



PROFILE

Art Lee, renowned artist, teacher and performer of the Japanese Drumming art form known as Taiko, is the first person ever to obtain an artist visa from the Japanese government to lead the life of a professional taiko artist in Japan.

Art Lee first began the study of taiko in 1993 from the Sacramento Taiko Dan, with whom he later became a featured performer and instructor. In 1994, he was invited to join one of the world's most famed and respected taiko groups, Za Ondekoza, for their U.S. and Japan Tour, which culminated in a landmark concert at Carnegie Hall.

Art Lee became a solo performer after moving to Japan in 1998. And on November 14th, 2001 - Art exploded onto the world scene when he became the first person in the world ever to be granted an unsponsored artist visa from the Japanese government to teach, perform, and lead the life of a Professional Taiko Artist in Japan.

On October 15th, 2005, Art took another massive step in the world of Taiko once again when he became the first non-Japanese to win First Place in the Solo Odaiko section of the most prestigious and renowned taiko contest in the World - The Tokyo International Wadaiko Contest.

In addition to his solo performing and teaching schedule, he is the resident instructor of various taiko groups in Japan, including Koihime Daiko and Tento.

He is also the Founder and Artistic Director of Wadaiko Ensemble TOKARA, whom he has led to become one of Japan's most unique taiko groups. They tour nationally and internationally at least twice a year. Art is also a performing member of Osuwa Daiko - Ashura-Gumi, which is led by Grandmaster Daihachi Oguchi, the person who created the performance style of taiko over 50 years ago.

Utilizing his extensive training in both traditional and modern taiko techniques, he continues to perform all over the world, as well as teach in both English and Japanese to taiko enthusiasts and newcomers alike.

His concert tours, compositions and workshops are requested repeatedly. Highly Acclaimed Concert Tours to date include: EXISTENSION, Fuyu no Kodama (Winter's Echo), Michikusa, Toward the Undiscovered Country, and more.

Among his many disciplines of the taiko drum, Art has become most widely known for his Odaiko solos, and his unique style and solo while performing on the drum sideways, called Yokomen-uchi.