

# Asia Scope and Sequence for The Arts

Units of Work

Unit 10: Taiko — Australia-Japan  
Taiko Drumming Fusion

*Asia Scope and Sequence for The Arts: Units of Work*

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*Asia Scope and Sequence for The Arts: Units of Work* can be found at the Asia Education Foundation website under Curriculum Materials at:

[www.asiaeducation.edu.au/public\\_html/scope\\_sequence.htm](http://www.asiaeducation.edu.au/public_html/scope_sequence.htm).

## Stage of schooling

Middle Secondary

## Learning focus

Music

### Elaborations

- **Mu5.1** Students create or interpret music works that present imaginative responses to values and beliefs.
- **Mu5.2** Students create a musical ensemble piece using Asian, European, digital or constructed instruments to create a specific atmosphere.
- **Mu6.1** Students investigate and discuss the values and beliefs embedded within musical performances influenced by or performed in Asian cultures, using music terminology.
- **Mu6.2** Students use appropriate musical language to analyse how points of view about and attitudes towards particular musical styles change over time.
- **Mu6.3** Students explore and discuss aspects (ideas, values, beliefs, performance conventions) contained in comic or dramatic theatre works from Asia and Australia that incorporate dance, drama and music.

### Focus questions

- How is traditional taiko drumming from Japan assimilated into the music of an Australian musical group?
- How do the composers write music for a group like this? How important is choreography in performances of taiko drumming?

## Overview

TaikOz is an Australian musical group formed in 1997 by taiko player/percussionist Ian Cleworth and shakuhachi dai-shihan, grand master Riley Lee. The group has established itself as one of Australia's most energetic and exciting drumming groups. It combines the power of the traditional Japanese taiko with the bamboo shakuhachi. This unit provides students with the opportunity to investigate the music of TaikOz. Students will learn how the concepts of music are used to create taiko drumming pieces and analyse the movements used in taiko drumming. The unit provides opportunities for students to create their own piece for drums using elements of the taiko drumming style and to explore the techniques used by composers to create pieces for taiko.

### Duration

This unit will take around 6 hours and can be completed in 6 x one-hour blocks over a term.

# Resources

## Essential

- TaikOz 2003, *Live at Angel Place* – DVD/Video available for purchase on the website [www.taikoz.com](http://www.taikoz.com)

## Optional

- Background notes on the website [www.taikoz.com](http://www.taikoz.com) are also useful
- Large map of Japan

## Activity 1

1. Have students watch the introduction section and first piece *Ota-i-ko* on the TaikOz *Live at Angel Place* DVD.
2. After watching the performance have students respond to the following questions:
  - What are your first impressions?
  - What country do you think this music originated from?
  - Describe the instruments used in this performance.
  - Describe the movements used in this performance.
  - Write three questions you would want to ask the performers.
3. Discuss the responses and then have students read Resource sheet 1 and Resource sheet 2.
4. Discuss the content of the interview, paying particular attention to the spiritual, social and cultural contexts of taiko music.
5. Are any of the students' questions still unanswered? If so, encourage students to explore some of the websites listed on Resource sheet 3 – Websites

## Activity 2: *Ota-i-ko*

The following activities focus on the musical features of *Ota-i-ko* by Ian Cleworth. The music concepts are those of rhythm, tone colour or timbre and texture. The activities are sequential and aim to lead the student to discover how the composer constructed the piece.

1. Watch *Ota-i-ko* on the DVD again and identify the instruments used. The following website will help: [www.asano.jp/english/index.html](http://www.asano.jp/english/index.html). Discuss the instrument sounds and how different colours are created. For homework, have students write a detailed description of each of the instruments.

2. Now have students read the program notes for *Ota-i-ko* – Resource sheet 5 and reread the ‘When developing rhythms within a composition what do you do?’ question on Resource sheet 1. Here Ian Cleworth refers to repetition and diminution as a means of developing ‘melodies’ in *Ota-i-ko*. The following activities explore three techniques he uses in *Ota-i-ko* to develop rhythmic motifs: repetition, diminution and hemiola.
3. Have students find definitions for the motif, diminution and hemiola in a music dictionary.
4. There are three main motifs in *Ota-i-ko*. See Resource sheet 8. Have students clap each motif paying particular attention to the accents. Create ostinatos from the motifs and perform with sticks on desks or any available drums.
5. Listen again to the first five minutes of *Ota-i-ko* on the DVD and identify each of the motifs. DVD cues: Motif A – 1:46, Motif B – 3:22, Motif C – 3:13.
6. Have students clap the hemiola rhythm shown on Resource sheet 8. How can this be defined as a hemiola? (The time signature is 4/4 and the pattern of the rhythm is in a grouping of 6/4.)
7. Listen again to *Ota-i-ko* on the DVD and identify this rhythm being played on the taiko set upstage at DVD cue 2:32. Which motif is being played over the top on the chudaiko? (Motif A.)
8. Now have students clap the diminution example shown on Resource sheet 8 and listen for it on the DVD at 3:52. Describe how this is an example of diminution.
9. Have students create and then perform their own rhythms using the techniques of repetition, hemiola and diminution. A discussion about the use of space in taiko compositions would also be helpful at this stage. Refer to the ‘How important is space in your performance?’ question on Resource sheet 1. Have students consider this when creating their own rhythms in order to imitate the taiko style more closely.

### Activity 3

The Japanese have their own traditional method of notating rhythms. Resource sheet 9 gives an example of bars 30–38 of *Ota-i-ko*. Have students analyse this and discover for themselves how the Japanese notation can be transcribed into western notation.

