

MantisQuarterly

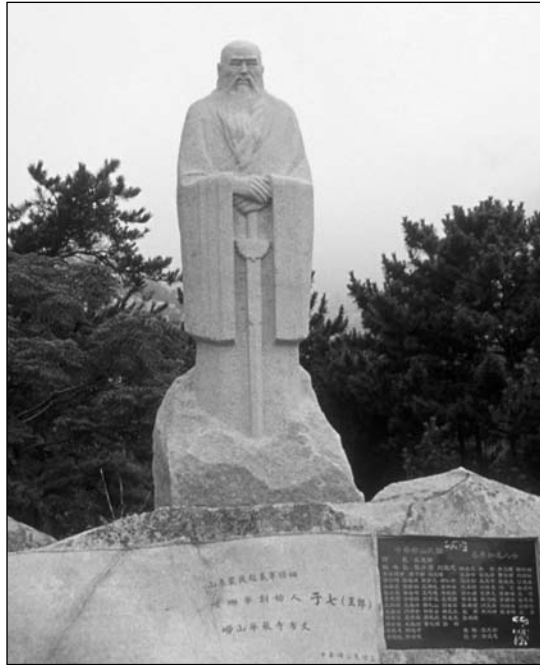
VOLUME 1
ISSUE 1

Welcome to the first issue of *Mantis Quarterly*. We hope that this publication will provide a forum for Praying Mantis practitioners to discuss, debate and disseminate information on the history, technical aspects and practice of this art that we all love. It has been a long time in coming (due mostly to my own lack of diligence), but now that it has begun, we hope that momentum from the mantis community keeps it going.

There has never been a time of community and an exchange of information among the world's Praying Mantis practitioners as there is today. Nearly all of this new communication owes its origin to the Internet and to those who, having envisioned the possibility of such things, created forums that made this exchange possible. Beginning in the 1990s, my students and I were one of the first groups to offer an international mailing list online with the art of Praying Mantis as its sole topic. It and other online groups slowly overcame partisan politics and generations-old differences to share information about different approaches to the art. As more online forums and lists arose and proliferated, what began as a small group grew into a thriving community of voices. Where a scant decade ago there were only individuals exchanging videos of sets or having occasional visits, now schools frequently meet and exchange ideas freely and openly, improving the practice of the art for all.

In recent months, during the time when we were already busy preparing this newsletter, many in the online community have said that it is time for a publication dedicated to Praying Mantis. Nearly ten years ago we attempted to provide such a publication, but found that the voices actively against the project and the exchange of information it would facilitate greatly outnumbered those in favor. After a year of attempting to gather writers to publish regular issues in the face of this resistance, the project was shelved. However, I will now admit that I have secretly held the URL www.mantisquarterly.com for more than five years waiting for this day.

Now things have changed; the Praying Mantis community has expressed overwhelming desire to discuss and research the art and to document that research for present and future generations. Those detractors of a decade ago are still



The statue of Wang Lang as warrior looking out over Mount Laoshan near the Huayan Si memorial site.

present but are so marginalized and are in such a comparative minority as to be insignificant.

When I again quietly proposed the idea of *Mantis Quarterly* last year, practitioners around the world immediately contributed articles. Some submitted informative pieces detailing practices and techniques of training. Others sent articles chronicling the spread of the art in a particular country or region of the world. The quickness of response and the quality of the work presented clearly indicated the timeliness of this present undertaking.

The *Quarterly* as it appears today is as small a beginning as those online venues were several years ago. It is a solid beginning nonetheless. It is, for now, not extensive in size or scope but can be maintained indefinitely, allowing for slow and certain development. All that is needed is for the community to continue to express its desire to share information. Considering the present attitude of practitioners of Praying Mantis around the globe, this will not be difficult.

