

# Artists Convene at FNCC

By LEIGH KENNICOTT  
BOULDER, CO., CORRESPONDENT

Unexpected—the word kept cropping up in conversations, experiences and events at the first Arts Division Conference at the Florida Nature Culture Center, May 11–14. At the opening session, SGI-USA Arts Division Leader Pasqual Olivera asked the 179 conferees to aim for 12 acts of kindness each day of the conference through introducing themselves to other people, making efforts to communicate and, most important, opening doors.

At the final session on May 14, one young man revealed: “I really wanted to get to the heart of faith this weekend. And somehow, we all did.” A woman whose mother, a pio-

neer of faith, died recently shared with the group her struggle to not resent activities: “On this Mother’s Day 2000, I know my mother fulfilled her mission, because she taught me how to be an SGI member.”

SGI-USA General Director Danny Nagashima made the unexpected announcement that award-winning musicians Herbie Hancock and Wayne Shorter had been named SGI Arts Division leaders. Mr. Shorter expressed his appreciation of the honor and his determination to help all the Arts Division members win: “I hope you will all be huge!” Since everyone there had tackled his or her lack of confidence during the weekend, everyone was more than ready to oblige. **W**



Shunzo Ono



Fushu Daiko taiko drummers

## SGI PRESIDENT IKEDA’S MESSAGE TO THE ARTS DIVISION CONFERENCE

# To Instill Hope in Countless People

**‘Your mission is to instill hope in the hearts of countless people,’ SGI President Ikeda tells the Arts Division members, ‘to encourage them toward the correct path of life—one imbued with strength and optimism.’**

*The Arts Division Conference was held at the Florida Nature and Culture Center, May 11–14.*

To my esteemed Arts Division members,

**M**y heartfelt congratulations on your first Arts Division Conference! The amount of

joy, hope and courage that you are bringing to countless people through your dynamic, steadfast activities is immeasurable. My deepest appreciation to all of you for your daily efforts.

Nichiren Daishonin states, “One can know the rise and fall of a nation through the sounds of its joys and sorrows” (*Gosho Zenshu*, p. 88). In a broad sense, “sounds” here signifies art and culture. The mission of the Arts Division is thus unimaginably profound. Your mission is to instill hope in the hearts of countless people, to encourage them toward the correct path of life—one imbued with strength and optimism.

All of you, the Soka Bodhisattvas of Wonderful Sound, are wondrous, noble and respectable. When you base your lives on faith—earnestly dedicating yourselves to accomplishing your missions, developing good

fortune and fulfilling your responsibilities—you will undoubtedly bring forth tremendous strength and wisdom from within. The Buddhist deities cannot fail to protect you.

Those of you who live out your lives for the sake of kosen-rufu together with the SGI and the eternal, boundless Mystic Law will ultimately triumph, without fail. You will develop vast life-conditions infused with fulfillment and satisfaction.

My greatest joy is to see all of you advance serenely, resolutely, fearlessly—as Soka Champions of the Arts.

I continue to send my sincere prayers to each and every one of you, my beloved Arts Division members, so that your future will unfold boundlessly.

Please stay healthy.

May 2000  
Daisaku Ikeda



Super Sounds



Kenwood Dennard

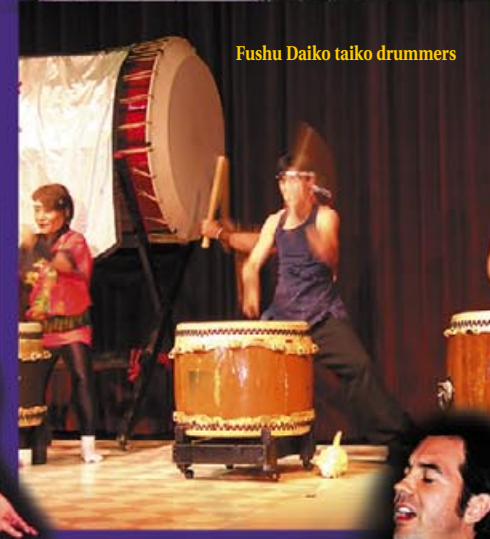


Nestor Torres and William Artope Jr.

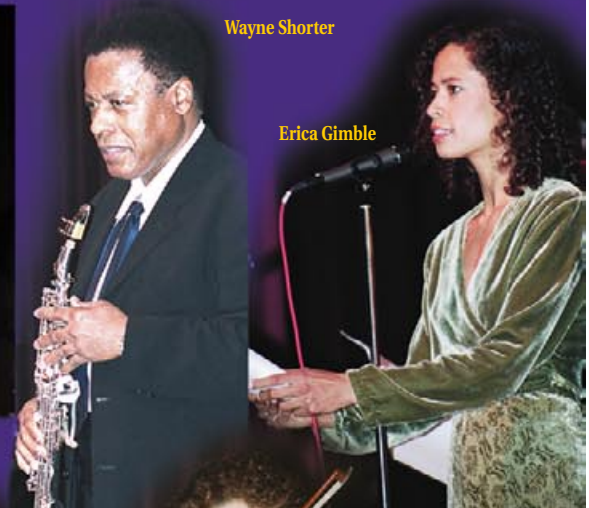


Tamara Jenkins

John Astin



Fushu Daiko taiko drummers



Wayne Shorter

Erica Gimble



Rosanna

Buster Williams



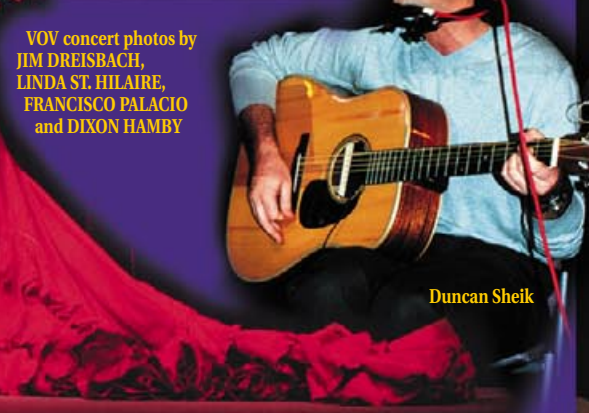
Richard, Candi and Katrina-Rose Tandy



Wayne Green



Nestor Torres



Duncan Sheik



Eduward Ruivenkamp

Francine Roussel



Onaje Alan Gumbs

VOV concert photos by  
JIM DREISBACH,  
LINDA ST. HILAIRE,  
FRANCISCO PALACIO  
and DIXON HAMBY

Pascual and Angela Olivera