

TAIKO TAIKO

ISSUE 44

SUMMER 2012

The summer is nearly drawing to a close, with festival appearances at the Shambala and Folkeast Festivals, and more. It has been an exciting summer for us, with a concert tour of Japan and Dojo study trip (see full report inside). We have also started on our new educational project for 16-25 year olds called "Taiko Alba", supported by Creative Scotland. Preparations have begun for our UK autumn tour, including special plans for the final concert of the tour at the Glasgow Kings, details to be announced on our website soon!

SEPTEMBER FESTIVALS

Sat 1 September Edinburgh Mela Festival
Sat 8 September Barnsley Diversity Festival
Sun 9 September Dewsbury "A World Together"

SPECIAL COLLABORATION WITH THE SCOTTISH YOUTH PIPE BAND

A unique collaboration with the country's top young drummers of the Scottish Youth Pipe Band incorporating taiko rhythms & choreography into their performance following workshops and development, to create an exciting one-off performance.

Sat 10 November Glasgow Fruitmarket



MUGENKYO CONCERT TOUR -- AUTUMN 2012

We are delighted to welcome back again special guest Nobuko Miyazaki, flautist extraordinaire from New York for this tour.

SEPTEMBER 2012

Th 27	HEXHAM	Hexham Abbey	01434 652 477	www.hexhamabbey.org.uk/festival
Fr 28	SCARBOROUGH	Futurist Theatre	01723 365 789	www.futuristtheatre.co.uk
Sa 29	SCUNTHORPE	The Plowright Theatre	0844 854 2776	www.scunthorpetheatres.co.uk
Su 30	KINGS LYNN	Corn Exchange	01553 764 864	www.kingslynncornexchange.co.uk

OCTOBER 2012

Tu 2	MILTON KEYNES	The Stables	01908 280 800	www.stables.org
W 3	CROYDON	Fairfield Halls	020 8688 9291	www.fairfield.co.uk
Th 4	MANSFIELD	Palace Theatre	01623 633 133	www.mansfield.gov.uk/palacetheatre
Fr 5	LEATHERHEAD	The Leatherhead Theatre	01372 365 141	www.the-theatre.org
Sa 6	TUNBRIDGE WELLS	Trinity Theatre	01892 678 678	www.trinitytheatre.net
Su 7	CHELMSFORD	Civic Theatre	01245 606 505	www.chelmsford.gov.uk/theatres
Tu 9	STEVENAGE	Gordon Craig Theatre	01438 363 200	www.gordon.craig.co.uk
W 10	CLACTON ON SEA	West Cliff Theatre	01255 433 344	www.westcliffclacton.org
Sa 13	ISLE OF MAN	Gaiety Theatre	01624 600 555	www.villagaiety.com
Su 14	MORECAMBE	The Platform	01524 582 803	www.lancaster.gov.uk/platform-tickets
M 15	LIVERPOOL	Liverpool Philharmonic	0151 709 3789	www.liverpoolphil.com
Tu 16	TELFORD	Oakengates @ The Place	01952 382 382	www.theplacetelford.com
W 17	WREXHAM	William Aston Hall	01978 293 293	www.glyndwr.ac.uk/events
Th 18	ABERYSTWYTH	Aberystwyth Arts Centre	01970 62 32 32	www.aber.ac.uk/artscentre
Fr 19	CARMARTHEN	Lyric Theatre	0845 226 3510	www.carmarthenshiretheatres.co.uk
Sa 20	NEWPORT	The Riverfront	01633 656 757	www.newport.gov.uk/theriverfront
Su 21	BROMSGROVE	Artrix	01527 577 330	www.artrix.co.uk
Tu 23	WAKEFIELD	Theatre Royal Wakefield	01924 211 311	www.theatreroyalwakefield.co.uk
W 24	KILMARNOCK	Palace Theatre	01563 554 900	www.enjoyeastayrshire.com
Su 28	GLASGOW	King's Theatre	0844 871 7648	www.atgtickets.com/glasgow

TAIKO TAIKO

The newsletter of Mugenkyo Taiko Drummers & the Mugen Taiko Dojo, with information on forthcoming tours, news, teaching activities, projects, and concerts around 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 introduce taiko as a cultural art-form and develop it as a modern performing art through performances and collaborations.



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.

