



# BODY Dialogue

A Publication of Shintaido of America

Issue No. 1, 1992

## JACOB'S LADDER An Interview with Hiroyuki Aoki

Interview by Lee Ordeman, translation by Lee Ordeman and Sakuko Sekijima

*Hiroyuki Aoki is the founder of Shintaido. He holds the title of Master in the Nippon Karate-do Shotokai Association. Mr. Aoki is President of Shintaido of Japan and Technical Director for the International Shintaido Federation.*

In November of 1991, Master Hiroyuki Aoki and I met for a chat before dinner in the lounge of a large hotel not far from his office in the Shinagawa district of Tokyo.

A year ago, in December of 1990, Shintaido celebrated its 25th anniversary with a day of workshops and demonstrations held in large and elegant reception halls in Yokohama. Mr. Aoki hosted and nearly 1,000 people attended the events.

The anniversary also marked the end of Master Aoki's direct involvement in the Shintaido organization. He has moved to a private space in a relatively quiet neighborhood in Takanawa, a fifteen minute walk from Shinagawa Station in southwestern Tokyo. There he receives visitors, organizes events, studies, and plans the next phase of his work. He keeps busy writing, giving demonstrations and lectures on Shintaido and spiritual life in cities around Japan. In addition he takes people on trips for waterfall meditation training and organizes tours to the Philippines and Korea to meet spiritual healers and teachers and to participate in spiritual training, usually involving body movement and the kind of philosophical thought that permeates Shintaido. Master Aoki also teaches a general Shintaido class in the Tokyo area, and gives instructors' examinations twice a year.

Mr. Aoki began by talking about how his visit to a spiritual healer in Korea had eased the pain in his lower back, caused by years of intense martial arts training. She operated on him with prayers and her bare hands, and the result was more freedom of movement than he had had in years.

Master Aoki widened the discussion to the amazing times we're living in. People find the boundaries that have contained them physically and psychologically dropping all around them. More work needs to be done, he said. "We think it's so difficult to love our neighbor, but it's easier than people believe."

He wants to catch the core of that idea and spread it around the globe. "To bring peace to the world shouldn't be so difficult," he says, giving as an example the fall of the Berlin Wall and the opening of the Brandenburg Gate. "These barriers are physical manifestations of our fears. We just need to open our minds."

**LEE ORDEMAN:**

A year ago there was talk of your retirement from Shintaido, but obviously you're still involved to some degree.

**HIROYUKI AOKI:**

I haven't retired from Shintaido at all. I haven't retired from life. You could say I've moved back from the front lines, retiring from the business side of it and as an instructor. I'm also recuperating, letting my body heal.

**ORDEMAN:** Do you have an idea as to how to begin the next stage of your work? What will you do and what will the medium be?

**AOKI:** I'm considering two things. One is I want to write a book, naturally in Japanese with an English version. And the other is to tie together Europe, America, and the Pacific region — China, Korea, the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia. I intend to find an organization that is powerful enough and eager to work on this.

I'll use some body movement — an extract of Shintaido. Not difficult things, very simple things.

**ORDEMAN:** Will the message be that of Shintaido? You said last time we spoke that the purpose of Shintaido was to inform people of their connection with God, bringing them to realize God in themselves. Will that be the essence of your message in the future?

**AOKI:** I think so. I've noticed that philosophers and academics tend to present these ideas in very different ways. There are simpler ways to inform people of this philosophy. When I was in Korea with Kim-san, the spiritual healer, we realized that other people's lives and hers are the same. We are different in our ways of life, but when it comes to people there are no border lines. To pigeon hole people just causes anxiety: people are not to be thought of as things. We should abandon characterizing people by their professions. I have Tenshinkai and Shintaido on my business card, which are different, but I'm the same person.

When I was in Bolivia, I was asked if I were Bolivian. And in Korea — "You're a really warm, intelligent person—it's as if you're not really Japanese." I was happy to hear these words because it meant Koreans accepted me. This is the highest praise.

People think it strange for a martial artist to be a Christian. When people hear me talk of Jesus Christ, they say, "How strange, here's a martial artist talking about Jesus." Sometimes when people have heard I'm a martial artist, they introduce me to famous martial artists, people from the movies like Bruce Lee. But I have nothing to do with them.

*continued on page 2*

The term *BodyDialogue* points to the original, elemental power of the body. By using our bodies as communication channels, we can begin to dialogue with one another and the earth.

The Japanese term *sensei* is reserved for specific teacher/student relationships, and is not used in general audiences. We realize that this may feel awkward for those accustomed to using *sensei* as an expression of honor and respect, and ask your indulgence.

I think we like to have prejudices, fixed ideas about people. But for instance Koji Ishizaki, a famous movie actor, also paints. Or take the sumo wrestler Taiho. He was one of the strongest sumo wrestlers ever, greater than Chiyonofuji. Taiho won the Nightingale Award, an international prize, a terrific honor. He used his own money to set up mobile hospitals for the Red Cross. With a doctor aboard, these vehicles go to towns and places in the countryside where there are no hospitals. But in Japan, winning the international prize didn't mean that much to people.

