

One Earth, Many Heartbeats

Our One Earth Tour 2013: Legend is currently on the road in the United States of America. This is the first time Tamasaburo Bando's "Legend" program has been performed abroad, and in this issue, we would like to share with you the individual audience posts we received on our Facebook page and a report from our Blue Man Group friend Adam Erdossy. We hope you will enjoy this feedback, as well as tour photo reports from Kaguyahime in Paris, Legend in the USA, and soloist Yoshikazu Fujimoto in China. If you are in the Eastern USA, we sincerely hope you catch the USA Legend performances before we head back to Japan. Tickets are still available!

Audience Comments about Kodo One Earth Tour 2013: Legend

Fantastic evening in Milwaukee at the Pabst Theatre! Your synchronicity is extremely tight = KODO ROCKS!!

What a spectacular performance tonight! Thanks for coming to Iowa!

The weather was cold in Ann Arbor last night, but Kodo brought the heat to Hill Auditorium! Amazing!

Kodo, thank you for coming to Ann Arbor tonight. As a music major here I can safely say that your performance was one of the most powerful I have ever seen. Makes me wish I were a percussionist!

Your performance tonight was transcendental!! Your rhythmic drive smashed all expectations. Bravo!

Your Chicago performance had me and the Symphony Center shaken! Amazing! So happy to see you live!

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Tamasaburo Bando's first work as Kodo Artistic Director is "Kodo One Earth Tour: Legend"

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Kodo in Las Vegas

A review by Adam Erdossy, *Blue Man Group*

Our current tour in the USA celebrated its opening night in Las Vegas. Former Tokyo-based Blue Man Adam Erdossy collaborated with Kodo in 2011's WOWOW program-turned-DVD, "*Blue Man x Kodo: Blue Man Meets Wadaiko*" and visited us on Sado Island for Earth Celebration and Kodo Juku while he was living in Tokyo. He is now performing in the new Blue Man show at the Monte Carlo Resort and Casino, and we asked him to personally review our newest performance, "Kodo One Earth Tour 2013: Legend," for Kodo eNews. Here are his thoughts about the performance on February 1st at the Smith Center in Las Vegas. We appreciate his candid remarks, as a fellow performer, friend and resident in the city of entertainment. Thank you, Adam!

Having been away from Japan for six months, my wife Seiko and I were extremely excited to experience Kodo here in Las Vegas. The unique sense of stark beauty, intense discipline, and the purest sense of joy and connection that the members of Kodo bring with them everywhere they go, was very much palpable and resonant. Although many of the cast were relatively new members of the Kodo tribe, it was wonderful to see how deeply they have soaked in the

rigorous training, and how valiantly they express themselves within it. Reynolds Hall in the new Smith Center of Performing Arts is a glorious and classy venue whose 2,000 plus seats were filled with people ready to experience Kodo. It is fascinating to wonder how each of those people came to see a group of Japanese drummers who live and train on a relatively small island off the West coast of Japan.

Having seen Kodo in various venues and incarnations over the last five years, this was certainly a new experience. Tamasaburo Bando, as the new Artistic Director, has expanded on his previous work with Kodo entitled "Dadan." In comparison, this incarnation of his work felt more fully realized at moments, more integrated with the Kodo esthetic. As with the "Dadan" performances, I struggled to find the purpose of adding what he calls very appropriately, "Flair" to the Traditional Kodo uniforms and costumes, which are directly, and deeply a part of the history and culture of Japan. For me, it is hard to reconcile the statuesque, raw, stripped down movements, drumming postures and expression of the Kodo performers, with glittery pants that evoke images of a futuristic sci-fi movie. A brave exploration, which deserves respect for its attempt to create a space, a moment in time when two such polar energies can

exist, but that in the end left me very much unmoved and distracted from exactly what makes me escape the shows of Las Vegas, and draws me to see Kodo.

That being said, as confused as I was once again by Bando-san's wardrobe choices, I was equally as impressed and deeply moved by his new compositions. Particularly the opening piece entitled "Kaden." It is an orchestral piece of percussion music that has such an intimate sense of flow both musically and emotionally that it quite honestly feels like he is exploring not just drumming and music, but that which connects all things. Whatever that elusive and mysterious fabric is that we are all woven into is, it was palpable in those brief moments where all 2000 people in the audience were holding their breaths without even realizing it. It was intense, and beautiful. And then, the way in which this piece organically led to a new version of the classic Kodo piece "Monochrome" was another very successful exploration.

After some time to digest the visceral affect this show had on me, I am left enjoying the memories of a truly beautiful, inspiring and thought provoking experience that I felt in my bones. One that at once filled me, and left me yearning to return to Sado Island.



