

taiko *taiko*

www.mugenkyo.com

Winter 2002 Issue No.19

The M-Team

The core group is the same as last year, plus we will be taking on new apprentice members to replace Ali, who is newly married & has emigrated to Canada. Congratulations to Ali!



It's a good line up, but try to stay calm!

Rest, recuperate and prepare!

After a refreshing and much-needed holiday, Mugenkyo are now spending the days in intensive rehearsals and general preparations for the touring season which is now approaching. In general the day starts with warm-up exercises, then jiuchi practice - the base rhythms which form the foundation of any taiko piece - fondly nicknamed "duty rhythms". After an hour of repetition of jiuchi's we practice sections of pieces, sometimes individually but usually in groups of two or three. When Neil and Miyuki can drag themselves out of the office simultaneously we practice the pieces from start to finish, and leading up to the final weeks of rehearsal, we will practice the theatre show as a whole, even down to choreographing who moves what drum where in between which pieces. A lot of time is also spent in meetings, planning what pieces we're going to work on next, deciding on costume design, and practical matters like deciding the lunch-cooking rota. We also spend a lot of time fixing up the equipment: varnishing stands, cleaning drums, renewing rope on the tied drums etc. We are also working on the dojo, mainly painting. In the office, Neil and Alexa work on the bookings and Miyuki sorts out financial matters. There is a lot of work that goes on behind the scenes to make a successful taiko drum group, and February is the time of year when a large concentration of this activity takes place at our base here in rural South Lanarkshire. We will begin touring again from late February, right through to November. **Hope to see you at one of our concerts in 2002!**



Neil Mackie - Co-founder of the group, Neil originates from Bristol and is now into his ninth year of playing Taiko. Powerful Odaiko player and regular Bachi breaker, Neil can also be seen on the mobile dealing with the groups bookings.



Miyuki Williams - The other co-founder of the group, Miyuki has a Japanese mother and a Welsh father. She is instantly recognisable by her flying hair style of Taiko. She is also in charge of the groups choreography and lighting.



Teresa Brookes - Hailing from the Isle of Arran, Teresa suffers from a rare case of performance schizophrenia, being scary and intense whilst drumming, yet gentle and delicate when playing the flute. She also designs the newsletter.



Katsuhiko Uemura - Born under Mount Fuji, Katsuhiko is a talented musician and composer, known at Mugenkyo concerts for his spectacular bachi (drumstick) twirls and baseball bat on odaiko technique. Katsuhiko is also the groups "Mr Fixit".



Also introducing our new administrator:

Alexa Stewart - Alexa started with us last November and likes fast cars and fast thinking. Her hard working nature and charming style has been and will continue to be invaluable in the Mugenkyo office. Prior to this Alexa worked alongside her husband, Colin, running his retail internet business.

MUGENKYO



Established in 1994, Mugenkyo is Europe's first professional Taiko drum group. We perform over 120 concerts a year at theatres, arts centres, festivals and schools. Mugenkyo's goal is to develop Taiko as a European art form, both through our performances and our educational programme.

"Taiko Taiko" is Mugenkyo's quarterly newsletter. Its aim is to spread information about the art form of Taiko and publicise Taiko events in the UK.

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or: www.taiko.co.uk
email: mail@mugenkyo.com

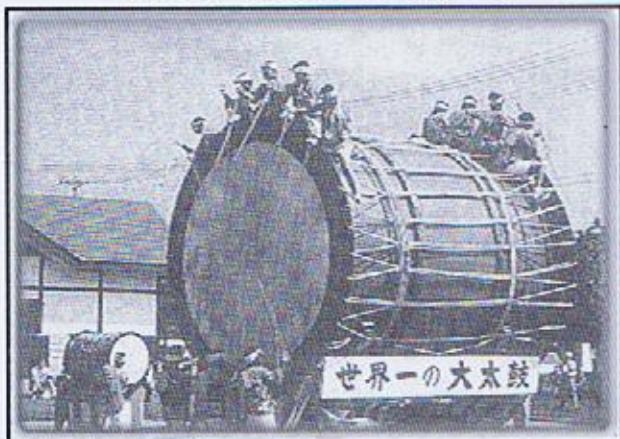
tel/fax: 01357 522 008

Thank you to those of you who sent in donations towards the cost of this news-letter:

J.D. Box, B.A Knowle, Sue Hines, Tim Kaye, James McCorgray, Paul Fletcher, Rona Partridge, Simon White, Robert W. Barnes, Mr K. Sims, Mike Ray.

Please remember, it costs money to put out a newsletter. Please help us to continue by sending donations - a book of stamps, postal orders or cheques (made payable to Mugenkyo), all gratefully accepted.

Wowie, what a whopper!



New Taiko group formed!!

In December we played at the Autosport Awards for motor racing. Seeing Mugenkyo inspired some of the sportsmost respected names to form HAYAI DAIKO (Speedy Taiko), which we think would be the fastest Taikoteam in the West, featuring:

Micheal Schumacher, Nigel Mansell, Jackie Stewart, Damon Hill and Murray Walker.