1. Students can juxtapose or layer the rhythms one over the other as used in *Ota-i-ko* and notated on Resource sheet 8.
2. Create a longer piece for three drums using the rhythms created by the students.
3. When learning taiko rhythm patterns the musicians traditionally use nonsense syllables to reinforce the rhythms and help them commit them to memory. On Resource sheet 9 the Japanese symbols are given, but a ‘Western’ translation of the syllables is also written underneath. Using the legend, have students practise saying the rhythms using the nonsense syllables. Hint – the rests also have syllables.
4. Discuss with students why they think different music notation systems exist and why it is important to have systems for notating music.

## Activity 4: *Shifting Sands*

The following activities focus on the musical features of *Shifting Sands*. The music concepts are those of structure, tone colour or timbre, texture and improvisation. The activities are sequential and aim to lead the student to discover how the composer constructed the piece.


1. Watch *Shifting Sands* on the DVD and have students identify any new instruments used. Discuss the instrument sounds and how different colours are created.
2. Have students read and discuss Resource sheet 5 – Program notes for *Shifting Sands*.
3. Have students reread the ‘When collaborating with other composers, as in *Shifting Sands*, how does this work?’ and ‘Why did you choose to include the didgeridoo?’ questions on Resource sheet 1 and discuss this now that they have viewed the piece.
4. Watch again and follow the Linear Overview – Resource sheet 6. Identify each of the sections as students are watching.
5. In order for students to further understand the structure and the texture of *Shifting Sands* have them watch again and beneath each section on the linear overview graphically notate what they are hearing. Discuss the way the composer has used the instruments and combination of instruments to create interest.
6. Have students listen to the Odaiko Trio section of *Shifting Sands* on the DVD. Ask them to notice the sections that are improvised. Discuss the impact of the improvised sections and how the performer ensures the improvisations relate to the piece.
7. Now have students learn to play an excerpt of the Odaiko Trio section – Resource sheet 10 on available drums. There are three improvised sections. One technique for encouraging students to improvise without pressure in these sections is to allow them to all improvise at the same time in rehearsal and then gradually encourage them to have a go on their own starting with only 4 bars of improvising each and then working up to longer solo improvisations.
8. Perform the excerpt and have students critically assess their performance. Encourage them to suggest ways that they could improve upon the performance and then perform again.

## Activity 5: *Chi*

These activities explore the structure of *Chi*, the variation of themes, use of hocket, improvisation and the importance of choreography in the performance.

Graham Hilgendorf has composed this piece using strophic or song-type structure. There are two main themes A and B with an introduction, bridge and coda. The themes also have been varied using a variety of techniques.

1. Watch *Chi* on the DVD and have students answer the following questions:
  - a. What instruments are used? (Three x *katsugi okedo* and *chappa*.)

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- b. What differences do you notice between this performance and the other two you've studied? (Only two instruments and three players, very theatrical, highly choreographed, improvisation, virtuosic)
  - c. List three compositional techniques you notice. (Imitation, repetition, unison, improvisation, staggered entries)
  - d. Do you think the choreography links closely with the rhythms used? (Yes, choreography highlights the compositional devices used)
  - e. List the choreographic moves that highlight the compositional elements. (eg Each performer enters the stage once the start, soloist steps forward to perform a solo, unison sections use the same strokes)
2. Have students read Resource sheet 4 – Program notes for *Chi* and discuss the phrase: *'... the basis of the entire composition of Chi lies in just a single 5-bar musical theme and its transformation through different combinations of players. Graham says, "[the use of only a single theme] represents the endless plains of the Australian landscape".'*
  3. Using Resource sheet 10, have students clap Theme A1 and Theme B1. How can Theme B1 be interpreted as a variation of Theme A1? (The same rhythm patterns are used but in a different order.)
  4. Now clap Theme A1 and B1 variation and discuss how these themes have been varied. (Parts of the rhythms are now played on 2 drum skins simultaneously.)
  5. Finally, clap Theme A2 and B2 and analyse how they are also variations. (More complicated sharing of the rhythm pattern between drum skins.)
  6. Perform all the rhythms on available drums and have students experiment with re-ordering the bars of rhythms and creating their own 'variations'.

## Activity 6

Graham Hilgendorf has used a range of other techniques to develop his themes.

1. Analyse the full score – Resource sheet 11 and find examples of augmentation, diminution, staggered entries, hoquet, hemiola, juxtaposition of themes, repetition and improvisation.
2. Now, watch the whole piece on the DVD again and follow the structural outline below.

Structure	Description
Introduction	Theme A 1 augmented (played at half the tempo) x 3 (player 1 then player 2 then 3 players)
Question and Answer	Each bar of theme A is then presented as Q/A with bass rhythm bar in-between (this is a diminution phrase)
Theme A1	x 2 (player 1)
	x 2 (player 2)
Theme A1 and B1	Theme A1 against Theme B1 x 2 (Theme B1 is a variation of Theme A1)
Theme A	played by player 3 x 3 (1st 3 bars only – players 1 and 2 play a bass rhythm for 2 bars – total 5 bars)
	(same length as the theme)
Bridge	Overhand bridge section
Theme A	Theme A – all x 2
Solo	Solos (players 1 and 2)
Theme A and B	Theme A against theme B x 2
Bridge	Overhand bridge section
	Overhand section with false ending
Theme A	Theme A x 3 slower with crescendo
Bridge	Overhand section
Coda	Two bar coda

3. Perform the last 14 bars of the piece on Resource sheet 11. Create some choreography to accompany your rendition.
4. Have students critically assess their performance. Encourage them to suggest ways that they could improve and then perform again.

## Activity 7

1. Watch the rest of the DVD.
2. Research the different styles of taiko drumming.
3. Ian Cleworth, Graham Hilgendorf, Riley Lee and Matthew Doyle are all composer / performers. This concept is less common in the recent history of music of this kind. Discuss the concept of the composer as performer. How would this inform the final performance? What difficulties may arise? What difficulties may be overcome?

