



Your valiant editor not passing his instructor's exam! Photo by Ula Chambers



## The Joy of failure

Forgive me putting a photo of myself on the front of this issue of the Newsletter. It's purely for artistic reasons of course... it did strike me as the most dramatic photo from all those which arrived for this issue.

At the Spring gussuku last April I asked Ito sensei if I could take an evaluation. He seemed slightly puzzled by this and asked why I didn't take an instructors exam instead. I explained that I had done very little study for such an exam, and was totally unprepared, but that I wished to see how the emotional chaos that is currently my personal life affecting my Shintaido practice. i just needed some feedback!

"Good", replied Ito sensei in typically inscrutable fashion, "so you can take the instructor's exam and fail it!"

This I did quite successfully, and Minagawa & Ito afterwards congratulated me for successfully failing the exam!

Go figure...

Charles Burns

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## DIARY DATES:

Saturday 8th Sept 2001, a weekend in the Gower with Crystal Ryu - led by Marcus Grant all enquiries to Marcus at: [mgrant@gn.apc.org](mailto:mgrant@gn.apc.org)

The next Shintaido Foundation event will be in the Bristol/Gloucester area  
**Dates: November 25th/26th (weekend).**

Ito *sensei* will be bring his inspirational gorei to the workshop and there will be an opportunity to take exams.

*Watch out for news about the new Shintaido gradings up to assistant level!*

## DITCHLING

*A fund-raising keiko to help Debbie Evans*

We practised in the rain, after a spectacular thunderstorm. *Taimyo kata* and *renki kumite*. We embraced all the energy and good wishes of those people who couldn't be with us that day. During *taimyo kata* with the positive healing energy of the Universe in our thoughts, we gave thanks for nature and all we have. We hope that Debbie and all the people we thought of will have the beautiful life we envisaged for them. Then we practised *renki kumite* - how to make our connections strong.

If you were unable to come but would still like to offer some donation for Debbie, please send a cheque a.s.a.p. made payable to "Shintaido" to my address:  
9, Coombe Rise  
Saltdean,  
Brighton  
East Sussex  
BN2 8QN

Ula Chambers

## Newsletter Submissions

Please send all comments, photographs and articles to:

The SF Newsletter, 234 Peppard Rd,  
Emmer Green, Caversham, Berks. RG4 8UA

**Fax: 0118 947 6813**

e-mail: [newsletter@shintaido.co.uk](mailto:newsletter@shintaido.co.uk)

Long articles & pictures should be sent by e-mail or on disc whenever possible. 🍏 Mac is great, but I can read most other things too. (All discs will be returned).

Copy deadline for the next issue is:

**Monday 14th January 2002**

*But please don't wait until then, write now, while inspired!*

## Newsletter Distribution by internet

This Newsletter is distributed by post free of charge to SF Supporters, but is not normally available to those who have not paid! However, for those who wish to distribute copies of this Newsletter to their local group I suggest the following:

1. Visit my web-site at <http://www.edobarn.demon.co.uk/Shintaido.html>
2. Click on the link "Current SF Newsletter" to download the Newsletter as a .PDF file.
3. Print out and distribute as many as you wish!

This will save your unpaid editor an awful lot of extra work! There is enough here already, believe me! Note that .PDF version does not include the column "SF Organisation" on the last page, since this is really only relevant to SF Supporters.

The .PDF version is also distributed free to all who ask, by e-mail. The current e-mail distribution includes many overseas Shintaido practitioners. Any member of your group can subscribe to this by sending an e-mail to:

[subscribe@shintaido.co.uk](mailto:subscribe@shintaido.co.uk)

## WEEKLY CLASSES AROUND THE COUNTRY

**MON**      **Stroud**                      **7.00 - 8.30pm**                      **The Horsley Village Hall**  
Contact Jo & Paul Hofman on 01453 834774 (or Masashi)  
*Shintaido for beginners taught by Minagawa sensei*

**TUES**      **Thames**                      **7.00 - 9pm**                      **Hounslow Yoga Centre**  
Contact Daniel des Baux on 020 8580 5455

**Brighton**                      **6.00 - 9.00pm**                      **Evolution Arts Centre**  
Contact Ula Chambers on 01273 271521

**WEDS**      **Bristol**                      **7.30 - 9.00pm**                      **Bishop Road School**  
Contact Debbie on 0117 924 9406

