

TAIKO TAIKO

ISSUE 39

AUTUMN 2009



NEW MUGENKYO CD OUT NOW!

Announcing the release of the third Mugenkyo CD, commemorating 15 years of developing taiko as a powerful modern performing art. The CD is called "Era", to mark the end of a very important era in Mugenkyo's history, and the beginning of a new one.

All of the tracks were first recorded "live" at the Mugen Taiko Dojo, without the use of a click track (the use of which is the norm in modern recording) in order to preserve the live feel and natural nuances of the music. Then these recordings were taken into CaVa Studios in Glasgow, and on some of the pieces, additional overdub tracks were recorded, in order to expand the sound of the recording, and to add on additional sounds and effects.

The name Mugenkyo means limitless reverberation, and expresses our belief that there are no boundaries to taiko, cultural or otherwise, and there are no limits to the possibilities of taiko drumming as a contemporary art-form. This idea is expressed especially in the very modern pieces recorded for this album: *Belenos* and *Essence*. There is also a bow to the traditions of taiko: for the first time we have recorded our own versions of the traditional classics *Yatai Bayashi* and the *Kiyari* folk-song.

There are two Odaiko (big drum) pieces on the CD: *Gekko*, Teresa's dramatic solo, and *Fudoshin*, performed by Mackie and Miyuki. The album also features full-on powerful taiko drum pieces composed by Mugenkyo which will be familiar to our audiences: *Tomoe*, *Shichisan Stomp* and *Nagareboshi*.

The CD can be purchased at our concerts during this autumn tour, and is on sale through our website. See inside page for full track listing and further details.

MUGENKYO TAIKO DRUMMERS 15 YEAR TOUR

SEPTEMBER

- 18 WHITEHAVEN Civic Hall 01946 514 960
- 19 ST HELENS Theatre Royal 01744 756 000
- 20 WOLVERHAMPTON Grand Theatre 01902 429 212
- 22 ISLE OF MAN Gaiety Theatre 01624 694 555
- 23 NEW BRIGHTON Floral Pavilion 0151 666 0000
- 24 LICHFIELD Lichfield Garrick 01543 412 121
- 25 HARTLEPOOL Town Hall 01429 890 000
- 26 GATESHEAD The Sage 0191 443 4661
- 28 CROMER Pavilion Theatre 01263 512 495
- 29 CROMER Pavilion Theatre 01263 512 495
- 30 BEDFORD Corn Exchange 01234 269 519

OCTOBER

- 1 CHESHAM Elgiva Theatre 01494 582 900
- 2 FELIXSTOWE Spa Pavilion 01394 282 126
- 3 LONDON Cadogan Hall 020 7730 4500
- 4 WORTHING Pavilion Theatre 01903 206 206
- 5 CANTERBURY Gulbenkian Theatre 01227 769 075
- 6 DUNSTABLE Grove Theatre 01582 602 080
- 8 EXMOUTH The Pavilion 01395 222 477
- 9 MINEHEAD Regal Theatre 01643 706 430
- 10 NEWPORT The Riverfront 01633 656 679
- 12 CARDIGAN Theatr Mwldan 01239 621 200
- 13 DERBY Assembly Rooms 01332 255 800
- 14 TEWKESBURY Roses Theatre 01684 295 074
- 15 HERFORD The Courtyard 01432 359 252
- 16 ABERGAVENNY Borough Theatre 01873 850 805
- 17 BRECON Theatr Brycheiniog 01874 611 622
- 22 STAFFORD Gatehouse Theatre 01785 254 653
- 23 OXFORD New Theatre 0844 847 1585
- 24 POOLE The Lighthouse 08444 068 666
- 25 SWINDON Wyvern Theatre 01793 524 481
- 27 CROYDON Fairfield Halls 020 8688 9291
- 28 CAMBERLEY Camberley Theatre 01276 707 600
- 29 HERTFORD Castle Hall 01992 531 500
- 30 SCUNTHORPE Plowright Theatre 01724 277 733
- 31 HULL City Hall 01482 226 655

