

TAIKOz

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Kelly Staines has been a member of TaikOz since 2000. You will have seen her perform the beautiful Hachijo with Masae, as well as dynamic solos on the chudaiko and Odaiko. She is also very involved in Wadaiko teaching - every Saturday morning at 9.30.

Kelly toured to Japan with TaikOz last year to undertake study and performances with Eitetsu Hayashi. The following story is her response to his recent Sydney return.

EITETSU - TAIKOZ WRAP

It was an exciting time leading up to Eitetsu's visit; I was really looking forward to seeing him again as well as watching him play. However, I must admit, I was also a little nervous, to say the least, about performing the trio piece, *Mitsumai*, with him.

Seeing Eitetsu perform with the Sydney Symphony brought back a flood of memories for me; not just the group's wonderful visit to Japan, but also the huge impression he made on me with his physical presence, quiet beauty and incredible musicianship. Seeing his manager and crew again - Oba-san, Maruo-san and Abe-san - was a real pleasure and they treated all of us like old friends. This made me feel really warm.

The rehearsal days leading up to the Enmore concerts were pretty intensive but also satisfying. After months of practice, finally being able to rehearse *Mitsumai* with Eitetsu was a great relief for me. I realised that it was going to work OK and I wasn't going to fall flat on my face! It also made me realise that playing with outstanding musicians is such a necessary thing to do as it lifts your performance to places you never thought you could reach.

When opening night finally arrived I had the worst cold I'd had in years which is pretty ironic, but funnily enough it made me less nervous. I thought the Friday night concert was great and the group played really well; having Eitetsu there just made it all so special and his encouragement was contagious.

Watching him play his O-Daiko solo reminded me once again that music is magic and he is a musical shaman... he literally had the audience spellbound. One member of the audience said she saw a ghost walk down from the O-Daiko platform just before Eitetsu walked up to begin his solo piece! I'm not sure about this, but I think he definitely conjures up the "Spirit of Wadaiko" in his performance.

The Saturday performance was technically not as tight but I think it had more exciting moments; I think we were all a little exhausted! After the concert we went and had dinner, which was a really good opportunity to wind down and relax with everyone.

I felt a little sad saying goodbye to Eitetsu and his crew knowing that it would be a while before we saw them again, but I think we have consolidated a really good friendship with these lovely people. We have solidified a mentorship with Eitetsu that is very precious - after all, he is the greatest. As Eitetsu continues to tour around the world it's back to the dojo for us - full of inspiration, renewed enthusiasm and wonderful memories.

SYDNEY TERM FOUR WADAIKO CLASSES

TaikOz is off to Thailand to play at the **BANGKOK INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL of DANCE and MUSIC** on the **29th of September**. After our return Term four classes begin.

RILEY LEE BREATHING WORKSHOPS

This workshop is for everyone who breathes. In the workshop, we learn simple breathing exercises that are designed to increase strength, control and ultimately better awareness of our breath. The assumptions of the workshop are that there is an optimal way to breathe. We usually don't breathe that way and with the exercises we can begin to do so immediately.

Dr. Riley Lee has developed these simple exercises through nearly three decades of teaching and performing experience.

The purpose of these exercises is to make you immediately aware of your breath.

Assumptions underlying these exercises:

1. There is a healthy way to breathe.
2. Most of us do not breathe in this way.
3. Simple breathing exercises can benefit almost everyone on both physical and metaphysical levels.
4. Better breath awareness leads to better control over all aspects of your life.

[Ian Cleworth, September 2002]