The focus of the *Quarterly* will be topics discussed at the level of the advanced student or instructor. It is hoped that the *Quarterly* will become a place for many voices, from all ►

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the different branches of Praying Mantis, offering informed opinions on the art and technique that most instructors and senior students simply do not have the opportunity to address in detail



The entrance to Wang Lang's memorial located on Mount Laoshan near the Buddhist temple where he served as abbot.

during classes. In addition, there will be opinion pieces, such as a student's or instructor's forum, where experience, of both those new to the art and of seasoned practitioners, will be presented for consideration. When appropriate, dissenting opinions will also be presented. Finally, there will be a guide

to the Internet, the mother of this community, where sites around the world will be reviewed.

For the next four issues the Quarterly will hold to the present format and length. As subscriptions and submissions allow, it will expand in size and scope. There are plans to have the Quarterly eventually translated into other languages. The languages made available will be subject to the demand from different regions of the world.

There were more submissions in response to the Quarterly's initial request than could be placed in the first issue. One technical article from Taiwan and one historical article from Australia were selected for this first publication and England and the Philippines have been chosen for historical accounts on the growth of the art in those countries. In future issues we will include regular features, such as web site reviews and opinion pieces, and we will highlight additional regions, branches of the art and countries, ensuring a diverse gathering of opinions and perspectives.

The Quarterly needs support while in its infancy. This support can be submissions on the technical, historical or Chinese cultural aspects of Praying Mantis; opinion pieces; or stories of interest to the community at large. Submissions do not have to be in English; the Quarterly already has translators that can handle most major languages. Individual and school subscriptions to the Quarterly will help tremendously for financial support and will help determine the growth of the publication. In short, this undertaking, set aside so many years ago, is begun again. The staff of Mantis Quarterly looks forward to this shared adventure exploring the fascinating art of Praying Mantis!

—Steve Cottrell

History

Lion Dance: Its origins and place in the traditional Kung Fu school

About the Author

Matt Young has been a student of Tsui Wing Sing (Jimmy Tsui) in Perth Western Australia since 1996. He has also trained in praying mantis both in Hong Kong and in mainland China.

Origins

It is almost certain that lion dancing is not a Chinese invention. There are no lions and never have been any lions native to China — yet still the dance is at the core of the traditional Chinese culture. It is possible the lion dance was introduced as early 200BC, when traders from the silk route sent lions to the Han emperors as gifts. One belief is that lion dancing developed around this time. During the same period, traders and merchants performed dances similar to what we now know as lion dances, and the Chinese may have adopted these dances. The fact that similar dances are still performed in India, the Middle East and many Southern Asiatic countries lends credence to that theory.

We do know that during the Tang Dynasty, around 800 AD, lion dancing was an important part of Chinese culture in all levels of society.

The dance has been continually performed since these early times and has continued to evolve and take on meaning. The fact that lion dancing has survived to the current day despite the changing face of China and its principles is testament to its importance to both those who perform it and Chinese people in general. Unfortunately, it is unlikely there will ever to be a definitive answer to the question: Where did Chinese lion dancing come from?

Types of Lion Dance

There are two major types of lion dance — the more common southern lion and the northern lion.

The southern lion is a colorful and powerful-looking lion. Traditionally each lion represents a historical Chinese figure. For example, the red lion is the lion of Guan Gung (the

patron saint of martial arts and business), and the yellow is the lion of Liu Pei. Each lion has its own personality, which reflects both the character to which it is dedicated and the school of its origin. A tanglang lion, for instance, will exhibit a predilection for tanglang footwork as taught in that school. Indeed, some experienced lion dancers can identify other schools simply from the footwork, cymbal pattern or behavior of their lions.

The northern lion dance is most instantly recognizable by its golden, shaggy lion. The northern lion tends to have a longer tail and traditionally is more acrobatic. This is the lion often depicted in the Chinese Circus, although both types are often represented. The motions of the northern lion are also more playful than those of the southern lion.

The Meanings of Lion Dance

Many people are at a loss to understand exactly what is going on at a lion dance. There are literally hundreds of traditions regarding the lion's movements and actions. Lions bow to shrines to show respect, fight each other, eat small children, shirk away, climb over difficult apparatus and perform many other actions. Some of these have direct traditional meanings, some are simply part of the dance, and some are an expression of a particular lion's personality. Additionally, every school will perform the dance slightly differently. It is no wonder that people have difficulty understanding and appreciating the complexity of the ceremony.

