



NEWS RELEASE

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For immediate release

Photos available

Contact: Michael Griggs

(503) 288-2456

info@portlandtaiko.org

www.portlandtaiko.org

What: Portland Taiko's 2010 Season

Who: Portland Taiko, Asian American Drum Performance

When & Where: *The Way Back Home*

March 27, 2pm and 8pm at the Dolores Winningstad Theatre, Portland Center for the Performing Arts, 1111 SW Broadway, Portland

Ten Tiny Taiko Dances

June 19, 3pm and 8pm and June 20, 2pm at the Dolores Winningstad Theatre, Portland Center for the Performing Arts, 1111 SW Broadway, Portland

Romp Stomp Boom!

October 2, 2pm at the the Newmark Theatre, Portland Center for the Performing Arts, 1111 SW Broadway, Portland

Taiko Unleashed

October 2, 8pm and October 3, 2pm at the Newmark Theatre, Portland Center for the Performing Arts, 1111 SW Broadway, Portland

Tickets: Season tickets on sale now, \$70; Patron Season tickets \$145.

Call Portland Taiko at (503) 288-2456 or www.portlandtaiko.org.

Season Supported by: Mabel Shoji Boggs in memory of Mitsuru Kai Shoji, George and May Shoji; Oregon Arts Commission; National Endowment for the Arts; Regional Arts & Culture Council; and Target

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Portland Taiko Brings Innovation and Collaboration to the Stage in 2010

Asian American drum performance ensemble Portland Taiko offers something for all seasons in 2010 in three distinct concerts: a show shaped by their unique community based creative process, a dynamic collaboration and world premiere performances, and for the season finale, the presentation of a taiko legend.

This spring, Portland Taiko's 2010 season begins on March 27 with the Portland debut of PT's national touring program, *The Way Back Home*, at the Winningstad Theatre.

Summer starts with movement and music, in the unique taiko and dance performances of *Ten Tiny Taiko Dances*, June 19 and 20 at the Winningstad Theatre. *Ten Tiny Taiko Dances* is co-curated by choreographer, performer, and founder of Ten Tiny Dances, Mike Barber. Barber will also perform on the tiny 4x4 stage for the concert.

In the fall, the lively family matinee concert, *Romp Stomp Boom!* rocks the Newmark Theatre on October 2. The 2010 season finale fall concert, *Taiko Unleashed* brings guest artist Grand Master Seiichi Tanaka and San Francisco Taiko Dojo and Portland Taiko's entire performing group to the Newmark's stage. This climactic concert combines contemporary and traditional taiko rhythms, dance movement, and stunning martial arts displays. *Taiko Unleashed* shows on October 2 and 3. 2010 Patron and Season tickets are on sale now at www.portlandtaiko.org or 503.288.2456.

Asian American
Drum Performance

3230 NE Columbia Blvd

Portland, OR

97211

ph: (503) 288-2456

fax: (503) 288-2460

email:
info@portlandtaiko.org

“From a child’s crayon drawing, to the displaced and refugees from shattered destruction of all that they knew, home is a sacred place we all search for,” says Portland Taiko’s Artistic Director, Michelle Fujii. On March 27, PT brings their successful national touring concert home, for the first time, to Portland’s Winningstad Theatre in *The Way **Back** Home*. The concert has been performed throughout the country, and this year it seemed the right time to bring it home. Fujii explains, “Home can be a place to express and to be your self. Right now people are losing that space.”

*The Way **Back** Home* was inspired by Portland Taiko’s own personal experiences and stories from the local Vietnamese community that were woven into their 2007 production, *The Way Home*. With its core ensemble of performers, *The Way **Back** Home* has been refined to its essence, exploring the theme of home while showing the full range of Portland Taiko’s artistic expression.

“This project is gonna rock!” declares Mike Barber, Portland creator of Ten Tiny Dances. Barber is curating the summer 2010 concert, *Ten Tiny **Taiko** Dances*, with Portland Taiko. Original dance and taiko pieces will be performed on a 4x4 stage, using the drum as a creative element. Genres will range from pure movement, theatre and dance, and pounding taiko performances.

The “rules” for Ten Tiny Dances performances have varied since the first performance in 2002. For some concerts, performers have not been allowed off the tiny stage at all, or only allowed off for 15 seconds, or with one foot off, etc. Barber explains that this year, “Now, what is most important is for the choreographer to see that the 4 x 4 stage is a dominant artistic element.” Barber is, “Interested, always, in seeing how the constraint of the stage impacts the creative process for the artist and the audience.” *Ten Tiny **Taiko** Dances* premieres June 19, 3pm with additional performances at 8pm and June 20 at 2pm, at the Portland Center for the Performing Arts, Dolores Winningstad Theatre.

Portland Taiko’s annual fall concert finales traditionally see the biggest drums and the largest ensemble performance, and this year will not disappoint. Portland Taiko’s entire performing group will share the stage with an artistic giant in North American taiko, Grand Master Seiichi Tanaka & San Francisco Taiko Dojo in *Taiko **Unleashed***.

Tanaka brought the art form of modern Japanese taiko to North America, founding San Francisco Taiko Dojo in 1968, after seeing no taiko drumming at the 1967 Cherry Blossom festival in San Francisco, or anywhere else during his travels in the United States. “In Japan, taiko drumming is played at practically every occasion, especially special ones like festivals, or ceremonies,” says Tanaka. Mr. Tanaka hoped that the word “taiko,” like “karate” and “sushi,” would one day become a part of the American vocabulary.

In over 40 years, Grand Master Tanaka and San Francisco Taiko Dojo have gained worldwide attention and have taken their taiko performances to Japan, Germany, France, Switzerland, Austria, Israel, Mexico, Brazil, Cuba, and across the United States. In 2001, Grand Master Tanaka was named a National Heritage Fellow by the National Endowment for the Arts. His performance in *Taiko **Unleashed*** will showcase the dynamic and powerful art form of North American taiko that he helped pioneer.

*Taiko **Unleashed*** plays October 2, 8pm and October 3, 2pm at the Portland Center for the Performing Arts, Newmark Theatre. Portland Taiko’s 2010 family matinee, *Romp Stomp **Boom!***, will play October 2, 2pm in the Newmark Theatre, with music, storytelling, and taiko rhythms for the whole family.

Season tickets for Portland Taiko’s 2010 Season are on sale now for \$70 at www.portlandtaiko.org. Patron season tickets are on sale for \$145 and include preferred seating, entrance into the Patron & Cast Party on October 3, 7pm and a \$60 tax deductible donation to Portland Taiko. For more information and for group tickets, call 503.288.2456 or email info@portlandtaiko.org.

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