

# What's On Disc

## ★ CD REVIEWS

### World

#### KIYOSHI NAGATA ENSEMBLE

##### *Kiro (Indie)*

It's another credit to this cosmopolitan city that one of the world's most interesting Japanese taiko drumming ensembles hails from Toronto. Since 1998, the nine-person group headed by Kiyoshi Nagata has consistently added new layers of invention to the traditional drumming-and-dancing repertoire. It's not immediately obvious how taiko could make for a fulfilling listening experience, since much of taiko work relies on movement. And, while *Kiro* does not make ideal iPod fare for urban commuting, there is lots here to tease the ear. Nari-mono (various percussion devices) enhance the basic drum rhythms, while shakuhachi (a recorder made from bamboo), shinobue (flute used mainly in kabuki performances), shamisen (a type of lute) and voice spice up the sound with repeated melodic fragments. All 10 tracks on *Kiro* are recent creations, four of them by Nagata. The repetition-variation pattern of the sound means that even the more aggressive passages are still conducive to achieving a sort of meditative state. (Purists, please don't read this: I think these pieces would make excellent loops for dance-club fusion.) The Kiyoshi Nagata Ensemble performs tonight through Saturday at the George Ignatieff Theatre.

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