

MEDIA RELEASE

Taiko Sensation to perform with the Sydney Symphony

East and West will meet in February 2009 when Australian-based Japanese drumming group TaikOz takes to the stage of the Sydney Opera House with the Sydney Symphony.

Fusing the thunderous sounds of Japanese taiko with the might of a symphony orchestra, seven drummers will beat 20 drums of varying size and character alongside a 92-piece symphony orchestra in an exhilarating juxtaposition of musical cultures. The concerts will include works by TaikOz founder and Artistic Director, Ian Cleworth, as well as by the late Japanese composer Maki Ishii (1936-2003), who pioneered a style of composing that sets Japanese and Western elements alongside each other in space and time.



For Cleworth, the concerts will be a chance to perform with former colleagues once again having spent 20 years as the Sydney Symphony's Principal Percussion from 1986 to 2006.

"TaikOz is relishing the opportunity to work with the Sydney Symphony," he says. "The energy of the taiko is always held back in Mr Ishii's music with the orchestra acting like a prism through which the sound of the drums is focussed...until the amazing finale when everything explodes in a wonderful combination of colour and primal force."

The performance of taiko is an extremely physical art, requiring significant strength and stamina. Given the size of the drums - the largest of the drums that will appear on stage reaches three metres high and weighs 250kg - the performers have to maintain incredible body strength. To support his strenuous life as a taiko performer, Cleworth includes cycling, running and pilates in his fitness regime.

Joining the two ensembles in the concert is Australian percussion star Claire Edwardes, whose passionate advocacy of contemporary music has seen her established as an in-demand musician in Australia and Europe. Winner of the 2007 Australian Classical Music Award for 'Outstanding Contribution to Australian Music by an Individual', her performances have been described as "riveting" and "infectious".

The Taikoz concert s are the first in the Sydney Symphony's 2009 Kaleidoscope series presented by St. George. Fusing the orchestra with other artforms and music genres, the series is crafted under the artistic direction of Australian jazz legend, James Morrison.

Tickets can be purchased by phoning the Sydney Symphony Box Office on 02 8215 4600 or visiting www.sydney-symphony.com.

ENDS

For further information, images and/or interviews, contact:

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Note to Editors: Concert Details

**St George presents Kaleidoscope:
TaikOz and the Sydney Symphony**

Friday 6 February, 8pm

Saturday 7 February, 8pm

Sydney Opera House Concert Hall

Ryusuke Numajiri conductor

Claire Edwardes percussion

TaikOz

TRADITIONAL arr. TaikOz – Tribute to Miyake

TAKEMATSU Gitimalya

CLEWORTH ...the pearls of thunder

ISHII Jō for Orchestra- Mono-Prism

Tickets from \$50*

**Booking fees may apply*