



## ISABEL Romeo-Biedma

*Taiko for me is a joyous way of personal development.*

My first contact with taiko was due to working in Japan as a dancer. There, I was part of community group Ago Kaijin Daiko (アゴ海神太鼓), with whom for two years I enjoyed the most popular and joyful side of this art. The other “leg” of my taiko origins is the city of Ise, with its Shinto shrine, its professional group Shin-On Daiko (神恩太鼓), and its Taiko festival with top players in an amazing atmosphere.

My life changed due to living in Japan – and to getting into taiko.

Back in Spain in 2009, I searched to continue playing, but taiko was almost unknown. I began to disseminate it with talks, performances and courses. Besides, I co-founded the first taiko group in Spain, Seiwa Taiko 「西和太鼓」. The group grew up to 7 Japanese and Spanish members. I was a very active member until January 2016, when I left the group to continue my artistic path. In December 2016, a new group with me and some of my students was presented: Issho Daiko 「一緒太鼓」: We offer quality, energetic and varied performances, especially didactic ones to disseminate the culture of taiko.

**My aim** is to share the energy and beauty of taiko so that people can enjoy its benefits, as players as well as audience. I dream (and work for) an open and respectful taiko community in Spain and abroad, connected from the heart.

These are some of my highlights so far:

- Taiko Community Alliance charter member (since 2012).
- Collaborations: Mey-Ling Bisogno Dance Company in their productions “Hermosura” (Beauty, 2012), “Tokyo Dream” (2014), “Manga vol. II” (2016), Nos(Otros) (2017); Carmelo Segura Dance Company in their production “Osaka” (2017)
- European Representative at the 1<sup>st</sup> World Taiko Gathering (Los Angeles, 2014) and XX North American Taiko Conference (San Diego, 2017).
- Panelist at 1<sup>st</sup> European Taiko Conference (2016). Speaker at 2<sup>nd</sup> European Taiko Conference (2017). Panelist at “Women & Taiko” Summer Taiko Institute (San Diego, 2017).
- International workshops: Workshop leader at Taiko Spirit (Switzerland, 2016) and Sweden (organized by Taiko Shin Kai, 2017)
- International performances: Festival to raise funds for Fukushima disaster victims, organized by Tsunagari Taiko (Paris, 2011); World Taiko Gathering with Taiko Project (Los Angeles, 2014); Taiko Spirit (Switzerland, 2016), European Taiko Conference (2016 & 2017); Joint performance with Shoji Kameda and Taiko Shin Kai (Stockholm, 2017); Culture night with Taiko Shin Kai (Uppsala, 2017); North American Taiko Conference (San Diego, 2017), Anderson Japanese Gardens – Summer Festival with Ho Etsu Taiko (Illionis, USA, 2017)

- Magazine “Esto es taiko!” (This is taiko!), only taiko magazine in Spanish (now available in internet) and web Vivirjapon.es.
- Documentaries “Taiko: inochi no kodo”(2011) and “TaikoFilm” (current in production) by Spanish film-maker Ivan Muñoz;

Teaching is one of my core activities, since I understand people enthralled by taiko usually want to play (as I do). I teach workshops and regular lessons since 2010 for adults, kids, families, team-building. From general ones to more specific, like the 15-hour course I taught for the Masters Degree in Ethnomusicology at Salamanca (2014) Also, I offer what I call “Didactic performances”, a blend of Taiko History, styles, instruments.

Taiko for me is a joyous way of personal development and expression where you work rhythm, body, and skills useful for your whole life like listening, group work, discipline, self-confidence, creativity. I find essential to know and experiment the Japanese essence of this art, though taiko is so rich that has transcended frontiers.

There are many ways, and many people to learn from, but only with time, respect and consciousness you can incorporate other’s teachings and bring your unique essence. Among the people I’ve learnt from are Chieko Kojima, Yousuke Oda, Eiichi Saito and Eri Uchida (Kodo), Hono-o-Daiko, Machiko Asano, Tsumura family (Miyake Taiko), Joe Small, Shoji Kameda, Yuta Kato, Keita Kanazashi, Michelle&Toru Watanabe (Unit SouZou), Joji Hirota, Frank Dubberke (Wadokyo - Germany), Gastón San Cristóbal (Argentina), Kyoshindo (Italy).

Besides, I’m trained in dancing and martial arts, BA in Audiovisual Communications and a Degree in Public Relations and Advertising.

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