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All Tai Chi Chuan enthusiasts are invited to submit articles, letters, and pictures for publication. Both critical and complimentary letters concerning the form and content of this journal are welcome. Please send correspondence in electronic format to: editor@yangfamilytaichi.com

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PRESIDENT'S LETTER

YANG JUN, President

Transcribed by Carolyn Fung

Dear Member, After eight months of planning, the grand opening of our new center in Kunming took place on March 25, 2017.

This grand opening event was a great success. The new center represents three things:

1) The International Yang Family Tai Chi Chuan Association's Asia-Pacific Affairs office.

2) A traditional Yang Family Tai Chi Chuan training base for Southwest China. A training base is a higher-level center that is able to host instructor training seminars and also acts as a center for regional management.

3) A new Yang Chengfu Tai Chi Chuan Center - our flagship center in China.

ore than 500 people were at the grand opening ceremony, which was held at the Jinyuan Grand Hotel, walking distance from our new Kunming center. Despite being 92, my grandfather took a flight more than three hours long with my grandmother to attend the opening ceremony. Other Yang family relatives who are involved with tai chi chuan came to the grand opening,

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International Yang Family Taijiquan Association, Yang Family Taijiquan Training Base by Yang Zhenduo in the Spring of the LunarYear Ding You (2017)

such as my uncle Yang Zhifang, Zhao Youbin, and Fu Qingquan (James Fu). It was like a family reunion for us. People from local martial arts organizations, the Chinese national government martial arts organizations, and many of my grandfather's disciples and students attended the celebration. Many people from our international association traveled to China for the event. They represented 14 countries from the continents of North America, South America, Africa, Europe, and Asia.

One of the highlights of the grand opening was a tai chi flash mob that occurred in the main open area of the hotel. It was quite a new experience for many Chinese people to see tai chi chuan performed in a flash mob and felt fresh and interesting. There were many wonderful performances during the grand opening. One highlight was a group of international people who pushed the excitement level of the event to a peak at the end of the grand opening by performing a dance called Cha Cha Slide. My grandfather created a calligraphy painting that the VIP guests (witnesses) finished by adding their seals in red ink at the ceremony. This artwork is a symbol for us and will be used as a model to make copies carved into wood to hang in each training base we establish.

Alsoduringtheopeningceremony, I signed an agreement with a famous writer and professor, Xu Fulu to write a Yang Family Tai Chi Chuan Heroes List book. The book will include the biographies of Yang family members from every generation from past to present. I believe that when this book is published, it will help make many people familiar with who promoted Yang Family Tai Chi Chuan in the world and their life stories. We will try to keep the contents as close to history as we can. The publishing of the book is sponsored by a company in China that I partnered with called I Love Tai Chi.

It was quite a new experience for many Chinese people to see tai chi chuan performed in a flash mob and felt fresh and interesting.

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We will be having another grand opening event on May 26, 2017, this time for our association's China headquarters located in Beijing. This center will also be a North China training base. After the grand opening ceremony, everyone enjoyed lunch at the hotel. That same afternoon, a disciple ceremony took place at our new Kunming center. Twenty-eight people from various countries became disciples at this happy event. It was the first time I received disciples from China.

We will be having another grand opening event on May 26, 2017, this time for our association's China headquarters located in Beijing. This center will also be a North China training base. Beijing is very important to Yang Family Tai Chi Chuan because the art began to be introduced to the public from Beijing. This was Yang Luchan's contribution when he went to Beijing. Since Yang Chengfu's time, we have moved north and south from Beijing. At this time, China is promoting the preventative health industry, so we think it's important to be there. It was a hard decision to open a Beijing center because it is very expensive to do, but once we decided it was important to do, we put our energy into making it happen.

On May 1, 2017, the company I partnered with, I Love Tai Chi, opened its online teaching program to the public. For Chinese people, this is quite a new way for people to access the complete content for Yang Family Tai Chi Chuan. In the future, we will also do an online course and gradually spread to different instructors, different languages, and use this online platform for outreach for people who want to learn tai chi chuan.

Our international association is working and making progress refining many of our documents and methods for ranking and examining instructors. Before the end of this year, we will have a new judge's handbook published. We are also modifying our instructor's handbook to provide better service to our members. We are still developing our new website. Hopefully by the end of this summer we will have a new website published.

Our international association is currently focusing more on China. There are more developments in China than I have mentioned in this letter. These are just a few. Now, in China, people are realizing that tai chi chuan is a national treasure. People are busier with work, experiencing more stress, and the people are aging. They are starting to realize that health is important. The Chinese government wants a cheaper way to keep people healthy. All this makes the present moment a golden time to promote tai chi chuan in China and bring it to a higher level. This is the reason for focusing on China now and you will be hearing much more news from China in the future. However, an international focus is still our whole picture and we would like to unify all Yang Family Tai Chi Chuan practitioners as one family.

In closing, I would like to sincerely thank all the people that travelled to our Kunming grand opening. It was nice to see so many people from around the world. I hope you enjoyed the celebration, met new friends, and created many happy memories!

GRAND MASTER YANG JUN NEW DISCIPLES



Left to right, Front Row:

Yafeng Yang, Yachao Yang, Yarui Yang, Yaguo Yang, Yashan Yang, Yazhi Yang, Yahai Yang (Mario Santoni, Italia), Yafei Yang (Ylaria Giorgia Flora, Italia)

Second Row:

Yamin Yang (Leonardo Ratto, Uruguay), Yajun Yang, Yawen Yang, Yanan Yang, Hong Fang, Jun Yang, Yajing Yang, Yazhe Yang (Ken Ning, USA), Yawei Yang, Yajing Yang

Third Row:

Yawei Yang, Yakang Yang (Csaba Simo, Hungary), Yahao Yang, Yachong Yang, Yawei Yang (Mihai Serban, Romania), Yashi Yang (Stefanie Russell, USA), Yajian Yang (Mihály Vadas, Hungary), Yaquan Yang, Yaxin Yang, Yafu Yang, Yasheng Yang, Yalian Yang (Edyta Piatkowska-Wu, France)



LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

DAVE BARRETT Editor

When the issue # 40 of our journal! This project started as a two-page newsletter put together by Jeremy Blodgett (of blessed memory) and GM. Yang Jun. He and Fang Hong Laoshi had just moved from Taiyuan to Seattle and were living in a small apartment in Chinatown. There were only three Yang Chengfu Centers: New York, Michigan and Texas.

The first steps on the journey to opening the Kunming Yang Family Taijiquan Training Base were taken back in 1995 when GM. Yang Zhenduo met with Bill Walsh, Han Hoong Wang and Horacio Lopez. He shared his vision of an association that would spread his family's art to the world. This international association would equally share in the work and rewards of training students. He asked these brave hearts to help and the rest is history.

YANGFAMILYTAICHI.com



Journal of the International Yang Family Tai Chi Chuan Association — with a first of the International Yang Family Tai Chi Chuan Association

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Over the years, the journal has reported on the expansion of this model and the achievement of GM. Yang Zhenduo's dream. Along the way, fellow travelers have shared their insights, exploits and achievements in all things taijiquan. We have contributors from all over the globe.

In putting together this issue I thought it would be clever to use the well-known Chinese proverb, "a picture is worth a thousand words", as a theme for celebrating the Kunming event. I asked for one picture and a brief story to go with it. Thank you to all who have shared their recollections and images.

Confucius said many things but "a picture is worth a thousand words" is not one of them. Come to find out (thank you Wikipedia) that phrase was coined in the 1920's by an American advertising executive.

The actual Chinese expression is, "Hearing something a hundred times isn't better than seeing it once" (百聞 不如一見, bǎi wén bù rú yī jiàn).

Take a close look at this image of the Yang family captured by Ana Horta at the Kunming Center.



We can all tell 100 stories of the rare mastery and generous spirit of these individuals. Seeing them together, after all these years of hard • work, is better than anything!

ALL ROADS LEAD TO **KUNMING**

BY **FERNANDO DE LAZZARI** Director, Ribeirão Preto Yang Chengfu Tai Chi Chuan Center - Brazil





love to take pictures when I am traveling, mainly of nature and beautiful landscapes. It is very difficult to choose a best picture of our trip to China in March 2017. I have so many beautiful and significant images.

This trip was very special and we visited many interesting places. We had many special moments at the Grand Opening of the Association's Headquarters, Disciples Ceremony and Cultural Tour.

For me, one very special picture is worth more than 1000 words! This is our Latin American group in the Association's headquarters. It was a pleasure and honor for me organize this group to travel to China for this historic event. Always, when I see this picture, I am reminded of many things: all the Yang Family Masters; the Association's beautiful Headquarters in Kunming; many tai chi friends from China and other countries; great moments with my wife, and memorable and funny moments that I have lived with all the people in our group. After this trip I feel our friendship is stronger and our connections with Yang Family Tai Chi Chuan are stronger too.

I really want to thank GM. Yang Jun, Master Fang Hong, my tai chi brothers and sisters from Brazil and from all the other countries. I am so grateful to have lived these special, rich and unforgettable moments together.

Together we are stronger! Together we can travel farther on this journey!

BY **MIHÁLY VADAS (YANG YAJIAN)** Translated from the Hungarian by Mate Banki



ne day, when I was still an elementary school pupil, we were given a task by one of our teachers to approach his desk from our bench without making any noise. Each of us was carefully listened to. It was my turn when I started moving very slowly at an even pace, rolling on my sole from heel to toe, inch by inch, stepping in a soft, smooth way, finally reaching my destination in absolute silence. This sequence of motion must have triggered some deep memory from within. From that time – and more than 30 years have passed since - I have been constantly seeking this feeling.

Hungary in the 1980's was devoid of Chinese martial arts. Tai chi has not been introduced yet. I was working for a television company when one of the guests of a talk show appeared in quite a strange outfit – red ribbon in her long hair, dressed all in crimson silk. She explained that having spent a month in Beijing she had learnt the 24step routine, which she demonstrated on the spot.

After this encounter I called her and visited her class the following day. It was 1988.

From this moment I became mindful of my quest, I realized that the internal feelings and experiences released in my childhood are connected to tai chi. Years of research have followed: purchase of a book in Vienna; a master from Hamburg, then the US; a variety of schools and styles. I made many journeys both home and abroad, to training camps, seminars, and competitions. I bought hundreds of books, DVDs and films.

The styles of tai chi I had been learning did not provide the experience I was searching for. Some traces here and there, clues and fragments, but not in its entirety, something was always missing. I was guided by my intrinsic motivation, my inner compass. The direction was becoming clearer and more distinct – what I was looking for was related to Yang Chengfu and his teachings, based on my personal research, experience and readings.

Then as a leader of a Hungarian tai chi association, I suggested we invite GM. Yang Zhenduo. He held a three-day sword seminar at the age of 83. We were surprised by his presence, his charisma, posture, and smile. The power of his voice astonished us all. I was deeply honored to have assisted him in showing some techniques and applications. I remember how exquisite the 'feeling' of his body was, expressing the flexibility of his tai chi power. The 67-sword routine made an even stronger impression on me, although I had learnt a number of Yang style barehanded and weapon routines. Every single bit of a mosaic picture was there in front of me, fragments of which

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I had encountered before, but never the whole image. I suddenly realized that my quest had come to an end. I finally found the Yang Family Tai Chi Chuan in 2007. The only idea bothering me was not to have found it earlier.

In 2008, I participated in a seminar led by Master Yang Jun, on the recommendation of GM. Yang Zhenduo. The venue was in Cologne, and I arrived with great expectations and curiosity. I was paying close attention to every single detail and I learnt from everything. At first it was rather surprising how well structured, clear and organized the system was, and even more surprising how seamlessly it worked.

I realized soon enough all the tiny, yet important and substantive differences, which gave my tai chi practice a deeper quality. Earlier, when I compared my previous studies with the classics, a feeling of disharmony arose. Theory and practice were often separated. The pushing hands practice was on the last day. Since I have always been deeply interested in martial applications, this was greatly important for me. I had competed in this category a lot, and considered myself experienced. However, when the German students encouraged me to try it with Master Yang Jun, I was astonished. He told me that I should re-learn most of what I knew, or just throw it out. Though I had put years of practice into it, I knew he was right.

An interesting process started in my tai chi life after this encounter. I started to remove and discard the unnecessary, unfitting elements. In my previous repertoire I used to have 8 to 10 different routines, some of them required many years of practice and brought medals at competitions. After a while these all disappeared, to the great surprise of my students. After the Cologne seminar I was only studying and teaching one thing – Yang Family Tai Chi Chuan. We can achieve our goals by practicing, understanding and deepening one single system, one that includes everything! I could see this truth through the experience of my students and my own research.

