



TCP Perpetuates Japanese Art Form

By Chizuko Endo
Co-founder and managing director of Taiko Center of the Pacific

Do you remember the first time you heard taiko, the big Japanese drums? For me, taiko was dynamic, powerful and graceful. It was unlike any Japanese art form I had ever experienced. I immediately knew I wanted to do it!

In ancient times, taiko was used to send messages to distant places, instill courage in samurai warriors and celebrate momentous occasions. Brought to the United States with the early immigrants, taiko usually was heard during the summer obon festivals or in tem-

ples and shrines. The popular phenomenon more properly known as kumi-daiko (group drumming) started in Japan in the 1950s.

My husband Kenny Endo and I founded Taiko Center of the Pacific (TCP), a school of traditional and contemporary Japanese drumming in 1994, following 10 years of in-depth study in Japan. We are both former members of San Francisco Taiko Dojo, the first taiko group established outside of Japan, in 1968. Since kumi-daiko did not exist in the United States when I was a child, I thought



Taiko Center of the Pacific (TCP) shared the art of taiko at the Memorial Day Parade in Waikiki. Pictured are (from left) TCP fellow Chung Wan Choi; performer Mika Yamazaki; TCP Taiko Tots program founder, taiko instructor and performer Yeeman Mui; students Ashbea Oyadomari and Keahi Horowitz; TCP co-founder, managing director, performer and instructor Chizuko Endo; performer Patrick OIye, and student Vince Okada-Coelho

PHOTO FROM TCP

it would be awesome to give children the chance to grow up with taiko.

TCP offers year-round classes for ages 2 and older, and all skill levels. Students learn basic form, technique, practice pieces, cultural customs and Japanese language associated with the art form.

TCP is offering its 14th annual Summer Taiko Intensives July 18-22. This year, six unique courses ranging from taiko basics to West African polyrhythms and shamisen (a banjo-like lute) are open to anyone. Participants will get a chance to

learn from instructors Kenny Endo, PJ Hirabayashi (San Jose Taiko), Kapono Ciotti (Jamarek), Michael Gonhata (Nihon Taiko Dojo) and Patrick OIye (TCP). "Ei Ja Nai Ka?!" is a special one-day only taiko dance movement workshop to be held July 17. Please join us!

Besides teaching, TCP also has youth and adult ensembles that perform at parties, corporate events, celebrations, festivals and concerts.

For more information, visit taikoarts.com, call 737-7236 or email taikoarts@gmail.com.