

Meeting Tuey

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Nuri, Alan, Chri, Grandmaster Tuey, Gavreal, and Leo (from left to right)

Alan Ludmer is a gentle, soft-spoken [Taichi](#) connoisseur. He was invited to a push-hand session a few weeks ago in the Maryland Heights area in St. Louis, Missouri. There were several advanced Taichi enthusiasts there. They challenged him. After a few twining and pushing, Alan “threw” them off one by one. They were all shocked and dazzled by Alan’s skill. They asked how long he has studied Taichi to develop this amazing skill. Alan politely told them that he has studied Taichi for over 30 years and then humbly stated that his skill is nothing

compared to his master Tuey's. Some uttered "no wonder"; some did not know who Tuey is and wanted to learn more about him.

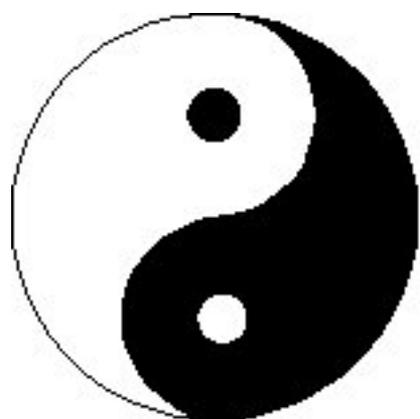
Alan has studied Taichi with a few masters and grandmasters. However, Tuey Staples is the one he admires most and studied with for over 30 years. Tuey Staples was one of the pioneers in the greater St. Louis area in teaching and promoting Taichi since 1970. But in recent years, Tuey Staples stopped taking new students with few exceptions, further cementing his legendary reputation. .

With the help of Alan Ludmer, I had an opportunity to visit Tuey and observe his class on **Floating Lotus**. I got there before Tuey arrived. Due to vacation and out-of-town engagements, not all students attended the class that day. All students are advanced Taichi enthusiasts and they have studied with Tuey for at least 20 years. I asked Chris, who is a professional bass player with the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, why he continues to learn with Tuey after all these years and what he can possibly learn from him. Chris remarked that Tuey's knowledge is so profound and his skill level is extremely high. He wants to learn the knowledge that Tuey possesses even though it might be a stretch goal. The students practiced in pairs on the zigzag walk. Sometimes they practiced a form by themselves and consulted with each other.



Grandmaster Huo Chi Kwang & Alan (1978)

Then Tuey came in pushing a bike. Alan had told him about my visitation. He greeted me lightly. Even though Tuey is extremely fit, his aura makes him more like a scholar than a **martial arts** master. Actually, in 2007, Tuey Staples was inducted as a Grandmaster by **United States Martial Arts Hall of Fame**. Tuey is a gifted martial artist. He began his martial art training in Judo and Karate, advancing to 4th Degree Belt in Kyokushin Karate. In late 60's, through Alan's introduction, Tuey studied with the honorable **Grandmaster Huo Chi Kwang**, creator of Chen Tzu Taichi and became Grandmaster Huo's disciple. He has achieved Grandmaster level in Yang, Chen Tsu, Wu **Tai Chi** Forms, **Baguazhang**. He has authored a number of articles for both Inside Kung Fu and Tai Chi magazines.



During the class, Tuey watched the students practicing the entire Chen Tzu form. He provided feedback to the entire class as well as to individuals. He took questions and answered them methodically sometimes by demonstration. He explained that walking in zigzag fashion (stepping right and left foot in 45 degree angle alternately) can avoid resistance from a defender. By walking this way, one can continue to advance and this is a true application of "no opposition". Even though no brute force is applied, it is very powerful

and it is hard for a defender to stop the advancing even with both hands

pushing. Below photos show that Chris (in a white t-shirt) walks forward in a zigzag fashion while Gavreal (in a green shirt) tries to stop him in vain.

Grandmaster Staples constantly emphasized the importance of “Center Still” (Zhong Ding or Central Equilibrium). He urged his students never make any move until one is Center Still. He carefully watched every movement his students made and meticulously pointed out when the Chi was not sank to the bottom of feet.

Tuey told his students that in martial art Yin and Yang are complementary to each other. During combating, Yin represents retreat while Yang is advance. When Yang (a big circular advancing movement) meets strong resistance, one should change it to Yin (a small figure eight retreating but re-directing the opponent's movement by borrowing his force) just like the S line in the middle of the Taichi symbol). His Interpretation of Taichi Yin/Yang symbol in martial art application certainly is superb.

Chris (in white) walks in zigzag fashion with Gavreal (in green)



The walk starts at the upper left photo then moving down to the right and then down to the bottom row. Alan does not use any force by successfully advancing forward. The key is to sink the Chi to the feet.

above).



Violet Li

St. Louis Tai Chi Examiner

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