

# TAIKO TAIKO

ISSUE 38

SPRING 2009

## HAPPY 15th BIRTHDAY! MUGENKYO TAIKO DRUMMERS

We have an exciting year ahead, as we celebrate Mugenkyo Taiko Drummers' 15th year – yes, it's been that long! After our traditional "down-time" in January & February, the year began in earnest with our annual "Big Bang" concert in March, showcasing the different teaching groups at the Mugen Taiko Dojo. This year we had a very special finale for the audiences in Glasgow and Edinburgh: a 25-strong taiko drumming piece, with everyone involved in the concert performing as part of the encore – the most drums & drummers we've ever had on stage at the once! The sound was truly thunderous, reverberating right through the RSAMD and Church Hill Theatre (see full report inside)

In March we also had a special show at the Hamilton Town House, where local high school students performed the pieces they had learned over the course of the previous six weeks. (see full report inside)

We are now in rehearsals for the upcoming "Way of the Drum" tour – out on the road in May & June. This is a chance to see Mugenkyo performing traditional taiko drum pieces from Japan, with explanations about the background to this fascinating art form – see enclosed handbill for a full list of tour dates. We are excited to welcome Fi Stoddart & Jamie Wallace on board for this tour, who will join Neil, Miyuki & Teresa. This concert will not be touring in 2010, so catch it while you can!

This summer there are more chances than ever to try out taiko drumming – from our weekend workshops suitable for everyone, from all over the UK & beyond – to our taster sessions & courses for those in Central Scotland, including a new course in Glasgow and Edinburgh leading to an opportunity to join a performance at the Edinburgh Fringe! To check there are places still available on our workshops, contact Lynn on 01357 522 008 or [MTD@taiko.co.uk](mailto:MTD@taiko.co.uk)

We're also looking forward to another "Yatra" collaboration for the Edinburgh Mela in August, with new & exciting combinations of taiko, tabla, Scottish pipes, harp, Indian song, Gaelic song & fiddle – this year with the addition of Indian dance.

**Hope to see all of you at one of our events in our 15th anniversary year!**



### THE WAY OF THE DRUM

Experience exhilarating rhythms in an entertaining & dynamic show, and gain a unique insight into the enthralling world of this ancient art.

See enclosed handbill for May/June tour dates.



## 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 classes & 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

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:

Mr. V.A.Hunt, Margaret Berry, Paul Hopkinson, Peter J. Tipper, Chris Pickett, B. Tredgett, Ken Hunt, The Farrimond Clan, Harumi Williams, J. Smith, Anthony Clewer, 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 Mugen Taiko Dojo) all gratefully accepted.

Photos thanks to Lin Smith & Leah Ford

## Balls to Taiko!

On the same night as our Edinburgh Big Bang concert, Peter, Dan & ex-Mugenkyo member Al Hagger took a trip to Celtic to perform at the farewell dinner for legendary Japanese footballer Shinsuke Nakamura. A great time was had by all our footy-mad boys with Nakamura & teammates even joining in on the taiko drums at the end of the performance. Unfortunately we won't be signing him to our team this season as he's leaving to go back to Japan!

## YATRA RETURNS IN 2009

The next stage in our exciting collaboration, with taiko, tabla, bagpipes, harp, Indian and Gaelic song and fiddle. This year the performance will be enhanced by the addition of Indian dance by the wonderful Priya Shrikumar & Dance Ihayami. The piece will be called "Journeys Home", commissioned especially for the Scotland Homecoming Festival in 2009.

Sat 8 & Sun 9 August

Edinburgh Mela Festival

0131 332 2888



## SOUTH LANARKSHIRE TEACHING PROJECT



The students at Lesmahagow High School and Lanark Grammar School performed as part of our concert at the Hamilton Town House in March, showing off their newly acquired skills to an adoring audience. With only six weeks of sessions leading to the performance, all the students involved worked very hard to reach the standard required, and put lots of energy and enthusiasm into the final performance – well done!



South Lanarkshire students shine on stage.