These days, after finishing a routine, I often tell the others "this is so incredibly well-structured and designed, it just includes everything in unity. This is simply outstanding." I am grateful for the opportunity to learn and teach this system. It is fantastic to see how people enjoy practicing tai chi. One of the greatest values of Yang Family Tai Chi Chuan for me is its role in enhancing mindfulness, balancing the heart and reaching tranquility. This state of mind can establish the ultimate space for creativity and manifestation. It affects the practitioner's flow of life.

All the above-mentioned ideas ran through my mind multiple times while standing for the Disciple Ceremony. An elevating and momentous feeling, an intense presence. Concentrated attention, flowing energy, almost recognizable to the touch. I am sensing everything simultaneously. Time is limitless. The past is present, spirit of the ancestors. Portraits of the Old Masters on the wall.

GM. Yang Zhenduo is present. Sitting quietly, almost unmoving. Great as a mountain. Paramount, majestic. Teaching by his presence. Radiating power. His voice like thunder. Power itself. Yang Jun. Shifu. Pure, exquisite awareness. Consciousness. His bright light shines through all. Everything gains a perspective in his presence. Shimu. The receiver. The omnipresent. The foundation. The all-giving nurturer. Source. In her smile, support and encouragement.

Excitement on the faces of my Disciple brothers and sisters. Hours, months, years of hard work, experience. Their eyes, a fountain of emotions, a teardrop somewhere. And now it is perfectly appropriate. Well conducted, simple and transparent, everything in the right place to the tiniest detail. A stream of unbelievably strong force, taking us along. Flowing. Irresistible. Now being part of a greater energy, barely sensing yourself, you are one with it. You know what is to come, though hard to believe. It is incredible to stand here after years and decades of exploration and study – as a Disciple. Waves of gratitude and love overwhelm me. Those two hours seemed just a few moments. We are warm with flushing cheeks, bright eyes all around. Wherever I look, smiling people hugging each other. Compelling joy.

I cannot yet properly formulate the experience I received, probably it is going to take a lot more time, but I am sure I have arrived. I am home.

A poem is shaping among my thoughts:

"Glance ahead to walk the way Marked by forefathers' footsteps Spirit-born through each of us Not to let you go astray Master's hand will lead you straight."

BY STANISLAV BAGALEV

BULGARIA TO KUNMING



Discover China and yourself - Travel to the East!

The feeling of being in China is beautiful and magical. For Stanislav Bagalev, Marin Maznev, Dimityr Tonchev and Maxim Iliev from the Tai Chi School in Plovdiv, Bulgaria this was the realization of long time efforts.

For Marin and Maxim this was the first seminar with GM. Yang Jun and also the first visit to China. We all were very impressed how well organized the trip was from the first day till the end.

The new training center in Kunming is combination between traditional and modern design. It has an amazing look, energy and spirit. Meeting GM. Yang Jun and participating in his seminar gave us all new understanding and feeling for tai chi and motivation to learn and practice even more.

To be in China was a dream come true for all of us. Our wish is to spread the positive feelings and energy we experienced there to our country and in our school and to motivate more people to visit China and practice Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan!

BY JACK CORNELL





friend of mine from Vicenza, Italy, where I live, is a tea expert. When we spoke about my trip to Kunming he advised me to buy the Pu Er tea, since the area is famous for producing that tea. Upon arriving in Kunming, the next day, together with my friends Ylaria, Alberto and Patricia, we went to the old part of the city.

For me it was like traveling back in time: the beautiful gardens, the monasteries, ancient buildings and pagodas. Then we came upon an open-air market. It was our great fortune to come across a stand that sold Pu Er tea. Thankfully Ylaria spoke Chinese, so we started talking with the lady who owned the stand. After a few minutes, I asked, "Can we taste the tea?". "Of course". That's when I really started to enjoy myself. Everyone did, to be honest. We found out her name is Lilly; she invited us to come behind the stand where she had a tea table. She was very shy and told us that this was the first time she ever offered tea to foreigners and that it was her pleasure to do so. We started tasting different varieties of Pu Er tea. She explained the qualities of each and every tea. I didn't realize that we had been there more than an hour; time just went by so fast. It was so enjoyable sitting there with her and enjoying each other's company. Then we looked outside her stand and there was a group of locals that had gathered there to watch what was going on. What a time we had! I'll never forget Lilly and her tea stand. She will always have a special place in my heart. Don't laugh-I bought almost 4kg of tea!

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BY MEGHDAD ABDI



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y name is Meghdad. I'm from Iran and an association ľm member since 2010. At the time I decided to follow Grandmaster Yang Jun and learn Yang Family Tai Chi, I had no teacher, however I was fortunate enough to learn from GM. Yang Jun's DVDs. In Tehran, together with my friend Morteza, we started to practice and learn from the beginning. It is a very long story with lots of ups and downs and yet quite a rewarding journey. While studying and practicing tai chi, I became very interested in Chinese medicine as it shares the same roots with tai chi.

About two years ago I planned to put everything aside and move to the USA to follow my life dreams: to study tai chi and Chinese medicine. My lovely wife Mina supported this decision. What was most important to me when choosing the university was its distance to Seattle, because my top priority was to be able to study with GM. Yang Jun and to fulfill this long held dream. But in the end this plan did not work although we tried our best; we instead moved to Shanghai last year and I started to study Chinese medicine at Shanghai University in Sep. 2016. Although my initial plan failed, soon I experienced a series of amazing synchronicities that changed everything. The most important of all was that same year GM. Yang Jun decided to



spend much more time in China. As a result, I could attend four seminars with him within the first seven months of our stay in China and hopefully have many more opportunities in the future. It's unbelievable how life unfolds in the way we never expected and I am grateful for every moment of my life here.

In Kunming, apart from the opening ceremony, I participated in two seminars, which lasted for a total of eight days: a five-days instructor-training seminar and a three-days hand form seminar. This picture is quite special to me for many reasons. First, it is a symbol of how life unfolds, not in my way but in the best way, if I hold

on to and believe in my dreams and visions and that I should be brave enough to go with the flow. Second, it reminds me of the wonderful time I had during those eight days learning from and being with GM. Yang Jun; it was a unique and inspiring experience for me. Third, this was my first opportunity to meet GM. Yang Zhenduo, who I have admired for a long time. This picture shows two generations of Yang Family Grandmasters that I have followed and learned from for the past eight years, so it was very special to me. Fourth, I had already participated in the association seminars in China and made a lot of good friends who have been so kind to me and helped me a lot. This was my first time to see

BY MIHAI SERBAN (YANG YAWEI)





 his image captures another moment from the endless row of outstanding moments that my tai chi family has given me.

A moment that I share with my Bulgarian friends.

Joyful, thrilled and grateful, I proudly display my acceptance certificate as a disciple of GM. Yang Jun.

It is a lifetime achievement, a crowning of the most secret expectancies. Not the kind of crowning that ends a life, but the kind that opens a new, brighter, one.

If my dearly departed daughter Anais is looking down from the skies, she is certainly smiling with pride.



the international members of the association and I also made very good friends that I look forward to meeting again in future. Although this picture does not show all of them, it reminds me of all my new and kind friends.

This picture was taken in the last day of the instructor training seminar and later that night there was a party with many performances, songs, lectures and friendly talks. The atmosphere was so friendly and sincere that I deeply felt I was sitting there and spending great time with my real family. It was that night that I realized how it feels to be a part of the Yang Family. This was the first seminar held at the Kunming Center and this also makes this photo special. Another very important reason why this photo is special to me is because of Master Fang Hong. Over the past years I have always talked to her regarding different issues and she has always been so kind and helpful. During the five days seminar she taught us everyday in the evening from 7 to 9. This was my first series of classes with Master Fang and I learned a lot from her.

I have tried my best to be as brief as possible although it is very hard to express my deep feelings of those eight days and the past eight months in China. In conclusion I would like to say that I am very happy to be a part of the Yang Family and I look forward to meeting you all!

BY **HUGUES RAHARIMANANTSOA** Director, Antananarivo Yang Chengfu Tai Chi Chuan Center

MADAGASCAR TO KUNMING

n March 23, 2017, Yolande Ma-ky and I left Antananarivo, the capital of Madagascar to join the GM. Yang Jun in Kunming. You can imagine the long hours that we spent either on an airplane seat or in the corridors of an airport. On the night of March 24, 2017, we were happy to arrive but at the same time we reflected on the long journey that led us to this city, which has become the Yang family training base for all of Southeast Asia.

The long journey began 13 years ago, April 2004. That was my first Seminar with GM. Yang Jun, in Paris during the last Seminar directed by his Grandfather GM. Yang Zhenduo in Europe. This seminar was memorable because working under the direction of two Grandmasters was an almost unimaginable dream. Memorable also because I had dreamed of this moment one year before when Duc and Carole Nguyen Minh helped me to go from the 24 form to the Yang Family 103 form.

Since then, in spite of our very modest resources, my students, including Yolande, now an Associate Instructor, have followed the seminars of the GM. Yang Jun and have traveled the continents to try



to find the substantive marrow of the Yang Family. In 2007, I travelled to the Taiyuan Invitational Tournament with a small delegation of students all "in love with tai chi chuan". Unfortunately one of them, our dean Jose, died in October 2010. The seminars and exams followed one after another: Rome saw me as a Certified Instructor, Paris awarded me the 5th Duan and Santo Domingo awarded me the title of Director of the Antananarivo Yang Chengfu Tai Chi Chuan Center.

Then, my Grand Dream to introduce GM. Yang Jun to the practitioners of Madagascar came true in 2016! The Yang Family arrives in Africa! I was so proud to be the instigator! We welcomed him in the traditional Malagasy style: "Now, I introduce to you the direct descendant of Yang Luchan so let's make a "Lamako"(pronounced Lamaku), a special "traditional clapping hands" to show that we are happy to welcome him."

The gymnasium filled with the chant:

Yang Jun LAMAKO! Yang Jun LAMAKO! Yang Jun LAMAKO!

We will develop the Yang Family in all of Madagascar!

We continued this implantation in Madagascar during the "2017 World Health Day". The Ministry of Health of Madagascar and the 18

MADAGASCAR

Representative of the World Health Organization invited us to a hospital in the capital to give a performance and to make a special presentation of our Art to all the guests of this important day

And what about Kunming? After experiencing the Grand Opening of the Center with a Grand Ceremony, as only the Yang Family knows how to do it; we first traveled through Lijiang, Jade Dragon Mountain, Shangri La, Dali; we even discovered the importance of the Yak for modern China!

March 31, we gathered for the beginning of the seminar with the Grandmaster. Yes, this seminar was exciting but also enriching because "I took for my grade", as they say. Yes, we worked the "Hand Form" but the Grandmaster adopted a particular method of transmission to such an extent that I felt even smaller than I am. He showed it in such a way, in his approach, that I thought I was "rediscovering tai chi chuan". And in the end, my thighs, my legs, and my mind have stored so much energy that I have forgotten all my aches.

Thanks to our GM. Yang Jun,

Thanks to Fang Hong Laoshi,

Thanks to you all brothers and sisters of Yang Family Tai Chi Chuan!

KUNMING STORY

BY **PAM BOYDE (YANG YAZHU)** Head, the Yukon Group





ive weeks before the grand opening of the Kunming
Yang Chengfu Centre, Fang Hong Laoshi notified me
that a performance of the Cha Cha Slide group dance
was planned for the closing act of the event.

There were a handful of folks on the trip who had participated in the performance of the dance for GM. Yang Zhenduo's 90th birthday. We had precious little time in Kunming to rehearse. I think we may have had two practices. I know we had one for sure at night in the parking lot outside our hotel. We started at 10 pm!

As for the show, try to imagine this mash-up. While some were Cha Cha Sliding on stage, a small contingent demonstrated push hands and hand form in front of the stage. Quite the juxtaposition of energies!

Once the performance part was done, the audience was invited to come on stage to Cha Cha Slide together. There we were, one big happy family from around the world, struttin' our stuff, doing the Cha Cha Slide together.

Judging from the smiles from the Grandmaster's table, they were quite pleased.

People were still talking about it days later.

BY STEFANIE RUSSELL (YANG YASHI)



ears ago some of us gathered with Fang Laoshi to study Mandarin here in Seattle. Sitting peacefully, holding a young Jason on her lap, she taught us to sing "Xiao Yanzi." That is a gentle moment that will live in my heart forever.

