

Health & Internal Training

Issue 52 Nov/Dec 2000 £2.95/\$4.95(US)

Qi 正氣

Bruce Lee

Magazine

**Qigong for
Modern
Times**

*Ancient
methods for
the 21st
Century*

**Essence of
Energy**

*Discover
what is Qi*

**Qi Hand
Gestures**

*A unique way to
develop Qi*

**I Ching &
Taoist
Alchemy**

*8 Trigrams and the
Internal Functions of
Tai Chi*



Jeet Kune Do

Ted Wong *Living out the Legacy
of the Little Dragon*



Feng Shui

Swimming Dragon Gong

Tai Chi Chuan



Bruce

Ted Wong

Preserving Jeet Kune Do

On 20th July 1973, a famous martial artist and movie star passed away. This was twenty seven years ago but this person is still popular and his image is seen maybe even more than ever before, in different pictures and movies. He is known all over the world. I don't think that there are many people who have this kind of influence. His name, as you may have already guessed, is Bruce Lee.

After Bruce passed away, his popularity settled a little, but slowly his fans and fame began to increase as it still does today. He is the person who does exactly what he wants to do and he does not mind what happens around him, either poor or rich or in any difficulties. He loved martial arts since he was a little boy and he started studying Taijiquan with his father, Lee Hoi Chuen. It was not until he was a teenager that he began to study Wing Chun with the famous master, Ip Man.

Bruce Lee was a very intelligent and liberal person. He did not like to be trapped by any situation and always liked to go his own way. He found that traditional Chinese martial arts did not give him enough freedom for his fighting skill, so he decided to follow the Daoist philosophy of being like water. He used this idea of being yourself and expressing yourself in the martial art way and in this way came to create Jeet Kune Do. This combined all of his own philosophy based on Daoism and his own style of fighting which was based on the idea that there is no fixed way or form. In Jeet Kune Do, any way could be used to complete an attack on an opponent. Of course, we

Lee's Legacy



can see that Jeet Kune Do has also been influenced by his Wing Chun studies, using a straight line principle of attack, however, Bruce Lee did not want to be limited by the Wing Chun techniques. He liked to use his own way of punching and kicking.

Even though in the beginning he followed the traditional Chinese Wing Chun skill, at the end, there was very little of this used in the Jeet Kune Do system. His students have often said that the Jeet Kune Do footwork is more like fencing and the hands are like in boxing. However, the philosophy is Daoist and the principle is more like Wing Chun in its directness and use of explosive power. This was very new thinking and it was criticised by the traditional Chinese martial artists in the beginning. However, now, many people not only accept his ideas, but also follow to study the Jeet Kune Do. It has now become more popular than it ever has been since Bruce Lee created it.

Usually, when we study traditional martial arts, either Japanese or Chinese, we will learn the forms, techniques and how to spar. Every beginner has a way to follow in order to progress their level. However, when studying Jeet Kune Do, there is no such way. Almost anybody can watch his movie or read his books and start studying or even teaching Jeet Kune Do. Many people have taken the opportunity to make money by teaching Jeet Kune Do and it has become like karate, judo even some Shaolin Kung Fu in which anyone can use the name without control. Even some of his students say that this is not proper Jeet Kune Do but that it is mixed up with other styles.

In 1996, Bruce Lee's wife, Linda Lee Caldwell, along with some of his close students like Daniel Inosanto and Ted Wong set up Jun Fan Jeet Kune Do Association and have registered this name to avoid the situation of people using the Jeet Kune Do name without control and damaging its reputation. Recently, Qi Magazine had the opportunity to meet Master Ted Wong and interview him. He is one of the students personally authorised by Bruce Lee to teach Jeet Kune Do. Bruce Lee only offered two certificates for teaching Jeet Kune Do and this was for Master Ted Wong and Daniel Inosanto. Master Wong was very close with Bruce and was also an assistant to help on Bruce Lee's book, *Fighting Method*. Master Ted Wong, since Bruce Lee's death, has kept himself very low profile and not teaching Jeet Kune Do openly in the public.

Master Wong was born in Hong Kong on the 5 November 1937. He spent his teenage years in south China, in Guangzhou. In 1953, he moved to America and it was in 1967 that he began to study with Bruce Lee. He was always interested in martial arts as a child but never had the opportunity. He first saw Bruce Lee giving a martial art demonstration that was in Los Angeles China Town after he had acted in the TV series, *Green Hornet*. Afterwards he went to Bruce's Los Angeles studio to study with him. Master Wong is one of the most loyal students of Bruce Lee and has studied no other martial arts, although before he started Jeet Kune Do he had done some boxing. He said, "When I saw Jeet Kune Do, I really liked it because it has similar principles to boxing." He always thinks of his Sifu, Bruce Lee. Whenever he thinks of



his Sifu, he wants to practise. If he does not practise, he feels guilty. He does not want to see his teacher's skill damaged or modified.

