



stillness is the master of unrest



Twin Cities T'ai-Chi Ch'uan Studio

Wee Wu-Tang—The monthly e-newsletter

August 1, 2010

From Sifu Ray

This is time of great harvesting in the agricultural world. State fairs are usually held now, when the fruits of labor are so plentiful. What are you harvesting? Get out this month and enjoy the State Fair and the Minnesota Renaissance Festival before the snow falls.



I am planning a set of workshops for the Fall/Winter. The theme will be teaching/learning/tutoring. I also will try to schedule one or two to entertain like last year. I'll keep you posted as to dates and times.

Look for the third edition of my book, "Lessons with Master Liang." There are a lot more notes, articles, commentaries, photos - and a few surprises. A limited hardcover edition will be available.



Attention, Lion Dancers. Starting in September, let's meet the second Saturday of each month, right after the 12:30 day class. We can meet for 30-45 minutes and work up our routine for Chinese New Year.

A hardy congratulations to the graduates of Hsing-Yi level 1. They were put through a grueling physical test, as well as a written test, to emerge as graduates of the Five Fists/5 Elements: Nicholas Cronin, Ralph Jerndal, Tom Hautman, Scott Lund, Patrick Stapleton, Dominick Veldman, Douglas Rohde, David Dettloff, Adam Frank, Mark Alloway, Bryan Steenerson, and two pending a retest.

"Time is of no account with great thoughts. They are as fresh today as when they first passed through their author's mind, ages ago."

- Samuel Smiles



(This was one of Master Liang's favorites, which he used to quote from memory in many of my classes.)

SCHEDULE NOTE: Classes will run normally August 14-22. Ray and Paul will be on vacation, but student teachers will run all classes on the normal schedule.

Walker Open Field

This summer the Walker Art Center is offering an opportunity for organizations and groups to sponsor a time slot and offer an activity or demonstration on their field. We will participate on **Saturday, September 4 from 3:00-5:00pm**. If you can join us, please talk to Rondi or Dominick. Please come, bring your friends, and a picnic if you wish.

<http://walkerart.org/openfield/>

T'ai Chi Yin and Yang by Dennis Kelly

T'ai Chi Practical Application

There are nights I amble into the Studio when my introverted *Mr. Yin* wants nothing more than to be left alone. Wound up from the workday, I seek refuge in the Solo Form and attempt to put a leash on my monkey mind. I am weary of other students encroaching on my space. The last I checked, in both spellings, T'ai-Chi and *Taijiquan*, the letter "I" was prominently



featured. T'ai-Chi is not a team sport; no one wins or loses or keeps score. And to punctuate the solo aspect, there is no lonelier feeling than when you're learning T'ai-Chi. Stumbling around like a stroke victim trying to imitate the dancers in the Bolshoi Ballet is a pretty singular experience. So let solo prevail.

There are other times, however, when I arrive at the Studio and my party guy, *Mr. Yang*, is ready to roll. I gadfly around in search of other students to make me feel good. The more the merrier. In my enthusiasm, I imagine taking T'ai-Chi out to the Twins ball park. An animated bearded caricature of Sifu Ray would appear on the Jumbotron to lead 40,000 fans in Cloud Hands – the new wave - beer cups holstered, please.

As usual, I am caught in my own dualistic drama, bookended by the polarized control of *Messrs. Yin and Yang*. The T'ai-Chi Classics, however, point to the middle way. Rather than let our emotional state dictate our behavior, we become attuned to the energy around us and do not resist, work against or try to control anyone or the environment. Only through practice can we become aligned and balanced in such a way as to foster this direct experience. And from direct experience, like a stone cast into a pool, we move out from our center and appreciate and encourage the practice of other students.

Taking up a position for the Solo Form, I sense the invading presence of the *Yin and Yang* duo. Grasping the Sparrow's Tail, I sidestep and ward off an attack from *Mr. Yang*. I block the counter with Parry and Punch, arms flowing in a circular-elliptical pattern and land a blow with Diagonal Flying to the throat of *Mr. Yang* to shut him up. *Mr. Yin* charges with a chop, I spin and kick with sole. I could kick him in the groin but am compassionate and hit him in the tan-t'ien, dispersing his energy field. My ego sidelined, I fall in with the other students and experience our interconnectedness through movement as we spin a golden silk web.



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