## Assessment

Assessment should be ongoing throughout the unit of work. Teachers should monitor student engagement with each task and the level of cooperation and collaboration during group activities.

Sample assessment questions for each stage of the unit are provided below. They should be adapted in line with specific State and Territory curriculum goals. The sample questions can also be used:

- For teacher observation
- As the basis of an assessment rubric.

## Sample questions

### Introductory activity

- To what extent did students participate in the discussion and pursue answers to their questions?

### Activity 1: *Ota-i-ko*

- To what extent did the student find appropriate answers for the research questions?
- How effectively did the student perform the rhythmic motifs?
- How effectively did the student adapt the concepts discussed and create a piece of their own?

### Activity 2: *Shifting Sands*

- To what extent did students participate in the discussion?
- How effectively did the student perform the excerpt from the piece?
- What ideas did the student contribute to developing and refining the performance?

### Activity 3: *Chi*

- To what extent did the student find appropriate answers for the research questions and participate in the discussion?
- How effectively did the student perform the rhythms and then the excerpt from the piece?
- What ideas did the student contribute to developing and refining the performance?

## Resource sheet 1: Interview with Ian Cleworth from TaikOz

### Are there any links between taiko drumming and religion or the martial arts?

In Japan the taiko are heard and seen most frequently in the *matsuri* – festivals. As in all societies, festivals play an important part in marking significant occasions, and in Japan this often revolves around some aspect of rice harvesting, local legend or religious observance. Many *matsuri* feature the wonderful sight of a portable shrine – called *mikoshi* – being carried and hurled around by hundreds of boisterous young men. This event is often accompanied by the taiko and *shinobue* (the bamboo flute), which is a fantastic experience to be a part of, if you ever get the chance!

The taiko also appear in the theatre – *nô* drama and *kabuki*, particularly – as well as other forms of music-story-telling, such as *gagaku*, *kagura* and *kyogen* – all of which are associated with Shinto belief and rituals. You can often hear the taiko, cymbals, woodblocks and bells played in Buddhist temples, too – when the priests are chanting.

When you see taiko groups play you can often see little ritualistic movements like picking up the sticks (*bachi*), preparing to play the *ôdaiko* (big drum) and other movements – this kind of thing – that all have their origins in Buddhist or Shinto practice.

You can say that there are some similarities between playing the taiko and Japanese martial arts. *Kendo* – ‘The Way Of The Sword’ – and *aikido* are particularly related in terms of both movement and the way of thinking. An important concept shared by martial arts and taiko players is *ki* – which is often described as ‘life force’. This idea is expressed by striving for complete unification of the mind and body in performing a single act, which in our case is striking the taiko and blowing the flute.

Another area of similarity is the one of ‘form’ – or in Japanese we call it *kata*. ‘Form’ is really important in Japanese culture – you can see evidence of this in everyday life such as language and social etiquette, as well as all of the performing arts and disciplines like the tea ceremony, calligraphy and martial arts.

In playing the taiko we always strive for beauty, refinement, strength and purposefulness in our playing – attention to form, in other words. All of these things have an aesthetic quality to them, too – developing the ability to really play a phrase in music correctly by having both internal mental control and external physical control over every movement. The performance will be wonderful if you pay attention to all of these things!

Members of TaikOz train not just on the taiko, but in other areas, too. A couple do martial arts, others practice dance and flute playing. These other disciplines help us in many areas of our performance, including development of ‘form’.

After seeing TaikOz perform, people often say it looks like we’re meditating, even though we may be playing full-out on the biggest, loudest drums. This is kind of interesting because if you think about it, in essence, we are meditating! There is always a sense of calm at the centre of it all – and all musicians strive to achieve that wonderful point of ‘living in the moment’ – no regrets, no fear of the future, just the enjoyment of the ‘here and now’!

## What is the Oz in TaikOz?

The members of TaikOz all live in Australia – which immediately identifies us as ‘Oz’! And like the rest of the country, we come from a variety of cultural backgrounds – two have Chinese heritage and another is Japanese, as well as various European backgrounds.

We also come from a wide variety of musical backgrounds, which I think makes the ensemble unique, too. We have experts in Japanese traditional music, symphonic music, jazz and contemporary music, as well as martial arts and dance. All of these things combine to make our performance special – our compositions reflect who we are.

TaikOz often tours in Japan – which I admit is a bit like taking ‘coals to Newcastle’ – but the Japanese people really appreciate what we do and say what they like and respect about TaikOz is our dedication, our high level of musicianship and our excellent compositional skills. These elements all combine to create a sound that is a bit different to Japanese taiko groups.

I must say though, that TaikOz has a sound footing in traditional Japanese aesthetics and an understanding of the culture. We respect that totally and believe it is really important to our integrity as performers.

## Why do you wear that style of costume? Are there any traditional aspects of the costumes?

TaikOz wear a couple of different costumes. One is the black, backless top called *haragake* which is really comfortable because we sweat so much in a performance! And another is the *hakama* – long, flaring pants that almost look like a dress! These pants are quite formal and we only wear them for certain formal, serious pieces.

Our footwear is the traditional Japanese sock called *tabi*. Ours have rubber grip on the bottom, which is really useful because of the low, wide stances we often adopt to play the taiko.


Sometimes we also wear a light coat called *hanten* or *happi*. We have two colours – one is blue, which represents the Australian sea and sky, and the other is ochre, which represents the colours of the outback. The blue hanten was designed by a Japanese designer – Abe-san – who thinks blue is the definitive Australian colour – I think she’s right, too!

Sometimes we talk about playing in a costume that’s more reflective of our Australian culture – like jeans or shorts and thongs! – but they just aren’t suitable for playing the taiko – too hot and restrictive. I also like to have a bit of formality on stage – I don’t think the audience wants to see us in street wear! It is too casual, I think.