Arriving in Kunming, to the welcome of our friend Wei Zhang, I understood more deeply why the sparrow in the song returned each spring. Here there were friends. The warm air was fragrant with the scent of spring flowers brought to us by a gentle breeze. Birds were singing.

What could be better than joining the Yang Family here to celebrate the Grand Opening of their beautiful Headquarters and Training Base? Witnessing the tradition and strength and dedication of the assembled taijiquan community filled me with deep respect.

The Grand Opening was followed by Master Yang Jun's 4th Disciple Ceremony. Becoming brothers and sisters with friends from around the world at such an historic time is indescribable for me still.

It felt wonderful to have my daughter with me. She was so impressed with what she witnessed: the love we all have for Yang Family Taiji and the friendship we share with each other! I was glad that she could see with her heart as well as her eyes!

Having renewed old friendships and created new ones, we flew off to Lijiang to begin our tour. As we made our way across the countryside we experienced not only China's natural beauty but also the beautiful spirit of her people. Winding our way through higher, cooler mountainous terrain and then back to Kunming we witnessed the land gradually coming back to life. The growing season was well under way.

Upon our return we heard the sound of voices raised in song at the Training Base. The Chinese Instructors' Seminar students were serenading GM. Yang Zhenduo and his wife! Even though I could not understand their words, I could easily feel their great spirit, their great heart, their great love of Family.

From singing "Xiao Yanzi" years ago in Seattle, to hearing this rousing song in Kunming, it is clear that the strong heart of the Yang Family enlivens us all, whoever and wherever we may be. Just "listen!"

BY AMBER KING

AUSTRALIA TO KUNMING



Grand Opening Day

he day started with a bus trip from our hotel to the training headquarters, followed by a walk to the Embark Hotel.

When you walk the footpaths of Kunming you really need a rear vision mirror. The motorbikes share the walkways with the pedestrians. The scooters are fast and silent (electric) and behind you before you know they are there.

When you cross the streets of Kunming even if the pedestrian lights are green, to get across you need to walk with or like a local. If there are road rules for pedestrians, we never got the memo. The only way to safely cross the road is to stick like glue to a local and keep your fingers crossed!

We arrived to a wonderful greeting at the Embark Hotel. We were each given a beautiful rose corsage and a gift bag containing a commemorative Yang family tea flask, a Yang family logo pin, and a program of events and some commemorative information.

The foyer of the Embark Hotel was spacious and elegant. As everyone gathered, the media was interviewing GM. Yang Jun.

He began to play tai chi. One by one, he was joined by his disciples, students and others until the whole foyer was filled to overflowing with tai chi players. Many people were watching from the stairs and the overhead mezzanine floor. A large flash mob had formed. Hotel guests stopped in their tracks to watch and lots of selfies and pictures were taken. It was a memorable experience to be part of such an occasion.

The large auditorium was filled to capacity with Yang family mem-

bers, local officials and dignitaries, Yang family students and other invited guests.

There were many speeches given, in Chinese of course. While not translated, all added to the grandeur of the event.

Following the formalities there was lots of fun and laughter when Pam Boyde was joined on stage by anyone that she could haul up there and they danced the Cha Cha Slide. This was followed by a general invitation to everyone to stand up and join in. It was heaps of fun.

At the entrance to the banquet room there was a large red banner, maybe 12 x 20 feet hung on the wall. As guests approached, they were given a marker pen to sign their name on the banner. Look closely and you will find me there!

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TAI CHI LETTER

BY VIVIANA ULIARTE

Escuela Mendocina de Tai Chi Chuan, Argentina

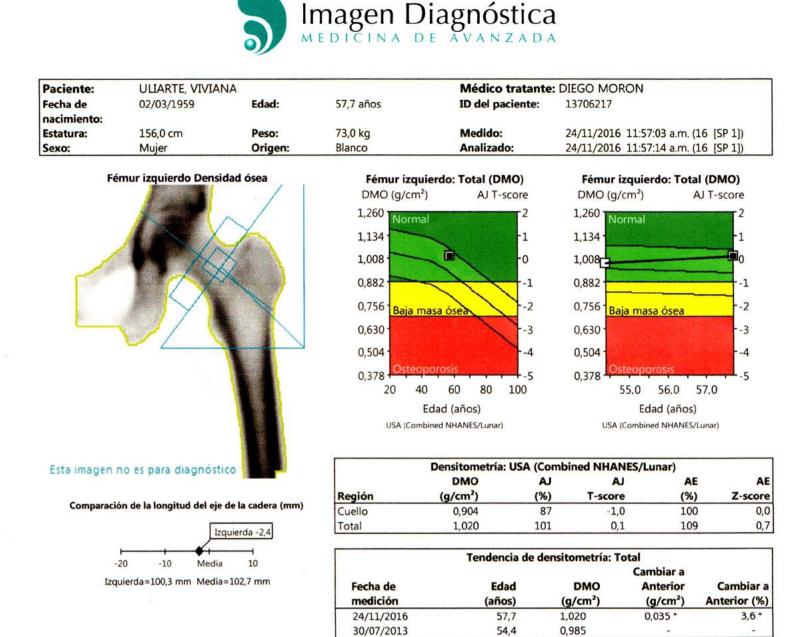
I'm 57 years old. I've been practicing Traditional Yang Family Tai Chi Chuan For 4 years now and I can't stop surprising myself.

> ere's my story: I studied Law (hours and hours of sitting down at University). I run an advertising agency (hours and hours of sitting down at the office). I was the manager of a rock star (hours and hours of sitting down at the office, at airports, during sound tests and shows). I had, clearly, a sedentary life. I never played sports, and since very young I was always dressed in formal clothes and heels, really high heels.

> Finally, one day in 2012, because of tough situations in my life, I started learning tai chi chuan, just to "stop my mind". That was my only goal.

From the very first day, I felt a released, comfortable and joyful feeling that I could not explain.

After a few months, in 2013, I travelled to Brazil to study at the Jardim do Dharma. This is the very special place, in the forest, home of the Sao Paulo Yang Chengfu Tai Chi Chuan Center. That trip was inspirational and transformational! Everything changed: my interests, my habits, and my environment. No more heels, just sneakers. No more business suits, only track suits.



I have the privilege of being taught by Yang Family Disciples.

Angela Soci and Roque Severino, on every visit, help me grow by leaps and bounds. Then there are GM. Yang Jun's seminars. Every minute with him changes me; every explanation deepens my comprehension of the Art. And now, there are the regular trips to Rosario to practice with Master Rubén Coirini, who explains, shows, corrects and nurtures my daily will to progress and improve.

Definitely, my formation rests in these four people. It makes a difference. I feel myself absolutely privileged.

As for my health: my balance, state

of mind, and coordination has improved. Specifically, a recent scan of my bone density in 2016 shows since 2013 that it grew by 5%! The normal expectation, considering my age, is a decrease of 10% in three years. I cannot argue with that! This is above and beyond my feelings of joy and comfort. A cold Densitometry machine certifies one of the benefits of regular tai chi chuan practice.

Another benefit is the friends that I have met through tai chi chuan. It is just as important as my health; they are part of my quality of life. Relationships of different kinds: with some, it is an instant match; with others, there is work to do, done with empathy and compassion. Each of them helps me to improve myself. There are the strong relationships with people that I see, at least twice a year, and this seems to be part of my life since the very beginning of my study. To all of them, I am deeply grateful.

The practice of Traditional Yang Family Tai Chi Chuan has improved my life, my health, my friendly relationships, especially the bond with my children. They are the most grateful! It has transformed the way I face different situations in life.

I have been blessed for finding this way through tai chi chuan, and today, being able to share it with my students, to whom I try to pass, as precisely as possible, all the teachings I have received.

➔

TAI CHI OUTREACH:

TEACHING TAICHI AT A CLINICAL REHAB HOSPITAL

TAI CHI OUTREACH



BY MARTIN MIDDLEWOOD

eaching tai chi to people with a variety of needs meant changing my perspective on teaching and adapting my approach for a diverse audience. I teach five classes a week at Cedar Hills Hospital, serving adult patients who are in need of treatment for a psychiatric disorder or substance abuse detox. I work for the in-patient program and the participants are confined to the facility.

PATIENT POPULATION

Cedar Hills has 89 beds for patients. It accepts a wide range of people with mental health, pain, trauma, post-traumatic stress and substance abuse problems. It dedicates one unit, called Freedom Care, to military patients suffering from these issues. Insurance controls the hospital stay for patients, which can be as little as a week or for Freedom Care several weeks to months. In my time there, I've seen some patients return several times.

CLINICAL APPROACH

The hospital's clinical approach stresses healing using mindbody work. The hospital traditionally offered yoga. Six years ago, they contracted me to offer tai chi as well. During my interview, I asked what would benefit their patients the most. The human resources interviewer said many patients cannot focus and are not in touch with their bodies. She thought helping them breathe might be the greatest value I could bring. Later, after an introduction to a staff group, they asked me to explain how I would do that. I suggested a series of easy gigong movements and encouraged them to follow along with me. I led them through the eight movements of the "Longevity Gong" taught to me by Dave Barrett, which he learned from Prof. Chan Sik Hung, a longtime tai chi instructor in Portland, Oregon.

INSTRUCTOR CHALLENGES

Patient attendance at exercise classes at the hospital isn't compulsory. Part of the patients' rehabilitation is to help them make better decisions, and choosing to go to yoga or tai chi is always the patient's decision. Although caseworkers assign patients to different units based on their condition and treatment needed, all may attend the 30 to 45-minute classes. This means instructors never know what mix of patients will show up, or whether they have special needs

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TAI CHI OUTREACH

we should consider. Some patients may not be able to stand long, others rely on walkers, and some suffer from pain. Therefore, they may use a chair to join in.

Except for a class conducted in the Freedom Care unit, all tai chi classes are in a carpeted gym which has exercise machines, a basketball hoop, and a ping-pong table. Class size varies from one to 16 patients. (For sessions given in the unit, there's only room for four patients.)

Because insurance fixes the duration of each patient's treatment, an instructor may see a patient only once or twice. Most classes involve several units, and instructors depend on medical technicians to escort patients to the gym. They can arrive at different times and are often a few minutes late.

Sometimes patients come to the gym believing they can use the exercise equipment instead of doing tai chi. My answer is always, "I'm sorry we're doing tai chi. Why don't you stay? If you don't like it, you can always go back to your unit." Hospital policy gives patients the choice to leave class before it's over, which can be disrupting, especially for a room of unfocused participants. While most patients behave well, occasionally one is openly belligerent, easily distracted, too talkative, or upset. The hospital expects instructors to manage these situations. We

can always decide to ask irksome patients whether they would prefer to return to their unit. In extreme cases, we ask the medical tech not to bring the patient back.

Cedar Hills wants each patient to sign a participation form before the class. The medical techs also leave each patient's "round sheet" with the instructor. (This sheet tracks where the patient is during a day.) The instructor initials both forms and returns them with the patients when we escort them back to their respective units. A nurse takes the round sheet and drops the participation form in the patient's file so caseworkers can see the number of mindfulness exercise classes the patient attended.

INSTRUCTION APPROACH

Structure is important to keep the patients focused on what we're.doing, help them learn, and to reduce their anxiety. It's also important to keep them exercising with as little lag time between movements as possible to lessen any opportunity for disruption.

I break each class down into three parts—breathing, qigong, and building a one-move tai chi form with cloud hands. Before starting each class, I outline this agenda so there's no question about how we will spend our time. I make clear shifts between these sections by saying, "now we're moving onto..." or some similar transition. I use the same general approach for every class, but adapt it for the patients attending.

I choose the simple "Longevity Gong" qigong form because it's easy to learn, and I find patients respond positively to it. I've broken it into five basic movements that we practice five or six times before combining them into the form. This way, patients get a brief warm up, familiarize themselves with many of the moves, begin connecting movement and breath, while increasing their confidence, and lessening their anxiety.

For tai chi, I picked cloud hands because, at the 2009 International Tai Chi Symposium at Vanderbilt University, I recalled Grandmaster Yang Zhenduo joking on stage about shortening the Yang form for beginners until it was just one movement: cloud hands. So, it's the core movement for my condensed version of tai chi at the hospital.

The number of tai chi postures I can cover depends on how quickly the group absorbs the movements. With some groups, I only get as far as helping them do standing cloud hands. With others, I add the tai chi opening and closing and the cloud hands side-stepping footwork. Occasionally, I can add a second movement.

