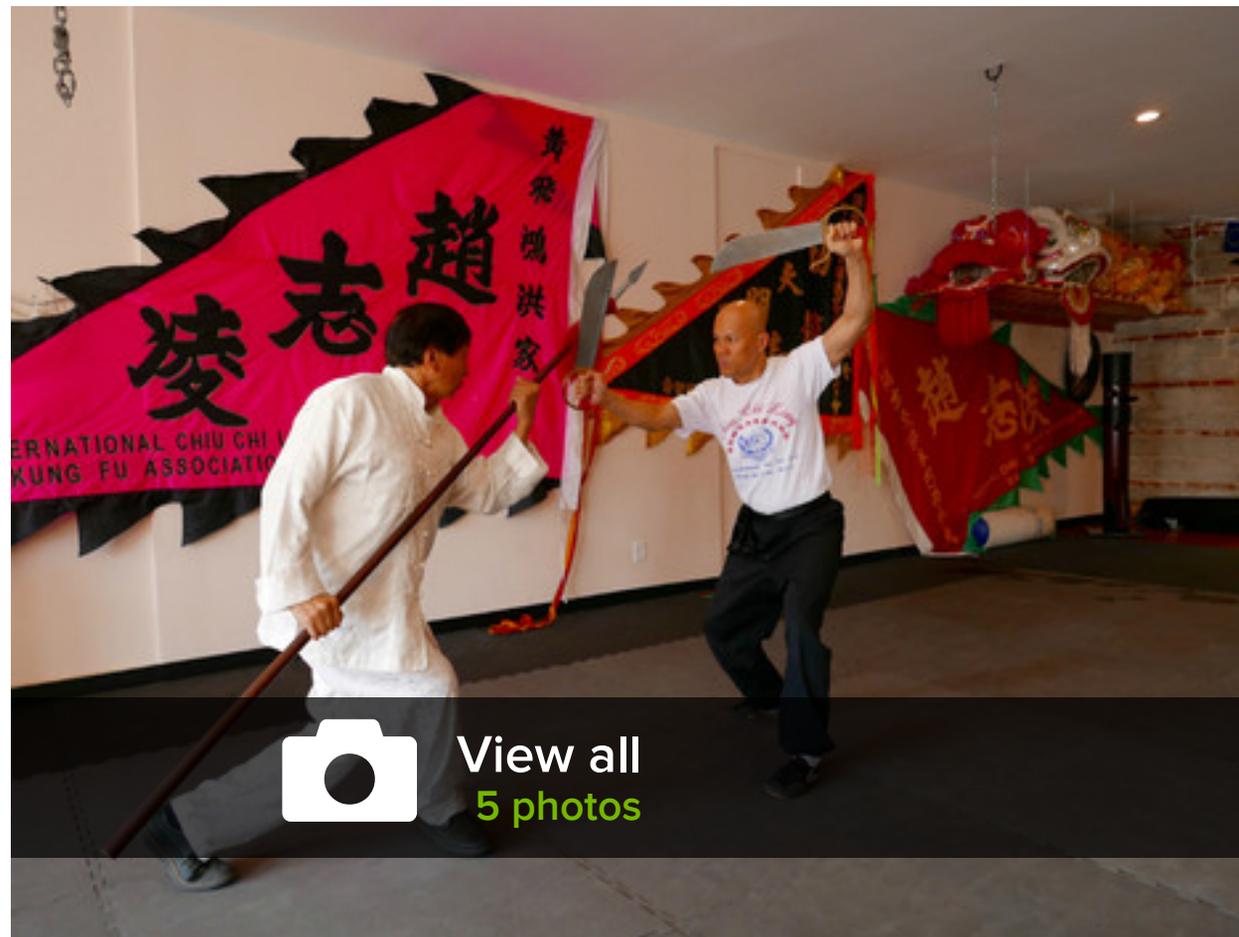


# Grandmaster Chiu Chi Ling charmed St. Louis with skills and character

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Grandmaster Chiu Chi Ling (left) and Paul Lee

*Violet Li*

**Kung Fu Hustle** is a Hong Kong **Kung Fu** parody that gained rave reviews worldwide and won multiple awards. One of its success factors was that each actor portrayed a unique character. Audience still remembers a tailor who utilized curtain rings as arm shields as well as weapons. Grandmaster Chiu Chi Ling was the tailor and he demonstrated the signature **Hung Gar Kung Fu** Iron Arms. Recently he came to St. Louis for a short visit and taught a few classes. His skills and personality impressed many.



