



# Bachi Beat



## SPECIAL EDITION

August 2008

Bachi Beat Editor: Karri Barry

# 火祭り

## FIRE FESTIVAL

17th Anniversary Performance

# WATSONVILLE TAIKO

**Cabrillo  
College  
Theater**

**Sat. Oct 11, 2008  
7:30 pm**

**Sun. Oct 12, 2008  
2:00 pm**

**Admission:**

**Adults - \$15**

**Seniors (over 60) - \$12**

**Children (under 12) - \$12**



**Ticket Office:  
(831) 479-6331**

email: [info@watsonvilletaiko.org](mailto:info@watsonvilletaiko.org)  
phone: (831) 458-0448



Join us for our 17<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Performance

This year we will bring back our fall anniversary performance "Himatsuri", Fire Festival. The performance will be at the Cabrillo College Theater on Saturday October 11<sup>th</sup>, and Sunday, 12<sup>th</sup>

In past performances we have presented wind (Primordial Wind in 2004), earth and water (Sansui in 2005). Many fire and fire festivals in Japan are based on Shinto beliefs in purification and harvest celebration. Santa Cruz sister city in Japan, Shingu is renowned for its colorful fire festival. Hundreds of hearty men run down the steep steps of a small mountain that rises above the seacoast city. They start at the Shinto Shrine that sits atop the mountain and careen downward with lit torches held aloft. Watsonville Taiko in participation with Shinsho Mugen Daiko and Sandoshin Taiko will attempt to emulate in spirit the energetic spectacle of the Shinto Fire Festivals in Japan. These festivals are an important part of Japanese community strength. Don't miss out on this spectacular performance...mark your calendars now.

## *Fire Festival*

Karri Barry's special interview with  
Artistic Director Ikuyo Conant

**Karri:** What makes this type of formal performance important to you?

**Ikuyo:** Most indoor and out door events we perform are for supplemental entertainment. We are background for the event or a short eye catching gig to enhance the main program. There is nothing wrong with this type of performance. It is a part of the process that arts have to go through to survive. The formal performance like our anniversary performance is for a presentation of the art of Taiko. It is important for us to present the essence of Taiko. The audiences are from diverse backgrounds. Some may have no idea what Taiko is. We have to define what Taiko is and what the art of Taiko is. This is what makes Taiko interesting for me. The formal performance is the way to express this difficult challenging question.

**Karri:** How much time does it take to organize a performance of this size?

**Ikuyo:** It takes a year to two years. We need to perform regularly in order to meet our budget, so we cannot focus on our formal performance only. We had the anniversary performance every year for 15 years, but the production became harder as the economy became tighter. People's work hours change, their jobs change, they move out of the area—the economy influences our Taiko community. We decided to have the anniversary performance every other year, and it is still hard for us to prepare for the show.

**Karri:** How far in advance does WT need to start rehearsing for the anniversary performance?

**Ikuyo:** We usually start two months prior to the show. For us Taiko drumming is one thing but moving drums – artistic stage transitions – are always new, and must be practiced and learned well. It is a very large operation. For beginners, this is a totally new experience.

**Karri:** How many pieces of music will be in this year's performance?

**Ikuyo:** We will have 12 pieces of music

**Karri:** How did you choose these pieces of music?

**Ikuyo:** I am interested in female energy in Taiko. I love the explosive sound of Taiko. I also love the very gentle soothing sound of Taiko. The sound comforts me and gives me quietude. It is hard to create a full loud sound, but it is harder to create a full soft sound. We need to learn how to move ourselves with breathing. Five years ago I composed Himatsuri (Fire Festival) and Niutsu (Mercury Goddess Niutsu) to put more movements in the choreography of the drumming. Women generally learn to hold their deepest feelings, but underneath the held feeling, there is the fire of life. I chose these two pieces as core music and build other music around them. We have Kuniomi and Fuma. These two pieces are rearranged with more movements.

**Karri:** What was your inspiration for choosing the theme of this year's performance?

**Ikuyo:** Originally, I was working on a different theme; however, I realized that it would take a few more years in order to do a production with this theme. I use mythical creatures as my inspiration of music and performance. Taeko D'Andrea, our business manager and a great visual artist, was working on a phoenix motif for a T-shirt design. She mentioned that we had not covered the Fire Element in our

performances. I use Fire when we performed Kamunabi in 2002; however, I have not used this theme as a single element for a presentation. To tell the truth, Fire is, for me, difficult to work on. I have been avoiding the development of this theme. In previous productions, we used Earth, Water and Air. This is not my call, but I am obliged to do this element....Fire chose me!

**Karri:** How many performers will be playing this year?

**Ikuyo:** 48 people

**Karri:** What is your vision for Watsonville Taiko's future?

**Ikuyo:** I would like to have more elements of movement as part of Taiko. I would like to incorporate dance, and martial arts.

**Karri:** What feeling or feelings do you hope the audience leaves with after the performance?

**Ikuyo:** A simple thing such as poun ding a drum can be very empowering when presented in the complexity that becomes art. I hope they leave with higher sense of vitality.

**Karri:** From where do you get your energy and how are you able to send that energy out into the audience?

**Ikuyo:** When the audience is enthused I get charged. The performance is a dialectical form of art where the energy is passed back and forth between the audience and the performers.

**Karri:** How has the art of Taiko drumming changed your life and how do you think your performer's lives have changed since joining the group?

