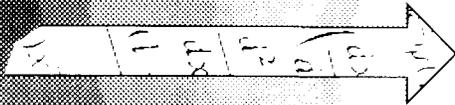


BODY Dialogue

Journal of the U.S. Shintaido Movement

Issue No. 5, Spring 1996



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BODY Dialogue

Journal of the U.S. Shintaido Movement

Issue No. 5, Spring 1996

Shintaido of America's 20th Anniversary... Sixth International Retreat

by Kazu Shibao

July 3-7, 1996 is the date of the Sixth Shintaido International Retreat and SoA's 20th Anniversary National Gasshuku. This auspicious event will be held in Sonoma, California, and is being organized by Pacific Shintaido on behalf of both Shintaido of America and the International Shintaido Federation.

This retreat is unprecedented and special in that both the

... and the United Nations' 50th: "Will the Circle Be Unbroken"

by Roby Newman



On June 3rd, Pacific Shintaido was part of an event (one of many spread over the month) commemorating the end of the Second World War and the birth of the United Nations in San Francisco. A giant, multi-colored circle, symbol of unity and interconnection, was painted, with introductory remarks from the American School of Japanese Arts and a brief Shintaido demonstration led by H.F. Ito. Roby Newman was there.

international and the national at the same time. We are privileged that Mr. Hiroyuki Aoki, the founder of Shintaido, will head the International as the Director of Instruction. All instructors from around the world are invited to learn from his instruction and inspiration.



David Franklin

The First International was held in 1980 in Sausalito, California. This sixth represents a full circle that America is sponsoring an international again. The second was held in Bristol, England in 1982, the third in Pontalier, France in 1984, the fourth in Tanzawa, Japan in 1988 and the fifth in Brighton, England, in 1992.

The National Retreat will highlight the 20th anniversary of Shintaido of America since H.F. Ito and Michael Thompson founded it in San Francisco in 1976. Jim Sterling, our national Technical Director, will be the director of Instruction. All students of Shintaido, including beginners and first-time attendees, are most welcome to attend.

The theme for this double event is "Across Space and Time." This appropriate message captures the breadth of Shintaido practice especially in countries such as Japan, France, England and the United States with a 20-to-30 year history in each particular country. Our special thanks go to Mary Coe from Shintaido North East for being so thoughtful in developing this theme.

The manager is Kazu Shiba; the assistant manager is Sandra Bengtsson. If you have any questions or requests for more brochures, please get in touch with Kazu. His phone fax number is (415) 584-8026, and his e-mail address is bcruz@galileo.stmarys-ca.edu

See the Events Calendar on page 5 for more information about the Sixth International

*"The practice of peace,
whether in art or politics,
is still viewed as a novelty"*

The day began with blue sky and sunshine, with barely a hint of fog. By 8:00 am a group of people had gathered at UN Plaza (between City Hall and the Library); organized by artists and peace activists Mario Uribe and Kaz Tanahashi, the preparation for the circle took shape. A large plastic tarp was placed on the pavement, approximately 50 by 30 feet in

dimension. On top of this were laid three large strips of white canvas that were taped in place, with six inches of separation between each panel. As this step was going on, the task of assembling the brush also got underway. Made of a copper base and sponge bristle, it was about five feet high, certainly

continued on page 4



Kazu Yanagi

"Circle of All Nations" hanging on the War Memorial in San Francisco

Shintaido, or "new body way," is a new art of movement and life-expression. Born in Japan in the 1960s, it encompasses a range of traditional disciplines and contemporary Western arts and philosophies. *Body Dialogue* is the journal of Shintaido of America a non-profit organization.

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

No Bones About It

by Friedemann Schulz

In writing today, I am reminded that a few years ago I had second thoughts about becoming a Shintaido assistant. I feared at the time that an involvement in a system might endanger the free spirit of my Shintaido practice.

Not only did I become an assistant and eventually an instructor, but to my surprise I find myself being the president of Shintaido of America!

Part of the System

I have to say that I have learned a great deal about myself by becoming part of "the system," and I have gained a different understanding about some of its purpose. This is what I would like to write about today.

Since I became president of SoA in January '94, I have often heard the question: "What does SoA do for me?!" And after giving the usual list of benefits, *Body Dialogue* magazine, SoA discounts, standardized exams, blah blah blah, I often felt slightly embarrassed, because I could not tick off more of SoA's "products."

Then recently, I was part of a meeting that involved members of a Japanese Shintaido group, whose members

I mention it here, because like Brad Larson's work on our mailing list (to name just one of the more mundane areas of work of our SoA secretary), this kind of effort and its "product" will not be easily detectable to most SoA members. But it is exactly this type of "invisible" work that goes a long way to keep our practice free of issues that otherwise might intrude upon it.

*SoA's "product"
is its ability to
absorb crises*

For instance, when I am going to a workshop or visiting another group, I have no questions about the qualification of the instructor, even if I have not heard his or her name before. I don't have concerns, because I have learned to trust the process that assures quality control for Shintaido teachers—a process that developed over a long time and took a lot of effort by the individual board members or officers of organizations such as SoA or ISF.

deal with political or policy issues, plan ahead or support specific projects.

