



HOPKINS CENTER
FOR THE ARTS

presents

YAMATO DRUMMERS OF JAPAN *BAKUON: LEGEND OF THE HEARTBEAT*

Post-Performance Discussion

You are invited to remain in the theater immediately following the performance for an informal discussion with the artists.

Funded in part by the John M. Tiedtke 1930 Visiting Performing Artists Fund, the David E. Skinner II 1942 Fund and the Robert S. Weil 1940 Fund in Support of the Hopkins Center's Visiting Performing Artists Program.

Sponsored by The Point
Progressive Radio

Tuesday, February 23, 2016 • 7 pm

Spaulding Auditorium • Dartmouth College

PROGRAM

WINGBEAT (HABATAKI)

Since you have been put on this earth you muster your courage and flap your wings heading for the sky.

You can't cower in the nest forever.

Now is the time. Now is the moment.

Fly!

The combination of *shimedaiko* and *okedodaiko* create the beat, and the *okedodaiko* drummer dances a powerful dance on the stage. This composition makes you feel the energy of a challenge by making you imagine you are poised to fly into the sky.

THOUSAND SOUND (SEN-NARI)

My sound is one beat. Your sound is one beat. Anyone's sound is one beat.

The beats echo here, there and everywhere.

A thousand sounds reverberate in unison to finally create one sound.

On the stage, the quiet sound of the Taiko drum gives the premonition that something is about to come into being. The *shimedaiko*, the smallest of the Japanese *taiko* drums, can express a wide range of sounds which make you feel the appeal and potential of the Japanese Taiko drum as an instrument. You can feel the synchronization of the hearts of the drummers who mutually put their emotions into each beat of the *shimedaiko*.

THE FIRE (REKKA)

This session pitches two drummers against two drummers—all four highly skilled. Enjoy the crackling tension and the lightning speed. No one will back down. Which team do you support?

FUBUKI (ITTETSU-SAKURA)

If you think about it, the strength of a man is to head towards a single path.

The cherry tree gets through the winter and produces a momentary bloom.

The resolute falling dance of the blossom is exactly the same as the path on which men must live.

No complaining, no grumbling, simply devote yourself to this way of life.

Enshrined before the *odaiko*, the drummer faces off. There is no way out and there can be no deception. Believing in the time spent repeatedly practicing, the drummer strikes. As the cherry blossom (which embodies the way of life that the Japanese deem acceptable) dances to the ground, the *odaiko* rings out wholeheartedly.

• INTERMISSION •

PROGRAM CONTINUED

HAPPY DRUMMING (RAKUDA)

You walk and walk but never arrive—people’s lifetimes consist of boisterous merrymaking. It’s OK to take it easy. It’s OK to have fun. Are you having fun?

Playing the Taiko drum is physically hard. The body becomes toned through daily training, and the spirit also becomes toned. All the drummer’s energy is poured into the performance and the drummer sends out the overflowing power from his body to the audience, topped with a smile. When this is accomplished, the audience returns the smile.

SCRAP TOYS (GARAKUTA)

Saying “This is odds and ends at best” does not mean I am being particularly petulant. It’s just little old me, and there are things I want to do, things I want to say. Even odds and ends have half a soul.

It is difficult to say that the instrument called a *chappa* plays the leading role. However, it is not an instrument that we can do without. It seems unnecessary but is actually important, is both jarring and pleasant, and seems ungainly to the eye yet you cannot dislike it.

THE BIGGEST SOUND (BAKUON)

The beat of the heart that resides in the human body.
The sound that never pauses while there is life.
As long as the human world exists, this roaring sound will never pause.

Yamato members concentrate all their efforts for this last piece of the program with dozens of small and large Taiko drums. The heartbeat that pulses through the body of the drummer is expressed in the sound of the Japanese Taiko drums. The tale of the heartbeat spun by Yamato begins here.

The program is subject to change.

YAMATO DRUMMERS OF JAPAN

Masa Ogawa *artistic director*
Marika Nito
Saori Higashi
Hisato Fukuda

Jun Kato
Subaru Imai
Haruki Matsumoto
Kenta Ono

PROGRAM NOTES

WHAT IS BAKUON?

