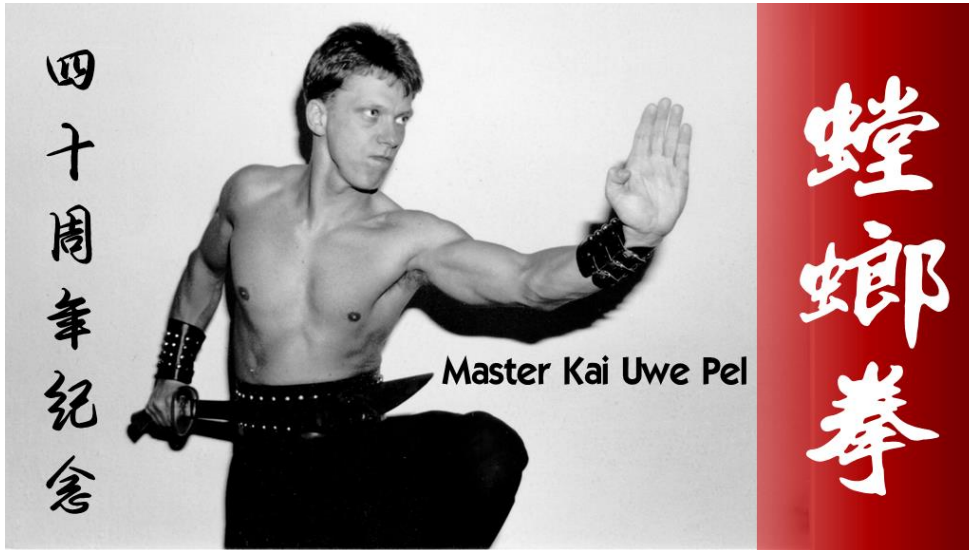


Mantis Publications & Research

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In Recognition of Master Pel's Forty Years in Seven Star Praying Mantis Kung Fu

A foreword by Andy Best, student of Master Kai Uwe Pel.

This year Master Kai Uwe Pel celebrates forty years dedicated to the mastery and preservation of Seven Star Praying Mantis Kung Fu. Master Pel of the Seven Star Praying Mantis style came to Shanghai to teach from 2002, first with the surviving Jing Wu organization, then at the Longwu Center and privately in the suburb Xin Zhuang. We identify our schools with the great grandmaster Luo Guang Yu and name our modern clubs *Luo Guang Yu Seven Star Praying Mantis*. Last year also marked a hundred years since Luo Guang Yu came to teach in the original Shanghai Jing Wu school, bringing the style from Shandong province and ultimately giving it to the world.

Seven Star Praying Mantis originated in the Shaolin Temple and most Mantis schools and styles begin with the legend of Wang Long, a student in the temple who devised the style. The monk Bodhidharma visited Luo Yang and then Mt. Song by the temple around 500 CE and taught the monks yogic techniques known as the Luohan Movements. These were combined with martial arts to form a unique style that Chinese scholarship notes as being nationally acknowledged in the reforms of the emperor Song Taizu in 960 CE. Wang Long existed sometime between then and when the Seven Star style surfaces in modern record keeping, in 1800s Shandong.

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Master Luo Guang Yu
罗光玉 1888-1944

ONE FAMILY

Wang Long
王朗

Sheng Xiao Dao Ren
生肖道人

Li San Jian
李三笏 (c.1821)

Wang Rong Sheng
王荣生 (c.1854)

Fan Xu Dong
范旭东 (c.1841)

Luo Guang Yu
罗光玉 (1888-1944)

Lin Bo Yan
林伯炎 (1903-1990)

Zhao Zhi Min
赵志民 (1901-2002)

Xu Jin Ge
徐晋阁 (1949-)

Li Jin Rong
李锦荣 (1947-)