I do think that we, of the SoA Board and staff, can always do a better job, and it is absolutely necessary to get feed-back about the needs of the membership. But I thought it might also be a good idea to remind ourselves about the more "intangible bottom line" of our organization.

I would love it if you'd drop me a line about this article or about some of your ideas that could help us to do a better job.

Thank you for your support. •••

Friedemann Schulz is the preesident of Shintaido of America, and a Shintaido instructor in Santa Monica, CA. You can reach him at (310) 396-1426 or by e-mail at wiedumir@aol.com

**Join Shintaido of America—
Includes a Subscription to
BODYDialogue magazine**

SoA MEMBERSHIP SUPPORTS

- curriculum development
- continuing education for instructors

...to take exams in the US. To make a long story short, we did not have a policy that covered this situation, and SoA will now push to get a clear ruling from ISF (the International Shintaido Federation). It later became clear to me that this was the kind of situation that SoA was designed to handle.

SOA'S Product

An analogy for me is our bone structure, which will carry the body's movements and supports its direction. I think our organizational system serves us in a similar ways. In other words, SoA's "product" is often not so much a specific result, as is its functionality as a structure: its ability to absorb crises,

Shintaido of America (SOA) was established to give practitioners access to qualified instruction. It produces educational materials on the practice and teaching of Shintaido.

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"SUPERKATA"

a how-to manual for instructors

by David Franklin

A friend of mine recently came to a Shintaido class for the first time, and later asked: "Why haven't I heard of this before? This is some of the most incredible body movement I have ever experienced. Why isn't this more popular?"

Good question, and one for which (typically) I had no ready answer. But with the Superkata project already in progress, I was beginning to feel that I could see part of the solution on the horizon.

Not exactly inspiration, but...

Superkata initially grew out of questioning whether Shintaido will continue to exist in the future. Both Shintaido of America and the regional organizations have had many successes. We have a coherent curriculum for the study of Shintaido and an exam system for deciding who is qualified to teach it. We also run successful weekend workshops through genuine group effort. People who may never have imagined themselves as leaders or organizers find themselves growing to fill those shoes. This is an especially significant sign of Shintaido's strengths as a system of human development.

But there is something missing from this picture. Who will the well-qualified instructors teach? Who will come to weekend workshops if they haven't first been studying regularly in a

continued on page 6

- assistance to new groups
- support for the National Instructors Council
- development of new publications and videos

MEMBERS RECEIVE

- subscription to *Body Dialogue* magazine
- directory of Shintaido practitioners nationwide
- information about events and workshops
- discounts on selected publications and events

ONLY MEMBERS MAY

- attend nationally-sponsored workshops
- apply for scholarships for national events
- apply for Shintaido examinations

MEMBERSHIP REGISTRATION

Please add me to your mailing list for information about events and workshops

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I would like to support Shintaido of America as a member (includes BodyDialogue subscription, membership directory, and discounts on selected equipment):

- Full-time student member \$15.00
- General member \$30.00
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Name _____

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Please send a copy of this form with payment to:

**Shintaido of America Membership
P.O. Box 38-1672
Cambridge, MA 02238**

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Research, Development, and the Core

by Haruyoshi F. Ito

Mr. Hiroyuki Aoki is a man who is never at a loss for creative energy or urges to explore and research areas of human development, both new and ancient. In recent years his explorations have touched on areas ranging from traditional waterfall meditation to Philipino psychic healing and swimming with dolphins. He is also the founder of Shintaido, which as a systematic method of study has a stable and accessible curriculum. Sometimes his research is perceived by Shintaido practitioners as part of the Shintaido system. H.F. Ito, one of the main international advocates of Shintaido, gave his point of view in a talk in San Francisco. —eds.

It seems to me that there are two ways to follow Aoki-sensei's ideas and experiments in living, both within and outside of *keiko* (Shintaido practice). To use an analogy from the world of computers, they correspond, on one hand, to focusing on upgrading to the latest version of software regardless of its relevance to your needs; and on the other, to using whatever version you happen to have in order to pursue your interests. Both of these approaches have their strong and weak points.

Research and Development

One approach is to focus Aoki himself as intently as possible. He is the chief Shintaido "software" developer, and people might want to study his latest "products" and get the most recent "upgrades."

As a parallel example, NASA and IBM are two enterprises that research and develop many good ideas for future use. Cutting-edge accomplishments such as arranging individual atoms to spell out the "IBM" logo may lead to useful technologies—100 to 300 years from now. But it is not always practical to provide these R&D (research and development) innovations to today's society. Aoki-sensei's activity in Shintaido is also R&D. He is always trying something new, always experimenting.



H. F. Ito

time. I came to the U.S. in 1975 to introduce Shintaido here. Between 1975 and 1988, I was developing Shintaido in the U.S. and was trying to figure out the best way to teach Americans. Part of this work involved refining the core movements of Shintaido.

Developing International Standards

In 1980, during the First International in San Francisco, Shintaido examinations were held for the first time outside Japan. Westerners asked Aoki-sensei how to prepare for examinations and what curriculum they were expected to learn. As a result of these questions, examinations became more objective. From 1980 to 1988, I wrote a core program for the Shintaido examination curriculum for the International Shintaido Federation Technical Committee. This curriculum was formally established in 1988 and is currently in use.

