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Published by Rebellion, Riverside House,  
Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, UK  
[www.rebellion.co.uk](http://www.rebellion.co.uk)

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# HONDO CITY LAW

JUDGE DREDD CREATED BY JOHN WAGNER & CARLOS EZQUERRA ★ JUDGE INSPECTOR SADU CREATED BY JOHN WAGNER & COLIN MACNEIL  
SHIMURA AND JUDGE INSPECTOR INABA CREATED BY ROBBIE MORRISON & FRANK QUIETLY, BASED ON DESIGNS BY COLIN MACNEIL

# HONDO CITY LAWMEN

## JUDGE INSPECTOR TOTARO SADU



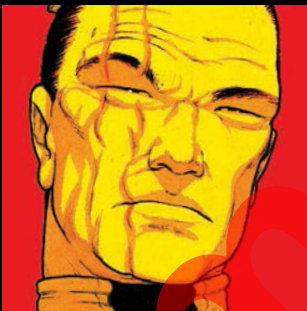
**Status:** Deceased

**First Appearance:** *2000 AD* Prog 608, *Our Man in Hondo*

**History:** Judge Sadu was one of Hondo City's toughest Judges – a dedicated and skilled lawman - very much Hondo's equivalent of Judge Dredd. The two judges first met whilst Dredd was in Hondo City attempting to catch a rogue sleeper agent (collected here in *Our Man in Hondo*). They would meet again during an event known as *Judgement Day*, in which Sadu sacrificed his life in order to save the Earth from Sabbat and his zombie army.

**Abilities/weapons:** As well as being in peak physical condition after years of Judge training and policing the streets, Sadu was an eight-time Hondo City champion in the art of ritual Tendo stave fighting.

## SHIMURA



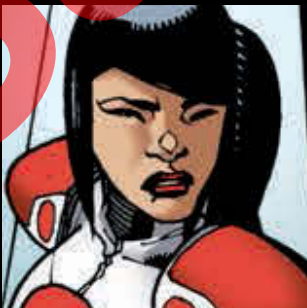
**Status:** Ex-Judge Inspector, now a ronin.

**First Appearance:** *The Judge Dredd Magazine* 2.37, *Shimura*

**History:** Shimura was regarded as one of the greatest Judges in the Hondo City Justice Department and was once considered for a place on its council. This all changed after he was among a group of Judge Inspectors ambushed by yakuza with ties to corrupt department officials. A disillusioned and vengeful Shimura went rogue exacting his own form of justice on criminal organisations in the city. He is currently employed as a bodyguard to the heiress of the Taoka Corporation.

**Abilities:** A formidable fighter, at one time considered to be the best in the whole of the Hondo City Justice Department, Shimura excels in the use of several weapons, including laser-shuriken and the traditional Wakizashi sword.

## JUDGE INSPECTOR AIKO INABA



**Status:** Active Judge Inspector in Hondo-City

**First Appearance:** *The Judge Dredd Magazine* 2.37, *Shimura*

**History:** Aiko Inaba is a rarity – a woman rightfully wearing the uniform of a Hondo City Judge Inspector. Once Judge Shimura's rookie, she is now a rising star in Justice Central. More recently Inaba has been partnered with Cadet Junko Asahara, a new breed of Judge.

**Abilities/weapons:** A highly-proficient Hover-bike rider with keen detective skills, Inaba is also very skilled in hacking into and deactivating advanced computer networks.

# INTRODUCTION

I was an avid comics reader as a kid, but drifted away roundabout my early teens. The only comic that I continued to read on a regular basis was *2000AD*, though, at the risk of perpetuating the myth of the mean Scotsman, this doesn't mean I bought it! My friend Derek Reid had a newspaper round throughout school and one of his customers had *2000 AD* on order, although he always received it a day late because Derek and I read them first.

The story which stuck most in my mind from that period was *Our Man in Hondo*, a tight wee thriller that sent Judge Dredd to a futuristic version of Tokyo, renamed - for some reason I've never worked out - Hondo City. It opens this collection, so I won't spoil your enjoyment other than to say it's got a great script by Dredd's creator, John Wagner, and some fantastic fully painted artwork by Colin MacNeil. In many ways, though, what stood out for me even more than the story was Hondo City itself.

At that age, growing up near Glasgow, Tokyo seemed like the closest thing to life on another planet that you could find on Earth. A totally different and endlessly fascinating culture to the one I was familiar with. I found the Hondo Judges, a fusion of futuristic technology and ancient Samurai ideals, even more intriguing and exciting than the lawmen of Mega-City One.

A few years later, after selling a *Judge Dredd* script called *Kinky Boots* - about two boot fetishists who attempt to steal the eponymous lawman's footwear - I had been asked to submit new ideas to the *Judge Dredd Magazine*, *2000 AD*'s sister title. Hondo City seemed like the best place to start.

*Shimura* was conceived as a tough SF thriller about a Ronin Judge. Ronin were masterless Samurai, forced to wander feudal Japan as swords-for-hire, after having failed their lord in some way. Inspector Shimura, the hardest Judge in Hondo City, starts out as a dedicated lawman, but eventually goes ronin, embarking on a relentless quest for vengeance, although his sidekick, Inspector Inaba, remains a Judge, pursuing justice in her own spin-off series.

The aim of the series was to combine the pulpy, action-packed, in-your-face storytelling of classic British comics such as *Action* and *2000AD*, with the scale and kinetic power of Japanese Manga epics like *Lone Wolf and Cub* and *Akira*. While Clint Eastwood is an acknowledged influence on the character of Joe Dredd, Inspector Shimura of the Hondo City Justice Department draws heavily on the great Japanese actor Toshiro Mifune, star of *Seven Samurai* and *Yojimbo* (itself remade as the Eastwood classic *A Fistful of Dollars*).

The Hondo City stories have been drawn by some exceptional artists. Frank Quitely and I broke into comics around the same time and *Shimura* is one of the first things either of us had published. Frank doesn't need an introduction as he's one of the best artists in the business and has won just about every award going, although he did somehow manage to miss out an entire page of script while drawing the final part of *Shimura*. See if you can spot the clunky line of exposition that marks out the last-minute rewrite!

Of course, you may be too distracted by Frank's art on *Babes with Big Bazookas* to notice...

Andy Clarke came onto *Shimura* after the series had been on hiatus. His clean lines and cinematic action sequences perfectly suited the character and environment, and he was snapped up by DC Comics to work on *Batman* soon afterwards. Neil Googe's art on *Hondo City Justice* is the most obviously manga-inspired to have featured in the series and seems to leap off the page at you.

Gary Caldwell, also colourist on the *Nikolai Dante* series of graphic novels, does his usual vivid and atmospheric job on the last three stories, with Ellie De Ville and Annie Parkhouse lettering, an often overlooked part of the comics process.

Enjoy your trip to Hondo City. Just don't break the law while you're there.

Robbie Morrison  
May 2011





## OUR MAN IN HONDO

Script: John Wagner

Art: Colin MacNeil

Letters: Tom Frame

Originally published in *2000 AD* Progs 608-611