Narration and demonstration of each movement helps keep patients engaged, lets them gain confidence, and confirms we're following the approach I explained at the start of class. This helps eliminate the "what's next" concerns that for some creates anxiety. Also, cloud hands is sufficiently complex so that patients cannot just intellectually process it. This forces them out their heads and into their bodies.

BREATHING PRACTICE

To start the class, I check the groups' awareness of diaphragmatic breathing. I have everyone place their hands around their bellybutton. I tell them to imagine their stomach as a balloon that they fill with air with a breath in and then release the air and breathe out. After a couple of minutes of this breathing, I remind them that this is how we will breathe during in our movements. Then add that it may take some concentration at first, but should they forget that's ok. (This also reinforces breathing and mindfulness practices the staff is teaching patients.)

To prepare for the qigong practice, I simplify the basic tai chi posture by asking them to stand with their feet shoulder width apart, relax their shoulders and let their arms hang loosely at their sides. (Those in a chair I ask to move away from the back of the chair, sit up straight and place their feet shoulder width apart on the floor.)

QIGONG PRACTICE

I explain that gigong loosely translates as "breath work." I break the "Longevity Gong" into simple gigong movements and explain each one connects with a breath in or out. We do the each of these exercises five or six times together, before recombining them into the form.

Before showing the form, which has two squats, I ask the group if anyone has joint troubles (neck, shoulder, lower back, hip, knee, or ankle problems). For those that do, I suggest they recognize the movement by bending their knees slightly instead of a squatting. For patients using a chair, I ask them to bend slightly forward instead of squatting. Then I show the form allowing them to either watch the first time or follow along as I recite the movements and the breathing. More often than not, everyone follows along.

I check in with them between exercises to ask if anyone is feeling light headed. If so, I suggest they breathe naturally and make sure they are taking longer breaths out than in. (If they get too light headed, I suggest they sit down and put their head between their knees.)

We go through the qigong form two times in sequence together and one final time where I change the narration to the poem that accompanies the form. (Two dragons emerge from the sea; two tigers go into hiding; soaring up to the sky; picking up the moon from the sea bottom; the abbot lifts the bronze urn; the wild geese land on flat sands; the old monk lifts the qi, and leading away the goats.) Most patients enjoy hearing the poem with the movements.

TAI CHI PRACTICE

So far, this has taken about 15 minutes. I tell them we're moving to the tai chi portion of the lesson. I say that every movement we make has at least two parts-one horizontal and the other vertical. In tai chi, I show how we combine these two to move our bodies differently than we do in sports or everyday life. I interlace my fingers and put my hands at my navel with my index fingers pointing out. Then I turn my trunk left and right 45 degrees to make the horizontal axis of the movement. I explain we lock our arms to our shoulders, and with a right and left trunk rotation, we move them horizontally. Once they are all doing this, I have them stop and show one arm up while the other moves down to show the vertical axis of cloud hands relating that hands moving in opposite directions is a feature of many tai chi movements.

I show how combining these two movements together creates arcs and circles, and that's how we will learn cloud hands. I explain that we are going to start mechanically.

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TAI CHI OUTREACH

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First we'll draw a box with the left hand and then join the movements to move the left hand counterclockwise. Next, we will do the same with the right hand, but in the opposite direction. I ask them not to think, but to feel what their body is doing instead. (My standard joke is that cloud hands is tai chi's versions of rubbing your head and patting your stomach—once you think about it, you can't do it anymore.)

At that point, I face away from them and talk them through the motions. We start by placing the left hand in front of the right hip and turn to the right. I call out each of the movements: Lift the left hand up shoulder high; turn the trunk to the left to move it to the left side; then lower the left hand on the left and turn back to the left to bring it back to the starting point. We move robot-like making boxes five or six times.

Then I ask them to combine the movements by turning their trunk and raising the left hand while watching it arc up in front of the left shoulder. I tell them to turn the palm to the floor and turn back right lowering the left hand to the right hip again. We repeat this movement five or six times.

We repeat this exercise with the right hand starting by placing it in front of the left hip and looking toward the left. I mention that everything we're doing is the opposite of what we did with the left hand. We draw the box five or six times and then make a clockwise circle several more times.

PUTTING CLOUD HANDS TOGETHER

Finally we circle both hands together. I have them put their hands on the right side of "the box" with the right hand on top corner and the left by the right hip on the bottom corner. I narrate turning to the left and lifting the left hand while lowering the right. At the other side of the box, I note that we have reversed the position we started with. Then we go back to the right. I tell them that we will always breathe in when we turn to the right and breathe out when we turn to the left. After a few cycles of cloud hands, I turn around so I can see how they group is doing.

Facing them, I become their mirror image and they can see my movements. To start, I position my left hand by my shoulder and my right hand by my hip so we will all be turning the same direction. I ask them to do the opposite and then follow along at my pace. While mirroring sometimes confuses patients, most of them easily mimic my actions.

Doing cloud hands makes some patients anxious or frustrated. Occasionally, someone cannot focus enough because of their medication, mental state, or anxiety. When this happens, I approach them and ask if I may touch them. (This gives those suffering trauma a chance to refuse if they want.) Then I work with them to get the motions correct. I stand either beside them while we do cloud hands together, or in front of them helping them move their arms. If they are too anxious, I suggest they take a break and just watch for a few minutes.

After a while, patients start to feel the movements. If I still see several patients struggling, I ask if anyone is a swimmer. (Often at least one person is.) Then I show the backstroke, where the trunk turns and the right arm moves in a clockwise circle and as the trunk turns to the left, the left arm moves in a counterclockwise circle. The difference I tell them is we make the backstroke motion along the side of the body and cloud hand more in front of it. This analogy helps some people get cloud hands more quickly.

BUILDING A TAI CHI FORM

Once they have a grasp of cloud hands, I show them how we can build a one-move tai chi form by adding the standard Yang-form opening and an adjusted closing. At the end of cloud hands, this simply involves straightening the body and raising the left arm parallel to the right before lowering our hands to our sides. I do this as I continue mirroring the group while dictating

TAI CHI OUTREACH

the movements and breathing. We do this one-move form at least two times. Then I say we're making one change and we will do three cycles of cloud hands. To keep us together, I count off each time they return to their right side. Again, we do this at least twice. (In a 30-minute class, this is usually as far we can go.)

Depending on time, and the capability of the group, I add three side steps. I ask the group whether they noticed that when they turned right and left they were shifting a part of their weight in that direction. It's that weight shift that will allow us to take a side step, I explain. To learn the footwork, we take 6-8 steps to the left together. Then I have them add cloud hands to the footwork again taking six to eight steps to their left. Finally, we put this together with one-posture form.

Some of the 45-minute classes go so well, I can add three steps back to the right also. Again, I make just one change a "quick step" in with the right foot after the third step left and then quickly step out to reverse the footwork. We practice the footwork and then make the cloud hands move in both directions together. On rare occasion, I've added more motions. Usually "repulse the monkey," which is like the crawl stroke in swimming, or "parting the wild horse's mane."

CONSISTENT EXPERIENCE

Because patients may attend only one tai chi class, I believe it's important to give them as complete a tai chi experience as time allows. I also believe consistency helps patients establish expectations for future classes. I try to move the classes along slowly but steadily. I simplify as much as I can and only introduce one movement, or one change, at a time, building on movements the group has practiced already. I show and recite each movement when I demonstrate or practice with them. I keep them moving so their minds don't wander. I sometimes explaindiaphragmatic breathing, and its benefits for general health, pain and anxiety. By watching closely, I can see many patients breathing properly while moving hands and feet at the same time. I try to keep the tone of the classes light and give frequent encouragement and offer few corrections. However, patients often reverse cloud hands to the "crawl stroke." I catch this change by saying they've changed directions. Then I joke that it's a legitimate tai chi movement called "repulse the monkey," just not the one we're working on right now.

I must watch to see whether anyone has trouble moving. While I make it clear that if anyone has pain, they need to let me know and that we can adjust the movements for them, often patients won't say anything. If they have trouble standing, I will offer them a chair saying I can adapt the movements for them. For those with joint injuries or pain, I ask them to back off 20 percent from where they hurt and take care not to "bump against the pain."

REWARDS

Teaching tai chi at Cedar Hills Hospital has been rewarding in several ways. After class, I often get responses like: "I've not felt this good for a long time." Or, "I'm on a natural high." However, a greater compliment, I believe is seeing the patient coming back each time I teach. It's made me understand that working with special needs patients means making no assumptions about their ability. It's helped me shift with the needs of the group and understand how to teach more flexibly and efficiently. Breaking movements down into smaller bits for the patients has also forced me to look closely at many of the continuities within the form. As a result, it's strengthened my teaching, enhanced my personal practice, and shown me a deeper beauty in the Yang family style.

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TAI CHI REPORT

BY JANE KNOX

Traditional Teaching Methods Seminar

TTM-1 was a great success! Although it was a teacher training, there were participants at all levels of tai chi practice. Several were attending as candidates to obtain the Trainer certificate to teach the Yang Family Tai Chi Chuan short forms. Many had taken the Teacher Training Method seminar last year with Master Yang Jun and found it such a positive experience they returned this April. The participants represented the whole spectrum of tai chi practitioners. The range included seasoned teachers as well as one individual who has only been practicing tai chi for four and one half months. There were all levels and interests in between.

The TTM-1 Seminar was sponsored by the North American Teacher Academy of the International Yang Family Tai Chi Chuan Association. Its mission is to provide high standard training to students who wish to become certified instructors.

The curriculum consisted of Review and Corrections of the 10 Movement Yang Family Tai Chi Chuan; theory and lab work in Anatomy and Biomechanics; Pedagogy and Chinese Basics. There were four seminar presenters. Master Han Hoong Wang taught the 10 Movement Form. She has been teaching tai chi for thirty-five years and is a disciple of GM. Yang Zhenduo. The other seminar presenters are accomplished in both tai chi and the individual disciplines they taught at the seminar. Bill Walsh is a disciple of GM. Yang Zhenduo. He brings a strong background in pedagogy from his corporate experience. Holly Sweeney-Hillman has a MS degree in Orthopedic Biomechanics and is a disciple of GM. Yang Jun. Audi Peal,

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a Harvard graduate and a lawyer, has studied Chinese language extensively. He is also a disciple of GM. Yang Jun.

Attendees graciously agreed to be interviewed at the beginning of the seminar and participants enthusiastically responded to a questionnaire at the conclusion of the event. There was an abundance of positive comments. Because the participants represented different skill levels, it was interesting to learn what attracted each to this particular seminar.

respondents who There were specifically mentioned a desire to deepen, receive corrections and develop a greater understanding of the 10 Form. Some communicated a desire to learn teaching techniques and a refined understanding of tai chi movements. Many were interested in learning more about biomechanics, anatomy and how this related to the practice of tai chi. Those who attended last summer's seminar spoke favorably about how valuable the topics were. Three people indicated that they were here because they had previously attended a seminar with Master Wang and found her to be an outstanding teacher.

Participants at all levels of expertise were enthusiastic about what they

had gained in relation to their personal practice of tai chi. Remarks spoke of the practice of tai chi as a journey and that it is endlessly perfectible. Another comment was, "It is all about continuous improvement." There were references to the value of Holly's lectures on anatomy and body mechanics for improving one's practice.

The idea that the tailbone moves was a revelation to most people and they appreciated Holly having us work with a ball on our abdomen in order to move the tailbone.

Holly analyzed the efficacy of Yang Chengfu's instructions for practice in light of the new science of biotensegrity and the livina architecture of fascia. The following instructions were the focus of a lecture and lab with endoscopic photos of fascia and biotensegrity anatomical models:

"Keep your head erect and do not incline it forward or backward; hold the torso straight and the backbone and free end of the sacrum vertical; when moving, always keep the chest slightly inward and back upright". The principle of "relaxation" was also analyzed in terms of how the body remodels structure according to repeated mechanical stimulation. The biomechanics of the knee and Participants at all levels of expertise were enthusiastic about what they had gained in relation to their personal practice of tai chi. Remarks spoke of the practice of tai chi as a journey and that it is endlessly perfectible.



shoulder were presented along with a teaching lab on how to make corrections on students' use of their knees and shoulders which could improve the students' understanding of their own anatomy.

Those who taught particularly found Holly's information about the body helpful. Some teachers appreciated the specific information on hips, knees and shoulders and the relation of these body parts to the form. One teacher said, "I have a better understanding of women's hips and how to correct their form."