The most important thing to understand about the lion dance is the significance of having one in the first place. Lions are thought to bring good luck by scaring away evil spirits. That explains the association of firecrackers and lion dancing — the firecrackers are also thought to scare away evil spirits. Offerings are made to the lion to thank it for scaring away the spirits. The two most common offerings are red packets with money in them and the “green vegetable.” The red packets are traditionally given around Chinese New Year because the Chinese believe that whatever is given away during that period will be received back many times over. The packets also help pay for the lion dance. The green vegetables are usually “eaten” during the culmination of the lion dance. The vegetable is often choy sum or Chinese cabbage, but it can also be lettuce or a similar vegetable — the symbolism being the same. The “choy” in the name of the vegetable sounds like the Chinese word for wealth, and when the lion spreads the cabbage all over, it is thought to be spreading wealth. At the

end of the lion dance, the lion bows to those responsible for organizing the lion dance to show respect and as a final blessing to them. At this stage the lion will often present them with a banner — a lasting talisman for good luck.

Thus, the lion scares away evil spirits and brings luck and wealth. Lion dancing is most often seen around Chinese New Year to bring luck for a prosperous and healthy new year. Lion dances may also be performed at any major celebration, including business openings, weddings, anniversaries and the like.

Lion Dance and Kung Fu Schools

The southern lion is the one most often associated with kung fu schools. Schools with a southern tradition, even those teaching northern styles, are far more likely to have a lion dancing tradition than those from an entirely northern background. For this reason, it is easy to spot a Northern Praying Mantis school that has passed through the Hong Kong or Cantonese tradition. Their Northern tanglang brothers, not associated with Hong Kong, may not perform the lion dance at all. Despite the association between southern styles and lion dancing, kung fu schools will often perform using the northern lion. Indeed, most schools will attempt to include a northern lion in their repertoire.

As with the origins of lion dancing, the association between kung fu schools and lion dancing is often subject to myth and conjecture. There are stories of fights erupting between rival lion dancing troupes. Whether these are a traditional, integral part of “real” lion dancing or if the participants are simply responding to a combative urge independent of the dance is the subject of debate.

Kung fu schools have historically been the holding place of the tradition of lion dancing, particularly in the south. Today, lion dances ►



Kung fu schools have historically been the holding place of the tradition of lion dancing.



The drummer and the lead lion coordinate in matching rhythms, moods and in leading the other lions. Sifu Tsui Wing Sing (top picture) performs the difficult task of drumming for the lion dance performance.

are also performed by community groups and specialist lion dance schools, as well as kung fu schools. In the past the dance was used as a secret way of passing messages and practicing martial arts when those activities were outlawed by the state. Many kung fu schools today use lion dancing to improve students' stances and legwork. In the eyes of a southern master, a kung fu school is not complete without a lion dance tradition. As such, the dance represents the school — the stronger and more technically brilliant the dance, the better it reflects on the school, and it is a way for the sifu to improve his standing in the community.

The Anatomy of a Lion Dance Troupe

The lion dance troupe is divided into two parts — the dancers and the musicians. They may swap duties at different points during the lion dance, often imperceptibly to onlookers. There may also be a “little buddha” running about teasing the lion with a fan or a celestial pearl. His job is actually to be the eyes for the lion and direct

its movements. There are also many traditional associations with his movements.

The lion comprises only two dancers—any more would indicate a dragon, a dance also often performed by lion dance troupes. The front dancer is usually somewhat lighter and controls the personality and decisions of the lion. The rear dancer is the root of power for the lion, providing the strength and footwork required for some of the more spectacular jumps and balancing acts performed by the lion. Dancers must know their partners extremely well because vision is limited under the tails and masks of the lions. The best dancers think as one to such an extent that the audience forgets that there are two performers and instead see only the lion.

