

A textbook on Chen Style Tai Chi short weapons is out

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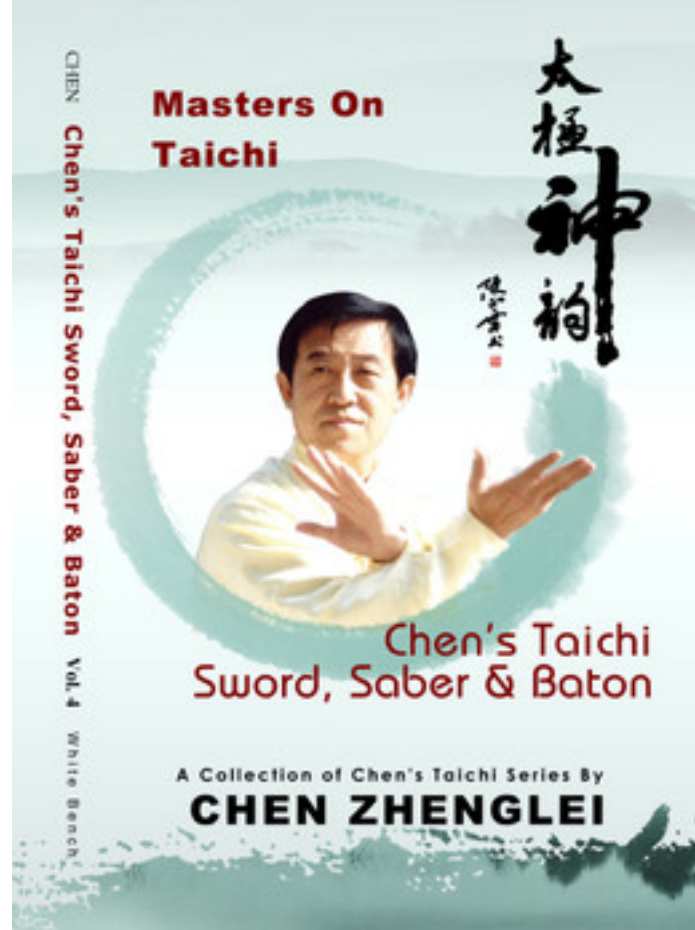
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In [Tai Chi](#) (Taiji, Taichi), weapons are an extension of hands and arms. The prerequisite for any Tai Chi weapon is a solid foundation in a hand form so one can move Qi throughout the body smoothly and transmit the energy to the tip or the body of a weapon. Therefore, after publishing his first three volumes on Tai Chi for [health](#), Old Frame Routines One & Two and New Frame Routines One & Two, [Grandmaster Chen Zhenglei](#) just published the forth Chen Style Tai Chi on short weapons in English translated by his in-chamber disciple Master Jack Yan.



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18 photos

Master Yue Liming



Jack Yan

Grand Master Chen Zhenglei, born in May 1949 in the Tai Chi mecca Chen Village (or Chenjiagu), China, is a 19th generation descendant of the Chen's family and a 11th generation direct-line inheritor of Chen's Tai Chi. He was the head coach at the Chen's Village National Tai Chi Center and vice-president of Henan [Wushu](#) Stadium. He is officially accredited with the title of "China's Top Ten Contemporary [Martial Arts](#) Masters". He has won many prestigious awards for his contribution to promote Tai Chi worldwide including being listed on *Cambridge List of the Most Distinguished Chinese People in the World* along with a Nobel Prize Laureate, a prominent economist and other highly selective influential Chinese celebrities.

Chen's Tai Chi Single Straight Sword is one of the oldest weapon routines, which has been practiced for hundreds of years. This well-designed routine is composed of forty-nine moves. All the movements are tightly connected with distinct techniques. The techniques include pierce, chop, upward-swing, hook, point, slice, lift, upward- block, sweep, cut, jab, push and neutralize. It is a deadly weapons form; yet, it is full of grace and considered the most exquisite form to watch.

The Double Sword routine was created by the 18th Generation Chen family descendent Grandmaster Chen Zhaopi during 1930 to 1938. This routine is based on the double sabre (Dao) routine by incorporating techniques from the hand form routines and the single sword routine. It is said that the single sword is like a floating dragon and the two swords move like dragons swimming in the open sea under flying clouds but also resemble crouching tigers while in stillness.

The original Chen Style Single Saber only has thirteen movements and is called Thirteen Form Saber. Grandmaster Chen Zhaopi rearranged the routine and added nine moves to create the current routine.

Even though it is short, it includes many martial arts applications, which is reflective of the features of Chen Tai Chi. It is said that the Chen Saber moves like a tiger.

The Double Saber is an ancient weapon form. There are similar requirements as the Single Saber but it focuses more on body coordination with footwork. It is commonly understood that “the single sword is with the hand and double saber is with the footwork”. Footwork is essential to achieving proficiency.

It was said that batons (or maces) were used as weapons from the Qin Dynasty (221 – 210 BCE) and up to the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911 CE). They are seldom practiced today. In the ancient times, batons were made of bronze or iron but are made of wood nowadays. Batons are 70 to 90 cm in length according to the practitioner’s height. There is a hole at the end of the handle to be roped through and wrapped around the waist. The body of a baton is square with concave surfaces and hard ridges but no blade or tip. The Chen Style Double Baton is practiced on the basis of Chen’s Tai Chi boxing training with hands, eyes, body and footwork coordination. According to Grandmaster Chen, Baton training can enhance the coordination and arm strength.

In the Preface of this new book, Grandmaster Chen mentioned that he was trained by Grandmaster Chen Zhaopi and learned Old Frame forms as well as weapons from Zhaopi. He studied New Frame forms and Tai Chi theories from Grandmaster Chen Zhaokui. In all his books, Grandmaster Chen Zhenglei would spend pages explaining the theories and applications behind movements. In this new book, he treats readers with Chen Style Tai Chi classics from previous masters or his ancestors in addition to the step-by-step clear instructional material. These classics include Tai Chi creator Chen Wangting’s poem “Lyrical Totality on Quan”, Chen Xin’s Tai Chi Quan Theory (Jing Pu) and Tai Chi Quan Techniques (Quan Pu) and Chen Changxing’s Tai Chi Ten Fundamentals. They are precious and people who do not practice Chen Style can also benefit from reading them.

Like his previous books, this volume has many photos to exhibit each movement in details. There are more than 600 pictures for the five short weapons forms. Unlike the previous books, his daughter Master Juan Chen and his son Master Bin Chen also collaborated and demonstrated straight swords and saber respectively.

For more information on this book “Chen’s Taichi Double Sword, Saber & Baton”, visit chenzhenglei.com/?page_id=101#!~/category/id=806601&offset=0&sort=addedTimeDesc.

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Violet Li

Tai Chi Examiner