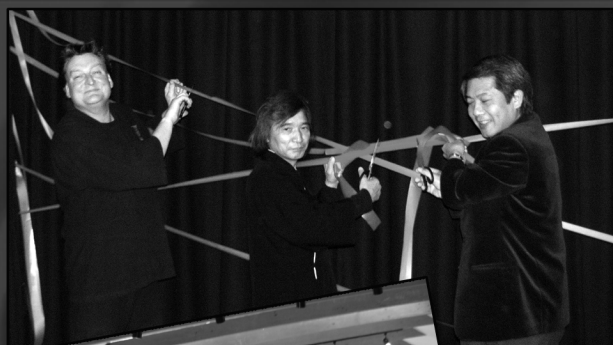


OFFICIAL OPENING EVENT OF THE MUGEN TAIKO DOJO

- FIRST PURPOSE-BUILT TAIKO DRUMMING CENTRE IN THE UK -



On Monday 4th April we celebrated the official opening of the Mugen Taiko Dojo. We actually first opened the doors of the Dojo to the public in early 2002 and have been holding regular workshops and classes since then. At the same time we have also been continually adding to the facilities, including the completion of the reception area in early 2004.

In Spring 2005 all the final details were complete, and we were finally able to hold the official opening event, for which we invited our teacher Masaaki Kurumaya Sensei from Fukui, Japan. We were also honoured by the presence of not one but two consuls from the Japanese Consulate in Edinburgh, the Consul General Mr. Shuhei Takahashi, and Consul Hotta.



Guests were welcomed by a Chindon performance from Teresa in a flamboyant red silk kimono, with Georgie on the Shinobue flute – the Chindon is a traditional instrument used in street performance, to celebrate grand openings in old Japan. In the opening speeches, Neil Mackie, co-founder of Mugenkyo and Director of the Mugen Taiko Dojo, thanked all the people who have helped Mugenkyo over the years, and especially Kurumaya Sensei, who not only taught Neil & Miyuki the techniques of taiko when they lived in Fukui all those years ago, but also taught them the spirit of taiko and provided the inspiration for forming the group. As many of the taiko players and activity in Britain can trace their roots back through to

Kurumaya Sensei, we all owe him a huge debt of gratitude, which was expressed at the Dojo Opening in Neil's heartfelt speech.

Kurumaya Sensei spoke of "deai" – how the fateful meeting between himself and Neil changed both Neil's life and his own, and the importance of keeping true to the spirit of taiko, asking the guests to continue helping Mugenkyo spread taiko to the ends of the universe. Consul General Mr. Takahashi concluded the speeches with an eloquent and humorous speech, praising Mugenkyo for their contribution to the spreading of Japanese culture in the UK.

Following the speeches, not one red ribbon, but a whole web of red ribbons was cut by the three, and with the final snip of the scissors, the curtains parted to reveal Sandy Devers playing the pipes to welcome the guests into the practice hall of the Dojo. As guests entered they were presented with a glass of champagne, taking their seats to enjoy a performance by the Taiko Academy, students at the Dojo. The performance concluded with an impromptu demonstration by Kurumaya Sensei, Neil and Mr. Takeuchi – head student representing the Kurumaya Dojo in Fukui. The energy between them was electric, Kurumaya Sensei his usual fiery yet compact ball of energy and Neil with his powerful beats feeding off each other, interweaving their improvised rhythms.

We were also honoured by the presence of visitors who travelled from afar: Mrs. Catherine Megumi Ochi, curator of the "Taikokan" Drum Museum based at the Miyamoto Unosuke Gakkiten in Tokyo, who have been instrumental in Mugenkyo's development with their generous gift of two drums in the early days, and who also later beautifully crafted our Odaiko big drum. We were also very pleased to see Ms. Asano, the daughter of the manager of the Asano Taiko Factory in Matto, Ishikawa-ken, from whom we have bought many excellent drums. Thank you for celebrating this special day with us! A special thank you also to the Nippon Taiko Foundation for the beautiful flower arrangement.

TAIKO TAIKO

The quarterly newsletter of Mugenkyo and the Mugen Taiko Dojo, publishing news on concerts, Taiko Dojo activities, the art form of Taiko, and Taiko events in the UK.



Established in 1994, MUGENKYO is Europe's first professional Taiko drum group, performing at theatres, concert halls, festivals and events. MUGENKYO's aim is to develop Taiko as a European art form, through performance and collaborations across artistic disciplines.

www.mugenkyo.com



The MUGEN TAIKO DOJO

Located in rural Scotland it is the first purpose-built Taiko Centre in the UK. Here we introduce the art form of Taiko through residential workshops and regular classes. It is also the permanent base and training space for Mugenkyo. The Dojo's extensive outreach programme also brings Taiko to schools and communities across the UK.
www.taikodojo.com

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Thank you to those of you who sent in donations towards the cost of this newsletter:

Mrs D. Hastings, Miss P.C. Cofie,
Mrs Jane Hill, Simon Willder,
B. Tredgett, Gail Forest, Bill Stavert
and Rona Partridge

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

In April Mugenkyo performed concerts in Glasgow and Edinburgh, with Kurumaya Sensei as special guest. Both concerts at the Tramway and Queen's Hall theatres were sold-out, and the lead-up and the final scramble for tickets caused a real buzz of excitement. Kurumaya Sensei was on top form, displaying his amazing skill and charisma to a spellbound audience. Mugenkyo too were firing on all cylinders, the emotion of the moment lifting all the players. It was a concert of heightened energy and intensity - a fitting thank you to Kurumaya Sensei for being the inspiration which started it all. The audience responded with an instantaneous standing ovation and bouquets of flowers for Kurumaya Sensei.