## When preparing a new piece what things do you consider? What process do you follow? Do you use notation when learning?

As the members of TaikOz are fortunate enough to be able to spend a lot of time together – 5 days a week – we can workshop all of our compositions. So when a new composition is brought to the group we learn the rhythms and movements at the same time. All members of the group feel welcome to contribute ideas to the development of the piece and everyone is encouraged to memorise the rhythm patterns from the start. This is a good process because we get the music in our bodies – literally – right from the beginning.

After gaining that first flash of inspiration the composer will work through several conceptual processes like developing musical themes using various compositional techniques, choosing



instruments and cultivating stylistic ideas and so on. The ideas are brought to our regular training sessions and communicated firstly through a process of *renshû* (practice exercises) and improvisation, followed by work on the themes or sometimes just fragments of themes and musical ideas. At this stage, most of the work is done aurally, with perhaps the odd look at a written score.

Using these musical fragments and forms the group collectively works on ensemble, dynamics, phrasing, sound and style and once we begin to get the feel of the music in our bodies and minds, we then begin the process of working on the full piece. One of the beauties of our ensemble is that because we do work together on a daily basis and know each other's playing really well, developing new pieces of music can be done over an extended period of time, which allows the composer to carefully consider every aspect of their piece of music. The composer is able to hear things played in a myriad of ways and make changes as they go, before settling on the final composition. By this stage we often use the printed page as an extra tool in the learning process and this will eventually make its way into a full score that can be referred to in the future. It's not uncommon for us to make changes after a piece is given its first performance and so the process of development and refinement continues, sometimes for years!

I should say too, that all of the movement is determined by the musical material, which is what we call the 'taiko style' – it's 'what makes taiko drumming different from every other style of drumming'. This gets back to the idea of 'form' (the *kata*) – beauty and refinement of movement and sound. To have good 'taiko style' you must have good form and we work this in at the beginning of the compositional process – you can't add it in later.

All of our pieces are fully composed, but they often contain elements of improvisation. You must be a good improviser to play the taiko. Although we like to be very inventive when improvising on the taiko, we always stay within the conventions of the style – you must maintain good form at all times. This is because the aesthetics of the performance must remain intact – we can't break that.


As I said, we do use notation as a memory aid and it's good to have a score for future reference. We're always changing the music in little ways, though! No performance is ever the same.

### **How important is space in your performance? That is, the space between each drum stroke?**

This question is actually a very complicated one because it works on many levels. First of all there is the space between each drum stroke, which works on two levels in itself – the alternation of drum strokes, which is heard as 'rhythm', and also the physical space that flows between the drum skin, the *bchi* (drumstick), the arms, the body and back again – a circle in other words! The space or shape that you make with your arms and *bachi* should never be in a straight line – always a circle. *Everything* moves in circles in a taiko performance – watch for it next time you see a performance and see how the circle comes into every aspect. ... of course you can begin with the very shape of the taiko itself.

The stylistic movement of taiko players impacts on every aspect of the sound, too. There are subtle differences created by the way in which the stick hits the skin and how much air it has to travel through and what level of force is given. This gets back to the 'taiko style' – the beautiful, circular movements are unique to taiko, I think. The sound should never be forced or 'hard' – always soft!

The other aspect of 'space' is what we call *ma* in Japanese. This is really hard to talk about in words, as there is no direct translation for it. It kind of means 'the space between tangible entities' or 'space that forms part of the whole'. These descriptions are not very adequate, but you can certainly hear and feel them in performance – it's amazing when the taiko is raging away and then stop for a brief moment before moving on again – but there's no count, no cue, no movement, just stillness. It creates real tension in the music!



If you want to think about *ma* in a philosophical way there is a wonderful poem by the Chinese poet Laozi. It begins with the lines:

*Thirty spokes share the wheel's hub;  
It is the centre hole that makes it useful.*

The full poem, which celebrates the use of space or nothingness, can be found by googling Laozi.

### **Does playing both ends of the drum at the same time impact on the sound?**

It is interesting to note that very occasionally when two players play the Grand Drum – the *ôdaiko* – their two *bachi* sticks may hit at exactly the same time. When this happens the players can physically feel a jarring in the hand with 'hollowness' in the sound as a result. This is because the airwaves meet in the middle of the drum and 'cancel' each other out.

### **When collaborating with other composers, as in *Shifting Sands*, how does this work?**

This piece is essentially a really large version of a popular piece by shakuhachi *dai-shihan* (Grand Master) Riley Lee and didgeridoo virtuoso Matthew Doyle called *Spirit's Dance*; it's a beautiful piece of music.

The original plan was to create an arrangement of *Spirits Dance* that included an accompaniment for a single taiko, but when this was workshopped it developed into much more than this – it became a whole new composition involving four different taiko instruments and styles and a large percussion set-up for gongs, bells and cymbals – all played by seven players plus Riley and Matthew.

### **Why did you choose to include the didgeridoo?**

First of all, we have had a long-term friendship with Matthew – we've played with him many times, including on three tours of Japan. And also, as you can see from the genesis of *Shifting Sands*, that relationship already existed between Matthew and Riley.

But on a purely musical level the didgeridoo just fits in so well with the sound of the taiko. The low earthy tone both blends and contrasts with the sound of the taiko – particularly our large *ôdaiko*. We think of the sound of the taiko as something like the pealing of thunder or crashing of waves on a beach and the didgeridoo colours that sound, giving it a tonal focus. Matthew can employ such fantastic 'percussive' effects, too – dingo barks, kookaburra shrieks, brolgas noises and the like.