**ORDEMAN:** In your book *Shintaido: A New Art of Movement and Life Expression* you described Shintaido as "The answer to a fervently desired dream." What is that dream?

**AOKI:** The first thing that was in my mind was to put in people's hearts a Jacob's ladder. The major religions of the world commonly refer to a passageway or channel to God by which people can experience great mysteries. I don't know how well Americans and Europeans are aware of this today, but in the Old Testament, about the ancient Jewish people, there is text referring to Jacob's ladder. While sleeping, Jacob dreams of a ladder coming down with angels climbing up and down it. This was a channel by which a person could come and go between his place and God's. Jacob put a memorial stone at the spot where this happened.

In everyone's heart there is the potential for such a passageway. To make this happen was my first intent. A channel for everyone. Muslims, Jews, Christians can all understand this concept of the ladder. Their religions have all recognized this. We all have it. I'd like for everyone to know it.

And in regard to doing Shintaido, we can't understand each other completely. But most basically—in understanding each other's needs—there is a better, simpler way. I wanted to introduce people to that.

Take *hikari-to-tawamureru* (playing with light) and *wakame taiso* (seaweed movement). They're not just to make people

feel good, and soften and relax their bodies. I'd like people who do it to think more deeply about these things, about what they mean. (Of course it's fine if they just want to do it for their health.)

Our bodies are natural. We have the message of nature in our bodies, so to restore our bodies is very important. There is a method to finding one's real self in deep consciousness. It's my dream to let people know that—to make our bodies more natural, to understand each other, to know Jacob's ladder, and to find our real selves.

**ORDEMAN:** I asked you the last time why you chose karate and you said that it was because you like to improve things.

**AOKI:** That's not true. Only after I started karate did I try to improve it. I chose karate to make my body strong. I needed a strong body for drama.

There are many people who could be revolutionaries, who are geniuses, but who don't do anything. From a bud comes a flower, but in order for it to do so, you must feed it. We need more than genius. Hard work is what we need. Many Americans know the work of Thomas Edison, who said his accomplishments were "1% inspiration, 99% perspiration." It's the same.

Many people feel that I found my Korean friend and healer Kim Keika, whom I love very much, because I'm

lucky. It's not luck. I went to Korea. I spent 3 million yen (\$23,000). First I went to the Philippines, and I was cut in 60 places by phony healers, then I went to Korea and immediately found this good person. But that was after a lot of effort. The same has been true with Shintaido, but of course, first comes inspiration.

This is funny, making effort upon effort all the time to get one percent inspiration. And then the 99% perspiration starts again. It takes time and trouble. That's very important.

**ORDEMAN:** You had a very sad childhood, I understand. Did that have a very strong impact on what you chose to do with your life?

**AOKI:** Of course. My early experiences had a large influence on me.

**ORDEMAN:** If I didn't know you personally, I would find your generosity hard to believe, because Japan fought the West in the war, and your mother and sister and brother were killed by Americans in that war. How did you reconcile this?

**AOKI:** Until I was 17 or 18 I hated the Americans, the French, Western countries. At that time I was just the same as a young *yakuza* (a gang member). My *oyabun* (mob boss) was Jesus Christ, and he ordered me to love my enemy. If the boss orders you to kill someone you have to do it. My *oyabun* was Jesus Christ, and he ordered me to love my enemy. I had no choice.

I'm very much a Christian, but different from one that goes to church on Sunday and is always on good behavior. So my life as a Shintaido teacher is to love enemies, I think. Two summers ago in France and the United States, I believe my *oyabun* told me I'd passed. You could say that after a 30 to 40 year pilgrimage I had been tested and told I'd passed.

**ORDEMAN:** Since these countries were once enemies, were you thinking in terms of your childhood at this time?

**AOKI:** Yes, my whole life. It was a feeling of self-confidence, satisfaction. In terms of my religious effort — religious combat — that's enough, I thought.

**ORDEMAN:** How did you become a Christian?

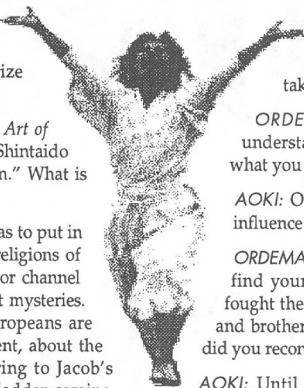
**AOKI:** In junior high school there were two girls who were Christians and they lived unusual lives. They had such character. These two girls lived their lives in a wonderful way. I was charmed. And then when I was in high school there were two Christians in the drama club. They were different from other students, warm, mild. They were more mature than most high school students. I couldn't stand them. I wanted to hurt their feelings because they were so great. Because I knew nothing about the Bible. I wanted to attack them, hit them. But in order to fight them, to criticize them, I had to read the Bible. Where did I get that Bible? From American soldiers.