MTD

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

John Sparrow, Michael E Smith, Pauline Wilkes, Sybil Mackie, Anthony Cleaver, Mrs J Smith, Suzan Northway, Rozalia Harris, Denise Zollman, Angela Willder, Hilary MacPherson, June Radford, Janet Amos, Susan Deakins and Jan Short

Please remember, it costs money to put out "Taiko Taiko". 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:

Colin Robertson www.iconphotography.com

"TAIKO TAIKO" email newsletter

Switch to the email newsletter & save trees! Send us an email with your name & town where you live, and we'll include you on our regular email bulletins.

TAIKO TAIKO

EMAIL NEWSLETTER OF MUGENKYO TAIKO DRUMMERS & THE MUGEN TAIKO DOJO

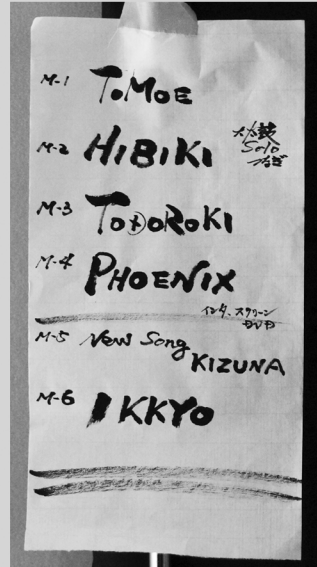
Join us on Facebook search for "Mugenkyo Taiko Drummers"



MUGENKYO JAPAN CONCERT

In July, 16 members of the Mugen Taiko Dojo travelled to Japan for a Mugenkyo concert tour & Dojo study trip.

The concert tour began with a performance with Kurumaya Sensei and his group "Hibiki", the original teacher of Neil & Miyuki, the founders of Mugenkyo. It was an emotional concert, as the event marked the 20th anniversary of their first meeting, the fateful event which would change all of their lives forever. Neil & Miyuki had no idea that this first meeting would lead to a lifetime dedicated to taiko drumming, and with Neil as his first non-Japanese student, Kurumaya Sensei opened his doors to teaching and developing international taiko players, leading to building his beautiful Dojo in Fukui & teaching groups throughout the world. The concert concluded with a performance by Kurumaya Sensei's students and also by Hibiki Daiko, who once again inspired us all with their fluidity & natural grace, and their ability to be at one with the drum.



The very next day we headed to Matto, Ishikawa Prefecture, where we were very honoured to be invited to perform at the Extasia Festival, one of the most prestigious taiko festivals in Japan, with a line-up of the most highly regarded professional taiko drumming groups. Mugenkyo were selected as the only non-Japanese group & our performance concluded the first half of the 4-hour concert. It was a huge challenge for the group, as we were performing on unfamiliar rented equipment, feeling under great scrutiny performing alongside such legendary groups, with the added pressure of being followed throughout by camera crews from three television stations. However, all of the members rose to the occasion & put on an outstanding performance, making it one of the absolute highlights of Mugenkyo's performing career. The reaction of the sold-out 2000-strong audience in the theatre was immense, with clapping punctuating musical climaxes & solo flourishes, and our finale "Phoenix" was received with rapturous applause.

(Readers, you may be interested to look up on the internet some of the amazing groups at the festival: Yufuin Genryu Daiko, Shidara, Hono Daiko, Dadadadan Tenko.)



TOUR & DOJO STUDY TRIP

Our concert tour came to a close with a performance at the Saiwai Shimoina Wadaiko Festival in the mountains of Nagano Prefecture, concluding the double-bill with Wadaiko Tokara, our good friends and hosts of the festival. We were shocked and delighted by the surprise visit of an old friend, Chieko Kojima of the Kodo drummers, who travelled to see us all the way from Sado Island, and whose support was very much appreciated. The Dojo Performance Team also had their debut Japan performance at the Saiwai Shimoina Festival Fringe, opening the festival with their upbeat and energetic performance.

Alongside the performances, the purpose of our trip was also further study, which extended our stay up to 3 weeks in the blazing July heat. The 16 Dojo members travelled up & down the country, having lessons with expert taiko instructors, meeting legendary taiko performers, watching & studying an array of inspirational taiko groups and visiting taiko organisations.

Our first port of call was of course Kurumaya Sensei's Dojo in Fukui, where the Dojo members learned the importance of the preparation of the mind for playing, through Zazen meditation. Another crucial lesson learned was the enjoyment of practicing the repetitive & hypnotic jiuchi base rhythm.