To coincide with the concerts, there were two workshops at the Mugen Taiko Dojo. Participants gathered from all over the UK to take part in this very special opportunity to learn from Kurumaya Sensei. The workshops covered the core principles of Kurumaya Sensei's teaching and philosophy, such as "kokoro" heart / mind and "ki" energy.



Photo sent by Brad



Photo: Alastair Burnett

THE BIG ISSUE IN SCOTLAND | APRIL 28 - MAY 4, 2005

Eleven years on and Lanark's Mugenkyo are at the top of their game. Their honest, respectful translations of ancient Japanese rhythms bring a packed Tramway to its feet, but even this rapturous applause was nothing compared to the volume of their ferocious tub-thumping. The five-strong band treat percussion like combat, each player framing their parts with aggressive, dramatic movements in beat-perfect numbers. With up to eight different types of drum on stage at any time, they often come close to overwhelming an audience, but contrast this raw power with simple flute solos. But the highlight of the evening was the appearance of the group's master, Masaaki Kurumaya Sensei. While Mugenkyo play like coiled springs, Kurumaya is a rubber band, his experience and expertise allowing him not only to play his instruments, but to play with them, improvising and experimenting. The surprise addition of a piper in the encore could have been tacky, but the pounding, exuberant drumming transformed bagpipe standards 'Scotland the Brave' and 'Mairi's Wedding' into fresh compositions, completing the evening's cultural exchange. **Kirsteen Paterson**

TAIKO ACADEMY 2005

Following the "Big Bang" Dojo Showcase Concert in April, we have selected this year's Taiko Academy members on a range of skills including rhythm, movement, energy & attitude. Their continuing commitment to taiko means that they now have the opportunity to take their training a step further; their experience leading them to become future performing members at the Dojo.



Anna Birkett



Georgina Harris
(trainee member with
Mugenkyo this year)



Katy McAuley



Neil MacDougall



Jennifer McFadden



Lucy Searle



Peter Tagg



Shonagh Walker



The Big Bang!

REPORT

Dojo Showcase Concerts - Glasgow and Livingston, April 2005

The annual Dojo showcase opened with a powerful performance of Miyake by the 10 participants of Project Taiko, which looked like a huge 20-armed spidery beast onstage, all swelling and spreading arms in unison. Large scale taiko pieces were interspersed with varied pieces such as a djembe and taiko duo and a performance of poi with taiko & didgeridoo accompaniment. In the second part of the evening, Taiko Academy took to the stage, showing off their newly learned skills in the Fukui style of taiko, helped greatly by Kurumaya Sensei's visit. Well done to all involved for two fantastic shows.



Photos: Alastair Burnett

PROJECT TAIKO 2006



An opportunity to take part in an exciting project, which involves learning to play the **Taiko drums** and performing in a series of concerts as part of a **professional production**.

No previous drumming experience required, but must have good **rhythm, movement** and lots of **energy**.
Age range 18 - 26

**AUDITIONS IN NOVEMBER
APPLY NOW!**

For an info pack contact:
workshops@taikodojo.com or 01357 522 008

Introductory Weekend Workshops at the Mugen Taiko Dojo

These workshops for adults of all ages are very popular and the limited places go fast! Experience the thrill and excitement of playing a taiko drum, as members of Mugenkyo take you step by step through the basics to playing a taiko piece from the west coast of Japan.

Dates: 3 / 4 September
3 / 4 December **SOLD OUT!**
10 / 11 December - book now!
4 / 5 March 2006

Cost: £130 non-residential (includes lunch)
Residential rates available on request

Contact us to receive an information pack:
workshops@taikodojo.com or 01357 522 008



HANAYUI WORKSHOP

at the Mugen Taiko Dojo

A very special opportunity to learn directly from members of Kodo. Not only are the group top-class experts in their field, they are all also experienced teachers with an inspiring and accessible style. This workshop will combine learning Japanese folk dance, and taiko drumming. Due to popular demand, this workshop is only open to participants who have completed at least one weekend workshop here at the Dojo. If you'd like to participate in future guest teacher workshops, please sign up to one of our introductory workshops, (see above).

Date: Sunday 9th October 2005

Cost: £70 (includes lunch)

For further details: workshops@taikodojo.com 01357 522 008

Order Form

See overleaf for goods.