**ORDEMAN:** In Japanese?

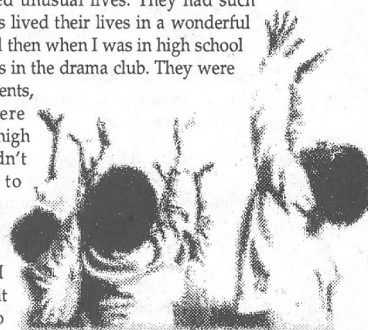
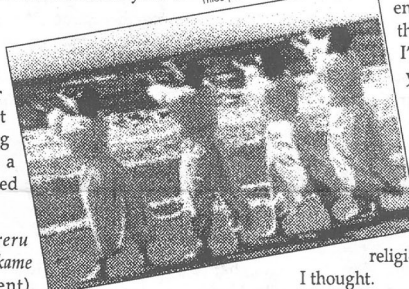
**AOKI:** In Japanese. I was really surprised. With eyes wide with surprise, I read of the world of the Bible shown to us by Christ that was higher, broader, deeper than I had ever dreamed of. It knocked me out. So then I read books on Christianity and I listened to talks given by missionaries. There were a lot of them around, Mormons and others, who were a little strange, but that was fine, they were interesting. And I studied on my own. There were two decisive things for me. The first was meeting the girls in school. The second was as follows:

I didn't understand prayer, what it was, but one day I imitated the priests, putting my hands together. And then something really spiritual happened. It was as if everything around me fell away and all I could see was the sky. It was as if the brick

continued on page 7



These photos courtesy French Shintaido



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

#### Board of Directors

Permanent Members  
H.F. Ito  
Michael Thompson

Elected Members  
Friedemann Schulz  
Bill Burtis  
Lee Seaman

#### Officers

Eric Avildsen, President  
David Franklin, Secretary  
Christopher Nash, Treasurer

#### BodyDialogue Staff

Tomi NagaiRothe, Editor  
Nurit Arbel, Graphic designer  
Robert Gaston, Research  
Stephen Billias, Copyeditor

#### Editorial Office

BodyDialogue  
P.O. Box 22622  
San Francisco, CA 94122 USA

#### Subscription/Membership Office

P.O. Box 1672  
Cambridge, MA 02238 USA  
(617) 492-6536

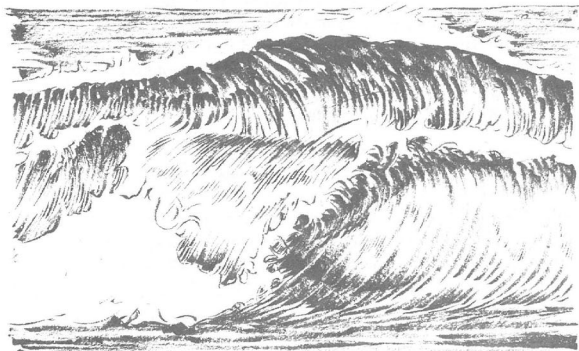
BodyDialogue is published twice a year by Shintaido of America. Entire contents Copyright 1992, Shintaido of America with the exception of "The Man Who Ran Eiko and Became a Fish." All rights reserved.

## STORY

# The Man Who Ran Eiko\* And Became A Fish

Roby Newman

*The author wishes to thank Michael Buckley for the inspiration for the story and Ed Brown for his Zen anecdote, which he acknowledges gratefully, albeit in an altered state.*



David Sigary

Alexander was a fanatic, defined by Merriam Webster as a person "marked or moved by excessive enthusiasm and intense uncritical devotion." Suffused at a young age with a deep belief in the existence and goodness of God, he was twice sent to the principal's office for refusing to stop saying the Pledge of Allegiance, so grateful was he to the Lord for putting his country "one nation under. . . ." Devoted to his pets, he fed the cat so often it became a small sow and was sold by his parents to a local farmer; the beagle was taken on endless runs through nearby fields so that by the time it was three in dog years it was a greyhound and ran on weekends at the racetracks, two towns over.

He saw wonder in everything. Brooks babbled to him in Latin, frogs croaked folk songs, the constellations were the cosmic eateries of the universe, flashing their "Eat at Joe's" neon to infinity. Even the television set grew in stature in his eyes. Mister Kleen was not merely the "White Tornado," but an apparition of The Buddha, years before Alexander made his acquaintance. Wiley Coyote was not just bad but a victim of bad karma, and Bugs Bunny's "What's up, doc?" became a question which haunted him for years. By ten he was wearing eyeglasses, for when the voice from the TV announced "don't go away, we'll be right back," he wouldn't, sitting patiently for hours waiting for the mysterious "we" to return until his mother would turn the set off and lecture him on the use of common sense, of which he was remarkably deficient.

