

Shogo Yoshii Appearing in *Babel* with Cast from 14 Nations

Kodo's Shogo Yoshii has set off solo on a trip to Belgium to join a cast of 18 dancers and musicians from 14 countries around the globe. Entitled *Babel*, all eyes are on this production directed and choreographed by internationally-acclaimed artists Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui and Damien Jalet. UK visual artist Antony Gormley joins the esteemed directors and cast to provide original stage sets.

Shogo Yoshii on *Babel*:

Overcoming various obstacles

"The title of this production is *Babel*, taken from the story of the Tower of Babel from the *Book of Genesis* in the *Old Testament*. Legend holds that in a time when the whole world communicated through a single language, the people gathered to build a tower that would reach the heavens, and this angered God. In punishment for their hubris, God created different languages, and shattered their means of mutual understanding. This story offers an explanation for why we now have trouble trying to understand other cultures, and how language "barriers" came about.

The performers in this production have a total of 14 different nationalities. Actually, when we

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New Kodo full stage members Mariko Omi, Yosuke Kusa, and Eri Uchida

Kodo Junior Members Advance to Full Stage *Apprentice Centre Graduates Also Advance*



New Kodo Apprentice Centre graduates Nobuyuki Fujimoto (staff) and Akira Takahashi (performer)

This spring, junior member performers Eri Uchida, Mariko Omi, and Yosuke Kusa all advanced to become full stage members. Also, graduating from the Kodo Apprentice Centre late January, Akira Takahashi (performer) and Nobuyuki Fujimoto (staff) joined the Kodo team as junior members. Congratulations!



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Babel

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began rehearsals, I really felt the difficulty of several barriers. The biggest one was of course the language. It took all my effort to decipher the subtle nuances the artistic director was asking for, and often I couldn't fully explain my own ideas in my own words. I wasn't alone. I heard Italian, French, Flemish, Hindi, and Turkish all flying about, as we all tried to speak and be understood.

But the language barrier wasn't the only hurdle. We all experienced a similar phenomenon with musical scales and rhythms. I had a really tough time trying to play Turkish music on my *kokyu* (Japanese string instrument). The tuning was a riddle, and I kept saying "Hang on, hang on" as I tried to figure it out.



And rhythm was tough, too. The Italian percussionist wrote some sheet music, and the Indian musicians added their own vocalization of the rhythm in their own language. When they saw the quarter notes, they asked if it

was "dah" or "daa." Our instruments and music are structured differently, so they are difficult to combine. Then we would play it all together and end up saying "Is this interesting musically?" The fundamental differences in our intuitions would appear and disappear as we worked.

The more I learned about my colleagues, the more I could see the differences between us. I wondered how to break down the barriers between us...like in the legend, I pondered the challenge of trying to have a broader world view. But as time went on, I learned to enjoy these inherent differences instead.

In the *Old Testament*, the Tower of Babel was portrayed as a symbol of extravagance and decadence. But the "tower" that we dancers and musicians from 14 countries are trying to build with our various cultures in this production is one that overflows with sympathy and understanding. In the end I decided it was not really a tower at all, but more of a wide-open structure, perhaps a bit like a globe."

Babel, Featuring Shogo Yoshii (Kodo)

April – December 2010

Touring in Europe

World Premiere this Month

April 27-30 Cirque Royal,

Brussels, Belgium

[Click here for tickets](#)

(Tour dates TBA later this month on the [Kodo website](#) and SNS)

Artistic Direction

Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui

& Damien Jalet

Stage Art

Antony Gormley

Dancers from:

Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, Japan, Morocco, Norway, Portugal, South Africa, Sweden, UK, USA

Musicians from:

Italy, India, Japan



Kodo's Shogo Yoshii in rehearsal with the multinational troupe of "Babel"