At the International Conference in Japan in 1988, Shintaido practitioners from all over the world gathered. The Japanese practitioners were not technically advanced, but had many adventures to relate of their activities with Aoki-sensei. The Europeans and Americans who took exams, on the other hand, demonstrated strong technique and understanding of the basic core Shintaido program. This difference illustrates the two approaches to studying from Aoki-sensei.

From 1988 to 1990, I was hired as a restructuring consultant for the Japanese Shintaido Association to prepare for their twentieth anniversary event in Japan. At that time, I started to provide Japanese Shintaido practitioners with updated information on the the core program for the Shintaido examination curriculum. In 1992, when Aoki-sensei came back to resume the leadership of the Japanese Shintaido movement, they naturally reverted to the R&D approach.

Shintaido in the Community

I believe that, here in the U.S., we

As in the example of NASA and IBM, he is developing products for future generations. He has a true artist's nature and is always giving voice to his inspiration. And this nature is coupled with a strong and magnetic personality.

Many Japanese practitioners have decided to take advantage of their proximity and his availability to study his latest ideas and to follow him in his creative endeavors.

Implementing the Core Curriculum

The other approach is to maintain a respectful (and, geographically, inevitable) distance which means learning more slowly but also with less chance of burn-out. In our case, the Pacific Ocean is the physical barrier that establishes a buffer between those practicing Shintaido in the U.S. and Aoki-sensei who resides in Japan. This means that, although we may not have access to the latest version of Shintaido software, it may be easier for us to focus on using the Shintaido we know in our communities. Because there is an ocean between Japan and us, we have time to absorb and digest Aoki-sensei's previous upgrade before feeling obligated to try out his latest version.

The latest version could be a technique, a study, or just about anything he is focusing on. There is a difference between the R&D laboratory style and the Shintaido core style. In the past, whenever Aoki-sensei came up with a new technique or idea, I would study it, further refine it, incorporate in the core program, and finally present it to Shintaido practitioners.

My concern is that if Shintaido practitioners keep following Aoki-sensei, they will find it hard to focus on finding ways to introduce Shintaido to the general public. In other words, they might become obsessed with having the latest version of the Shintaido software rather than trying to use the available version to meet the needs of their students or their community.

When I lived in Japan, I was a member of Rakutenkai between 1960 and 1975, which was Aoki-sensei's R&D department at the

may lead to useful technologies— 100 to 300 years from now.

should focus our energies on using Shintaido "software" according to the needs of each community. I think the future of Shintaido in the U.S. is based on how we can develop the Shintaido system and share it with the rest of society. Its future, ten or twenty years

from now, may be dependent on how much each Shintaido instructor can come up with ideas on how to use *Tenshingoso* (a basic Shintaido form), for example, to meet the needs of various communities. Some examples we already have are Joe Zawielski's teaching Shintaido to physically and mentally challenged kids and Hideko Hokari's use of *Yokikei Kenko Taiso* (the soft movement part of Shintaido) to inspire housewives in her hometown in Japan. At the request of David Palmer and Gary Bernard, I have written a Shintaido program (featuring *wakame* 'seaweed exercise' and Shintaido *kenko taiso* health exercises) for their Amma massage students. Other approaches might be the adaptation of Shintaido long staff, short staff, or sword techniques as a method of outreach to people interested in the martial arts.

All these approaches can be valid along with others to come, and should give us hope for the future of Shintaido in this country even though we may not have access to the latest version of the "software." •••

Haruyoshi F. Ito is one of the members of the Rakutenkai group that originally developed Shintaido. Co-founder and former Head Instructor of Shintaido of America, he lives in San Francisco.



Kazu Yanagi

PRACTITIONER'S CORNER

One of the things that happens every time I go to a *gasshuku* (retreat) is that at some point during the weekend I decide to quit Shintaido. It seems to have nothing to do with whether things go well or badly, how people behave, whether I am taking an exam or simply attending the event, and I'm always surprised that I never remember, as the weekend begins, that at some point during the weekend I will decide to quit Shintaido.

Let me explain. I always know that I will learn something during a *gasshuku*, and I'm pretty good at not trying to figure out ahead of time what it will be.

But apparently I do have some subtle expectations—“It'll be fun,” “It'll be like last time”— or even just “I'll learn something.” I spend a lot of time trying to concentrate, to listen and watch, looking for the thing I'm supposed to learn. Usually there's some annoying little thing happening on the side that I keep telling, “Leave me alone, I'm awaiting my Message.”

Eventually the frustration of not finding my “Message” wears me down and I begin to get short-tempered. “This is a lot of bunk, anyway,” I get to thinking. “Besides, I don't like everybody here. So-and-so is pushy, this other person is arrogant, that person doesn't like me anyways, and everybody's just a lotta fuzzy crunchy granola types that aren't in touch with reality anyhow.”

“That's it,” I say, “I've had it. I'm quitting Shintaido. I'm no longer a Shintaido student.”

Then I learn something.

It's usually within 24 hours of my resignation, when I'm just going through the motions of finishing up the weekend before

within me, so that I went home still unclear whether that “Message” I was supposed to get had arrived.

