

# Pain, Joy, and the Body Politic in Asian American Taiko: American Crossroads 55

Taiko, the Japanese art of drumming, has a long and complex history in the United States. It was first introduced to the country in the early 20th century by Japanese immigrants, and it has since been adopted by a diverse range of people, including Asian Americans, non-Asian Americans, and people of all ages and backgrounds.

In recent years, taiko has become increasingly popular as a form of artistic expression and political activism. One of the most prominent taiko groups in the United States is American Crossroads 55. Founded in 1995, the group is based in Los Angeles, California, and is comprised of Asian American and non-Asian American performers. American Crossroads 55 has performed all over the world, and their work has been praised for its artistry, its political engagement, and its ability to build bridges between different communities.



## Louder and Faster: Pain, Joy, and the Body Politic in Asian American Taiko (American Crossroads Book 55)

by Amy Gahran

★★★★☆ 4.8 out of 5

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One of the most striking things about American Crossroads 55 is their use of pain and joy as expressive tools. The group's performances often feature moments of intense physical pain, as the performers strike the drums with such force that their bodies visibly recoil. However, these moments of pain are always balanced by moments of joy, as the performers dance, sing, and laugh together. This interplay of pain and joy creates a powerful tension that is both cathartic and empowering.

For American Crossroads 55, pain is a reminder of the suffering that Asian Americans have endured throughout history. The group's performances often draw attention to the racism, discrimination, and violence that Asian Americans have faced in the United States. However, pain is also a source of strength for the group. It is through pain that the performers are able to connect with their own experiences of oppression, and it is through pain that they are able to find the courage to speak out against injustice.

Joy, on the other hand, is a reminder of the resilience of the Asian American community. The group's performances often celebrate the beauty and diversity of Asian American culture. They also celebrate the ways in which Asian Americans have overcome adversity and built thriving communities in the United States. Joy is a powerful force for healing and transformation, and it is through joy that the performers are able to create a vision of a more just and equitable world.

The interplay of pain and joy in American Crossroads 55's performances is a powerful reminder of the complex relationship between these two

emotions. Pain and joy are often seen as opposites, but in reality they are two sides of the same coin. They are both essential parts of the human experience, and they can both be used to create powerful art and political activism.

American Crossroads 55 is a shining example of the power of taiko. The group's performances are a powerful reminder of the pain and joy that Asian Americans have endured throughout history. They are also a celebration of the resilience of the Asian American community and a vision of a more just and equitable world.

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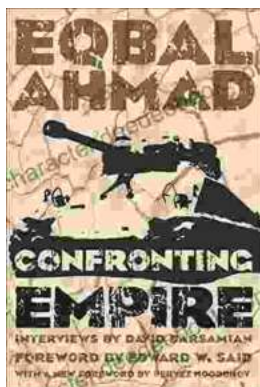
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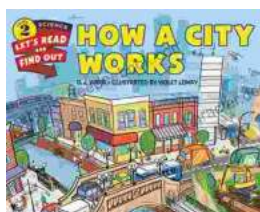
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