notated as " Ko ".
tsu	tsu	A rest or note played very softly . The value of the note is variable.
ka (ta)	ka (ta)	A beat played on the edge of the drum or sometimes on the body. The left hand is notated as " ta ".
kara	kara	Two fast beats played on the edge of the drum and played "right, left."
ma		The space between two notes or beats on the drum. Ma is just as important as the notes that surround it.

Playing a solid backbeat requires good technical skill, as well as strong timing and listening skills. The backbeat keeps the timing and is the driving force of a song.

common backbeat rhythms: **Straight backbeat:**

Mitsu Ushi (regular backbeat):

O-hayashi (heartbeat):

Matsuri:

do ko do ko

Don do ko

Don ko

Don do ko Don Kon



DOJO ETIQUETTE

THE BEGINNING OF THE LESSON

Students will form a circle.

A senior student will strike the Odaiko to let the teacher know that the group is ready for the lesson to begin.

The teacher will join the circle then bow and say:

お願いします **ONEGAISHIMASU** - (on a gye she muss)
'if you please' or 'it is my wish'

The students reply as they bow, with the same:

お願いします **ONEGAISHIMASU** (on a gye she muss)

THE END OF THE LESSON

The class will form a circle. The teacher will bow and say:

お疲れ様でした **OTSUKARESAMADESHITA** - (ots kari sum uh desh ta)
'thank you for your hard work' *or*

お疲れ様です **OTSUKARESAMADESU** - (ots kari sum uh des)

The students reply as they bow:

ありがとうございました **ARIGATOU GOZAIMASHITA**
(arr ee gah toe goh zai ee mush tah) 'thank you very much' *or*

ありがとうございます **ARIGATOU GOZAIMASU**
(arr ee gah toe goh zai ee muss)

ENTERING THE DOJO

bow and say お願いします **ONEGAISHIMASU**

If you arrive late to class, you should say:

遅くなってすみません **OSOKU NATTE SUMIMASEN**
(osocku nutteh soomimasen)

'for being late, excuse me'

LEAVING THE DOJO

Turn back to face the room, bow and say

ありがとうございました **ARIGATOU GOZAIMASHITA**

If you have to leave before the class is finished or before the teacher leaves the room, you should say:

お先に失礼します **OSAKI NI SHITSUREI SHIMASU**
(osarki nee shitsuray shimasu)

'sorry for leaving first/before you'

CLASS RULES

DO NOT LEAN OR REST ON THE DRUMS. Drums should be respected and should not be used for any other purpose than for drumming.

DO NOT DROP YOUR BACHI OR KICK/TOUCH THEM WITH YOUR FEET. Bachi should be placed gently down on the floor.



ACTIVE WARM UPS & STRETCHES

by Raelene Callaway

Taiko is not just about rhythms; it is also about whole body movement, cardio-vascular fitness and strength. While it can usually be adapted to an individual's level of fitness, at times it can be physically challenging. For this reason a warm up will be conducted at the beginning and cool down and stretch performed at the end of each session.

If you are injured or have health conditions you should consult with your doctor before beginning Taiko. Please let the instructor know before the class begins so that modifications to the activity/stretch can be adapted to your condition if possible.

ACTIVE WARM UP AT THE BEGINNING OF THE LESSON

An active warm-up is dynamic (the body is constantly moving). The active warm up consists of:

The “**Name Game**” - a team activity, which trains the student to feel **on beat & off beat** rhythms, and teaches coordination of movements.

Dynamic stretches and warm up drumming drills.

STATIC STRETCHING AT THE END OF A TRAINING SESSION

Static stretching cools down and lengthens those muscles that may have tightened up during the training session. These stretches are held for a longer duration.

What else can I do to help my muscles?

- Drink water during training, and drink water regularly throughout the day.
- Your muscles are built from the food you eat so ensure you are getting optimal nutrition.
- Get enough sleep – your body repairs itself when you sleep.
- Keep your muscles warm after exercising. Put on warm clothes after training.
- **Use them – or lose them!**

TIPS

- Warm up before dynamic or static stretching. Active warm ups and static stretches should start slowly and gently and gradually build in intensity.
- **Breathe!** Don't hold your breath while stretching. Breathe out and relax as you move into the stretch, this will assist blood flow and increase oxygen levels.
- Warm ups/stretching should **NOT** create pain.
- Never perform “ballistic” stretches (bouncing the stretch) due to the high risk of injury of this method.

The recommendations made at Taiko Drum are made for the members' benefit. The responsibility lies with the participant to make sure they are comfortable, and that they are doing what is right for their individual needs. Participants may choose to modify the routines and stretches according to other professional advice they may have received, and their own needs.



WHAT TO EXPECT FROM A CLASS

It is a good idea to arrive early as usually everyone is busting to get started at 6:30, and you don't want to miss out on getting properly warmed up and taking on the challenge of the name game. Although there is a cold-water dispenser at the dojo, bring your own drink bottle as a class can be a good workout and you build up a thirst! The only other thing you really need to bring is a pair of earplugs!

The class starts

- **Practice previous songs**
Sometimes the whole group will run through a song we've learnt in the past to keep it fresh in our minds – if you know it (or even roughly know it) – join in – no harm in having a few dodgy bits. If not, you can kick back on the side or in the back row and have a crack at joining in or just watch.
- **Learn new songs**
Each month we learn a new song – we go at a slow pace and practice and stop for questions etc. Over the month we'll learn all the basic components of the song. Then there's a workshop to put all the pieces together so you can play the whole song.
- **Drills and exercises**
In training we also do drills and exercises to improve our strength and technique – and just polish.

The class finishes

We run through some static stretches in a group to cool down, and that's basically it. Usually 8:30 arrives before we know it, and we reluctantly have to stop.

Further Help

And if you ever want some further help with a particular part of a song, or you have any questions, just ask any of the more experienced members. The group is very keen to share their knowledge and can give you some individual help if you want it. The weekend workshops are also a good time to practice certain bits you're having problems with, or to get some extra tuition.

Beware – it's very addictive!! Enjoy!!!