His years of sitting before the idiot box made him well suited for Zen, which he took up shortly after moving to California to go to school at UC Berkeley. His fanaticism had been tempered somewhat by adolescence, as his undying love for Andrea Wanamaker in eleventh grade had given him flat feet and shin splints from walking seven and a half miles to see her when her parents moved to the next county. He became more discerning of who or what to believe, but when he attended a lecture given by a visiting roshi his junior year it was as if a large, 200 watt bulb had been turned on, brilliantly illuminating an otherwise empty room, and he was convinced he had found his life's calling. Alexander dropped out of school, shaved his head badly, found a local monastery with vacancies, and spent his days, and most of his nights, in silent meditation, full lotus style, eating little and drinking only tap water. At first his fellow Zen monks were taken by his enthusiasm and untiring devotion to the rituals of their sect, but after several months his ardor became a burden. The monks were constantly prying his legs loose with a crowbar and listening to endless kōan that Alexander would make up (such as "how many camels can you fit on the head of a pin?"), which they informed him would not lead to enlightenment but likely the sanatorium.

It was in his sixth month that Alexander decided to imitate the great Buddha himself and sat on a straw mat in front of the

large elm tree in the monastery's garden, a bowl of Uncle Ben's Converted White Rice in front of him, from which he swore he would only eat one grain a day. The abbot of the monastery, and several of the senior monks, tried to convince him that his action was profane as well as foolish, but Alexander refused to listen, saying only that if it was good enough for the Buddha it was good enough for him. That evening he awoke to find himself on a Greyhound bus bound for San Francisco, with his belongings (one pair of pants, three socks, and a copy of Jack Kerouac's *On The Road*, a gift from the roshi) wrapped in a bandanna, a torn ticket stub in his hand, and a terrible headache from the "Mickey" slipped in his water while he was sleeping.

Alexander was humbled, and devastated, and were it not for his fateful discovery of Shintaido he might have, out of desperation, applied for readmittance at Berkeley. Instead, having moved to the Mission District of San Francisco and become employed as a dishwasher at a local Chinese restaurant, he chanced one evening after work to walk by Mission Dolores Church and, looking across the street, saw an open door down an alleyway with a person all in white standing beside it. Coming over he asked about the woman's uniform and did she belong to a new order of monks; when told no, that she and others practiced a Japanese body movement that was about to begin, and would he like to watch, he nodded yes. All it took for him to join that night was a clean and empty dōjo, which reminded him of his room at the monastery, the genuine warmth of the *keiko* (practice), and his discovery that Tenshingoso meant "five expressions of cosmic truth." He saved his earnings and bought seven gi, one for each practice.

Alexander took to Shintaido like the proverbial wet duck. *Musōken, kaishōken, kiri komi* or *seiza*, he practiced like a man possessed, dotting every A and crossing every E, his body bouncing in *meisō* jumps like a mad yoyo or waving so loosely in *wakame taisō* (seaweed movement) that you could almost see the waves pushing him from side to side and almost hear the whispered gliding of the fish. Naturally, his favorite *keiko* was on the beach: having never seen an ocean, except in his imagination, until he was eighteen, he loved the feel of wet sand between his toes and the salt air in his face. And nothing in Shintaido, not even his beloved Tenshingoso which he would have gladly done for Dante in the seventh circle of Hell, gave him more pleasure than running Eiko.

Within a month, he was Eiko mad, the discipline he'd learned from Zen and the television pushing quickly through the pain and exhaustion, so that he seemed to grow stronger with each pass, his arms stiff and unbending, his howl one of transcendent ecstasy. Even among those who had practiced Shintaido for years, and were seasoned "Eikoists" in their own

## Editorial Reflections

When we first sat down to describe a vision of *BodyDialogue* we imagined a meeting place, a commons, a clearing in the woods where those practicing Shintaido in different parts of the United States and the world — and those interested in some aspect of the body movement, communion, and self-expression it embodies — could exchange ideas and learn from one another.

We imagined the circle that begins and ends each practice, where we pause to reflect on our commitment to each other and the opportunity such a community affords. Yet the days when the circle is unfinished, with an open end, are the most promising because it means there is room for more people and more dialogue.

In talking with some of you, it is clear that this gathering place needs to be neutral — a forum that accommodates an open exchange of writing and art from all regions of our readership and from all points on the opinion spectrum, without the dark cloud of a "party line."

As with Shintaido practice, this implies certain conditions: make the circle a safe, sacred space, use full and honest expression — no holding back; compassionate expression toward others — especially those with whom you partner; take risks; always look to the future.

Perhaps *BodyDialogue* will be a print version of the traditional American town hall meeting where the exchange is lively and everyone gets a say. We hope so. This will ultimately be decided by those of you who begin to contribute and commit to engage each other in the clearing.

This issue marks an evolution of the Shintaido of America Newsletter, a membership publication for Shintaido practitioners and friends, into a magazine with a larger readership. It also marks the end of Tom Stinnett's tenure as editor — a role he handled with his trademark grace for 3 years. We also owe thanks to Kazu Shibao, founder of the SOA newsletter in 1980, and to Bela Breslau who edited the newsletter for seven years and moved the publication to a desktop published format. Thanks to them we have a strong foundation from which to grow.

On behalf of the *BodyDialogue* staff I welcome you to this inaugural issue. We challenge you to surrender to new ways of thinking in this print dōjo (practice hall).

