

The Aikido Center of Los Angeles, LLC, 1211 N. Main Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012, Tele: (323) 225-1424 www.aikidocenterla.com



# The Aikido Center of Los Angeles

## 道の為、世の為、人の為 合気道

# The Aiki Dojo

Direct Affiliation: Aikido World Headquarters, 17-18 Wakamatsu-cho, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo, Japan  
Los Angeles Sword & Swordsmanship Society Kenshinkai  
Furuya Foundation

August 2008

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Photo courtesy of Irene Ishikawa

### **In the Dojo** by David Ito

During the preparation of the August newsletter, I took some time off with Mark Ehrlich to visit the Obon festivals at the Zenshuji and Nishi Hongwanji temples. The Shichigatsu (seventh month) Obon is usually celebrated in July but also celebrated in August as Hachigatsu Obon. This Japanese custom, over 500 years old, honors the spirit of deceased ancestors. Families typically visit their respective temples and family gravesites at this time and offer prayers, celebrate and dance. This is the time to clean your house and make sure your family altar, or *butsudan*, is clean and decorated with flowers and offerings because it is believed that the spirits return to their family shrines.

In the United States Obon is celebrated for one day, but in Japan Obon can last three days. At the festivals people enjoy food bazaars, games, performances and *Bon Odori*, a joyful dance to show gratitude to the ancestors. (Mark and I did not dance.)

When we arrived at Zenshuji, I noticed that Sensei's name appeared on a cotton hand towel called a *tenagui* and was given out to people who donated to the temple. (Reverend Kojima previously told me about it, but I had forgotten.) It made me smile and remember all the things Sensei did for us in the past and how he continues to watch over us today. So let's keep our dojo and our practice within it in order, and show our gratitude to the man who made everything we have here possible. *Gambatte!*

### **End of Summer Party**

September 13, 2008  
**Saturday**  
4:00 PM

Potluck!

*Bring your favorite dish*



## Letters

Crazy is the short word I would use to describe how I am, but nothing has changed. It seems as though whenever I get a handle on life, something else enters and requires adjustment. We are in the process of selling our house and buying a new one. We close on both properties on the 25th of this month, 10 days. We have to pack and move by the 29th of this month. Tomorrow is my 8 year wedding anniversary. Thursday is my last day teaching summer school, and I'll have three weeks off to pack, move, and unpack before I go to work teaching at my new job. Soleil turns a year old on July 28th. Stressful, but all positive things. I am training twice a week. I went to Jeff Albright's grand opening of his new dojo in Castle Rock. It was nice, and Andrew Blevins was there to help with uke duty with Izawa Sensei.

How are you? How is the dojo?

I feel so isolated out here away from you. Yes, I am connected through Izawa, but I miss everyone there. I really liked reading the archived essay in the newsletter from Sensei.

Let me know if I can help with anything.

All my best,  
Steven Shaw

I am sorry to hear of the passing of Furuya Sensei. About 6-years ago, I read his book 'Kodo' and was thoroughly impressed by the depth and understand Furuya Sensei has of budo. I had emailed Furuya Sensei and told him I felt that he was a teacher to us all, and thanked him for writing this book. I was so impressed with his humbleness and kindness in his response even though I am not an Aikido student. Again, I am sorry for your loss. Gambatte!

Sincerely, Jay Zimmerman  
Shihan Bujinkan Budo Taijutsu

Hello Ito Sensei!

Both Itoh Sensei and my self are doing well, thanks. At Tekko we just promoted our first ever shodan last Monday! We also got a rush on new students. Overall, tekko is looking pretty good. Yeah, I was pretty bummed about hearing that you guys had postpone your grand opening seminar. I wish you the best on getting your dojo on your feet. You can count on me and Tekko for support. It will take time, hang in there. You have a lot people, pulling for you guys.

-Andre Brown

*Editor's note:* Andre Brown is one of the assistants to Itoh Sensei at Aikido Tekko Juku of Boston.

### JAPANESE LESSON



**Konnichiwa: Good afternoon**  
Pronounced (*Koh-NEE-chee-wah*)

こんにちは

**Konbanwa: Good evening**  
Pronounced (*Kohn-bahn-wah*)

こんばんわ

Konnichiwa and Konbanwa are the salutations equivalent to good day or good afternoon and good evening.

