

# TAIKO TAIKO

ISSUE 35

SUMMER 2007

**NEW WEBSITE!**

**[www.taiko.co.uk](http://www.taiko.co.uk)**

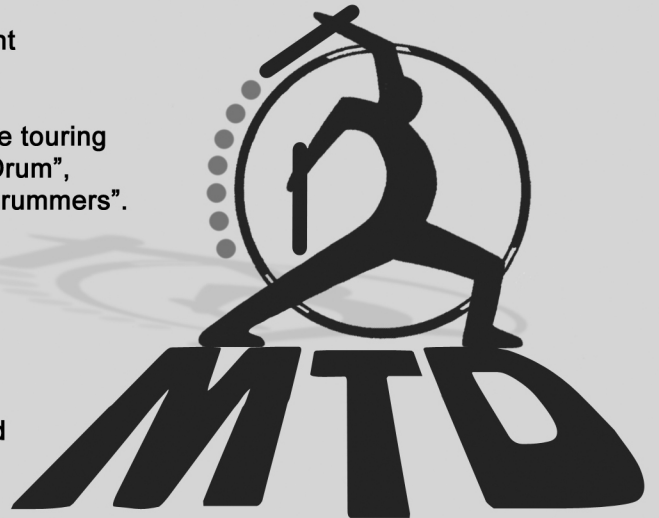
Over the last few months we overhauled the website. We've brought all the branches of our organisation – performing & teaching – under one site: **[www.taiko.co.uk](http://www.taiko.co.uk)**.

This means those of you who have been familiar with Mugenkya the touring group, can now be introduced to our other show, "The Way of the Drum", and also our group specialising in festivals and events, the "Dojo Drummers". And those of you who had been familiar with our Dojo site can now see all of our performance work as well!

The website has been constructed in stages, with the Dojo section finally completed, so if you have come across the site in the last few months, please do look at it again (press your refresh button!)

Also new to the site is the facility to buy merchandise by credit card using Paypal, and a forum section called "Interact", where you can communicate with other taiko fans across the country.

In the coming winter we plan to add in the full history of the group, a resource section with general information about the art-form, a links page, plus a whole lot more, so please do keep checking back to it. Hope you enjoy the site!



## UPCOMING TOURS in AUTUMN 2007

**"THE WAY OF THE DRUM"  
in SEPTEMBER**


**MUGENKYO TAIKO DRUMMERS  
in OCTOBER / NOVEMBER**

Mugenkya Taiko Drummers present...

### THE WAY OF THE DRUM

*A celebration of traditional taiko drumming*

*An evening of exhilarating rhythms & dynamic choreography  
and an invitation into the exciting world of this ancient art*



*"Not just incredibly skilled musicians,  
they are also excellent performers:  
theatrical, humorous and energising."  
- Edinburgh Evening News*

with support from:  
The GB Sasakawa Foundation

[www.taiko.co.uk](http://www.taiko.co.uk)

photos: Chris Nicholls

### MUGENKYO TAIKO DRUMMERS

in concert

MTD presents...

★★★★★  
*"This show is  
not to be missed"*  
Edinburgh Evening News

*"Unashamedly drumming as  
theatre, but also drumming as  
an almost religious experience  
... exhilarating to behold"*  
The Herald

[www.taiko.co.uk](http://www.taiko.co.uk)



photos: mark rafferty

**SEE ENCLOSED LEAFLETS FOR DATES  
OR VISIT [WWW.TAIKO.CO.UK](http://WWW.TAIKO.CO.UK)**

# TAIKO TAIKO

The quarterly newsletter of the Mugen Taiko Dojo & Mugenkyo Taiko Drummers, with information on forthcoming tours, news, teaching activities, projects, and concerts around the UK.



The Mugen Taiko Dojo is the first purpose-built Taiko training centre in the UK located in rural Scotland.

At the Dojo, we introduce the art form of Taiko through residential workshops and regular classes.

The Dojo's extensive outreach programme brings Taiko to schools and communities throughout the UK.

## MUGENKYO TAIKO DRUMMERS

Established in 1994, Mugenkyo is Europe's first professional Taiko drum group, based at the Mugen Taiko Dojo, performing at theatres, concert halls and festivals. Mugenkyo's aim is to develop Taiko as a European art form, through performances and collaborations.

MTD

P.O. Box 5124 email: [MTD@taiko.co.uk](mailto:MTD@taiko.co.uk)  
Lanark tel/fax: 01357 522 008

ML11 0WA  
U.K.

[www.taiko.co.uk](http://www.taiko.co.uk)

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

Mrs J Copas, Mrs. C Saville, B Tredgett, TH Evanson  
Sheila Sharman, Jane Hill, K Haywood, Roy Nelham,  
Mr VA Hunt, Marjorie Payne, Jane Farrimond,  
Hilary MacPherson, Mrs B Woodhouse, Shona Davis,  
Ken & Sylvia Grandfield, Mrs Bradley, Jenny Waive,  
Suzan Northway, William Stavert

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 Mugen Taiko Dojo) all gratefully accepted.

