

Wadaiko Tokara News

February 2013

Upcoming Performances and Workshops

- **March 22nd, 24th:** [1001 Buddhas](#)
- **March 29th, 30th:** Kazakoshi performance at the Dreamland Arts Theatre
St. Paul Minnesota, US, 7:30pm
- **April 28th:** Kazakoshi performance at the Kelowna Community Centre,
Kelowna BC, Canada
- **May 10th, 11th:** Kazakoshi performance at the Heron Theatre,
Beetham, Cumbria, UK
- **May 18th:** Kazakoshi performance at the Minack Theatre,
Cornwall, UK
- **May 25th:** Kazakoshi performance at the Barnfield Theatre,
Exeter, UK
- **May 27th - 29th :** [Kenshu Core Taiko Training Course](#),
Rua Red Arts Centre - Dublin, Ireland
- **June 17th - 28th:** [Inadani Taiko Drumming Course GRAND TOUR](#),
Achi Village, Nagano-ken, Japan.
- **June 29th:** [Saiwai Shimoina Wadaiko Festival](#)
Iida City Kouminkan, Iida City, Nagano-ken, Japan
- **August 1st - 26th:** Kazakoshi performances at Edinburgh Fringe Festival in
C too main house, Edinburgh, Scotland

Welcome to another chapter of the Wadaiko Tokara newsletter. As I write this we are currently on the I-94 heading west to Minneapolis, and then North to winter- I mean Winnipeg, where a workshop and some training await us before starting the second leg of our 5 month North American tour.

Planes, Roads, Storms and More Roads

Written by Dean Havixbeck.



Tokara with Doug Masuhara in Vancouver, B.C.

And what better way to start off than the debut concert of our Kazakoshi tour in Vancouver Canada... two days after our flight from Japan. This concert was sponsored by the Japanese Consulate of Vancouver and the Japan Foundation at the Norman Rothstein Theatre. We had a wonderful time at that theatre, despite our jet lag, (we landed in Vancouver on the 23rd and the performance was on the 25th), and it gave us good energy to start off the tour. We must also send out a big thank you to Doug Masuhara of Tetsu Taiko for organizing the concert, and to Shinobu Homma and his group Chibi Taiko who opened the show for us. Thanks again.

Then we had some time to relax and.... Oops, that's not right. We members of Wadaiko Tokara like to challenge ourselves, so we decided to drive from Vancouver on the west coast to Providence, Rhode Island on the east coast to participate in the East Coast Taiko Conference. The weather must have known about our trek, creating blizzard conditions to add to our challenge. Every morning we awoke to a blizzard outside our hotel window, then embarked upon a 10 hour daily drive, (of course with 5 months luggage, 5 adults, 2 kids, and 4 shime daiko packed in the van for extra coziness), pushing ahead of the storm and pull into the next hotel for a well deserved rest. We left on the 26th, and made it to Providence, Rhode Island on the 31st, the evening before the conference started. Challenge completed!



The start of a long stormy journey to the East Coast



Tokara Workshop at the East Coast Taiko Conference

The conference was a blast. With close to 200 participants, some of the biggest names in North American taiko attending as instructors and/or speakers and Tsumura Kazuhiro from Miyake Daiko attended to add a miyake daiko workshop at the last minute. You couldn't ask for a more successful conference. The concert in the evening was electric. Soh Daiko blew the roof off with their performance and set the tone for the whole evening. We were honored and humbled to perform for the close of the concert. Of course there were also more workshops on 8:30am the next day. Taiko players seem to not need, or care for much sleep I have observed. A fantastic event to say the least.

Three days in Providence went by in a flash, and we were on our way to New York for a workshop with New York Taiko Aikokai. A word of advice for people going to/driving through New York: plan your route in extreme detail. If you make one mistake, it is extremely difficult to get back to where you want to be. One night in New York, and then we hit the road again, this time retracing our steps before veering north to Winnipeg. There we will be training for a couple of weeks before continuing our tour in Minneapolis with our collaboration with Ragamala dance and many other concerts and workshops to come as the Kazakoshi North American tour continues.



