



YAMATAI  
PRESENTS:

# PULSE

April 20, 2024 | 7:00pm

Bailey Hall

# FROM THE DIRECTOR:



Welcome to PULSE!

As perhaps the loudest musical group on campus, we hope that you will be able to not only see and hear, but also feel the intensity of music with each hit of the drum! We will be showcasing various different styles of taiko alongside fue (bamboo flute) and keyboard, and perhaps even a little bit of dancing!

This year, we have the honor of welcoming back guest performer Miyako Seki of the professional ensemble *Bonten*. Miyako and her expressive playing have been an inspiration to all of us since we first met her during last year's PULSE. She and the rest of *Bonten* has supported us immensely throughout the concert rehearsal progress this year, and we are incredibly thankful that we get to play taiko because of them.

Tonight, we hope to bring to Bailey Hall not only the pulsing of drums, but the resonance of every member's joy for playing taiko with each other. The most cherished aspect of Yamatai for me would definitively be how it feels to look into each other's eyes and smile wide together during a performance! This group has been an incredible source of support for me since undergrad, and I will deeply miss Yamatai next year.

I cannot thank our members enough for their understanding, dedication, and perseverance to create music together for this night. I hope that you enjoy this concert as much as how excited we are to finally present it to you!

Sincerely,  
Victoria Shao  
*2023-24 Musical Director*

# WHAT IS TAIKO?

TAIKO (太鼓) simply means “drum” in Japanese. An art form with roots in Buddhist and Shinto rituals and classical traditions, taiko drumming has been in traditional theater, the imperial court, and agrarian celebrations. Today, the word *taiko* is used in general to refer to ensemble Japanese drumming (*kumi-daiko*), an art form which started in the 1950s.

YAMATAI (邪馬台) is a student musical ensemble at Cornell University dedicated to spreading the art and joy of taiko. The team was founded in 2006 by Cornell undergraduate Haruki Yukawa '09 and began under the musical direction of Eva Kestner '09. Through rigorous study and training, Yamatai seeks to explore musical possibilities of taiko drumming in contemporary adaptations while respecting the origins of the traditional art. Our current repertoire consists of traditional community taiko pieces, original compositions by Yamatai members and alumni, and pieces by Bonten.

## BONTEN 梵天 featured member

BONTEN(梵天) is a professional drumming troupe in Japan formed in 1999 by members of the Mirai Taiko Dojo and led by Masataka Kobayashi. Making their stage debut in 2000, they have been creating colorful music with their own unique sound and worldview, using mainly Japanese drums, but also shinobue, shakuhachi, shamisen, koto, and piano.

In the fall of 2006, Kobayashi-sensei visited Cornell to help us establish our taiko ensemble, Yamatai. We thank Kobayashi-sensei and Bonten for their tremendous, continued support since the founding of the team.



