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# Kodo One Earth Tour

# 2015: Mystery

Directed by Tamasaburo Bando

BAM Howard Gilman Opera House  
Mar 19—21 at 7:30pm

Running time: two hours, including intermission

*Season Sponsor:*

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# KODŌ

NOTE FROM TAMASABURO BANDO,  
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

In the folk arts that have been handed down across Japan, there's a sacredness, an air of mystery within prayers. The drums express this, and I'd like for the audience to feel it. I hope theater-goers will experience the same sort of otherworldly splendor that you sense at a temple or a shrine, or when you discover things in nearby woods.

Another thing—I like people to enjoy “darkness.” The beauty of something you come across lit by candlelight, a sense of something vague yet marvelous. *Mystery* enfolds within it fear, humor, charm, and various other qualities. In the “Serpent Dances” that have come down from old, the defeated serpent is endowed with a surprising level of sacredness. In this performance, many things will emerge from the darkness. While it's a drum concert—playing as only drums can play—we've added plenty of visual interest.

A space or time of wonder can only be experienced by those who were actually there. Religious rituals, and the arts as well, have been refined over a long span of time from the inspiration of those who went before us. In this staging of drums I hope the audience enjoys to the fullest that magical sense of space and time.

NOTE FROM NOBUYUKI NISHIMURA,  
PRODUCER

One day, while we were sharing a meal, the artistic director and some Kodo performers were discussing the future of Kodo. They spoke about

the future direction of the group and the kind of expression they want to explore moving forward.

You could say that both our field of performing arts and the world we live in differ greatly from that of our artistic director. For this reason alone, his demands on us create significant challenges. If we prepare for a performance with our own concepts, we cannot meet his demands. What is our artistic director aiming to do? What do we need to do to achieve those goals? These questions prompted us to ponder the very meaning of appearing on stage, as opposed to just playing taiko.

The answer has to begin with us shedding the image of ourselves that we have forged to date as taiko players. In order for the Kodo performing arts ensemble to carry on, Kodo cannot merely play taiko; the group also has to experiment with new stage productions that captivate more varied and vast audiences. This ensemble has been a leader in the taiko world for many years, so we tend to end up imitating a fixed image of our own, but we do not want this image to limit our creative process.

*Mystery* incorporates lavish theatrical elements with new costumes and props like never before. Best of all, the pieces Kodo performs in this production are almost all new compositions. This performance feels like one answer to our questions about Kodo's future, a work that was sparked by deeper dialogue and enhanced collaboration with our artistic director. We hope that this new creation will reverberate with this renewed passion and touch the hearts of our audience.



## PERFORMERS

**Masayuki Sakamoto**

**Eri Uchida**

**Mariko Omi**

**Yosuke Kusa**

**Shogo Komatsuzaki**

**Akiko Ando**

**Yuta Sumiyoshi**

**Tetsumi Hanaoka**

**Kosuke Urushikubo**

**Jun Jidai**

**Koki Miura**

**Shunichiro Kamiya**

**Ryoma Tsurumi**

**Kengo Watanabe**

**Tomoe Miura**

## STAFF

Artistic Director **Tamasaburo Bando**

Producer **Nobuyuki Nishimura**

Assistant Artistic Director **Yosuke Oda**

Choreography **Kazumi Boy**

Technical Director **Martin Lechner**

Lighting Designer **Kenichi Mashiko** (S.L.S.)

Stage Manager **Takeshi Arai**

Assistant Stage Manager **Nanako Suzuki** (Niigata Shoumei Giken)

Company Manager **Takashi Akamine**

Assistant Company Managers **Yui Kawamoto, Mio Teycheney**

## TOUR SPONSOR

*Kodo One Earth Tour 2015: Mystery* is supported by



North American Tour Representatives

IMG Artists

## PART ONE

Jamai	Traditional, arranged by Kodo
Yomichi	Composed by Tsuyoshi Maeda, 2013
Wall	Composed by Yosuke Oda, 2013
Ajara	Composed by Mitsuru Ishizuka, 2006
Ake no Myojo	Composed by Yosuke Oda, 2012
Harewataru	Composed by Eri Uchida, 2013
Namahage	Arranged by Kodo Featuring “Yomichi” by Tsuyoshi Maeda, 2013
Mute	Composed by Yosuke Oda, 2013
Kusa-wake	Composed by Yuta Sumiyoshi, 2013
Kei Kei	Composed by Yuta Sumiyoshi, 2012