One person thought that learning about the Chinese terms was useful for his practice.

Bill Walsh's presentation on how to teach was helpful for all participants, including people who are presently teaching. Bill included an activity giving each participant an opportunity to teach in a small group. The other group members offered both positive feedback and helpful suggestions.

Teachers found it useful to be instructed by Master Wang in the 10 Form.

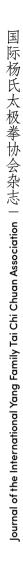
All the comments about how this seminar compared with other semi-

nars were positive. Some mentioned the unique character of this seminar in so far as the focus was on teaching. Those who attended the seminar last summer felt that this seminar was an excellent follow up. People also commented on what might be called the more academic aspects of this seminar. They enjoyed the classroom experience as well as the actual tai chi 10 Form training.

A participant commented, "I have learned more detailed information about tai chi movements than ever before, as well as some new practice movements to correct articulation of joints and limbs." Another said, "It was also a wonderful opportunity to learn from other participants." This idea was expressed several times; particularly from those who are teachers. It was a great chance for teachers to compare notes.

The participants were lavish in their praise for the TTM-1 program. They used such adjectives as good, great, terrific, and excellent. The superlatives were not restricted to first-time participants. One returnee's reaction was, "It is terrific for people who come more than once - great variety of topics." Another participant stated

"I have learned more detailed information about tai chi about tai chi movements than ever before, as well, as some new practice movements to correct articulation of joints and limbs."





were:

the knee out"

learning."

Master Han Hoong Wang

that, "Teaching others is the best method for personal improvement, better than personal practice."

"It was very practical."

"A good next step to move forward in the practice of tai chi."

"I learned a tremendous amount, but I can learn more."

"It was an opportunity to learn from a master as well as other teachers."

"To keep getting refinements and recommendations and tips for better teaching."

"Those of us who teach need "teachers" to notch us forward and spice up our own approaches."

These comments are certainly indicative of the value of the seminar. Several people shared how much they liked the idea that the classroom portions were not talking-head lectures but included experiential activities. There was also mention of the camaraderie. Even those who are advanced enough to be teaching already expressed the desire to participate in future teacher-training seminars.

The last question asked was, "What will you most remember from this

"Relaxing and not over extending are very important"

seminar?" Some of the responses

"That we can't ask students to move

"That this is a life-long process of

In conclusion, a testimonial by Matt Vergo speaks most significantly about the power of the seminar. Matt found the seminar so transformative that he wrote Holly a lengthy letter of appreciation. Matt stated that he experienced an epiphany in Holly's class. He said, "...your class has made an immediate improvement in my understanding of my structure." This insight was enhanced by Master Wang's demonstration. "I felt and UNDERSTOOD my stance, from my feet to my head, with a clarity I'd never experienced before." He went on to say that he experienced an alignment within his whole body as well as, "...feel the improvement in my energy flow too." Matt was amazed that this "newly enlightened perception" has stayed with him while doing standing meditation, practicing the form and while "just walking • around."

"It was also a wonderful opportunity to learn from other participants." STEALING BOXING

Editor's note: Our story so far. In the last chapter, Master Chen's fourth disciple, Fang Zishou, was accused of a heinous murder at a local brothel. A mysterious figure drops a letter for Fang in the middle of the night. Could this have been Yang Luchan? The note points to a witness who can exonerate him. Master Chen Qingping sends his third disciple, Geng Yongfeng, to seek the help of a local gentleman scholar Zhou Longjiu. Then the Master sneaks into the brothel and seizes the witness, carrying him off over his shoulder. If you want to know what happens next, read on.

- CHAPTER 9 -

CROOKED NECK XIE TALKS, GENTLEMAN DISCOVERS THE TRUTH

BY GONG BAIYU

Translated by Ken Ning Emended by Dave Barrett

It is late at night and Zhou Longjiu is getting anxious. He asks Geng Yongfeng directly: "What is Master Chen Qingping doing? Why does he have to get involved in this investigation?"

Suddenly the door swings open and a person falls in, thrown to the floor. Geng Yongfeng immediately goes outside but Master Chen has left without a shadow. He comes back inside and helps Crooked Neck Xie to get up.

Crooked Neck Xie is dizzy from falling down. He makes a sound, "Aiyoo". He opens his eyes. He's in a fine living room, the lights are very bright. Crooked Neck Xie is so confused he thinks he may be dreaming. His hand strokes his crooked neck, with his suspicious eyes he looks at Zhou Longjiu. This is a man about 50 years old, tall, red faced, with a long beard, majestic eyes and eyebrows like swords. He also studies Geng Yongfeng. A young man, around 27 years of age, strong spirited. They seem to know each other.

Crooked Neck Xie doesn't know who has brought him here, guessing that the situation must very bad, scared and trembling asks, " Masters, where's this place?" Zhou Longjiu says pleasantly: "Friend Xie, you don't have to be scared, do you know who has brought you here?"

"I was in deep sleep, someone got into the house, grabbed me, I fainted, I don't know how I got here. I don't have troubles with anyone, I haven't done anything wrong, please let me go!"

Zhou Longjiu laughs, asks Geng Yongfeng to help Crooked Neck Xie to sit on a chair, gives him a cup of tea from a table, continues to ask, "Friend Xie, do you know me?"

"You look familiar to me, my head is dizzy, can't remember right now."

"My family name is Zhou, everyone calls call me Zhou Jiu. Perhaps you have heard of me?"

When Crooked Neck Xie hears this, his whole body starts trembling. He falls down to the floor, on his knees, saying, "You're Master Jiu. This little villain has never seen Master Jiu. This little villain has heard of Master Jiu a long time ago. This little villain has done some dirty things, it's obvious. I will not make troubles again under Master Jiu's supervision. Master Jiu, I am not so sure what I did to upset you, please help me to understand." 35

Geng Yongfeng starts to smile as he listens. Crooked Neck Xie is so scared and knows that Zhou Longjiu has a well-deserved reputation for finding the truth.

Zhou Longjiu says to Crooked Neck Xie, "Friend Xie, get up, don't be afraid. I invited you here to talk to you, not to trouble you. Get up, please sit. I just want to ask one thing, in private. Just tell me the truth."

Crooked Neck Xie blinks his eyes, relieved but still a little anxious, "Master Jiu, please don't talk like that, I can't handle it. If you have any questions, please ask me, I will tell all. I lie to other people, but not to Master Jiu. What do you want to ask?"

"Can't you guess what I am going to ask?"

Crooked Neck Xie exhales, saying: "This little villain can't think, master, command me."

Zhou Longjiu's both eyes are looking at Crooked Neck Xie, suddenly full faced with anger, speaking loudly says, "Friend Xie, I need to ask you do you know Xiao Caisan?

Crooked Neck Xie starts shaking, knowing now he's not dreaming.

Zhou Longjiu glances at Geng Yongfeng and says: "This Xiao Caisan dares to bully me. I don't want to do much, just teach him a lesson, so he would know that I am not an easy victim. I have heard that last month at your place, something happened. This incident is related to Xiao Caisan. This guy has a lot of nerve, talking all

> "Friend Xie, any big issues, Master Jiu will take care not to involve you. Don't worry, tell me immediately."

over the place, blaming Fang Zishou for the crime. I can't allow him to get away with this. Brother Xie..."

Crooked Neck Xie sits taller and says: "This little villain is not worthy."

Zhou Longjiu laughs, saying: "Brother Xie, in this matter I must ask for your help. That's not much, I just want you to describe last month's incident, tell me all about it, no more than that. Good friend, please talk!"

Crooked Neck Xie thinks to himself, "This is unpredictable, if the Judge takes charge of the case, he could eventually find me involved.....but with Zhou Longjiu as my friend, I should have no fear. This is a good time to tell!"

Crooked Neck Xie's mind is now set. He decides to tell all the details regarding the incident, bows and calls out, "Master Jiu!"

Zhou Longjiu smokes the water pipe, peacefully waiting, and points with one finger: "No troubles, you can just tell me what you know."

Sitting across from Zhou Longjiu, Master Chen's third disciple Geng Yongfeng, stretches out the paper, brush ready, and prepares to take notes.

Crooked Neck Xie thinks again, begins anxiously, "Master Jiu, regarding this murder case, the truth is I have seen it myself. But if it I tell you, Master Jiu, after that, please watch over me. Not the small villains I fear, but after this case comes out, the big ones will know it is me, they will chase me with a knife."

Zhou Long Jiu slaps on his chest and says: "Friend Xie, any big issues, Master Jiu will take care not to involve you. Don't worry, tell me immediately."

Crooked Neck Xie says: "So this little villain must say it all, I will tell Master Jiu. In this case, you know that folk saying, 'Gambling makes poor robbers, adultery kills lives.' It's not false. Cheng Sha Bao, that woman, she is not a local resident, coming here with her man fleeing from a calamity. They are refugees and can't make a living, so they 36

steal to sell. Her man's nickname is Stinky Short Melon. He only has one eye that opens, one eye closed, and relies on her for a living. This matter, you might have heard about. Cheng Sha Bao is really bad, she loves money, also loves handsome men. She relies on a few wild men. This is what people say. This sends Xiao Caisan into a jealous rage, so he pulls a knife. Cheng Sha Bao suffers a couple stabs; Stinky Short Melon fights for the knife and is killed in one cut by Xiao Caisan. Her goddaughter starts yelling, Xiao Caisan also kills her! Her niece starts to run and gets hacked to death. "

Geng Yongfeng is holding the brush and taking notes. He asks, "Why did Xiao Caisan murder these people?"

"Half of it is jealously, the other half is that he is broke and impatient. Xiao Caisan and Cheng Sha Bao got together about one year ago. This woman will bite until there is no more money, then goes away, always not for free. This whole year, she makes Xiao Caisan crazy about her, makes him lose all his money and family, and strips off all of Xiao Caisan's belongings. She also takes on another young lover, Xiao Dou. Toward the end, Xiao Caisan hits the bottom. He argues with his uncle, steals his home's deed, goes gambling and loses the house. He can't get back what he lost. He goes to Cheng Sha Bao to get back two sets of jewelry. He also asks Cheng Sha Bao's man to borrow \$200, with high interest. Stinky Short Melon agrees, but she refuses. No jewelry, no loan, Xiao Caisan is totally broke.

Cheng Sha Bao and Stinky Short Melon have had enough of Xiao Caisan. She breaks it off with him, from then on wouldn't let him come close. He gets angry, runs into Cheng Sha Bao's house, knocks things down and smashing things, yelling: "Because of you I've lost everything, my wife has gone back to her family, my mother is deathly upset, my uncle is so angry he won't let me in to the house! I have no life. Cheng Sha Bao, let's both hang ourselves. Didn't you tell me that we can't be apart and will always be together? Let's leave this world." Stinky Short Melon, he gets very angry! He starts to yell at Xiao Caisan. Two of them start to argue. Stinky Short Melon is shouting and beating up on Xiao Caisan, Cheng Sha Bao is also shouting and Li Chongde also helps to beat him up. These three beat up Xiao Caisan badly. After this he staggers out the door, finds a knife and that's when the killing starts."

« If we can just get a confession out of Crooked Neck Xie that would be enough.»

Crooked Neck Xie swallows hard and continues, "Xiao Caisan holds the knife and Cheng Sha Bao's goddaughter gets killed with one strike, dead on the scene. Stinky Short Melon is already dead, blood flows to the ground. Cheng Sha Bao gets stabbed multiple times, but she is not dead, only bleeding.

Xiao Caisan runs away, also the cook Old Luo gets scared and runs off; only Li Chongde and me are left. We know a murder case is big trouble. We are afraid we will get involved, but also afraid to escape. Li Chongde and I tell each other: 'Report to the officials as soon as possible.' Li Chongde tells me: 'The killer is young master Fang Zishou.'

I say: 'I am sure I have seen Xiao Caisan.'

Chang Sha Bao is delirious on the bed murmuring: 'No, not Xiao Cai. It's Xiao Fang he hacked me, I know.'

This makes me confused. I didn't see the killer's face, I was hiding, but I heard Cheng Sha Bao during the fight,

begging, 'Master Cai, Ancestor Cai! Please forgive me! I won't change my love for you. You have killed Stinky Short Melon, I will marry you!'

"Xiao Caisan's living place, villain doesn't know, I think he runs far away."

The killer says: 'Bitch, you hurt me badly, if you tell I will come back and kill you another day.' I can tell it's Xiao Caisan, why would it be Fang Zishou?

