



# BODY Dialogue

## Cristophe Bernard

by  
Friedemann Schulz

*[In early August, long-time Shintaido practitioner Christophe Bernard died. Many of the articles, pictures and poems in this issue are about Christophe.-- Editor.]*

The email came from Brenda. What a shock! I had to reread it several times – and as Brenda said in her note, it seemed unbelievable. Christophe had taken his own life.

Brenda asked me to let the Shintaido people know, and one of the first to respond was Ito. Brenda had given me the date for Christophe’s memorial service, but as I talked to Ito, it became clear that he was not able to make it. But he ended up arranging with Brenda to come to Los Angeles a few days after the service and perform a ritual of passing at her house.

I was able to participate in the memorial service and even to say a few words about my relationship with Christophe and his passion for Shintaido. And I had the good fortune to meet old friends again! Irene and Nobu Hadeishi, as well as Yuki and his family (he has two kids now!). Robin, who had practiced with Shin’s group in San Francisco for a long time, was there as well. And of course Lori and Claude Breant, my old pals from the time when Christophe started his Shintaido life.

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## Walk right in, set right down

by  
Chris Ikeda-Nash

*[In this article, Chrs Ikeda-Nash describes an encounter with a walk-in customer at his place of work, and how he handled it from a Shintaido perspective -- Editor]*

*Walk right in, set right down*

*baby let your mind roll on . . .*

I have been working doing tax and accounting work with Miranda Chang at her Berkeley office, Chang & Associates. Two days after the last tax season ended, we were still exhausted.

Some time in the middle of the day, a man walked in and asked for information about our services from Bou, a slender woman who had left Laos as a little girl. She asked if she could help him. He answered that his momma taught him that people should get to know each other before they talked business. She asked again what she could help him with and his conversation began to diverge from hers.

I couldn't hear clearly what they were saying to each other but the sound of their voices carried through the office. The man's voice became more insistent and cajoling, and Bou's voice became more determined and worried. He asked if he could use the bathroom and she said "no." I walked out to see what was going on. I'm a white guy, early 60s, some extra body fat.

The man was slightly smaller than I am, about 30 years old, wiry muscles, wearing a tank top and a mullet style haircut. I asked him if I could help him with anything. He walked toward me, moving his body in an agitated way and we shook hands. He waved his arms about when he talked and moved at times like he was going to touch my face with both hands. {now, me thinking, I'm going to kick him in the balls}

*Continued on p.3*

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*Christophe Bernard*

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Please submit articles, poems, pictures to the editor at  
[newsletter@Shintaido.org](mailto:newsletter@Shintaido.org). Deadline for submissions is March 15,  
2014.

Published by Shintaido of America (SoA), a non-profit organization which produces educational materials on the practice and teaching of Shintaido.

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*Body Dialogue* is published twice a year by Shintaido of America.

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## Christophe Bernard

*Continued from p.1*

In terms of Shintaido, that time ended up to be a very interesting one in Los Angeles. Claude and Lori had just come back from their 18 months stay in Japan, and they were full of enthusiasm for Shintaido. Their energy and Claude's expertise were exactly what I needed at that time. John-Pierre, my first teacher had left Los Angeles, and although I now had connections to the folks in San Francisco, it had been a somewhat lonely Shintaido existence. If I remember correctly, I was an assistant at that time, and had been teaching Irene and her kids and some of her friends in Gardena - but I had no real peers to practice with.

So, Claude and Lori started a new group and through their connections, especially with Shi Shi (Michel Chiche), a French cook, other folks joined. For a while it seemed like a French Shintaido enclave. Good news and bad news for me: I didn't (and still don't) speak a word of French, but on the other hand, the food after the practice was excellent!



*A photo ofl "the old days" from Claude and Lori Breant*

Christophe was one of those French guys who joined the group. Even though he was young, younger than most of the other folks, he seemed to have a special standing among all those cooks. As I found out along the way, even that early in his career his professionalism and his art of cooking were admired by his peers.

He was a bit out of shape at first, but as in Claude's words, in terms of his Shintaido practice, he soon became a "race car". He was able to grasp the Shintaido ideas and movements very quickly. Both he and I were competitive, and it bugged me a bit that "this upstart" was outpacing me at Kaikiakusho, for instance. But he was also such a likable person that we actually got along very well. We travelled together on many trips to San Francisco and the rest of the country, going to Gasshukus and special Shintaido workshops.