Thank you to all of you who filled in the audience survey forms on the spring tour. This helps us to assess how our publicity is working, and helps us to understand you: our audience!

The winners of the DVD draw:

Angus Birkin (Isle of Wight), Lesley Scoular (Drunfield)  
Angela Willder (Stoke-on-Trent)  
Mr AJ Peplow (Birmingham), Patsy Mowatt (Chislet)  
Debbie Cox (Binford-on-Avon),  
David Imray (Aberdeen), Morag Henriksen (Portree)  
Dr R. Narayham (Camberley), Lucy Mowbray (Garve)  
Andy McCheyne (Christchurch)  
Alix Wilson (Stoke-on-Trent), Mollie Hudson (Helston)  
Audrey & Graham John (Llanelli)  
Joyce Cartledge (Nottingham),  
Ann Gristwood (Bracknell), Jeremy Price (Presteigne)  
Robin Webster (Swadlincote)  
Mrs B. Freeman (Rotherham)  
Christa Wynn-Williams (Edinburgh)

Photos thanks to Lin Smith & Robert Binstead

## THE TOUR

The final lead-up to the Mugenkyo spring tour was a whirlwind of 12 hour rehearsal days & last-minute adjustments to the set. The final touches to a brand new stand for our new performance piece "Belenos" were made the very morning of departure. The tour itself was the most strenuous yet: 32 towns in 5 weeks with only 3 days off to rest our weary limbs. We did survive (just!). Highlights of the tour included a first visit to the beautiful Aberdeen Music Hall, another full house at the Halifax Square Chapel, the vociferous audience of Chesterfield, and our home-town dates at the Glasgow Fruitmarket and Edinburgh Queen's Hall. We were all excited to perform for the first time at the King's Theatre in Southsea, on the same stage that The Who's "Tommy" was filmed. A full standing ovation finished us off in style on our final date on the Isle of Skye, before the battle with the midges loading the equipment afterwards.



Georgie & Peter working on the Belenos stand (aka santa's evil sleigh) on the morning of departure



Crack midge defence team - the last night of the tour on the Isle of Skye

## THE EVENT



A highlight of the summer was an appearance at the 3rd UK Taiko Festival in Exeter. The Dojo Drummers performed in a concert with Kagemusha, and were also joined onstage by Mackie & Miyuki, joining together to perform an encore.

The festival itself was a great gathering of the taiko community, from taiko players to taiko makers. We were particularly impressed with the level and variety of all of the youth groups who performed at two youth concerts. A special congratulations to Kagemusha for all their hard work in organising such a visionary event, and for providing the platform for so many youth groups to develop and grow. No doubt the festival will develop year by year, as a reflection of the fast growth of the taiko movement in this country.



### *We're pleased to announce...*

Peter Tagg – tour player on the autumn 2006 tour and spring 2007 tour – is now a trainee of the group, having started full-time with us from July.

Peter is a welcome addition to the team!



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## THE FESTIVALS

The Dojo Drummers have been busy performing at festivals all over the UK, from the multicultural Eastern Festival in Evesham to a spectacular extravaganza at the Festival of Speed in Chichester, to the Marlborough Jazz Festival. They battled the wet & windy summer, with the rising river in Evesham almost enveloping the stage & damp fireworks & aerial acrobatics in Chichester.

Meanwhile..... Mackie & Miyuki went to Glastonbury Festival to perform with Kenji Williams (Miyuki's brother), an electro-trance artist performing live violin floating over trance beats. The performance also featured Japanese dance by Miyuki & Sayoko (Kenji's wife), tribal bellydance by Sayoko, and projected visuals by Kenji, who is also a film director. This was a first-time family collaboration in a unique taiko/ trance/ violin/ bellydance fusion! The two sets at the Glade stage and the West Dance stage lifted the spirits of the wet and muddy Glastonbury crowd, and the combination of taiko & dance music worked brilliantly together. Despite getting the van stuck in mud, having to carry the equipment from van to stage through foot-deep mud past overflowing portaloos & camping in a soggy field, a good time was had by all! (see [www.kenjiwilliams.com](http://www.kenjiwilliams.com))  
Meanwhile..... Georgie & Lucy have been busy with educational work, teaching students in Barnsley, Inverness and Tees Valley, where two weeks of teaching led to a student performance and the beginnings of their own youth taiko group in the Middlesbrough area.



GLASTO 2007

## THE GUEST TEACHER

A welcome return visit by taiko master Hiroshi Motofuji, who taught a weekend workshop at the Dojo in July. This year he taught a workshop in the Sukeroku style from Tokyo, where the drum is played at a 45 degree angle, challenging the participants with this athletic and energetic style of playing.