The musicians include a drummer, a gong player and cymbal players. The musicians not only respond to the lion but also serve the purpose of helping the lion scare away evil spirits with their noise. By tradition, the drummer follows the lead lion, and the other lions hear the drummer and follow the leader. In reality, it is more like a conversation between the lead lion and the drummer. When vision between the two is limited, they use hand signals to match the music and movements. Each drum rhythm has meaning and corresponds to the movement of the lion. It takes many years to drum a lion dance confidently. The sound of the gong and symbols carries the sound farther than the bass of the drum can. They too need to be perfectly in time, and their beats also reflect the meaning and motion of the lion. Their sounds are the first experience many audiences will have of the lion dance — their importance cannot be overestimated.

The dance goes on...

Lion dancing has a long, rich tradition. Today it is found in kung fu schools and community groups around the world, and it is performed by Chinese and westerners alike. Although layered in meaning and subtleties, the art is open to all to enjoy. It is the quintessential ingredient in a large Chinese celebration — with the possible exception of food — and it is loved by young and old. For the participant it offers discipline and skills not found through any other practice. For the kung fu school, the lion dance is a part of their heritage and a reflection of their skill and endeavors, and for the public lucky enough to experience one, it is a tiding of good fortune and prosperity in times to come. **MQ**

The Two Person Set

In many styles of Praying Mantis kung fu, solo routines can be performed as two person exercises. In this training method, one person performs the set as it is done solo, with its attacking, pursuing and defending motions, and the other responds with appropriate movements to facilitate the set's techniques. For many schools of Praying Mantis, the purpose of paired set performance is to preserve an appropriate interpretation of the techniques from generation to generation. However, there are also developmental drills designed to enhance combat effectiveness inherent in the paired set, if it is used correctly. For the first time in an English language publication, these stages are outlined for the Praying Mantis practitioner's consideration and use in training.

Two-Person Set Training Methods

Master Shr Zhengzhong of Taiwan uses a five-stage training methodology in the practice of two-person sets. The stages are lien (drill), ling (receive), pi (split), chai (break apart) and gan (overtake). Practitioners of Hong Kong Praying Mantis will see many similarities to those methods taught by their founder, Luo Guangyu.

In the lien stage, the student practices the solo form. Balance, form of movement, linkage between movements and fajin (the release of energy) are perfected. Some schools of Praying Mantis concentrate the majority of basic training in this stage, and rightfully so. Proceeding further without fully accomplishing this stage jeopardizes one's potential because errors not corrected at this stage will compound themselves in more complex exercises.

The ling stage is practicing the routine with a partner. This stage teaches the most fundamental application of the set. Partners must fully cooperate with each other to synchronize the movements. This stage is effective training for coordination, sense of distance, timing and sensing an opponent's energy. Once students are proficient at performing this level of drill, training can proceed to the remaining three stages, and real fighting ability can be developed. It is regrettable that, for many schools, ling is the entire extent of their training. Making the leap from ling to actual fighting with Praying Mantis technique is difficult if not impossible. Though significant, ling alone cannot effectively teach one to use Tanglang Quan.

In the pi stage, students take several techniques from a set and use them as a flow drill. For example, Beng Bu's "to the face straight punch" and "encircling elbow" coupled with "mantis seizes the cicada" can be made into a drill for two people. Each person uses the three techniques in turn. Like children singing "row, row, row your boat," the partners go back and forth between attack and counter without any break in the action.

Because the knowledge contained in ling is used in pi, a student need not practice the ling step for every set. It can be argued that pi is a more efficient use of students' training time because they do not have to memorize the largely passive respondent's half of every set. In fact, Plum Flower Mantis, Six Harmony Mantis and some Seven Star schools bypass ling altogether. Yet pi does not provide complete reactions for attack and defense; a flow drill cannot fully prepare students for the instinctive choices that must be made when fighting. Once students are skilled in pi methodology, the training must progress to the next levels to develop effective combat skills.

At the chai stage, students are given the choice of two different pi techniques to perform. Neither participant knows which technique the other will use. This eliminates unconscious cooperation between the partners and makes it more difficult to perform the techniques effectively. After the instructor has determined that the students are adequately skilled, a third pi drill will be added, then a fourth, a fifth and so on.

To make the progression to multiple drills move as efficiently as possible, the following progression is suggested:

1. Hand techniques with no footwork.
2. Hand techniques with footwork.
3. Hand techniques with kicks.
4. Hand techniques with takedowns.