Konnichiwa is sometimes used to say "hello," but generally it is used as a term to mean good day. Konnichiwa is usually used after about 11:00 AM and no later than 5:00 PM. Konnichiwa was derived from the phrase *Konnichi wa ikaga desu ka*, which means, *How do you do today?* Often times people who just meet for the first time casually might say konnichiwa even in the evening, but it is usually reserved for the afternoon or day time.

Konbanwa is used to say good evening after about 7:00 PM, but not usually in the early evening. Konbanwa comes from the phrase *Konbanwa ii yoru desu ne*, which means, *This is a pleasant evening isn't it?*

### Konnichi-wa

こんにちは

"Hello" or "Good afternoon"

### Konban-wa

こんばんは

"Good evening"



### Dojo Etiquette Reigi Saho

#### Placing your shoes properly as you enter the dojo.

The entrance where we take off our shoes is referred to as the *Genkan* and the shoe rack is called a *geta-bako*. In a Japanese home or temple, the *Genkan* is a transitional space that separates the inside world from the outside world. The *Genkan* is the area which Japanese people designate as the face to the outside world. People can glimpse your inner world as they walk by your front door. The Japanese, culturally, have a strong sense of cleanliness and the *Genkan* is always supposed to be clean and free from dust and dirt and the shoes should be impeccably arranged. The Buddhist belief is that when we clear the dust away from the world, we are really cleaning and arranging ourselves.

In old times, travelling Buddhist monks used to judge the disci-



pline of the temple or school by the order and cleanliness of the *Genkan*. Today, keeping the *Genkan* clean and neatly arranged is one of the first manners children learn. About a decade ago, a newspaper reporter came to the school to interview Sensei. One of the things she remarked in her article was that when she was leaving Kenny Furuya had turned her shoes around and placed them so that she could easily exit the school. She thought that gesture was so thoughtful.

When you enter the dojo, please turn your shoes around, align them and put them off to one side, if you can. When we have guests, please turn their shoes around and place them in the center of the doorway against the wood.

Please do not enter or leave the dojo bare footed. It is considered extremely bad manners. We do not want to bring the dirt from the outside world into our dojo. Also, there is a shoe horn located in the *Genkan*, which provides a caring touch to the dojo and lets other know we are thinking about their well being.



Nikolay Anatolyevich Savelyev, 2nd kyu visits from Russia. He will be staying in Fountain Valley for a short time for work.



**Everyone is  
Welcome!**

### Hacienda La Puente Aikikai

Tom Williams, Aikido 4th dan  
Chief Instructor

Monday and Thursday Nights  
6:30-8:00 PM

Dibble Adult School  
1600 Ponte Avenue  
Hacienda Heights

#### New Q&A section in the newsletter starting next month

Please send your questions or inquiries to [info@aikidocenterla.com](mailto:info@aikidocenterla.com) and our team will do our best to come up with an answer.

Any contributions to the newsletter is welcome and appreciated. Please share something that you think others might gain from or that you feel is meaningful. We are always looking for new and interesting content.  
Thank you!

#### August Events ...

August 30th  
6:30 AM Intensive practice  
~No Iaido~

August 15th  
Deadline for article submissions

September 13th  
Promotion testing

September 13th  
End of summer party





***Why were you interested in starting Aikido?***

I have been interested in martial arts since I was a child. My parents did not understand, and did not really approve, of me saving my allowance to buy books on karate and judo. When I was about 11 years old, my Dad brought home a hippie catalog called "The Whole Earth Catalog". Among the things like Earth Shoes and the Firefox book that showed you how to live the simple life, there was a book called *Aikido and the Dynamic Sphere*, by Westbrook and Ratti. The description of Aikido was intriguing, and I saved my paper route money and sent away for it. When the book arrived, it was full of hand drawings that showed the complex motions of Aikido, and descriptions of the mysterious "ki" that Aikido practitioners developed. I wanted to study Aikido, but we lived in Ohio then, and there was no place to study Aikido. Later on, we moved to Pennsylvania, in the middle of Amish country, but there was still no access to Aikido there, so - after a protracted period of convincing my parents that I would not be injured or break the woodwork in the house - I went to karate school. It was not until I went to graduate school in Hawaii that I was anywhere near a Japanese community. In Hawaii, I started to study Aikido, and that was when I discovered the extant political divisions between different schools of Aikido. I wanted to study Aikido, but I had professors who were in different organizations. Rather than be criticized by one advisor for studying Aikido at the "wrong" place, I learned Tai Mantis Gung Fu from a teacher who had a small group that practiced every morning at 6:00 in the park next to my apartment. I learned that my teacher, Trinh To Hoa, had taught Gung Fu in Saigon for over 40 years before escaping to the U.S. After we moved to Los Angeles, I practiced Gung Fu by myself for a few years, and then I learned that my teacher had passed away. After a few more years, I decided to start studying at a school again, and I thought the time was right to study Aikido.