Motofuji and Mugenkyo Taiko Drummers also performed a special joint one-off concert together in London at the Royal Academy of Music. Motofuji is a master of the flamboyant Sukeroku style, as well as pioneering a more modern style of playing, and the concert combined this with Mugenkyo's energetic style. A standing ovation confirmed that the combination worked well together. We hope to welcome Motofuji again soon. Watch this space!

## THE WEDDING

We'd like to congratulate Anna Birkett & Peter Tagg on getting hitched - we wish you happiness & health in your future life together. A true taiko love story, Anna & Peter's first date was at a Mugenkyo concert. After both joining Taiko Academy their love blossomed, as did their involvement with the group. Anna brought her experience in arts administration into the group, and worked in our office for nearly 3 years. Meanwhile, Peter joined us on tour & now has become a trainee with the group. Sadly Anna is no longer with us in the office, but is still part of the Mugenkyo family. At their wedding, a surprise performance of Yatai Bayashi with Peter in his kilt, and Anna playing in her gorgeous wedding dress - a first in the history of taiko!



## 500 MUGENKYO DVDs SOLD in FIRST MONTH of RELEASE!

The new Mugenkyo DVD has been proving extremely popular, with over 500 DVD's sold in May on tour and through our new website mail order. Purchase your copy now on [www.taiko.co.uk](http://www.taiko.co.uk)

# INTRODUCTORY WEEKEND WORKSHOPS AT THE MUGEN TAIKO DOJO

Sign up now for our upcoming workshops. Learn how to play the taiko drums in a friendly & supportive atmosphere and experience the power of the taiko drums first hand. The introductory weekend workshop is a true all-round experience.

Dates: 24 / 25 November  
1 / 2 December

Cost: £160 non-residential (residential rates on request)

For further info, contact Lynn on 01357 522 008 or MTD@taiko.co.uk

## FURTHER WORKSHOPS AT THE DOJO

There will be a long-awaited follow-on weekend workshop in December. At the follow-on workshop participants can learn a new piece over the course of the weekend.

Due to popular demand for more intensive sessions, we have also decided to schedule in a further 3-day intensive course on the Monday to Wednesday following the follow-on workshop. This course will be open first to those who have signed up for the preceding weekend & with a smaller group. The structure of the 3 days will be slightly different to the follow-on workshop in that the course doesn't lead to learning a specific piece. Rather, the time will be spent on technique and exercises. The object of the course is for each individual player to improve as a taiko drummer in technique, rhythm and form, and is designed for players who intend to carry on playing taiko on a regular basis.



### Follow-on Workshop

Dates: 8 / 9 December  
Cost: £160 non-residential

### Intensive Course

Dates: 10 / 11 / 12 December  
Cost: £240 non-residential

For further info, contact Lynn on 01357 522 008 or MTD@taiko.co.uk

## PROJECT TAIKO 2007-8

### Could this be you?!!

Project Taiko is open to applicants aged 18 – 30, and is free of charge for the successful applicants. Following an audition process, the chosen participants will take part in a series of weekly sessions at the Dojo from December – March 2008, culminating in a final performance at the annual Dojo Showcase Concert.

The deadline for applications is up until Fri 16th November, with auditions being held the following week.

For further info, contact Lynn on 01357 522 008 or MTD@taiko.co.uk

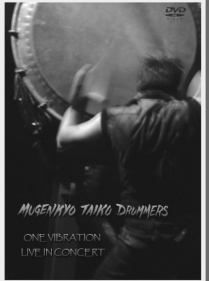


## MERCHANDISE

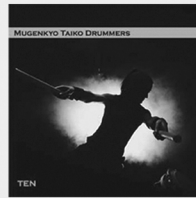
### MUGENKYO DVD

#### "ONE VIBRATION LIVE IN CONCERT"

Filmed in autumn 2006  
16:9 Widescreen PAL  
Length: 40 min



### MUGENKYO CD'S



#### "TEN"

Recorded in 2004 - big taiko stompers, with bamboo flute, bells, voice & didgeridoo & a bonus CD-rom of show clips.



#### "MUGENKYO"

Recorded in 1997.  
Pure energy music!

### NEW T-SHIRTS AVAILABLE SOON!

## ORDER FORM

MUGENKYO DVD £14 \_\_\_\_\_

MUGENKYO CD'S £12 \_\_\_\_\_

"Ten" \_\_\_\_\_

"Mugenkyo" \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL ENCLOSED: \_\_\_\_\_

All prices include VAT, packaging and postage within the UK. Please allow 14 days delivery. Please make cheques payable to:

**MTD Productions Ltd.**

Send this form to: MTD  
P.O Box 5124  
Lanark ML11 0WA

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ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

TOWN: \_\_\_\_\_

COUNTY: \_\_\_\_\_

POSTCODE: \_\_\_\_\_

What do you mean this drum's not loud enough?!