Kodo One Earth Tour 2010 Europe Feedback

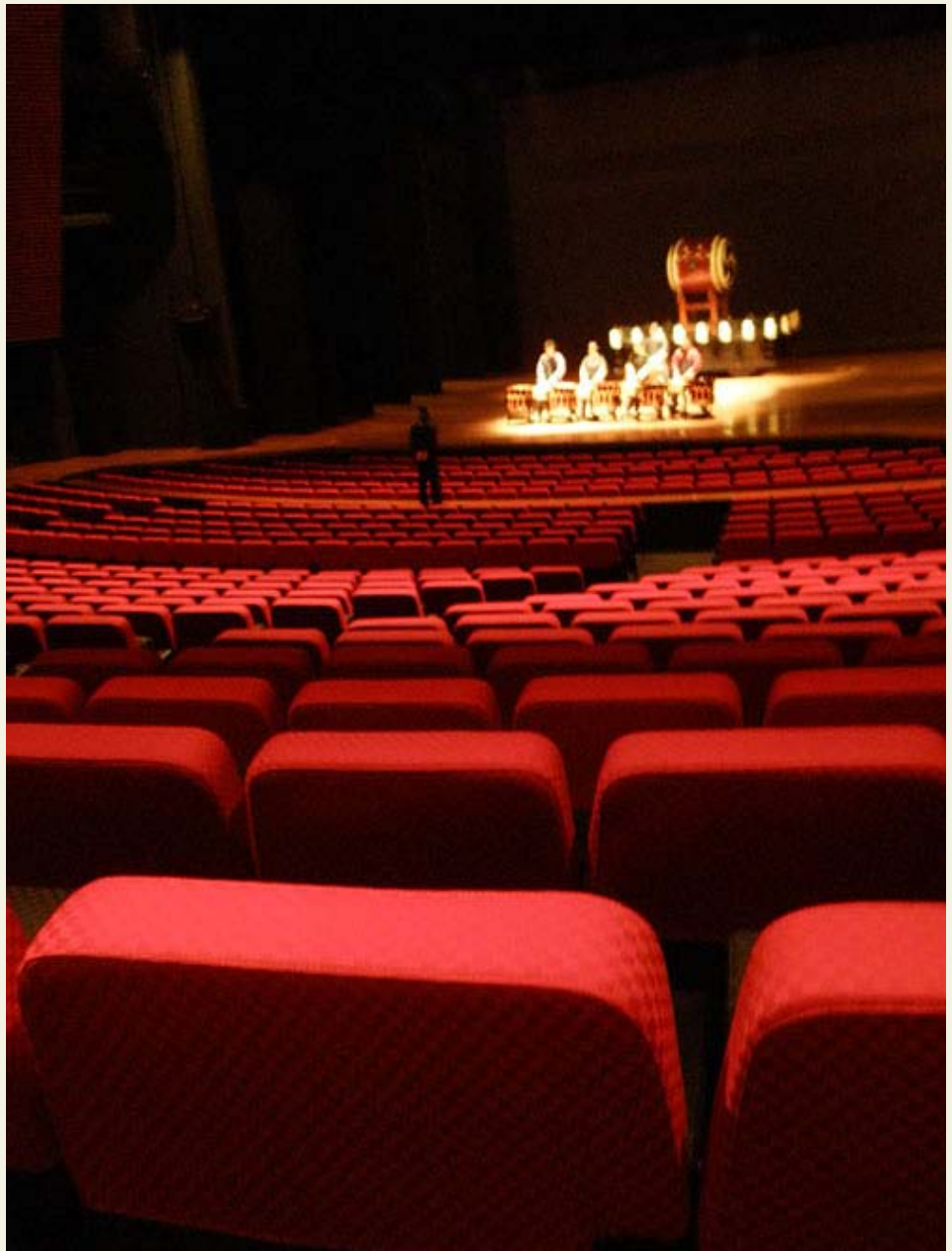
The *One Earth Tour* just got back from Europe. Thank you so much to everyone who came to see the performances. For those who missed out, we'd like to share some of the comments from the audience about the show, along with a couple of snapshots from the road. And Kodo will be touring in Europe again in the fall. Schedules will be announced soon on our website.

Feedback from the Tour

"I just got back home after seeing your show this evening in Plymouth. Absolutely amazing, really. Thank you for coming out for the audience at the end of the show and letting us clap with you - it really was a brilliant feeling, and I hope you were able to feel it too."

"We went to see Kodo in Basingstoke last night. This must be our 12th time seeing the tour and this year was just as good as ever, if not better! A nice variation and some of the routine choreography seem impossibly hard but fantastic to watch. We only wish Kodo would do more than one date in Basingstoke (yes we are greedy :)) It was a shame not to see Yoshikazu Fujimoto this year but the rest of the team were superb as always, including the new members (first time for us anyway). Come back soon!!!"

