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REICHHOLD CENTER SEASON OPENS WITH FAMILY SERIES SHOW “COBU”

On a large sound stage a group of young Japanese women dressed in hip-hop style clothing pound exaggeratedly on oversized Taiko drums. These enthusiastic performers pound their sticks while rhythmically tap dancing to create a hip-hop beat.

This fusion of traditional Japanese drumming with the energy and excitement of New York City’s hip hop tap dancers forms the production COBU, the first presentation in the Reichhold Center for the Arts 2009-2010 season. This Family Series show takes place Saturday, October 3, 2009 at 7 p.m.

Taiko drums, traditionally used in Japanese folk and classical musical traditions are significant in the Japanese culture but COBU has coupled them with American dances and attire to create that mouth-dropping experience.

As a live rhythm performing arts group, COBU has been wowing audiences in the United States, Japan, Europe and Asia since its inception in 2000. The group, which is the brainchild of Yako Miyamoto, has staged performances which the *New York Times* calls “Dynamic! Powerful, primal and exotic.”

She is well known for her drumming and dancing skills that afforded her the accolade of being the first Japanese cast member in the Broadway show “STOMP.” When she was just 10 years old, Yako was chosen to be a Goodwill Ambassador between Japan and New Zealand.

It is safe to say that COBU is not your average drumming group as like their motto, they dance like they’re drumming and drum like they’re dancing. COBU promises to be an innovative family event unlike anything the Virgin Islands has ever witnessed.

COBU captured the first place prize in “Kollaboration New York” at NYU’s Skirball Center in June 2009, and the “Choreography Award” from Mann and Entertainment in 2001.

Tickets to COBU are available for \$32, \$20 and \$13 and can be purchased online at www.reichholdcenter.com, at various ticketing outlets: UVI Bookstore, Urban Threadz, VI Bridal and Tuxedo, Home Again or by calling the Reichhold Center Box Office at (340) 693-1559.

The Reichhold Center Family Series is sponsored by the Virgin Islands Department of Education.

Additional sponsors for COBU and the Reichhold Center season are: International Capital and Management, Virgin Islands Lottery, First Bank, First Insurance Agency, Tropical Shipping, Marriott Frenchman’s Reef Hotel, Innovative Cable TV, Virgin Islands Council of the Arts and Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation.

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