So we wish them every luck and a offer word of advice: " Keep on track with your jiuchi's and don't speed up"!!

Our Thank You to the Mugenkyo Taiko Drummers

by Malini, Spencer, Sally, Anna and Corrinne - Gr. 5 ACS

*The dance, like a calm wave
Swaying from side to side.
Tells the sad story of a girl
Entrapped in a swirling blizzard of snow
With nothing colder than her own heart.*

*Boom, Boom!
The drums speak
Loud and long.
I feel the rhythm
Coursing through my veins
Head to toe*

*The beating of the drums through my feet
Takes me into a world of excitement and bounce.
Vibrations of the drums I still feel,
The beating of the drums I still hear.*

*Boom, Boom!
Like the strides
Of an elephant
Shaking the earth
Controlling the earth.
The beat of nature.*

*Thank you for the beat
Thank you for giving us the sound of drums.
Thank you for the spirit and the motion
Which enlightened us and will stay in our hearts
For ever.*

Thank you to the students from the American Community School, Cobham, who sent us this brilliant poem!!
Thanks guys!!



"Children of the Drum" by Mark Coutts-Smith. A large format book of beautiful photographs and text, this is the first major publication about the Kodo Drummers in English. £23.95

THE DOJO

Dojo, literally translated means the place of "the way", and is used to describe where the learning of an art takes place. "Do" can also be read as "michi", and means the way or the path - the journey taken whilst learning an art. The learning of martial arts takes place in a dojo, as does the study of taiko drumming. If you are interested in learning taiko drumming in Japan, there are several dojo's where this can be done:



TAIKO NO SATO

The Asano Taiko Factory in Matto in Ishikawa Prefecture have founded "Taiko no Sato" (translated as the hometown of taiko), a study centre which includes a drum museum and a dojo, where workshops and courses take place throughout the year. Asano Taiko has a 400 year history of drum making, where the trade secrets have been passed down from father to son for generations. Their taiko are top quality and are used by the Kodo Drummers and other top groups (including Mugenkyo!). Asano Taiko also publish a monthly journal called Taikology (only available in Japanese, unfortunately) Asano Taiko, 148 Fukudome, Matto, Ishikawa 924, Japan
tel: +81 762 77 1717 fax: +81 762 77 2228
web: www.asano.co.jp



MASAAKI KURUMAYA SENSEI

The teacher of Mugenkyo, Masaaki Kurumaya Sensei has established a taiko school in Fukui, which just this month has moved to newly built premises in the countryside just outside of Fukui City. Kurumaya Sensei is especially interested in teaching people from overseas. Sensei is a master at the traditional Hokuriku style of playing, but has forged in new directions combining jazz rhythms with traditional taiko rhythms. He also innovates with mixing taiko with different instruments, from synthesizers to jazz bands to church organs! Masaaki Kurumaya, Kamogawara 2-1-11, Fukui 918, Japan
tel/fax: +81 779 74 1180 or +81 776 36 6048

KYOTO TAIKO CENTRE



The Kyoto Taiko Centre is the longest established centre of teaching Taiko in Japan. Here they teach workshops and courses where students can learn the classic pieces of traditional Taiko, such as Miyake and Yatai-bayashi. They also sell teaching videos

(Japanese, but still useful) for each of these traditional pieces, as well as a general instructional video and book. There were plans to publish these in English, so if it has not yet been done, some gentle persuasion will probably speed up the process! Workshops have been organised in the past specially for foreign visitors, where the instruction takes place in English. The Kyoto Taiko Centre also have a performing group called Matsuri-shu, an excellent mixed group who have a very joyful style of playing.
tel: +81 75 813 8615 fax: +81 75 813 8616
mail: webmaster@taiko-center.co.jp



KODO

The famous Kodo drummers provide one opportunity a year to attend a residential course. It's called the Kodo Juku, and the mountain of applications are dealt with by a lottery system. Kodo Village, 148-1 Kaneta Shinden, Ogi, Sado Island, 952-06, Japan
tel: 81 259 86 3630 fax: +81 259 86 3631



KATSUJI KONDO

Katsuji Kondo began studying taiko as a member of the original "Ondekoza" in 1976. Ondekoza changed their name to Kodo in 1981, and Katsuji Kondo performed as one of their lead players at over 1200 concerts in 20 countries. He left Kodo in 1993 to develop his solo and teaching projects. Every year he conducts two residential workshops at his base in the mountains of Nagano, where people from all over Japan and the world gather for four intensive days of taiko training. All are welcome, from age 15 and up, beginners to experts.
tel: +81 3 3222 1660 fax: +81 3 3222 1665
email: KYM00620@nifty.ne.jp



