THE EXCITEMENT OF DANCE, MUSIC, THEATRE AND STORYTELLING COMES TO YOU!

TAIKOPROJECT
Enclosed is a packet of information about the scheduled program. Please review all of the documents carefully, as they are the materials you will need to sponsor a successful program.

THE DAILY SCHEDULE

It is important that the daily schedule be maintained as specified on the confirmation document. If special circumstances occur once the project has begun, notify Music Center staff as soon as possible. Changes may be accommodated pending artist availability (which can be limited). We request that all participants be seated in the performance area and ready to begin at the scheduled times.

STUDENT SUPERVISION AT SCHOOL SITES

In accordance with California law, The Music Center requires that a classroom teacher be present with students at all times. It is expected that teachers will attend events with their class and actively participate in the learning experience.

YOUR FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

About a week after the performance, you’ll receive an invoice in the mail. You have 30 days to pay upon receipt of the invoice. We do ask that you wait until you receive the invoice before sending payment.

ARTIST INTRODUCTION & STAGING REQUIREMENTS

Please introduce the artist with the enclosed introduction. There is also specific information you will need to prepare for the arrival of each artist. Please give the tech sheet to the school personnel in charge of setting up the performance area well in advance of the scheduled dates. Be sure to have ready any equipment which may be required.

CURRICULUM CONNECTION FOR CLASSROOM TEACHERS

These pre- and post-event classroom activities are designed to enhance the understanding and enjoyment of the program. Please duplicate this preparation material and distribute to all teachers whose students will be attending the event to allow them to fully prepare the students.

PRESS RELEASE AND POSTER

A pre-made press release is available should you wish to publicize the event. A premade poster is also included so that your school community can be aware of the upcoming event.

We applaud your commitment to arts education and look forward to working with you.

If you have any questions, please don’t hesitate to call us at 213-972-4310.
"I would like to introduce today's performance which is presented by The Music Center of Los Angeles County. TAIKOPROJECT is a taiko drum ensemble that has performed at hundreds of schools, on television, and in performing arts centers throughout the country. Using the ancient Taiko drums, but with a modern approach, they will take us from the past, into the present. Please welcome TAIKOPROJECT!"

Feel free to encourage the adult members of your audience to share the experience on social media! Tag us on Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram at @MusicCenterLA and we might repost your photos!
TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

SPACE
- 20’ wide x 15’ deep minimum
- Portable stages must be sturdy, level and securely lashed, with steps leading up to them

SURFACE
- Freshly mopped (not waxed)
- Irregularities covered with tape
- Extraneous clutter removed

OUTDOOR PERFORMANCES
- Shaded and protected from wind and excess traffic or playground noise
  - Wood surface preferred
- Concrete and grass are not acceptable
- Raised seating for students is preferred

EQUIPMENT
- One microphone with stand

ARRIVAL
- 45 minutes prior to the scheduled start time to prepare and set up

PARKING
- 2-3 space closest to the venue for loading and unloading

ASSISTANCE
- Please have a school representative ready to welcome the performers and assist as needed

START TIME
- Please prepare to start the program on time
- Students should be in the venue, seated and ready to begin at the listed times
TAIKO PROJECT

ART FORM: Music
STYLE: Taiko
CULTURE: Japanese

MEET THE ARTIST:

TAIKO PROJECT was founded in 2000 in Los Angeles, California by a group of young, emerging taiko drummers led by Bryan Yamami and Masato Baba. The group continues to refine their unique style of taiko performance, blending traditional forms with an innovative and fresh aesthetic. The members of the ensemble were born and raised in the United States, and grew up listening to American popular music which has been a major influence on their work. They first made waves when they became the first American taiko group to win the prestigious Tokyo International Taiko Contest in 2005. The full group currently consists of 18 members and has performed on the Academy Awards, the Grammy Awards, NBC’s The Voice, Syfy’s Face/Off, The X-Factor, Conan, Jimmy Kimmel Live, The Late Late Show with James Corden, Food Network’s Iron Chef Gauntlet, and the iHeartRadio Music Festival, along with supporting numerous artists such as 30 Seconds to Mars, Stevie Wonder, Usher, Alicia Keys, A.R. Rahman, John Legend, and Kanye West.

PREPARING FOR THE EXPERIENCE:

Originating from Japan, taiko was first used by farmers who would strike the drum in hopes that the sound would bring rain for their crops to grow. The deep rumble of the drum, when struck, resembled the sound of thunder. Many villages even determined their boundaries by the distance the sound of the drum could carry. Taiko was also used as part of ceremonial and religious events and later was used in traditional Japanese theatre and music.

Taiko drums are handmade and a single, medium-sized drum can take as long as 40 hours to make. It is believed that the spirit of the trees from which the wood came, as well as the drum makers and performers, come to embody each drum. Movement is an integral part of taiko, requiring each musician to use his/her body in connection with the drum and its sound to communicate.

