

Choichi Terukina sensei



Choichi Terukina Sensei

a Living National Treasure of Japan in the Afuso style of Okinawa uta-sanshin (simultaneously singing and playing sanshin), has always believed in seeking *makutu*, which, in Okinawan language, means “the ultimate truth.” Through music, Terukina Sensei has committed to building bridges and sharing truth and messages of peace around the world. He has traveled the world sharing uta sanshin in Asia, North America, South America, Russia, and Europe. Hawaii has a special place in Terukina Sensei’s heart. It is where the first school of Afuso Ryu was established outside of Japan under the leadership of his student Grant Sandaa Murata Sensei in 1984.

Terukina Sensei’s journey to become a grand master and a Living National Treasure is a unique one. Although he took to the sanshin at a young age, his formal training under the instruction of Haruyuki Miyazato Sensei began at the age of 25. What he received from Miyazato Sensei are the many intangible treasures that can only be passed down directly from the student sitting face-to-face in front of the instructor and imitating the vocal and playing style of the teacher. This is why, reading sheet music is not encouraged in the Afuso style of uta-sanshin.



Since opening his sanshin dojo in 1960, Terukina Sensei has taught hundreds of students from around the world. He has been successful in cultivating other sensei in Hawaii and abroad who reflect his wholehearted style of uta sanshin. There are approximately 1,300 Afuso Ryu members worldwide, of which 200 are members in "Choichi Kai" (Afuso Ryu membership in Hawaii and Los Angeles). With the encouragement of his network of Branch Sensei, many students take advantage of the opportunity to travel to Okinawa to experience the unique teaching style of Afuso Ryu from Terukina Sensei. Students go



back multiple times to engage in rigorous training to obtain certificates in proficiency.

In addition to being beloved by his students, Terukina Sensei gives an unforgettable performance to his audience. At 85 years old, the power and clarity of his voice are undeniably gifts from the heavens that creates a connection to the hearts of those who are fortunate enough to experience his performance. In 2010, he filled the Hawaii Okinawa Center to celebrate its 20th Anniversary with a magical charity performance. He continues to support the preservation and perpetuation of Okinawan culture in Hawaii.

Performance is not the only way for Terukina Sensei to expand his message of peace and aloha around the world. This past July, Terukina Sensei partnered with Seigi Tamagusuku II (Morikuni Ota) Sensei (Kumi Wudui National Laureate) to establish a kumi wudui research organization called the "Choichi Terukina and Seigi Tamagusuku II Dentou Kumi Wudui Kenkyuu Kai U.S.A." Kumi wudui is a classical Ryukyuan drama that includes the elements of music, dance, song, and narrative and is recognized by the Japanese government as an Important Intangible Cultural Property, and by UNESCO as an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. The creation of the kumi wudui research organization establishes Hawaii as the gateway of bringing the art of kumi wudui to the rest of the world.

Ambition has little to do with the success of Terukina Sensei. In fact, his signature style of uta-sanshin, is nurtured by his long walks in nature, singing in the ocean waves, and smiling joyfully every day. "Embody makutsu" (the ultimate truth) - this is the legacy that Terukina Sensei wishes to instill in the hearts of people through the universal language of music.

