

Inaugural Issue

The Newsletter of the International Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan Association

Volume 1, Number 1

Dear member,

Thank you for reading the inaugural issue of Tai Chi Chuan, the newsletter of the International Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan Association. Limited manpower and resources have caused repeated delay and possibly caused you to wonder when the newsletter would be published for which I want to express my apologies.

This publication's aim is to promote Traditional Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan and advance the establishment and development of traditional Chinese culture. The layout will include news on the development of the International Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan Association and Chinese Tai Chi Chuan organizations, selected articles for reference and study, as well as a small section dedicated to studying Chinese to help everyone learn some simple and useful words and phrases.

The newsletter will be published three or four times a year. The Yang Chengfu Tai Chi Chuan Centers and the membership base need to actively submit articles for publication in order to ensure the quality and timeliness of publication. Even more importantly, I hope you will provide us with valuable suggestions and comments in order for the newsletter to better serve you, the member. The goal is to provide content which is interesting, worthy of reading, and full of information, and ultimately, to develop the newsletter into a quality magazine.

On behalf of the Chairman of the Board, Mr. Yang Zhenduo, I would like to thank you for all of your support. We hope you enjoy the newsletter!

Sincerely,

Yang Jun President

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History of the Association

by Jeremy Blodgett

Tai Chi Chuan

Nov. 1999, Vol.1 No.1

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All Tai Chi Chuan enthusiasts are invited to submit articles, letters, and pictures for publication.

Suggestions concerning the content and form of this newsletter are also welcome.

Please submit in electronic format to:

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or mail to:

International Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan Association 606 Maynard Ave. So. Suite 107 Seattle WA 98104, USA. Masters Yang Zhenduo and Yang Jun's journey towards the western world began in 1985 when they first traveled to France. Then in 1990 Pat Rice of the now Winchester Center invited Masters Yang Zhenduo and Yang Jun to Winchester, Virginia. This was the first time that they traveled to North America to teach their art. It was a great success and during each summer for the following 5 years they continued traveling abroad to further spread Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan.

In 1995, during a Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan exhibition hosted by the Shanxi Association in Taiyuan, an important meeting took place with the future Center Directors where Masters Yang Zhenduo and Yang Jun decided to create the Yang Chengfu Tai Chi Chuan Center USA and open 3 branches. The directors of the three original Centers are Horacio Lopez, Texas; Han Hoong Wang, Michigan; and Bill Walsh, New York. The centers were named by Master Yang Zhenduo after his father, Yang Chengfu, because he was the one most responsible for the widespread popularity of Tai Chi Chuan. In 1996 a 4th Center was added in New Jersey, U.S.A. with Andy Lee as the director.

For several years, Masters Yang Zhenduo and Yang Jun maintained their regular schedule of traveling to these Yang Chengfu Tai Chi Chuan Center USA branches and to other Tai Chi Chuan centers throughout the world. The USA Centers received the support and attention of the Tai Chi Chuan centers in Europe. The time was ripe for an international organization uniting centers in each country into one



The first full meeting of the Advisory Board - Seattle WA, October 9, 1999

Pictured: 1st row(left to right) Giuseppe Turturo, Nelly Leray, Angela Soci, Therese Mei Mei Teo, Yang Jun, Jerry Karin, Jeremy Blodgett, Han Hoong Wang; 2nd row: Andre Leray, Sergio Arione, Dave Barrett, Bill Walsh, Claudio Mingarini, Pat Rice, Horacio Lopez.

cohesive framework. Originally, it was planned to create an international organization called International Yang Chengfu Tai Chi Chuan Center. But in order to attract even more practitioners an Association was determined to be the best structure. On October 29, 1998, the International Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan Association was established in Seattle, Washington. The last several months have been a busy time for the Association.

In July, Masters Yang Zhenduo and Yang Jun made their first trip to Seattle and held an exhibition. Nearly 200 people attended this rare chance to see Master Yang Zhenduo demonstrate. Then in August Master Yang Jun moved to Seattle with his wife Fang Hong and opened up the Seattle Center in September. In October, the school's grand opening was timed with an advanced seminar for all

of the Center Directors around the world. During the seminar, the Association held its first full meeting of the Advisory Board, the Association's main governing body of power. There had only been partial meetings of the Advisory Board before in Milan and New York City. During the Seattle meeting, the Board decided the direction of future development for the Association.

The Association's homepage was put up on April 24, 1999 and has been continuously developed. See the latest changes at www.yangfamilytaichi.com. Some of the planned developments are to include video clips from the forms and on-line chats with Master Yang Jun.

The first batch of Association memberships were officially processed on October 12, with Annica Moberg from the Stockholm Center being the first member. Her biography is featured on page 8.

The Association is a non-profit entity dedicated to advancing the art and theory of Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan. Under the leadership of the Yang Family, it will grow into maturity. Already, it has grown to 16 Centers in 7 countries with new Centers opening by the end of the year. With members of different Centers being of one heart, we can work together for a glorious tomorrow and realize the words of Master Yang Zhenduo in "making Tai Chi Chuan benefit the well-being of mankind".

The establishment of the International Association was made possible by over a decade of support from the lovers of Traditional Tai Chi Chuan. The Association thanks its members for their support throughout the years.



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All Association members who have practiced Traditional Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan for at least three years, who are convinced they possess the ability to be teachers of Traditional Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan, and who are deemed to have the necessary skill level, may apply in writing to the Association for authorization to establish a local Yang Chengfu Tai Chi Chuan Center. Interested members should contact the Association Home Office, or the Europe Office for locations in Europe.



International Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan Association Constitution

Article I General Provisions

- 1. This Association is named International Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan Association.
- 2. The Yang family descendants of the founder of Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan, Yang Luchan, establish this Association. Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan enthusiasts willingly constitute this international non-profit organization.
- 3. The Association's purpose is to carry-on and develop the superb technique of Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan, promote the development of Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan, improve people's health, increase the interaction between peoples of all countries, and contribute to the advancement of martial arts in the world.
- 4. The Association, in order to promote the standardized and healthy development of Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan throughout the world, will establish Yang Chengfu Tai Chi Chuan Centers, which will serve as local representatives of Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan.

Article II Mission

- 1. The main mission of the Association:
 - A. Be responsible for the theory and technique of Tai Chi Chuan and people's research into these;
 - B. Be responsible for the examination and approval of Yang Chengfu Tai Chi Chuan Center applications, and direct and supervise the Centers' work;
 - C. Train and coach members, judge members, and conduct evaluations of Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan practitioners' qualifications;
 - D. Organize competitions;
 - E. Develop interaction and friendly exchange with other martial arts organizations, and establish widespread cooperation;
 - F. Promote the spread of Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan.

Article III Members

- 1. Yang Chengfu Tai Chi Chuan Centers and Association Members:
 - A. Yang Chengfu Tai Chi Chuan Centers: All Association members who have practiced Traditional Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan for at least three years, who are convinced they possess the ability to be teachers of Traditional Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan, and who are deemed to have the necessary skill level, may apply in writing to the Association for authorization to establish a local Yang Chengfu Tai Chi Chuan Center. After being awarded a certificate of authorization from the Association, a Yang Chengfu Tai Chi Chuan Center may be established, using the Association name and logo to develop membership in the International Association. All Yang Chengfu Tai Chi Chuan Centers will observe the articles of this Constitution, abide by the morals intrinsic in the practice of martial arts, and be ready to teach Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan to Association members;
 - B. Individual members: Every enthusiast of Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan may register as member of the Association at a local Yang Chengfu Center or directly with the International Association.
- 2. Member Rights:
 - A. Members have the right to vote for and serve as Advisors;

- B. Members may apply to establish a Yang Chengfu Tai Chi Chuan Center;
- C. Members may participate in all activities held by the Association;
- D. Members may receive all materials published by the Association;
- E. Members have the right to offer suggestions and constructive criticisms of Association work;
- F. Members have the right to enjoy the preferential treatment and support of the Association;
- G. Members willingly enter the Association and may cease membership at any time.
- 3. Member Duties:
 - A. Observe the articles of the constitution and carry-out Association resolutions;
 - B. Complete tasks assigned by the Association;
 - C. Impart Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan to others;
 - D. Increase membership;
 - E. Make timely reports to the Association on assigned tasks.

Article IV Organization

- 1. The Association is established by the Yang Family. The Association's executive body of power is the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors will appoint the President. The Advisory Board elects the officers of the Association.
- 2. Association members vote to elect the Advisory Board. In addition, each Yang Chengfu Center Director naturally is an Advisor of the Association serving on the Advisory Board. The number of Advisors cannot exceed 5% of the total number of Association members. Members serve a five-year term on the Advisory Board.
- 3. The Board of Directors may meet according to need. Its tasks are:
 - A. Decide important Association affairs;
 - B. Listen to reports from all the Advisors;
 - C. Listen to and examine Association work reports.
- 4. The Board of Directors may, according to need, elect up to several Vice Presidents, and a Secretary who constitute the officers of the Association. Officers serve a five-year term. The President may appoint and remove officers when it is not practicable for the Board to do so.
- 5. The officers of the Association are responsible for the daily work of the Association and for the guidance of the Centers' work.
- 6. The Association may, according to need, appoint up to several Honorary Presidents and Consultants.

Article V Funding

- 1. International Association's source of funds:
 - A. Membership dues from Yang Chengfu Tai Chi Chuan Centers and individual members;
 - B. Income from Association activities;
 - C. Income from the providing of Tai Chi Chuan products;
 - D. Donations.

Article VI Supplemental

- 1. All Centers will use the Association logo when dealing with related martial arts activities.
- 2. The Association's address and phone numbers are:

606 Maynard Ave. So. Suite #107

Seattle, WA 98104 U.S.A.

Phone: (206) 447-2759 Fax: (206) 903-3126



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Yang Zhenduo, *Chairman* Yang Jun, *President*

ADVISORY BOARD

Sergio Arione
Dave Barrett

Jeremy Blodgett, Secretary/Treasurer
James Fox
Marco Gagnon, Artistic Director
Jerry Karin, V.P. Communications
Andy Lee
Andre Leray

Nelly Leray Horacio Lopez Claudio Mingarini Pat Rice

Roque Enrique Severino Angela V. S. Soci Therese Mei Mei Teo, *V.P. Europe* Michel Tremblay Giuseppe Turturo Bill Walsh Han Hoong Wang

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Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan Exhibition and Competition Form (49 Posture) Introduction

by Yang Jun

Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan is a traditional physical exercise that is well received and loved by the masses. At the same time it is also a widely participated in social activity. Because the time required to demonstrate the traditional form is fairly long, it is inconvenient to use during exhibitions and competitions. In the past in order to shorten the demonstration time, it was common to use only the first and second sections of the form. However, those who loved to watch Tai Chi Chuan didn't get to see some of the showcase moves in the third section. Their interest was peaked just as the exhibition ended.



