



HOPKINS CENTER
FOR THE ARTS

presents

Kodo

Evolution

Funded in part by a gift from Nini and Rob Meyer and the C. Henry Hathaway 1907 Memorial Fund No. 3

Mon • Mar 4 • 7 pm

2019 • Spaulding Auditorium • Dartmouth College

Program

Artistic Director Tamasaburo Bando

Performers:

Mitsuru Ishizuka, Kenta Nakagome, Eri Uchida, Yuta Sumiyoshi, Jun Jidai, Ryoma Tsurumi, Kengo Watanabe, Ryotaro Leo Ikenaga, Hayato Otsuka, Tomoe Miura, Mizuki Yoneyama, Issei Kohira, Yuta Kimura, Yuki Hirata, Chihiro Watanabe, Taiyo Onoda

Staff:

Technical Director: Martin Lechner
Lighting Designer: Kenichi Mashiko (S.L.S.)
Stage Manager: Kazuki Imagai
Assistant Stage Manager: Kentaro Shino
Production Manager: Yui Kawamoto
Tour Manager: Koji Miyagi, Shingo Kawamura, Ami Akimoto
International Tour Management: IMG Artists
imgartists.com
Publicity: Rebecca Davis PR
rebeccadavispr.com

Part 1

Kei Kei

Composed by Yuta Sumiyoshi, 2012

Phobos

Composed by Kenta Nakagome 2009

Mute

Composed by Yosuke Oda 2013

Kusawake

Composed by Yuta Sumiyoshi 2013

O-daiko (Kenta Nakagome, Hayato Otsuka)

Traditional, arranged by Kodo

Monochrome

Composed by Maki Ishii, 1977

Part 2

Color

Composed by Tamasaburo Bando & Masayuki Sakamoto, 2009

Ake no Myojo

Composed by Yosuke Oda, 2012

Yuyami

Composed by Yuta Sumiyoshi, 2013

Ayaori

Composed by Yuta Sumiyoshi, 2016

Rasen

Composed by Tamasaburo Bando, 2016

Approximate duration: 120 minutes with a 20-minute intermission

Program Notes

Directed by Tamasaburo Bando, *Evolution* marks the 35th anniversary of the internationally acclaimed taiko performing arts ensemble Kodo. This brand-new production is a culmination of Kodo's ever-evolving artistic voyage, which boldly displays the future of taiko on stage. For decades, Kodo has led the genre of taiko performance with dedication and innovation. With *Evolution*, Kodo promises to drive its next generation to new heights of creative expression.

Tamasaburo Bando has crafted a program that places Kodo's best-known work alongside some of the latest core repertoire. Signature pieces like *O-daiko* and *Monochrome*, which have been synonymous with Kodo since the days of its antecedent group, are now integrated among more recent work such as *Kusa-wake* and *Color*. This combination of classic and current is complemented by completely new compositions that were created especially for this production. *Ayaori* is intricate and uplifting, while the climactic *Rasen* (*Spiral*) features motifs of an array of Kodo pieces from various eras of the ensemble's history. The result is a rousing whirl of energy that carries the audience into a new dimension of taiko performance.

Message from Director Tamasaburo Bando

This time I've created a work called *Evolution*, which has been touring through Japan and around the world. We introduced this performance, made to commemorate the 35th year since the founding of Kodo, in August 2016 on the second night of a three-night concert at Tokyo's Suntory Hall.

The aim of this piece is the notion that the diverse works we created in past, when combined with the new works that Kodo is performing now, create a spiral advancing into the future.

New works I created for this show include the fun of *Monochrome* at the end of the first act, and *Color* at the beginning of the second act. *Spiral* and *Ayaori* will be performed for the first time in North America. We also added a fresh atmosphere to the very large drums.

Kodo is evolving as it moves in a spiral from past into the future. I hope that our efforts will be appreciated in the musical world, and I look forward to your enjoyment of our performances.

