

# TAIKO TAIKO

ISSUE 36

SPRING 2008

Happy New Year & wishing you all good fortune in the year of the Rat!

After a Christmas & Hogmanay break, the teaching work has been gearing up again at the Dojo, with three regular nights a week through the winter months. Taiko Academy have been learning new skills and repertoire, to be ready in time for the Dojo Showcase Concerts in March. A new series of Taiko Night has just started, with some new members joining the regulars. Following auditions in November, the new Project Taiko recruits have been hard at work through December, and will also be working towards a performance at the "Big Bang" Dojo Showcase Concerts. Teresa will be leading much of the teaching work in the early spring, as the rest of the group set off on the "Way of the Drum" tour in Feb / March. It will be a busy first half of 2008 for us, as we'll also be off again on the Mugenkyo spring tour in mid-April for just over 4 weeks.

Hope to see you at one of our shows!

Enclosed are leaflets with our tour dates for the upcoming "The Way of the Drum" tour in February / March, and also the "Mugenkyo Taiko Drummers" tour in April / May.

See [www.taiko.co.uk](http://www.taiko.co.uk) for updates to our schedule.



## DOJO DRUMMERS ...in Kiev



THE KIEV TEAM LASSIES

In December, the Dojo Drummers performed in Kiev at the grand opening of a new "Godskitchen" nightclub, opening for a star DJ lineup. Unfortunately, a series of mishaps led to the drums being held up in customs, and faced with having to do a performance with no instruments, the team set off on an intrepid adventure led by Teresa and Peter, scouring the streets of Kiev for replacement drums. They ended up hiring tom-toms from a local drum shop, which they decorated with wood-effect sticky-back plastic & rope to look like taiko drums (very Blue Peter!). A first both for the Dojo Drummers & for the Ukrainian audience!



TAIKO-ESQUE DRUM KITS



GODSKITCHEN NIGHTCLUB



THE DRESSING ROOM RIDER



BACKSTAGE SNOOZE

# 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. At the Dojo, we introduce the art form of Taiko through regular classed & residential workshops.

The Dojo's extensive outreach programme also 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

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

William Stravert, Roger Wyld, Jane Hill, B. Tredsett  
Ken & Pat Haywood, Linda M. Buckley, Celia Bradley  
Sheila Sharman

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:

Diane Verney (Crymych), Mr & Mrs F.T. Smith (Hull)  
Barry Dixon (Clayton-Le-Moors)  
Eleanor Sharkey (Langholm), K.Charlesworth (Derby)  
Christine Hudson (Lockerbie)  
Ken Branch (Morecambe), Mick Rhead (North Shields)  
Ben Saul (Swindon), Mrs D. Vines (Kewstoke)  
Celia & Dave Drummond (Horncastle)  
Carrie Willis (Ipswich), Mr Tom Cross (Hull)  
Jason Jacques (Newstead Village)  
Mr Clifford Whale (Swindon)  
Mr & Mrs J. S. Lawrence (Scunthorpe)  
Simon West (Kidderminster), Cherry Walker (Pendine)  
Mrs B. Trescaheric (Barrow-in-Furness)  
Mr & Mrs Holder & family (Weston-Super-Mare)

Photos thanks to Lin Smith, Peter Searle & Mark Rafferty

## A GOODBYE & TWO HELLOS:

A sad goodbye to Lesley Watson, who now works for the National Theatre of Scotland, to pursue her career path specialising in marketing. Lesley worked hard in her time here with us, and we wish her the best of luck in her future endeavours.

A big welcome to our new office team:

### Lynn Tonner

The voice of MTD with her bubbly personality & charm, Lynn had previously worked for Glasgow Council and with a "Theatre in Education" arts company. Lynn is in charge of the Way of the Drum tours and educational bookings, including all of the weekend workshops at the Dojo.



### Liz Lauchlan

Liz previously worked in London with an independent record label and with the Performing Rights Society, before relocating back home to Bonnie Scotland. Highly efficient and hard-working, Liz is in charge of the Mugenkyo tours and the Dojo Drummers bookings.



## VISITING GROUPS FROM JAPAN

(N.B. these are not Mugenkyo tour dates!)

### KODO



The amazing KODO Drummers, from Sado Island, Japan, are touring the UK. From the technical precision of their playing, to the simple elegance of their stage production, Kodo define the genre. Not to be missed!

29 January	London, Royal Festival Hall
31 January	Basingstoke, The Anvil
2, 3 February	Dublin, National Concert Hall
5 February	Manchester, Bridgewater Hall
8 February	Birmingham, Symphony Hall
9, 10 February	Gateshead, The Sage
11 February	Liverpool, Philharmonic Hall

### YAMATO



The youthful and energetic Yamato Drummers will be touring the UK in March / April. Yamato are one of the hardest-working taiko groups in the world, touring for 11 months in 2007.

19 - 30 March	London, Peacock Theatre
1 April	Truro, Hall for Cornwall
2 April	Cardiff, St. David's Hall
3 April	Brecon, Brycheiniog
5 April	Southend on Sea, Cliff's Pavilion
6, 7 April	Nottingham Playhouse
8, 9 April	Brighton Dome
10 - 12 April	Canterbury, Marlowe
15 April	Aberdeen Music Hall
16 April	Salford, Lowry
17 April	Stoke, Victoria Hall
19 April	High Wycombe, Swan
20 April	Warwick, Arts Centre
24 April	Northampton, Derngate Theatre
25 April	Norwich, Theatre Royal
27 April	Buxton, Opera House

# MUGENKYO TAIKO DRUMMERS

## AUTUMN 2007 TOUR

The third tour in a row with exactly the same line-up allowed us to take further steps forward with the show. Peter Tagg is now a full-time with the group, having been a tour player in the autumn '06 & spring '07 tours.