# BIG BANG 2009 - Dojo Showcase

This year's bang was bigger than ever, with 25 drums & drummers onstage for the finale. The stage shook, the seats rattled, and the audience went wild!

Taiko Night unveiled their new piece: Inferno, which set the place alight. The hard work put in by the Taiko Nighters was evident from the jump up in the level of playing from last year. Taiko Academy also made a leap forward, with members of the group taking on new roles within the pieces. For the first time this year, the novice players of Project Taiko integrated with the two more experienced groups, which worked seamlessly. Congratulations to you all!



Both Taiko Academy & Taiko Night had the opportunity to show off their new costumes: happi coats from Japan especially designed with the Mugen Taiko Dojo logos, as well as funky new "urban warrior" costumes for Taiko Academy.



"TAIKO DOJO  
DRUMFEST"  
at the  
EDINBURGH  
FRINGE  
FESTIVAL



A celebration of all the players at the Mugen Taiko Dojo, mainly featuring the Dojo Drummers, but also with a short guest spot by the participants of the summer taiko course – see the results of the Dojo's teaching work! This performance forms part of the Festival of Spirituality and Peace.

24, 25, 26, 28, 29 August    Edinburgh, St. John's Church    7:30–8:30 pm    0131 473 2000

## INTRODUCTORY WEEKEND WORKSHOPS

Learn the basics of taiko & learn to play a complete taiko drumming piece in an exciting & rewarding weekend at the Mugen Taiko Dojo. Past workshops have attracted participants from Germany, France, Holland, Ireland, Spain, as well as all over the UK. Accessible and fun!

Date: Sat 11 & Sun 12 July 2009  
Cost: £180 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

## FOLLOW-ON WEEKEND WORKSHOP

At the upcoming follow-on, we will be teaching the piece Onami, based on the shichisan rhythm. Take advantage of the consecutive weekends, and sign up for both workshops, with a week in bonny Scotland in between!

Date: Sat 18 & Sun 19 July 2009



## TASTER WORKSHOPS

We have started running regular taster workshops for adults in Glasgow, Edinburgh & surrounds. Check our website for additional workshops.

Sunday 7 June Livingston, Howden Park Centre 2-4pm £20/ £15  
Thursday 11 June Edinburgh, "Big Red Door" 7-9pm £15/ £10  
To book a place, contact Lynn: 01357 522 008 [MTD@taiko.co.uk](mailto:MTD@taiko.co.uk)



## SUMMER COURSE IN GLASGOW & EDINBURGH & PERFORMANCE PROJECT

The course takes you from the basics through to learning a complete taiko piece, and is suitable for adults of all ages & all levels of experience, from complete beginners to experienced drummers & percussionists. At the end of the course, there will also be an option to take part in a performance at the Edinburgh Fringe in August. A unique opportunity to learn to play these beautiful instruments, and to take part in an exciting performance project.

**GLASGOW:** Tuesdays in June & July, 7-9:30 pm  
at the Tron Theatre, Trongate  
**EDINBURGH:** Wednesdays in June & July, 7-9:30 pm  
at St. John's Church, corner of Princes St & Lothian Rd

Course fee: £120 (£90 for students & unemployed)  
For further info, contact Lynn: 01357 522 008 [MTD@taiko.co.uk](mailto:MTD@taiko.co.uk)

## MERCHANDISE

### DOJO T-SHIRT

White & mustard print on black T-shirt  
Certified fair-trade - organic cotton  
sizes: XXL, XL, L, M, S, kids (size 8)



**BACK:** Large Japanese calligraphy drum symbol by Zen priest

**FRONT:** Mugen Taiko Dojo logo



### 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 plus bonus CD-rom of show clips.

"MUGENKYO"

Recorded in 1997.  
Pure energy music!



## ORDER FORM

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

MUGENKYO DVD £14 \_\_\_\_\_

MUGENKYO CD'S £12 \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

DOJO T-SHIRT £17 \_\_\_\_\_

SIZE? \_\_\_\_\_

Available: XXL, XL, L, M, S, kids (size 8)

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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