



PRESS RELEASE

March 14, 2006

For immediate release

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What: *The Spirit of Taiko* Film Screening

Who: Portland Taiko, Asian American Drum Performance, with Gayle Yamada, filmmaker

When: Wednesday, April 12, 2006, 6:30pm

Where: Hollywood Theatre, 4122 NE Sandy Blvd., Portland

Tickets: \$10 general, \$7 seniors/students. Available **beginning March 10** through Hollywood Theatre box office, **by phone** at (503) 493-1128, **online** at www.hollywoodtheatre.org, or **in person** at the Hollywood Theatre office, 9am-5pm Monday-Friday or at the theatre box office, 4122 NE Sandy Blvd., 15 minutes before the first show of the day through the last show.

For further information: Call (503) 288-2546 for further information or visit www.portlandtaiko.org

Sponsors: The James F. and Marion L. Miller Foundation and The Autzen Foundation.

PORTLAND PREMIERE FILM TRACES *THE SPIRIT OF TAIKO*

Portland Taiko, the Asian American drum performance group, launches its 2006 season with a screening of *The Spirit of Taiko* on April 12, 2006 at 6:30pm at the Hollywood Theatre. Film co-director and co-executive producer Gayle K. Yamada will be on hand for a talkback session following the screening. Light refreshments will be served following the talkback.

“Taiko” is the Japanese word for “big drum.” A new genre of taiko drumming took hold in the United States in the 1960s which has been evolving into a dynamic “new” performing art. *The Spirit of Taiko* traces the evolution of taiko in North America through three generations, interweaving the rich stories of taiko leaders, artists, and drum builders.

Two of the artists featured in the film have ties to Portland Taiko. Kenny Endo was commissioned to create new work for the group in 2000. He trained the company and played as a guest artist. Masato Baba is currently commissioned to create a new collaborative work for PT’s spring concert, *Crossing Bridges*, in which both he and Endo will also perform.

Asian American
Drum Performance

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Gayle K. Yamada is an award-winning executive producer/producer/director/writer with more than 25 years in commercial, public, and cable television and radio, including documentaries, informational series, cultural performances, feature-length segments, news, corporate videos, and non-broadcast educational projects.

Her recent works as producer-director-writer-executive producer include *The Spirit of Taiko*; *Pacific Fusion*; and *Uncommon Courage: Patriotism and Civil Liberties*, a PBS program (on Japanese American soldiers in the Military Intelligence Service during World War II and the Occupation of Japan). National television credits include *We the People with Peter Jennings*, *Yan Can Cook*, *Bradshaw on Homecoming*, *Growing a Business*, *Cooking at the Academy*, and *Take Charge! With Jane Bryant Quinn*; Videotape projects include *Fighting for Justice: The Coram Nobis Cases*, *Asian Law Caucus: 25 Years in Defense of Civil Rights*, and *Ice Cream and Economics: Ben and Jerry's Homemade*.

She is the co-author of two books, *Building a Community: The Story of Japanese Americans in San Mateo County* (2003) and *Hard News: Women in Broadcast Journalism* (1987), and was a columnist for the *Gainesville Sun* and *Peninsula* magazine. Her awards include first-place honors from the Asian American Journalists Association in both television and radio, an Edward R. Murrow regional award for documentary, Best Historical Documentary from the New York International Independent Film & Video Festival, a national Emmy nomination, several Northern California Emmy nominations for directing, writing, and documentary, and a Governor's Award from the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences.

Steven Dung, Dianne Fukumi, and Daniel Morii Schwinn share executive producer and directing credits with Ms Yamada for *The Spirit of Taiko*, which features narration by "Sheila E" Escovedo.

The Hollywood Theatre is located at 4122 NE Sandy Blvd., Portland. Admission is \$10 general, \$7 seniors over 65 and students with ID. Tickets are available **beginning March 10** through the Hollywood Theatre box office **by phone** at 503-493-1128, **online** at www.hollywoodtheatre.org, or **in person** at the Hollywood Theatre office, 9am-5pm Monday-Friday or at the theatre box office, 4122 NE Sandy Blvd., 15 minutes before the first show of the day through the last show.

For further information about the program or Portland Taiko call (503) 288-2546 for further or visit www.portlandtaiko.org.

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