"Went to see Kodo for the first time on March 5th at Warwick University. Absolutely mind blowing - I have become an instant fan and have already purchased two DVDs and CDs -- but nothing comes close to the real thing. Am looking forward to when you come back to the Midlands to see you again. I really enjoyed all the performances as they are so varied but especially liked "Monochrome" and the comedy sketch - which was not what I was expecting and a real treat.



Kodo performers play to a quiet venue during a sound check in Europe

Look forward to your next tour..."

"I was *boggled* by Basingstoke. Come back soon !"

"Thank you for a great show at Dublin on Sunday! It was definitely worth flying there from Finland to see you (we weren't able to go to your Helsinki concert, so the only option was to follow you abroad...). We sat in the middle of the second row and it felt like being surrounded by the music. I've never experienced anything as intense as that!"

"We have just come back from a wonderful mesmerising night watching Kodo in Leicester - UK, as part of your 2010 Kodo Tour. Stunning performance from the entire team. Top marks. Can not wait for the next tour!"

"Well, last night my daughter fell asleep in my arms during that piece. It must be said that she'd had a long day already, did have hearing protection (this was her first 'loud' concert), but still, she just dozed off. Thank you for a wonderful evening!"

Sado Island Taiko Centre (*Tatako-kan*) Makes Finding a Workshop Easy

From March 6 (Sat) to November 21 (Sun), on weekends and public holidays *Taiko Encounter* workshops will be available at designated times, making it easy to drop in for some fun with the drums.

These workshops are designed for people ages 6 to adult who have never played taiko before to have a go, and also for taiko lovers to play during their stay on Sado. A great hands-on way to make your visit to Sado Island all the more memorable. Families are very welcome, so bring your kids!

Details

Period

Mar 6 (Sat) to Nov 21 (Sun),
on weekends (Sat/Sun) and
public holidays, 3 times a day

Start times

10:00, 13:30, 15:00

Note: During summer vacation,
a fourth Saturday session will
start at 17:00. (Jul 17-Aug 31.)

Workshop Length

Approx. 1 hour

Fee

Adults 1500 yen
Ages 6-12 800 yen

Capacity

25 people per session

Reservation Deadline

By 17:00 the day before you
wish to take part. For inquiries,
[please email us](#).

Please note that these are not
private workshops, so please be
prepared to drum with others
in the same session.



Kodo Performances 2010

Coming up this year

ONE EARTH TOUR 2010

May-June: Japan - Kansai (Hyogo, Shiga, Wakayama), Chubu (Gifu, Shizuoka), Kanto (Chiba, Tokyo, Saitama, Tochigi), Tohoku (Fukushima, Iwate), Hokkaido, etc.

September: Japan - Kanto (Tokyo, Kanagawa, Gunma, Chiba, etc)

October-November: Europe - Netherlands, United Kingdom, Germany, etc.

SCHOOL WORKSHOP-PERFORMANCE TOUR

May: Nagano City

October-November: Planned for Kansai & Kanto areas

AIKAWA KOZAN MATSURI

July 25 (Sun): Aikawa, Sado Island

EARTH CELEBRATION 2010

August 20 (Fri) – 22 (Sun): Ogi, Sado Island

Shiroyama Concerts with special guests Corsican polyphonic singing ensemble [A Filetta](#)

SPECIAL PERFORMANCES IN JAPAN

July: Kodo [Dadan](#) - Niigata, Chiba, Saitama, Kumamoto, Shizuoka, Aichi

SPECIAL PERFORMANCES ABROAD

June-July: Kodo in [Kaguyahime](#) Opéra Bastille, Paris, France

September Kodo at Rencontres de Chants Polyphoniques de Calvi Festival, Corsica, France

SOLO PROJECTS

Shogo Yoshii in [Babel](#) by Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui, Damien Jalet and Antony Gormley - Europe

Yoshie Sunahata in Akram Khan's [Gnosis](#) - Europe, Middle East, Taiwan, Australia

KODO DECEMBER CONCERTS

A compilation of the best of 2010, this show will set the tone for Kodo as the group transitions into its 30th anniversary year.

December: Sado, Niigata, Nagoya, Osaka, Sendai, Tokyo

2011: Kodo will celebrate its milestone 30th anniversary. We are planning tours in North America and throughout Japan next year.



At the Sado Island Taiko Centre, playing the taiko is serious fun



It helps to have great instructors too, like Kodo's Shin'ichi Sogo

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On Sado Island, small villages celebrate
spring with demon dancing

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