### **Who traditionally plays – men or women?**

In many of the traditional forms of taiko – out in the villages and country regions of Japan – men play the taiko. But these days, particularly in the modern form of taiko, it has become extremely popular with women. In fact I think there are now more women than men playing! In Australia this is definitely the case.

I sometimes wonder if women have a stronger innate understanding of the taiko, mainly because they see that it's not about brute strength but about using the whole body in unified flowing movement – it's not just the arms – and releasing that energy into the drums.

Many women quite often have a bigger sound than men because they understand this idea – many blokes just try and hit really hard!

## When developing rhythms within a composition what do you do?

I would like to say first of all that there is no distinction between so-called 'tuned percussion' and 'un-tuned percussion'. All percussion instruments – triangles, cymbals, taiko – possess pitch; put two drums side by side and you can immediately hear that one will sound higher than the other – two pitches, in other words. So, when I compose for the taiko drums I hear everything in terms of melody; much taiko music functions like a song – in fact, in Japan we call pieces of music 'songs' (using the English word, too).

To develop my 'drum melody' theme I will use compositional techniques like repetition. But even when repeating a phrase I will often change it a little bit each time – maybe by adding or taking away an instrument or adding some different accents.

I also like to use some mathematical type of techniques; you can hear this in my piece Ota-i-ko where I will take a phrase and chop beats off it until it's just a fragment of the original – diminution in other words.

I also like to compose long cyclic patterns and overlay them one on top of the other. For example: you can make a theme of say, 24 beats, which is made up from four smaller phrases of 6 beats and have another instrument play at the same time six phrases of 4 beats. Even then perhaps I might combine three phrases of 7 beats' length, adding another 3 beats to make up 24. I hated maths in school – but its fun in music!

I must say though that my ear determines the final outcome – if all of these formulas don't sound any good then I'm quite happy to chop them up and change them around. The musical line is ultimately what matters. The composer must make a decision at every step about how it actually sounds.

I'm also frequently asked if I use technology when composing. I don't like these kind of programs (except for notation where they are great) because the sampled sounds are vastly inferior to the real sounds, especially as regards pitch and tone. It's much better to record it – DVD is best so you can see and hear! By the way, it's always good to have musical friends – jamming away on your ideas is a great way of learning and being creative.

## Resource sheet 2: About TaikOz

### About TaikOz

Established in 1997, TaikOz has grown into an ensemble comprising eight musicians who undertake a year-round schedule of performances, workshops and teaching. The group regularly tours throughout Australia collaborating with artists and organisations such as the Melbourne and Sydney Symphony Orchestras, acclaimed choreographer Meryl Tankard, taiko great Eitetsu Hayashi and chamber music presenter Musica Viva. TaikOz travels internationally and in particular to Japan, where the group's approach to taiko and shakuhachi performance has received considerable acclaim.

TaikOz members have trained and performed with taiko masters Sado-Ondekoza, Eitetsu Hayashi and Sen Amano and over the course of ten years have collectively established a definitive Australian taiko sound. Recent highlights include TaikOz's appearances at Tokyo's National Theatre of Japan with Eitetsu Hayashi and Fuun no Kai after an invitation to present an all-Australian program of taiko music. This followed a month-long tour of Australia with Eitetsu and Fuun no Kai in 2006 marking the 30th Anniversary of the Japan-Australia Friendship Agreement. Previous collaborations with Eitetsu include the opening concert of the 2000 Sydney Festival, 'Kaikyousai' Festival in Kobe and concerts at Sydney's Enmore Theatre. Further appearances in Japan include TaikOz's 2005 tour of Japan where the group presented an all-Australian program at the 'Hibike Festival' in Echizen and collaborative concerts in Kobe with friends, Wadaiko Matsumuragumi. TaikOz and Matsumuragumi have also presented joint concerts and workshops at the Brisbane Powerhouse in 2004. The 2007 Sydney Festival saw a two-week sell-out season for the World Premiere of TaikOz's collaboration with acclaimed choreographer Meryl Tankard entitled *Kaidan: A Ghost Story* – a fusion of dance, music and theatre.

## Resource sheet 3: Websites

### Websites about different taiko drumming styles

- [www.miyamoto-unosuke.co.jp/](http://www.miyamoto-unosuke.co.jp/) – Miyamoto Unosuke Shoten is a family who make taiko instruments, Shinto shrine accoutrements, and other festival (matsuri) items of use. Their lineage dates back over 150 years and the company is based in Asakusa – an old, original area of Tokyo. Their beautiful hand-crafted instruments are used by shrines and musicians of the Kabuki theatre.
- [www.asano.co.jp/](http://www.asano.co.jp/) – In 2009 the Asano Taiko Company celebrates 400 years of instrument making. Their taiko are of the highest quality, using the finest materials by highly skilled craftsmen. Their instruments are used by many of the top professional groups.
- [www.eitetsu.net](http://www.eitetsu.net) – Eitetsu Hayashi is Japan's pre-eminent taiko soloist and at the forefront of contemporary taiko performance. He performs in a variety of contexts – solo concerts, concertos with orchestras, with musicians and performers of other genres and cultural backgrounds, as well as with his own ensemble, Fuun no Kai. Eitetsu is a gifted composer who writes for himself and his group, as well as for student ensembles.
- [www.kodo.or.jp/](http://www.kodo.or.jp/) – Kodô is the most famous of taiko groups and their concerts are seen all over the world. Their programs have a mix of traditional arts, including dancing and singing, as well as the latest contemporary music composed by living composers.
- [www.miyaketaiko.com/index.html](http://www.miyaketaiko.com/index.html) – The Miyake drumming style originates on Miyake Island – a very volatile place because of its intense volcanic activity. This traditional style is very flamboyant and requires the player to play in a very low stance, which demands a lot of strength and endurance from the player.
- [www.maff.go.jp/soshiki/kambou/joutai/onepoint/trad/english/c\\_shinji.html](http://www.maff.go.jp/soshiki/kambou/joutai/onepoint/trad/english/c_shinji.html) – This website refers to *Shishi-Mai* – Lion Dance of Saitama Prefecture – and *Shishi-odori* – Deer Dance of Iwate Prefecture.
- [http://nipponkiChi.jp/article\\_list.do?sessionId=4B76F743375BDED7364027C2F5502509?m1\\_lang=en&ym=200703](http://nipponkiChi.jp/article_list.do?sessionId=4B76F743375BDED7364027C2F5502509?m1_lang=en&ym=200703) – This website gives information about the ancient dance called *Oni Kenbai* – Demon Sword Dance.
- [www.oedosukerokutaiko.com/english-1.html](http://www.oedosukerokutaiko.com/english-1.html) – Sukeroku style taiko is very popular and originates in the old Tokyo district of Asakusa.
- [www.geocities.jp/fuurinkazan\\_tenko/osuwa.htm](http://www.geocities.jp/fuurinkazan_tenko/osuwa.htm) – This website gives information about *Osuwa-daiko* – a well-established group that has been part of the modernisation of taiko practice, although its roots are very ancient. Their leader and founder, Daihachi Oguchi, is very famous and seen by many as the 'father of modern taiko'.