The style of group taiko drumming known as “kumidaiko,” often seen today, has existed for over a half century and is considerably new when compared to the long history and evolution of taiko. In the 1950s Daihachi Oguchi, a Japanese jazz drummer trained in western music, visited a temple in Japan and found ancient Japanese sheet music. Instead of playing the music by himself, he decided he wanted to split up the parts and play them the various taiko drums with a group of musicians. Thus, a new style of playing taiko with an ensemble, “kumi-daiko,” was born.

This style first made its way to America in 1968 by a Japanese man named Seiichi Tanaka. He founded the first taiko group in America, called San Francisco Taiko Dojo, still a very active taiko group. Around the same time in Los Angeles, a group of third-generation Japanese Americans were looking for a way to express their cultural heritage, and started playing a form of taiko they found at their local temple. They started a group called Kinnara Taiko. From these first two groups, taiko started spreading all over the United States and today there are over 200 taiko groups across the country. Just like any other art form, taiko continues to grow and evolve.

ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE:

TAIKO PROJECT presents an interactive and dynamic introduction to the music, history, and art of taiko. The program features songs interspersed with specific aspects of how taiko has made its way from Japan to modern day America. The audience is also given a view into how the drums are constructed and the craftsmanship involved. The group gives insight into the contemporary approach used to create and play taiko music today. Beside the main taiko drums, there are also metal percussion instruments played, including the atarigane, a small circular brass gong, and small brass cymbals, called chappa. In addition, there are two wind instruments—the shinobue, or bamboo flute, and the horagai, a giant seashell with a mouthpiece. The audience is also given an opportunity to learn a taiko pattern, called an oroshi and learn the verbal sounds that match the rhythmic pattern.

This begins with a short vocal “call and response” pattern called kiai. Toward the end of the program, students and teachers have the opportunity to come up to the stage and play the taiko drums. The performance concludes with a dynamic song called “Many Sides.” It demonstrates a modern style of taiko from Tokyo, Japan, and includes choreography and improvisation.
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

• How do the movements of TAIKOPROJECT performers relate to the music they make? Does the size of the drum affect the movements they use? If so, how?
• What is unique about playing taiko? How does it differ from playing other types of drums you have seen?
• The sound of taiko is often used to recreate sounds heard in nature such as thunder and rain. What are some other instruments that are often used to recreate, or imitate other natural sounds?
• What were the different types of taiko that were demonstrated? Which one was your favorite and why?
• What was your favorite part of the performance? What was it about this part that stood out to you?
• What other aspects of Japanese culture are you familiar with?

FRAMEWORK FOCUS—SCIENCE:

Have students learn about natural materials similar to taiko construction materials. It is interesting to note that early cultures used the materials most available to them. To learn about various types of wood, students will need to bring in one wooden item from home and tap them to hear the different sounds they make based on the hardness or thickness of the wooden item. Perhaps do some research to discover what type of wood is used to build different types of instruments. If you are interested, make a chart with pictures of instruments and then list the type of wood used to make them.

A rawhide chew or toy can be used to demonstrate how taiko drumheads are stretched. When taiko drumheads are stretched over the drum body, the cowhide heads are soaked in water overnight in order to make them soft and pliable. Once they are stretched, they are tucked down and left to dry. Once dry, they are hard again, and have also been reduced in length and width. This process shows the science of biological materials and effects of water on them. Think about other materials that could be used as a “skin” if cowhide wasn’t available (rubber, stretch cloth, etc.).

ACTIVITIES TO ENHANCE THE EXPERIENCE:

• Taiko is an important aspect of Japanese culture that has been passed down from ancient times. Can you think of something in your family history that has been passed down from your ancestors? Make a list, then share and discuss with your fellow classmates.
• Taiko drums come in all shapes and sizes, and each can be played in various ways. Do you remember some of the different types of taiko that the performers introduced? Draw a picture of the different drums you saw during the performance.
• Compose a simple 4-beat drum pattern using a combination of the following sounds: Don, Do-Ka, dokadoko, Tsu, Tsu-Ku, Ka, and Ka-Ra (the words used for the basic sounds played on a taiko). Say the pattern out loud and have your fellow classmates imitate you by clapping the pattern. Loud claps should be used for a ‘Don’ or ‘DoKa’. Soft claps should be used for a ‘TsuKu’. Snap your fingers (or stomp your feet if you can’t snap your fingers) for a ‘Ka’ or ‘KaRa’. Try to play the pattern to a constant tempo using a metronome, (a device that keeps a steady tempo; various apps are available if you don’t have one). Experiment with different combinations of the sounds.
• Using several of the following adjectives, write a paragraph describing your impressions of TAIKOPROJECT sounds:
  timid exciting vibrant bright
  listless expressionless expressive intense
  strong concentrated energetic assertive

