



Press Release

Internationally renowned taiko drumming group, 'Wadaiko Tokara' from Japan explodes onto the stage with their most popular production called "Tenchi Shinmei" (meaning "The Thunder of Heaven and Earth" in English) at the Exeter Barnfield Theatre in Exeter, Devonshire on September 30th and October 1st, 2011.

What does it take to become a professional taiko performer with Tokara? Artistic Director Art Lee explains the type of training taken on by performers as a prerequisite to the stage. "Daily routines usually require us to run 10 kilometers, do 200 sit-ups, 200 push-ups, and other exercises before breakfast; clean the office and practice drumming for three hours before lunch. Then practice pounding on big drums with big, wooden sticks for another three hours before dinner".

With such a training schedule, it is little wonder that Art Lee is considered to be one of the top taiko artists and performers in the world. He is the first and still the only person in the world to be awarded an unsponsored artist visa by the Japanese government to live in Japan as a professional taiko performer, teacher and composer. He is also the only non-Japanese person in history to ever win Odaiko Grand Champion at the most renowned taiko competition in the world - the Tokyo International Taiko Competition.

His group, Wadaiko Tokara is one of the most unique to come out of Japan. The group tours internationally four to five times each year to audiences in their native Japan, as well as throughout the United States, Canada, Europe, Taiwan, and India. Tour highlights include a two week run Off Broadway in New York, the 2005 Japan Expo, the Taipei City 150th Anniversary, and the Asano Taiko 400th Anniversary.

Concert Details:

Title: "Tenchi Shinmei"
Date: September 30th and October 1st, 2011
Place: Exeter Barnfield Theatre
Time: 7:30p.m.
Tickets: £15 (£10)
Ticket Details: Theatre Box Office: 01392 270891
Tokara Website: <http://www.tokara.net/>

Special Tokara Taiko Workshop - October 1st, 12p.m. - Barnfield Theatre

Quotes from previous performances:

They communicated such joy...that I was absolutely enchanted...I felt pure primal joy as the beat reverberated through my body... - *NipponDaze*

"Catch them while you can. If you don't, you'll probably either live to regret it or probably never know what you missed" - *Edinburgh Fringe Review*