Master Yang Zhenduo and Yang Jun

In 1986 in order to adapt to the changing needs of society, my grandfather, Yang Zhenduo, based on his experience gained from practicing Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan for many years, arranged the 49-posture exhibition and competition form. The new form did not deviate from the postures or characteristic style of the Traditional Form, but only deleted many of the repeated moves, slightly rearranged the sequence and changed a small number of transitions. At this time however, the 49 Form was relatively undeveloped, and through the numerous suggestions of Tai Chi Chuan practitioners it underwent many revisions.

After being used in many social activities, it received the high praise of sponsoring organizations and Tai Chi Chuan practitioners. Then, in 1987 the Shanxi Province Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan Exhibition used the 49 Form for the first time. The participants and judges all reacted favorably, ending with Yang Zhenduo formally establishing the 49-posture exhibition and competition form. From 1987 on, the Shanxi Province Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan Association has used the 49-posture exhibition and competition form for all organized demonstrations and exhibitions. Among these were the 10th anniversary celebration of the founding of Shanxi Province Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan Association, held in 1992, and the 15th anniversary celebration and the 1st Shanxi Province Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan Association International Invitational Exhibition held in 1997. In 2002, at the 20th anniversary celebration and 2nd Shanxi Province Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan Association International Invitational Exhibition, the 49 Form will be used as the standard competition form.

The 49-posture exhibition and competition form has already undergone a 14-year process of development and maturation. Currently, the practitioners of the Shanxi Province Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan Association already number in the tens of thousands. The form is well received and liked by Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan enthusiasts. Although the arranged sequence of the 49 Form is not as good as the Traditional Form for its reasonableness, it is a good method of practice for those with less time, assuming ample warm up beforehand. While practicing the 49 Form, one still needs to combine the Traditional Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan characteristics of the postures being slow and gentle, even in tempo, and large and beautiful. Generally, the form takes about 12 minutes to perform. The Shanxi Province Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan Association requires the form to be performed in 7 to 8 minutes when used in competition.

Although the 49-posture exhibition and competition form differs somewhat from the Traditional Form, it is not a simplified form. The 49 Form includes all of the postures in the Traditional Form, not giving up any of its moves. The 49 Form radiates with the splendor of traditional Chinese culture.



Master Yang Jun - Strike the Tiger

Michigan Center Introduction

by the Michigan Center

Greetings from the Michigan Center! This article tells a little of our history as a center, and of its teacher and director Han Hoong Wang. We are one of the three founding branches of the Yang Chengfu Tai Chi Chuan Center USA and now have five instructors and more than 400 students with classes reaching twelve cities.

In 1995, Han, along with Horacio Lopez of another founding Center in Texas, led students in participating in the International Tai Chi Chuan Competition in Handan, Hebei Province, China. Accompanying them were Bill Walsh and Dave Barrett of the New York City and Portland Centers, respectively. The U.S. team won first place in Traditional Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan and first place in Traditional Yang Style Saber. Han received first place in individual Saber and second place in individual Hand Form. During the same trip to China, Han and the U.S. team visited Yongnian, the birth-place of Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan, and Master Yang Zhenduo's home in Taiyuan.

In 1997, four of Han's students participated in the 15th anniversary celebration of the founding of the Shanxi Association and competed in the 1st Shanxi Province Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan Association International Invitational Exhibition. Following, the students trained in a seminar taught by Master Yang Zhenduo. Both trips to China were remarkable cultural experiences as well as catalysts for strengthening our conviction to further the study of Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan.



The mayor of Troy presenting the Key to the city

Students of the Michigan Center have participated in every seminar held by Masters Yang Zhenduo and Yang Jun in North America, and have had the privilege of hosting these seminars three times. Because of the rich and excellent teachings of Masters Yang Zhenduo and Yang Jun, combined with the strong support and cooperation of the students, each seminar has raised the students' skill level and encouraged further earnest study of the Traditional Yang Style system.

The Chinese people say, "Ride on the east wind." For us, Master Yang Zhenduo has been like the 'east wind' in his art. He has influenced us and guided us these seven years with his limitless spirit, constant emphasis on the ten essentials, and unending demand that we strive for the standard of his father, Yang Chengfu. Because of Master Yang Zhenduo's great influence, we have become stronger and healthier. More and more people have come to learn of Traditional Yang Style and our center. The students are

working with ever increasing seriousness. Our goal is to make it easier for the learner and at the same time encourage the discipline necessary to achieve the Tai Chi spirit we share.



Han Hoong Wang, Director

Our Center has worked hard over the years to spread Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan in our area. We have been involved in local, county, state and regional activities. Students have taught or performed for seniors at community centers in several suburban cities to show the health benefits available from practicing the form. We participated in the Wayne County Family Fitness Day and the Friendship Games at Ann Arbor. We demonstrated at the Chinese International Cultural Conference. Twice yearly we give open demonstrations to ever increasing audiences. We find that public demonstrations of what our students have learned are well attended and serve to attract new students to the study of Tai Chi Chuan. Last year over 200 people attended our spring Friendship demonstration and appreciated our efforts as well as those of our guest martial art groups.