Monday evening I was walking out of my workplace towards my car on the way to my regular Shintaido class. A lovely sunset spread before me, and it humored me that it seemed to be pointing towards Worcester, where we have our *dojo* (practice place). I thought of the stability of that class, that I saw the same people there every week, that we practiced together on the same things. Then I thought of the workshop,

where we practiced with people we didn't necessarily know in a *dojo* not our own, and took exams— practicing at, not with, but at others, in a way.

I suddenly felt like I'd been slammed over the head with a two-by-four.

“I need the old and the new, the familiar and the unfamiliar, the safe and the risky,” I realized. It was a sort of yin-yang kind of thought, and I suddenly knew that life depends on opposites working together. Life isn't about change—

it's about stability and change interacting. Cells must have parts that remain the same and parts that constantly vary. Trees both offer and receive, offering oxygen, receiving sunlight (have you ever noticed how many trees stand in “O”?).

I'd been wondering why dead things had been giving me such peace lately— at the *gasshuku* I'd gone walking, pleased by the sound of the dead grasses underfoot. On Monday, on my way to lunch, I'd walked out to my car and paused to appreciate a tree with dead leaves that whispered “ssshhhhhhhh!” in various tones in the wind. “Life depends on the dead and the living,” I thought, “More yin-yang stuff.” I'm not sure I completely understand it, but it's so fulfilling that the “Message” I



by Christine Conran

something to do with that little annoying thing that I kept pushing away.

This past weekend, at our annual winter workshop, sure enough, late Saturday night I quit Shintaido yet again. At Sunday morning's session, I learned a lot of small things that I could not have been open to the day before. It was an emotional weekend, and ideas were swirling all around and

me. Maybe next time I'll remember that I always quit Shintaido at a *gasshuku*. Maybe not. Maybe it doesn't matter. I seem to get the Message in spite of all my well-laid expectations. •••

Christine Conran is a Shintaido practitioner in Worcester, MA. This article originally appeared in the Shintaido North East newsletter.

U.N.'s 50th

continued from page 1

one of the largest brushes ever used for painting. Imagine a giant playing with watercolors, and you have some idea.

By 10:00 am, several busloads of tourists had witnessed the proceedings, which by now included the preparation of press kits and the gathering of over a dozen shintaidoists, dressed fittingly in white. People were curious about what was going to take place; the practice of peace, whether in art or politics, is still viewed as a novelty, though one where there is a palpable interest and respect.



Painting the "Circle of All Nations"

A number of onlookers joined the eager assemblage when Liz Kenner of the American School of Japanese Arts welcomed everyone in attendance, reminding us of the historic significance of the anniversary. She then introduced Bob Brockob, one of the principle organizers of the event and director of the American School. H.F. Ito then led us— Shintaidoists in white and everyone else who had gathered around the canvas— in a brief warm-up. Ito's theme was, naturally, the circle, so we rotated our shoulders forward and back and did a few body rotations. A number of passers-by stopped and joined in, including one elderly asian woman who followed quite closely and without a trace of self-consciousness.

There was a wonderful spirit in the air, so when we did *Tenshingososei* (a basic Shintaido form), many in the crowd participated with us. Make a joyous noise unto the Lord, the bible says, and it was great to hear five sounds that symbolize the cycle of life fill City Hall Plaza for half a minute on a Saturday morning.

Kaz Tanahashi had placed bright swatches of paint between the two concentric circles drawn in pencil on the canvas; thus would our circle,

representing the people of the world, take shape. A little before noon, seven people very slowly moved the brush over the canvas, creating behind them a swirl of color. The painters could not see their work until they were finished; it happened in public display for everyone but them. Simultaneously, flags were passed out, with the request that we "pass our flag to the person on our right." The nation-state has a powerful hold on the hearts and minds of the planet (witness Bosnia). To give up our flag is an equally strong symbol.

The nation-state has a powerful hold on the hearts and minds of the planet

As the wind picked up, people began to filter out of the Plaza, the Circle of All Nations we had just painted waving in its moorings, slowly drying. That afternoon, it was hung from the front of the War Memorial building, where it would stay for over three weeks, through Official UN 50th Anniversary festivities. It was a privilege to be a part of such a gathering. •••

Roby Newman is a Shintaido practitioner in San Francisco, CA.

Don't Know Much 'bout Philosophy

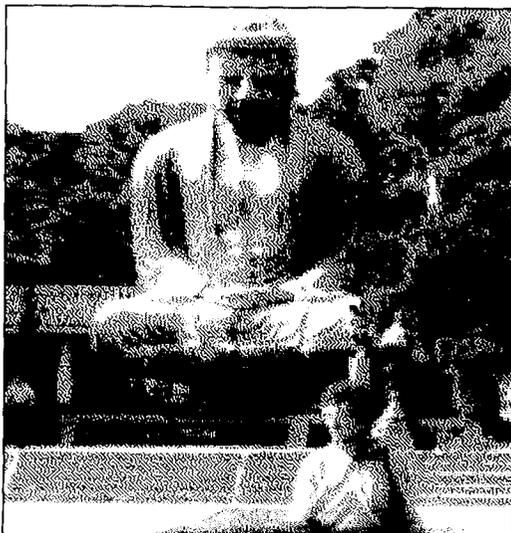
On the eve of Shintaido's 20th anniversary in the U.S., should we worry about *what it is*?

by Michael Thompson

As we are about to celebrate the 20th anniversary of Shintaido in the United States and are approaching a new millennium, I thought it might be appropriate to offer a personal assessment of where we have come and where we might be heading.