### Other wonderful styles to investigate are –

- Chichibu Yataibayashi from the town of Chichibu in Saitama Prefecture and their annual *yo-matsuri* – 'night festival' (December 3)
- Hachijo-taiko hails from the Island of Hachijo and this style is very beautiful, involving dance elements in the drumming.

## Resource sheet 4: Program notes

### *OTA-I-KO (2001) – IAN CLEWORTH*

In 2001 Eitetsu Hayashi, the acclaimed taiko soloist, invited TaikOz to Japan to experience a period of intensive training under his guidance. Naturally, it was enormously stimulating and inspirational for us all. However, our time was enhanced, in no small part, by the wonderful surroundings we found at Ota-cho, Fukui-ken – an ancient village close to the coast of the Sea of Japan.

This small picturesque town has natural beauty in abundance, but most incredible – at least for taiko players – is its taiko training facility at ‘*Ota-i-ko Hills*’. Surrounded by mountains and graced with beautiful trees and birds, this marvellous place is a drummer’s dream – great food, comfortable accommodation and drums, drums, drums. It is also the home of *Otaikoza Myojin* – a wonderful group of taiko musicians with whom we forged a close friendship.

Drumming for up to twelve hours a day, the time at ‘*Ota-i-ko Hills*’ afforded us the opportunity to really workshop new ideas and techniques. This piece is a result of that process and its title refers to the sense of gratitude I feel towards this beautiful place and its wonderful people.

### *SHIFTING SANDS for Shakuhachi, Didgeridoo, Taiko and Gongs (2003) – IAN CLEWORTH, RILEY LEE, MATTHEW DOYLE*


The shakuhachi melody and didgeridoo part were composed by Riley and Matthew in 1992 and is known by the title of *Spirit’s Dance*. It has proven to be one of their most popular compositions and some attribute this to the beautifully complementary nature of these two ancient wind instruments; the ethereal, heavenly tone of the shakuhachi seems to fly above the earthy, rich drone of the didgeridoo. *Shifting Sands* takes the melody and bass of *Spirit’s Dance* and places the lively rhythms of the taiko ‘in between’.

The rather austere opening, played on *okedo* in traditional *dengaku* style, evokes night. The didgeridoo suggests ancient rites and rituals; the shakuhachi’s gentle statement of the *Spirit’s Dance* theme implies playfulness. In time, the *okedo* builds momentum with skeletal odd-time rhythm climaxing in explosive rhythmic development by three *Ôdaiko*. After a series of solos, duos and trios the bass pattern eventually settles into a lilting rhythm. A waltz – something we can all dance to!

### *CHI (2003) – GRAHAM HILGENDORF*

The Japanese word ‘*Chi*’ translates as ‘land’ and Graham has used this as the title for his piece to reflect the idea of wandering across the Australian landscape. The five taiko used in *Chi* are lightweight, easily transportable drums called *katsugi okedo* – which translates as ‘slung drum’ – and as the name suggests, this particular instrument allows the player to move freely about a field and across the land; or in our case, over the stage!

Although there are similarities between the *katsugi-style okedo* used in *Chi* and the black and white *dengaku-style okedo* used in other pieces performed by TaikOz, the two vary considerably in sound (because of the differences in proportion, size and weight) and their cultural origins. While the *dengaku okedo* has its roots in the rice paddy rituals of Iwate Prefecture, the *katsugi okedo* stems from



the collaboration, only a generation ago, between Japanese taiko drummers and Korean players of the ancient *changgo* drum. While the Japanese form of 'slung-drumming' has since developed its own distinctive sound and style, the Korean influence is obvious to both eye and ear in the use of the electrifying overhand stick technique of the accomplished player.

Graham draws on this highly virtuosic technique to create a myriad of interlocking rhythms. However, the basis of the entire composition of *Chi* lies in just a single 5-bar musical theme and its transformation through different combinations of players. Graham says, '[the use of only a single theme] represents the endless plains of the Australian landscape'.

To add extra colour to the sound of the okedo he has included pairs of small cymbals called *chappa* (the name is an onomatopoeia). When composing *Chi*, Graham created the highly original technique of playing the *chappa* in the left hand while a stick held in the right plays the *okedo*.

