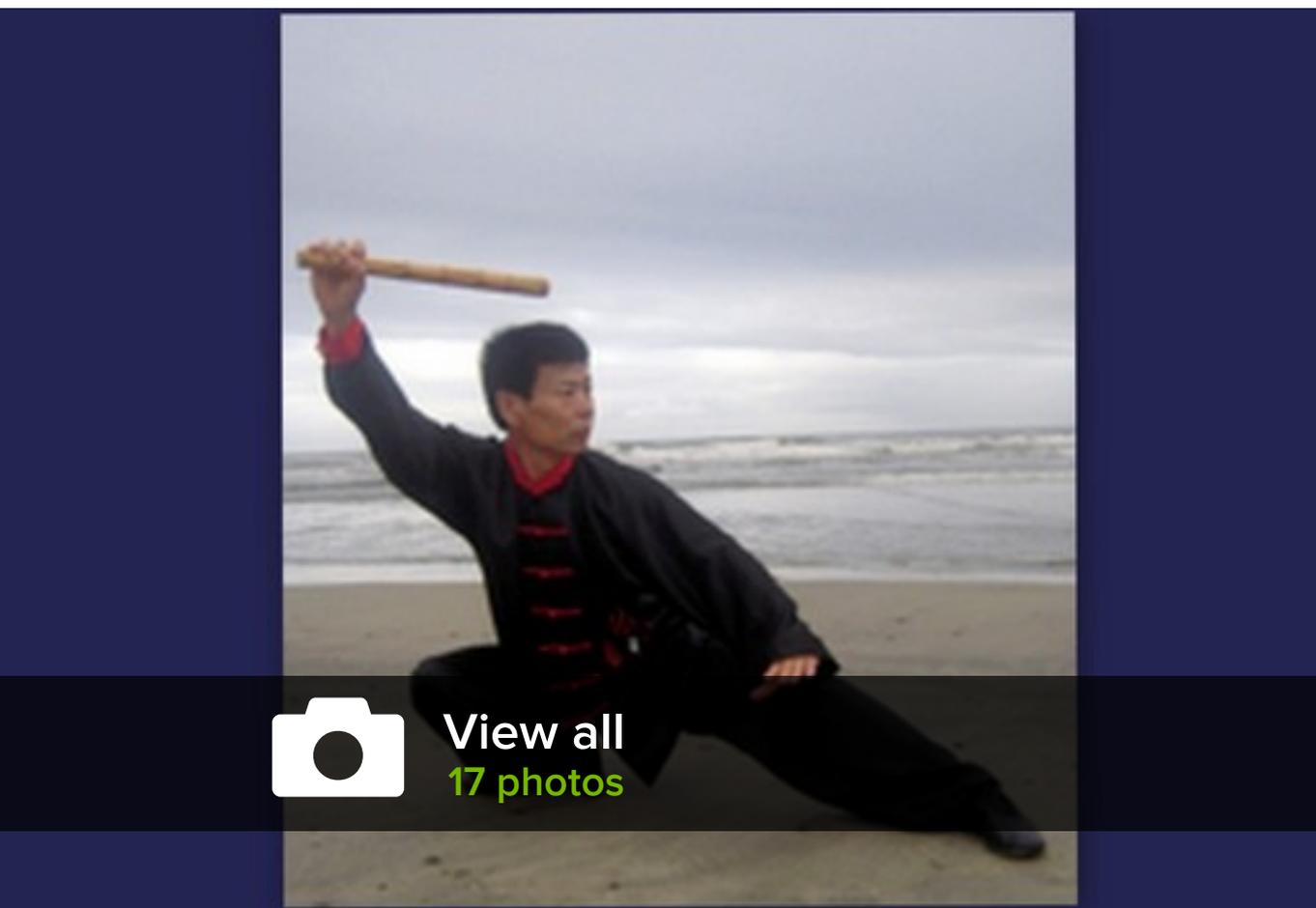


Tai Chi Bang by Master Jesse Tsao

November 5, 2012

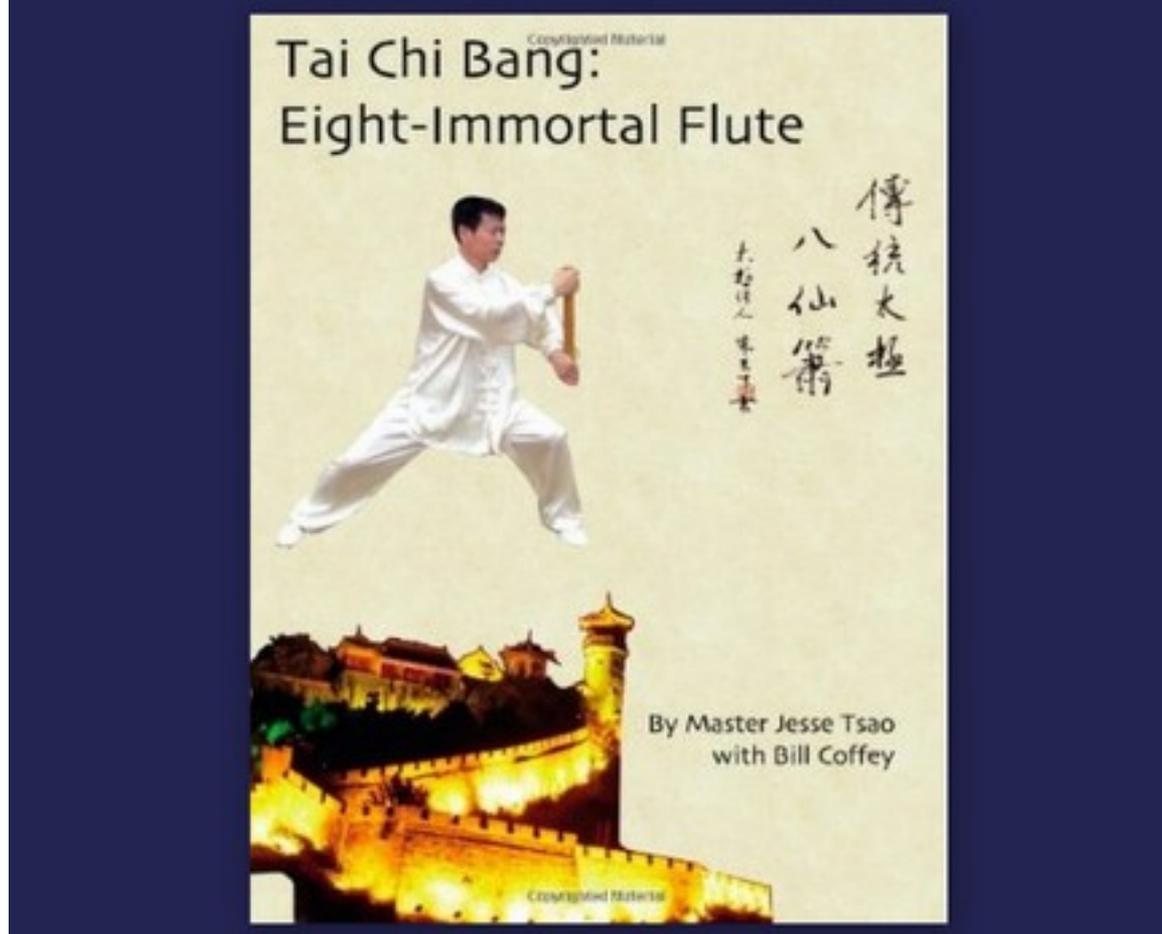
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I started my [Tai Chi](#) journey ten years ago. But I did not start to learn the true Tai Chi theory and fundamentals until I took private lessons from [Master Jesse Tsao](#) a few years ago. At that time, I already owned a few of his well-made teaching DVDs; still, I asked him whether I could tape him doing the form during the one-on-one classes with close shots so I could tell exactly how he subtly moved his body. He told me that he did not mind me taping but he disapproved my approach in learning. First of all, he stated that his body moves in a way corresponding to how his Qi moves. Secondly, if I imitate him, I can never learn the true art myself.



Master Jesse Tsao demonstrates Tai Chi Bang "Yecha Searching the Ocean".

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Penglai is a harbor city in Shandong province, China. Due to its breathtaking natural landscape, historical events and Chinese mythology, Penglai became the synonym of Shangri-La in Chinese. It is said that fairies and immortals lived there and most notably the Eight Immortals. The city was immersed in a Taoist culture with the emphases on internal alchemy development, meditation and martial art practices. Famous national hero and **General Qi Jiguang** (1528 -1588) was bestowed the commander-in-chief there. Research has shown that General Qi's **military strategy - Ji Xiao Xin Shu** and *Record of Military Training* had a profound influence on **Chen Wangting's** (1580-1660) creation of the modern Tai Chi.

