**Download photos:**

[TAIKOPROJECT](https://app.box.com/s/tfwtig2njkfhhkueafp9hojxixdh6s3p)

[Gamelan Merdu Kumala](https://app.box.com/s/jrjxvzy0knrzeqdb3tr1asfvmo7w8jrs)

Photo captions/credit included in file names

**For Immediate Release**

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**Sierra Madre Playhouse Presents   
Compelling Cross-Cultural Musical Collaboration between  
TAIKOPROJECT + Gamelan Merdu Kumala,**

**Blending Musical Traditions from Japan and Indonesia**

**Saturday, September 21, 2024, 4PM and 7:30PM, at Sierra Madre Playhouse**

(Sierra Madre, CA – September 3, 2024) Los Angeles-based TAIKOPROJECT, the first American taiko group to win the prestigious Tokyo International Taiko Contest, partners with Gamelan Merdu Kumala, a Southern California-based gamelan ensemble, to present two back-to-back performances Saturday, September 21, 2024, 4 pm and 7:30 pm, at Sierra Madre Playhouse. Blending musical traditions from Japan and Indonesia, the cross-cultural collaboration creates a bridge between these two rich cultures and celebrates the power of music to bring people together.

The two distinctive ensembles will explore the shared tradition of vocalizing rhythms, using it as a creative launching point for their joint performance. The program also includes them collaborating on a piece inspired by the intricate melodies and rhythms of Balinese gamelan composed by Masato Baba, a founding member and artistic director of TAIKOPROJECT who is considered one of the leading next-generation taiko and shinobue performers and composers in the United States.

In addition, two traditional works are featured, "Langsing Tuban" and "Tabuh Pisan," both typically performed at the beginning of a concert. They are juxtaposed by two contemporary pieces, "Kosaliya Arini," and "On The Way,” by pioneering composer Made Agus Wardana commissioned by Gamelan Merdu Kumala in 2021.

The partnership between TAIKOPROJECT and Gamelan Merdu Kumala embraces diversity, creativity, and the universal language of music.

TAIKOPROJECT, which captivates with its modern American twist on the exhilarating ancient Japanese art of taiko drumming, is hailed for its electrifying energy, thunderous beats, and heart-pounding rhythms. The trailblazing group has been featured at the Academy Awards, the Grammy Awards, on numerous TV shows, and with pop stars Stevie Wonder, Peter Gabriel, and Alicia Keys.

Gamelan is the term for a traditional Indonesian ensemble featuring such percussion instruments as gongs, drums, kettles, bamboo flutes, and metallophones. As a musical ensemble, Gamelan Merdu Kumala remains respectful of the Balinese tradition of music making while also moving the artform forward, infusing its performances with rocket-fast melodies, instantaneous tempo changes, and delightful yet elegant performances.

**Tickets and Information**

Tickets ($12 - $35) are on sale now. For tickets and information, please call 626.355.4318 or visit [www.sierramadreplayhouse.org](http://www.sierramadreplayhouse.org). Sierra Madre Playhouse is located at 87 West Sierra Madre Boulevard, Sierra Madre, CA 91024.

**SIERRA MADRE PLAYHOUSE**, a vibrant Southern California cultural hub with a rich history spanning a century, energizes audiences and the community with distinctive theatrical productions and captivating live performances. Hailed as a “jewel” (*Pasadena Weekly*) and “a landmark theater” (*ABC7 Los Angeles*), the performing arts center has garnered tremendous accolades for its varied repertoire and thought-provoking education and outreach programs curated with social impact in mind. The *Los Angeles Times* proclaims, “This is theater from the heart.” As one of San Gabriel Valley’s only performing arts center presenting a broad spectrum of performance genres, including theater, music, dance, film, comedy, and family-friendly productions featuring eminent local and national professional artists, the treasured artistic beacon draws audiences from across the Southland. The intimate 99-seat Sierra Madre Playhouse offers an up-close and personal connection to performances that resonate deeply, earning multiple Ovation Awards, NAACP Awards, and LA Times Critics' Choice honors. It is nestled into a historic building on the inviting Main Street of Sierra Madre, a charming village in the foothills of the San Gabriel Mountains. Retaining its distinctive movie theater façade and instantly recognizable marquee, the structure has undergone numerous transformations since opening in 1910, from furniture emporium to silent movie theatre to the artistic institution that now stands as a vibrant embodiment of the region’s rich cultural legacy. The Sierra Madre Playhouse fosters creativity that aspires to bridge divides and spark dialogue, all while celebrating the rich tapestry of the American experience and the enduring pursuit of shared understanding.

**EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE:**

**WHAT:**

**Sierra Madre Playhouse Presents Music @ The Playhouse: TAIKOPROJECT + Gamelan Merdu Kumala**Blending Cultural Elements from Japan and Indonesia  
  
**WHEN:**

Saturday, September 21, 2024, 4pm and 7:30 pm

**PROGRAM:**1. "Langsing Tuban" (gambuh ensemble)

2. "Kosaliya Arini" (gong kebyar ensemble)

3. "Tabuh Pisan" (gong kebyar + taiko)

4. "On The Way" + "The Stroll" (gong kebyar + vocals + taiko)

5. "Grounded" (taiko + gong kebyar & various)

**WHERE:**

Sierra Madre Playhouse   
87 West Sierra Madre Boulevard  
Sierra Madre, CA 91024

**TICKETS AND INFORMATION:**

Tickets: $12-$35

(626) 355-4318

[www.sierramadreplayhouse.org](http://www.sierramadreplayhouse.org)

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