When West met East

As most everyone involved in Shintaido knows, it had its beginnings in this country when H.F. Ito moved here from Japan in the mid-seventies with the intention of creating a Shintaido school. I had been practicing for four years at that time: two in France with Marc Bassis and two in Geneva, New York on my own. Ito and I decided to join forces on the West Coast and the result was the creation of a non-profit corporation called "Rakutenaki-Shintaido of California" (*Rakutenkai* was the original group that developed Shintaido in Japan— ed.). Ito's main emphasis at that time was the



development of native instructors and a functioning organization. He was successful in both endeavors and by the time of our 10th anniversary, celebrated at a *gasshuku* (retreat) in New Hampshire, we had established solid footing with groups led by U.S. instructors on both the East and West coasts.

In 1988, Mr. Hiroyuki Aoki named me to replace Ito as U.S. Head Instructor, a position I held until I resigned in 1992. In retrospect, it seems to me that I lacked the sense of mission that

mystify me and others that we don't have more members. One of the problems is that most of our instructors are not teaching— this for many reasons, including the fact that no one yet has been able to make a living teaching Shintaido in this country. Where there are courses being offered, it seems to be in a sporadic, hit-or-miss way: to this day, there has never been

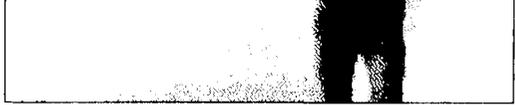
*Maybe it is characteristic
of the Clinton age
to hedge your bets*

an official Shintaido center, either at the regional or national level.

What it is

We have always spent an inordinate amount of time trying to define what exactly Shintaido is and why we do it. This is partly the fault of the instructors who do not always manage to convey a clear idea of what it is they are teaching. Is it a martial art? Well, sometimes, but not always, and when it is, it is not a form of self-defense. Is it a health movement? Parts of it, but sometimes we push our bodies well past the "comfort zone." Is it a form of community? When we attend *gasshuku*, yes, but otherwise, we have our own lives to live. Maybe it is characteristic of the Clinton age to hedge your bets, but sometimes I wish we could just yell out: "YES! IT'S AN OFF-THE-WALL CULT, GODDAMN IT!" and get it over with.

Actually, it's probably much less dramatic than that. We have a core curriculum that has been around for more than twenty



Michael Thompson in Japan, 1975

continue Ito's work as a national leader. As a result, the Shintaido movement seemed to lose momentum at the national level although local and regional

groups continued to be active. Annual national *gasshuku* were still being held, but hosting these was becoming an increasing burden on regional groups, distracting them from their primary objective of attracting and educating new students from their own communities.

As a result, the SoA (Shintaido of America) Board of Directors decided to recognize and encourage the trend toward regionalization. To begin with, the position of Head Instructor was changed to Technical Director whose role was more that of "Dean of Faculty" than leader of the national movement. At our most recent meeting in Cambria, California, the Board decided to make the position an elected rather than appointed one: an officially recognized Instructors Council consisting of people actively teaching groups, regardless of rank, would choose one of their own to serve as national Technical Director for a two-year term. Jim Sterling, who served ably as Technical Director for four years, was charged with implementing this new system and asked to serve as adviser to the new body.

That is part of what is happening from an organizational point of view. I should add that many people have devoted their time and energy to running SoA over the past twenty years. A partial list includes: Bela Breslau, Kazu Shibao, Lee Seaman, Christina Cross, and, currently, Friedemann Schulz. Without their and others' efforts, there might well be no 20th anniversary to celebrate.

If we build it, will they come?

I would like to turn now from organizational to *keiko* (practice) matters. Whereas I believe we have been quite successful in creating a viable organization, I am less sure that we have been so in introducing Shintaido to the general public.

At the *gasshuku* in Cambria where we held our meetings, I was once again struck by how much people enjoy and benefit from coming together to practice Shintaido. From the point of view of numbers or even level of practice, it was perhaps less than spectacular, but there is no disputing the effect Shintaido *keiko* continues to have on individual practitioners. It continues to

EVENTS CALENDAR

Across Space and Time: Sixth International & SoA 20th Anniversary Gasshuku July 3-7, 1996 • Sonoma, CA

Contact Kazu Shibao, phone/fax: (415) 584-8026
e-mail: bcruz@galileo.stmarys-ca.edu
544 Laidly St., San Francisco CA 94131

As we go to press, there are some changes in the fee schedule from the original brochure. The due dates for the *gasshuku* fee have been relaxed with an installment plan adopted. It is as follows:

- April 1— \$100 deposit deadline
- May 1— 2nd payment of \$175 due
- June 1— Last payment of \$175 due

The total fee is \$450 for single adults, married adults and students. If a married adult pays in full by April 1, the fee due is \$395. After June 1, the fee for all adults is \$510.

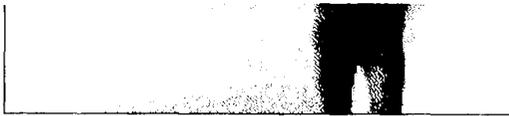
Make payment to "PacShin '96 International" electronically to Wells Fargo Bank, account #0045-058468 (routing number #1210-00248), or by international money order or cashier's check mailed to Kazu Shibao, 544 Laidley Street, San Francisco, CA 94131.

