

**Taniguchi Japanese Garden –  
A Labor of Love Celebrates its 41<sup>st</sup> Anniversary**

**Open House  
Sunday, November 7, 2010  
1:00 – 4:00 p.m.**



**A Little History....**

As you enter the Taniguchi Japanese Garden – built on a rocky hillside at Zilker Botanical Garden – knowing its story is crucial for understanding and appreciating why it is one of Austin’s most treasured assets.

This 3-acre tract of land was transformed into a peaceful, strolling garden by Isamu Taniguchi, who was 70 years old when he built it in 18 months, with occasional help from two PARD staffers. Taniguchi designed the garden in his mind, his soul, and his heart—it was his labor of love, given to the City of Austin as a gesture of gratitude for educating his two sons, Alan and Isumu (both graduated from the University of Texas at Austin). Alan was Dean of the UT School of Architecture in 1969 when his father completed the building of the Taniguchi Japanese Garden in April of that year.

The garden features a series of ponds that spell out the word “AUSTIN” when viewed from above – they are an ideogram, reflecting that this garden was a gift to the city of Austin. As you stroll through the Taniguchi Japanese Garden, you see that all the elements – stone pathways, stream beds that intricately connect the ponds, a 12 ft. waterfall, a Half Moon bridge (Togetsu-kyo Bridge), a Lotus pond filled with koi, a Teahouse overlooking Austin’s skyline, a Bamboo Grove and Japanese Maple trees throughout the garden—make your visit a peaceful, spiritual experience. So, when you enter the stone gates – a gift from Austin’s Sister City of Oita, Japan – you fulfill Taniguchi-san’s wish:

***It has been my wish that through the construction of this visible garden,  
I might provide a symbol of universal peace...  
It is my wish that you have pleasant communion with the spirit of the garden...***

## Open House Activities

Visitors who join us on Sunday afternoon, November 7<sup>th</sup>, will enjoy a variety of activities throughout the Taniguchi Japanese Garden and in the Garden Center.

- **Docent of Zilker Botanical Garden** will conduct tours, emphasizing the history of the garden and sharing information about the meaning that trees, shrubs, and objects in the Taniguchi Garden have in the Japanese culture. Tours will be scheduled at 1:00, 1:45, and 3:15 (approximately 45-minute tours).
- The **Texas Bamboo Society** will also have members available to take visitors on Bamboo Walking Tours, pointing out the varieties of bamboo (remember—it's a grass not a tree!) growing in the Taniguchi Garden.
- The **Austin Pond Society** will greet visitors at the largest pond—the Lotus Pond—which is home to a collection of Koi. They will be available to share knowledge about building and maintaining ponds, caring for Koi, and selecting pond-friendly plants.
- The **Austin Bonsai Society** will be in the Garden Center auditorium, with displays and demonstrations. Joey McCoy, President of the Austin Bonsai Society, has over 20 years' extensive experience with this ancient form of living art. He will share horticultural and artistic techniques used to create Bonsai, showing tools, pots, wire needed for this fascinating living art form.
- The **Austin Ikebana Study Group** will also have a display area in the Garden Center auditorium. Members of the club will be available to talk about the principles that apply to creating Ikebana arrangements, using their own creative designs as examples. They will share their knowledge of the chronological history of Ikebana which echoes the spirit of a “study group.”

There will also be a special performance given by the **Austin Taiko Drummers**, on the green lawn area adjacent to the Teahouse in the Taniguchi Garden. The playing of Taiko – the Japanese word for “great drum” – is a combination of art and sport and dates back many hundreds of years. Performing requires physical strength, stamina, and discipline. You will not want to miss this amazing performance that is scheduled from **2:30 – 3:00 p.m.**

If you need to pause and rest your feet, you can relax and enjoy a slideshow of images from the Taniguchi Garden that will run continuously throughout the afternoon of the Open House. Parents can also bring their children into the Greene Room in the Garden Center, for a storytelling time. They will enjoy readings from two books about the Taniguchi Japanese Garden: **The Journey of the Third Seed** and **The Mother Tree**, written by Jane Scoggins Bauld, an Austin author whose friendship with Isamu Taniguchi led to the telling of his stories in these two wonderful children's books (illustrated by Jane's daughter, Cynthia Darr).