



KODŌ eNEWS

Issue 34

October 2012

In Japan, Australia and Canada

The “[Kodo One Earth Tour 2012: Legend](#)” is currently on tour in Western Japan and heading to Kyushu. The fall tour finishes in Chiba on October 23. In November, many of the cast and some of our [distinguished members](#) will join Tamasaburo Bando for [special performances](#) at Kanamaru-za in Kagawa Prefecture, which have already sold out. The “Legend” tour continues in Japan in December and travels to the [U.S.A.](#) in the new year!

[Kodo and TaikOz](#) have completed their six-city, eight-performance Australia tour. Featuring TaikOz’s founding member and world-class shakuhachi player, former Sado no Kuni Ondekoza member Riley Lee, the tour was a great success and both ensembles have forged a stronger relationship with each other. We will feature a tour report in the next issue of eNews, so please stay tuned. Here are a couple of reviews from the tour: from [The Australian](#) newspaper and [Glam Adelaide](#).

Eight of the Australia cast members traveled from Sydney to Montreal and are currently in rehearsals for our appearance in ballet performance “[Kaguyahime: The Moon Princess](#)” in Canada. For an interview with Gradimir Pankov, Artistic Director

of Les Grands Ballets, and more on Kaguyahime in Montreal, please see page 2.

In mid-October, Yoshikazu Fujimoto, Chieko Kojima, Yoko Fujimoto and Motofumi Yamaguchi will begin the final series of [this year’s special Kodo concerts on Sado Island](#). They will be joined by Hanayui member Mitsue Kinjo. We hope you will join them on Sado Island to enjoy the performance and all the harvest season has to offer.

In this issue, we feature a special exclusive-to-Kodo eNews report on Earth Celebration 2012 by Johnny Wales. We hope you’ll join us next summer on Sado Island, so please pencil in the dates now: Earth Celebration 2013 is August 23-25.



The audience join Kodo & TaikOz for a curtain call portrait at the sold-out Hamer Hall performance in Melbourne, Australia.



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“Kaguyahime” with Opéra national de Paris, 2010 Photo: Christophe Pelé / Opéra national de Paris

Kaguyahime in Canada

This month Montreal-based ballet company Les Grands Ballets Canadiens will hold performances of “Kaguyahime: The Moon Princess,” which will feature eight Kodo performers. “Kaguyahime” is a legendary ballet production that fuses music by composer Maki Ishii with choreography by Jiří Kylián. Two years have passed since Kodo took part in “Kaguyahime” performances with the Paris Opera Ballet on the Opera Bastille stage and we are currently rehearsing in Montreal for the new season in Canada, which begins on October 11th. We hope people will travel from all over North America and beyond for these special performances.

We asked Gradimir Pankov, artistic director of Les Grands Ballets, some questions about the production of “Kaguyahime” in Montreal.

From your point of view, as the artistic director of Les Grand Ballets and the Kaguyahime production, please briefly describe the production for people

who will see it for the first time.

Kaguyahime: The Moon Princess presents us with a theatrical event that evokes the ancient past of Japan. I believe Montreal audiences will be moved by the narrative sweep of the piece, the remarkable beauty of the choreography, and the accomplished performances of the dancers and musicians.

How did you first encounter the Kaguyahime production, and how did you become interested in performing this production with his Les Grands Ballets?

I saw the original production of Kaguyahime when it premiered in The Hague. The Nederlands Dans Theater gave an astounding performance, and I immediately started dreaming of mounting my own production. All these years later I am delighted to see that dream come true, and to be producing Jiří Kylián’s wonderful choreography with our dancers here at Les Grand Ballets de Montreal.

What in particular about the Kaguyahime production has intrigued

you the most?

The production successfully incorporates elements of both Eastern and Western cultures, and I am particularly interested in the use of traditional Japanese music. In placing the musicians onstage, in full view of the audience, we highlight the incredible physicality of their performances and the unique beauty of traditional Japanese music. The remarkable compositions and musicianship of the Kodo and Gagaku groups are indispensable to the overall impact of the piece.

What do you aim to achieve with the new Canadian version of “Kaguyahime” with Les Grand Ballets?

Each company is unique, and I believe Les Grands Ballets will leave its own stamp on the piece. Kaguyahime will be one of the defining events of the cultural season in Montreal, and I expect the production will create something of the same sense of excitement and enchantment that I experienced years ago.

Earth Celebration 2012

A personal view by Johnny Wales

While walking my dog on a very late and icily-cold Spring day this April I found myself wondering ‘Will this winter ever end?’ It was then that I made a promise to myself. ‘No matter how hot it gets this summer’ I muttered under my breath, ‘I will not complain!’ Well this year’s summer on Sado has put my resolution to the test because – after a rainy season that only lasted about a week – we have had a nearly unbroken streak of steamy blue skies. The crescendo of heat seemed to be reached on August 17th, the first day of the 25th anniversary edition of Earth Celebration. Three days of blazing sun, fun, music and dance and – if that wasn’t enough – I met at least two people I expect may become fast friends.