People in our metropolitan area have become more aware



The Masters being honored by the State of Michigan

of Tai Chi Chuan and have shown a greater interest in our art over the years. Former First Lady, Barbara Bush, visited us. Michele Engler, wife of Michigan's governor, also came to observe a class. The governor of Michigan honored the Masters with a plaque. Jean Stine, mayor of Troy, presented Masters Yang Zhenduo and Yang Jun with the key to the city during a seminar. Several times TV reporters and local newspapers have visited seminars and our classes and interviewed Master Yang Zhenduo or Han, thus increasing the public awareness of Tai Chi Chuan and its numerous benefits. As the new millennium approaches, our center is even more committed to growing the family of Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan enthusiasts.

Meet Annica, the Association's First Member!



Annica Moberg

In 1986 I joined a Tai Chi group in Stockholm, at a time when Tai Chi was relatively unknown among the Swedish people. We started learning the 24 Form. It was totally different from everything else I had been training before, including all sorts of different methods for staying physically fit. The reason I started studying Tai Chi was to find a tool to handle my stress at work. I was working with costumes and scenographies for a Swedish dance group and we were often on tour. The work was a

lot of fun, but the downside of it was immense stress, late nights, coffee, cigarettes and, in other words, not a very healthy way of living.

A change within me slowly began to take place during my training. In 1987 I had my first child so, naturally, I slowed down at work. The time was made for me to practice Tai Chi more frequently and a couple of years later, I started to study the long form.

"The reason I started studying Tai Chi was to find a tool to handle my stress at work."

Masters Yang Zhenduo and Yang Jun had their first seminar in Sweden in 1995. I was introduced to the Saber Form and later that year to the Sword Form. To see Masters Yang Zhenduo and Yang Jun do the form was incredible. They made every movement so clear and obvious with their powerful energy and beauty. To see the source and to listen to Master Yang Zhenduo telling about the tiger and the wasp, and the history behind those movements, was an incredible experience which left an indelible impression on me!

In 1997 Master Yang Zhenduo invited the Swedes to China to join in the 1st Shanxi Province Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan Association International Invitational Exhibition. At first, we asked ourselves how should we compete in Tai Chi? Then, eight of us decided that we would like to try as a group. The preparation was a learning period for all of us in many aspects. For me personally, the competition was a challenge to see if the Tai Chi principles really worked during an actual competition.

We were very well taken care of in China. The competition was great, and we experienced a very nice, warm and friendly atmosphere. We were awarded a special prize for excellent performance. China and its people left me with wonderful memories.

In 1998 I participated in a competition in England, performing the Traditional Yang Style 49 Form, Sword Form, and Saber Form, as well as the 24 Form. At that time I did not have seven other women close to me and that was my challenge - to be out there on my own. This time the atmosphere also proved to be cordial and I

was awarded 1 gold and 3 silver medals.

I have been teaching Tai Chi since 1995 to groups living on my home island, Ekerö. Furthermore, I teach Tai Chi to employees of companies in Stockholm and it feels great to notice the growing interest in the art of Tai Chi. I have also recently started studying Traditional Chinese Medicine and

Acupuncture.

Over the years, Tai Chi has transformed from a tool to a way of life for me. I am grateful to Therese Mei Mei Teo for being my teacher over the years and for introducing me to Masters Yang Zhenduo Master Yang Jun. I realize that studying Tai Chi is a never ending journey, and I am looking forward to continuing on its

"Over the years, Tai Chi has transformed from a tool to a way of life for me. I realize that studying Tai Chi is a never ending journey, and I am looking forward to continuing on its path."

I wish the International Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan Association good

luck and I am looking forward to participating in more seminars, including those in Seattle. I also want to express my gratitude for the honour of being granted a life membership in the Association.

Sincerely, Annica Moberg Stockholm - Sweden

Master Yang Jun Teaches Free Classes for Seniors

Starting in September 1999, Master Yang Jun began donating time teaching classes at the Legacy House in Seattle. The Legacy House, located in Chinatown, is a model retirement complex with assisted living and independent senior housing. Seniors and support staff alike practice twice a week for thirty minutes. Classes are held in the cafeteria, just before the lunch hour. By the end of class, all of the residents have arrived and are watching while they wait for lunch. Some seniors attend class in wheel chairs or strollers or just watch or move their arms. Master Yang Jun goes through the form move by move, and is currently at end of the first section.

It is inspiring to see that even some of the more frail can manage to turn the foot in and do a single whip, best demonstrating that correct posture can overcome challenges to old bones and muscles. To keep the knees from hurting, the postures are not practiced as low as for those with stronger legs. Even with such a short class, there are occasional short breaks where participants are encouraged to sit down if necessary to prevent over-exertion. Initially, residents had to be rounded up as the staff frequently said that people had a hard time remembering. Now, the die-hards assemble and review before the beginning of class, giving the impression of having more than one teacher present when Master Yang Jun arrives. - Jeremy Blodgett

Introduction to Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan

By Yang Zhenduo

Translated by Jeremy Blodgett

Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan is one style of Tai Chi Chuan. It comes from the era of Grandmaster Yang Luchan, his sons Yang Banhou and Yang Jianhou, and his grandsons Yang Shaohou and Yang Chengfu. These three generations yearned for the ideal of having Tai Chi Chuan serve mankind. Accompanying the needs of the developing society, they painstakingly researched and developed Yang Style from Chen Style. Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan maintains the aspects of attack and defense, keeping the martial arts essence. The founders created a form that is slow and gentle, open and expanded, beautiful in appearance, with the strength manifested from within. It has the characteristics of being pure and new, unconventional and original. It has emerged in the arena of Chinese martial arts in order to improve health, cure illness, increase longevity, and mould character, making a brilliant contribution to mankind.

Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan is worked out very finely, reasonably arranged and tightly structured, comprehensive and complete with a certain scientificnes. It is the natural combination of a martial art and a method for preserving health and curing illness. At the same time, it seamlessly coordinates difficult with ordinary, and gentle with tense movements. This appropriate combination allows the practitioner to feel comfortable, relaxed and happy from beginning to end, even when practicing the form several times in a row. Its adaptability is great, being able to serve many different needs. It provides many benefits from practice, satisfying the young and

old practitioners and those seeking improved health or cure from disease. Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan adds to the splendor of the Chinese martial arts treasure.

The National Sports Ministry in 1956 used the Tai Chi Chuan postures of Yang Chengfu as the model when creating the 24-posture simplified form and the 88-posture form. From the very beginning of the forms development, they have been deeply welcomed by the people. These forms play an important role in the development of Tai Chi Chuan in China and abroad.

Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan's basic theory is the standard guiding its healthy development. The revered Yang Chengfu wrote "Tai Chi Chuan Ten Essentials" and "Talks on the Practice of Tai Chi Chuan" and now after the test of time they still are the criterion to follow for the healthy development of Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan.

Seeing Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan's developmental trend gives pleasure and satisfaction. Now, the number of practitioners extends to the entire world, increasing in number daily. Tai Chi Chuan is even more widespread and popular, realizing the hope that Tai Chi Chuan contributes to the well-being of mankind.

FOUR GENERATIONS OF YANG STYLE TAI CHI CHUAN



YANG LU CHAN



YANG JIAN HOU



YANG SHAO HOU



YANG CHENG FU



YANG SHOU ZHOU



YANG ZHEN JI



YANG ZHEN DUO



YANG ZHEN GUO





Shanxi Province Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan Association Introduction

by Yang Jun

Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan is one of the splendid colors in the rich mosaic of Chinese martial arts. Yang Style Tai Chi evolved from the Chen style and for almost 200 years, from Yang Luchan, Yang Banhou, Yang Jianhou, Yang Shaohou, Yang Chengfu, Yang Zhenguo, Yang Zhenji, and Yang Zhenduo and others, it has undergone four generations of establishment and development. Now, the great influence of Yang Style can be felt in China and throughout the world.

In April 1982 Mr. Yang Zhenduo, the bearer of 4 generations of development, proposed and sponsored the creation of the Shanxi Province Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan Research Committee (name later changed to Association). Due to the great support from all walks of life and the unremitting efforts of Association members, the Association gained stature by receiving the attention of society. When the Association was established, there were only 200 members and no sub-associations. Through 17 years of development, when money was scarce and working conditions were poor, the Association relied upon its earnest supporters. Currently in Shanxi Province alone there are 82 sub-associations and over 30,000 members. This rapid development ranks as one of the remarkable feats in the history of Tai Chi Chuan. Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan has the characteristics of being open and extended, structured and precise, relaxed and natural, both light and heavy and hard and soft. It not only retains the martial art aspects, but also is an effective method to improve health and cure illness. Many suffers of chronic cardiovascular, respiratory, digestive and other diseases have improved their condition and even been cured after practicing Tai Chi Chuan for a number of years. These are the contributions of Tai Chi Chuan towards the health of mankind.

Particularly worthy of mentioning is the ever increasing attention received in China coupled

with the development of Tai Chi Chuan into an important method of cultural exchange during these 17 years of development of the Shanxi Association. In 1992 the Association celebrated the 10th anniversary of the founding of the Association with participants coming from 12 different countries. In 1997, participants from 18 different countries joined in



The Texas and Michigan groups in Taiyuan, 1995

celebrating the 15th anniversary, successfully holding the 1st Shanxi Province Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan Association International Invitational Exhibition. Because of this, Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan is not only a method to improve health, but also a bridge for increasing friendship and understanding between the Chinese and the rest of the world.

In 1998 due to Yang Zhenduo's sponsorship, the great help of the Shanxi Association, and the wide support of Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan practitioners in China and abroad, the International Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan Association was successfully established in the United States. The International Association already has 16 Yang Chengfu Tai Chi Chuan Centers established in the U.S., Sweden, France, England, Brazil, Italy and Canada with plans to open new centers in other countries by the end of the year, elevating Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan to a brand-new level.

Countdown to 2002: Taiyuan

by Jeremy Blodgett

The 2nd Shanxi Province Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan Association International Invitational Exhibition commemorating the 20th anniversary of the founding of the Shanxi Association will be held in Taiyuan, Shanxi, China in 2002. All Association members are invited to attend this historic event.

In 1997, the 1st Shanxi Province Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan Association International Invitational Exhibition, commemorating the 15th anniversary of the founding of the Shanxi Association, was held in Taiyuan. Practitioners from 18 countries participated in the event along with several hundred from throughout China. (See photo on preceding page.)

The exhibition featured Chinese and foreign guests demonstrating side by side. The skill of the Chinese was evident, but there were also many surprises and crowd favorites among the foreign



Sunday teachings by Master Yang Zhenduo at Can Jing Lo, Yingze Park

guests with several placing in the medals. The opening ceremony was grand with thousands of spectators filling the gymnasium. Many groups prepared lively programs to share with the Chinese. Two from New York performed modern dance, and the large Swedish contingent dressed in traditional clothes and danced and sang a traditional Swedish song. Although the Association regrets the accommodations for the guests were below Western standards, everyone stayed in the same hotel and shared a wonderful experience.