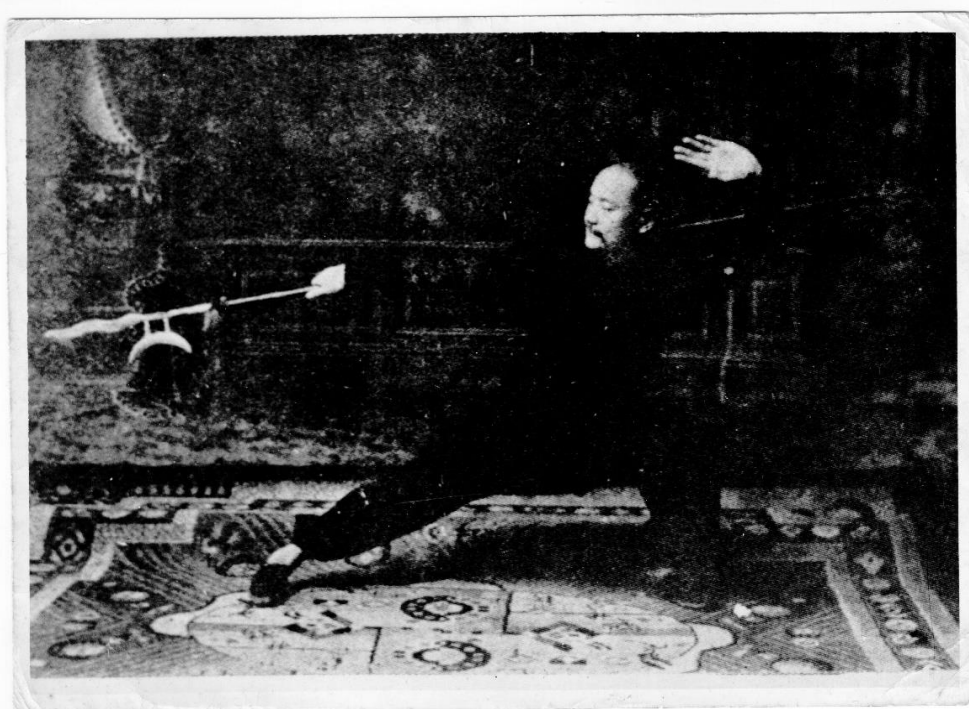
Kai Uwe Pel
裴凯
(1964-)

“Master Luo was the end of the era that begun with Li Sanjian and represented a complete and seamless transmission from Fan Xudong. Luo was hand selected to represent Master Fan in Shanghai Jingwu because he had a high level of technical skill, iron palm training, and a reputation like his kung fu brothers for never shirking a real fight.”



The mantis fighter Li Sanjian is said to have learned directly from the monastic line, from a temple in the Laoshan Mountains. He then taught Wang Rongsheng who came from a rich family and was able to open a school. His most famous student was Fan Xudong, who was known for his large size and fighting ability. Fan had five master students: Luo Guang Yu, Lin Jingshan, Yang Weixin, Guo Jialu and Wang Chuanyi. Fan was invited to teach in the Shanghai Jingwu school but was already elderly and sent Luo Guangyu as his official representative.

As one of the *Four Superlords* of Jingwu, Luo surprised many and shook things up. The Jingwu project was born in a time where confidence in Chinese culture was at a low in the face of colonialism and social upheaval. Luo and his kungfu brothers were from Fan Xudong's tradition with a high level of technical skill, iron palm training, and a reputation for never shirking a real fight. An early boost to the school came when one of Luo's students scored wins in a *Leitai* free fighting competition. Even more telling is an anecdote from Mantis Master Huang Hanxun (Wong Honfun), writing in his book on the *Tiger Tail Three Section Staff*. He relates how the three-section-staff was considered to be outside of the main training and passing-the-time, but when Luo Guangyu came to the Guangzhou Jingwu to teach they all realized his high level of skill before he even finished playing the first set, the implication being the issue was with them, not the weapon itself.