Tom Nagai-Rothe, Editor

\*One of the two foundation practices of Shintaido that involves opening, reaching skyward, then forward past the horizon.



# GASSHUKU

## REPORT

**Roby Newman**

### THE PLACE

Camp Becket is a lovely expanse of cabins, green and waterfront replete with pine trees, canoes and a mess hall big enough to dance in (it brought me back 20 years to a Quaker camp in central Vermont).

### THE PEOPLE

Of the 38 who arrived at Camp Becket, the majority were from the East Coast, particularly Massachusetts and the Boston/Cambridge area. Several attendees were from Northern New England, plus two of us from San Francisco, and three from Quebec. Master Instructor H.F. Ito and Head Instructor Michael Thompson provided keiko instruction, examined practitioners on Sunday afternoon, and gave the *gasshuku* (training intensive) a sense of history (where Shintaido has been and is) and a sense of the future. Deb Zawieski was the *gasshuku* manager and coordinated the activities with ten other people. I would be remiss if I did not stop to say what a tremendous job Deb did. The *gasshuku* did run smoothly, and made the keiko all the better.

**THE KEIKO (AND RELATED EVENTS)**  
All three keiko were conducted on a soccer field ringed by conifers.

**Keiko I:** From approximately 3:00 to 5:15 p.m. on Saturday, Kathy Mulica led the first keiko (open hand) with Sumiko Kobayashi leading warmups. Kathy led us from *Tenshingosō sei* through *aozora taisō* (*musōken* and *kaishōken*) to "circle

8's" with *jōdan* cuts, ending with *wakame* and *Tenshingosō dai*.

She was excellent, thorough and clear in what she wanted, and set a good precedent for the other two keiko.

The sky was very blue (robin egg blue?), the air was hot (the high 80's), and the keiko was demanding and long, at least for a *gasshuku* rookie such as myself. Nearly half of the participants were instructors or assistants, so technical skills were high. So too was the spirit, which given the nature of Shintaido and the beauty of our setting, came as no surprise.

**Keiko II:** Sunday morning, 7:00 to 9:15. Joe Zawieski taught a *bō* (long wooden staff) keiko, with Michel Van Waeyenberge leading warmups. It was overcast and cool, a day more reminiscent of San Francisco than Western Mass. I had never even held a *bō* before, let alone used one, so many of the finely tuned techniques were lost on me: I had enough trouble getting the damn thing under my armpits correctly! Joe focused on first "connecting" with the *bō*, passing it from hand to hand in one motion, eventually working up to "partner passing" (note: *bō* toss) of the *bō* and finally, for further lack of appropriate words, "Robin Hooding," (note: *bō* *neriai*) whereby in *kumite* *bo* are "crossed" like swords and partners exchange leading and following with a pushing motion of the *bō*. I personally found this very lovely and actually managed to do it with some semblance of coordination.

We finished with *bō eiko*, which was a killer. I've always secretly dreaded Eiko, its physical punishment of the arms and neck coming when keiko is almost over and I am almost spent. But running with the *bō* over my head, and watching my fellow practitioners run, back and forth on the soccer field, I began to learn something about the mental aspect of Shintaido, how it's not the body that gives up first, and what passion and commitment can give to one's practice. It was a lesson I would continue to learn over the next 24 hours.

### KATA, EXAMS, AND THE RAIN:

David Franklin and H.F. Ito taught an optional *bō* and karate class from 2:30 to 3:30 p.m., Sunday afternoon. I arrived towards the end of the *kata*, and was impressed with both the technique and passion (there's that word again) of instructors and instructees. By the end of the *kata*, the overcast sky had turned to drizzle. What followed during the next hour and a half was in many ways the highlight of the *gasshuku* for me. Joe Angello and Lee Seaman took *bō* exams, bowing separately to H.F. Ito and Michael Thompson, seated behind a

separately, and then together, the drizzle getting gradually harder by the minute. As they were the only ones taking exams, Michael offered free "practice" exams of *Tenshingosō dai*, *Tenshingosō sei*, and Eiko, for any witnesses who wanted to partake.

There was a pause, and no one volunteered. Michael asked a second time, and six people, most of whom had recently done the *kata*, "volunteered." I hesitated, decided I wasn't ready for even a practice exam, and remained standing. Over the next hour, one by one these "happy few," in a steady downpour and hunkered side by side on the wet grass and mud like flightless, drenched birds, put everything they had into *Tenshingosō* and Eiko, in body, voice and spirit, while poor Joe and Lee waited for a second round of *bō*.

Two memories stand out: Marc Langlais running full tilt Eiko, his long arms fully extended, his voice loud, so drained physically and emotionally that he burst into cathartic tears. And Pat Maher, engaged in a kind of Shintaido mud wrestling with Ito, exhausted, soaked and smiling at the end, as was everyone. I was truly moved by the damn spirit of the thing, the camaraderie, the mental strength, and the humor, and would not have missed it for the world.