MIYAMOTO

Miyamoto Unosuke Shoten is the premier taiko factory of Tokyo, which also specialises in the construction of festival floats and shrines. The taiko made at Miyamoto truly are works of art. Mr. and Mr. Miyamoto, the brothers who run the company, generously donated two drums to Mugenkyo when we were first starting out: a nagado drum, carved from a single tree trunk, and a shime-daiko tied drum, for which we are eternally grateful. Since then we have bought our two largest drums from Miyamoto, which are hand-crafted beautiful instruments. The Miyamoto drum museum in the Asakusa district of Tokyo is an excellent and fascinating collection of drums from around the world. The curator of the museum, Mrs. Ochi, speaks english and is a good point of contact for Miyamoto. They also have a dojo in Asakusa, which is very heavily insulated, as would be necessary in the heart of Tokyo! There are four studios in the building, and each of the studios are actually three rooms, one built inside the other -triple layers of walls for maximum sound insulation. Classes take place here, not only for festival-type taiko, but also taiko used in Noh theatre, and also Gagaku court music. Drum museum - tel: +81 3 3842 5622
Studio - tel: +81 3 5603 1661 fax: +81 3 5603 1662
web: www.miyamoto-unosuke.co.jp

ORDER FORM

See overleaf for goods.

Name :	Merchandise	Quantity
	CD	£12 <input type="text"/>
	TAPE	£8 <input type="text"/>
	T-SHIRT	£10 <input type="text"/>
	KODO BOOK	£23.95 <input type="text"/>

Total enclosed

£

Postcode :

All prices include VAT, packaging and postage within the UK (please allow 21 days delivery). Please make cheques or postal orders payable to... MUGENKYO
MUGENKYO
P.O. BOX 5124
Lanark
ML11 0WA

MUGENKYO tour dates

(so far confirmed)

February

- | | | |
|----|------------------------------------|---------------|
| 26 | Haddenham, Arkenstall Village Hall | 01353 740 909 |
| 27 | Sawston, Village College | 01223 712 424 |

March

- | | | |
|----|---|---------------|
| 1 | Banbury, The Mill | 01295 279 002 |
| 3 | Glasgow Matsuri, Botanic Gardens (free daytime event) | |
| 6 | Salisbury City Hall | 01722 327 676 |
| 8 | Leighton Buzzard, Raven Theatre | 01525 634 132 |
| 9 | Winchester, Theatre Royal | 01962 867 986 |
| 16 | Isle of Arran, Whiting Bay Hall | 01770 302 529 |
| 19 | Denbighshire, Ysgol Glan Clwyd, St. Asaph | 01745 582 611 |
| 22 | Harlech, Theatre Arduwy | 01776 780 667 |
| 23 | Builth Wells, Wyaside Arts Centre | 01982 552 555 |
| 24 | Glastonbury Town Hall | 01458 830 580 |

May

- | | | |
|-----|--|-------------------|
| 2-3 | Germany, Braunschweig Classix Festival | 0049 5312 388 913 |
| 8 | Norwich, Maddermarket Theatre | 01603 620 917 |
| 9 | Surrey, Epsom Playhouse | 01372 742 555 |
| 11 | Hertford, Castle Hall | 01992 589 026 |
| 12 | Brighton, Sallis Benney Theatre | 01273 709 709 |
| 13 | Cardigan, Theatre Mwdan | 01239 621 200 |
| 22 | Cheltenham, Bacon Theatre | 01242 258 002 |
| 23 | Wakefield, Theatre Royal | 01924 211 311 |

June

- | | | |
|----|--------------------------------------|---------------|
| 7 | Harrogate Theatre | 01423 502 116 |
| 13 | Great Yarmouth, St. George's Theatre | 01493 858 387 |
| 14 | Tunbridge Wells, Trinity Theatre | 01892 678 678 |
| 15 | Richmond, Georgian Theatre Royal | 01748 823 021 |

July

- | | | |
|-------|-----------------------|---------------|
| 10-12 | Bath, Ustinov Theatre | 01225 448 844 |
|-------|-----------------------|---------------|

For any additional dates, go to www.mugenkyo.com



MUGENKYO workshops

After a year of building headaches, missed deadlines and minor disasters, the renovation of the DOJO is now well under way. The skylights are in place, the double doors and loading ramp are constructed, the underfloor heating is installed. Now we are just waiting for the beech floor to be laid, the disabled toilet put in, and the mirrors mounted on the walls. We are hoping to start weekend workshops open to all from this autumn. This will enable taiko fans from all over the country to attend a taiko workshop. In the meantime, if you are in the central Scotland area, we will be conducting a three-week course in Livingston. This is our only class planned at the moment, **so book now!**

DATES: Wednesdays 6th, 13th and 20th February 2002

VENUE: Howden Park Centre, Livingston

INFO: tel: 01506 433 634

Skinny-fit T-shirt. One size, red w-black trim. £10

Front



Back

MUGENKYO

Medium/x-large t-shirt. Black w/white print, or black w/orange print. £10



Front



Back



CD - £12
Tape - £8



Goodbye!