## Resource sheet 5: *Shifting Sands* linear overview

**LINEAR OVERVIEW OF SHIFTING SANDS: a composition by Ian Cleworth, Riley Lee and Matthew Doyle. For shakuhachi, didgeridoo and Wadaiko ensemble**

INTRODUCTION SOLOS Dengaku okedo (ad lib on thematic material)	DVD cue – 45:29 Didgeridoo solo statement with gong 'colours' and egg shaker

DVD cue – 46:35 SPIRIT'S DANCE THEME enter shakuhachi ( <i>Spirit's Dance</i> 1st & 2nd phrases only) didgeridoo to 'drone' accompaniment + dengaku rhythmic theme(64-beats)	DVD cue – 47:37 development of <i>Spirit's Dance</i> (through improvisation)

DVD cue – 49:22 Development of OKEDO THEME juxtaposition of 4/4 over 6/4-beat theme add gong 'colours' & introduce 'bell theme' on Burmese tuned gongs	DVD cue – 51:01 ÔDAIKO TRIO development of 64-beat theme	DVD cue – 54:02 GONGS DUET

DVD cue – 55:10 ÔDAIKO TRIO full statement of 64-beat theme (now rendered in 32-beats)	DVD cue – 56:18 return of ÔDAIKO TRIO with tam-tam colouration and gong bass line Didgeridoo returns

DVD cue – 56:50 MODULE Nr.1 didgeridoo solo Ôdaiko bass rhythm Hirado bass rhythm	DVD cue – 57:03 MODULE Nr.2 ôdaiko duet with bamboo sticks (Hachijyo-style = side-on to drum)	DVD cue – 57:25 MODULE Nr.3 shakuhachi returns (long tone improv only)	DVD cue – 59:00 MODULE Nr.4 shakuhachi states <i>Spirits Dance</i> theme Gongs reintroduce 'bell theme'  Shimedaiko plays bass rhythm Ôdaiko drops out

DVD cue – 59:58 MODULE Nr.5 2nd Hirado player joins & alternates beats a la 'hocket'	DVD cue – 1:00:36 MODULE Nr.6 shakuhachi plays 'bell theme' from <i>Spirit's Dance</i> chappa added for colour / hocket figure b/w gongs ôdaiko re-enters with 6/8 feel	DVD cue – 1:00:50 MODULE Nr.7: FINALE final statement of 'bell theme' small cymbals & gongs added	DVD cue – 1:00:58 final short solo on didgeridoo to conclude

### OVERALL SHAPE

INTRODUCTION	SPIRIT'S DANCE THEME	development of OKEDO THEME	ÔDAIKO TRIO	MODULES 1 – 7
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## Resource sheet 6: The composers

### IAN CLEWORTH: TaikOz Artistic Director

Ian has been Artistic Director of TaikOz since its inception in 1997. In 2005 he became full-time with the group after having spent 20 years as Principal Percussionist with the Sydney Symphony and 16 years with the percussion group Synergy.

At age 19, Ian began taiko study with Amano Sen of Yamanashi-ken and performed throughout Honshu and Shikoku with Amano's taiko ensemble, Araham. Since then he has undertaken study and performance with Japan's greatest taiko soloist, Eitetsu Hayashi. TaikOz has an ongoing collaboration with Eitetsu since presenting the opening concert for the 2000 Sydney Festival and a year later, at *Kaikyousai*, Kobe, which marked the group's debut in Japan. In 2004 Ian was invited to the Tokyo Summer Festival for a performance of Maki Ishii's *Monochrome* as a guest member of Eitetsu's ensemble, Fuun-no-Kai.

With the Sydney Symphony Ian played under such conducting greats as Lorin Maazel, Charles Dutoit, Edo de Waart and Vladimir Ashkenazy, and has played in some of the world's finest concert halls, including Carnegie Hall, Boston Symphony Hall, Amsterdam's Concertgebouw and London's Royal Albert Hall. As a soloist Ian premiered and recorded Ross Edwards's *Yarrageh: Nocturne for Percussion and Orchestra* and with his Synergy colleagues, Toru Takemitsu's *From Me Flows What You Call Time*.

During his years with Synergy Ian was involved with the presentation of the latest works for percussion, including numerous premieres of Australian and international composers. With Synergy he toured Australia, the UK, Hungary, Sweden, Taiwan, Japan, Poland, Germany and Singapore and worked with some of the world's finest musicians, including Fritz Hauser, Trilok Gurtu, Mike Nock, Hosam Ramzy, Omar Faruk Tekbilek, Kazue Sawai, Palle Mikkelborg and Dave Samuels. Ian was Co-Artistic Director from 2000 until 2003.

In 2007, Ian received the APRA-AMC Classical Music Award for 'Long-term Contribution for the Advancement of Australian Music'.

### GRAHAM HILGENDORF: Composer/performer

Graham joined TaikOz in 1998. He travelled to Japan in 2001, studying under the guidance of Eitetsu Hayashi and performing with the group in Kanazawa, Kobe and Manno. Graham is also a freelance jazz drummer and percussionist. After completing percussion studies at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music he founded the percussion ensemble *B'tutta*. Graham composes for *B'tutta* and TaikOz, including the popular *Chi* and *Daichi* which features the recently developed *katsugi okedo/chappa* style. Graham also coordinates many activities for TaikOz, including student classes/workshops/concerts and corporate events.

Graham spent most of 2005 living, studying and playing in Japan. He had the opportunity to study under Wakayama-ryu leader and master of the Edobayashi style, Suzuki-sensei. An interest in the traditional Hachijyo style of taiko playing took him to Hachijyo Island for further study with Kikuchi-sensei.



### **RILEY LEE: Composer/performer**

Riley is Australia's only Grand Master of the shakuhachi and one of the few outside Japan. He began playing the shakuhachi in Japan in 1971. For three years he toured internationally as a full-time member of Ondekoza – The Demon Drummers (now called Kodo), a group of traditional Japanese musicians.