Today, he said that he sees so many people using Bruce Lee's name to make money, not only in America but in Hong Kong and especially China. However, what they are teaching is not the proper skill and it is nothing to do with Bruce Lee. Many times, he sees that what they are teaching is mixed up with other styles. He has no objection for other people teaching other styles, but he says that they should not call it Jeet Kune Do. It is for this reason that they set up the Jun Fan Jeet Kune Do Association. Jun Fan is Bruce Lee's Chinese name which means famous in other countries. This is the name Bruce's father gave to him and it seems very fit for him.

According to Lewis Luk, the Hong Kong Jun Fan JKD Association representative, Linda Lee tried to register the name Jeet Kune Do, however, it proved impossible because it is so well known and the name has already been used for so long by so many

created Jun Fan Jeet Kune Do. He used the scientific way to find the way muscles work and how the body functioned. He then concentrated on the most efficient way to throw a punch or kick. In this way he came up with his own way of fighting. He tried to cover all aspects of fighting, not just standing but on the ground as well. He did not

believe in Qigong but in modern science and for him, nutrition was also very important. He did his own research on different vitamins and different health foods. He made his own protein power drink for building muscles. He wanted to train his body to be stronger and so he also lifted weights. To keep his flexibility, he did a lot of stretching and other training everyday as well."

Master Wong has studied Jeet Kune Do over 32 years and says he still has a lot to learn. He said, "It took me fifteen years before I understood what Jeet Kune Do was and another fifteen years to perfect the art. I still have many years to go. Many people think that they can pick up a book to learn anything. But to perfect an art, you need to get to the mechanics, the timing. Once you learn the technique, this is just the beginning. Learning to apply the techniques takes forever. For instance, do you think that

“Jeet Kune Do is based on the idea of simplicity and directness.”

people. So Jun Fan JKD is for representing Bruce Lee's original and authentic Jeet Kune Do skill. Master Wong said that there are some people who teach martial arts for a living, using the name Jeet Kune Do just to attract students, like bringing bees to honey. But in this way they destroy the art. He said, "I learned martial arts because it was like a sport, a hobby for me, but my main objective is fighting. It is like chess."

So what are the principles of Jeet Kune Do? Master Wong said that Jeet Kune Do is based on the idea of simplicity and directness. He said that Bruce Lee said, "True refinement is simplicity." However, Master Wong continued, "Simplicity does not mean studying many other things and then throwing out all these other things. Instead, it is cutting down on the number of movements used and cutting down the time to achieve your emotion. This is simplicity. In the beginning, what Bruce Lee did was based upon Wing Chun. He had not really created anything yet. That is why you can see some of his old students in Seattle still doing Wing Chun when we come together for meetings."

"He found Wing Chun not quite fit for what he wanted though and he started to create things. Then in July 1967, he



Ted Wong and his teacher Bruce Lee

kick'. In this last stage, all mechanical things are gone. That is freedom, possessing nothing."


"In this last stage, the skill can be compared to walking. When you were a little kid, you had to think of every step. Now, as an adult, do you think about it? Do you think to yourself, 'I am walking' when you are walking? After many years you come to this stage in Jeet Kune Do. So when I hit you, I don't think about it. My Sifu, Bruce Lee, said, 'I don't think. I hit by myself.' This is Jeet Kune Do."

He concluded the interview, saying, "Bruce Lee was a very special person. He applied philosophy into emotion and very few martial artists can do this. That is what made him so good. He was a man of principle and character whose family came first. Although he did not have much money, martial arts were most important to him so he opened a school to teach. Sifu said, 'Do good martial arts, then everything will come my way.' I have tried to follow his example and keep true to his skill." ■

Interview by Michael Tse

after a few lessons someone can be a champion boxer? Of course not. He needs hard training, combat, a good trainer and also the practice of many fights to gain experience. This is no different for Jeet Kune Do or even in other fighting art."

Master Wong continued, "Jeet Kune Do is a fighting art and if you do not spar, you do not learn how to parry. Applying techniques you learn about speed, timing and gaining experience. There are three stages of Jeet Kune Do development. First, you learn the art and are like an infant, innocent and free. The second stage is to start copying techniques. In this stage you lose freedom and become more mechanical. When just copying, you do not understand the purpose. The third stage is when the movements become a part of you. You have internalised them and it is at this stage that 'A punch is no longer a punch and a kick is no longer a



***“My Sifu, Bruce Lee, said, ‘I don’t think. I hit by myself.’
This is Jeet Kune Do.”***