

Quad Cities Residency 2020
Taiko Quick Facts
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Examples of taiko performance

- **What is taiko?**

- “Taiko” literally means “big drum” in Japanese
- Traditionally made out of whole tree trunks and hide
- A modern, more affordable way to make taiko is with wine barrels
- Taiko come in many shapes and sizes, allowing a taiko ensemble the potential to have many different sounds and textures



- **Where is taiko from?**

- Taiko is originally from Japan
- For centuries, taiko was used primarily for military and religious purposes
- In the 1950s, Daihachi Oguchi envisioned the contemporary performance style of large taiko ensembles. Inspired by American jazz drumming, Oguchi began experimenting with many taiko being played at once. His then-new style of taiko performance quickly gained stature and popularity in Japan, and eventually all over the world.



- ***How did taiko come to the United States?***
 - Taiko came over along with Japanese immigrants to the United States in the early 1900s. Just like in Japan, they were primarily used for temple or folk ceremonies.
 - After World War II and the incarceration of Japanese and Japanese Americans living in the United States, observance of Japanese culture largely came to a stop. Assimilation was (and continues to be for many non-white Americans and immigrants) a survival mechanism for many Japanese Americans who looked to return to the lives that had been uprooted by war time incarceration.
 - Taiko did not gain popularity again in the United States until 1968, when Seiji Tanaka brought the contemporary kumi-daiko style (invented by Daihachi Oguchi) to San Francisco and started the San Francisco Taiko Dojo. Since then, taiko has spread all across the United States. There are many groups, each with its own history and motivation for playing taiko.

- ***What are some examples of taiko performance today? These are just a few! Look up “taiko” and you will find a whole world to explore.***
 - Chieko Kojima - [Hana Hachijo](#) Yokouchi style
 - Kodo - [Odaiko](#)
 - San Jose Taiko - [Ki](#) kumidaiko style, at Obon (summer festival)
 - Ho Etsu Taiko + On Ensemble - [Lion Chant](#)
 - Senzoku Gakuen (College of Music) - [Fertility of the Sea](#)