Tokara with New York Taiko Aikokai and Kaoru Watanabe at Columbia University, New York

That just about does it for now. As usual, For more information about our workshops and shows you can check the listings or visit the Tokara website for more details. Until then, enjoy the rest of the winter season, preferably by a warm fireplace!

KAZAKOSHI

"Kazakoshi" is a new production touring 12 countries throughout the world for two years celebrating Wadaiko Artist Art Lee's 20th Anniversary in 2013, and Wadaiko Tokara's 10th Anniversary in 2014.

"Kazakoshi" is the mountain wind which flows across the mountaintop of Mt. Fuetsu, bringing a billowing mist into the Inadani valley from which we gather our strength and determination to share throughout the world.

Not simply a taiko performance, "Kazakoshi" is an expression of the powerfully flowing, yet jazzy style of performance for which Tokara has become known.

For details on "Kazakoshi" 2013 - 2014 World Tour:

www.tokara.net/kazakoshi

WADAIKO TOKARA

Incorporating arrangements of traditional Taiko pieces into their performance, Tokara has created an all new style of Taiko, where speed and power meet eloquent movements of dance and the circular fluidity of the Chinese martial arts and aikido.

Tokara's new style of Taiko music also brings rhythm signatures from other cultures around the world to create a jazzy and exciting style of taiko music.

Artistic Director Art Lee is considered to be one of the leading Taiko artists of his generation. In November 2001, he received international acclaim for becoming the first person in the world to be awarded an artist visa from the Japanese government to teach Taiko and lead the life of a professional Taiko artist in Japan. He is the only non-Japanese to achieve the status of Grand Champion in the Odaiko section of the most renowned taiko contest in the world, the Tokyo International Taiko Contest.

Season One

(January - August)

Vancouver * Kelowna * Minneapolis * Beetham * Penzance
Dublin * Exeter * Edinburgh

Full Details: www.tokara.net/kazakoshi



Photos by Junko Sasaki and Nedra Cammerly

WWW.TOKARA.NET



Contact Wadaiko Tokara Japan:

Address:

3598 Misajiro, Matsuo, Iida City
Nagano Prefecture 〒395-0826

TEL/FAX: (81) 265-59-8768

Email: info@tokara.net

or

wadaiko.tokara.japan@gmail.com

Website: www.tokara.net

*Would you or someone you know like to
subscribe to the Tokara Newsletter?*

[Tokara Newsletter subscription site](#)

Thank you for supporting us for the years up to 2012.
We look forward to seeing you again in the many years
to come.

Wadaiko Artist Art Lee 藝李
Wadaiko Ensemble 遙Tokara遙

Wadaiko Tokara has a new CD!!! Please click
on the link below to get your copy today!

www.tokara.net/info/ttuccd.html

To see videos and pictures of the 2012 tour,
follow the links below:

[Tokara Official Website](#)

[Performance Schedule](#)

[Tokara on YouTube](#)

[Tokara on Facebook](#)

Upcoming Workshops and Classes

INADANI TAIKO DRUMMING COURSE

GRAND TOUR

Beginners/Intermediate Course

June 17 - 22, 2013

June 24 - 29, 2013

This course is designed for the purpose of bringing
the taiko practitioner closer to understanding the art
that is Wadaiko in Japan. For this reason, the
training site, nestled between the mountains of
Shimoina, was specifically chosen to enhance an
experience and atmosphere which cannot be had in
any other country of the world. This course offers a
unique experience as it takes place in the heart of
Japan - Nagano Prefecture. Each participant will be
surrounded by and immersed in the culture from
which comes the heart and spirit of the Wadaiko.

Details can be found on the course website:

www.tokara.net/japantaikocourse.html

Kenshu Core Taiko Training Course

Training Workshop and Seminar for Taiko Teachers

May 27 - 29, 2013

This course is for teachers who already do or are
planning to teach taiko classes and workshops, as
well as for teaching assistants within a group.
Theory and demonstration will accompany drills
and playing technique. Participants will also have a
chance to view teaching principles in action. During
the morning sessions, participants will be taught
movement and technique in various taiko
performance styles. Afternoon sessions will include
details/drills/information for teaching successful
workshops and classes and group interactive
sessions. For more details please visit the course
website:

<http://www.tokara.net/kazakoshi/kenshucore.html>