The tour took us to 32 concerts in 5 weeks. Highlights included a return visit to the Wyvern Theatre in Swindon after 7 years. One of our favourite audiences was in Scunthorpe, where the capacity crowd gave us a standing ovation. A feature of the tour was that 7 out of the 32 venues were seaside venues, the most dramatic of which was the Pavilion Theatre in Cromer, a wonderful old theatre right at the end of the pier on the north Norfolk coast. As the van couldn't drive up the old wooden pier, we transported all the equipment using large trolleys, as the waves were crashing beneath us. There were many highlights too numerous to mention & thank you to everyone who attended the concerts & for giving us your support.

Audience numbers were boosted on this tour with a postering campaign by Peter and Taiko Academy member Stanko Kadura, who travelled around the country in the lead-up promoting the tour. Despite having our new silver surfer dream machine, we were plagued by van troubles on this tour, from tyres, to lights, to weighbridges, to lost keys. However, we were very fortunate to have no injuries or illnesses, & it was the first tour with no bachi drumstick breakages.

We're already looking forward to the next one... see you there!  
(see enclosed leaflet for full details)

In October, we had the pleasure of meeting the director & lead martial artist from the short film "Land of the Kami", which features music by Mugenkyo. The film is a martial arts adventure with the Japanese art of Aikido, filmed and edited by Pascal Fintoni: a fantasy adventure about passing into the world of the spirit beings, culminating in a dramatic battle between good and evil.

For more info: <http://landofthekami.wordpress.com>  
<http://www.youtube.com/ACTIFProductions>



CLEANING THE DRUMS BEFORE THE TOUR



THEATRE ON CROMER PIER

## THE WAY OF THE DRUM

On the "Way of the Drum" tour of September 2007, we were pleased to welcome Jen McFadden from Taiko Academy as a tour player. The "Way of the Drum" introduces the traditions of taiko in a friendly and accessible concert.

Last year we were able to bring in a demonstration of the Tokyo style of Bon Daiko, learned from Hiroshi Motofuji. Perennial favourites in the show include the audience joining in with the "Kiyari" song, as well as the strenuous piece "Chichibu Yatai Bayashi".

On the tour we were excited to travel right to the tip of Scotland, to Thurso and then across the northern coast and around to the northwest village of Lochinver. The fantastic scenery energised us. On the road we had several exciting adventures, such as getting locked in the school grounds at midnight in north Wales & telephoning the police to rescue us ...to singing "Kiyari" to test the acoustics of Smoo Cave near Durness on the northern tip of Scotland.

Meanwhile... Teresa stayed behind to carry on the teaching work at the Dojo, including the regular group "Taiko Night", whose course culminated with a guest spot at the "Way of the Drum" concert in Stirling. Well done to the Taiko Night team!

See enclosed leaflet for details of our forthcoming "Way of the Drum" tour.



GALS ON TOUR





## UPCOMING in 2008... INTRODUCTORY WEEKEND WORKSHOPS

Work off those extra inches from the holiday season with a weekend of taiko at the Mugen Taiko Dojo. Learn a taiko drum piece, experience the vibrations of these huge drums right up close, and meet other taiko enthusiasts from all over the country. No experience of taiko drumming is necessary for these workshops. Complete beginners welcome!

Dates: 29 / 30 March  
5 / 6 April

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

Contact us on 01357 522 008 or [MTD@taiko.co.uk](mailto:MTD@taiko.co.uk) for an information pack

A follow-on workshop is also planned for April, details tbc.

## FIRST "INTENSIVE COURSE" AT THE MUGEN TAIKO DOJO

December was a busy season of workshops at the Dojo, including two introductory weekend workshops, a follow-on weekend workshop, a series of all-day workshops for Momentum Scotland, a teambuilding workshop for the Scottish Directorate, and for the first time at the Dojo: the Intensive Course.

The Intensive Course was a 3-day course which ran on consecutively from the follow-on weekend workshop, which meant that most of the participants were at the Dojo for a full 5 days in a row. We worked on how to use your weight to direct Ki energy in playing, and how to move fluidly on and around the drum, with exercises to develop strength and control in the left hand. In addition to delving deep into the technique on the nagado drums, we also covered takebachi bamboo stick technique and the different kinds of percussion.

More courses are planned for the future. Watch this space!



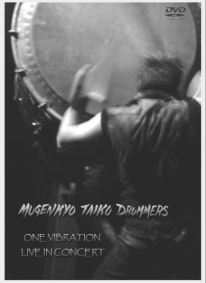
TEAMBUILDING WITH THE SCOTTISH DIRECTORATE

## MERCHANDISE

### MUGENKYO DVD

#### "ONE VIBRATION LIVE IN CONCERT"

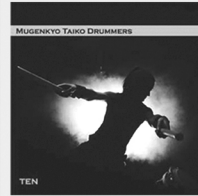
Filed in autumn 2006  
16:9 Widescreen PAL  
Length: 40 min



### 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

Please use this form for postal orders  
(Merchandise can also be ordered from  
our on-line shop at [www.taiko.co.uk](http://www.taiko.co.uk))

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

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

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

# The big bang 2008

## DOJO SHOWCASE CONCERTS IN GLASGOW & BATHGATE

The annual celebration of the teaching work at the Mugen Taiko Dojo, with performances by Taiko Academy, Taiko Night and new recruits Project Taiko, joined by members of Mugenkyo. Thirty drummers onstage in an extravaganza of heart-pounding rhythms & explosive energy.

Sat 15 March Bathgate Regal Theatre 01506 433 634  
Sun 16 March Glasgow Gilmorehill G12 0141 330 5522

