

Review Excerpts

"...the musicians sliced space and made it tingle. The drummers channeled energy with adventurous vigor; they sent it out, welcomed it back, built on it and made a moving art form in the process."

- Los Angeles Times

*"I especially liked when there was direct interaction between drummers and dancers . . . **the concept and the piece was groundbreaking**, and look forward to seeing more of such work."*

- Hyphen Magazine

*"...the show opened with a **high-voltage performance** by (Somei) Yoshino Taiko Ensemble that seemed to welcome the gods and goddesses to the theater. Walking slow patterns across the floor, chanting and clapping, the group established an atmosphere of community ritual that steadily gained momentum as the evening progressed. The four drummers of Bruce Mui Ghent's ensemble formed an **octopus of arms waving like a possessed painter, brushes in hand wildly smearing a canvas with percussive and lyrical rhythms.**"*

- SF Bay Guardian

"visually stunning"

*"A bonus to the ticket holder came with the appearance of the four musicians of the Somei Yoshino Taiko Ensemble. Drumming with **calculated, martial-art-inspired patterns and arcs, the drummers got the blood rushing, while accelerating to a collective blur resembling living Asian brush drawing.**"*

- Contra Costa Times

*"From there, The Somei Yoshino Taiko Ensemble let out all the stops in 'We Hsing,' striking up an intense drum piece... **extremely tight as an ensemble, they stir up the audience's energy and excitement.**"*

- AsianWeek

"The musicians are consistently evocative and physically resonant... (the) haunting music... is rhythmically interesting and physically dynamic."

- Urban View

*"They were **superb!** In total harmony with one another! Movements flowed. **A MUST see!**"*

- Dara's World

"I saw four electrons laugh triumphantly as they filled D type spiritual orbitals! All I could gasp in the way of intelligible speech while witnessing Somei Yoshino (Taiko Ensemble) Sunday night at San Francisco's Dance Mission Theater was "I didn't know it could be like this..." The four dance-musicians began by hovering just above the studio audience in a delicious invitation to flight, then rhythmic flashes of P type activity drew in the fearful stragglers who wanted to fly most."

- D Orbitals

Wamblegleshka... "Overall, this piece is brilliant. There is a great build up, the melody lovely, the pacing nearly perfect. The flute-chant-flute section keeps the interest while Jimi's playing adds the necessary spice until Ellen and Naoko kick in. The movement, the hands on the drums, the flow of this piece is really enjoyable. Ellen and Naoko's choreography is nice and varied without being forced.

"... I love all of the elements that Somei Yoshino has pulled together. There is a grace, gravity and spirit unique to your group. Please keep it up as Yuko and I continue to expect Somei Yoshino to be one of the standard bearers for modern, professional taiko in the US."

- David Leong, Rolling Thunder