

# SWEEPINGZEN

the definitive online who's who of Zen



## Eido Shimano to lead sesshin at Providence Zen Center in 2013?

Oct 2nd, 2012

By Adam Tebbe



One must really pause to question the wisdom of any Zen institution that would offer [Eido Shimano](#) a place to teach and lead sesshin, knowing about his [long and well-documented history](#) of sexual and ethical misconduct that began when he first came to the United States in 1960. From where I am sitting, for any Zen institution to offer Shimano a place of teaching authority on their grounds is unconscionable. According to [a letter from George Zournas](#) to the Trustees of the Ze Studies Society dated 9/14/1982, one Dr. Tadao Ogura (then Senior Psychiatrist of the South Oaks Hospital) agreed, saying of Shimano: "Wherever he goes, he s[h]ould never again be given a position of primary authority." That was the opinion of a highly respected psychiatrist dating as far back as 1982!

And yet, the [Providence Zen Center](#) (the international headquarters of the late Zen master Seung Sahn's [Kwan Um School of Zen](#)) has knowingly done just that. In an email from Ekyo Ursula Sapeta to Eido Shimano's remaining group of followers, [Sapeta writes](#):

"Eido Roshi kindly agreed to lead sesshin in USA in May 2013. The sesshin will be four and half days, starting Friday evening May 24th and finishing Wednesday May 29th, after lunch.

We have a reservation in beautiful place Diamond Hill Monastery at [Providence Zen Center](#) (<http://www.providencezen.org>)."

Fair enough. The assumption would be that the Providence Zen Center mistakenly booked the reservation for May of 2013, not knowing that the sesshin was to be led by Eido Shimano. This, sadly, is not the case. In an email exchange between the Providence Zen Center's director Jeff Partridge and Rev. [Kobutsu Malone](#) dated October 02, the Kwan Um School of Zen's head temple [confirmed that Mr. Shimano would indeed be leading sesshin at Diamond Hill Monastery](#) in 2013.

**Kobutsu Malone:**

Dear Friends,

I am writing to inquire if the Providence Zen Center has actually booked a reservation to host a sesshin conducted by **Eido Shimano** in May of 2013 as per the attached email?

Thank you in advance for your prompt reply,

Rev. Kobutsu Malone

**Jeff Partridge:**

"Hello!

Yes I'm working with Ekyo now on the details. Please let me know if I can help with anything else.

Thank you,

Jeff Partridge

Director

Providence Zen Center"

Unreal...

(Photo via [Wikimedia Commons](#) by Brian Murtha under a [CC-BY-2.0](#) license)

## Comments

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**Keith Angilly** - Meriden, Connecticut

Genjo Marinello – there has been no such sponsorship. Sweeping Zen jumped the gun based on flimsy, second-hand information. Unfortunately, now the cynics come out of the woodwork. Ugh.

[Reply](#) · [Like](#) · 18 hours ago



**Genjo Marinello**

If you have confirmation that PCZ will NOT be renting to Eido Shimano's followers, I'm sure we will all be relieved. Adam Tebbe was right to expose this sooner than later. Eido Roshi needs to stop teaching, but he doesn't get it, Shinge Roshi doesn't get it (just not on ZSS property), so the only thing left is to keep exposing him and his followers. No gun was jumped, there is no way to deny that PCZ was planning to rent Eido Shimano's followers. If they change their mind before it happens, great, let them say so.

[Reply](#) ·  1 · [Like](#) · 15 hours ago



**Matthias Eng**

Having seen the pictures of how Shimanos old students welcomeing him back into his old place for some occasion, it suddenly hit me really hard: Everyone involved believes in the sincerest manner possible that they practice the buddha-dharma, but in reality they are really just playing a shell game that is just all pretension. To see that made me really really sad.

I think the problem with Zen ist that there is a too exclusive focus on "hard practise" in the form of meditation and far too little regular self-inquiry. Having a lot of "dharma-energy" that wows people does not in itself make someone more awake. In my experience, just as often, this sort of energy creates a dharma ego in which its really easy stay stuck in. This applies to students and teachers alike, and if the teachers accept no one to enlighten them to that, all these problems will result.

Reply · Like · 18 hours ago



**Genjo Marinello**

It is one thing for Eido Roshi to work with students who still want to work with him, but that he is still funded by ZSS, allowing him to continue to teach and compete with them, and sponsored by a place as legitimate as Providence Zen Center is indeed incredible.