Riley's studies with traditional teachers in Japan have included such peculiar methods as practising barefoot in the snow, blowing into his flute under waterfalls and in blizzards until icicles form at its end, and running the Boston Marathon and then playing taiko at the finish line.

In 1980, he became the first non-Japanese to attain the rank of Dai Shihan – grand master in the shakuhachi tradition. His present shakuhachi teacher is Katsuya Yokoyama, one of the world's most respected masters of the Zen inspired repertoire.

Riley completed his BA and MA degrees at the University of Hawaii and received his PhD in ethnomusicology from the University of Sydney. This combination of scholarship and performance professionalism taken to such a high degree is rare with any musical instrument, especially so in such a cross-cultural East/West context.

On New Years Day 2000, Riley performed on the roof of the Sydney Opera House as a featured soloist in Australia's contribution to the Millennium Dawn performances. This was broadcast live around the world.

### **MATTHEW DOYLE: Composer/performer**

Matthew is well known as a didgeridoo player and dancer and has worked with, among others, the Aboriginal and Islander Dance Theatre (AIDT) and the great solo taiko player, Eitetsu Hayashi. As a solo artist he has toured Japan, Papua New Guinea, the United Kingdom and Germany.

# Resource sheet 7: Ota-i-ko motifs

This is page 1 only of the score. For complete score [click here](#)

## OTAIKO MOTIFS

IAN CLEWORTH

**bass rhythm**  
*f* *mf* *mf*

**motif A**

**motif B**

**motif C: b. 52**  
shimedaiko  
nagado  
okedo  
*sub mp*

**motif C: b. 75**  
*sub mp*

**motif C: b. 77 & b. 152**

**motif C: b. 154**  
quasi ad lib

**b. 30 solo: hemiola**  
6 beats 6 beats 6 beats  
*crescendo always*  
*ff*

**b. 30 solo: diminution over 32-beat cycle**  
9 beats 8 beats

**b. 79 solo: diminution over 16-beat cycle & 24-beat cycle**  
*sub mp*  
6 beats 5 beats 3 beats

51 2 beats 7 beats 5 beats

# Resource sheet 8: Japanese notation

This is page 1 only of the score. For complete score [click here](#)

## OTAIKO

solo: bars 30-38 (see music with Japanese notation)

LEGEND:

天 = ten      テケ = teke      ステ ツク = sute tsuku      テレスク = teresuku

5

ステ ツテ ツケ天 = sute tsute tsuketen      ス天 ツ = suten tsu

10 bar 30

Taiko set:  
shimedaiko  
nagado  
okedo

天 テケ ステ ツク ステ ツク テケ天 テケ天 テレスク テレスク ステ ツテ

12

ツケ天 天 テケ ステ ツク ステ ツク テケ天 テケ天 テレスク ステ ツテ

14

ツケ天 天 テケ ステ ツク ステ ツク テケ天 テケ天 テレスク ス天 ツ

16

天 テケ ステ ツク ステ ツク テケ天 テケ天 天 テケ ステ ツク ステ ツク 天

English sounds version

19

ten teke su tetsu ku su tetsu ku te ke ten te ke ten teresuku teresuku sute tsute

21

tsuketen ten teke su tetsu ku su tetsu ku te ke ten te ke ten teresuku sute tsute

23

tsuketen ten teke su tetsu ku su tetsu ku te ke ten te ke ten teresuku sutentsu

25

ten teke su tetsu ku su tetsu ku te ke ten te ke ten ten teke su tetsu ku su tetsu ku ten

# Resource sheet 9: Shifting Sands Odaiko Trio section

This is page 1 only of the score. For complete score [click here](#)

## SHIFTING SANDS

IAN CLEWORTH

Freely

SHAKUHACHI

DENSAKU OKEIKO

GONGS (ten)

GONGS (bass)

DENSAKU OKEIKO

DENSAKU OKEIKO

ODASAKO/ HIRADO

SHIMEDA/KO

SOLO [ad lib c. 1] [Q] ff fast gradually dim & rit.

SHAKUHACHI SOLO ("SPIRIT'S DANCE" - 1st phrase) [Q] (2nd phrase)

DENSAKU OKEIKO SOLO [ad lib c. 1] Free tempo gradual dim [Q] gradually dim & rit.

GONGS (ten) PP Free tempo [gradually dim out non-pitched gong] [Q] gradually dim & rit.

GONGS (bass) PP Free tempo [gradually dim out non-pitched gong] [Q] gradually dim & rit.

DENSAKU OKEIKO Free tempo (cont ad lib) f mf mp

in tempo  $\text{♩} = c. 120$  4 (sim) (sim)

SHAKUHACHI

DENSAKU OKEIKO

GONGS (ten)

GONGS (bass)

DENSAKU OKEIKO p mp f p mp

DENSAKU OKEIKO

A 4 4 4 4

SHAKUHACHI (sim) (sim)

DENSAKU OKEIKO (sim) (sim)

GONGS (f x only) p (f x only)

GONGS (f x only)

DENSAKU OKEIKO mp

DENSAKU OKEIKO mp



# Resource sheet 11: Chi full score

This is page 1 only of the score. For complete score [click here](#)

## CHI (2003 Version)

GRAHAM HILGENDORF

**slow and steady**  
play 1st & 3rd times

Katsugi okedo (1.4 or 1.5)

**play 3rd time only**

Katsugi okedo (1.8) chappa

**play 2nd & 3rd times**

Katsugi okedo (1.4 or 1.5)

**quick and bright**

9

1. 2. 3.

*f*

17

*mf*

23

*mf* *f* *mf* *mf*

28

*mf* *f* *mf*

33

*f* *mf* *f* *mf*

**with greater intensity**

39

*ff* *ff*

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