***Why did you decide to join the Aikido Center of Los Angeles?***

The first day I decided to check out the ACLA was September 10, 2001. I decided that I would go down and watch class the next day, which, of course, did not happen. Over the next couple of weeks, I read Furuya Sensei's daily message on the web each day. His comments about the 9/11 attacks and our responsibilities in the aftermath were different from any other perspective I knew about. I really didn't know what to think about Sensei from his writings, but it was obvious that his knowledge of martial arts and Japanese culture was extensive. Finally, on September 30,

2001 (I remember it was a Sunday) I went down to watch the morning class, which was taught by Mark Ty. I signed up on October 1, 2001.

***What do you find challenging about your practice?***

Two things are at the top: keeping the beginner's mind, and trusting the technique completely. Furuya Sensei used to tell me that I shortchanged the techniques. By that he meant that I relied too much on my own ideas and power. I am always learning that the techniques don't really need me to do anything, except practice constantly, to make them work.

## Faces In The Dojo



**William Allen III, Aikido 2nd dan**

***What do you like most about Aikido and/or the Aikido Center of Los Angeles?***

That is not really a fair question. Aikido and the ACLA are not things that I can criticize and evaluate as I could a movie or a book. A lot of my heart is with Aikido and the ACLA, and I find there are almost not enough hours in the week to work, take care of issues at home, and study Aikido. I like teaching the children's class very much, and I enjoy seeing the older kids graduate to the adult class.

***Please tell us a little about yourself.***

I have been married to my wife, Machiko, since 1989. We met in Honolulu, when I was working on my Ph.D. in mathematics at the University of Hawaii. I worked at the University of Hawaii for a semester before coming to Los Angeles in 1989 to work in the Math Department at UCLA. I currently work at Symantec Corporation, which is the largest computer security company in the world, and have worked there for the past 11 years. My job title is The Director of Mac Engineering, and my team creates and maintains Mac security products like Norton AntiVirus for Mac, and Norton Internet Security for Mac.

***What other hobbies or interest do you have?***

I enjoy finger style acoustic guitar, and I have been playing guitar since 1977. My favorite guitars are my two Taylors. I have a Taylor 710 Dreadnought and a Taylor 815 L7. Both are great instruments. Though I don't do active research in mathematics any more, I still like to study math, and I have a few hundred mathematics books on my shelves at home. I will never finish them in my lifetime, and that is fine with me. I am interested in Ukiyo-e, or Japanese woodblock prints. I very much like the works of Kawase Hasui, Utamaro, and Yoshitoshi.

***Please tell us something most people don't know about you.***

I lived in Asuncion, Paraguay from the time I was 1 year old until I was five.

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Published by The Aikido Center of Los Angeles  
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Tel: (323) 225-1424. Email: [info@Aikidocenterla.com](mailto:info@Aikidocenterla.com)

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# Our History



Sensei with unknown Uke at Hollywood dojo  
circa 1970s



Maria Murakawa, Aikido 2nd dan throwing  
Kenneth Furuya, Aikido 5th dan



Sensei teaching Aikido on *The Dick Cavett Show*  
circa 1970s



Ken Watanabe, Aikido 5th dan and  
Mark Ty, Aikido 3rd dan demonstrating  
at Echo Park's Lotus Festival



Sensei throwing Ken Watanabe outside the old dojo



The old dojo



### The Fallacy of Reason

by Reverend Kensho Furuya

Most people think that they can get by in this world by reason and their intellect so it is easy to argue and conjecture and assume. How many times a day do I hear the words, "I assumed ...", or "I thought. . . ." Just as the "prayer" or "mantra" we use every time we are wrong.