One of the qualities that I admired about Christophe, was his

ability to make friends so easily. Wherever we went, his humor and willingness to help out created lots of friendly connections. He also liked talking about Shintaido, and it seemed that in his explanations to others about this or that concept, he worked out his ideas and came to understand something himself.

So, a few days after the memorial service, Ito and Nicole came to stay with me, and the next day the three of us went to Brenda's house. The two children, Camille (15) and Julian (20) were present as well.

Ito asked them to join us in some simple Shintaido movements and sounds, based on Tenshingoso. After that he, Nicole and I "cut the space" with just three Toitsukihon cuts. Then all of us stood in meditation for a while. The movements and the atmosphere were enfolded by the chants of the Dalai Lama, which played in the background.

Ito's words encouraged Christophe to move on - to run a big Eiko Dai for one more time. He told the family, who were clearly moved by their participation in the event, that in the Tibetan Buddhist tradition, the ones who have passed are on a journey and that we can help them to complete this voyage successfully. He also suggested for the family to now move on in their own lives - in order to help themselves as well as Christophe.

As Julian and I talked a bit later about his experience of that terrible day, Ito walked around the property with his meditation bells. Hearing those bells coming from different parts of the garden, behind the house and eventually to the garage, where Christophe had taken his life, made a big impression on me. The bells' bright voices were such a contrast to the suburban LA city sounds. They didn't fit, but they were very fitting all the same. The thought came to me, that Christophe could not help but hear those bells, and I imagined that he drew strength from their sound and from our good wishes for his passing. \*\*\*



*H.F. Ito, Friedemann Schulz, and Christophe's family*

## Remembering Christophe

by

Eva Thaddeus

I remember seeing Christophe take one of his Shintaido exams. It was for graduate or maybe instructor. He looked so comfortable out there, handling partners as they came at him with different attacks. When it came time for exam feedback, the examiners lit into whoever was before him, as they like to do – all kinds of things were difficult, wrong, needed work, character flaws had been bared. . . .then it was Christophe's turn. "Christophe – good." A tone of affection. That was it. That was his exam feedback.

It seemed that everybody liked Christophe. I know I did. When I think of him, I think of somebody who was pleasant and relaxed, no drama. Once he came to an L.A. gasshuku on the weekend of the Golden Globe awards. His cooking students were in charge of the Golden Globe dinner, which was taking place while he was away. He shrugged. "They'll be fine."

When he stopped coming to gasshukus, I figured he didn't need us any more. Now that he's dead, I wonder if I was wrong. When I first knew him he had a small child, "mon petit bonhomme." I never met his little bonhomme, and I wonder how old that son is now, and how he's doing. I wonder what the years have wrought. I am left puzzled, and with questions. In one way, when we do keiko together, people become very intimate, and in another way, we learn so little about one another. Until I learned he was gone from the world, I didn't realize I missed Christophe. Now I know that I do.\*\*\*



Minagawa Sensei Instructing Christophe and Joe Zawielski  
Pacific Kangeiko 2007 -- Photo by Robert Kedoin

## Song-Rou, Xu-Kong, Yuan-Man

[Master Instructor H.F. Ito provided this text from an article written by Professor Tomoji Miyamoto, Chuo University: *Chinese Martial Arts for the Body, Mind, and Spirit - The World of Ma Chang Xun, Fourth-Generation Master of Traditional Wu-style Tai Chi.* -- Editor.]

These six characters effectively describe the development of mind and body in the practice of Tai Chi Chuan.

As we progress in keiko, a number of mind-body characteristics start to develop:

鬆 "Song" meaning relaxation

柔 "Rou" (the character for flexibility, meaning soft resilience)

虛·空 "Xu-Kong" (the characters for deficiency and emptiness, meaning that within ourselves we respond naturally to stimulus from outside)

圓·滿 "Yuan-MAN" (the characters for round and full, meaning that we are naturally filled up with universal KI energy).

鬆 "Song" means relax, or loosening.