The exhibition in 2002 will include group demonstrations, using the 49 Form, of 6 people each. Also, the Association will

organize a special 100-person demonstration formed with groups from each Center. Start selecting your groups now and learn the 49 Form if you have not already.

The number of foreign guests invited to the exhibition in 1997 was intentionally small, as it was the first of its kind. The second one in 2002 is sure to be well attended, with groups representing each center as well as individuals that are not affiliated with any center. Masters Yang Zhenduo and Yang Jun will hold seminars following the event. Master Yang Zhenduo frequently says that 2002 is the year he will retire. Learn the 49 Form if you have not already, and start saving your money for this landmark event.



Beautiful Yingze Park located in the center of Taiyuan

Great changes are now taking place in Taiyuan, the capital of Shanxi Province. This year the United Nations selected Taiyuan as one of two cities in the world to receive a grant from the World Bank to beautify the city. Taiyuan has already started working on the Fen River flowing through town. It is a wide river that had very little water flowing through it. Soon, water will be diverted upstream to fill the banks down in Taiyuan. A recreational water park is even going to be built!

Centers and interested individuals are invited to prepare a display to contribute to the Shanxi Association, with captions in Chinese, English, and your native language if not English, to share with fellow practitioners in China and around the world. The displays will be put out for all to look at during the exhibition.

Useful Chinese Phrases

同学们好!Tong Xue Men Hao Hello Students. 老师好! Lao Shi Hao

Hello Teacher.

Hello Teacher.

早 Zao 太极拳 Tai Ji Quan Good Morning. Tai Chi Chuan

你 好! Ni Hao! 太 极 剑 Tai Ji Jian Hello. Tai Chi Sword

再见!Zai Jian 太极刀 Tai Ji Dao

Goodbye. Tai Chi Saber

Letters From Members

I've been living in Brazil for eighteen years, and although I've been relatively happy, I never seemed to be able to completely embrace my life. I've lived as if things that I had done or decisions that I had made, could somehow be erased; as if I could somehow change the course that my life had taken.

Since I began practicing Tai Chi last year, I feel like I have finally come home. I live more in the present and am willing to accept my past and all its ramifications. I am becoming more gentle with myself and more tolerant of my limitations and those of others. I am aware of my inner strength and in general, approach life with more equilibrium. I would like to say that I am always grounded but I know I am not. Tai Chi has helped me to accept my humanness and when I am able to do that, I feel a wonderful peace of mind. - *Nadja Venezian*, *Sao Paulo*, *Brazil*

Following the needs and development of martial arts, the Chinese Martial Arts Institute formally implemented the "Chinese Martial Arts Ranking System" in 1997 in order to evaluate the skill level and contributions of practitioners and people working in the field of martial arts. Within the last two years of development it has already achieved success among the practitioners and professional martial artists. The International Association in order to adapt to the current state of the Chinese martial arts and to better coordinate with its future development has specially created the Tai Chi Chuan ranking system for Tai Chi Chuan practitioners. The structure of the Association's ranking system is based on that of the "Chinese Martial Arts Ranking System". – Yang Jun



Ranking System for Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan

Article I Purpose

This ranking system was developed specifically to promote the development of Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan, raise the level of skill and theory within Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan, and establish a standardized training system for Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan.

Article II Names of the Ranks

There are nine ranks that will be assigned according to a variety of factors. The length of time spent practicing Tai Chi Chuan, the level of attained skill and theory, achievements in research, the degree to which the moral code of martial arts is followed, and the contributions made to develop Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan are all considered. The ranks are as follows:

Beginner Ranks: One, Two, Three Intermediate Ranks: Four, Five, Six Advanced Ranks: Seven, Eight, Nine

Article III Specifications for Each Rank

Practitioners of Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan must be at least 8 years old, achieve a score of at least 7 points in the entry level test on the first section of the form, and receive teaching in the moral code of martial arts in order to enter the ranking system.

A. Beginner Ranks

- 1) 1st Rank (*green eagle*): Individuals that have practiced Traditional Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan for at least one year after entering the ranking system, achieved a score of at least 7.5 points in the test of Traditional Yang Style Hand Form, and respect the moral code of martial arts may apply to advance to the 1st rank;
- 2) 2nd Rank (*silver eagle*): Individuals that have practiced Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan for at least one year after attaining the 1st rank, achieved a score of at least 8 points in the test of Traditional Yang Style Hand Form, and respect the moral code of martial arts may apply to advance to 2nd rank;
- 3) 3rd Rank (*gold eagle*): Individuals that have practiced Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan for at least one year after attaining the 2nd rank, achieved a score of at least 8 points each in the test on Traditional Yang Style Hand Form and the test of either the Sword or Saber Form, and respect the moral code of martial arts may apply to advance to 3rd rank.