**Keiko III:** Monday morning, 7:00 to 9:15. Michael Thompson led an open hand keiko, with Eric Avildsen leading warmups. We did many stretches and exercises—*Tenshingosō*, *kiri harai*, group *wakame*, and yet another "first" for me, what I will call "cutting and rolling," where in *kumite* the "cutter" goes to a kneeling position and the "cuttee" is rolled with a motion of the arms and the leading leg. I wasn't particularly good at it, but I loved it!

Michael pushed us, and kept pushing, in what I knew by then to be his serio-humorous style, the Good Shepherd à la Jefferson Airplane. I remember at one point, thinking "Well, that's got to be the end of it," and looked at my watch for confirmation. There was 45 minutes left in the keiko. Shortly thereafter, coming into A in *Tenshingosō dai*, I blacked out; as I brought my arms up I didn't have a clue where the hell I was. As I started wandering off towards the woods in a slight panic ("Help," a little voice was starting to sound off), I was gently tapped by Michael Thompson, and like a mental soap bubble bursting, I came back to reality, finished my A and went into E.

That's when it struck me, what I had sensed but never truly experienced

### Editor's note:

We have chosen to limit the translation of Japanese terms in the Practitioners' Corner in order to smooth reading for practitioners. Please refer to the glossary in *Shintaido: The Body is a Message of the Universe*.

## CALENDAR

### Northwest Shintaido

Fall Event  
First week of  
November 1992  
Instructors:  
John and Lee Seaman  
Call for Spring workshops  
(206) 676-8543

### Shintaido Northeast

Autumn *Gasshuku*  
October 10-12, 1992  
Instructors:  
Michael Thompson  
Joe Zawieski  
Jim Sterling-guest examiner  
Kangeiko  
End of January 1993  
(508) 393-3575

### Pacific Shintaido

Meditation Workshop  
October 24-25 (intro)  
October 26-31 (adv.)  
Instructor:  
H.F. Ito  
Kangeiko  
January 8-10, 1993  
Instructors:  
H.F. Ito  
Pacific Shintaido Instructors  
(415) 586-1177





The Man Who Ran Eiko continued from page 3

right, his endurance was amazing, almost frightening, for he seemed to glow as he went, as if some spiritual flashlight had been left on inside him and the batteries never ran down. (Once on a dare, he had run to the Cliff House, bought fish and chips for twelve, and on the way back seemed to be barking to the seals and laughing as they barked back.) He never boasted of his exploits, but did them with an unconscious, humble grace, and was accepted as a decent if decidedly odd sort, even by Shintaido standards.

One summer morning, with an unusually thick fog even for San Francisco surrounding them, the Saturday class was finishing up keiko. It had been a good class, full of the usual shrieks and moans, *jōdan kiri harai*, Tenshingoso kumite, finishing with several jaunts of Eiko. After seiza, as was his want, he begged the instructor for more Eiko. "That's enough for today," the instructor told him, and then added, "you will spoil Eiko if you do it like breathing. Eiko should be the holes in the cheese, not the cheese itself." But Alexander persisted, saying that he didn't mind if he was the only one running, that he loved the fog, the

beach, and the ocean, all of which the instructor had heard before.

But this had been a long and unrelentingly cold morning, and the instructor was tired and in no mood to debate the issue. "The Tao made the beach and the beach made Eiko," Alexander said. "If I could I would run forever." At this the instructor had had enough. Looking at Alexander he angrily threw his arm into the air and loudly said, "Then run!" Turning his back, the instructor walked back toward his car, thinking of hot tubs and the rest of the weekend away from Mad Eiko, which several of Alexander's fellow students had begun to call him. It was only at the Great Highway when, asked by his assistant where Alexander was, the instructor realized that he'd sent him running Eiko south.

A search party was immediately organized, on car and on foot, but the fog lay over the ocean until late in the evening, and no one could see, let alone catch, Alexander. The next day half a dozen Shintaidoists tried to persuade the police to send out an APB, but finding the story unbelievable, with no apparent laws having been broken

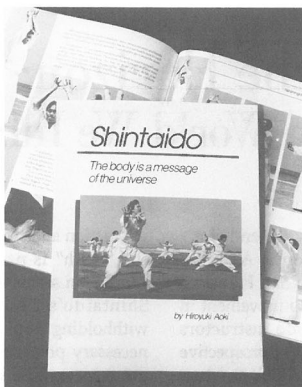
except possibly disturbing the peace, they were politely told no, with the added caveat that, "Your friend's bound to get tired of howling, he'll eventually stop and use a pay phone." At this they hung their heads, but the instructor continued looking, driving down Highway 1 to talk to beach residents. One woman in Pacifica said she thought she'd seen a man, dressed all in white, running on the beach, his arms flapping in the air like a pelican, shouting something about a camel, but she had attributed it to the fog. And a man near Half Moon Bay said yes, he'd seen somebody fitting Alexander's description, stumbling a little as he made his way down the coast, but he had merely spat aloud, "Damn hippies."