This year the Fringe events all took place on a stage on the grassy lawn in the middle of the Harbour Market, so you didn’t have to trudge back and forth to Kisaki Shrine or further, to the school gym at the other end of town to catch all the action.

Even living here on Sado – an island spoiled in the variety and quality of its produce – it is always a treat to sample the food from around the world you see at EC. Every year on the first day you look for your perennial favourites – and just as you begin to despair that they aren’t here this year – you discover you have a new passion for Korean food. I get to choose whether I want to eat the bento lunch provided by Kodo, or accept lunch money instead, and I always choose the later. I can eat local bento all year round but the 3 days of EC is a once-in-a-year smorgasbord of treats.

Then there is the shopping. It is like an international mini mall landing on our shores. My weakness is the

Kakigori (shaved ice), a traditional Japanese summer sweet that sells like hot cakes in Sado’s summer heat.



Just one of the many food stalls bringing flavours from around the world to our island.

Ten minutes of healing bliss for 1,000 yen. Lucky me, I got over 20 minutes and she actually fixed my long-aching arm.

Thai fishermen’s trousers. They are almost all I wear year round. Having already acquired about 15 pairs of them however – I resisted this time. Feeling a bit guilty I bought the stall’s owner Juichiro and his friends a coffee kakigori shaved ice treat instead. And so the thread of one more personal connection is woven into the tapestry of friendships that is created in the uniquely laid-back atmosphere that is Earth Celebration.

Laid-back for the visitors that is, because behind the scenes everyone at Kodo is working like mad to keep the wheels turning, EC being the most frenetic time of the year for them. My Sado friends who make the kakigori began serving well before noon on the first day and carried on without a break for the next three. If you were looking

for a metric to rate the weather for any given EC you need look no further than the sales figures of the shaved ice stand.

Inevitably Earth Celebration is a time for reunions and farewells too. For two long-time Kodo members this was to be their last hurrah performing with the group, lending every event they appeared in a special poignancy. Ayako Onizawa will be pursuing her studies in dance in Okinawa, and chappa specialist Kazuki Imagai will be leaving the stage to join the stage production staff. Welcomed back – both for the first time in 7 years – was player Akira Nanjo and production staff member Yuko Maeda (Peko chan) who works with young people in devastated Fukushima.

continued on page 4

EC 2012 Gallery



Top left: Takeshi Arai standing by with Kodo's Shishi Odori dancers swelting away before dress rehearsal in the noon sun of Shiroyama.

Top right: The audience awaits the cool evening air and the steaming heat of the show on Shiroyama mountain.

Opposite left: Yasukazu Kano and Takafumi Imaizumi on the new Fringe Stage in the heart of the market

Opposite right: Ayako Onizawa drums a farewell to departing guests, which is her own last performance with Kodo.

Bottom left: Chieko Kojima and Hanayui give a special performance on the Fringe stage.

Bottom right: As sunset approaches everyone lines up at Kisaki Shrine for the climb to the concert venue atop Shiroyama and an evening of music, dance and even a little magic.

continued on page 5



Earth Celebration 2012*continued from page 4*

This year the main concerts were all quite different in feel. Kodo player Shogo Yoshii got the festival off to a rousing start by directing 'Opening Night'. It was loose and brimming with fun and felt more like a matsuri than the usual Kodo concert. The second night was a presentation of 'Dadan' and with its all-male cast is a great departure from the sound and look of traditional Kodo performances. Director Tamasaburo's popularity was reflected in the enormous crowd who packed the mountain green to see it. The third evening featured special guest shamisen master Hiromitsu Agatsuma

who presented a wide range of styles from traditional Tsuagaru folk music to his own set of synthesizer-accompanied fusion and jazz. He and Kodo came together seamlessly for the last part of the concert and would have raised the roof, had there been one.

All the while, between performances, there were over 30 different Fringe groups from all over the world throughout the day. There were also over 10 different workshops from taiko to flute, singing to dance taking place. People were also invited to explore our island home on kayak tours of Sado's southern coast, walking tours of the traditional architecture of the town of Ogi, and even a trip to the

old-growth cedar forest in the northern mountains. I suggest that if you are coming back next year and want to take part in any workshops or tours you keep an eye on this site and pre-register.

It's all over but the memories now, for another year. I know I am not alone in saying how glad I am you made it up here to see us, and for those of you who had as much fun as I did, here's hoping we see you and your friends next year too.

Oh yes, and I didn't complain about the sun, the heat or relentlessly blue skies, not even once.



Top left: Even after the evening concert there is more music and dancing by candlelight at the Yoi no Yunzuru performance. This is also a great time to meet old friends, make new ones over a refreshing drink and swap impressions of this year's event.

Top right: It is always a poignant time to see the ferry take away a boatload of fellow festival goers, back to their lives on the mainland or lands far away. I bet we will see more than a few of them back here again.

Opposite: A large lion (Ojishi) wends its way through the streets of Ogi. Local Sado folk groups can be seen throughout the festival and give guests a taste of our vibrant island culture.