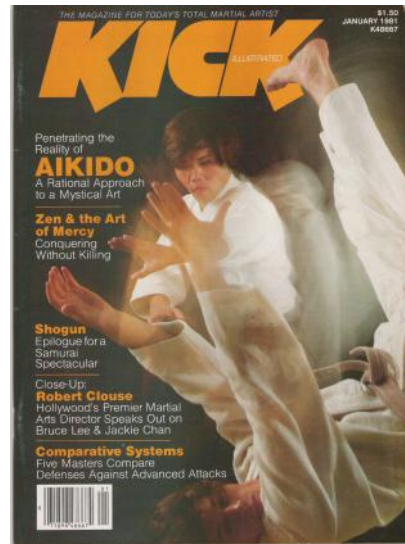
In the dojo, reason doesn't work. I am not saying one should be silly or ignorant, it is important to use one's mind and heart ... but the mind and heart is not ruled by reason at all, if you think about it seriously.

More important than reason is the "caring heart." When we think of others, it is easy to go one step ahead and think beyond reason. Reason only calculates and justifies the here and now ... a caring heart takes us far beyond.

Today, one of our students is sharing his great talent of playing the guitar and singing in the Dojo tonight. Everyone in the community and neighborhood is invited, of course. Whenever we have these function, we always clean the Dojo a little more than our normal schedule just to have everything nice to welcome our guests. This is our custom. Today, however, I didn't say anything about this ... and, of course, no one did anything.

Of course, it is logical, to think, "If no one says anything, why should I do it?" No one ever thinks, "We have many guests tonight, we should make sure our Dojo is nice for everyone."

Teaching Aikido comes in many ways. Everyone knows how to defend themselves quite well, especially when it comes to themselves. We always have a word or excuse handy, if we are caught. Doing for others, making sure everything is ok, beyond one's own immediate needs, requires insight, compassion,



Sensei on the cover of Kick magazine  
January 1981 issue

generosity, leadership, responsibility, and most of all, a caring heart. Without this caring heart, we can never attain our full humanity ... without humanity, Aikido will always be beyond our grasp, I believe.

Everyday, day and night, I am thinking of my students and how to teach them ... at the same time, it is such a lonely life here in the Dojo. . . . Much more fun if I think about myself and do for myself, but then. . . .

In Japanese, *to be caring* is said as, *ki ga kiku*. Literally, "Your 'ki' is working well. . . ." Is your ki working well today?

*Editor's note:* This was an article Sensei wrote on October 16, 2006 and posted on his Yahoo group: Aikido-Iaido-KODO.

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**Congratulations!!!**

**Castle Rock Aikido**

Their new dojo is now open



**We wish them all the best!**

**Branch Dojos**

### Hacienda La Puente Aikikai

Hacienda Heights, California  
Chief Instructor: Tom Williams

### Aikido Kodokai

Salamanca, Spain  
Chief Instructor: Santiago Garcia Almaraz  
www.kodokai.com

### Veracruz Aikido Dojo

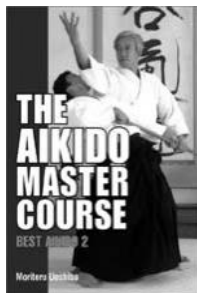
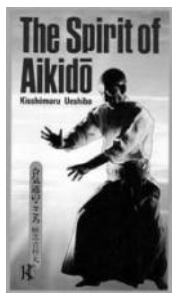
Vera Cruz, Mexico  
Chief Instructors:  
Dr. Roberto Magallanes  
Dr. Alvaro R. Hernández Meza



### Recommended Readings:



by Ueshiba Kisshomaru



by Ueshiba Moriteru



### Aikido Center of Los Angeles:

We are a not-for-profit, traditional Aikido Dojo dedicated to preserving the honored values and traditions of the arts of Aikido and Iaido. With your continued understanding and support, we hope that you also will dedicate yourself to your training and to enjoying all the benefits Aikido and Iaido can offer.

#### The Aiki Dojo Newsletter

Editor-in-Chief: David Ito

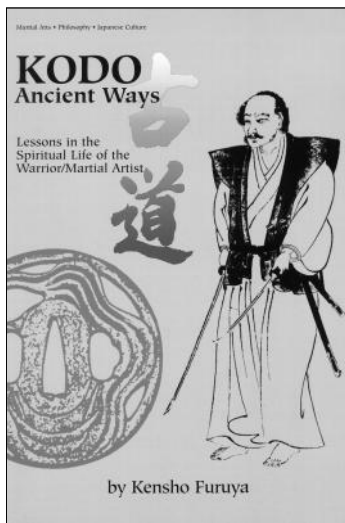
Assistant Editor: Mark Ehrlich

Photographer: Larry Armstrong

### ◇ Publications By Reverend Kensho Furuya ◇

### Kodo: Ancient Ways: Lessons In The Spiritual Life of the Warrior

By Reverend Kensho Furuya



Highly recommended for all students of the Dojo.