Blue Man and Kodo in Tokyo (Adam is the Blue Man in the middle)
© WOWOW, INC, BLUE MAN GROUP INTERNATIONAL, LCC /
Photo by TEPPEI



Scott Kinworthy (Blue Man), Masayuki Sakamoto (Kodo), Adam Erdossy (Blue Man) and Seiko Kitagawa backstage after the Kodo performance in Las Vegas

Greetings from the Kodo Group

Kodo Ensemble Leader Tomohiro Mitome

Almost a year has passed since Kodo underwent a distinct transformation. In April of 2012, we welcomed Tamasaburo Bando as our new Artistic Director, and in May we launched “Kodo One Earth Tour: Legend,” which tours for a full year, abroad in the United States this January before coming back for the Spring Japan Tour. We have enriched our performances with artistic expressions previously unseen on the Kodo stage, incorporating new costumes and Western percussion instruments. Here at home, we held “Kodo Special Performances on Sado Island” which featured our Distinguished Members in Spring, Summer, and Fall. We also drew upon our 14 years of experience of working with students to launch a series of highly successful collaborative performances with different schools. Lastly, we were given the opportunity to share the stage with Tamasaburo Bando for the first time in 5 years, this time at the Konpira Grand Theatre in Kagawa Prefecture, Japan’s oldest theatre. This was certainly an historical moment for Kodo.

Our biggest upcoming project for 2013 is bringing back the “Amaterasu” performance after a six-year respite. The show will include a new cast and updated program for which we are diligently rehearsing at the moment. We are also gearing up for our second new production in December, which means including new pieces and new expressions to our repertoire. Developing a new program is not easy, but step by step, little by little, we are making progress and are excited to create something new and amazing.

In order to ensure the artistic development of taiko, we must incorporate change as we maintain core elements of the art form. I believe that as new expressions develop within each member, the group is also transformed



Tomohiro Mitome

as a whole, and that in turn becomes a bridge for new taiko expressions throughout the world.

I offer you my best wishes for the New Year, and humbly ask for your continued support throughout 2013.

Kodo Artistic Director Tamasaburo Bando

In April 2013, I enter my second year as Artistic Director of Kodo. I’d like to express my gratitude to all who made possible the success of my first production as director, *Kodo One Earth Tour: Legend*, which ran from May 2012 until December, finishing with a performance in Tokyo.

Two new pieces created for this production, *Kaden* and *Tsukimachi* were performed in Part 1 and Part 2. In response to the feedback we received from many people, the musical ensemble gradually matured throughout the fall, and as the performers got used to the new style (running acts together, instead of separating them as Kodo has done before), they developed confidence. Exploring new creations and modes of expression such as these will play an important role in Kodo’s future activities. Combined with the basic repertoire already established at Kodo, a classic act like *Monochrome*, newly revised, can be appreciated at a fresh level.



Tamasaburo Bando

This year we’re planning a re-designed *Amaterasu*. It will be a major show with a long run, from July in Tokyo’s ACT Theater, through September in Fukuoka’s Hakataza Theater, ending in October at Kyoto’s Minami-za Kabuki Theater. For both Kodo and myself, it will be a new experience to play in the same production continuously for three months. We’re practicing vigorously at the moment in order to prepare a show of the highest quality. I also look forward to meeting everyone at this summer’s outdoor *Earth Celebration* event.

I’m deeply grateful that we have enjoyed increasingly higher attendance since last year, bringing great satisfaction to both the performers and myself. As we look forward to December’s new productions, we’re striving to polish our art further, to take pieces that are solid and fundamental, and make them more lively and enjoyable, at the same time aiming for a stage experience ever deeper and more profound.

We hope you will also read the greetings from [Kitamaesen Co., Ltd. President Takao Aoki](#) and [Kodo Cultural Foundation Chairman Makoto Shimazaki](#) on our website. To learn more about our group’s organizational structure, please click [here](#).

Photo Album: Eri Uchida

In February, performer [Eri Uchida](#), appeared in her third season of performances of ballet “[Kaguyahime](#).” She was one of two members to take part in 2012 in Montreal and both 2010 and 2013 in Paris. Eri has been busy taking photographs to capture the special opportunity to perform at the glorious Palais Garnier. We hope you’ll enjoy a glimpse behind the scenes at the Paris Opera through her album.

Top Left: The drum leaders, Western percussionist Christophe Vella (left) with Eiichi Saito.

Top Right: View from the orchestra pit of Gagaku musicians and balcony seats.
Upper Middle: In Kodo’s orchestra pit space, Mariko Omi (left) shows some sticks that are different to her usual taiko bachi. Yosuke Kusa (centre) and Eri (right) smile for the camera.