**THURS**      **Bristol**                      **10.30 - 11.30am**      **Almonsbury Sports & Leisure Centre**  
Contact Choices for learning on 0117 987 7754 (or Masashi)  
*Shintaido for people with learning difficulties (open to all)*

**Bath**                      **7.00 - 8.30pm**                      **Percy Community Centre**  
Contact Julia Heavens on 01225 481160 (or Masashi)  
E-mail: jules@les-iles.demon.co.uk

**SAT**                      **Bristol AI's 9.30 am - 12.30 pm**                      **Bishop Road School**  
**Cost, £5 - £15 on a sliding scale!**  
Contact Debbie on 0117 924 9406

*This class meets once a month on the first Saturday of the month.  
Please bring bo, jo & bokuto if you have them.*

Masashi Minagawa tel: 0117 957 0897

*Shintaido classes and their venues do change on a regular basis, so it is wise to check first before attending an unfamiliar class. The above information is correct and complete as far as I can ascertain, but do please let me know of any omissions or errors as soon as possible.. It is helpful if details of all new classes and events (including times, location & cost) and all cancellations are reported to the Newsletter as a matter of course when planning your regional keiko programs. Many Thanks.*

## SUPPORTERSHIP

SF Supportership, which normally renews in April, is going out ridiculously late this year (with this newsletter). Many apologies for this. Recent upheavals in my personal life have meant that I've been unable to give SF the level of attention it deserves. This has also meant that you've been very short of newsletters this year. Hopefully the quality of reporting & photography in this issue will make up for that!

Please do fill in and return your supportership forms promptly. It does make a difference to SF funds.

Charles Burns

## INTERNET NEWS

The Shintaido Foundation as an organisation is becoming increasingly centered on the internet. E-mail does seem increasingly to be the natural way for Shintaido practitioners, with their notoriously disparate and individualist lifestyles, to stay in touch wherever they may be.

Ula Chambers currently has an interesting mailing list called "Optimists News" (where much of the material for this Newsletter has come from, thank you Ula!). Daniel des Beaux is running the "shintaido.co.uk" domain, and seems able to give anybody a "your-name@shintaido.co.uk" e-mail address for the asking. Please contact him if you'd like one of

these internet fashion accessories! If you would like to be on Ula's "Optimist's News" please e-mail: [ulachambers@btinternet.com](mailto:ulachambers@btinternet.com)

The downside of this is that it is important to let people know where you are, cybernetically speaking. The world is full of abandoned e-mail addresses, and we may keep sending stuff to them, and assuming you've read it! Do please let us know when you change service providers. Current membership forms include a space for an e-mail address, think carefully about whether this should be at work or home. Where will you really have time to read about Shintaido? You will also be given the choice about whether you would like to receive information via e-mail (recommended), post, or both. Please bear in mind that the "e-mail" option saves SF some money, and saves the world a little bit of paper!

Also, if you don't yet have access to the internet, please think carefully about how you might obtain it, in some form. If you hate computers you have my sympathy, but you might be able to access e-mail through your television (many cable TV companies are now making this possible!)

For the first time I am making the newsletter available as a .PDF file for downloading over the internet. The .PDF version will be in full colour, so far superior than the photocopied version you currently receive! If you are happy with a .PDF version alone, please let me know on the enclosed supportership renewal form, and I'll stop sending you paper. I would hope that the .PDF version could be made available to a wider audience than current supportership alone, and with BOD's permission I plan to keep the current Newsletter available as a free download from my own web-site.

Charles Burns



"Warming down" at the Spring Gassuku, unflattering photography by Ula

# ITO MASTERCLASS

*The spring gasshuku held in Bristol, April 2001*

The SF spring gasshuku and examinations took place on April 7/8th 2001 in Bristol, England. We were very happy to welcome Ito sensei as our guest instructor and examiner and Minagawa *sensei's* assistance was, as usual, invaluable.

The gasshuku had quite a European flavour with visiting practitioners coming from, Germany, Belgium and France, as well as from the UK. We were also pleased to welcome a new practitioner who had found Shintaido via the internet! Though people did not know one another so well at the beginning, by the end of the gasshuku (as so often happens) we felt very much like one big family. Of course, even as we parted we were making plans to see each other again soon!

The programme was divided into two separate days, one day concentrating on the *bo-jutsu* curriculum and the next on the Shintaido curriculum.

