

Isaku Kageyama

<http://www.isakukageyama.com>

Historical Background

Bon Daiko refers to the style of taiko played at the Bon Odori (Obon Festival) that celebrates the return of ancestral spirits. The Naname style of playing taiko is derived from Bon Taiko, and was popularized by Sukeroku Daiko.

Steps to Playing a Bon Daiko Piece

1. Get a general sense of the groove, by listening to the ji pattern, the other instruments, and the melody.
2. Analyze the form of the song. Many Bon Daiko songs are in AB form, where a main melody with vocals and an instrumental interlude are repeated.
3. Decide what to play during each part of the song. Typically, the drums will play a ji pattern during the vocal parts, and play out during the instrumental parts.
4. Practice each part of the song individually. Then, gradually start putting the parts together. For example, practice only the A section of the song. Then practice only the B section. Practice the A and B sections of the song before trying to play the entire song.

Bon Daiko Tips

Sing the melody while playing. This helps ensure there is a close connection between your drumming and the rest of the music.

Play simple. Bon Daiko is played for the dancers. Observe the dancers and try to play material that supports their movements.

Listen to multiple versions of the same song. Like any folkloric music style, everybody plays the same song slightly differently. Listen to various versions and create a mash-up that is unique to you.

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