柔 "Rou" means "soft and flexible" We also have three additional Chinese characters that express similar feelings:

軟 ("Ruan", meaning soft and fluid),

輕 ("Zhi," meaning soft and lightweight), and

靜 ("Jin," meaning soft and quiet).

So never stop thinking about "Song-Rou" whenever you do standing meditation, kata or push-hands.

松·柔 "Song-Rou" becomes a growing part of your awareness, your inner self will be more and more filled with deficiency and emptiness.

True natural movement begins from true internal deficiency and emptiness; then your body will respond easily and gently to outside stimulus.

A relaxed body makes instantaneous judgments from the skin sensors and other input, and responds naturally and appropriately.

There are many famous Chinese medical texts that contain information related to Tai Chi, making it very difficult to distinguish any essential difference between martial arts and medicine. Meditation returns the inner Tanden to its ideal state, filled with the same life-force as a newborn baby. This is the same as the ideal state in martial arts. In other words, the spirituality of Chinese martial arts is the power to live as a natural human being.\*\*\*

## Walk right In continued from page 3

"Yeah, right . . . Chang & Associates. What if I go down to the County Recorder's office and find out who really owns this business? That better be you!" He was rocking back and forth, arms swinging up and down.

"Go ahead."

"I'm a salesman. I've got a lot of business. And I will be back with my four employees to talk this over with you. Let me have one of your business cards."

"No."

"You won't even give me a business card. That costs twenty five cents!" He took his eyes off me and looked at the counter to his right and fixed on a container of pens. "Let me have one of the pens then."

"No."

"Com'on, at least give me a pen."

Relaxing, I reached over and give him a pen.

He moved towards the door, and gave me a small look of triumph. "At least I got a pen" and walked out the door.

### Discussion points:

\* Winning, losing, protecting others

\* Preparing oneself in advance for conflict \*\*\*

## From Jim Sterling

Maybe, we all have been thinking a little about death this week. I came across this passage in an interview with George Saunders, an American writer.

*Interviewer:* I asked him about the occasional dramatization in his stories of the moments after death, the way characters' lives are sometimes suddenly reframed and redeemed.

*George Saunders' reply:*

"In terms of dramatic structure, I don't really buy the humanist verities anymore," he said. "I mean, I buy them, they're a subset of what's true. But they're not sufficient. They wouldn't do much for me on my deathbed. Look at it another way. We're here. We're nice guys. We're doing O.K. But we know that in X number of years, we won't be here, and between now and then something unpleasant is gonna happen, or at least potentially unpleasant and scary. And when we turn to try and understand that, I don't really think the humanist verities are quite enough. Because that would be crazy if they were. It would be so weird if we knew just as much as we needed to know to answer all the questions of the universe. Wouldn't that be freaky? Whereas the probability is high that there is a vast reality that we have no way to perceive, that's actually bearing down on us now and influencing everything. The idea of saying, 'Well, we can't see it, therefore we don't need to see it,' seems really weird to me." \*\*\*

## We found

(for *Christophe Bernard*)

we found we  
riding the same lightning strike  
the long, slow journey  
sky to earth.  
we wondered at the sound, called thunder,  
scampered the sense realms,  
smelled moistness and charred flesh . . .  
flaring charges trying to grasp the flame-slippery heart  
of being

you are gone to ions now  
this other soon to follow  
still the shape of lightning remains  
to engulf the dry forest

Chris Ikeda-Nash  
September, 2013

**Also from Jim Sterling**, a link to an article in the New York Times entitled [The Value of Suffering](#):

"Calamity cracks you open, moves you to change your ways. Sometimes."

## life haiku

life is a short AH,  
A, E, O, surrounded by  
a very long UM

Stephen Billias  
July, 2013

## Five Stages of Shintaido Development

[General Instructor Jim Sterling suggested that we publish these stages of Shintaido development, given to us by Aoki-sensei through Master Instructor H.F. Ito, in this issue. Editor.]

Aoki-sensei has presented his view of the practitioner's body condition at five stages of Shintaido development. We will study these stages as they are reflected in each practitioner's body condition and movement.