NOVEMBER

- 1 BLACKPOOL Grand Theatre 01253 290 190
- 12 FALKIRK FTH 01324 506 850
- 13 GLASGOW Tramway 0845 330 3501
- 14 DUNOON Queen's Hall 01369 702 800
- 15 MOTHERWELL Concert Hall 01698 403 120
- 19 EDINBURGH Queen's Hall 0131 668 2019
- 20 LANGHOLM Buccleuch Centre 01387 381 196
- 21 HALIFAX Square Chapel 01422 349 422
- 22 BATH Theatre Royal 01225 448 844

44 concert dates across the UK
...our longest tour so far
...our biggest lineup to date
...with special guest Lale Sayoko
.....Don't miss it!
You'll find enclosed a dozen or so
flyers to hand out to your friends &
spread the word of taiko!



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

Mr & Mrs Finon, Mrs B Hoare, Ken & Pat Haywood, Suzan Northway, Harumi Williams, Ken Hunt, Nichola Morgan, Denise Zollman, Ms Y Thompson, J Smith

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 Mark Rafferty & Lin Smith.



YATRA AT THE EDINBURGH MELA

Following the success of Yatra in 2008, the opportunity arose to take the collaboration one step further for this year's Edinburgh Mela festival.

This ambitious collaboration consisted of a forging together of three musical cultures: Scottish music in the form of harp, Gaelic song, fiddle and pipes, along with Indian musical traditions – song and tabla – and taiko drumming. This year the collaboration was enhanced by the addition of Indian dance by the wonderful Dance Ihayami, choreographed to perfection to fit with the music, and also projected visuals. The music itself was a unique cross-cultural fertilisation, and it was truly remarkable how well certain combinations of instruments worked together, despite being from opposite ends of the globe.

"Yatra" means journey, and the process of creating the piece was a journey in itself – the rehearsals at the Dojo were marred with disaster, from the singer losing her voice & dropping out, to the harpist hurting her shoulder when falling off a chair, to the fiddle needing an emergency repair, to the tabla player being rushed off with a complication from an eye operation.



Despite these difficulties, thanks to everyone's dedication to the project, in four short rehearsal days we managed to pull together an entire 50-minute set of truly unique music and dance.

The piece was called "Journeys Home", commissioned especially for the Scotland Homecoming Festival in 2009 – and came about thanks to the vision and belief of Liam Sinclair, director of the Mela Festival.

The two performances were very well received by the audiences, with a full standing ovation at the end of the second performance.



NEW MUGENKYO CD (continued)

Full track listing:

01 BELENOS: For those familiar with our theatre concert, this piece opens the Mugenkyo concert, and represents the unveiling of a new dawn.

02 GEKKO (Moon Drum): Teresa's dramatic Odaiko (big drum) solo.

03 SHICHISAN STOMP: A classic Mugenkyo stomper, playfully using the Katsugi Oke carrying okedo drum with the funky shichisan rhythm.

04 YATAI BAYASHI: Our own version of the traditional piece from Chichibu Festival.

05 KIYARI: A new arrangement of the famous folk-song from Miyake Island

06 FUDOSHIN: Odaiko piece by Mackie and Miyuki, which usually marks the climax of the first half of the Mugenkyo concert.

07 TOMOE: One of Mugenkyo's signature pieces, the drummers play between two horizontal drums swinging bachi drumsticks in perfect synchronisation in this tightly choreographed piece.

08 NAGAREBOSHI (Shooting Star): A hard-hitting fast-paced taiko piece, performed last year as our encore in the Mugenkyo concert.

09 ESSENCE: Unlike the other live pieces on this album, this piece was conceived in the studio, and the process of its conception expresses the essence of what is Mugenkyo: improvised rhythms driven along by a strong underlying shiburoku base rhythm, Chi flute played with soul and passion, and a variety of unconventional sounds and ideas thrown in, all combined to create a fresh new approach to taiko, dedicated to our teacher: Masaaki Kurumaya Sensei.