Reply · 1 · Like · 18 hours ago



**Matthias Eng**

This is indeed incredible, but having been a member of the Kwan Um School of Zen myself, I am sadly not all that surprised.

Reply · Like · 19 hours ago



**Keith Angilly** · Meriden, Connecticut

nothing has happened, except hearsay and rumors.

Reply · Like · 19 hours ago



**Adam Tebbe** · Senior Editor at Sweeping Zen

What are you talking about? If there is some sort of correction to be made, that's fine. But on what basis and grounds do you make this claim? I've offered my evidence. Yours?

Reply · Like · 19 hours ago



**Adam Tebbe** · Senior Editor at Sweeping Zen

As you can see, people like those posting below would like to offer sanitized versions of what goes on in practice centers here in the West. The mere fact that I covered the obvious story makes the website "unbalanced."

No, unbalanced, my dear friend Al, would be pretending something has not happened when it has.

Reply · Like · 20 hours ago



**Al Jigong Billings** · ★ Top Commenter · Oakland, California

If you want to roll around in the gutter as your "practice," by all means continue. How long do you think people will want to read it every day as if it is the sum total of Zen?

Reply · Like · 19 hours ago



**Al Jigong Billings** · ★ Top Commenter · Oakland, California

Another scandal post for Sweeping Sins.

This is what this site is for, I guess.

Reply · Like · 20 hours ago



**Adam Tebbe** · Senior Editor at Sweeping Zen

Why aren't you covering this? Does Open Buddha not have the stomach or patience?

Reply · Like · 20 hours ago



**Al Jigong Billings** · ★ Top Commenter · Oakland, California

Because it is shooting fish in a barrel. I covered it plenty in previous years. I have better things to do than spend the entirety of my blogging on scandals.

If all you cover is scandals, then that is the entirety of what you present as Zen to people. You're focusing on a handful (less than a dozen and mostly three or four) out of probably hundreds of teachers and tens of thousands of practitioners. Don't we have anything actually relevant to awakening to discuss?

[Reply](#) · [Like](#) · 19 hours ago



**Adam Tebbe** · Senior Editor at Sweeping Zen

Yes. Read above. What threatens you about the truth?

[Reply](#) · [Like](#) · 19 hours ago

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## Comments

**ADAM FISHER** says:

OCTOBER 2, 2012 AT 4:03 PM

As Abraham Lincoln once said, "You can fool all of the people some of the time and some of the people all of the time, but you cannot fool all of the people all of the time."

You might think that the fence-sitters and supporters of Eido Shimano would be a little wearied in the face of all the facts, but, to quote the comedian Ron White, "Let me tell you something, folks: You can't fix stupid. There's not a pill you can take; there's not a class you can go to. Stupid is forever."

**KEITH ANGILLY** says:

OCTOBER 2, 2012 AT 5:30 PM

Don't believe everything you read Adam...geez, I would think you of all people would know that!

**SWEEPING ZEN** says:

OCTOBER 2, 2012 AT 5:42 PM

So what is not to be believed here?

**KEITH ANGILLY** says:

OCTOBER 2, 2012 AT 6:36 PM

Your flimsy connecting the dots without actually talking openly to the PZC folks to begin with. That's journalism 101 isn't it? Check the source? It isn't rocket science. This event has not been finalized.

**SWEEPING ZEN says:**

OCTOBER 2, 2012 AT 6:43 PM

Jesus man. Just quit being so defensive and attacking me as if I had it in for your school in some secret way and get the story corrected if it needs correcting. I don't need your lectures on journalism. I had the source. You hoped that I could read the mind of Jeff and realize that "yes means no," or that yes means "no it isn't going to be approved."

This kind of thing happens EVERY SINGLE TIME a story is taken on. If it's a person's sangha, it's overreact, get angry and deflect. Just calm down and have whoever it is that needs to send a correction send the correction, as you began denying the story an entire 1 minute after publication. You already decided what the story was here, yet you accuse me of doing no homework. I did mine. You just didn't like the result.

**ANONYMOUS says:**

OCTOBER 2, 2012 AT 7:15 PM

"Journalism" - not here.

**SWEEPING ZEN says:**

OCTOBER 2, 2012 AT 7:22 PM

Sighs. They always come out of the woodwork when it's not a fluff piece.