B. Intermediate Ranks

1) 4th Rank (*green tiger*): Individuals will have practiced Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan for at least two years after attaining the 3rd rank. Individuals that have achieved a combined score of at least 34.4 points in the tests on Traditional Yang Style Hand Form, the 49 Form, the Sword Form, and the Saber Form, have achieved a score of at least 75 points in

the 4th level theory test, and emphasize the moral code of martial arts may apply to advance to 4th rank;

- 5th Rank (*silver tiger*): Individuals will have practiced Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan for at least two years after attaining the 4th rank. Individuals that have achieved a combined score of at least 35.2 points in the tests on Traditional Yang Style Hand Form, the 49 Form, the Sword Form, and the Saber Form, have achieved a score of at least 80 points in the 5th level theory test, and emphasize the moral code of martial arts may apply to advance to 6th rank;
- 3) 6th Rank (*gold tiger*): Individuals will have practiced Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan for at least two years after attaining the 5th rank. Individuals that have achieved a combined score of at least 35.2 points in the tests on Traditional Yang Style Hand Form, the 49 Form, the Sword Form, and the Saber Form, have achieved a score of at least 85 points in the 6th level theory test, and emphasize the moral code of martial arts may apply to advance to 6th rank.

C. Advanced Ranks

- 1) 7th Rank (*green dragon*): Individuals will have practiced Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan for at least six years after attaining the 6th rank. Individuals who have achieved a certain level of success in work, research and writing in martial arts theory, and who have a high level of martial virtue may apply to advance to 7th rank;
- 2) 8th Rank (silver dragon): Individuals will have practiced Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan for at least five years after attaining the 7th rank. Individuals who have achieved a certain level of success in work, research and writing in martial arts theory, who have contributed significantly to the development of Traditional Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan and who have a high level of martial virtue may apply to advance to 8th rank;
- 3) 9th Rank (*gold dragon*): After attaining 8th rank, individuals who have achieved a great level of success in work, research and writing in martial arts theory, who have contributed greatly to the development of Traditional Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan, whose influence is large, and who have a high level of martial virtue may apply to advance to 9th rank;
- 4) Famous people who contribute greatly towards the development of Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan can be given an honorary high level ranking, by the discretion of the International Association.

Article IV Method of Testing, Scoring, and Requesting Advancement

- A. Those who respect the martial code, love martial arts, have a certain level of martial ability and understanding of theory may request the corresponding rank. Only ranking committees that have been authorized by the International Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan Association can organize ranking tests.
- B. Each Yang Chengfu Tai Chi Chuan Center will organize ranking tests once a year for its students to test for entering the ranking system, and for first, second, and third ranks. The successful applicant's results will be sent to the International Association for assignment of rank.
- C. Continental Level Association Ranking Committees can hold ranking tests for the 4th, 5th, and 6th ranks. The successful applicant's results will be sent to the International Association for assignment of rank.
- D. The International Ranking Committee will, from time to time, organize adjudication for the assignment of the seventh, eighth, and ninth ranks. Successful applicants will be given the appropriate ranks.
- E. The method of testing will include competitions organized by the International Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan Association and standardized ranking tests.

Article V Certification, Clothing, and Insignia

- A. Certification: The International Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan Association will design and produce standardized certificates.
- B. Clothing: The International Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan Association will design standardized clothing.
- C. Insignia: The International Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan Association will design standardized insignia for the following ranks:
 - 1) Beginning Ranks: 1st Rank (Green Eagle); 2nd Rank (Silver Eagle); 3rd Rank (Gold Eagle) 2) Intermediate Ranks: 4th Rank (Green Tiger); 5th Rank (Silver Tiger); 6th Rank (Gold Tiger) 3) Advanced Ranks: 7th Rank (Green Dragon); 8th Rank (Silver Dragon); 9th Rank (Gold Dragon)

Seattle Events

The Association held its first seminar in Seattle from October 8th to the 13th. Master Yang Jun taught an advanced seminar to Center Directors and their assistants.

This small and intense workshop had representatives from 6 countries with numerous languages represented. Sometimes it was required to translate from Chinese to English to Italian to French to get a meaning conveyed!

amount of dedication to Yang style, since all of us either have recently presented a seminar with the Yang Family or will soon have that opportunity." - Pat Rice, Director

"This gathering of promoters

certainly represented a huge

On the first

night of the seminar the Association held its first full meeting of the Advisory Board, the main governing body of power. Previous partial meetings were held in the summer, but this was the first time that everyone could be together. The meeting, which took place in the Seattle school, was long and detailed. Everyone gave many suggestions and discussed many important issues for the Association's future. The Advisory Board decided on popularizing Tai Chi Chuan and developing the Association as its main work.

Following the meeting the new As-

sociation and Seattle Center sign was unveiled (see picture on page 2). Then, the Association presented each Center Director with a mounted certificate for the Center.

> The atmosphere was exciting and everyone shared in the feeling that the Association was now officially launched.

> During the seminar the Association celebrated Yang Luchan's 200th birthday and the opening of the Seattle Center with an open house and demonstration. Dave

Barrett, Portland Center was the emcee for the event, captivating the audience with his humor and story-telling skill. About every 30 minutes demonstrations were held. It was a rare display of skill with some of the best Yang Style practitioners from throughout the world demonstrating. Directors were dressed in beautiful silks of all different colors. Among the exhibitions were Pat Rice, Winchester Center (Saber Form), Horacio Lopez, San Antonio Center and Han Hoong Wang, Michigan Center (Sword Form), Andre and Nelly Leray, Pau Center (Hand

Form), Bill Walsh and Holly Sweeney, New York City Center (Saber Form) and a group Hand Form. Master Yang Jun introduced push hands with a brave Claudio Mingarini, Rome Center. In between demonstrations, guests mingled with Center Directors and helped themselves to food and refreshments. After a brief discussion of integrating the 10 essentials into the movements of the body, Bill Walsh and Holly Sweeney surprised the crowd by suddenly breaking into a lively modern dance. Periodically, Sergio Arione, Montreal Center, would invite a child from the audience to draw names for free classes. The open house culminated with Master Yang Jun demonstrating the 49 Form. The Association is grateful to everyone for their contributions in making the open house and demonstration such a success.