The focus of the event was to "fine tune" our understanding of the curriculum by looking at specific aspects. This included such details as the way of holding our bo, how to start *kumite*, how to start an examination, as well as practising *kihon* (and *kata*...??) On the examination day Shinatido candidates and senior members studied *taijyo kata* and the *kenjutsu* programme, whilst the beginners group studied free hand *kihon*, *eiko* and *eiko kumite*.

We were also very pleased to be able to go over the new stepping programme devised by Aoki *sensei* and it became very clear throughout the weekend that the knowledge of the different steps can immediately make a big difference to our Shinatido, *kenjutsu*, *kihon* and *bohjutsu kata*.



Ito sensei, demonstrating *kenjutsu*, photo by Ulla

There were examinations in *bo-jutsu* and Shintaido. These are the results:

## *Bo-jutsu*

Phillipe Pierpont 7 kyu

## *Shinatido*

Marcus Grant Instructor

Daniel Desbaux Instructor

After the examination feedback we had a discussion about the purpose of examinations. We came to understand that taking an examination is much more than about getting a grading, or acquiring status. Showing our examination programme is not only an expression of what we have learnt in the *keiko* beforehand or even in the previous few months of prepara-



The Spring *gasshuku*, photo by Marcus



Elizabeth, Jesse, Holly, & Jasper waiting in the wings, photo by Marcus

tion. It is an expression of our Shintaido involvement thus far, both our technical knowledge and understanding of the philosophy and principles of Shintaido.

To choose an image, our examination is like the tip of an iceberg showing above the water, but our commitment and experience is the remainder of the iceberg underneath. If we come to an examination on a whim, without practice or commitment it is like a shallow piece of ice floating on top of the sea without any depth to it.

We also realised that taking the examination should not be the end of something, but rather a beginning of something else. Sometimes we make the mistake of taking an examination and then not taking our



Marcus passing his instructor's exam, photo by Ula

practice further. So it was good to be reminded that the achievement of a grading is the first step towards a deeper practise.

Ula Chambers



Group photo at the end of the Spring workshop, photo by Marcus

# BRUSH MIND

## *Single stroke painting for "Spring Lines" - May 2001*

Kazuaki Tanahashi trained in Japan as a painter and calligrapher. He has been active in the United States since 1977 and is a Fellow of the World Academy of Art and Science as well as being listed in Who's Who In America. With a human-size brush, Kaz creates the world's largest one-stroke paintings. In June 1995 he created the "Circle of all Nations" - to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the signing of the United Nations Charter. Shintaido practitioners were involved in the creation of this work.

This year Kaz came to Brighton during the Festival to run workshops in Zen calligraphy as part of a calligraphy exhibition "Spring Lines" held at the Ditchling Museum. Ito put him in touch with Minagawa who assisted him during his workshops, mixing paints and helping him in various ways. Minagawa was so excited by the brush work! He came to stay with me last Saturday and we stayed up talking about it till very late!

On Monday 28th May Minagawa invited UK Shintaido practitioners to help with Tanahashi's performance for the festival, "Brush Mind". This was to be a public creation of a new one stroke painting. Shintaido was introduced by the organisers, and the audience was told that Shintaido would help them relax and enjoy the performance!

Nick Twilley came from Gloucester with his family and played drums and flute, Ra joined in with the opening Shintaido demonstration, leading the way with Minagawa, softly jumping around the demonstration area. Terry and Sarah, from Brighton, and myself also joined in showing tenshingoso.

Smiling and encouraging, Minagawa invited the audience to join in. How could they resist? Everyone joined in! Around 350 people did a light warm up either sitting down or standing up, Shintaido breathing, and *eiko sei* movement. It really helped to focus people's concentration and ground them. It was such a pleasure!

Then Tanahashi began his performance. He showed the development of pictograms into ideograms, then made a personal interpretation of some well known *kanji*. He explained the process of his calligraphy circles - miracles of every moment. It was beautiful, the mixing of colours and his concentration as he put the brush onto the paper took my breath away!

Finally he did a very large work with a human sized brush. Minagawa has stayed up one night with Tanahashi making this brush of felt, cutting the fabric together and weaving it onto the wooden base - he described how Tanahashi enjoyed this process cutting the felt with such care and concentration.