Right before the killer left, he took off all bloody clothes and dropped the murder knife."

Zhou Longjiu asks immediately, "Where are the murder knife and bloody clothes now?

"The bloody clothes already got burned by Li Chongde. The knife also got burned in the stove, and only the metal blade is left."

Zhou Longjiu says, "Based on this, they must have set up the accusation against Fang Zishou. Why did they accuse him?"

"This small villain is not sure. Why would they do that? Master Jiu, you are the wisest, please think about it, they did it because Xiao Caisan is so broke and a desperate person; his older brother, Cai Er, is a fighter, not good to mess with. Fang Zishou's family is very rich. Maybe one reason is revenge. Fang Zishou had a big fight with Li Chongde. He got beat up, Fang's family is wealthy, and Chongde hooked up with the local gang and is using this murder case to blackmail them. This is the reason Li Chongde persuaded Cheng Sha Bao to accuse him. Since this incident, Li Chongde and Cheng Sha Bao have hooked up together. Li Chongde has become her advisor. Old Master Fang offered 500 stacks of coins to keep them quiet. Li Chongde and Cheng Sha Bao say it must be 1,000 stacks of coins. This small villain knows Young Master Fang is innocent."

Zhou Longjiu gets the details, and then asks, "Right now, do you know where's Xiao Caisan lives? Also has Xiao Dou ever come back after the incident?"

Crooked Neck Xie says: "Xiao Caisan's living place, villain doesn't know, I think he runs far away. About Xiao Dou after the incident, he's too scared and hasn't come since. Right now Lian Chuan, nicknamed Stinky Fish, is hooked up with Cheng Sha Bao, therefore Li Chongde is not too happy about it."

Zhou Longjiu waits until Crooked Neck Xie finishes talking, puts his thumbs up and says, "Done! Friend Xie, you think highly of Master Jiu. However, I still need you to do something, are you sure you have the guts?"

"Master Jiu, what are you talking about? I have a small gut; it depends on for who and what business. If it is for Master Jiu, I am willing to, but for someone else I won't."

Zhou Longjiu says: "I want to tell you how to break the news to the Court. Friend Xie, listen carefully, I am not using you, but I want to use this case to take care of them. I can't do it by myself, because I was not involved. You were at the scene. You must say that you were threatened by them, afraid to speak up and wouldn't go out the door. Recently it's become safer, so you are coming in to report. I will take care of the Court officials. You and I are a team. Friend Xie, you help me to take care this and we'll keep this to ourselves. In the future you won't have to do these dirty works, Master Jiu will feed you. If you don't want to, I won't force you, I will come up with something else."

"Master Jiu don't worry, I must help Master Jiu win. We must finish them all the way this time. Master Jiu you must direct me, I can't be confused. Also you must prepare the official court, I only want to report, then bring out Xiao Caisan immediately. He's the killer, if he gets away, the case would be difficult."

"Where does he live?"

"I'm not sure about his hiding place."

At this moment Geng Yongfeng says, "Master Jiu, this I know, right now Xiao Caisan lives at the Wei family area, to catch him will not be hard. He's hiding at his relative Qi Fanlian's house.

Zhou Longjiu say, "Then, I must trouble you to take a trip to the Wei family, you must catch Xiao Caisan. You may use any strategies you need to catch him. Wait until we report to the official court, then we will send someone to bring him back."

Geng Yongfeng answers and gets up. Zhou Longjiu also says " Listen to me, don't let him see your face, drop him secretly."

Then Geng Yongfeng leaves immediately, heading to the Wei family.

Zhou Longjiu keeps Crooked Neck Xie, teaching him what to say to the Court until dawn. Then he sends him to report the murder case, and turns in the report to the court advisor, telling him about the incident, then he reports to the official judge.

The City Official Judge is working on the murder case at Fang Village; the case is not yet closed. He reads Crooked Neck Xie's case report, sends out the guards with arrest warrants for the murderer Xiao Caisan, and witnesses Li Chongde, and Xiao Dou.

It's not yet noon, all suspects and witness arrive together.

The suspects are present and the judge opens the court.

Crooked Neck Xie testifies that Xiao Caisan killed Stinky Short Melon, the goddaughter and nephew, and stabbed Cheng Sha Bao. He tells all the details and also says Li Chongde and Xiao Dou were present during the killings.

Xiao Caisan wants to lie, but can't overcome Crooked Neck Xie's testimony. The judge also questions Li Chongde and Xiao Dou separately, in individual interrogation. He checks answers and reactions, combining the past reports, and knows Crooked Neck Xie is telling the truth.

Now the Judge smiles at Xiao Caisan, speaking with a

You young innocent, temporarily lost control with this woman, lost your family and money, got beat up and insulted. You madly murder; it's understandable. You have to tell this Judge the truth!

pleasant voice, "You young innocent, temporarily lost control with this woman, lost your family and money, got beat up and insulted. You madly murder; it's understandable. You have to tell this Judge the truth! I might have mercy on you. Don't force to me to use the tortures.

Xiao Caisan in the beginning pretends to be tough. He tries to blame Xiao Dou; tries to implicate Li Chongde. The bailiffs bring out the burnt murder weapon and begin to ply it on the suspect. Xiao Caisan is not that tough, can't stand it any longer, crying, nose running, tells all the truth.



The purpose of the International Yang Family Tai Chi Chuan Association is to enable everyone to work closely together to promote Tai Chi Chuan worldwide.



6

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6

SABER FOF

BY GM. YANG JUN Transcribed by Bruno Repetto, PhD.

6- (continuing) Treasured maidens work their shuttles facing eight-fold ways.

ALL CONTENT AND IMAGES ARE COPYRIG

- 7- Triple stars open, close, extending their will.
- 8- Double legs arising come and strike the tiger pose.

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8

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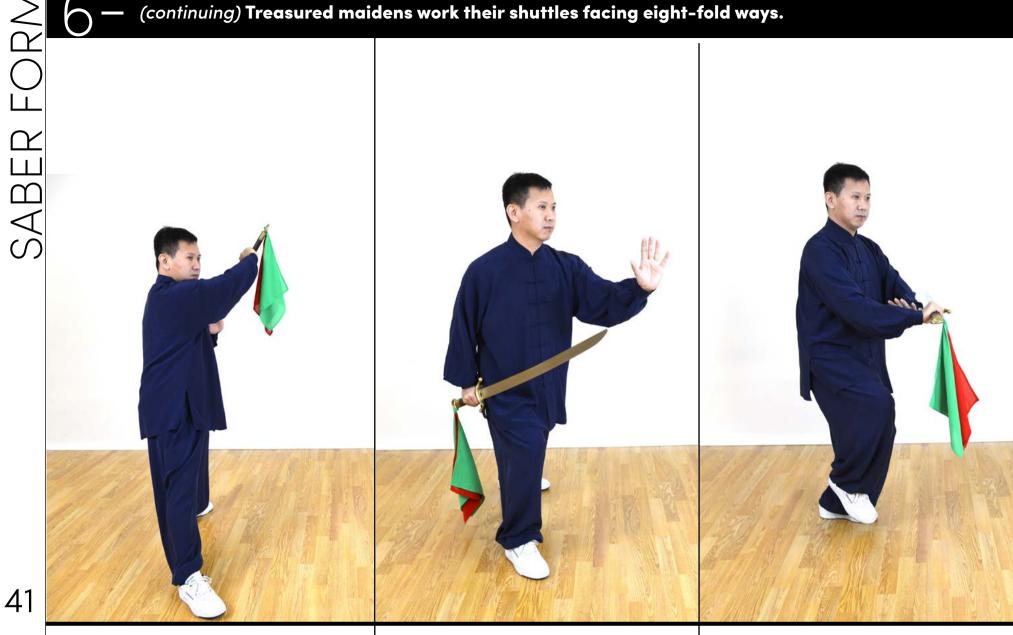
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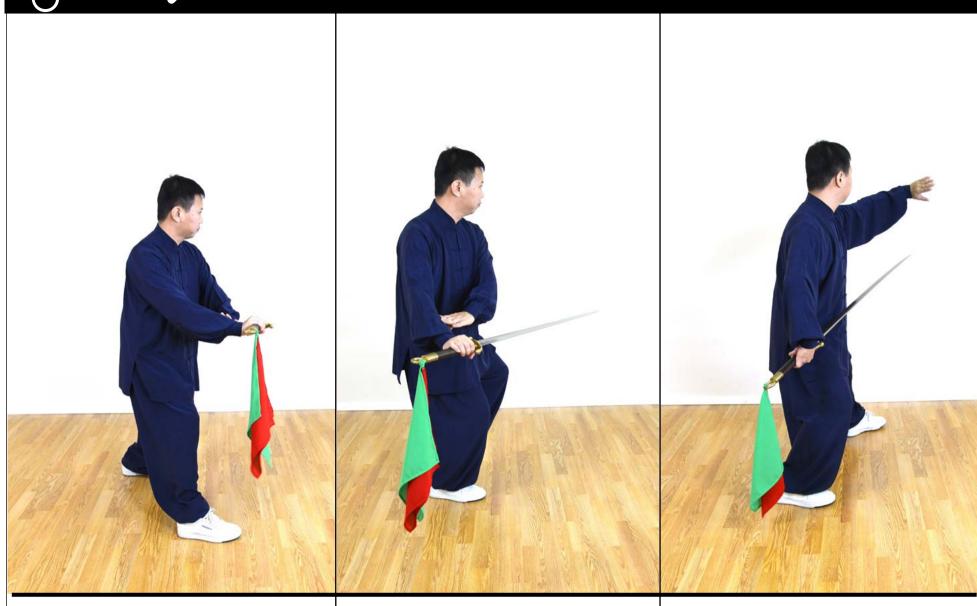
9- Drape the body, hang aslant, and kick like doting ducks.

(continuing) Treasured maidens work their shuttles facing eight-fold ways.

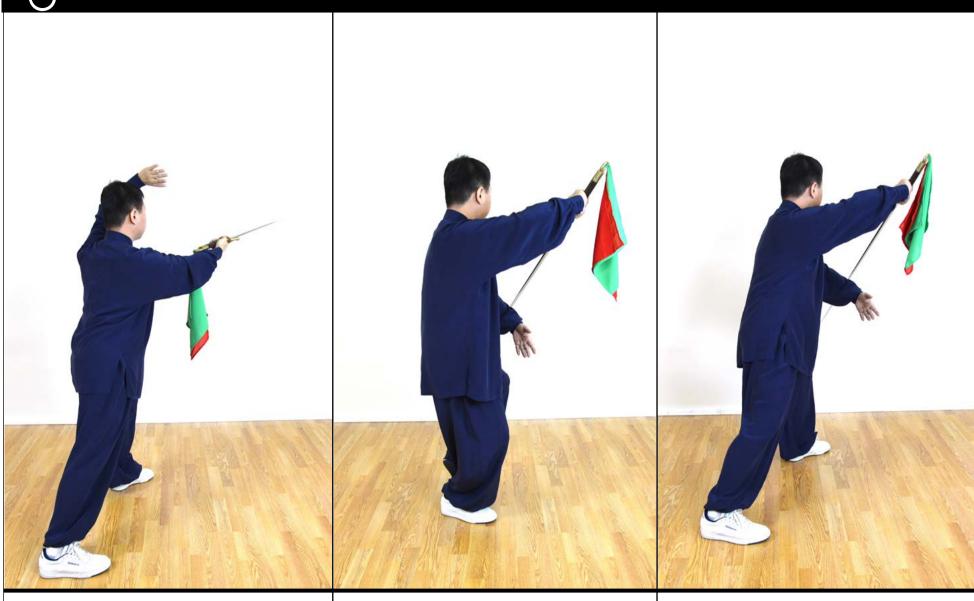


- 55 Shift your weight back to the left, step out with your right foot to the corner direction, at shoulder width distance from the other foot, into a bow stance. Sit your left arm and sit up your left palm.
- 50 Continue turning to the right, shift forward and bend your knee. The saber slashes diagonally down and to the right, with the handle coming to rest by your right hip. At the same time, the left palm strikes to the corner. In the end position, both your saber and your left arm point to the corner direction. The gaze follows your left arm.
- 51 Shift back, bring your right foot in and bring your saber in as well. The saber is in front your stomach. The left palm touches your right wrist.