Total length: 52:52



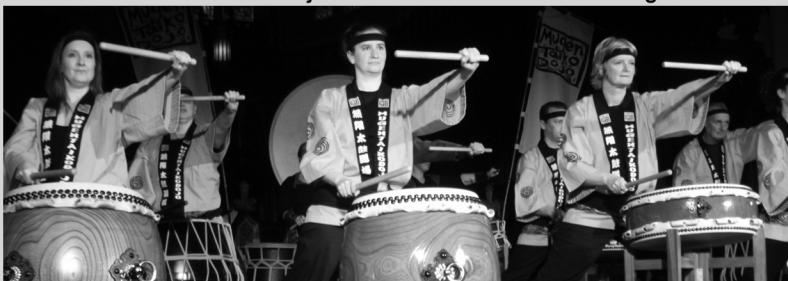
Our own recording studio in the Dojo



Engineer Geoff at the controls at CaVa Sound



The Dojo Drummers thrill the Edinburgh audience



Team Taiko with a perfectly synchronised ending

TAIKO DOJO DRUMFEST AT THE EDINBURGH FRINGE FESTIVAL

A long-awaited return to the Edinburgh Fringe festival, this time with a show celebrating of all the players at the Mugen Taiko Dojo, mainly featuring the Dojo Drummers and Team Taiko aka Taiko Night, but also with a short guest spot by the participants of the summer taiko course. Well done to all of the players who took part in the performance! The participants of the summer taiko course in Glasgow and Edinburgh performed as part of the show after just a six-week course plus two rehearsals at the Dojo, which thoroughly impressed the audience.

As part of their eight-taiko-days-in-a-row run, Team Taiko followed performing at the Fringe with a performance at a wedding and at the annual Balloon Festival at our local village of Strathaven. On this weekend, the Mugen Taiko Dojo had a total of 37 taiko drummers performing simultaneously at two different events on the same evening!



Course participants from Edinburgh & Glasgow, at their debut performance



INTRODUCTORY WEEKEND WORKSHOPS

Solve your Xmas present quandary early this year with a gift certificate for a weekend workshop at the Mugen Taiko Dojo. Experience learning to play Taiko with senior members of Mugenkyo Taiko Drummers.

Through the course of the weekend the participants learn the basics through to an entire taiko drumming piece.

Dates: Sat 9 & Sun 10 January 2010
or... Sat 20 & Sun 21 March 2010

Cost: £180 non-residential (contact us for residential rates)
For further details: 01357 522 008 / MTD@taiko.co.uk



FOLLOW-ON WEEKEND WORKSHOP

Learn the piece "Kaminari" based on the Gobu-gobu rhythm. The workshop is only open to those who have attended an introductory weekend or equivalent course.

Date: Sat 5 & Sun 6 December

Cost: £180 non-residential (contact us for residential rates)
For further details: 01357 522 008 / MTD@taiko.co.uk

We have an ongoing audition process for our performing groups here at the Dojo. Several times a year we provide the opportunity for anyone who is interested in taking up taiko drumming as a serious hobby or a career, to put themselves forward.

No previous drumming experience is required – full training is provided. Applicants must be committed, energetic, fit and have a good sense of rhythm.

Previous experience in any field of music, dance or other performing arts is an advantage.

Next auditions in early December and March. Contact us for full details.

**PUT YOURSELF
IN THE SPOTLIGHT:
TAIKO AUDITIONS**

IMPORTANT NOTICE

In the New Year we will have a new-look email newsletter, so we are encouraging everyone who currently receives the postal newsletter to switch to email. Save trees & postage!!
See enclosed postcard / form.

MERCHANDISE

MUGENKYO CD'S



"ERA"

Recorded in 2009 - two Odaiko big drum pieces, our own versions of traditional classics, plus the very modern "Belenos".

"TEN"

Recorded in 2004 - big taiko stomps & bamboo flute, plus bonus CD-rom.



"MUGENKYO"

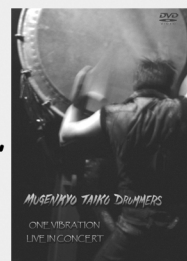
Recorded in 1997. Pure energy music!



MUGENKYO DVD

"ONE VIBRATION LIVE IN CONCERT"

A document of our autumn 2006 concert
16:9 Widescreen PAL Length: 40 min



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



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)

MUGENKYO CD'S £12

"Era" _____ "Ten" _____ "Mugenkyo" _____

MUGENKYO DVD £14 _____

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.**

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