"Kai Uwe Pel has always had a deep interest in traditional Chinese martial arts... and is today regarded as one of the true Masters of the traditional Seven Star Praying Mantis." - Graham Player, Ph.D., Gam Bok Yin



Luo Guangyu brought the style into the general public eye and led by example, showing that it was practical and strong. Shanghai also had modern mass media and the other effect was the standardization of the style, or rather a more robust record-keeping of the traditions. Whether a school strives to follow his example, or defines themselves by their difference to him, Luo Guangyu is the most accomplished Seven Star Grandmaster and the measuring stick for our family.

Master Kai Uwe Pel first trained in Hong Kong under Master Li Jinrong. His teacher, Master Zhao Zhimin, had graduated from the Guangzhou Jingwu and had studied under Luo Guangyu with Huang Hanxun. Having completed his training and graduated the full system, Pel continued to train under Master Xu Jing'ge in Singapore. Xu's teacher was Master Lin Boyan, who trained directly in Luo Guangyu's Shanghai class. Lin and Xu were both natives of Fujian province and Lin left the mainland during the turmoil of World War Two. Pel strove to emulate Luo Guangyu, leading by example with a high level of technical skill and physical performance, and becoming accomplished in the iron palm conditioning.

Master Pel first brought the style to his native Germany, setting up a lasting legacy that continues today. He came to Shanghai following a connection between the Singapore and Shanghai branches of the Jingwu school. Despite running a large public class open to all, the trend among the Shanghai public was towards boxing and Karate, with little support coming from the Jingwu, who leant on the Modern Wushu sport and had retired the traditional masters. However, a group of dedicated students pushed through and the family continues to be represented by Teacher Nathan Wright in Shanghai, as well as Teacher Cameron Hirst, who returned to his native New Zealand.



“All our doubts were cleared when we first saw Kai perform Beng Bu. Before he’d finished the form we were not only convinced of his ability but of the whole system, and it was us who would have to work hard to get there.” – Andy Best



Recollections

Writing this in Shanghai, looking out of the window, the old buildings of pre-war Shanghai are still visible everywhere. Using a tablet computer and a wireless connection to the internet, I look at the black and white photos of Luo Guang Yu performing the famous Beng Bu set in the Shanghai Jingwu. My main memory of our early training with Master Kai echoes the story of Huang Hanxun. All our doubts were cleared when we first saw Kai perform Beng Bu. Before he’d finished the form we were not only convinced of his ability but of the whole system, and it was us who would have to work very hard to get there. A hundred years seems like an age, but in many ways it’s a very short journey. Kai Uwe Pel met Zhao Zhimin, his Shigong, in Hong Kong and Zhao Zhimin was taught directly by Luo Guangyu. So, in celebrating with Master Kai in Shanghai this year, we honor our teacher, and also contemplate the traditions and the legacy we are a part of.

Andy Best, student of Master Kai Uwe Pel.

Shanghai 2020



One Family

“Having the chance to experience real Kung Fu due to Master Kai’s ability and the sense of community he built is what has kept me motivated and training until now. The high bar he has set means I know I have a lifetime of training to try and achieve it.” – Cameron Hirst



Recollections

After moving to Shanghai I began training in modern Wushu. Being young and not knowing so much about the martial arts I didn’t understand the history or background of what I was learning and that it was not a true reflection of the traditional arts. The Seven Star Praying Mantis class trained at the same time, next to where we trained. I saw them doing line drills, physical exercises, two-man drills, body conditioning, applications, forms and more weapons than I knew existed.

Master Kai was very friendly, and he and his students would always encourage me to come train with them. Within a few months I had moved to the Seven Star Praying Mantis class. I immediately took to Master Kai’s methods as he had a clear structure and way of teaching. He was demanding but also rewarded those who put in the effort, I knew I would get out what I put in, and that there were no shortcuts.