The instructor, burdened with guilt, drove as far as Monterey, certain that he would be ready for Alexander when he arrived. Sadly, he had underestimated the fanaticism of his student. Alexander, cold, numb and undaunted, ran into the sea five miles north of San Diego. His body was never found, but it's the lore of fisheries as far north as Anchorage that a great whitefish swims close to the salmon, running them ragged for months.

## BOOK ANNOUNCEMENT

### SHINTAIDO: THE BODY IS A MESSAGE OF THE UNIVERSE

*Shintaido: A New Art of Movement and Life Expression* was published by Shintaido of America in 1982. For ten years it has served as a gateway and guidebook to the practice of Shintaido. Master Hiroyuki Aoki recently granted permission for this second printing which includes a new cover and more information about the ten Shintaido meditation positions. Cover price: \$20 — \$15 for subscribers/members.



The following five booklets are available for those who wish to deepen their intellectual understanding of Shintaido. The set price for five booklets is \$25.00 (postpaid) in the U.S.

#### TENSHINGOSO & EIKO

Hiroyuki Aoki \$10.00

This booklet is for Shintaido practitioners what the Diamond Sutra is for Buddhists. Tenshingoso and Eiko are the two fundamental movements of Shintaido (*Ni Dai Kihon*) with philosophies and prescriptions for human growth. The "Little Red Book" contains practical advice for all levels plus "Advice for Instructors."

#### THE ZERO POINT OF CONSCIOUSNESS AND THE WORLD OF KI

\$5.00

"We are standing on an earth filled with so many jewels of the truth, but no one realizes it." — H. Aoki Master Aoki describes his experience of reaching the space of *Mu* (nothingness) as coming into an open field. This interview with explores the unique

understanding of ki energy he came to in synthesizing this body movement.

#### ORIGINS, A HISTORY OF SHINTAIDO

Shiko Hokari \$7.00

Shiko Hokari, one of the founding members of Shintaido relates the near-legendary stories of

Rakutenkai the group from which Shintaido emerged, and the conditions of society and consciousness in the late 1960s when Shintaido was developed in Japan. Insights into the continuing evolution of Shintaido forms from their earliest manifestations.

#### IMPROVISATION

AND THE BODY \$3.50

What does Miles Davis have in common with Japanese culture? Toshinori Kondo, Japanese composer and jazz performer answers this question and discusses Shintaido and music in an interview with French composer Gilbert Dalmasso. Illustrates how much one artist can benefit from Shintaido by going beyond his limits.

#### STUDENT HANDBOOK

\$3.00

Written by an American Shintaidoist, Faith Ingulsrud, who grew up in Japan, this handbook helps ease the "culture shock" experienced by American practitioners encountering Japanese customs and terminology. Basic information on what to expect during regular keiko.

## VIDEOS

### BO KATA AND KUMITE VIDEO \$70

H.F. Ito gives instruction for *kaihō-kei* (opening and challenging) exercises with Michael Thompson and Robert Breant (120 minutes). Includes: *kaihō-kei* group practice, *bōjutsu kata* (*hi no kata*, *kaze no kata*, *shō-dan*, *ni-dan*), *jōjutsu kata* (*taishi*, *hojō*), *karate kata* (*sanchin*, *tenshō*), *kumibō* (*bō* vs. *bō*) arrangement from *hi no kata*, *kumitachi* (sword vs. sword) *no kata* 1 - 9. Filmed/edited by Bill Burtis.

### KENKO TAISO VIDEO \$35

H.F. Ito gives instruction for Shintaido *kenko taisō* morning exercises (26 minutes), *wakame taisō* (seaweed partner exercise, 9 minutes), *Ritsu-i-ju-meisō-hō* (ten position standing meditation, 5 minutes), and *Kenka-in-hokō* (walking meditation, 5 minutes). Filmed/edited by Bill Burtis, with Michelle Grenier.

Jacobs Ladder continued from page 2

and the mortar, the concrete of the walls and everything around me peeled away and I could see the clear blue sky. That was the 30th of July in the summer when I was eighteen.

“  
It was as if the brick  
and the mortar, the  
concrete of the walls  
and everything around  
me peeled away and  
I could see the clear  
blue sky.”

That was a big religious experience for me. So from then I was reading and listening to sermons, and my faith quickly grew. When I entered college I joined a student Christian group and with them I began systematically studying Christianity.

ORDEMAN: Did you preach to other people?

AOKI: Yes, I did it a lot. I was good at it too — really good at it. A lot of people became Christians — the poor things (laughing).

ORDEMAN: This was at the same time you were doing martial arts?

AOKI: Yes, during college. I'd run right from keiko in my karate clothes to the classroom with a Bible in my hand.

From before I started going to church, I've had faith. But since that time I

haven't been able to join Christian groups.

ORDEMAN: You don't feel comfortable?

AOKI: No. It's strange. I used to be in a group that was led by an American reverend. I felt uncomfortable. They told me not to wear red clothes or red slippers, not to draw a picture in church. But for instance I've been to Glide Memorial Church in San Francisco. They didn't use the Bible. Nobody brought a Bible to church. Many black people, many poor people and homosexuals go there. It had once been a very wealthy church, but gradually it became a church in the slums.

