

TAIKO

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Vocabulary

Taiko – drum	O-daiko – largest drum in an ensemble
Bachi - sticks	Chu-daiko – medium-sized drum
Kata – stance	Shime-daiko – smallest drum
Ich – one	Kane – small gong
Ni – two	Chappa – cymbals
San – three	Yokobue - flute
Shi – four	

History

- Traditionally used as a solo instrument in villages to delineate boundaries (when you can no longer hear the drums you are outside of the village), or as war drums
- Largely fell out of use in the late 1800s as Japan industrialized and modernized
- Revitalized after WWII as a way to reclaim Japanese culture and masculinity
- New style combined different sized drums in an ensemble

North American Taiko

- Popularity spread to North America, beginning in San Francisco
- Southern California has several groups, including the Taiko Center of Los Angeles, led by Revered Tom Kurai
- Not just an Asian-American practice anymore; people of all ethnicities practice and perform in the United States

Learning a Song

Key:

R – right hand

L – left hand

DON – a single loud strike

DORO – two consecutive loud strikes (R, L)

TSUKU – two consecutive quiet strikes (R, L)

KARA – two consecutive strikes on the rim of the drum (R, L)

(each line takes 8 equal counts)

DON (rest) DON (rest) DON (rest) DON (rest) (x2)

DORO TSUKU DORO TSUKU DORO TSUKU DON DON (x2)

DON KARA DON KARA DON KARA KARA KARA (x2)

DON TSUKU DON TSUKU DON TSUKU DON DON (x2)

O-DAIKO



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CHU-DAIKO



SHIME-DAIKO



KANE



CHAPPA



YOKOBUE