After a short time training, I remember Kai demonstrated a section of a form we had begun learning. I had seen him perform movements or sequences for us to learn before, but always in a way we could follow. This time he performed the movements with real speed and power, and it was a lightbulb moment for me. I realised after seeing his blur of movements that my way of thinking about martial arts even physical training was wrong, and it was actually possible to be not only lightning fast, agile and fluid, but also strong and powerful at the same time. I had never seen those attributes all melded together, and I remember thinking, Oh, that’s what real Kung Fu is.

Having the chance to experience real Kung Fu due to Master Kai’s ability and the sense of community he built is what has kept me motivated and training until now. The high bar he has set means I know I have a lifetime of training to try and achieve it, and for that I am extremely grateful

Cameron Hirst, student of Master Kai Uwe Pel and instructor of Luo Guang Yu Seven Star Praying Mantis.



“Master Kai Uwe Pel to this day remains a shining example of what traditional Chinese martial arts is all about. Attaining the highest level of skill, he proudly represents his style with passion, humility and respect.” – Nathan A. Wright



Recollections

Dedicating more than forty years of his life to the mastery and preservation of Seven Star Praying Mantis Kung Fu, Master Kai Uwe Pel to this day remains a shining example of what traditional Chinese martial arts is all about. Attaining the highest level of skill, he proudly represents his style with passion, humility and respect, while taking an intelligent no-nonsense approach to the fighting art.

My first meeting with Kai was in the Spring of 2003. At that time, I was in search of a traditional Chinese Kung Fu teacher, and Kai had recently arrived in Shanghai. We exchanged a series of emails and one day he graciously invited me to his home where we sat at his dining room table, drank tea, and talked about Kung Fu. Despite my embarrassingly inept and awkward moments, Kai remained incredibly kind, humble, and generous in his exchange. He even went so far as to demonstrate the form Hei Hu Jiao Cha which completely blew my mind, and convinced me this was for real.

Over the last fifteen years Kai has impressed on me many lessons and knowledge in Seven Star Praying Mantis Kung Fu and I will forever be grateful to him as my teacher. Going forward I still have a long way to go and a lot to learn, but I will always do my best to represent him, the values he holds, and the greater traditions of our Luo Guang Yu Seven Star Praying Mantis family.

Nathan Wright, student of Master Kai Uwe Pel and instructor of Luo Guang Yu Seven Star Praying Mantis



“Praying Mantis Kung Fu has afforded me tremendous privilege and opportunity to study with great teachers, travel around the globe, experience new cultures, make long lasting friendships, and enrich the lives of students around the world with this great art.” – Kai Uwe Pel

羅光玉
七星螳螂



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[Conceptual Levels of Training in Luo Guang Yu Seven Star Praying Mantis Kung Fu](#)

Who We Are

We are a diverse group of people dedicated to the transmission and promotion of traditional Seven Star Praying Mantis Kung Fu (Qi Xing Tang Lang Quan). We represent the proud family lineage of Master Luo Guang Yu, who made the style famous in the Shanghai Jingwu Association in 1919. In 2019 we celebrated the 100-year centennial anniversary of Seven Star Mantis in Shanghai.

Seven Star Praying Mantis

Seven Star Praying Mantis Kung Fu is an open hand combat system originating out of Shandong, China, ~ 350 years ago, and is widely considered to be the apex of traditional Chinese martial art. Born out of the Shaolin tradition, it is a fighting system codified by a diverse group of fighting techniques (kicking, striking, grappling, and throwing), and governed by a holistic body of combat strategy, tactics, principles, theories, and training methodologies.

A Typical Class

A typical class in our Northern Praying Mantis Kung Fu system covers a wide range of exercises, skills, and drills. You will learn traditional fighting techniques, application of 12 Keyword principles, physical conditioning, tactical theory, and traditional forms and weapons. These practices have been passed down for hundreds of years, and we continue to strictly adhere to and promote our rich history of combat practices and traditions.

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