The gan stage is similar to Western sparring. Students do not cooperate with each other, and techniques are chosen according to the tactical situation and thrown with full effort. Full effort is also expended by the defender to escape and counter each attack. At this stage students are free to use whatever skills they have acquired in their training.

Over time, students will clearly understand the techniques (ling), perform them with a ►

About the Author

Kevin Brazier has been a practicing martial artist since 1982. He moved to Taiwan in 1989 to continue his study of Praying Mantis under the tutelage of Shr Zhengzhong. He currently operates a Praying Mantis school in Tainan city and is head instructor of Tainan Boys' First High School Martial Arts Club.

relaxed ease (pi), use them in a non-telegraphic manner (chai), and execute them with full combat power, having chosen them in accordance with the changing tactical situation (gan). To further develop their fighting expertise, students must gain more experience fighting against practitioners of different styles, temperaments and physicalities.

Types of Two-Person Sets

The following are four types of two-person sets. (The names given here are only intended to differentiate between types and are not to be considered a part of the traditional Praying Mantis lexicon.)

Mirror Image

In this type of drill, partners perform the same techniques at the same time using techniques that are simultaneously both offensive and defensive. For example, the Six Harmony Double Broadsword can be used as a mirror set. A tremendous amount of precision is required to apply these moves correctly while running, jumping and turning. A series of stationary and moving drills to help perfect each technique and its corresponding footwork can aid in the learning process. Many of the basic single broadsword drills for two people can also follow this mirror image method.

Rounds

This method is used for short exercises where both people perform the same techniques, but

not at the same time. The Beng Bu techniques listed in the section describing the pi step can be used as a rounds style set.

Folded Form

A folded form set is one in which the second half of the form is the counterpart for the first half. One famous example is Chuji Chuen, a compilation of Praying Mantis, Eagle Claw and Baji Chuen kung fu styles. Zhongji Chuen, a longer, more complex form, also follows the folded form principle. San Tsai Straight Sword and Shaolin Eighteen Movement Stick are two other well-known forms that use this method.

Same-Style Counterpart

In this type of two-person drill, the partners perform techniques that are not specifically from the solo form, but are of the same style. Sometimes the techniques for the counterpart can be found in other forms. For example, the counterpart for the beginning of Beng Bu can be found in the Taiji Praying Mantis form Twelve Old Hands.

Endless Techniques

There are hundreds of Praying Mantis forms, with techniques in the thousands, that could be used as two-person drills. When asked how many techniques one should master, Shr Zhengzhong replied that he had mastered ten techniques and perfected three. **MQ**

Mantis Boxing in the Philippines

About the Author
Shifu Arnold Buenviaje began his Gongfu training in 1977 with the Ling Nam Athletic Federation. His training spans many Gongfu systems, including Hung Gar, Pak Hok Pai, Choy Gar and Tanglang. He is a disciple of Zhong Lianbao and serves as founder and chief instructor of the Ling Ming Martial Arts Association.

The establishment of Chinese martial arts schools and organizations in the Philippines began in the 1930s. The prominent styles then were the Southern Chinese styles of Ngo Cho (Five Ancestor Fist), Choy Gar, Fut Gar and Choy Li Fut. Praying Mantis was first introduced in the 1960s by a young man named Shakespeare Chan (Xu Wei Peng). Chan had traveled to Hong Kong, where he studied Seven Star Praying Mantis with Chui Chi Man (Zhao Zhi Min), a senior disciple of Luo Guang Yu; the White Crane style under Ou Hai; and Hung Gar with Lau Kai Tong (Liu Qi Tung). Chan was invited by one of the senior members of the Ling Nam Athletic Association to teach martial arts in the association.

Ling Nam, one of the two earliest Chinese martial arts organizations in the Philippines, was established in 1958 by Zhang Jing Shan and Yu Xin Fu, two southern Chinese masters who special-

ized in Choy Gar and Fut Gar, respectively. The two masters later retired, and their senior students took over the association. While in the Ling Nam, Chan taught several Chinese martial art styles, including Seven Star Praying Mantis. Among Chan's notable students in the Ling Nam were Julio Kwong, Teddy Gaw, Henry Sy and Tony Tan.