**Masataka Kobayashi**  
小林 政高  
*Leader and Founder*



**Miyako Seki**  
関 美弥子  
*Guest Performer*

# YAMATAI 邪馬台



**Victoria Shao M.S. '25**  
*Musical Director*  
Nutritional Sciences



**Iris Ho '26**  
*President*  
Computer Science, Asian Studies, Linguistics



**Chris Chung '25**  
*Vice President*  
Data Science, Government



**Max Ma '25**  
*Training Officer*  
Economics, Information Science



**Julianne Huang '25**  
*Recruitment and Concert Chair*  
Classics, Art History



**Emily Fan '26**  
*Publicity Chair*  
Fiber Science



**Dylan Lee '25**  
*Social and Alumni Relations Chair*  
Electrical and Computer Engineering



**Claire Wu '27**  
*Webmaster*  
Communications, Info Science



**Elisha Wang '24**  
Hotel Administration



**Nicole Thean '24**  
Engineering Physics, Computer Science

# YAMATAI 邪馬台



**Cassy Ying '25**  
Government  
(studying abroad)



**Badyn Milstein-Touesnard '25**  
Environmental Engineering  
(studying abroad)



**Amber Min '25**  
Mathematics, Computer Science



**Kento Okada Ph.D. '27**  
Biological and Environmental Engineering



**Emma Pereira '26**  
Environmental Engineering



**Robert Haojia Wang '25**  
Physics, Computer Science



**Autumn Wang '27**  
Undecided Engineering



**Emmah Kabbah '27**  
Global and Public Health



**Kanae Funabiki '27**  
Biological Sciences



**Sydney Lau '27**  
Civil Engineering

# PROGRAM

## ECHO 廻向

*Masataka Kobayashi*

Inspired by the Buddhist belief that both humans and animals are reborn in different forms, this piece uses dramatic movements to express the whirlwind of emotions that one experiences from rebirth.

## OMIYAGE 御土産

*Shoji Kameda, TaikoProject*

The name of this piece means “gift”, and it was created by Shoji Kameda and TaikoProject as a gift to the whole Taiko community. The dynamic movements and rhythms of *Omiyage* make this piece incredibly fun for both viewers and performers.

## ŌDAIKO SOLO

*Elisha Wang '24*

*Odaiko* means “big taiko”, and the massive size of this drum conveys the strength and power needed to play it.

## MIYAKE 三宅

*KODŌ, arr. Grace Gu '23*

Stemming from the traditional roots of Miyakejima, this modern adaptation of a piece popularized by KODO features explosive solos and unbounded energy.

## HARU NO HADŌ 春の波動

*Masataka Kobayashi*

Meaning “vibrations of spring,” this powerful piece uses the upright *odaiko* style to convey the thundering resonance of a spring shower.

## CRIMSON クリムゾン

*Masataka Kobayashi*

Inspired by the flow of blood, energy, and life, this composition features intricate beta-set rhythms to create a complex pattern of harmonies.

## HERO ヒーロー

*Masataka Kobayashi*

A jaw-dropping display of power and technical skill, this piece pushes the limits of speed and endurance to illustrate the perseverance and strength of a true hero.

# PROGRAM

## -- INTERMISSION --

**YODAN-UCHI 四段打ち** *Sukeroku Taiko, arr. Victoria Shao '25*  
Making its official Yamatai debut this year, Yodan-Uchi is an original style combining the sideways naname style and upright hachijō style to allow for full body movement. Watch as performers spin, dance, and play taiko like you've never seen it before.

### **SUNDANCE**

*Ben Pastel '11*

An original Yamatai composition, this piece uses energetic rhythms and cheerful melodies to portray the joy and excitement of Japanese *matsuri* (festivals), as well as the mystery that underlies them.

### **HACHIJŌ DUET**

*Victoria Shao '25, Miyako Seki*

This style of taiko comes from *Hachijō* Island and is one of the few taiko styles based on improvisation. It is relaxed and expressive, with plenty of opportunity for individual creativity.

### **KUU 空**

*Masataka Kobayashi*

The Japanese character for *Kuu* can mean both “sky” and “emptiness,” and this piece represents the vastness of the open sky.

### **DOKOKARA**

*Yuta Kato*

Combining the classic ‘don’ and ‘ka’ of taiko, Dokokara is a creative and fun piece where players get to express their individuality and synchronization.

### **GAIFUU 凱風**

*Masataka Kobayashi*

Meaning “wind of victory”, *Gaifuu* unleashes the full triumphant power of a taiko ensemble, culminating in the most powerful finale in Yamatai’s repertoire.

## -- ENCORE --

### **SHUNPUU 春風**

*KODŌ*

# SPECIAL THANKS TO:

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**Yuta Kato**

*Workshop Leader*

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Collegetown

*Sponsor*

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**Lincoln Hall**

*Practice Space*

**and YOU!**



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For the latest news and updates on future performances and events, follow our social media accounts or our website:

[www.yamatai-taiko.com](http://www.yamatai-taiko.com)