**MICHAEL says:**

OCTOBER 2, 2012 AT 8:01 PM

It is not an easy thing to do, but if we consider the Buddhadharma important, and we hold our practice and tradition with high regard, and we practice with attention on the precepts, how then can we ignore a serious ethical lapse in the Buddhist community, a lapse that enables someone with a pathology to possibly reoffend, thereby further harming the Buddhist sangha/community?

I am very glad that there are courageous people willing to step forward and call out bad or possibly harmful behavior in the Sangha. There's nothing "Zen" about being an enabler, or letting go of what is an obvious ethical lapse.

No to sound grandiose, but we in the Buddhasangha really need to do more and do better than other 'religions' have done in terms of dealing with pathology and ethical lapses. The Buddha set a very high bar, and it's up to us to try to meet that very high standard.

**KEITH says:**

OCTOBER 2, 2012 AT 8:36 PM

"Jesus man. Just quit being so defensive and attacking me as if I had it in for your school in some secret way and get the story corrected if it needs correcting. I don't need your lectures on journalism. I had the source. You hoped that I could read the mind of Jeff and realize that "yes means no," or that yes means "no it isn't going to be approved."

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I have deflected nothing and accused you of not doing enough homework, not doing none. The result is incomplete and inaccurate. It's alright though, it's just more of Shimano's bad karma stirring up the crap.

As I said on Facebook, I really appreciate what you do and sincerely apologize for the harsh words. I didn't like seeing a friend being dragged through the mud, when what happened was an innocent mistake. In due time, the story will be set straight.

I have said it elsewhere, and I will say it here. The unfortunately reality is that the hatred people have for Shimano is so intense and blinding, that they don't pick their head up and look at what they are doing. It's just slash and burn and sort the bodies out later. And this from supposedly seasoned practitioners and teachers. Sad, but predictable I suppose. Bad actions yield bad results. Kobustsu Malone should have been more clear with his line of questioning.

good luck and thanks for practicing!

**GENJO MARINELLO says:**

OCTOBER 2, 2012 AT 11:58 PM

Keith says, "Kobustsu Malone should have been more clear with his line of questioning." I disagree; I think any reporter worth his salt would have put the question just as he did. He asked if a sesshin had been booked with Eido Shimano followers. The answer is what is, "Yes, ...working on the details." This was checking out the story as any good investigator would. I'm not sure what is worse, that the PZC director did know who he was renting to, or that he didn't know about the most serious case of abuse of authority in American Zen? I'm sorry a good friend feels like he is being dragged through the mud, but all he needs to do is say it was a mistake and that the Eido Roshi sesshin is not going to happen at PZC.

**JUDY ROITMAN says:**

OCTOBER 3, 2012 AT 11:53 AM

Please folks, let's be clear. PZC is not sponsoring Eido Shimano. Eido Shimano is not leading a retreat at PZC. His followers applied to rent the space at Diamond Hill Monastery on the PZC grounds. I don't know if they will actually do so. If they do, their contact with the rest of PZC will be by parking their cars in the parking lot. This article really jumped the gun big time.

**SWEEPING ZEN says:**

OCTOBER 3, 2012 AT 12:11 PM

No it didn't. On September 30th, followers of Eido Shimano stated that they had booked a reservation at Diamond Hill Monastery. On October 2nd, Kobutsu confirmed this through Jeff Partridge.

You can't even say whether they will or will not be, and yet you're saying I jumped the gun somehow. Instead, you state, "If they do, their contact with the rest of PZC will be by parking their cars in the parking lot."

Do you think that would be remotely acceptable? That's amazing that there is even room for such a thought.

**GENJO MARINELLO says:**

OCTOBER 3, 2012 AT 1:03 PM

Judy I'm guilty of using the word "sponsoring" not Adam, and if all they are doing is renting space in a zendo with parking, to me that is more sponsoring than any sane Zen group in America should be doing for Eido Shimano's followers.

#### ABOUT SWEEPING ZEN



Established in 2009 as a grassroots initiative, Sweeping Zen is a digital archive of information on Zen Buddhism. Featuring in-depth interviews, an extensive database of biographies, news, articles, podcasts, teacher blogs, events, directories and more, this site is dedicated to offering the public a range of views in the sphere of Zen Buddhist thought. We are also endeavoring to continue creating lineage charts for all Western Zen lines, doing our own small part in advancing historical documentation on this fabulous import of an ancient tradition. Come on in with a tea or coffee. You're always bound to find something new.

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