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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: December 22, 2010

**CELEBRATING ITS 30TH ANNIVERSARY, THE JAPANESE  
DRUMMERS OF KODO RETURN TO CAL PERFORMANCES  
THURSDAY & FRIDAY FEBRUARY 3 & 4 AT ZELLERBACH HALL**

**SchoolTime: Special one-hour performance for students Friday, February 4 at 11:00 a.m.**

**BERKELEY, December 22, 2010**—Elevating Japanese folk arts to a contemporary expression, the mighty **Kodo** returns to Berkeley **Thursday & Friday, February 3 & 4 at 8:00 p.m.** in **Zellerbach Hall**. Debuting at the Berlin Festival in 1981, Kodo celebrates its 30th anniversary with the 2011 *One Earth Tour*, which includes new works, and the release of its new album, *Akatsuki*. The 13-member troupe includes dancers, singers and musicians, and features a vast array of percussion instruments from hand cymbals to 800-pound behemoth *o-daiko* drum. With “tense, angular postures, stylized, frozen gestures and animal-like scampering and slithering, Kodo reminds its audience that, above all, its music is a matter of flesh and blood, wood and stretched skin” (*The New York Times*). Artistic Director **Mitsuru Ishizuka** designed the production to suggest a Japanese shrine surrounded by large sacred trees. “People gather at a shrine to sing, dance and drum so that their prayers may reach the heavens,” Ishizuka explained.

Kodo will give a *SchoolTime* performance for Bay Area students Friday, February 4, at 11:00 a.m. in Zellerbach Hall. Tickets available in advance only.

**THE PROGRAM**

The program features three works new to the Bay Area as well as classics from the Kodo repertoire. Among the new compositions, *Sakaki* opens the evening with a dance inspired by an ancient *Shinto* ceremony. This somber piece, the calm before the *taiko* storm, acts as a purification ceremony for the theater. *Stride* was written by Ishizuka and is unique: it makes use of all the drums in the group’s arsenal. Completing the trio of new pieces is *Sora*, a cross-genre collaboration that incorporates contemporary dance and flamenco.

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## KODO

The name Kodo comes from two Japanese characters for “child” and “play,” conveying Kodo’s desire to play with the “heart of a child.” Kodo is also a homonym for heartbeat, the most primal of all rhythms. The group began three decades ago as an off-shoot of another *taiko* group, but is considered by many to be the fountainhead of *taiko* experience and wisdom. The company lives communally on Sado Island, 40 miles west of the main Japanese island of Honshu, developing its own culture of living, learning and creating.

Physical conditioning is an important part of Kodo’s training with several of the older members having repeatedly run marathons. Strength is needed not only to play the drums but also, since the company has no stage hands, everyone loads, unloads and sets up the instruments including the *o-daiko* drum that require eight people to lift and set into place.

In response to requests from people wishing to join Kodo and learned the *taiko* and associated disciplines, Kodo established an apprentice center. The apprentice program serves as a mini-university, fulfilling part of Kodo’s original vision. Open to all qualified applicants, the program offers intensive training in not only diverse traditional performing arts, but in many related disciplines that inspired and inform them. These include rice culture and vegetable farming, tea ceremony, cooking and cuisine, history and calligraphy, among others. Graduates are selected on an individual basis to become junior performing members.

The troupe has given more than 2,600 performances on all five continents, touring up to eight months a year. While the company strives to both preserve and re-interpret traditional Japanese performing arts, touring and research trips around the world exert a strong influence on the group’s work. Collaboration with artists across the musical spectrum includes jazz drummer and composer Max Roach, Indian *tabla* drummer Zakir Hussain, Grateful Dead drummer Mickey Hart and Brazilian percussionist Airto Moreira. “The technique they use to play percussion instruments is totally different from anything I’ve ever seen” states Roach. “[T]hey deal with that ‘visual sound’ more than anyone I’ve ever known” (*The Village Voice*).

Kodo was last seen here at Cal Performances in February of 2007.

### **TICKET INFORMATION**

Tickets for **Kodo** on **Thursday & Friday, February 3 & 4** at **8:00 p.m.** in Zellerbach Hall are priced at **\$22.00, \$30.00, \$38.00, \$46.00** and **\$52.00**. Tickets are available through the Cal Performances Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall; at (510) 642-9988 to charge by phone; at [www.calperformances.org](http://www.calperformances.org); and at the door. Half-price tickets are available for purchase by UC Berkeley students. UC faculty and staff, senior citizens, other students and UC Alumni Association members receive a \$5 discount (Special Events excluded). For more information, call Cal Performances at (510) 642-9988, or visit the Cal Performances web site at [www.calperformances.org](http://www.calperformances.org).

For select performances, Cal Performances offers UCB student, faculty and staff, senior and community rush tickets. Rush tickets are announced three hours prior to a performance and are available in person only at the Ticket Office beginning one hour before the performance; quantities may be limited. Rush ticket sales are limited to one ticket per person; all sales are cash only. Rush ticket prices are \$10.00 for UCB students; \$15.00 for UCB faculty and staff (UCB ID required) and seniors age 65 or older; and \$20.00 for all other community members. Information is available on Cal Performances' Facebook page and at 510-642-9988, press 2 for the rush hotline, three hours prior to a performance only.

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Cal Performances' 2010/11 Season is sponsored by Wells Fargo.

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**CALENDAR EDITORS PLEASE NOTE:**

**CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS**

**Thursday & Friday, February 3 & 4 at 8:00 p.m.**

**Zellerbach Hall, UC Berkeley Campus**  
Bancroft Way at Telegraph Ave., Berkeley

*World Stage*

Kodo

**Mitsuru Ishizuka**, artistic director

**Program:** The samurai percussionists of Kodo return, exploring the limitless possibilities of the traditional Japanese drum.

**Tickets:** \$22.00, \$30.00, \$38.00, \$46.00 and \$52.00, available through the Cal Performances Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall; at (510) 642-9988 to charge by phone; at [www.calperfs.berkeley.edu](http://www.calperfs.berkeley.edu); and at the door.

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**Friday, February 4 at 11:00 a.m.**

**SCHOOLTIME PERFORMANCE**

**Zellerbach Hall, UC Berkeley**

Bancroft Way at Telegraph Ave., Berkeley

*World Stage*

Kodo

**Program:** The samurai percussionists of Kodo return for a one-hour performance for school children.

**Tickets:** \$5.00 per student or adult chaperone, available in advance only through Cal Performances at (510) 642-9988. *SchoolTime* performances are open to students in kindergarten through grade 12 in Bay Area public and private schools. Supplemental study guides for the classroom are provided. For more information about the *SchoolTime* program, contact the *SchoolTime* coordinator at Cal Performances by email at [eduprograms@calperfs.berkeley.edu](mailto:eduprograms@calperfs.berkeley.edu) or by phone at (510) 642-0212.

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