Shintaido North East Annual Columbus Day Weekend Gasshuku October 11-14, 1996 • Western Massachusetts

Contact Margaret Guay, phone/fax: (413) 586-6412
e-mail: Mags4259@aol.com
Details to be announced.

Shintaido South West Annual Thanksgiving Weekend Gasshuku Nov. 29-Dec. 1, 1996 • Southern California

Contact Friedemann Schulz, phone: (310) 396-1426
e-mail: WieDuMir@aol.com
Details to be announced.



Michael Thompson in Japan, 1975

would have enabled me to continue Ito's work as a national leader. As a result, the Shintaido movement seemed to lose momentum at the national level although local and regional groups continued to be active. Annual national *gasshuku* were still being held, but hosting these was becoming an increasing burden on regional groups, distracting them from their primary objective of attracting and educating new students from their own communities.

As a result, the SoA (Shintaido of America) Board of Directors decided to recognize and encourage the trend toward regionalization. To begin with, the position of Head Instructor was changed to Technical Director whose role was more that of "Dean of Faculty" than leader of the national movement. At our most recent meeting in Cambria, California, the Board decided to make the position an elected rather than appointed one: an officially recognized Instructors Council consisting of people actively teaching groups, regardless of rank, would choose one of their own to serve as national Technical Director for a two-year term. Jim Sterling, who served ably as Technical Director for four years, was charged with implementing this new system and asked to serve as adviser to the new body.

That is part of what is happening from an organizational point of view. I should add that many people have devoted their time and energy to running SoA over the past twenty years. A partial list includes: Bela Breslau, Kazu Shibao, Lee Seaman, Christina Cross, and, currently, Friedemann Schulz. Without their and others' efforts, there might well be no 20th anniversary to celebrate.

If we build it, will they come?

I would like to turn now from organizational to *keiko* (practice) matters. Whereas I believe we have been quite successful in creating a viable organization, I am less sure that we have been so in introducing Shintaido to the general public.

At the *gasshuku* in Cambria where we held our meetings, I was once again struck by how much people enjoy and benefit from coming together to practice Shintaido. From the point of view of numbers or even level of practice, it was perhaps less than spectacular, but there is no disputing the effect Shintaido *keiko* continues to have on individual practitioners. It continues to

Across Space and Time: Sixth International & SoA 20th Anniversary Gasshuku July 3-7, 1996 • Sonoma, CA

Contact Kazu Shibao, phone/fax: (415) 584-8026
e-mail: bacruz@galileo.stmarys-ca.edu
544 Laidly St., San Francisco CA 94131

As we go to press, there are some changes in the fee schedule from the original brochure. The due dates for the *gasshuku* fee have been relaxed with an installment plan adopted. It is as follows:

- April 1— \$100 deposit deadline
- May 1— 2nd payment of \$175 due
- June 1— Last payment of \$175 due

The total fee is \$450 for single adults, married adults and students. If a married adult pays in full by April 1, the fee due is \$395. After June 1, the fee for all adults is \$510.

Make payment to "PacShin '96 International" electronically to Wells Fargo Bank, account #0045-058468 (routing number #1210-00248), or by international money order or cashier's check mailed to Kazu Shibao, 544 Laidley Street, San Francisco, CA 94131.

Shintaido North East Annual Columbus Day Weekend Gasshuku October 11-14, 1996 • Western Massachusetts

Contact Margaret Guay, phone/fax: (413) 586-6412
e-mail: Mags4259@aol.com
Details to be announced.

Shintaido South West Annual Thanksgiving Weekend Gasshuku Nov. 29-Dec. 1, 1996 • Southern California

Contact Friedemann Schulz, phone: (310) 396-1426
e-mail: WieDuMir@aol.com
Details to be announced.

EVENTS CALENDAR

SUPERKATA

continued from page 2

weekly class? This seems to be the next step for the Shintaido movement. My friend's initial reaction to Shintaido—

"this is great, why isn't it more popular?"— leads me to think that there is a lot of potential for local Shintaido groups to grow in a way that really leads somewhere. But experience shows that (in this era of history at least) it doesn't happen

spontaneously just by renting some studio space and telling your friends to come. It requires a strategy. This was the first germ of an idea that led to Superkata.

A meeting with David Palmer

The second clue was a meeting in Cambridge with David Palmer, an honorary member of the Shintaido of America Board of Directors. He set out years ago with a simple but big goal: to make touch, or massage, a more common part of people's everyday lives across the United States. This led to the founding of the Amma Institute and then OnSite Enterprises (see *Body Dialogue* #2).

The key to his success? A simple but effective *kata*, or step-by-step sequence. He wasn't saying that having a series of steps to follow would automatically give good results, but he was saying

that with a step-by-step process to follow, the *what-to-do* was taken care of, and practitioners could then focus more effectively on studying the *how-to-do-it*.

It's not soap

I do not think that Shintaido can be "marketed" the same way that soap is, because Shintaido is not soap. I don't think it can be marketed the way that Amma or other bodywork or martial arts are, because Shintaido (as has been the topic of endless discussions) is not exactly any of those things, either. Shintaido is its own very unique activity, and we have to think about how Shintaido came into our lives and touched us, and therefore what is the

"This is great— why isn't it more popular?"

best way to reach other people. My instinct is that by thinking this way, we may be able to come up with some unique and surprising ways to offer the Shintaido "product" to more people, without watering it down or losing the essence.