**Ikuyo:** I can't speak directly about the other performers but we have maintained a community that has lasted 17 years. Deep roots grow as time passes.

**Karri:** If there was one word you could use to describe your love of Taiko drumming what would it be?

**Ikuyo:** "Trust"

**Karri:** Is there anything else you want people to know about Watsonville Taiko?

**Ikuyo:** We are a multi-ethnic group who are interested in the art of Taiko. We appreciate those organizations and individuals that support our art. Learning and working together and sharing Taiko experiences, we learn to be decent human beings.

### You can help support our Anniversary performance

Please help support Watsonville Taiko's artistic vision while enjoying heart pounding inspirational music. For every \$50 donation you will receive a complimentary ticket to Watsonville Taiko's Anniversary performance. Just fill out the enclosed donation form and specify which show or shows you would like to see. Watsonville Taiko will mail tickets to the address on the form.

For more information about this or any other performance or if you are interested in having Watsonville Taiko play at your event, please go to our website at [www.watsonvilletaiko.org](http://www.watsonvilletaiko.org) or contact Taeko D'Andrea at 831-458-0445

ワットソンビル太鼓  
辰星太鼓

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Mission Statement  
Of  
Watsonville Taiko Group

The mission of  
Watsonville Taiko Group is  
to foster the evolving cultural  
expression and traditions of  
taiko drumming through  
performances and public  
education.

August 19, 2008

Dear Friends:

We are very pleased to have our special edition Bachi Beat which highlights two performances in the coming months. We hope you will join us.

We are living in a very special time when cultures are rapidly fusing together. Yet, such amalgamation has given us a keen sense of those specific cultural elements that have added to the whole. Art groups, such as Watsonville Taiko, have worked to keep traditional forms intact and also create new forms that reflect the tremendous cultural fusion we now experience. We celebrate traditional arts; while at the same time, find collaboration and integration of old and new, east and west, particular and universal - seeking to find balance between them all.

We kindly ask you to consider a contribution towards one or both of our special performances or simply towards the general Watsonville Taiko organization. Any amount you donate would be greatly appreciated and your donations will go far to help us reach our artistic and educational goals.

Ikuyo Conant



Art is one of the ways to measure the wealth and health of a community. When Art thrives, the community thrives, because art is one important way to keep possibilities in our lives open. When the door to art closes, our possibilities die. Art transcends the immediate limitations of our human perspectives, and gives us hope by revealing new possibilities.

Art gives us an opportunity to look at our world in a personal way, and it also fulfills a universal human need to be part of something greater than ourselves.

Ikuyo Conant

Please return the form below with your contribution

### Yes, I would like to support Watsonville Taiko

I am sending a special donation of : \$ 25 \_\_\_\_\_ \*\*\$ 50 \_\_\_\_\_ \$ 75 \_\_\_\_\_ \*\*\$ 100 \_\_\_\_\_ Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please apply my donation towards: Jukai \_\_\_\_\_ WT Anniversary Performance \_\_\_\_\_ WT Organization \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*For every \$50 donation, I am eligible to receive a complimentary ticket(s) to the WT Anniversary performance. I am eligible to receive \_\_\_\_\_ complementary tickets.

Please send eligible tickets for the performance on: Saturday, Oct 11 @ 7:30pm \_\_\_\_\_ Sunday Oct 12 @ 2:00pm \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

## Watsonville Taiko and Shinsei Daiko 2008 Upcoming Events and Performances

Aug 23	Summer Heritage Day	San Jose
Sept 21	Kidrageous Carnival	Watsonville
Sept 27	Alzheimer's Memory Walk	La Selva Beach
Oct 11 & 12	ANNIVERSARY PERFORMANCE	Cabrillo College Theater

For more information go to: [www.watsonvilletaiko.org/events\\_calendar.html](http://www.watsonvilletaiko.org/events_calendar.html)

**Non-Discrimination: It is the policy of Watsonville Taiko and Shinsei Daiko to provide equal membership opportunities for all persons without regard to race, political affiliations, national origins, religious creed, gender, color, age, marital status, or gender preference in every aspect of participation**



# JUKAI

The Cast of *Jukai* will be holding two workshops in September at the Loudon Nelson Community Center, 2008:

- **Introduction to Japanese Taiko Drumming**  
Saturday, Sep 6th, 1-4pm; ages 12 and up

- **Actor-Created Collaborative Theatre**  
Saturday, Sep 13th, 1-4pm; ages 18 and up

Workshop Fee: \$ 25 per person for each workshop  
Call Ikuyo at (831)423-3926 to hold your place for September

### TAIKO CLASSES

Location: Kizuka Hall, 150 Blackburn Street, Watsonville  
Beginning Children (8+ years): Friday 5-6pm  
Beginning Adults: Friday 7-8pm: \$55 per month  
For more information: Call (831) 458-0448  
[info@watsonville.org](mailto:info@watsonville.org) or [www.watsonvilletaiko.org](http://www.watsonvilletaiko.org)

### Power Taiko Workshops

Location: Scotts Valley Tae Kwon Do Academy  
Children: 4 Mondays 12-1pm Begins July 28 \$55  
Adults: 6 Wednesdays 7:45-8:45pm Begins July 30 \$80

For more information on upcoming Power Taiko Workshops contact Taeko D'Andrea at [info@watsvonille.org](mailto:info@watsvonille.org)

[www.watsonvilletaiko.org](http://www.watsonvilletaiko.org)

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