The theme of our new program is “the story of a strong, passionate and continuous beat.” The story is based on the sound of the heartbeat in all of us. This sound of the heartbeat is continuous from our birth, growth and day-to-day existence. Above all, we who carry this sound are protagonists in this story of today, during this brief moment in the endlessness of time.

In all that visibly exists between the blue sky and green earth, our hearts are continuously beating. It has a quiet but strong pulse. Inspired by this sound, we wove this beat into the

story of Yamato. Each beat from the Taiko drums in Yamato represents its history, a life’s story of sweat and tears, and the vast memories remembered within the sound of every person’s heart who is gathered here.

Alas, although our place in this vast storyline may appear insignificant, we still endeavor to inscribe a new page into the story!

Today we hope to share with our audience an earnest moment in time where together “we somehow still exist.”

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Yamato was founded by Masa Ogawa in 1993 in Nara, which is said to be the birthplace of Japanese culture. Presently based in Asuka Village, Nara Prefecture, Yamato travels all over the world with Japan’s traditional Wadaiko drums, putting its very souls into the unusual instruments, whose sound stirs the hearts of people everywhere.

In the village of Asuka, a place with more than a thousand years of history and culture, Yamato seeks new expression with Wadaiko as its backbone. They think of the sound of the drums—made of animal skin and ancient trees, some of which are more than 400 years old—as a pulse or heartbeat (*shin-on*), the center of life and the source of power which pulsates within the human body. Like the strong and sturdy heartbeats of a lonely runner with a sleek and powerful body, Yamato attempts to create the energy of life, which envelops the audience and performers. What one feels when surrounded by the sound of Wadaiko, brought out by these highly trained performers, is what the Japanese call *tamashy*, translated as soul, spirit and

psyche—the basic elements of life. It is something which is invisible and intangible but whose existence is certainly felt. The pulse, carried down from antiquity, will resonate within all the bodies gathered at any given performance. Yamato last performed at the Hopkins Center in 2007.

Masa Ogawa *artistic director* was born in 1967 and raised in Nara Prefecture. He came across Japanese drumming when he was trying to become a glass artist, after graduating from the Art Department of Kyoto Seika University in 1991. Since then, he worked with several Japanese drumming performance groups, and he established Yamato in 1993. Yamato has given 3,000 performances in 53 countries. Ogawa composes, choreographs and works on theatrical designs for all the music performed by Yamato. He took charge of theatrical design as well as overall staging in order to complete the powerful and visually beautiful performance that combined traditional instrument with new music. He found a new direction for Japanese drum music that had been considered only as

ABOUT THE ARTISTS CONTINUED

Japanese traditional music. As a result, Yamato has gained a high reputation from around the world. He has performed as a core member since the group's inception. Currently, he provides music to other groups and instructs all age levels

how to play Japanese drums. In recent years, he has produced Yamato in cooperation with Asuka-mura and Nara Prefecture, which is Yamato's home base. He is contributing to the revitalization of the local culture.

CONNECTING ARTISTS TO THE COMMUNITY

While at Dartmouth, Yamato will participate in a post-performance discussion and perform in the School Matinee Series. For more information on Hop Outreach & Arts Education, call 603.646.2010 or visit hop.dartmouth.edu/online/outreach.

FREE ONLINE STUDY GUIDE

In conjunction with its School Matinee Series, the Hop prepares study guides to enhance student learning prior to and following performances. The Yamato study guide can be found on its performance page at hop.dartmouth.edu/online/ and on the Outreach and Arts Education section of the Hop's website.



Music Department Residency

RHYTHM AND DANCE OF INDIA

thu MAR 3 • 7 pm • THE MOORE THEATER

In a Hop exclusive, Sandeep Das—a Grammy-nominated master of the *tabla* drum and founding member of Yo-Yo Ma's Silk Road Ensemble—leads this intimate ensemble of musicians and dancers.



ANGÉLIQUE KIDJO

tue APR 26 • 7 pm • SPAULDING AUDITORIUM

Grammy-winning singer blends dance grooves from her native West Africa with R&B, jazz and samba. An unforgettable, joyous live performance.



For tickets or more info call the Box Office at 603.646.2422 or visit hop.dartmouth.edu.
Share your experiences! #HopkinsCenter

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If you do not wish to keep your playbill, please discard it in the recycling bin provided in the lobby. Thank you.