Lower Middle Right: In the orchestra pit at Palais Garnier Kodo prepares for a performance of ballet “Kaguyahime”

Bottom Left: All the percussionists for “Kaguyahime” with Kodo’s company president Takao Aoki (front far left) and tour manager and advisor Takashi Akamine (front far right) gather to toast Christophe Vella’s birthday backstage.

Bottom Right: Yuichiro Funabashi, Eri, and Yosuke Oda with ballerina Alice Renavand who danced the role of Kaguyahime, the moon princess

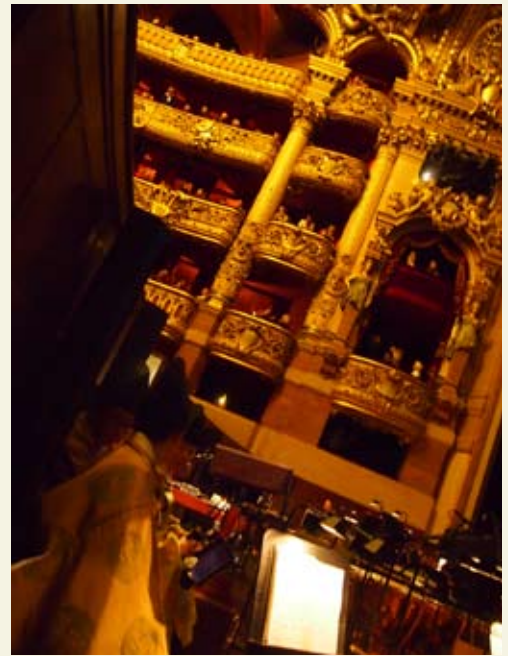
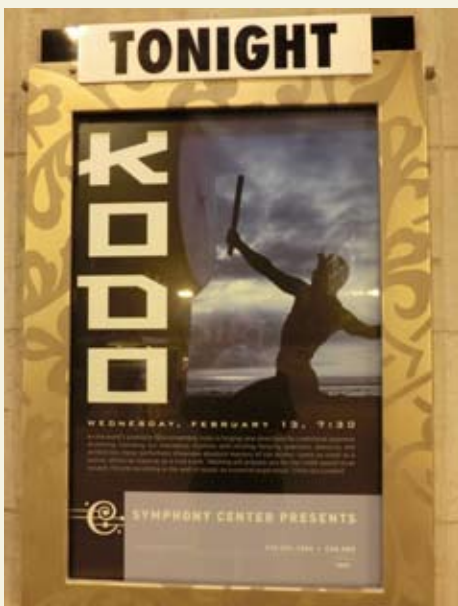




Photo Album: Tomohiro Mitome

This winter, Kodo Ensemble Leader [Tomohiro Mitome](#) is working on Sado Island, teaching at the [Kodo Apprentice Centre](#) and rehearsing with the [new junior members](#) who started life at [Kodo Village](#) last month. In February, Tomohiro traveled to Paris, France and Chicago, USA, to visit the two Kodo casts and watch their performances. Here are some of his photographs from the Paris Opera House, Palais Garnier, where he saw Kodo performing in “Kaguyahime” with the Paris Opera Ballet. In the group photo, the cast of seven is joined by Tomohiro and Frank van der Meijden, former manager of [Dutch band BLØF](#) who we have collaborated with several memorable times in recent years. From France, Tomohiro flew to Chicago to catch up with the One Earth Tour 2013: Legend troupe at the [Symphony Center](#). Having toured throughout 2012 in Japan as a performer in this program, Tomohiro says he was pleased to watch from the audience, to see the program objectively and feel the delight from the American audience first-hand all around him.



Japan Cultural Envoy Yoshikazu Fujimoto Goes to China

Report by Atsushi Sugano, Kodo Cultural Foundation

In February, Yoshikazu Fujimoto traveled to China for the first time since 2000 as a Japan Cultural Envoy from the Agency for Cultural Affairs. Japan Cultural Envoys are sent abroad for a minimum of one month to stay in an assigned country where they introduce Japanese culture and participate in exchange with local artists and culture-related people. This time Yoshikazu visited Beijing, the Shanghai region (Shanghai, Hangzhou, Suzhou), and Yanan in Shaanxi.

Yoshikazu said that the changes in China, which hosted the Beijing Olympics and Shanghai World Expo since his last visit over a decade ago, were so great that it felt like going to a country for the first time. Yoshikazu is used to traveling in a group for concerts abroad with Kodo, so it was rare for him to travel alone and stay abroad for so long. He admits to having felt quite worried before he set off on this trip.