Violet Li

Chiu's parents practiced Kung Fu and Chinese medicine. His father Chiu Jiao was a disciple of Master Lin Si Rong, the most famous disciple of Hung Gar Grandmaster [Huang Fei Hong](#). As an outstanding martial art coach, Chiu Jiao got a special award from the late Chinese leader [Chairman Mao Zedong](#). Learning Kung Fu and Chinese medicine was mandatory for young Chiu. Grandmaster Chiu started to learn Kung Fu at age four and was punished for not being diligent enough. With strict training, he solidified his martial art skills and Chinese medical knowledge of bone setting, known as *Dieda*. He was invited by the Hong Kong movie industry to be a Kung Fu instructor, choreographer, medical doctor to treat the wounded actors, stunt doubles, and actor in his early 20's. Movie companies in Taiwan, China, South Korea, the Philippines, Italy, and U.S. also hired him. Among the 70 plus movies, he played a few lead roles as well. An award-winning 2008 American Indie movie [Adventure of Power](#), he was the 4th in billing. He has a cameo in the latest movie *The Mermaid*, which was just released in the Asian market.

Aside from his achievements in the film industry, Chiu opened four Kung Fu schools in Hong Kong and trained many celebrities as well as tournament champions. Initially the foreign students went to Hong Kong and learned martial art in his schools. Later he was invited to teach in Asia, Europe, Africa, Austria, and Americas. His footprints are in over 50 countries. Many schools nowadays are under his lineage. He also opened a school in San Francisco after immigrating to the U.S. According to him, he has taught approximately 200,000 people around the world. He was on the cover of important martial art magazines, i.e. Black Belt, Kung Fu Tai Chi Magazine, etc. He is constantly invited to TV shows in many countries. He has won countless honors and awards to remember. This year along, he won five major ones including 2016 Kung Fu Master in Philadelphia right after his St. Louis trip. In May he will receive another honor in Malaysia.

St. Louis, Mo has many martial art enthusiasts. Nevertheless, It is a smaller market in comparison with the coastal cities, Chicago, Atlanta, and some others. Dr. Paul Lee, the founder of [International Shaolie Wushu Center](#) in St. Louis, is a long time student of Chiu's. At Lee's earnest invitation, Grandmaster Chiu paid St. Louis a short visit out of his busy schedule en route to New York. He arrived in St. Louis on the afternoon of April 4 and attended a special meet-and-greet event with fans in the evening. The 73-year-old Chiu attentively answered all kinds of questions. The next day, he started the day early and taught a few private lessons and two group classes. He was very focused on teaching and taught until almost 8 pm. His advanced student [Jose Jaime Fabian](#) flew from [Oaxaca](#), Mexico just to further his study and assisted Chiu teaching.

During the classes, Chiu mentioned that Hung Gar derived from Shaolin Kung Fu but it also inherited ancient Chinese culture and was heavily influenced by the philosophy of *Tai Chi*, *Liang-Yi*, and *Bagua* (the Eight Trigrams). Hung Gar demands that practitioners combine *Jing Qi Shen* (or strength, energy, and spirit) together. Hung Gar practice mixes the softness with the hardness. [Meditation](#) is part of the curriculum. Hung Gar is the most important Kung Fu in the Southern boxing system in China. It consists of multiple routines, hand forms, and footwork. It is fascinating to watch. Grandmaster Chiu said stories of Hung Gar Grandmaster Huang Fei Hong were made into movies way before [Yip Man's](#). There are over 130 movies about Huang Fei Hong thus far. To make the forms easy to learn, Chiu divided each movement to several parts and paired narratives to go along with them. No wonder the students had fun learning the art. However, he was stern about learning. He would call a student out if he did not pay attention during class. Chiu listened to every question attentively and answered it thoroughly.

Even though Chiu is a celebrity himself, he had a laid-back attitude. He was never too tired to sign his name for fans even on an old cheap Chinese bamboo scroll. He was like a gentle grandfather and tied the belt for young students before taking photos with them. With his charming personality and dazzling skills, students and fans are asking when Grandmaster Chiu will come back.

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**Violet Li**

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