

the KODŌ beat

鼓童

Kodo Villager's Event

Kodo Beat talks to Kodo Managing Director Takao Aoki about this spring's work day at Kodo Village.



Takeshi, Kazuko & Ryunosuke Arai pitch in en famille with the firewood.

pictures by Chieko & Johnny Wales

Every year in the first week of April the entire Kodo family gather for a day of communal work at *Kodo Village*. It isn't very often that we can all be here together. The only people who actually live at Kodo Village are single members who stay in the residential building. Once you marry you have to find lodgings of your own somewhere else on the island. The apprentices live down at the *Apprentice Centre* on Sado's Southern coast, and that's about an hour away by car. The playing



Masami Miyazaki & Yumi Nakamura climb the hill towards Izumi Tei.

members are on tour – either abroad or throughout Japan – 9 months of the year, so you can see we really have to make an effort to find ourselves all in the same place. Timing-wise, this seems the best moment as the members are just back from



Eiichi Saito shows his form splitting wood. He has a wood stove at home so he's a bit of an expert.

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The Ikeno's keeping a watchful eye on Kodo's wrangling.



their overseas tour, and it's when the whole troupe gets together for rehearsals in Kodo's fundamentals. Also the new apprentices come to Sado on April 1st, so this becomes a perfect opportunity to introduce themselves to the regular Kodo members. It's like the real start to Kodo's year.

We begin the day with self-introductions at 9 o'clock. Then we set to work. We break up into groups. This year our cow *Kikuko* (see KB 84) and her friend *Fuyumi* are visiting for the first time so we have one group looking after them for the day. Another large group gathers wood that has already been cut for burning in the woodstove in the dining room. Another group splits and stacks logs. We won't be cutting trees today because we want it to be a quiet time for the new members to go through the woods and get acquainted with the lay of the land and to see what flowers are blooming. Right now there are some quite rare *yukiwariso* (primroses) to see. This land was originally used for growing trees for charcoal, so it's mostly hardwood, Japanese oak, and the like. We can burn pretty much anything except pine which exudes pitch and can cause problems with the stove. We only have one stove at the moment so we can easily provide



Kikuko & Fuyumi visiting Izumi Tei, the 200 year old (originally thatched) Sado farmhouse rebuilt at the village and used as an all-purpose space.



Yoko Fujimoto chops carrots and Junko Susaki stirs the curry pot with other members of today's Kitchen Patrol.

enough wood for our own needs. With these numbers working we put away a year's supply in one day.

When we first moved here no one had been looking after the land so it was very overgrown. We had to clear out a lot of the bush, and then we had to consider what to do with the wood we had cut down. We also wanted to lessen our dependance on oil where possible. There

is also the idea of the traditional hearth, a place where the family can gather in warmth and comfort and spend time together talking. There is something about staring into a fire that encourages you to slow down, unwind and engage in idle banter, to communicate.

Today the cows will be heading back at about 3 and we will finish at 4 or 5 o'clock. Every year we do different kinds of work. Last year we invited our drum makers the *Asanos*, and had an initiation ceremony of the 2 *odaiko* we made ourselves, so every year tends to have a different theme. This has been a beautiful day, a beautiful start to another year. This is really an important event in Kodo's calendar I think. Even the smell of manure is comforting. What has the world come to when people think nothing of the smell of a zillion cars, but object to the smell of cows? People need to reevaluate their priorities, don't you think?



Minako Goto & the Chain Gang

Two old guys keepin' busy, Yoshikazu Fujimoto and KB editor Johnny Wales

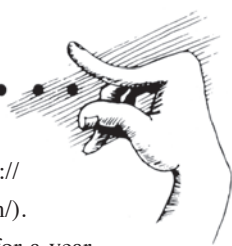




Yoko Fujimoto's long-awaited solo album *Morisa Komorisa*, a collection of lullabies (see KB 84) is now

available at Kodo Online Store (www.kodo.or.jp/store/), CD Baby (<http://cdbaby.com/cd/yokofujimoto>) and Amazon.com (<http://www.amazon.com/>).

in brief...