In 1974, after leaving the Ling Nam, Chan opened his own martial arts organization called Chin Wu, named after the famous Jing Wu club of Shanghai. Chan soon closed Chin Wu so he could concentrate on his growing hobby shop business. After closing Chin Wu, Chan began teaching privately. In 1981, Chan and his student Alexander Co, co-authored *The Praying Mantis Style of Kung Fu*, the first Chinese martial arts book published in the Philippines. In 1995 Chan and some of his former Ling Nam students, including Julio Kwong and Teddy Gaw, organized the Tibetan White Crane Athletic Association,

which concentrated on teaching the White Crane style. Chan has produced several outstanding Praying Mantis students, but only a few of them are teaching Seven Star Praying Mantis.

Liang Ji Ci, who moved to the Philippines from Taiwan in 1972, also taught Praying Mantis there. Liang was the son-in-law of the famous martial arts master Han Qing Tang. Liang studied several styles of Praying Mantis under different masters in Taiwan. He learned Six Harmony Mantis from Zhang Xiang San, Eight Step Mantis from Wei Xiao Tang, Taiji Mantis from Liu Zu Yuan, and Seven Star Praying Mantis from Wang Song Ting. In 1978, Liang and his wife, Han Ling Ling, established the Philippine Jiann Shyong Kung Fu Center, where he taught several Praying Mantis styles and other Chinese martial arts as well. Liang left the Philippines in the mid-80s and is currently teaching martial arts in Boston.

In 1993, a Philippine Wushu team represented by members of the Ling Nam Athletic Association, now called the Ling Nam Athletic Federation, competed in the Yantai International Tang Lang Quan Wushu Exhibition Competition in Yantai, China. While in Yantai, they met Seven Star Praying Mantis master Zhong Lian Bao, a disciple of Mantis Master Lin Jing Shan. After a period of training under Master Zhong, several

Ling Nam members, including William Soon (Xue Wu Qiang), Arnold Buenviaje (Cai Ming Ren), Richard Ng (Wu Li Qiang), and Rolando Villamora (Gao Ming Xiang), were accepted as Zhong Lian Bao's first overseas disciples. During Zhong's visits to the Philippines, he accepted Henry Sy (Shi Yi Mou), Tan Bun Kim (Chen Wen Jin), Lim Chiao Dong (Li Shao Nong), Jay Lee (Kuang Ji Hua), and Julio Kwong (Kuang Guo Qing) as disciples.

At present, the organizations that actively propagate the Seven Star praying Mantis of Master Zhong Lian Bao in the Philippines are the Ling Nam Athletic Federation, the Ling Ming Martial Arts Association, the Chi Ching Wushu Association, the International Qi Xing Tang Lang Association -Philippines and the Manila Downtown YMCA.

About three years ago, Erwin Ines, a former student of Joseph Alzate, a student of Shakespeare Chan and Alexander Co, went to Hong Kong, where he visited Seven Star Praying Mantis master Lee Kam Wing, a famous disciple of Chui Chi Man. After studying with Lee Kam Wing, Ines was given permission to represent Master Lee in the Philippines. Ines teaches privately and continues to study Lee Kam Wing's Seven Star Praying Mantis style under one of Master Lee's senior disciples. **MQ**

For more information, visit the following web sites:
www.lingnam.home.ph
www.geocities.com/lingmingwushu
www.geocities.com/sevenstarmantisfist
www.geocities.com/chiching95

Seven Star Praying Mantis in the UK

There are three main branches of Seven Star Praying Mantis in the United Kingdom, and they have more similarities than differences. The forms are clearly identifiable and, apart from the odd exception, consistent in name and teaching order.