From meeting with David Palmer I felt that having a step-by-step process, a *kata*, is crucial for making Shintaido more accessible through local weekly classes. And this is something that each instructor or group leader might not have the time, energy, or resources to come up with on their own. Maybe this information could be developed and

collected at a central source and then distributed.

Getting down to brass tacks

Eva Thaddeus was also thinking about these questions, and we decided to get a few Shintaido people together informally and brainstorm. The focus was local Shintaido groups: how can they introduce Shintaido in their communities? How can they be self-sufficient? Everything about the regular practice of Shintaido except the movement techniques themselves was thrown open for discussion.

We came up with more questions than answers, but we did come up with a concrete goal: to publish a handbook for Shintaido instructors or group leaders that would be a "How to Organize a Local Shintaido Group" manual. It would give people who wanted to start or maintain a Shintaido group a step-by-step process to follow, and it would include actual resources: poster templates, brochures, etc. Some of these elements are little mini-*kata* in themselves; there is a standard format for writing a Public Service Announcement for the radio, for example, regardless of what the content says. On the other hand, individual

continued on following page

EQUIPMENT & CLOTHING

* TILL JULY '96 ONLY *

Philosophy

continued from page 5

years; always changing, admittedly, but the basics are pretty well established. There is a "classic" *keiko* structure which every instructor has studied. It is perhaps sufficient to say that Shintaido is a new form of body movement which has roots in other disciplines, but which is unique and possesses its own philosophy. If we have studied both the movement and the philosophy in depth, I don't think much else is required to help us to open the next chapter of the Shintaido story.

Finding our own philosophy

We are fortunate, in this country, that Ito continues to live and teach here because there is no one in the world more qualified to teach Shintaido movements and techniques. And Jim Sterling along with other *sempai* (senior practitioners) have also attained a high technical level. As far as Shintaido philosophy goes, although we have limited access to Aoki-sensei's recent writings and lectures, we do have a representative selection which can be found in the Shintaido textbook, the *Tenshingoso/Eiko* and *World of Ki* booklets (shameless plug: see page 7 for prices and ordering information— ed.), and various SoA newsletter/*Body Dialogue* articles. While it is true that we receive less exposure to the philosophy of Shintaido than Japanese practitioners, if we make the effort, we can find enough to guide us. In fact, what seems to be a drawback can be turned to our advantage: the very

first time I met Aoki-sensei in France, he told us (all new to Shintaido) that he could show us how to do the movements of *Tenshingoso*, but that it was up to us to discover its meaning. Rather than being spoon-fed someone else's ideas, we can try to connect the movements to our own philosophy.

Of course, this means having a philosophy to begin with. But this is not as daunting as it might seem, since philosophy is based on experience followed by reflection. Anyone who has practiced Shintaido for more than a few years has acquired a certain measure of body wisdom which can then be verbalized, albeit imperfectly, in everyday language. A good matrix for this translation can be found in Aoki-sensei's "Heaven-Earth-Self-Other" paradigm. Each part of this equation, which can be expressed quite simply through our Shintaido practice, can be interpreted in many ways depending on personal experience or understanding.

But the core idea remains constant and we should always keep that in mind. Even if we would rather avoid talking in religious or cosmological terms, the fact remains that the movements themselves in Shintaido point us in that direction— toward what might be called its "tacit dimension." Anyone who wants to practice Shintaido or present it to others must take this quality into account especially in light of the absence of any official dogma. •••

Michael Thompson is a co-founder and former Head Instructor of Shintaido of America. He lives in Cambridge, MA.

Juliette Farkouh, who has been serving as Equipment Manager for Shintaido of America for more than 10 years, is stepping down, and the equipment supply situation will be changing as a result. You can still order clothing from Juliette until July of '96, but act now— supplies are limited! After that time equipment will be available from regional suppliers only.

Thanks Juliette for your dedicated service, and by the way— can I get a discount on these if I order two of them?

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"Superkata," continued from previous page

tastes and regional cultures vary, and certainly there is no one correct thing to say about "What are the benefits of Shintaido?" nor a single blurb about "What Is Shintaido" for all occasions. It was obvious that parts of this "toolkit" would have to include several alternative versions to choose from. As the scope of the project grew and we realized that it would include many mini-kata and alternative sub-kata, the obvious name suggested itself to Eva: "Superkata."

Your chance to help

Our two-pronged approach to developing Superkata is based on trying to use the collective knowledge and experience of people who teach, practice, or support the Shintaido movement. Although there may be no one person who is leading a hugely successful local group, those of us who practice Shintaido are the success

stories. Many people continue to dedicate themselves to Shintaido for years or decades, and they must have their reasons. If we can build on whatever humble success we do have—the experience of the people who do continue to practice or support Shintaido—then we can use that as a foundation for sustained growth. We really want to hear from you, no matter whether you are an experienced instructor, a rank beginner, or a curious bystander. How did you first hear about Shintaido? What about it first caught your eye or made you curious? What made you want to try it? What made you go back for more? Why do you keep practicing today? Since no-one has really defined exactly what Shintaido is, the answers to these questions are wide open.