# The Art of AIKIDO

Instructional Video Series s Now Available in a new DVD format.

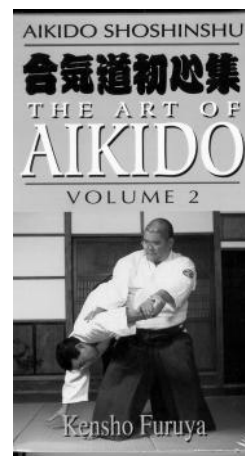
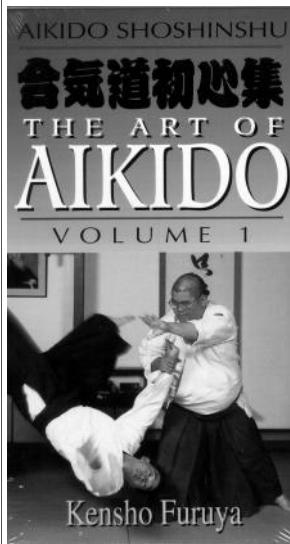
"Top Rated" Karate Illustrated

"Impressive Scope" Aikido Today

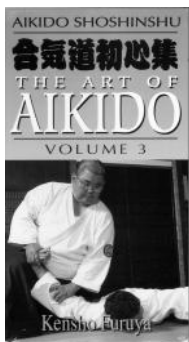
"Exhaustive" Aikido Journal

"Best in the English language on the market today," Budovideos.com.

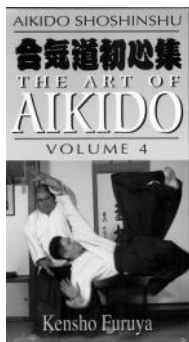
This video series is considered the most comprehensive and detailed instructional video on Aikido available today. Clear depiction of each technique and very detailed explanation of all of the fine points.



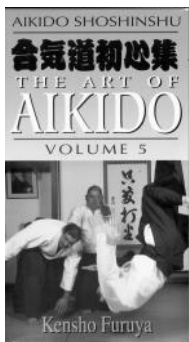
Basic Techniques  
Throwing & Joint  
Techniques, Ikkyo, Nikyo,  
Sankyo, Yonkyo & Gokyo



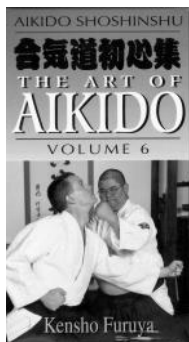
Ukemi-Breakfalling  
Basics Continued  
Free Style Techniques  
Tenshin. Ki. Breathing.



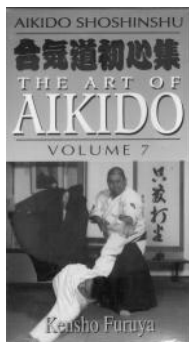
Katatetori Ryotemochi:  
Ryotetori: 2-hand.  
Reigi-saho: Etiquette.  
Koshinage-Hip throws.



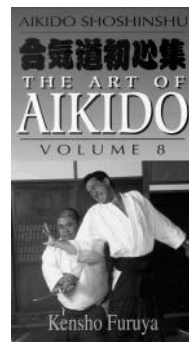
Suwari-waza. Gokyo.  
Hanmi-handachi. Ko-  
kyudosa.  
Katatori: Shoulder.  
Multiple attackers.



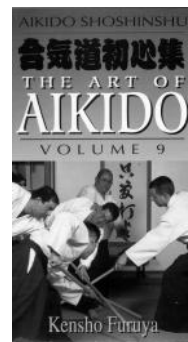
Tsuki: Strikes &  
Punches  
Yokomenuchi: Strikes  
to the side of the head &  
neck.



Shomenuchi,Ushiro  
Katatetori Kubishime:  
Chokes from behind.  
Ushiro Ryotetori,  
Ryohijitori, Ryokatatori.