One of the main branches, descended from Chan Wing (Chan Chen Wen), is currently represented by Sifu Paul Drummond of Banbury, Oxon, who studied under Sifu Mo Lam. Chan Wing, who learned Seven Star Praying Mantis from Fan Yuk Tung in the 1870s, settled in the Shantung Province to run a medical supply business. Mo Lam, born in 1905, was adopted by Chan Wing, who taught his adopted son his complete system. After studying medicine in Shanghai, Mo Lam left mainland China and settled in Taiwan, where he taught his art in the evenings after work. Mo Lam's students in Taiwan included Cheung Li Yu, Alan Tung, Jia Li and David Lok. In 1971, Mo Lam moved to England with Sammy Lai, one of his senior stu-

dents. Paul Drummond began learning from Sifu Mo Lam in 1972. Mo Lam died in 1981, but Sifu Drummond, one of his closed-door students, still promotes his version of Tong Long.

Sifu Drummond teaches in Banbury, Oxfordshire and actively promotes his art. He has spread this mantis style to France, Belgium, Ukraine and Mexico. He teaches approximately 40 fist forms and 23 weapons sets and is connected to the International Chinese Martial Arts Council based in Lini, Shantung Province, China.

In 1971 Sifu Michael Lee (Lee Kok Seng) immigrated to England, bringing with him a branch of Seven Star Praying Mantis descended from Lor Kwang Yuk. Wong Kam Hong, a student of Lor Kwang Yuk, taught Seven Star Praying Mantis in Malaysia. Michael Lee and his father were students of Wong Kam Hong in Malaysia. Sifu Lee has enjoyed success in his teaching since moving to Huddersfield, Yorkshire, and he actively promotes kung fu at competitions throughout the United Kingdom. **Mark** ▶

Author's Note

This article is intended as an introduction to Seven Star Praying Mantis in the United Kingdom. It is by no means comprehensive, and I welcome further discussion and research to bring our mantis community closer together.

About the Author

Paul Tennet has been a student of Wing Chun for 17 years, studying under Sifu Trevor Jefferson since 1985. Between 1989 and 1992 he studied Choy Li Fut under Sifu Ng Ho Tak. Since 1995 Paul has been studying Lee Kam Wing's Seven Star Praying Mantis with Sifu Derek Frearson. He has a training academy in Newcastle upon Tyne.

Hampshire is Sifu Lee's most well-known student. Several years ago, Sifu Lee invited Sifu Jon Funk to visit the United Kingdom, and he taught sessions for Sifu Lee's students. Sifu Lee and his students perform demonstrations throughout the United Kingdom, and Sifu Lee has produced a video covering Sap Say Lo Tam Toy (14 Springing Legs).

Sifu Derek Frearson, of Leicester, Leicestershire, represents the third branch of Seven Star Praying Mantis in the United Kingdom. In 1989 Sifu Frearson invited Sifu Lee Kam Wing of Hong Kong, an instructor under Chui Chi Man who was a senior disciple of Lor Kwang Yuk, to the United Kingdom. He teaches mantis kung fu and lion dancing during annual visits to the International Taijiquan and Shaolin Wushu Association Summer Camp. Sifu Frearson also takes his students to Hong Kong to train with Sifu Lee twice a year.

Based in Leicester, Sifu Frearson represents Sifu Lee's organization in the United Kingdom.

He has the largest number of groups in the United Kingdom, including branches in the Northeast, Northwest, Yorkshire, Midlands, Southern England, Scotland and Southern Ireland. Sifu Frearson has also taught in South Africa, Italy and Spain and regularly has overseas students come to England to train with him.

Apart from the main branches described here, there are many other branches active in the United Kingdom. Wutan International teaches Seven Star Praying Mantis throughout the United Kingdom, as descended from Sifu Liu Yun Chiao of Taiwan, Adam Hsu's teacher. Sifu Yuen Man Kai, a student of Wong Hun Fan, has also visited the United Kingdom to promote Seven Star Praying Mantis. During a visit to the United Kingdom in 1976, he taught students of the British White Cloud Society in Northwest England.

Praying mantis kung fu in the United Kingdom is spreading, and the standard continues to improve. **MQ**

For more information about Seven Star Mantis in the UK, contact Sifu Michael Lee or Sifu Derek Frearson at the following web sites:
www.7starmantis.net
www.itswa.freereserve.co.uk/sspm.htm

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