The rector was impressive. He looked like Moses wearing a big red robe of Spanish or Indian origin. His preaching was very simple. "Freedom. Love your neighbor." He was black. People read passages from the Bible and sang hymns projected onto a screen by an overhead projector. They just sang "I love you" and "Hallelujah" hand in hand. And the people there really enjoyed it. There were about 2,000 people at the service. In Japan there's nothing like that. I was amazed that this kind of place exists—a church of Jesus' people. I always thought that the church of God in Japan was Christianity, but there was no freedom of choice.

If I look for a faith that resembles mine, I'd say it would be Walt Whitman's. My Christianity can be found in Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*. My thinking is almost the same as his. This is the answer to the question about the "fervently desired dream" that Lee asked before.

ORDEMAN: The body is the message of the universe?

AOKI: Right, right. Whitman, now that I think of it, his thinking most resembles mine. *The Brothers Karamazov* by Dostoevsky, Leo Tolstoy, Henry Miller, Whitman. Whitman is great. Walt Whitman, he praised everything: 'your eyes are beautiful, your breasts, your bones, nice penis!' (laughing happily)

ORDEMAN: What was that called?

AOKI: "Song of Myself." Everyone is beautiful, and all the parts of their bodies, their breasts, their bottoms. Everyone is beautiful.

## SUBSCRIPTION / MEMBERSHIP

- ☐ Please send me general information and events information.  
☐ Please enter my one year subscription for *BodyDialogue* (two issues). \$15.00 per year.

I would like to support Shintaido of America as a:

- ☐ Full-time student member \$15.00  
☐ General member \$30.00  
☐ Contributing member \$50.00  
☐ Sustaining member \$100.00  
☐ Patron \$500.00  
☐ Shintaido advanced student \$50.00  
☐ Shintaido assistant \$100.00  
☐ Shintaido instructor \$150.00

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State, Province \_\_\_\_\_

Zip code/Country \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Amount enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

## ORDER FORM

Publications	QTY.	PRICE	AMT.
<i>Shintaido: The Body is a Message of the Universe</i>		\$20.00	
<i>Tenshigoso &amp; Eiko</i>		\$15.00*	
<i>The Zero Point of Consciousness and the World of Ki</i>		\$10.00	
<i>Origins, A History of Shintaido</i>		\$5.00	
<i>Improvisation and the Body</i>		\$7.00	
<i>Student Handbook</i>		\$3.50	
<i>Set of five booklets (above)</i>		\$3.00	
		\$25.00	
	Total		

\* Members/Subscribers

### Videos

Kenko Taisō Video		\$35.00	
Bō Kata and Kumite Video		\$70.00	
	Total		

All publications are postage paid and include sales tax, where applicable.  
Mail orders to: Shintaido Publications, P.O. Box 22622 San Francisco, CA 94122

Clothing	QTY.	PRICE	AMT.
Japanese gi top 100% cotton (all sizes)		\$30.00	
Japanese gi bottom 100% cotton (all sizes)		\$30.00	
Japanese tabi (all sizes)		\$25.00	
Japanese obi (belt)		\$10.00	
Korean gi set 100% cotton (top, narrow pants, belt)		\$25.00	
Sweatshirts (adult s-xl) 50% cotton/50% polyester		\$20.00	
T-shirts (adult s-xl) 100% cotton		\$10.00	
Bō, bokutō fabric covers		\$20.00	
Total			

Call for styles, colors and sizing information. Sales tax included.  
Shipping is an additional cost.

Mail orders to: Juliette Farkouh, 57 St. Charles Avenue,  
San Francisco, CA 94132  
Phone (415) 239-4132

### Weapons

Note: The pricing, sale, and distribution of bō and bokutō are undergoing a change and will henceforth be handled by Michael Buckley. For information, please contact Michael at: (415) 331-6254



Shintaido is a unique system of body movement based on martial arts expression. Although born in Japan, it encompasses many aspects of Western art and philosophy. As a mood, it is more spiritual and artistic than scientific, more emotional and primitive than rational. Shintaido can be a guide to moving our bodies according to natural law, and understanding our human and universal relationships.  
paraphrased from Shintaido: The Body is a Message of the Universe by H. Aoki.

Below are notes from the May 1992 National Gasshuku discussion on what Shintaido practice means.

# BODY Dialogue

Filling up  
The Sky

Shintaido  
is a way  
to let  
your mind  
without words

Can speak with  
BIG voice  
(out of the chest).

Reconnect broken  
circuits  
in body

Disrupts  
the monster  
that lives  
inside us.

Body sensitive

COME BACK TO  
CHILDHOOD  
AT 40 YEARS

**BODY Dialogue**  
P.O. Box 22622  
San Francisco, California  
94122 USA

Michael Borden-Sheets  
630 Silver Avenue  
San Francisco, CA 94134