

# TAIKOz

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## MAKI ISHII – “IN MEMORIAM 1936-2003”

It was with great sadness that TaikOz recently learnt of the passing of one of Japan's finest composers, Maki Ishii. The news carried extra poignancy for us as TaikOz had completed by a matter of only a few days, a series of three performances with the Sydney Symphony of his monumental work, *Monoprism for Wadaiko and Orchestra*. In fact we had received best wishes from him only weeks prior to the beginning of rehearsals.

Ishii once remarked that when he composed *Monoprism*, and its accompanying ensemble piece *Monochrome*, he had no idea that non-Japanese groups would ever be able to play this highly specialised music. Ishii wrote, “the fact that compositions for these rather simple instruments of Japanese folk tradition would receive so much interest from musicians in different parts of the world lay far beyond my imagination as a composer. Perhaps here may be felt the breath of a new age in the world of music.”

He was most encouraging of TaikOz's desire to establish an Australian Wadaiko practice and to this end sent the group scores of his later works for taiko ensemble. We have performed the powerful piece *Dyu-Ha* on a number of occasions, but two new compositions, *Beatessence 1* and *Beatessence 2*, will receive their Australian premieres in 2004. It had been our intention to invite Ishii-san to Sydney, but alas the concert will now be performed “In Memoriam”.

Maki Ishii pushed the boundaries of modern taiko practice to hitherto inconceivable heights. TaikOz mourns the loss of a great composer.

### TAIKOZ IN ADELAIDE

TaikOz will be performing at the **NORWOOD CONCERT HALL**, 175 The Parade, Norwood, from **September 3-6**.

**WHEN:** Wed 3 Sep, 7.30pm, Preview, all tickets \$20 plus booking fee!

Thu 4 Sep, 11am, School Show, students \$10 / disadvantaged \$8 plus bkg fee

Thu 4 Sep, 7.30pm, \$36/\$26 plus bkg fee

Fri 5 Sep, 7.30pm, \$36/26 plus bkg fee

Sat 6 Sep, 2pm, \$36/\$26 plus bkg fee

Sat 6 Sep, 7.30pm, \$36/\$26 plus bkg fee

We are really looking forward to our return visit to Adelaide and this time we will be presenting a series of **Wadaiko Workshops** for Adelaide taiko enthusiasts in conjunction with our concert performances.

**WORKSHOP VENUE: NEXUS CABARET**, Nexus Multicultural Arts Centre Inc, Lion Arts Centre, Cnr North Terrace & Morphett Street, Adelaide.

**WORKSHOP COST:** \$50 per session plus booking fee (4-Day Intensive is \$200 plus bkg fee). These prices include GST and the use of instruments and sticks.

The single session "**INTRODUCTION TO WADAIKO**" (two on offer) is designed to give people an overview of taiko technique, history and ensemble playing, covering a range of styles. We have presented many of these types of sessions throughout Australia and people have found them to be fun and educational.

**WHEN:** Sat 30 Aug, 2pm to 4pm **OR** Sun 31 Aug, 2pm to 4pm

The "**4-DAY INTENSIVE**" is for those who would really like to throw themselves into it! Each session is three hours in length and we will cover Wadaiko history, technique and ensemble playing in some depth. You don't have to be an experienced drummer, percussionist, instrumentalist or taiko player to do this course - just keen. It is designed to cover further ground than the single sessions and give you more of a feel for taiko training (it also gives you a chance to work the soreness out of your body)!

**WHEN:** Fri 29 Aug, 6.30pm to 9.30pm; Sat 30 Aug, 10am to 1pm; Sun 31 Aug, 10am to 1pm; Mon 1 Sep, 6.30pm to 9.30pm

Australia's own Grand Master of the shakuhachi flute, **RILEY LEE**, will also present a three-hour "**BREATHING WORKSHOP**". 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 this 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 you breath. Assumption 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

Better breath awareness leads to better control over all aspects of your life.

**WHEN:** Tue 2 Sep from 6.30pm to 9.30pm

**HOW TO BOOK:** VenueTix 8225 8888 or online at [www.venuetix.com.au](http://www.venuetix.com.au)

## **TAIKO WORKSHOPS – A PARTICIPANT’S PERSPECTIVE**

**By Katrina Beakley**

*This is the second time I've participated in an intensive Wadaiko workshop, and it just keeps getting better. What a great way to spend four days – learning new skills, meeting fellow drumming enthusiasts and feeling the energy of the taiko. This time the workshops were held in my hometown of Brisbane at the Powerhouse Theatre. For 4 days, 3 hours a day, our group struggled, but grinned, through the warm-ups, ignoring the aching arm muscles and blisters, studying one of Ian's compositions, Kazan. On our last day we performed the piece on the actual stage that TaikOz were to perform on. Just sitting there before the audience, even if they were empty seats, was a special feeling. When we finished the piece the whoop of joy and triumph was felt by all.*

*I also took some of my Art's students along to see TaikOz perform on the Wednesday evening's preview and they were blown away with the strength, focus and passion. Thank you to all TaikOz members for another wonderful experience – and yes, I will be definitely waiting for the next!!*

## **TAIKOZ ON TOUR**

**Friday July 18: Townsville Civic Theatre** (tel 07 4727 9013) as part of the Queensland Biennial Festival of Music

**Saturday July 19 & Tuesday July 22: Brisbane City Hall** for QBFM. TaikOz is appearing on the same bill as **Synergy** – Australia's greatest percussion ensemble – Egyptian darabuka extraordinaire **Hossam Ramzy**, Turkish flute, voice and drum specialist **Omar Faruk Tekbilek**, and master drummers from Senegal, **Ali N'Daiye Rose** and family.

**Saturday July 26: Bellingen Memorial Hall** for the Bellingen Music Association (Workshop and concert, tel 02 6655 1845)

**Thursday July 31 & Friday August 1: Lismore City Hall** for NORPA (Workshops, schools performances and concerts tel 02 6622 0300)

**Sunday August 3: Tweed Heads**