- 52 Step out with your right foot to the same place where you picked it up. The toe direction turns in and points straight.
- **53** Shift to the right, bring your left foot in. Follow the shifting of your weight and horizontally circle your saber until the tip points to the corner.
- 54 Step out with your left foot to the corner into a bow stance. Rotate and hold your saber edge inward until your palm points up and the tip points to the corner direction. The left arm wards up and is rounded. The left hand is slightly higher than the shoulder.



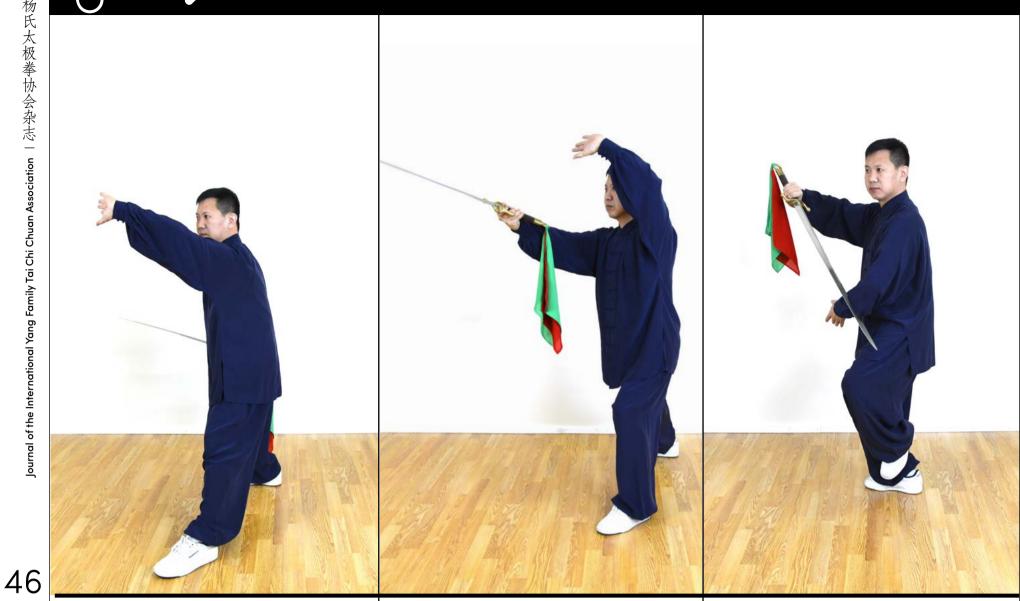
- **55** Shifting forward, turn the body towards the left, bend the knee, and thrust the saber from down to up. The left arm wards off up, body direction is towards the corner, and the saber tip is as high as your head. The left arm is rounded in front of your body.
- **56** Draw the left foot in, placing the saber downwards on the left forearm.
- **57** Step out to the corner and bend your knee. With your weight shifting forward, push your saber out. Your left arm is rounded. Keep the saber at an angle of 45 degrees, and the tip pointing down. In the end position, the left elbow and the left knee are aligned. Your head is up and looking forward.



- **58** Shift your weight back, turning your body to the right. Turn your left toe in 135 degrees, pointing straight. Your upper body's posture does not change while the body turns.
- 59 Shift your weight back to the left, step out with your right foot to the corner direction, into a bow stance. Sit your left arm and sit up your left palm.
- 60 Continue turning to the right, shift forward and bend your knee. The saber slashes diagonally down and to the right, with the handle coming to rest by your right hip. At the same time, strike out with your left palm to the corner. In the end position, both your saber and your left arm point to the corner direction. The gaze follows your left arm.

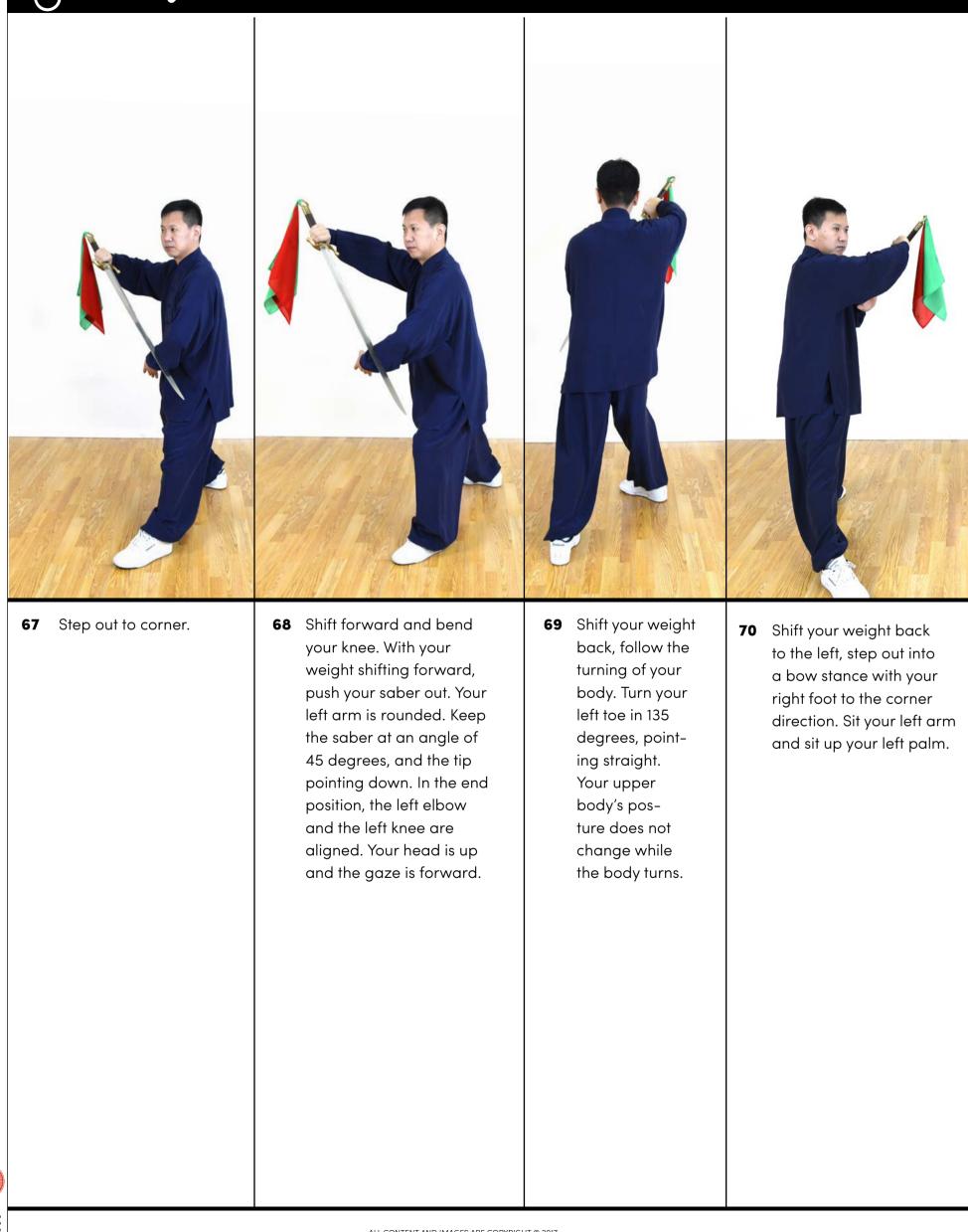


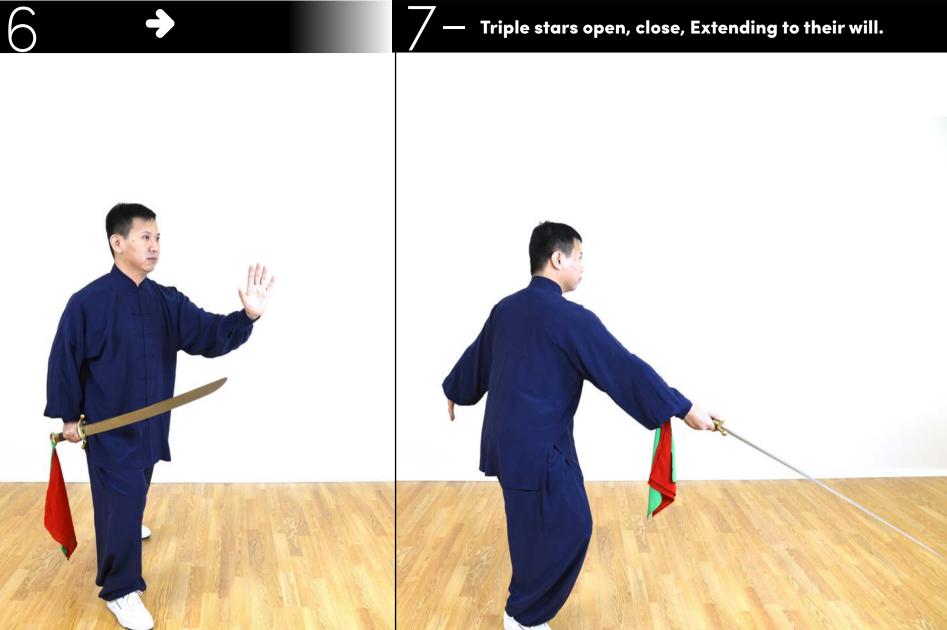
- **61** While shifting your weight back, bring your right foot in and bring your saber in as well. The saber is in front your stomach. The left palm touches your right wrist.
- 62 Step out with your right foot to the same place where you picked it up. The toe turns in and points straight.
- **63** Shifting to the right, bring your left foot in. Follow the shifting of your weight and horizontally circle your saber until the tip points to the corner.



- 64 The left foot steps to the corner direction into a bow stance, rotate your saber edge inwards until your palm points up and the tip points to the corner. The left arm wards up and is rounded. The left hand is slightly higher than the shoulder.
- 65 With the weight shifting forward, turn the body towards the left, bend the knee, and thrust the saber from down to up. The left arm wards off up, this time the body direction is towards the corner, and the saber tip is as high as your head. The left arm is rounded in front of your body.
- 66 Draw in your left foot, placing the saber pointing downwards on the left forearm.

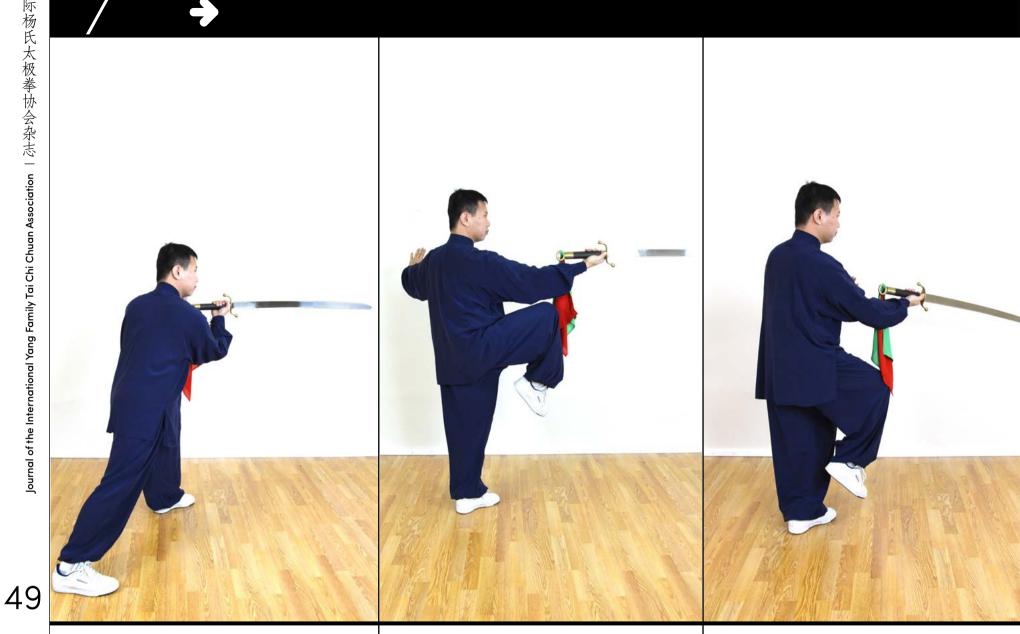
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- 71 Continue turning to the right, with your weight shifting forward and bend your knee. The saber slashes diagonally down and to the right, with the handle coming to rest by your right hip. At the same time, strike out with your left palm to the corner. In the end position, both your saber and your left arm point to the corner direction. The gaze follows your left arm.
- 72 Shift forward, pick up the left foot and step diagonally. The left arm circles down to the left, and the right arm circles to the right and rotates gradually, changing the saber so the sharp side is up.

