Music 17Q
Perspectives in North American Taiko
Sano and Uyechi, Spring 2004

M W: 2:15 – 4:05 p.m., Braun 106 (M), Braun Rehearsal Hall (W)
4 units

Course Syllabus

Taiko, used here to refer to performance ensemble drumming using the taiko, or Japanese drum, is a relative newcomer to the American music scene. The emergence of the first North American groups coincided with increased activism in the Japanese American community and, to some, is symbolic of Japanese American identity. To others, North American taiko is associated with Japanese American Buddhism, and to others taiko is a performance art rooted in Japan.

In this course we will explore the musical, cultural, historical, and political perspectives of taiko in North America through drumming (hands-on experience), readings, class discussions, workshops, and a research project. With taiko as the focal point, we will learn about Japanese music and Japanese American history, and explore relations between performance, cultural expression, community, and identity.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS
Students must attend all workshops and complete all assignments to receive credit for the course.

- Reaction Papers (30%)
- Midterm (20%)
- Research Project (40%)
- Attendance/Participation (10%)

COURSE FEE
$30 to partially cover cost of bachi, bachi bag, concert tickets, workshop fees, gas and parking for drivers.

READINGS
1. Course reader available at the Stanford Bookstore.

GENERAL INFORMATION

- Instructors: Steve Sano, Linda Uyechi
- Office: Braun 120
- Office Phone: 723-1570
- Phone: 494-1321, 494-1321 (8 a.m. – 10 p.m.)
- Email: sano@leland, linda.uyechi@stanfordalumni.org
## COURSE OUTLINE

### WEEK 1 (March 31)

**Wednesday**  
Introduction: What is North American Taiko?

**Reading**  

### WEEK 2 (April 5 and 7)

**Monday**  
Lecture/Discussion: Japanese Folk Tradition  

**Reading**  

**REACTION PAPER 1 (TAIKO AUTOBIOGRAPHY) DUE**

**Wednesday**  
Practicum: Performance Basics 1  
Centering, hara (center of energy), kiai (vocalizing), sukeroku stance, oroshi, drum roll, Renshuu demonstration.

**Reading**  
Yamaoka, S. The Art and the Way of Hara.

### WEEK 3 (April 12 and 14)

**Monday**  
Lecture/Discussion: Kumidaiko  
Post-war taiko in Japan. Sukeroku and Osuwa styles.

**Reading**  

**Wednesday**  
Practicum: Performance Basics 2  
Kuchishoka (song syllabary). Song: Renshu Taiko (S. Tanaka).

**Reading**  

### WEEK 4 (April 19 and 21)

**Monday**  
Lecture/Discussion: Taiko in North America 1
Beginnings: San Francisco Taiko Dojo, Kinnara Taiko, San Jose Taiko.

**Reading**

**Wednesday** Practicum: Performance Basics 3
*Seiza. Renshuu variations.*

**Reading**

**PROJECT PROPOSAL DUE**

**WORKSHOP 1:** US-JAPAN TAIKO FESTIVAL
Saturday, 4/24, 7:00 p.m. Kabuki Theater, San Francisco.

**WORKSHOP 2:** SAN JOSE JAPANTOWN TOUR
Sunday, 4/25, 1 p.m. San Jose Nihonmachi. **SAN JOSE TAIKO: RHYTHM SPIRIT**
Sunday, 4/25, 3 p.m. Campbell Heritage Theater, Campbell.

**WEEK 5 (April 26 and 28)**

**Monday** Lecture/Discussion: Taiko in North America 2

**Reading**

**Wednesday** Guest Speaker: Wisa Uemura, San Jose Taiko.

**Reading**

**REACTION PAPER 2 (SFTD/SJT) DUE**

**WORKSHOP 3:** San Jose Taiko Workshop and Nikkei Matsuri
Sunday, 5/2, 10:00 – 11:30 a.m. Okida Hall, San Jose. 11:30 – 1 p.m. San Jose Nihonmachi.

**WEEK 6 (May 3 and 5)**

**Monday** Lecture/Discussion: Japanese American History
Early immigration. *Issei* and *Nisei* (1st and 2nd generation). World War II. Culture in the camps, post-internment.

**Reading**

E.O. 9066.  
Civilian Exclusion Order No. 82.  
Assembly Centers and Internment Camps.  
Tanforan [ZVC 8989] (View in Green.)  
[Review Takaki readings.]

**Wednesday**  
Practicum: Performance Basics 4  
*Beta* style. *Matsuri Taiko.*

**REACTION PAPER 3 (SJT Workshop) DUE**

**WORKSHOP 4:**  
**STANFORD TAIKO**  
Saturday, 5/8, 8:00 p.m. Dinkelspiel Auditorium.

**WEEK 7 (May 10 and 12)**

**Monday**  
Lecture/Discussion: *Taiko in North America Review.*  
Stanford Taiko concert debriefing. Course review.

**Reading**  
[Review all previous readings.]

**Wednesday**  
**EXAM**  

**WEEK 8 (May 17 and 19)**

**Monday**  
Lecture/Discussion: *Asian American Identity and the Arts*

**Reading**  

**Wednesday**  
Practicum: Performance Basics 5  
Solo basics.

**WEEK 9 (May 24 and 26)**

**Monday**  
Student Presentations

**Wednesday**  
Student Presentations

**WORKSHOP 5 (OPTIONAL):**  
10th Annual Collegiate Taiko Invitational
Sunday, 5/30, 2:30 p.m. Dinkelspiel Auditorium.
Featuring Stanford Taiko, UCLA Kyodo Taiko, UCI Jodaiko, and other collegiate taiko groups.

WEEK 10 (May 31 and June 2)

**Monday**  MEMORIAL DAY HOLIDAY: NO CLASS

**Wednesday**  Wrap-up Discussion and Jam

**FINAL PAPER DUE**