Born in Penglai, Master Tsao started his martial art education at age 7 along with Taoist breathing methods, stretching techniques, energy collection and nourishment. Later he spent 10 years in Beijing studying **martial arts** intensively with the world renowned Professor Li Deyin. Master Tsao has also studied with Grandmasters Chen Zhenglei, Chen Xiaowang, Zhu Tiancai, Abraham Liu, and Daniel Lee. He has received advices from Wu Bin (Jet Li's coach), Li Ziming, Wu Tunan, Zang Hongxian, Chen Sitan, Su Zifang, and many more. He is an indoor disciple of Grandmaster Chen Zhenglei and 12th generation Chen Style Inheritor. This former Beijing collegiate Wushu champion immigrated to the U.S. in 1987. He has been teaching Tai Chi and **Qigong** in China, the U.S. and Europe for over 30 years.

With his extensive study of Tai Chi and teaching experience, Master Tsao has become a master in various Tai Chi Styles and has produced over 50 teaching DVDs in Chen, Yang, Wu, W'u/Hao and Sun style Tai Chi forms and weapons. Not only that, with his profound knowledge in Tai Chi and Qigong, he has developed few Tai Chi forms. His creation of Compact Tai Chi is suitable for corporate wellness programs and has won rave reviews.

He discovered that many practitioners lacked coordination of their two hands or the buoyancy (*Peng* energy) of two hands together. He liked the concept of Tai Chi Ruler created by the late Grandmaster Feng Zhiqiang but created Tai Chi Bang (short stick) with a Penglai style short stick. He stated that his Tai Chi Bang is influenced by the Penglai Temple Taoist meditation practices, General Qi's martial arts, and mostly Chen Style Tai Chi Silk Reeling. Three years ago, he produced a teaching DVD on this form. Both the form and the DVD are well received in the U.S. and Europe. At requests of his students, he put together a companion book [Tai Chi Bang: Eight-Immortal Flute](#) that just became available on Amazon.com now.

There are 36 movements in Master Tsao's Tai Chi Bang divided into three sections. Many of the movements are modeled after Chen and other styles of Tai Chi movements with the same or similar names.

Section I develops relaxation and concentration through continuous repetition of circular movements and deep and slow breathing. Tai Chi Master and internationally renowned [Professor Shin Lin](#), Director of Laboratory for Mind-Body Energy and Signaling Research, U.C. – Irvine, is the authority on bio-medical field. He praised the brilliance of the Tai Chi Bang design and recommends it for the health improvement.

Section II works on waist turning and torso's coiling energy, joint flexibility, arms spiral moves and strength, as well as developing eagle claw power, joint locking skills, and counter-joint lock skills. Master Tsao said that this section is developed mostly from Chen Style spiral and coiling energy training.

Section III focuses on close body self-defense applications, which are based on battlefield fighting methods developed by General Qi according to Master Tsao. This section is designed for advanced practitioners. Beginners can skip this section until later.

There are features in this book that are useful for readers. The book generously uses 267 photos to illustrate the 36 movements. Posture 18 alone has 33 photos. Each posture is described in step-by-step details. A Note section explains the main goal of each posture while an Optional section provides information about martial art applications and other energy development info. Master Tsao also provides interesting introduction of Eight Immortals and General Qi.

When asked why titled the book *Tai Chi Bang: Eight-Immortal Flute*? Jesse explained that [the Eight Immortals](#) have been part of Chinese oral history long before they were recorded in the works of writers of various dynasties – Tang (618 – 907), Song (960 – 1276), Yuan (1271 - 1368) and Ming (1368 – 1644). They represent men and women, young and old, rich and poor, and noble and common folks. They possess super powers including martial art excellence and Immortal Han Xian's tool is a flute. Legends have it that through hard work, Eight Immortals all achieved health and longevity.

The Open College Networks (OCN) in the United Kingdom is an accreditation organization for courses designed for community and adult education. The OCN was the first accreditation body to use credit as the basis of the award system. Due to the effectiveness of Tai Chi Bang, the OCN has accredited this course for physical education trainers. This is not only the accomplishment of Master Tsao; it also represents the OCN's recognition of the art of Tai Chi.

With the influence from the Eight Mortals and Penglai cultural heritage, Master Tsao has worked long and hard and established himself once again not just someone who inherited the treasure of Tai Chi but also someone who can enrich and broaden its horizon by creating something new.

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Violet Li

Tai Chi Examiner