After the open house, the Association held a banquet at a nearby restaurant in Chinatown. It was a festive occasion with everyone filling two large tables, sharing wine, good food, and entertaining stories. The seminar was a bonding experience for the leadership of the Association, uniting people from different cultures and backgrounds through the expression of a common goal. - Jeremy Blodgett

PRODUCTS

Book (in Chinese)

The latest book by Master Yang Zhenduo. Includes Sword and Saber Forms, 49 Form, Applications, Yang Chengfu pictures, and much more. \$15 (\$17 non-members)

Saber

The official saber for Traditional Yang Style Tai Chi. Made to the Yang Family specifications at the famous Long Chuan factory. Regular and long. \$55 (\$60 non-members)

Sword

The official sword for Traditional Yang Style Tai Chi. Made to the Yang Family specifications at the famous Long Chuan factory. Regular and long. \$50 (\$55 non-members)

Yang Chengfu Poster

Large (24" by 33") high quality black and white poster showing poses of only Yang Chengfu. Collectors item. \$10 (\$12 non-members)

Tassels

A higher quality tassel than what is included with your sword purchase. \$8 (\$10 non-members)

Sword Bag

For carrying and protecting your swords and sabers. A limited supply of many different kinds and colors. Velvet, silk, denim, in single and double (for both a sword and saber) sizes.

\$14 (\$16 non-members)

Yang Zhenduo Poster Set

4 large color prints with pictures of Yang Zhenduo for each move and transition. Chinese captions. A must for someone learning the form. \$40 (\$45 non-members)

T-Shirt (NEW!)

White, 100% Heavy-weight cotton, featuring 4 color Association logo on front. \$10 (\$12 Non-members)

Grooved Sword (NEW!)

Ordered by the Yang Family, this sword is made of high-tempered combat steel, with a ridge running down the center of the blade and is of a quality not seen before in a mass produced Tai Chi sword. Regular and long. \$75 (\$80 non-members)

Check your Center for availability (prices may be higher due to shipping and tariffs, especially outside of the U.S.). You may also purchase directly from Association by e-mailing us with your order at sales@yangfamilytaichi.com VISA/MC accepted. Purchaser is responsible for shipping charges and any applicable tariffs.



ROME, ITALY: TBA: May 22 to May 29, 2000 Contact: Claudio Mingarini Phone: 39-6-8610590 E-mail: claudio@yangfamilytaichi.com

PAU, FRANCE: TBA: June 1 to June 8, 2000

Contact: Andre Leray Phone: 33-5-59022186 E-mail:leray@yangfamiytaichi.com

COLOGNE, GERMANY: Hand Form: June 11 to June 15, 2000 Contact: Frank Grothstuck Phone: 43-221-625629

E-mail: frank@yangfamilytaichi.com

HAMBURG, GERMANY:

Hand Form: June 17 ot June 18, 2000 Contact: Stephan

E-mail: stephan@yangfamilytaichi.com

STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN: Hand Form: June 25 to June 28, 2000 Contact: *Therese Mei Mei Teo*

Phone: 46-8-201800

E-mail: meimei@yangfamilytaichi.com

WINCHESTER, VIRGINIA: Hand Form: July 2 to July 6, 2000 Corrections: July 7 to July 9, 2000

Contact: Pat Rice

Phone: (540) 667-7595 E-mail: pat@yangfamilytaichi.com

MONTREAL, QUEBEC: Hand Form: July 11 to July 14, 2000 Sword Form: July 15 to July 17, 2000 Contact: Sergio Arione Phone: (514) 684-9584 E-mail: sergio Avanda Smithaichi

E-mail: sergio@yangfamiytaichi.com

SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS: Hand Form: July 22 to July 25, 2000 Sword Form: July 26 to July 28, 2000 Contact: *Horacio Lopez*

Phone: (210) 225-2743

E-mail: horacio@yangfamilytaichi.com

PORTLAND, OREGON: Hand Form: August 5 to August 8, 2000 **Sword Form**: August 9 to August 11, 2000 Contact: Dave Barrett

Phone:(503) 357-8917 E-mail: dave@yangfamilytaichi.com

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MEMBERSHIP FORM

Turn in this form to your local Center Director, or if you do not belong to a Center, mail it the Association Home Office listed on the back page. Membership cards are produced and mailed on a monthly basis.

MEMBER BENEFITS:

- Newsletter
- · 10% discount on seminar tuition
- · Discounts on Association products
- Discount on Seattle classes
- Members may apply to establish Yang Chengfu Tai Chi Chuan Centers.

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Individual: \$20 Family: \$30 Lifetime: \$200

Name Mr./Ms./Mrs					
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Local Center, if applicable					
Birthday (optional)//					
Language of Preference					

please print clearly

If you do not belong to a Center, mail your form to the Association Home Office. You may pay by check or credit card (MC/VISA only).

Name on Credit Card _____

Card # ______Exp.___

Signature____

IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF TAI CHI CHUAN:

Yang Chengfu Talks on Practice Implementing the Ranking System History of the Yang Family