The *Sado Island Taiko Centre* next to *Kodo Village* has been open for a year,

over which time it has seen 10,000 visitors. A booming success.

Former Kodo member and now freelance musician in New York, *Kaoru Watanabe* appeared with his parents, distinguished musicians with the St. Louis Symphony, father *Haruka*, and harpist *Ayako*. *The Trio Watanabe* performed concerts in Tokyo and Sado from their new CD of original compositions called *Song of Shinobué*.

upcoming performances

Aikawa Kozan Matsuri

July 27 Aikawa, Sado Island 0259-86-3630

Earth Celebration 2008 Aug. 22-24, Sado Island Shiroshima Concerts

Aug. 22 Kodo

23 'Brazil Night' Olodum with Kodo

24 7Shukusai' Kodo & Olodum

Mini-Workshops and Lectures

As of June 30th, we are accepting applications for the Ogi Okesa and Taiko Making workshops and Shishi Odori, Brazilian Percussion and Sado Demon Drum lectures on first come, first served basis.

EC Pre-Events

Sado Takigi Noh Theatre Three-Night Performance Series

Aug. 19 Kasuga Shrine Noh Theatre, Aikawa

20 Daizen Shrine Noh Theatre, Mano

21 Suwa Shrine Noh Theatre, Ryotsu

EC tickets are on sale now.

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

One Earth Tour Japan

September

13 Ibaraki	Yuki Shimin Bunka Centre	0296-33-2001
14 Ibaraki	Omitama-shi Ogawa Bunka Centre	0299-58-0921
15 Saitama	Saitama-shi Bunka Centre	048-866-4600
17 Tokyo	Machida Shimin Hall	042-728-4300
18 Saitama	Pastoral KAZO	0480-62-3001
20 Kanagawa	Hadano-shi Bunka Kaikan	0463-81-1211
21 Shizuoka	Numazu Shimin Bunka Centre	055-931-8999
23 Nagano	Karuizawa Oga Hall	0267-42-0055
24 Nagano	Susaka-shi Bunka Kaikan	026-245-1800
27 Okayama	Kurashiki Shimin Kaikan	086-224-6066
28 Tottori	Tottori Shimin Kaikan	0857-24-9411

October

1 Hyogo	Yabu Shiritsu Viva Hall	079-664-1141
3 Mie	Inabe-shi Hokusei Simin Kaikan	0594-72-2200
4 Shiga	Oumihachiman-shi Bunka Kaikan	0748-33-8111
5 Kyoto	Kyoto Kaikan Daiichi Hall	075-211-0261
9 Hiroshima	Mihara-shi Geijutsu Bunka Centre	0848-67-6015
10 Yamaguchi	Starpia Kudamatsu	0834-31-9300
11 Shimane	Yuyu Furusato Kaikan	0855-72-0001
14 Toyama	Cross Land Oyabe	0766-68-0932
17 Yamanashi	Tokyo Electron Nirasaki Bunka Hall	0551-20-1155

One Earth Tour South America

October

27 Brasilia, Brazil	Teatro Nacional
29 Salvador, Brazil	Teatro Castro Alves (Indoor)
30 Kodo with Olodum	
Salvador, Brazil	Teatro Castro Alves (Outdoor)

November

1 Ipatinga, Brazil	Usiminas Theatre
4,5 Buenos Aires, Argentina	Teatro Coliseo
8,9 Rio de Janeiro, Brazil	Vivo Hall
11-15 Sao Paulo, Brazil	Teatro Cultura Artistica
16 Sao Paulo, Brazil	Open Air (To be announced)

December Concert Series

Dec. 2 Sado	Amusement Sado
5,6 Niigata	Niigata Kenmin Kaikan
11 Tokyo	Sumida Triphony Hall, Special concert with New Japan Philharmonic Orchestra
13,14 Osaka	NHK Osaka Hall
16 Nagoya	Aichi-ken Geijutsu Gekijo
17 Shizuoka	Act City Hamamatsu
19-21 Tokyo	Bunkyo Civic Hall

Attention members of Friends of Kodo

Advance ticket reservations for December Concert Series will begin in summer. We will be in touch with details.

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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