



Maui Based Documentary to Air: Great Grandfather's Drum

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By Wendy Osher

Great Grandfather's Drum, a documentary celebrating Japanese American culture and history on Maui, airs on PBS Hawaii this month.



The 1-hour program will be broadcast on Thursday, April 28th at 8:30 p.m. and again at 11 p.m. Great Grandfather's Drum is an inspiring story of spirit, traditions and community. It connects the past with the present by combining the history of Japanese Americans in Hawaii and sharing the contemporary story of the taiko drum through the group Maui Taiko.

The documentary was filmed primarily on Maui, but filmmakers also traveled with members of Maui Taiko to their ancestral homeland of Fukushima, Japan on a journey to reconnect with their musical and ancestral roots. In Fukushima Maui Taiko performed Fukushima Ondo, a traditional obon song handed down in Maui for over a century.

The group, Maui Taiko, was established in 1996, but the tradition of taiko music has been passed down through at least five generations on Maui. The group's founder, Kay Fukumoto is recognized as one of the first women to perform taiko in the U.S. Today the group has over 50 members ranging in age from 7 to 84.

The program was produced by international award winning filmmakers Victoria and Cal Lewin of Opticus Films. The five year project started with a grant from the County of Maui to interview 20 elders in Maui County.

DVDs are available at www.GreatGrandfathersDrum.com. Also vie the Maui Taiko drummers perform during the recent Floating Luminary Ceremony fundraiser for Japan relief.

<http://mauiNOW.com/2011/04/21/maui-based-documentary-to-air-great-grandfather's-drum/>