Tanahashi had asked the audience how long they thought mankind would live? He wanted concrete figures. Answers ranged from 37 years to 5 billion! He spoke about the sustainability of human kind, how it seems that there are many threats to our species, many of them made by ourselves. We have to work at sustaining our species, at making a good future for our children and their descendants, and fostering the continuity of human creativity. So the brush mind single stroke was made on a huge canvas, laying on the ground.

Accordingly then, the "sustainability" of humanity was painted by his single stroke. He produced a kind of time-line painting, in green, a uniform brush line from 1800- 1900, followed by "confusion" in 2000.

My interpretation was that it shows an expression of bewilderment in the 21st century, but it also represents a call to action. I'm not sure if I understood really well, but I felt deeply moved. Many of the audience were also very moved.

Minagawa, Terry, Sarah and myself helped Tanahashi during the demo: showing his calligraphy to the audience, handing him paints and parchment, whatever he needed. I felt very involved in his creative process. We helped him tidy up and then he went on to Vienna. One stroke and a lasting impression. What a beautiful human being!

Tanahashi also said some very positive things about Shintaido being a free movement to help people relax and express themselves. He recommended it to the audience! We had Shintaido leaflets available, and one or two people have contacted me about classes. Guess my summer *keiko* are already happening!

The good thing is that someone made a video of the whole event, including the Shintaido part. This will be played as a visual explanation alongside his work which was donated to the museum to be displayed. So in this way knowledge about Shintaido will be reaching a wider audience (unless they edit it out!! - I hope not) So thanks due to Ito for the introduction, thanks to Minagawa for his support and involvement. It was a memorable day.

Ula Chambers

# SHINTAIDO CAMP

*Camping at Rhossili, July 2001*

We enjoyed a very wonderful Shintaido Camp at Rhossili beach in Wales on July 7 & 8th. The camp was organised by the Stroud group and the gorei was lead by the ever energetic and joyful Minagawa *sensei*.

The Camp included around 15 adults and 10 children, with Shinatido friends attending from Belgium. We are happy to have practised with Colienne, Frederique and Etienne; thanks for coming! We concentrated on *renki kumite*, *tenshingos* and *eiko kumite* with both younger and more senior members exploring these forms together. At night we had a special healing meditation and practise under the stars, and around a camp fire, thinking of everyone who needs our good energy. The morning practice found us doing *taimyo kata* facing an incoming tide and a beautiful wide horizon.

This is a regular annual event and is specially focussed to be a family experience; not only to allow parents to bring their children to practice or just enjoy the communal atmosphere of Shinatido gatherings, but also to develop the feeling of closeness and ma as a growing Shinatido family. The event has a unique atmosphere and should be experienced!!

Next year's event will take place at a similar time in Wales. To be put on the mailing list for the event please contact Jo & Paul Hofman:

paul@kamchatka.u-net.com

Ula Chambers

# DALAI LAMA

*Masahi's impression of the Dalai Lama, October 2000*

I would like to send my latest news.

I met the Dalai Lama. The Dalai lama was attending a "Way of Peace" seminar organised by the World Community for Christian Meditation. This seminar was the final stage of a joint programme of pilgrimage and dialogue between Christians and Buddhists. I was invited as a performer.

He felt like Ito *sensei*, so I felt very comfortable. He shook my hands twice. His hands are very soft and warm like Aoki *sensei*. His message is very simple and strong. I thought it was just like Shintaido. No violence and a new way of expression; of compassion.

I was very pleased to be present at such an historical time in Northern Ireland and I enjoyed the event.

Masashi Minagawa

## SF ORGANIZATION

### TP (Technical Panel)

Masashi Minagawa 0117 957 0897  
Ula Chambers 01273 271521  
e-mail: Jeffulachambers@mistral.co.uk

### NIC Officers

**Treasurer**  
Peter Furtado 01865 247997

**Supportership Secretary**  
Charles Burns 0118 947 6637  
charles@shintaido.co.uk

**Newsletter Editor**  
Charles Burns 0118 947 6637  
newsletter@shintaido.co.uk

**Internet Manager**  
Daniel des Baux 020 8580 5455  
daniel@shintaido.co.uk

**Resources Manager**  
Pattie Thornley 0117 929 4632

### ABBREVIATIONS

SF Shintaido Foundation  
TP Technical Panel  
BOD Board of Directors  
NIC National Instructor's Council  
ISF International Shintaido Federation