

## Proposal: *New Works Showcase 2011*

We are writing today to propose a new program for the 2011 Taiko Conference: the *New Works Showcase 2011*. Designed to encourage the creation of new taiko work, the program culminates in an informal Conference recital of approximately 10 new works by 10 taiko composers. The showcase incorporates a panel of experienced artists and prepared questions to the audience to provide composers with helpful feedback. Patrick and I have designed the program to minimize the added complexity to the Committee and Taiko Conference staff, and to maximize its potential to have an impact on our art-form.

We believe the *New Works Showcase 2011* fills a critical need in the taiko world to encourage the creation of new work, to support aspiring composers, and to recognize the achievements of our creators. Taiko players are often intimidated by composition, having little or no musical training, and are daunted by the diverse musical and movement opportunities presented by taiko. There is no infrastructure in our community for supporting the creation of new work. An aspiring composer is on her own to make time and overcome issues in the process of writing a first piece. The taiko professional has few opportunities to receive critical feedback on her work, and to discuss deeply the issues of composition for taiko. The Showcase program provides a distinct goal for composers, with a deadline, parameters for the work, a network of support, and a venue for discussion and feedback. It provides the momentum of a group and the supervision of a mentor. The recital provides inspiration to Conference attendees, encouraging the would-be composer to take the plunge and the experienced creator to utilize the venue to debut ground-breaking taiko work.

The Showcase itself is one-hour in length, to fit a narrow time slot within the busy Conference schedule. The Showcase can optionally be held as a standard workshop, perhaps with the title “New Works Showcase – up close and personal with the compositional process”. In this case, additional emphasis is placed on audience involvement, with composition-related take-home materials for attendees. The Showcase begins with an explanation of the program’s goals and an overview of the Showcase. Each composer in turn is given a few minutes to speak before or after the performance of their piece. Like a concise master-class, the attending artist panelists then give feedback. Potential panelists include Byron Au Yong, Kenny Endo, Stanford music/dance/arts professors, Eitetsu Hayashi, Yoshihiko Miyamoto, Ryuutaro Kaneko, and other Japanese artists. Composers’ specific questions for the audience are prepared in the printed programs, and the audience is given a few moments to answer. Following the Showcase, panelists’ and audience written feedback is distributed to the composers.

The application process is straight-forward. Aspiring participants fill out a short proposal for their new work (example, pages 5 and 6) and these proposals are evaluated for three criteria: artistic potential, benefit to the composer, and likelihood of completion. We are assuming the Committee is interested in

reviewing the applications and choosing the final participants, but can make other arrangements for judging if the Committee's time or logistics are an issue. Composers selected for participation are then paired with a mentor in the taiko community and have access to a wider circle of taiko composers for support and guidance. Patrick and I serve as task-masters, doing regular check-in with the participants and mentors and overseeing the works' progress.

The remainder of this proposal includes a time-line for the project, promotional wording, the *New Works Showcase 2011 Application*, and the letter to potential mentors. Assuming the Committee finds the *New Works Showcase 2011* program worth pursuing, there are three main tasks the Committee assumes.

- Arrange venue/date/time for Showcase during Conference
- Plan for small set of drums to be used during Showcase
- Review applications and select participants

Patrick and I will handle arranging and pairing of mentors, promotion of the program, the day-to-day management of the composition phase, recital preparations, and day-of event management.

We look forward to hearing your thoughts on the proposal and hope you agree that *New Works Showcase 2011* would be a useful addition to the 2011 Taiko Conference line-up!

Sincerely,

Kristofer Bergstrom and Patrick Graham

## Time-line

- Aug 2010 – Submit proposal to Taiko Conference committee
- Sept 2010
  - Application forms finalized
  - Promotion by email, [taikconference.org](http://taikconference.org), [OnEnsemble.org](http://OnEnsemble.org), etc
  - Contact potential mentors
  - Set up online forum or group email list
- Sept to Dec 2010 – Application period open
- Jan 2011 – Participants selected by Taiko Conference Committee
- Feb 2011 – First official check-in
  - Mentor relationship status
  - Proposed work possible issues (equip, etc)
- Mar 2011 – Second check-in
  - Composition begun?
  - Plan for staying on track
- May 2011 – Third check-in
  - Progress
  - Possible issues for completion
  - Directed support
- July 2011 – Recital participation confirmed
  - Progress
  - Technical aspects (equipment, sound) for piece
  - Description of piece
  - Questions for audience
- Aug 2011 – *New Works Showcase 2011*

## Promotional Materials

Announcing the *New Works Showcase 2011*, a recital of all-new works for taiko at the 2011 Taiko Conference!