—Intermission—

## PART TWO

Chit Chat	Composed by Eri Uchida, 2013
Shishimai	Arranged by Kodo, Featuring “Lion” by Leonard Eto, 1990
Yuyami	Composed by Yuta Sumiyoshi, 2013
Color	Composed by Masayuki Sakamoto, 2009
Miyake	Traditional, arranged by Kodo
Yatai-bayashi	Traditional, arranged by Kodo
Jamai	Traditional, arranged by Kodo
Hekireki	Composed by Masayuki Sakamoto, 2013

The following pieces are based on these regional traditional performing arts:

- 1) Jamai  
Iwami Kagura (Iwami Region, Shimane)
- 2) Miyake  
Kamitsuki Mikoshi Taiko (Miyake Island, Tokyo)
- 3) Yatai-bayashi  
Chichibu Yatai-bayashi (Chichibu, Saitama)







### TAMASABURO BANDO

Artistic Director

Tamasaburo Bando is a leading Kabuki actor, and the most popular and celebrated *onnagata* (actor specializing in female roles) currently on stage. His profound aesthetic sense has been demonstrated across numerous platforms as he received high acclaim for his many artistic endeavors. His stage direction of productions such as *Romeo & Juliet* and *Kaijin Besso* garnered accolades, while as a movie director he demonstrated his artistic prowess in the films *Gekashitsu*, *Yume no Onna*, and *Tenshu Monogatari*, which caused a splash. In April 2012, Bando assumed the position of Kodo's artistic director. In September 2012, he was recognized as an Important Intangible Cultural Property Holder ("Living National Treasure") and in 2013 he was decorated as a Commander, the highest honor of France's Order of Arts and Letters.

### KODO

Performers

Exploring the limitless possibilities of the traditional Japanese drum, the taiko, Kodo is forging new directions for a vibrant living art form. The vibrations created by the drummers not only reach the ears of the audience, they move listeners on a visceral level. Making its debut at the Berlin Festival in 1981, Kodo is based on Sado Island in Niigata, Japan, giving more than 5500 performances in 47 countries worldwide under the theme "One Earth." Spending about a third of the year overseas, a third touring in Japan, and a third on Sado Island, Kodo is always on the move, giving performances that transcend borders, genres, and time. In March of 2012, Kodo received the 33rd Annual Matsuo Performing Arts Award for Japanese Music.

### TAMASABURO BANDO & KODO

In November 2003, the first Kodo performance directed by Tamasaburo Bando, *Kodo One Earth Tour Special*, was held. The production was created over the course of two years with Bando making five visits to Sado Island for rehearsals. In 2006, the first onstage collaboration between Tamasaburo Bando and Kodo was realized in *Amaterasu*, a musical dance play based on a Japanese myth. It featured Bando as the sun goddess Amaterasu and Kodo as the gods of the story who express themselves through music and dance. This performance was a catalyst for Kodo to break new ground in taiko expression. In August 2007, encore performances were held at Kabukiza Theater in Tokyo. The year 2009 marked the debut performances by Kodo of *DADAN*, a production that boldly portrays the essence of drumming. In February 2012, four sold-out *DADAN* performances took place at Théâtre du Châtelet in Paris. In May 2012, Bando's first production as Kodo's artistic director, *Kodo One Earth Tour 2012: Legend*, was premiered. In 2013, a new *Amaterasu* production was

performed in Tokyo, Fukuoka, and Kyoto, with a brand-new cast including former Takarazuka Revue male role star Harei Aine in the role of Ameno-uzume.

### YOSUKE ODA

Assistant Artistic Director

Yosuke Oda first encountered taiko when he was a high school student. He entered the Kodo Apprentice Centre in 1999 and became a Kodo member in 2003. He pushes himself to the limits physically while passionately seeking the true sound of the drum. In 2012, he made his directorial debut as artistic director of the School Workshop Performances. He is a prolific composer who has challenged himself recently to also create sensitive forms of expression such as *Ake no Myojo*, a new piece for female performers featuring taiko, dance, and song. He directed the Earth Celebration 2013 Shiroyama Concert *Shukusai* and was chosen to portray the role of Susano'o in the Tokyo and Kyoto performances of *Amaterasu* that year.