Take two to five of these words and write one to three sentences that describe taiko music from your perspective.
• Create a poem or story with a taiko drummer as the main character. Include directions on how to read specific lines or sections so that the traits of taiko drumming are emphasized. For example:
  Softly like rain (read like rain falling)
  Strong and steady (say line three times)
  With rhythm (add finger snaps or claps)
  Broken by silence (shhhhhhhhh)

SUGGESTED RESOURCES:


School Contact Name: ______________________
Phone: ____________________________

____________________ AND THE MUSIC CENTER ANNOUNCE

TAIKOPROJECT TO PERFORM ON ______________________

____________________ and The Music Center today announced the upcoming TAIKOPROJECT performance. As part of the school's continuing efforts to enrich its curriculum and its students' educational experience, the school will present a special performance by TAIKOPROJECT. The performance is presented by The Music Center's education department which provides many offerings including live performances, classroom workshops, scholarship and training programs, online arts curriculum, on-campus events and professional development.

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The Music Center on Tour is the premiere resource for high-quality performing arts performances in Los Angeles County. For more than 35 years, schools and communities have benefited from the program's roster of diverse and compelling performing artists who serve as models of artistic excellence, inspire creative thinking and introduce young audiences to the world's diverse cultural traditions. Music Center artists represent and celebrate the finest artistic contribution of the world's cultures – from the colorful regional dances of Mexico and the exquisite music of the China, to the pulsating rhythms of Brazil and the golden harmonies of 20th century America.

Schools can choose from more than 70 performances in music, dance, theatre and storytelling from an internationally acclaimed roster of artists seen across the globe in films, theaters, concert halls, television shows and museums.

About The Music Center
As L.A.'s performing arts destination, The Music Center is L.A.'s home to the world's greatest artistic programs and events. With four iconic theaters and four renowned resident companies – Center Theatre Group, the LA Master Chorale, the LA Opera and the LA Philharmonic – and recognized for its illustrious dance programming, Glorya Kaufman Presents Dance at The Music Center, The Music Center is a destination where audiences find inspiration in the very best of live performance, as well as nationally recognized arts education and participatory arts experiences. With The Music Center On Location, the non-profit performing arts organization brings events and activities to locations outside of its Downtown Los Angeles campus. The Music Center also programs and manages Grand Park, a 12-acre adjacent greenspace, with year-round free programming. For more information, visit musiccenter.org Follow The Music Center on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram (@MusicCenterLA).

# # #

For more information, please contact The Music Center at 213-972-3338. Members of the media are welcome to cover this performance. Please contact The Music Center prior to sending a reporter or photographer to the school.
THE MUSIC CENTER PRESENTS

TAIKOPROJECT

DATE: ___________________________ TIME: ___________________________

SCHOOL: ___________________________

musiccenter.org/ontour
ARTS INTEGRATION PARTNERSHIPS

The Music Center’s teaching artists work in the classroom facilitating student learning and modeling effective instructional strategies for teachers. Essential skills and vocabulary in music, theater, dance, or visual art are connected to universal themes and integrated with other content areas.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Our Professional Development targets arts integration strategies for K-12 teachers in dance, music, theatre, and visual arts. Teachers learn creative and effective approaches for integrating the arts into their content areas. Additionally, The Music Center offers the Summer Arts Studio for Educators. This program consists of events tailored for classroom teachers, arts teachers and educators.

STUDENT MATINEE PERFORMANCES

Each year Glorya Kaufman Presents Dance at The Music Center offers free student matinee dance performances. All performances include a teacher orientation session and curriculum guide for students.

THE BLUE RIBBON CHILDREN’S FESTIVAL

The Blue Ribbon Children’s Festival, designed specifically for fifth grade students, is an annual admission-free program at The Music Center. Students experience a live professional performance at a world-class performing arts center, then gather together to perform a short choreographed dance inspired by the production.

VERY SPECIAL ARTS FESTIVAL

The Very Special Arts Festival is an annual admission-free event celebrating the artistic achievements of students with disabilities and their mainstream peers. The festival features student and professional performances on two stages, visual and performing arts workshops, and a student art exhibit created around a central theme.

SPOTLIGHT

Much more than a competition, Spotlight is a scholarship and training program, which encourages personal and artistic growth, while exploring new possibilities in the arts.

ARTSOURCE®

The Music Center’s Artsource® curriculum is designed to bring the expressive world of the arts into classrooms. The materials are available online free of cost.

OTHER ON CAMPUS MUSIC CENTER OFFERINGS:

Glorya Kaufman Presents Dance at The Music Center, Dance Downtown, Symphonian Campus Tours, Grand Park

PROGRAM SUPPORT PROVIDED BY: