

the
KODŌ
beat

鼓童



Shinichi Sogo - the centre's main man - in a rare moment of quiet in the Taiko Hall

The Sado Island Taiko Centre

High on the Ogi Peninsula, not 500 metres from Kodo village and overlooking picturesque Mano Bay is the *Sado Island Taiko Centre*. This beautiful wooden two story building, occupying 671 square metres, was built by the city of Sado and was completed in November using wood entirely from the island. Since April, 2007 the *Kodo Cultural Foundation* has taken on the programming for an

initial two year term and has staffed the facility with long-time Kodo player *Shinichi Sogo*. His assistant is *Hirofumi Uenoyama*, a native islander and life-long *Onidaiko* demon dance drummer who returned to Sado to take on the position.

In looking for ways to stimulate cultural interaction among Sado Islanders themselves and visitors alike, Sado City created this space in part to

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tap into Kodo's unique experience in the world of taiko and to create a venue where that experience could be shared all year round. Still very much in its larval stage, it is hoped that this will become a place where the whole range of Sado's rich tapestry of traditional culture can be fostered and exchanged.

The facilities include a two story 234 square metre purpose-built cedar-floored taiko space equipped with 20 *okedo* drums on stands. There is also an *Odaiko* which may be used with permission under supervision. Other drums may also be provided upon request depending on availability.

15 minutes by car from the port of Ogi (and even closer to a wonderful sandy beach) there are only two houses in taiko-hearing distance and both belong to Kodo members, so you can bang away without upsetting the neighbours. From its first and second story verandas the light-filled building commands a sweeping panorama of the Sea of Japan with among the best views of the sunset on Sado. There is also a gallery featuring rotating exhibitions related to taiko and traditional arts, a kitchen and tatami-matted meeting rooms available for a minimal extra charge.



Great view of Mano Bay from the 2nd floor balcony ... even on a rainy day.

The current programme is an introductory one and half hour workshop held **T u e s d a y s** through **S u n d a y s** from 9 - 5 pm. These are available to

groups from 5 to 50 participants. The cost - including instructor - is ¥2,000 each, with a reduced rate for groups larger than 30 people. The workshop is a very basic introduction to the joys of taiko and Shin has found that even the most unenthusiastic participants at the start have come away wanting to play more. The programme will typically begin with a very brief introduction to the taiko, then right away it's time to work up a sweat on the drums using games and other techniques developed over the years of Kodo's experience in teaching taiko around the world. You won't be taught any set Kodo performance pieces, but rather the sheer pleasure of playing the taiko. Shin will adjust the workshop according the needs of each group as he watches them play.

The response has been overwhelming. This June alone thirty different groups took part, and he has only just begun. Because of the centre's popularity you should look at **m a k i n g** reservations 2 or 3 weeks in advance. There are no sleep-over facilities at the centre but there is a wide range of good inns in the area.



Assistant Hirofumi Uenoyama (Ue chan) & Shin-no-suke

If your group would like to arrange a drumming getaway in these uniquely beautiful and taiko-sympathetic surroundings you can rent the hall and drums without an instructor for a whole day, weekend or longer (depending on availability) for ¥1,000 an hour. Bring your own drums too if you like, and find out why Kodo chose Sado Island as its home.

For more information and reservations contact :

Sado Island Taiko Centre
tel: (in Japanese) 0259-86-2320
e-mail: info@sadotaiken.jp
website: www.sadotaiken.jp

20 Years of Earth Celebration

New York based Japanese flute and Jazz musician and former Kodo player Kaoru Watanabe returns to Sado to direct this year's gala 20th anniversary edition of E.C.. Here are some thoughts on his approach to the project.

This being the 20th Anniversary of Earth Celebration, Kodo will be digging deep into its roots while taking some bold steps forward. Throughout the three days of concerts, Kodo will be exploring both new pieces written by members, re-exploring pieces that have been in Kodo's repertoire since the group's inception and continuing the tradition of cross cultural, startlingly symbiotic collaboration that has so defined Earth Celebration over the years.

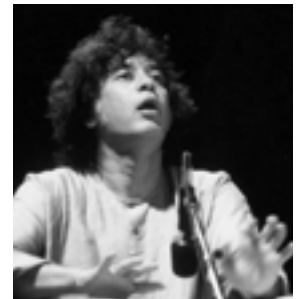
A Kodo performance will always be filled with references to the many influences that have helped shape the group over the years. For this 20th anniversary event, many of these references will be made literal when Kodo invites some of these mentors to perform together on stage. For instance the venerable *Sato Takako*, master of Okinawan classical dance, who - through artistic guidance and moral support - has been instrumental in Kodo's development and growth for three decades. She will be joined by her troupe of musicians and dancers to revisit the acclaimed '*Shimamusubi*' (binding of islands) concert held in 2005 to commemorate the many bonds between Okinawa and Sado.

Also, the true originators of an often-imitated style of drumming, the *Miyake Island Geino Doshi Kai* will be joining Kodo. It will be a challenge and an honor for Kodo to try to match the depth with which these guardians of a generations-old tradition perform.

Kodo will be also joined by the estimable artists *Yosuke Yamashita*, *Zakir Hussein*, *Giovanni Hidalgo*, and *Tamango* - all repeat collaborators from both the near and distant past - and in their first appearances with Kodo, singer *Mio Matsuda* and *sarangi* player *Dilshad Khan*, both young musicians with old souls who share Kodo's passion for expanding their musical horizons. Each of these artists are masters of their improvisation-rich musical tradition, able to create layers of rhythm and melody, to evoke an endless myriad of emotions and moods, and hold an intimate understanding of the complexities and joys of fearless

collaboration. As artistic director I feel the less I interfere musically with these artists, the more the music will flower and blossom. There is an abundance of real drama in their bodies and minds - theatrics become superfluous.

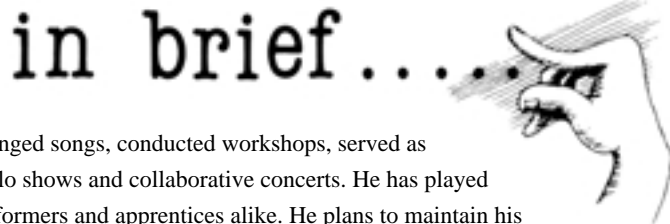
Finally, in pursuit of the original dream of creating a village of artisans and craftsmen, Kodo members have for the first time built their own taiko in Kodo Village. The knots and 'imperfections' of the tree have been intentionally left in the body of the drum so that the roots of the tree physically evoke the roots of the drum - the roots of Kodo's music. For the first time these elegantly gnarled taiko will be struck on stage, ringing the sounds of the past, the present and future.



*This year's guests include:
(from upper left)
Takako Sato, Miyake Island
Geino Doshi Kai, Yosuke
Yamashita, Zakir Hussein,
Giovanni Hidalgo,
Tamango and Mio Matsuda*

A Kodo player since 1987, *Ryutaro Kaneko* has decided to leave Kodo in September in order to focus on his own work as a solo artist. Ryutaro has long been one of the group's central and most popular artists. In

addition to performing, Ryutaro has composed and arranged songs, conducted workshops, served as artistic and musical director, performed in numerous solo shows and collaborative concerts. He has played a key role in the training and development of Kodo performers and apprentices alike. He plans to maintain his ties with Kodo as a taiko instructor and advisor. At this year's Earth Celebration, Ryutaro will take his final bow as a member of Kodo. He sends his warmest thanks for all your continued and enthusiastic support. Happy trails Ryutaro.



upcoming performances

Amaterasu - Kodo with Tamasaburo Bando

Aug. 4-6 Kabukiza, Tokyo

<http://www.shochiku.co.jp/play/kabukiza/theater/>

Earth Celebration 2007

August 17-19, Sado Island

Shiroyama Concerts

Aug. 17 Kodo

18 Kodo, Zakir Hussain, Okinawan Dance

19 'Celebration'; Kodo, Yosuke Yamashita,

Zakir Hussain, Giovanni Hidalgo, Tamango,

Mio Matsuda

Mini-Workshops

As of June 30th, we are accepting applications for the Ogi Okesa Folk Dance, Kasuga Ondeko and Taiko Making workshops on first come, first served basis.

Other Events

Hideaki Masago Exhibition, EC 20th Anniversary Exhibition, Sashiko and Sakiori Exhibition, Kodo Village Open House, Sado Island Taiko Centre and Ogi Peninsula Tour, Fringe Events, Flea Market

EC Pre-Event Noh Theatre Concert Series

Performers: Reijiro Tsumura (Noh), Tadashi Ogasawara (Kyogen), Motofumi Yamaguchi, Ryutaro Kaneko (Kodo) and others

Aug. 11 Kasuga Shrine Noh Theatre, Aikawa

Aug. 12 Suwa Shrine Noh Theatre, Ryotsu

Aug. 13 Daizen Shrine Noh Theatre, Mano

Aug. 14 Noh and Kyogen workshops

EC tickets are on sale now.

http://www.kodo.or.jp/ec/index_e.html

One Earth Tour Japan

September

17 Saitama Konosu-shi Bunka Centre 048-540-0540

18 Gunma Tatebayashi-shi Bunka Kaikan 0277-53-3133

20 Chiba Ichikawa-shi Bunka Kiakan 047-379-5111

21 Tokyo Shibuya C.C.Lemon Hall 03-5468-3282

22 Saitama Tokorozawa Shimin Bunka Centre 04-2998-7777

24 Kanagawa Atsugi-shi Bunka Kaikan 046-224-9999

26 Sagami-hara-shi, Kanagawa

Green Hall Sagamiono 042-742-9999

30 Hokkaido Tomakomai Shimin Kaikan 090-1522-9360

October

2 Hokkaido Sapporo Concert Hall Kitara 011-241-5161

6 Hokkaido Kushiro Shimin Bunka Kaikan 0154-22-3529

8 Hokkaido Nemuro-shi Sogo Bunka Kaikan 0153-23-4705

10 Shari-cho, Hokkaido

Yume Hall Shiretoko Bunka Hall 090-3111-7106

13 Hokkaido Monbetsu Shimin Kaikan 01582-4-2416

16 Hokkaido Asahikawa Shimin Bunka Kaikan 011-241-5161
 23 Aomori Aomori Shimin Hall 022-217-3955
 30 Sendai-shi, Miyagi
 Miyagi Kenmin Kaikan 022-225-8641

November

1 Fukushima Koriyama Shimin Bunka Centre 024-934-2288

3 Gunma Kasakakeno Bunka Hall

4 Tochigi Nasunogahara Harmony Hall

6 Miyagi Kesenuma Shimin Kaikan 0226-22-6616

7 Iwate Esashi Taiiku Bunka Kaikan Sasara Hall

0197-31-1607

8 Akita Akita Kenmin Kaikan 022-217-3955

One Earth Caravan - "Houraikitan"

Kodo and Kyogen collaboration

Oct. 28 Gifu Hashima-shi Bunka Centre

Oct. 31 Tokyo Bunkyo Civic Hall

Nov. 4 Sado Kanai Noh Theatre

Please check our website for more information.

December Concert Series

Dec. 1 Sado Amusement Sado

4,5 Niigata Niigata Kenmin Kaikan

9 Fukuoka Kitakyushu Geijutsu Gekijo

11 Hiroshima Hiroshima Yubin Chokin Hall 082-249-1218

13 Okayama Okayama Shimin Kaikan

15,16 Osaka Osaka Kosei Nenkin Kaikan

19 Nagoya Aichi Kosei Nenkin Kaikan

21-24 Tokyo Bunkyo Civic Hall

Hiroshima concert ticket sales start on July 14 and there will be no *Friend's of Kodo* advance ticket reservation service for this show. More details will be available on our website in August.

Notice to Kodo Beat Readers

Kodo Beat is a newsletter focusing on the activities of Kodo and is sent quarterly to members of *Friends of Kodo*. *Friends of Kodo* is dedicated to bringing Kodo closer to our audience and fellow taiko enthusiasts. Membership is available to all. As well as receiving *Kodo Beat*, members also get special advance ticket reservations for selected concerts in Japan, the chance to buy original goods available only to them, and selected discounts on a range of Kodo goodies. For further information about these offers contact us or check our web site.

For those readers who only want the newsletter, an on-line version is available on the Internet.

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