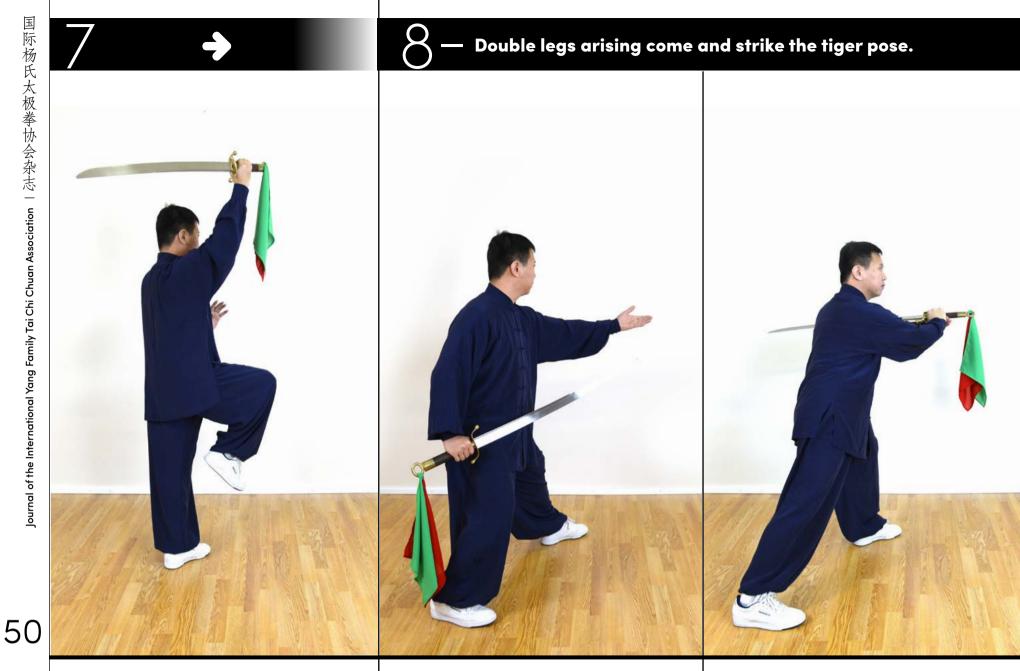




- Shift to the left, turn your right toe 73 straight, into a bow stance. Both arms circle to the front, close to your body. The left palm touches the saber ring. The saber's point is straight and level, at shoulder height.
- 74 Standing up, pick up your right leg and stand in a one-legged stance on your left foot. At the same time, thrust both arms out. The right arm is aligned with your right leg, saber sharp side up.
- 75 With your center sinking down, bring the saber down in a circle, and bring your left arm close to the left side of your chest. Keep your palm sitting.



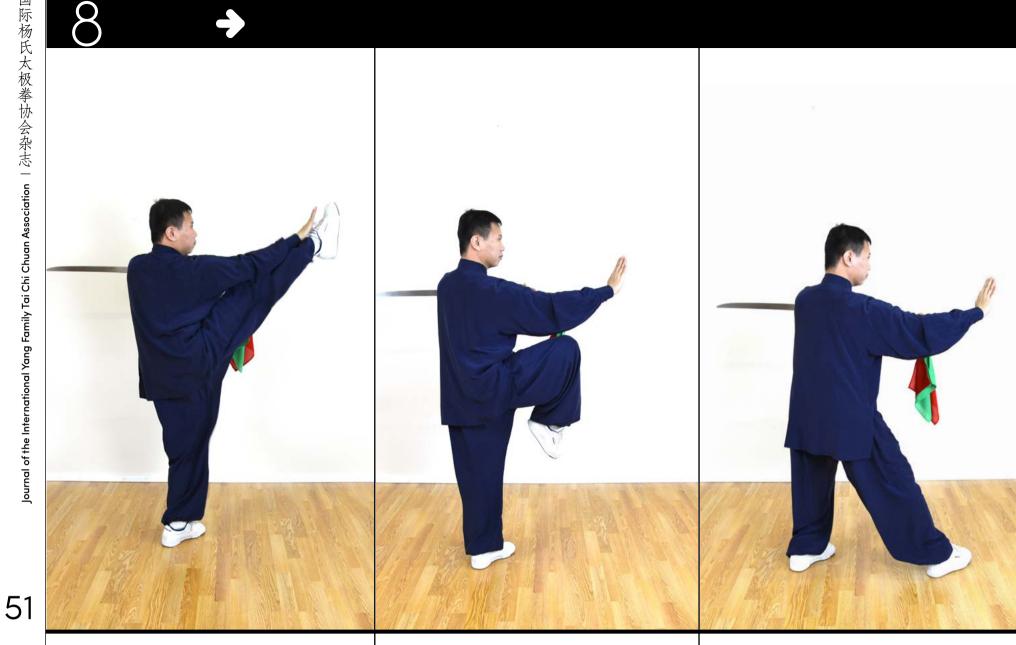




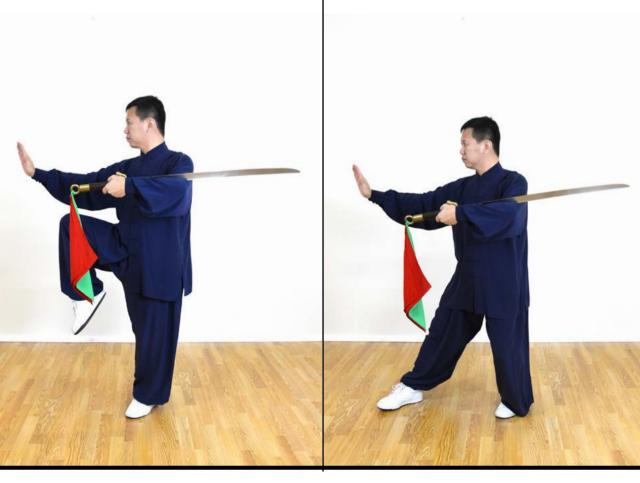
76 Jump up. The saber circles down at the beginning of the jump and then circles up with the rising motion of the arm and body.

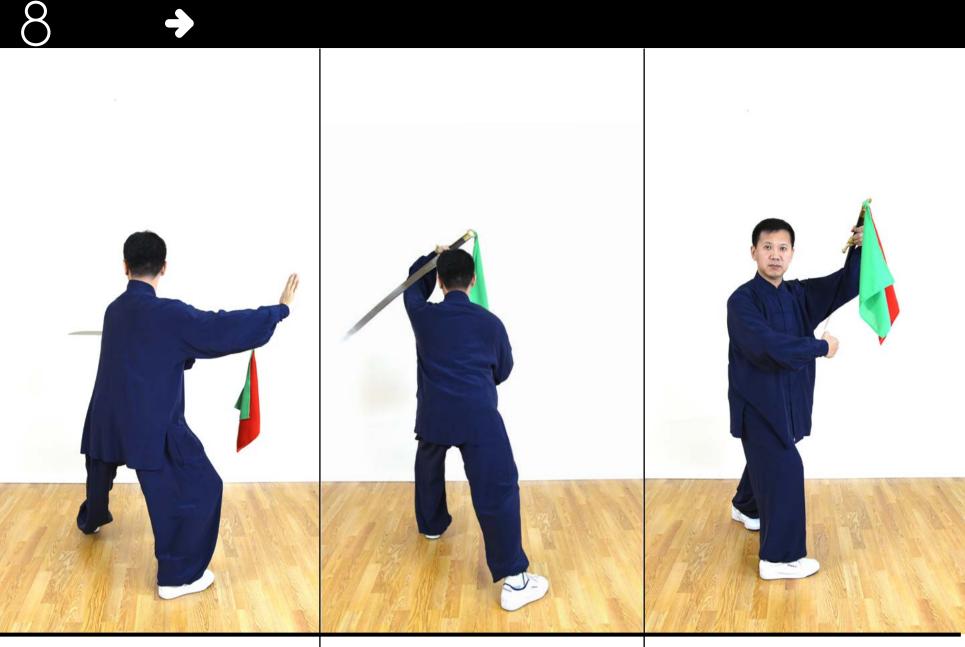


- 77 Shifting back, pick up the left foot and step into a shoulder-width stance. At the same, rotate the left palm facing up.
- 78 Shifting forward into a bow stance, switch your saber to your left palm. The saber blade rests on your left arm.



- **79** Stand up and kick with your right leg, toe pointed. The right arm circles up and the palm pats the top of the right foot. The saber in your left arm does not move.
- **80** After the kick, bend your right leg in as you stand on a onelegged stance on your left foot.
- 81 After the kick, bend your right leg in as you stand on a onelegged stance on your left foot.



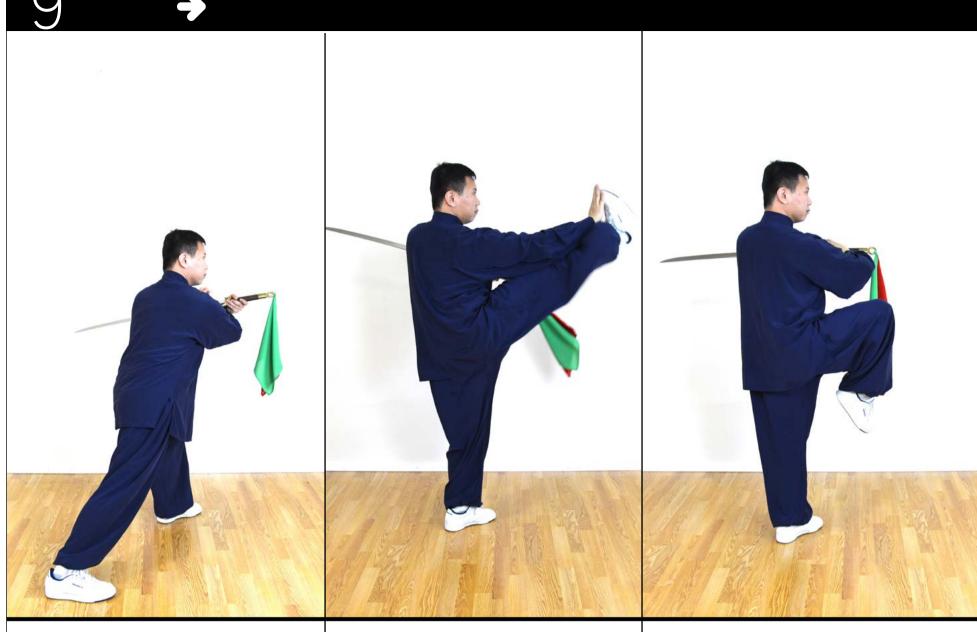


- 82 Shift to the right, left foot steps out. Keep a shoulder-width separation between your feet, and the left toe pointing straight. Look in the straight direction. The left arm does not change.
- 83 Shift forward into the bow stance, turn your body to the left until it's square and facing forward. At the same time, circle both arms. The left arm circles upwards and slightly over your head, with the sharp edge of the saber facing up. The right arm circles down from

the right, gradually turning in and changing the palm into a fist. In the end position, both hands are in the center of your body. 84 Shift back, making a full body turn to your right. Turn your left toe in 135 degrees. The toe direction points to the corner. Maintain the arms in the same position.



- 53
- **85** Shift left, step out with your right foot to a shoulder width stance . At the same time, drop down your left arm to shoulder level, sitting your right arm with an open palm. Both arms are on the left side of your body.
- 86 Shift forward into the bow stance, turn your body to the right until it's square and facing to the front. At the same time, circle both arms. The right arm circles upwards. Gradually change the palm into a fist slightly over your head. The left arm circles from the left to down,gradually turning in with the sharp edge of the saber facing out. In the end position, both hands are in the center of your body.
- 87 Rotate the body open to the left, turn your left toe out 90 degrees pointing to the back corner.
- 88 Shifting to the left, turn your body to the left. The left arm follows the body's turn, move the arm in an up-circle, blocking out. The right arm goes in a down-circle.



- **89** Continue shifting forward, turn the right toe in forming the bow stance. The right arm follows the body's turning, circling down and and then crossing inside the left arm. At the same time, look into the straight direction.
- **90** Stand up and kick out with your right leg, using the heel. Reach out the right arm in line with the kick.
- **91** After the kick, bend your right leg in and stand on one leg on the left foot. The right arm closes in, place the right hand on the saber handle.





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ZIBO, CHINA Sep 22-24, 2017 | Push Hands

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7.

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