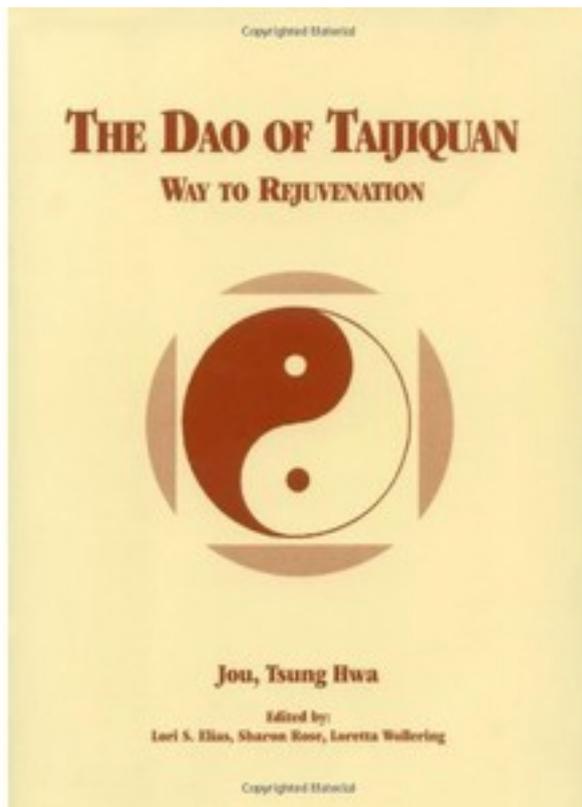


Shifu Wollering on legendary Tai Chi Grandmaster Jou Tsung-Hwa -- Part 2

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Cover of The Dao of Taijiquan
(courtesy of www.amazon.com)

Grandmaster Jou Tsung-Hwa's "The Dao of Taijiquan: Way to Rejuvenation (Tai Chi)" is like a bible for Tai Chi practitioners all over the world. Shifu Loretta Wollering was a lead editor for the last edition and a disciple of Grandmaster Jou. [The first part of the interview](#) with Shifu Wollering was published on Aug 29. Below is the second part of the interview which Shifu Wollering talks about the editing work and marketing of "The Dao of Taijiquan", Tai Chi Gala, and memorial parks.

Part 2

Violet: Did you volunteer to be the editor of "The Dao of Taijiquan"? How was the working relationship? Any special stories to share?

Loretta: I was 100% a volunteer editor. It was great, but a lot of work. Master Jou also made me push and ask the other folks working on his book, and that created some tension, as everyone revamping his last edition did this 100% as volunteers. But it's a good thing we got it done when we did, because

shortly after it was completed he died in a vehicular crash.

Violet: I know the book has been a success. How was it marketed?

Loretta: The book was never formally marketed. It was all word-of-mouth. Yet, at one point it was the top-selling book in the field of Tai Chi. That's because it was SO different than all the other Tai Chi books out there. Most Tai Chi people look down on marketing, but in a way, that's sad, because it halts the proliferation of Tai Chi to others. Yoga is highly marketed, so people know much more about it and therefore more people practice it. Tai Chi is still considered to be more obscure - no celebrities talk about doing it, unlike yoga, and sadly, that's part of what has kept Tai Chi down. After Master Jou's death, his family took over the non-profit foundation that self-published his book. No one is marketing it, and I fear that this may one day lead it to obscurity. Right now, the only marketing about this book is still mostly word-of-mouth. And it's amazing, because people still hear about it.

Violet: There are more Tai Chi books on the market now. Does that affect Master Jou's books?

Loretta: I think what affects Master Jou's book is that fact that no one markets it. There are more and more books available, but no one knows which one is right for them to choose. It seems that most people find out about Master Jou's unique book only when they start becoming serious about Tai Chi and do a little research. Because I was the content editor on that book and because I was Master Jou's apprentice, having lived at his school for 8 years, I still get emails today of people asking me to explain concepts in the book, or people sharing news about how happy they are that they found such a treasure of a Tai Chi book. But this is usually from people that have been doing Tai Chi for a while, and finally found the book through their own research to know more.

Violet: I know that the [2010 Tai Chi Gala](#) (in June) was a success. Can you talk about it?

Loretta: Master Jou founded the Zhang San Feng Festival in America in the 1970's. He began it as a tiny gathering in Chinatown, then a little bigger in Rutgers University. Then, when he purchased the Tai Chi Farm property in 1984, he moved it there. Tai Chi Farm was very large - it was not a typical residential property. It was 103 acres with fields, forests, cabins, building, etc. It had about 100-200 people at the Festival at this time. Master Jou then asked me to take over its management and production in the 1990's. At its height, it grew to about 500 people! It was covered in Inside Kungfu, Tai Chi Magazine, etc. Then Master Jou passed in 1998. Master Jou's family asked me to still stay at Tai Chi Farm and teach his classes and organize to maintain the property as best as possible until the property was sold and closed in July 2000. I re-named the event to more appropriately give Master Jou the recognition I think he deserves and to better honor the founder of Tai Chi - Zhang San Feng - who was the most important Daoist figure to Master Jou. Also, other people and groups have developed their own "Zhang San Feng Festivals" - so I now call Master Jou's original event "The Tai Chi Gala: An Internal Arts Convention in Memory of Jou Tsung Hwa & Zhang San Feng". I think both Master Jou and

Zhang San Feng deserve a little more recognition.

Violet: Is “Master Jou’s Memorial Park” the old Master Jou’s Tai Chi Farm?

Loretta: "[Master Jou's Memorial Park](#)" is not Tai Chi Farm - LOL - it's actually the private residence of Mr. Bruce LaCarrubba, who studied at Tai Chi Farm. For his love and dedication of Master Jou, when Master Jou died, he put a lot of pretty gardens, structures and signs up and renamed this part of his property, "Master Jou's Memorial Park." At Master Jou's birthday (July 13) he invites a lot of people over to a picnic, do Tai Chi workshops and share in the memory of Master Jou. A public memorial to Master Jou Tsung Hwa also exists. When he died, to run the workshops and school, a bunch of us created the "Master Jou Tsung Hwa Tai Chi Farm Foundation" until Tai Chi Farm closed. I was the president of this non-profit organization. When the Tai Chi Farm property was sold, we dissolved the foundation, and donated the proceeds to the town park to build his public monument. It is a gazebo dedicated to him and his memory, at Warwick Town Park in Warwick NY (Warwick, NY is the hometown of where Master Jou had his Tai Chi Farm).

Note: Grandmaster Jou Tsung-Hwa also authored [The Tao of Meditation: Way to Enlightenment](#), and [The Tao of I Ching: Way to Divination](#). Please share your memory of Grandmaster Jou in the comment section.



Violet Li

Tai Chi Examiner