

# Travelling to the Orient, in Ithaca!

By Hester Vermaak

**V**enture to Japan at the Sciencenter this Fall. In fact, you can discover Japan without leaving town. "Japan and Nature: Spirits of the Seasons" is a new exhibi-

Japanese artifacts, art supplies, costumes, and other interactive materials, this exhibition invites families to explore Japan's geography and to discover how people's lives are shaped by where they live."



*Photo provided*

**Friends play a taiko drum at "Japan and Nature," a new exhibition at the Sciencenter. As part of the exhibition opening celebration on Saturday, September 29, the Cornell University taiko drum team will give a special performance at the Sciencenter at 2 p.m.**

tion that examines how nature is celebrated in Japan through hands-on activities, dramatic play, and multi-media experiences.

"For the Sciencenter, a museum known for its interactive exhibits, this exhibition takes interactivity to a whole new level," says Lara Kimber, acting executive director. "With authentic

The opening celebration of "Japan and Nature" will be Saturday, Sept. 29. Visitors will enjoy a presentation at 11 a.m. by landscape architect Marc Keane entitled "Shiki: The Art of Nature in Japan" that illustrates how nature influences Japanese art and culture. Then, at 2 p.m., the Sciencenter welcomes "Yamatai," the Cornell University Taiko drum team for a heart-pumping musical performance. Throughout the afternoon Sciencenter volunteers from Japan will be on hand to guide visitors through origami activities.

This day-long opening celebration is made possible with the generous support of the Tompkins Trust Company. Special programs and activities for the exhibition are being coordinated in partnership with the Einaudi Center for International Studies and the East Asia Program of Cornell University. All opening day programs and events are included with Sciencenter admission.



*Photo provided*

**Cornell University Taiko drum team, "Yamatai," will perform at the Sciencenter on Saturday, September 29, at 2 p.m. as part of the opening celebration of the museum's newest exhibition, "Japan and Nature."**

"Japan and Nature" features four main interactive areas, each representing a different season and regional setting in Japan. Fall in the mountainside city of Kyoto means a visit to one of Japan's most celebrated shrines. With autumn around the corner here in Ithaca, visitors are invited to discover how children of Japan learn to respect nature; create a fall collage of leaves and nuts; dance and drum in the annual rice harvest festival; and scan the horizon for the special Harvest Moon.

"Japan and Nature: Spirits of the Seasons" was developed by the Brooklyn Children's Museum as part of

the Go East Asian Exhibit Initiative. Funded by the Freeman Foundation, this exhibition's tour is administered by the Association of Children's Museums. It will be on display at the Sciencenter through the end of 2007.

The Sciencenter, located at 601 First Street in Ithaca, is a hands-on science museum for people of all ages with over 200 exhibits, educational programs, an outdoor science park, a seasonal miniature golf course, and a gift shop.

For more information visit [www.sciencenter.org](http://www.sciencenter.org).