The second prong of our approach is to put it out there and see what works.

Rather than waiting to develop a finished product and then releasing it, we plan to distribute segments of Superkata piece-by-piece in rough draft form to instructors, group leaders, or anyone who wants to start a Shintaido group. Our hope is that some of this information will be concretely useful, and that as we get feedback from the field-testing process, we will use it to develop and refine Superkata. •••

If you have any comments, questions, answers to the questions above, or would like a copy of Superkata in its current form, please write:

Shintaido of America
PO Box 381672
Cambridge, MA 02238

email: Shintaido@aol.com

David Franklin teaches Shintaido in Cambridge, MA; Eva Thaddeus teaches in Albuquerque, NM.

VIDEOS

NEW *Kenko Taiso Part II: Partner Stretches* (\$10)
More than a continuation of Kenko Taiso Part I, this video demonstrates a series of more advanced health exercises and stretches that two people can do together. Includes detailed explanation of back-to-back stretching, the "egyptian chair" stretch, variations on the wakame or "seaweed exercise," and others.

NEW *Kenko Taiso Part III: Stretches with a Group* (\$10)
Provides a detailed introduction to group warm-up movements including the shiatsu train, japanese dragon, and group wakame. This video also includes sections on self-

PUBLICATIONS

Shintaido: the Body is a Message of the Universe by Hiroyuki Aoki (\$20 / \$15*)

For ten years this textbook has served as a gateway and guidebook to the practice of Shintaido. Includes sections on the history and philosophy as well as detailed explanations of technique. 120 pages, illustrated with photos. This second printing features more information about the ten Shintaido meditation positions.

The following five booklets are available individually or as a set for \$25 (postpaid):

Tenshingoso and Eiko
by Hiroyuki Aoki (\$10)

This booklet is for Shintaido practitioners what the Diamond Sutra is for Buddhists: a concise yet thorough description of the basis of practice. Tenshingoso and eiko are two of the fundamental movements of Shintaido, which embody philosophies and prescriptions for human growth. Contains practical advice for all levels.

The Zero Point of Consciousness

is excellent for instructors or group leaders who want to broaden and expand their techniques for leading group warm-up exercises.

Kenko Taiso Instruction Video (\$20)

Produced by On-Site Enterprises, this 50-minute video presents the classic Shintaido *kenko-taiso* warm-up sequence with detailed explanation. The 15-minute warm-up sequence, done in a standing position, is an easy-to-follow stretching and strengthening routine that is excellent for those who are relatively new to body movement. Makes an excellent gift to introduce friends to Shintaido.

Inside Shintaido—an October Gathering (\$20)

Shot on Cape Cod, Massachusetts, this half-hour documentary takes the viewer inside a Shintaido retreat. In this temporary community, beginning and advanced students practice together and discuss their thoughts and feelings about Shintaido. This video is especially useful for instructors or others who need an audio-visual aid to help present Shintaido at lectures, demonstrations, or conferences.

Life Burn (\$20)

If you missed the live painting / shintaido / music performance collaborations at the Theater Yugen in San Francisco in August 1992, it's not too late to see them. Featuring painting by Kazu Yanagi; music by Henry Kaiser and others; and Shintaido movement led by H.F. Ito, this one-hour video includes footage from all four nights of exciting improvisational performances.

Kata and Kumite (\$70)

H.F. Ito gives instruction for *kaiho-kei* (opening and challenging) exercises with Michael Thompson and Robert Bréant. Includes: *kaiho-kei* group practice, *bojutsu kata* (hi no kata, kaze no kata, sho-dan, nidan), *jojutsu kata* (taishi, hojo), *karate kata* (sanchin, tensho), *kumibo* (bo vs. bo) arrangements, *kumitachi* (sword vs. sword) nos. 1-9. 120 minutes.

Kenko Taiso and Meditation (\$35)

H.F. Ito and Michelle Grenier demonstrate Shintaido morning *kenko taiso* (health exercise), *wakame taiso* (seaweed partner exercise), and the ten-position standing and walking meditation forms. 45 minutes.



Shintaido: the Body is a Message of the Universe is the basic Shintaido textbook for all serious Shintaido students

In this interview Mr. Aoki describes his experience of reaching the "space of *mu*" (nothingness). He also discusses the unique understanding of *ki* energy (life force) that he came to in synthesizing Shintaido body movement.

Origins, a History of Shintaido

by Shiko Hokari (\$7)

One of the founding members of Shintaido relates the stories of Rakutenkai (the group that developed Shintaido), and the conditions of society and consciousness in the late 1960s in Japan. Contains insights into the continuing evolution of Shintaido forms from their earliest manifestations.

Improvisation and the Body (\$3.50)

Japanese jazz musician Toshinori Kondo discusses Shintaido, performance, and music in an interview with French composer Gilbert Dalmasso. Illustrates how one artist benefitted from Shintaido by going beyond his limits.

Student Handbook

by Faith Ingulsrud (\$3)

Written by an American Shintaidoist who grew up in Japan, this handbook helps ease the culture shock sometimes experienced by Americans encountering Japanese customs and terminology in Shintaido. Includes a glossary and description of the basic structure of a Shintaido practice.

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