



Torii Taiko Chosen for Taiko Ten Concert at NATC 2025

For Immediate Release

Santa Fe, NM., February 13, 2025 — Torii Taiko is honored to perform for the 2025 North America Taiko Conference (NATC) being held in Phoenix, AZ during Labor Day weekend. This is the first full conference since the COVID epidemic. With Labor Day on a Monday, the conference will run for four days instead of the usual three. NATC runs from August 29, through September 1 at the Phoenix Convention Center.

To share a wide range of taiko gifts, the Taiko Ten features ten groups who play for ten minutes each. Taiko Ten is a free community concert that provides performance opportunities to share a group's work with up to 600 screaming taiko peers who attend the North American Taiko Conference.

Since the 2003 NATC in Sacramento, the Taiko Ten continues to be a pillar of the NATC experience, with new themes and interpretations each year. The Taiko Ten concert is on Saturday, August 30th, starting around 7:30pm.

“The theme of ‘taiko in the desert’ is intended to reflect both the literal and the metaphorical. Our aim is to not only highlight the unique taiko ecosystem of the desert southwest, but also to consider deserts more broadly. Although often places of limited resources and difficult conditions, deserts are rich with their own kind of beauty.

Conference Organizer Gregory Wada says that Torii Taiko reminded him, “How it's so fundamentally cool that people get together and play music - and how they really make their own unique sound. That's really what we're going for with Taiko Ten. We want the performance to be about sharing our lives as taiko players and getting to see into people's worlds.”

“NATC 2025 will be a blast!” spokesperson Jon Whitsell said. “Performing with the Taiko Ten will add prestige to our ambitious negotiations with The Tsuyama Asahi Shimbun to promote dual concerts between our sister city Tsuyama, Japan and Santa Fe.”

The Taiko Community Alliance is the organizing nonprofit whose mission is to empower the people and advance the art of taiko. They honor the mission with core values of respect, heritage & evolution, empowerment, inclusivity, and transparency.

Torii Taiko is your path to another world of fun, loud and expressive taiko creations. Taiko is the Japanese drumming art form which spread new wings in Post World War Two Japan, evolving into “kumi daiko.” This group concept acts like a jazz ensemble combining the different taiko voices into one sound.

The four members of Torii Taiko cook up a unique contemporary local blend of dance, aikido, drumline, Afro-Cuban, and Taiko Different with rock and roll influences. The member are: Danny Silver, Emily Walukas, Dyan Yoshikawa, and Jon Whitsell. Inspired by the torii gates of Japan, the group name Torii Taiko, was approved by Grammy winner Koji Nakamura.

Kami spirits move through the center of the torii threshold. So, veer to the left or to the right and join us creating a special space. Torii also honor the awe and mystery of nature as manifested in the numinous spirit of place. Santa Fe is not a desert or a high desert. With 14 inches of rain each year, Santa Fe is a semi-arid steppe with cold winters and amazing landscapes!

Torii Taiko is a spontaneous evolutionary collaboration to joyfully cross over to worlds beyond our everyday existence through practice, patience, and passion.

Leave the mundane behind and join us searching for the extraordinary!

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[Taiko Community Alliance](#)

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