Atemi-waza: Striking  
Defense against kicks.  
Tanto-tori: Knife  
defense.Aiki-ken:  
Sword Training



Jo: Basic long staff  
Fundamentals.  
Complete 1st Degree  
Black Belt Examination



# Aikido TRAINING SCHEDULE

# Iaido TRAINING SCHEDULE

## TRADITIONAL JAPANESE IAIDO SWORDSMANSHIP

### Sundays

9:00-10:00 AM Children's Class  
10:15-11:15 AM Open

### Mondays

5:15-6:15 PM Fundamentals  
6:30-7:30 PM Open  
7:45-8:45 PM Weapons

### Tuesdays

6:30-7:30 PM Advanced (3rd Kyu & up) \*  
7:45-8:45 PM Fundamentals

### Wednesdays

5:15-6:15 PM Fundamentals  
6:30-7:30 PM Open  
7:45-8:45 PM Weapons

### Thursdays

6:30-7:30 PM Bokken (Black Belts)  
7:45-8:45 PM Open

### Fridays

5:15-6:15 PM Fundamentals  
6:30-7:30 PM Open

### Saturdays

9:30-10:30 AM Open  
10:30-11:30 AM Advanced (3rd Kyu & up) \*

\* These classes are not open for visitors to watch

**Saturdays:** 7:15-8:15 AM Beginning  
8:15-9:15 AM Intermediate-Advanced

**Sundays:** 7:45-8:45 AM

**Thursdays:** 6:30-7:30 PM (Bokken Practice)

*No Classes on the last weekend of the month.*

**Private Classes Available.**

## No Appointment Necessary To Join:

You are welcome to visit us anytime during our Open and Beginning Classes. Signing up for classes is very easy and only takes a few minutes. Welcome!

## CHILDREN'S CLASSES

6 to 16 years old

**Sunday Mornings 9:00 -10:00 AM**

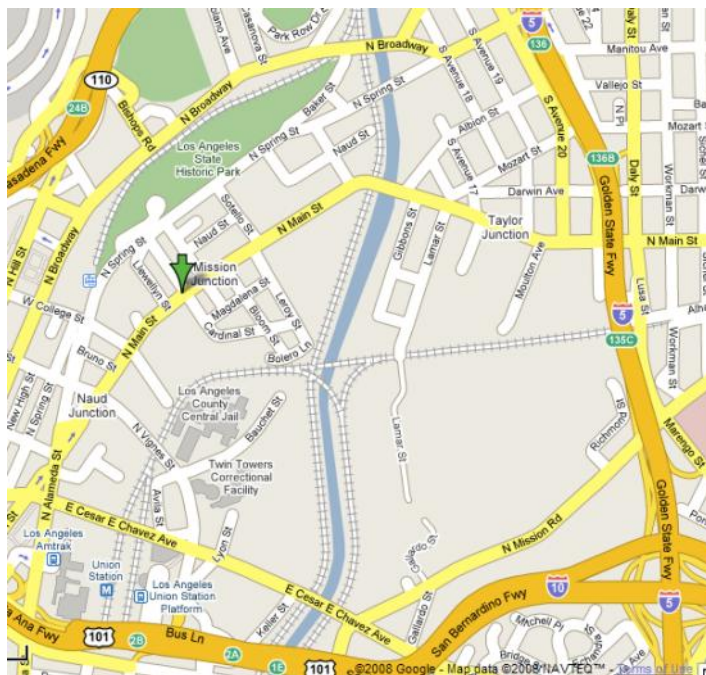
*We are directly affiliated with:*

### **AIKIDO WORLD HEADQUARTERS**

Aikido So-Hombu Dojo - Aikikai

17-18 Wakamatsu-cho, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo, JAPAN

*We are committed to the study and practice of the teachings of the Founder of Aikido, Morihei Ueshiba and his legitimate successors, Kisshomaru Ueshiba and the present Doshu Moriteru Ueshiba.*



## Aikido Center of Los Angeles

1211 N. Main Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Tel: (323) 225-1424

Email: [info@Aikidocenterla.com](mailto:info@Aikidocenterla.com)

[www.Aikidocenterla.com](http://www.Aikidocenterla.com)

## Finding Our Dojo:

We are located at

1211 N. Main St.

Los Angeles, CA 90012.

We are across the street and one block west from the Chinatown Metro Station.

**The Entrance is on Elmyra Street.**