Contrasting Kurumaya Sensei's focus on the mental & spiritual side of taiko, with Hiroshi Motofuji in Tokyo we learned more about anatomy and how to manipulate our bones, muscles and tendons in order to make our bodies work as perpetual motion machines, so as to create the biggest sound from the smallest effort.

We also had a special masterclass with the expert of the Miyake style of playing, Tsumura Sensei, who shared with us not only his thorough explanation of Miyake technique, but also his very physical and practical style of teaching. In the 6 hour day of practicing Miyake, we really got to grips with learning with our bodies, not with our brains.

Amongst meeting so many taiko players & teachers, we had the great honour of meeting one of the legends of taiko – Seido Kobayashi Sensei – who as the leader of the Tokyo group "Oedo Sukeroku" was instrumental in developing taiko as a modern performing art in the 1950's.

We visited the two top taiko factories in Japan: Miyamoto Unosuke and Asano Daiko factory, shop & museum, where we had a personalised tour of the factory.

Our study trip also encompassed a visit to the Tenjin Matsuri festival in Osaka, where taiko drums have been played in a variety of ways for hundreds of years. We witnessed a traditional Shinto ceremony using a huge taiko drum, taiko drums used on boats on the river, flutes and taiko drums carried and played as accompaniment to the lion dance, and 130 year-old hypnotic festival music performed on atarigane bells and drum, accompanied by a unique dance as an offering to the dragon god, praying for protection. It was a truly spectacular Matsuri festival, and by participating in the melee of the festival, the Dojo members learned how traditional taiko originated in the festivals and ceremonies.

It was a very full and exciting trip. The main lesson learned in the study trip was how much more there was to learn, and how broad & deep the world of taiko really is. It also re-invigorated our desire to learn & to continue exploring this wonderful art-form. Long live taiko!



VACANCY FOR ADMINISTRATOR

Mugenkyo Taiko Drummers, based in rural location south of Glasgow seeks to appoint an arts administrator to join our hard-working team.

The role is wide-ranging, encompassing many aspects of working within a busy professional touring company and educational organisation.

Applicants must be self-motivated, highly organised, with excellent communication skills.

For a full application pack, contact:
MTD@taiko.co.uk / 01357 522 008

NEW-FORMAT INTRODUCTORY WEEKENDS AT THE DOJO

Our new introductory weekend workshops have been proving to be hugely popular, both with brand new participants, and also with many Dojo returnees coming back to experience different styles of playing, including a short introduction to the Odaiko big drum. The November workshop filled up instantly, so book soon to join in!

Dates: Sat 17 / Sun 18 November - fully booked
Sat 20 / Sun 21 April 2013

Cost: £180 non-residential
(contact us for residential rates)

For further details: 01357 522 008 / info@taiko.co.uk



TAIKO ALBA COURSE & PERFORMANCE PROJECT

Taiko Alba is an exciting new project for 16-25 year olds in central Scotland - an opportunity to learn taiko with Mugenkyo, and perform as part of a festival or concert.

Thanks to funding received from Creative Scotland, the taster sessions and course are completely free of charge to participants. The first project in Edinburgh has already begun, and will culminate in a performance with us by the participants at the Edinburgh Mela festival on Saturday 1 September. Three more projects will take place over the course of the next year: in Glasgow, East Kilbride and either Stirling or Livingston. If you are interested in finding out more, please contact us: 01357 522 008 / info@taiko.co.uk

GLASGOW & EDINBURGH COURSES

Learn to play the taiko drums in a 7-week course, leading to a performance at the Dojo. The next Glasgow course starts on Wed 5 September, with both introductory & follow-on courses. The next Edinburgh course will begin in October. For further details: 01357 522 008 / info@taiko.co.uk

MAIL ORDER MERCHANDISE



MUGENKYO DVD'S

"CELEBRATION"

Our last DVD, celebrating our 15th Anniversary concert, featuring special guests Lale Sayoko & original members of Mugenkyo Liz Walters & Mark Alcock. Includes a bonus live CD.

"ONE VIBRATION LIVE IN CONCERT"

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



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 stompers & bamboo flute, plus bonus CD-rom.



"MUGENKYO"

Recorded in 1997.
Pure energy music!

DOJO T-SHIRT

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



FRONT:
Mugen Taiko
Dojo logo

BACK: Large Japanese
calligraphy drum
symbol by Zen priest

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~~ £10

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

MUGENKYO DVD's

"Celebration" ~~£18~~ £15 _____

"One Vibration" ~~£12~~ £10 _____

DOJO T-SHIRT ~~£12~~ £15 _____ 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.

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