Kodo's Home of Sado Island

Since 1971, Sado Island has been Kodo's home and the platform from which the group reaches out to the world. With nature's warm embrace evident in each of her four seasons,

Sado is an extraordinary place where traditional ways of life and the island's indigenous performing arts still thrive today. This island is the fountain of inspiration for Kodo and the guiding force behind the group's creative lifestyle. Their goal is to find a harmonious balance between people and the natural world. Each time Kodo ventures off the island, the ensemble encounters new people, customs, and traditional performing arts that are ingrained in the lifestyles of each locale. Both similarities and differences prompt Kodo members to pause and reflect upon the importance of the varied and rich cultures that color our world. These life lessons permeate each performer's skin and become an invisible source of their expression. It is through this process of living, learning, and creating that Kodo cultivates a unique aesthetic and sensitivity, reaching out toward a new world culture rooted in the rich possibilities of a peaceful coexistence between humanity and nature.

Kodo Cultural Foundation

Thanks to the support of many friends, the Kodo Cultural Foundation was established in 1997 in order to increase Kodo's capacity for outreach projects on Sado Island. Its primary mission is to carry out non-profit activities focused on social education and the notion of giving back to the local community. The Kodo Cultural Foundation is committed to the cultural and environmental preservation of Sado Island and oversees many ambitious projects. From the conservation of local habitats to the revitalization of rare craft traditions and Noh theaters throughout Sado Island, the highly collaborative Kodo Cultural Foundation supports many vital initiatives. Its activities include holding workshops, planning the annual Earth Celebration, creating a research library, managing the Kodo Apprentice Centre and the Sado Island Taiko Centre, and carrying out research in the performing arts.

Kodo Apprentice Centre

In a converted schoolhouse in Kakinoura on Sado Island, the young people who will continue and expand on Kodo's traditions are trained, not just in musical technique but also in all matters of body and spirit. Beginning in April, apprentices live communally and train for two years. From this group, probationary members are selected in January of the second year. These chosen few spend one year as junior members, and if they are successful, they then become full Kodo members. Kodo seeks people of all backgrounds who are interested in becoming apprentices, as well as the next generation of Kodo players and staff. Apprentices live communally in the Kodo Apprentice Centre where they learn taiko, dance, song, and other traditional arts.

About the Artists

Tamasaburo Bando is a leading kabuki actor, and the most popular and celebrated onnagata (actor specializing in female roles) currently on stage. He has demonstrated his profound aesthetic across numerous platforms, receiving the highest acclaim for his many artistic endeavors. Bando accepted the invitation to become Kodo's artistic director in 2012. In September 2012, he was recognized as an Important Intangible Cultural Property Holder ("Living National Treasure") and in 2013 he was decorated with the highest honor of France's Order of Arts and Letters, Commander.

Exploring the limitless possibilities of the traditional Japanese drum, the taiko, **Kodo** is forging new directions for a vibrant living art-form. In Japanese the word *kodo* conveys two meanings: Firstly, "heartbeat" the primal source of all rhythm. The sound of the great taiko is said to resemble a mother's heartbeat as felt in the womb, and it is no myth that babies are often lulled asleep by its thunderous vibrations. Secondly,

read in a different way, the word can mean "children of the drum," a reflection of Kodo's desire to play the drums simply, with the heart of a child. Since the group's debut at the Berlin Festival in 1981, Kodo has given over 6,000 performances in 50 countries worldwide under the banner "One Earth Tour," spending about a third of the year overseas, a third touring in Japan and a third rehearsing and preparing new material on Sado Island.

Kodo strives to both preserve and re-interpret traditional Japanese performing arts. Beyond this, members on tours and research trips all over the globe have brought back to Sado a kaleidoscope of world music and experiences which now exerts a strong influence on the group's performances and compositions. Collaborations with other artists and composers extend right across the musical spectrum and Kodo's lack of preconceptions about its music continues to produce startling new fusion and forms.

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