



Asian American
Drum Performance

3230 NE Columbia Blvd
Portland, OR
97211

ph: (503) 288-2456

fax: (503) 288-2460

email:
info@portlandtaiko.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 1, 2004

Ann Ishimaru or Zack Semke
info@portlandtaiko.org
www.portlandtaiko.org
(503) 288-2456

Spotlight on Composers

(Portland, OR)

How does a taiko composition evolve from idea to reality? As part of Portland Taiko's (PT's) 10th Anniversary Season, PT will present a series of Composer Spotlights, focused on the guest composers who are creating several new works for the company's fall concert: *On the Shoulders of Giants*. These composers are PT's artistic "giants;" pioneers in the North American taiko community whose influence and mentorship have greatly impacted PT's growth as one of the country's leading Asian American arts organizations. Two more Composer Spotlights are scheduled in the months leading to the company's fall concert; each providing the public a unique opportunity to view works-in-progress and dialogue with those behind the process of creating them.

The next Composer Spotlight features Sacramento Taiko Dan's **Tiffany Tamaribuchi**, special guest emcee **Dmae Roberts** and will be held on **Wednesday, July 14, 2004, from 6:30-8:00 PM** at the **Interstate Firehouse Cultural Center, 5340 N. Interstate Avenue, Portland**. Admission is \$7 or free with a PT season subscription. Call the PT office for more information: 503 288 2456 or info@portlandtaiko.org.

About Tiffany Tamaribuchi

Tiffany Tamaribuchi is an internationally recognized taiko master who has achieved a level of acclaim in trailblazing fashion. In the traditional taiko realm of Japanese born and trained male performers, she creates a new powerful voice with her multicultural heritage, youth, and feminine perspective. As founder and artistic director of three active taiko groups, her vitality reaches extremely diverse audiences throughout North America, Europe, and Japan.

First and foremost in her dedication is Sacramento Taiko Dan, a nonprofit organization that she began in 1989 to introduce taiko within her local community. Welcoming all interested drummers, Ms. Tamaribuchi instructs children and adults who eventually graduate into their respective performing groups. In addition to taiko techniques, students acquire life lessons in observation, focus, relaxation, and the benefits of simply breathing. Taiko draws upon one's entire spiritual being and elements of nature, which inspire Ms. Tamaribuchi's original compositions and the choreography used in Sacramento Taiko Dan's extensive concert schedule of 45+ performances annually.

Ms. Tamaribuchi also directs Tozai Wadaiko, a professional touring taiko ensemble comprised of individual artists from groups throughout the world whose repertoire fuses traditional taiko rhythms with modern influences for a fresh Japanese-American sound.

Expanding the performance opportunities for women taiko players, Ms. Tamaribuchi formed and coordinates JO-Daiko, an exclusively women's taiko ensemble which performs at events focused on women's issues. Embodying strong and commanding

images, JO-Daiko's voice awakens a sense of self-empowerment for women-both as performers and spectators.

About Dmae Roberts

Dmae Roberts is an award-winning Amerasian playwright, journalist, and educator who has written and produced more than 400 features, audio arts pieces and documentaries for National Public Radio and Public Radio International programming. In 1990, she received the prestigious George Foster Peabody award for her autobiographical radio documentary *MEI MEI, A Daughter's Song*. Her work in journalism has also garnered her numerous other awards and grants from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the National Endowment for the Arts, and various other journalistic associations and organizations.

As the executive producer of *MEDIARITES*, a non-profit organization dedicated to multicultural arts production in radio, theatre and educational outreach, she continues her personal mission to create works that bring diverse communities together. Though Roberts was born in Asia and lived there as a child, Oregon has been her home since the age of ten. Here she continues to write from a Northwest perspective while working on community and national projects.

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, with tours across the country, awards from the **National Endowment for the Arts** and the **American Composers Forum**, and a year-round full-time professional artistic core. During its East Coast tour this January, PT made its **Kennedy Center debut** in Washington DC before a standing-room-only crowd at the Millennium Stage.

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. Discography: *Making Waves* (2000), *Big Bang* (2003). *“‘Big Bang’ represents both an engineering and musical triumph. This album delivers a wholly engaging mix of bone-rattling drumming interspersed by Japanese singing and chanting and occasional coloristic touches on two violins and flute.”* – Norm Weinstein, *The Beat*.

###