抜け *Nuke*

*Nuke* comes from *Nukeru*, which can be translated as lost or dropped away as when the floor drops out from under one's feet. In Japanese, we might say *koshi ga nukeru* or *koshi nuke* and mean the person has lost his *koshi* and does not have any power. A martial artist looking at a beginning Shintaido practitioner's movement might think that the movement does not make any sense.

*Nuke* is the starting point, the goal of the first stage of Shintaido is to make our mind and body completely soft and flexible. In Japanese we say *gunya-gunya* to describe the movement of a snake or octopus or jelly fish. it is soft and flexible. These movements are especially important during the first stage of Shintaido

伸び、*Nobi*

*Nobi* comes from *Nobiru* which means to stretch, to grow, to expand. Several expressions reflect this as in *Motto tsuke o obashite!* Stretch your *tsuki* much farther forward! And, *Tsuki ga nobote kita*. Your *tsuki* is really expansive and far reaching.

*Iki-iki* (more vigorous) or *Nobi-nobi* (expanding) are expressions that we use in Japanese that reflect the goal of the second stage of Shintaido which is to expand and invigorate your *kata* or form. The goal is to expand and stretch, "to let your movement or *kata* express your life force in it."

利き、*Kiki*

*Kiki* comes from *Kiku*, to be effective, *Tsuki ga kiku!* This is literally "tsuki is effective." *Keri ga kiku* means that your kick is effective or is working. So in this stage, *kiki* means movements and forms are effective, that they work and make sense.

冴え、*Sae*

*Sae* comes from *Saeru*. *Atama ga saeru* mean literally that your brain has cleared and awakened. For Shintaido, *sawe* means that your *waza* or movement will become clear, beautiful, and awakened. At this stage when others see your movement and *waza* they will recognize their clarity and beauty.

自在 *Jizai*

*Jiyu Jizai* means free and liberated. I often use the expression *Katsu-Satsu-Jizai* to mean moving freely between life and death and choosing freely the sword of life and the sword of death. By the fifth stage of Shintaido, whatever you do, Shintaido will be expressed as part of it, as part of your life. Whatever you study in your daily life and whatever you do in your work, will also naturally be expressed through your Shintaido performance. Shintaido expression will be freely and naturally part of all that you do.\*\*\*

## Memories of Christophe Bernard

by  
Shin Aoki

I met Christophe through Shintaido practice and got to know him by spending some casual moments in *gasshuku*. I always enjoyed his cheerfulness and his boyish sense of humor full of silliness and innocence that taught me not to lose a little boy within me. In Shintaido *keiko* I respected him for having incredibly strong *tsuki* (or punches). As he became increasingly busy with his work as a chef and the director of culinary school, it became very rare to see him. I missed his bright presence.

When people come to Shintaido, practice at high intensity then move on, I often wonder how their lives are after Shintaido. Christophe certainly was on that list in my mind.

A few months ago, we were reconnected with each other through Facebook, and we periodically had late evening cyber chat, talking about family, friends, work, food, and lots of goofy stuff. It was relaxing for both of us. He seemed to be extremely busy at work but I could tell he loved his work.

Every time I think of chef training, it reminds me of a TV documentary that I watched where a chef was yelling in the kitchen at his apprentices who were silently looking down the floor apologetically. It was supposed to portray his perfectionism, but to me the man appeared to be a bully and narcissistic. I had to tell Christophe about this documentary just to tease him as if he would be like that angry chef. I also told him that it must be challenging to train people who don't have natural talent in cooking.

He responded to me saying "That's not my style. Everybody has something special in themselves. And my job is to find that something special and bring them out, just like what we do in Shintaido practice." What a beautiful statement. It gave me an answer to how he had continued his Shintaido *keiko* in his life, and it was one last powerful *tsuki* that I received from him deeply in my heart.

Thank you, my friend, Christophe.\*\*\*

# BODY

*Dialogue*



*Christophe Bernard and Jim Sterling*

*Pacific Shintaido Kangeiko 2007*

*photo by Robert Kedoin*

新  
体  
道

"Shintaido" means "new body way." It is an art form, a health exercise and meditation through movement developed in Japan in the 1960s. Shintaido grows out of the roots of ancient martial arts and meditation traditions, but the aim is to help modern people rediscover the original wisdom known by the body and realized through movement.