In Beijing, his visit began with exchange with Chinese musicians, a visit to a Japanese school, and giving a demonstration at the Embassy of Japan. Approximately 170 people attended the performance at the Japanese Embassy, mainly young people interested in Japanese culture. On this trip, Yoshikazu traveled with only one light okedo-daiko (barrel drum) so he could get around on his own, so the program also featured bamboo flute and song. However, just as one would expect from O-daiko player Yoshikazu, he offered an “air O-daiko” demonstration and sang the taiko rhythms as he showed how he moves during the performance, which



Yoshikazu attempts to play and dance using the local “waist drum” (Yanan in Shaanxi)



Jamming with a patron at Beijing restaurant “Hatsune”



At the Embassy of Japan in Beijing, Yoshikazu plays with some kind “support” for his drum



Yoshikazu performs at the Japanese school in Beijing

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Yoshikazu Fujimoto Goes to China*continued from page 6*

moved the audience and made them laugh to see his rare, “hidden talent” on display.

After Beijing, he visited four Japanese schools in the Shanghai area, before and after Chinese New Year. He also visited Shaanxi, which is said to be the hub for taiko in China, and he experienced a taiko performance that celebrated the New Year.

This time, Yoshikazu’s trip came at a difficult time for Japan-China relations regarding the Senkaku Islands dispute, but he felt that because of the timing, he was able to feel firsthand the meaning of cultural exchange, above and beyond borders.



Left: A banner advertising a performance by Yoshikazu at a restaurant in Beijing called “Manzo”

Below: Welcome poster at Shanghai Japanese School

Bottom: Collaboration with local traditional drum dance (Yanan, Shaanxi)

**One Earth, Many Heartbeats***continued from page 1*

Kodo, I saw you for the first time in Los Angeles on February 5th. Totally amazing. I want to visit Sado now.

Thank you for returning to Seattle. Your performance was stunning last night!!

Saw the show last night in Los Angeles - it was awesome! Thank you for your beautiful spirit!

Great show tonight at the Disney Concert Hall. KODO! Excellent - come again soon!

Saw your show in Las Vegas!! Fabulous!!

This was the most amazing performance I have witnessed. The drummers kept me mesmerized through out the entire performance.

Kodo Performance Schedule 2013

KODO ONE EARTH TOUR 2013: LEGEND

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

Florida, Ohio, D.C., West Virginia, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Connecticut, New York

The performance planned for March 11 (Mon) in Naples, Florida, has been canceled due to unforeseen circumstances. We offer our sincere apologies to everyone who planned to attend this performance.

May - June: [Japan](#)

Ibaraki, Shizuoka, Aichi, Nagano, Kyoto, Osaka, Toyama, Niigata, Kanagawa, Gunma, Saitama, Tokyo

[AMATERASU](#) Tickets for Tokyo Performances On Sale From March 3

Tamasaburo Bando & Kodo collaboration

July-October: Tokyo, Fukuoka, Kyoto

EARTH CELEBRATION 2013

Annual performing arts festival hosted by Sado Island and Kodo
August 23 (Fri) - 25 (Sun): Sado Island, Japan (Details TBA May 2013)

KODO ONE EARTH TOUR 2013 (New production, title and details TBA)

November - December: Japan

Sado Island, Nagoya, Osaka, Okayama, Nagaoka, Niigata, Yokohama, Tokyo (TBC)

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

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

Kodo One Earth Tour 2013: Legend

~ U.S.A. ~
March

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

- March 2: Clearwater, FL
- March 7: Fort Pierce, FL
- March 8: Boca Raton, FL
- March 9: Miami, FL
- ~~- March 11: Naples, FL CANCELED~~
- March 14: Columbus, OH
- March 16: Washington, D.C.
- March 18: Morgantown, WV
- March 20: Easton, PA
- March 22: Princeton, NJ
- March 24: Newark, NJ
- March 25: Philadelphia, PA
- March 27: Storrs, CT
- March 29: Schenectady, NY



Rolex Japan Presents "Amaterasu"

Appearing: Tamasaburo Bando, Kodo

Special Appearance: Harei Aine

(Former [Takarazuka Revue](#) male role star)

July 4 (Thu) - 28 (Sun) Tickets on sale March 3!
Akasaka ACT Theater, Minato Ward, Tokyo
23 performances

September 5 (Thu) - 29 (Sun)
Hakataza Theater, Fukuoka City 22 performances

October 5 (Sat) - 27 (Sun)
Minami-za Kabuki Theater, Kyoto City
21 performances

For further details, please visit our [website](#).

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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



Once-extinct in Japan, the reintroduced tiki (*Nipponia nippon*/crested ibis) now live in the wild on Sado Island again. (Hatano area, Sado Island)

Resources

[Kodo Website](#)

[Kodo on Facebook](#)

[Kodo Tour and Performance Schedules](#)

[Kodo on YouTube](#)

[Kodo CD Listening Booth](#)

[Kodo Bravia Promotion Video](#)

[Friends of Kodo](#)

[Kodo Online Store \(English\)](#)

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