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T-Shirts £12 Quantity

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XL - Black	
XXL - Navy Blue	

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"Ten"	

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All prices include VAT, packaging and postage within the UK, (please allow 21 days delivery). Please make cheques or postal orders payable to MUGENKYO Ltd

JOINT CONCERT TOUR

HANAYUI – dance, voice and drums from Sado Island, Japan
and **MUGENKYO TAIKO DRUMMERS**

In September we are very honoured to welcome the delightful Hanayui, sister group of the world-renowned Kodo Drummers. This is Hanayui's second visit to the UK; on their last visit they performed in Edinburgh, London and Exeter, performing with the local taiko group in each area. Following the success of the concert in Edinburgh, Hanayui have decided to return to the country for a joint concert tour with Mugenkyo, returning to many of our favourite venues, as well as going to a few new ones.

Continuing the Kodo tradition of excellence in their field, they bring to the UK a beautiful performance of Japanese dance, song, elaborate costume, and expert taiko drumming. Highlights of their performance include stunning folk dance and graceful taiko playing from Chieko Kojima, an original Kodo member since 1976, and expert traditional dance from award-winning Okinawan dancer Mitsue Kinjo.


(for more details on Hanayui, see www.kodo.or.jp)

This is a special one-off collaboration – the delicacy and grace of Hanayui complementing the power and explosive rhythms of Mugenkyo Taiko Drummers.

This is a show not to be missed!



Photo: Maiko Miyagawa

Thank you to the Japan Foundation for their generous support  JAPAN FOUNDATION

MUGENKYO TAIKO DRUMMERS AND HANAYUI

SEPTEMBER

Thu 22nd	St Andrews, Byre Theatre	01334 475000
Fri 23rd	St Andrews, Byre Theatre	01334 475000
Sun 25th	London, Sadlers Wells	0870 7377737
Mon 26th	London, Sadlers Wells	0870 7377737
Tue 27th	London, Sadlers Wells	0870 7377737
Wed 28th	Canford, Layard Arts Centre	01202 847525

Thu 29th	Brighton, Sallis Benney Theatre	01273 643010
Fri 30th	Nottingham, Royal Concert Hall	0115 9895555

OCTOBER

Mon 3rd	Taunton, Brewhouse Theatre	01823283244
Tues 4th	Norwich, Maddermarket Theatre	01603 620917
Wed 5th	Hexham, Queen's Hall	01434 652477
Thu 6th	Bowness-on-Windermere, Old Laundry Theatre	01539 488444

MUGENKYO CONCERT DATES AUTUMN 2005

SEPTEMBER

Sat 10th Glasgow Green, BBC Proms in the Park

MUGENKYO TAIKO DRUMMERS ONLY

OCTOBER

Tue 18th	Rhyl, Pavilion Theatre	01745 330000
Wed 19th	Canterbury, Gulbenkian Theatre	01227 769075
Thu 20th	Harlow, Playhouse	01279 431945
Fri 21st	Bury St Edmunds, The Athenaeum	01284 769505
Sun 23rd	Chelmsford, Civic Theatre	01245 606505
Tues 25th	Malvern, Forum Theatre	01684 892277
Wed 26th	Loughborough, Uni Arts Centre	01509 222899
Thu 27th	Welwyn Garden City, Campus West	01707 357117
Fri 28th	Camberley, Artslink Theatre	01276 707600
Sat 29th	Bracknell, South Hill Park	01344 484123
Sun 30th	Birmingham, Midland Arts Centre	0121 4403838

NOVEMBER

Tue 1st	Hastings, White Rock Theatre	0870 1451133
Thu 3rd	Cranbrook, Kent, Queen's Hall Theatre	01580 711814
Fri 4th	Winchester, Theatre Royal	01962 840440
Sat 5th	Boston, Blackfriars Arts Centre	01205 363108
Sun 6th	Newark, Palace Theatre	01636 655755
Mon 7th	Hereford, Courtyard Theatre	01432 359252
Tues 8th	Worthing, Pavilion Theatre	01903 206206
Wed 9th	Dartford, Orchard Theatre	01322 220000
Thu 10th	Wellingborough, The Castle	01933 270007
Sat 12th	Halifax, Square Chapel	01422 349422
Mon 14th	Oldham, Colliseum Theatre	0161 6242829
Tue 15th	Stratford-upon-Avon, Civic Hall	01789 207100
Wed 16th	Telford, Oakengates Theatre	01952 619020
Thu 17th	Lancaster, Grand Theatre	01524 64695
Sat 26th	Dunoon, Queen's Hall	01369 702800

It has come to our attention that a small batch of our C.D.'s are faulty. Unfortunately some of these have already been sold to our customers.

If you are in possession of one of these C.D.'s please contact us by phone or e-mail and we'll be happy to offer you a replacement.

Our sincere apologies for any inconvenience caused.

Mugenkyo Merchandise



T-Shirts available in various sizes and colours - see order form on back.

NEW C.D - TEN



Our latest C.D. Recorded last year and selling like hot cakes. With flute, bells, didgeridoo, voice and of course big booming taiko stompers...and a bonus C.D-rom of clips from our show.

C.D - MUGENKYO



Don't forget our original C.D. Pure taiko at its most energetic!