Kodo One Earth Tour 2013: Legend — U.S.A. Tour

Kodo will be touring in the United States of America for two months in early 2013 with our latest performance “Legend” directed by Tamasaburo Bando. It will be our first One Earth Tour outside Japan since our new artistic director took the reigns and we are looking forward to sharing this special production with audiences from coast to coast in the USA.

Tour schedules and box office details are listed on our website and will be updated as information comes to hand. We hope you’ll bring your friends and family and join us for this special performance.

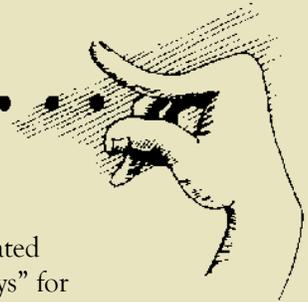
Kodo One Earth Tour 2013: Legend USA Tour February - March:

Nevada, California, Washington, Illinois, Michigan, Minnesota, Iowa, South Carolina, North Carolina, Florida, Ohio, D.C., West Virginia, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Connecticut, New York



Masaru Tsuji & Kenta Nakagome in “Monochrome”

in brief...



Yoshikazu Fujimoto and Chieko Kojima were named as “Japan Cultural Envoys from the Agency for Cultural Affairs” and will both be dispatched abroad in 2013. The Agency for Cultural Affairs names artists, persons of culture, researchers, and people related

to culture as “Japan Cultural Envoys” for a fixed period, and sends them to various places abroad to introduce Japanese culture, improve the image of Japanese culture, and create a network for people of culture and artists. Next year from January 20th through February 20th, Yoshikazu Fujimoto will be dispatched to China and Chieko Kojima to Spain, where they will spend a month holding workshops and demonstrations, etc.



Yoshikazu Fujimoto & Chieko Kojima were named as Japan Cultural Envoys from the Agency for Cultural Affairs in a special ceremony in Tokyo in July.

Concert production staff member Yoshiko Ando has decided to part ways with Kodo for personal reasons. She finished working for Kodo in September. We thank everyone who has supported her work with our group to date.



Kodo Performance Schedule 2012 - 2013

KODO ONE EARTH TOUR 2012: LEGEND

October: [Japan](#)

Shimane, Tottori, Yamaguchi, Fukuoka, Nagasaki, Miyazaki, Kagoshima, Nagano, Chiba

December: [Japan](#)

Sado Island, Niigata, Aichi, Hiroshima, Hyogo, Kanagawa, Tokyo

KODO IN BALLET PERFORMANCE "KAGUYAHIME: THE MOON PRINCESS"

October: Montreal, Canada

2013

KODO ONE EARTH TOUR 2013: LEGEND

February - March: [U.S.A.](#)

Nevada, California, Washington, Illinois, Michigan, Minnesota, Iowa, South Carolina, North Carolina, Florida, Ohio, D.C., West Virginia, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Connecticut, New York

SOLO & SMALL GROUP PROJECTS, SPECIAL EVENTS, WORKSHOPS, NEWS & INFORMATION

Please visit the [top page of our website](#) and scroll down for details.



"Tsukimachi" from Kodo One Earth Tour 2012: Legend

Kodo One Earth Tour 2012: Legend

~ JAPAN ~

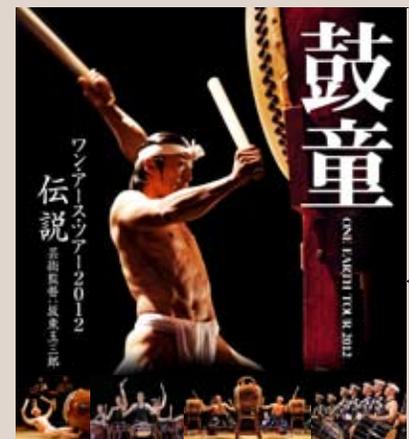
October & December

Schedule is subject to change. For up-to-date schedules and box office details, please visit our [website](#).

- October 2: Matsue, Shimane
- October 3: Tottori City
- October 6: Shimonoseki, Yamaguchi
- October 7: Kitakyushu, Fukuoka
- October 8: Unzen, Nagasaki
- October 12: Miyazaki City
- October 13: Kagoshima City
- October 21: Karuizawa, Nagano
- October 23: Narashino, Chiba



- December 5: Sado Island, Niigata
- December 8-9: Niigata City
- December 11: Nagoya, Aichi
- December 13: Hiroshima City
- December 15: Amagasaki, Hyogo
- December 18: Yokohama, Kanagawa
- December 22-24: Bunkyo Ward, Tokyo



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In the wake of disaster, Kodo started the Heartbeat Project, a multifaceted undertaking designed to support relief efforts and the people of the regions affected by the Tohoku Pacific Earthquake.

We are making new recordings and participating in charity concerts, fund-raising events, etc. Thank you for your continued support. For updates, please visit our [website](#).

KODŌ

Latest Album:
Kodo Akatsuki



Footwear at the entrance to one of the many homes visited during the fall festival (Yokka-machi, Sado Island)

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