Have you been thinking of writing a new taiko piece? Do you have a work in progress that needs a push to reach completion? Are you looking for useful feedback and support for your composition? The *New Works Showcase 2011* is your opportunity to compose!

Participants receive mentoring and support from a like-minded group of taiko enthusiasts, helping you see your piece through to completion. The recital is viewed by a panel of diverse and supportive artists, providing a rare opportunity for helpful feedback and exciting ideas.

The *New Works Showcase 2011* is a valuable opportunity to receive composition support! Propose your new piece today and join us to create new taiko work!

### NOTE

A possible incentive is to offer free attendance at Conference to selected composers.

## *New Works Showcase 2011* Application

*New Works Showcase 2011* is a one-hour recital of new compositions to be held at the 2011 Taiko Conference, intended to encourage and celebrate the creation of new taiko music. Participating composers receive feedback from a panel of established artists, as well as facilitated input from the Taiko Conference audience. During the development phase, composers have access to one-on-one mentorship with an experienced taiko artist as well contact with a community of like-minded creators for questions and problem-solving. *New Works Showcase 2011* is a rare opportunity for beginning and experienced taiko composers to generate new work and receive beneficial input from a wide array of supportive artists.

Works are selected based on their potential in one or more of the following categories.

1. Artistic potential

In what ways might this work be a contribution to the art-form of taiko?

2. Benefit to the composer and performers

How will the creation of this piece help you grow as a composer or performer? How might it positively impact others?

3. Possibility of successful completion

What steps are you taking to ensure you stay on track and the piece is completed successfully in time?

### **New Work Guidelines**

New works are limited to approximately 10 minutes in length. Composers and performers will be given a small amount of rehearsal time prior to the performance, but works should be essentially prepared prior to Taiko Conference. Composers are responsible for arranging performers and special equipment. Taiko Conference will arrange a small set of standard taiko drums and stands for use by all composers. Lighting and staging will be minimal, with an informal performance setting.

#### *Extremely Short Works* Category

To encourage new composers and experimentation, *New Works Showcase 2011* includes an *Extremely Short Works* category of pieces 2 minutes or less. An *Extremely Short Work* can be a complete, concise composition, the kernel of a larger work, or a compositional experiment to tackle a specific challenge.

Name:  
Email:  
Phone:  
Address:

Short bio:  
Feel free to include years of study, stage experience, composition experience,  
and any other information relevant to your work.

Proposal:  
Describe your work, addressing the three selection criteria above.

In addition to this application, you are welcome and encouraged to submit any relevant supporting materials including written scores, detailed notes, graphic notation, audio and video samples, etc. Note, however, that these materials are only useful to the reviewers in as much as they are relevant to your proposed work.

## Letter to Potential Mentors

Dear -,

Patrick Graham and I are arranging a new program called *New Works Showcase 2011* to be held at the 2011 Taiko Conference. Our goal is to encourage the creation of new taiko work and to recognize creativity in the taiko community. I am writing to ask if you will be a mentor in the program.

Participants in the program will be selected in January 2011 and paired with a mentor in the taiko community. Mentors will provide a resource for questions over the course of the 6-month composition process. We expect that some participants will utilize their mentors more than others, asking questions about composition, arrangement, and technique.

Patrick and I will pair the participants with mentors, sharing your email address with one or two mentees. Patrick and I will handle the regular check ins and “task master” role, working to keep the composers on track. You will simply be on call for questions should your mentee choose to utilize the option.

Will you serve as a mentor in the *New Works Showcase 2011* program? Please respond to this email and let us know. Both Patrick and I believe you would be a very valuable resource for the program’s participants!

Sincerely,

Kristofer Bergstrom

## Potential Mentor List

- Masato Baba
- Michelle Fujii
- Roy and PJ Hirabayashi
- Shoji Kameda
- Yuta Kato
- Kiyoshi Nagata
- Bonnie Soon
- Kelvin Underwood
- Kaoru Watanabe
- Bryan Yamami
- other San Jose players
- other Fubuki Daiko players