



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 20, 2003

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***** Announcing Portland Taiko's Big Bang! *****

Big Bang: CD Release Concert

September 5 & 6, 2003 (Friday and Saturday), **8:00 p.m.**

Newmark Theatre (PCPA, 1111 SW Broadway)

Tickets (\$17.50 - \$25.00), TicketsWest (800-325-SEAT)

Little Bang: Children's Matinee

September 6, 2003 (Saturday), **2:00 p.m.**

Newmark Theatre

Matinee Tickets (\$8.50 - \$13.00), TicketsWest

(Portland, OR) –

Returning to the Newmark Theatre for its fourth consecutive year, Portland Taiko will present its full company, its biggest drums, and its newest compositions (including all the songs from its new CD) in an electrifying CD release concert called **Big Bang**. The group will also treat children to a special matinee performance called **Little Bang**.

Big Bang: The CD Release Concert

Thundering taiko drums, dueling violin and bamboo flute, and a powerful groove that puts most rock-and-roll bands to shame – this is Portland Taiko's **Big Bang**. **Big Bang's** title refers to the sound of the taiko (Japanese drum), and to the power of creativity fused with contemporary Asian American expression. It features that unmistakable sound of the big drum, but also polyrhythm, melody and space.

Big Bang, the group's second recording, fuses old and new – traditional and innovation. The works on the album are inspired by traditional Japanese music, but also draw on contemporary American music forms like jazz, R&B, hip-hop, and rock. The combination is an infectious blend of folk sounds and modern musical sensibilities. The **Big Bang** concert will bring these new works to the stage, and

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will also include select audience favorites that pre-date the new recording – highly choreographed pieces that will shake the rafters of the Newmark Theatre

The recording process of the ***Big Bang*** CD paid special attention to capturing the formidable sound of Portland Taiko’s big drums (the largest measures six feet long and over four-and-a-half feet wide). These drums don’t fit through the doors of most recording studios, and their long sound wavelengths can’t be captured in small rooms. So the group recorded at a large acoustic hall. The result is a beautiful, warm taiko sound – ranging from a bone-deep bass reverberation to the quiet of falling rain.

Big Bang follows on the success of Portland Taiko’s first recording, ***Making Waves***, which spent several weeks at number one on The Oregonian’s local bands sales ranking and is currently in its 3rd pressing. Music critic James McQuillen wrote, “some of the tracks hew close to the traditional Japanese sound; others incorporate melodic and rhythmic material that the festival drummers of old Japan could never have imagined. The high energy is infectious throughout: If you can listen to the whole disc sitting down, check your pulse”. The concert will also feature a short film by videographer Dan Pred about the making of the CD, including glimpses of PT’s recording sessions and behind the scenes footage.

Little Bang: The Matinee

This special 55-minute matinee performance will take children on a visual and auditory journey through taiko performance and storytelling. Drawing from its experience of performing over 350 shows for schoolchildren, Portland Taiko’s *Little Bang* matinee will feature audience participation, laughter, culture and music. The show is perfect for kids (and their parents) who like shorter performances and enjoy laughing and participating. NOTE: ***Little Bang*** is not a shortened version of the evening concert; it is a distinct performance designed for children.

About Portland Taiko

Established in 1994, **Portland Taiko** is an award-winning Asian American drum performance ensemble. Through artistic excellence and innovation in taiko, Portland Taiko inspires audiences, affirms Asian American pride, builds community, and educates about our heritage and culture. The only professional taiko company in the Northwestern United States, the ensemble is widely recognized as a leading group in the North American taiko community. For thousands of years, the booming voice of the taiko, or Japanese drum, has called the community together in ceremony and celebration. Portland Taiko echoes that tradition while taking Asian American music into unexplored territory with its innovative and provocative creations.