

# The Passing of a Warrior Mystic

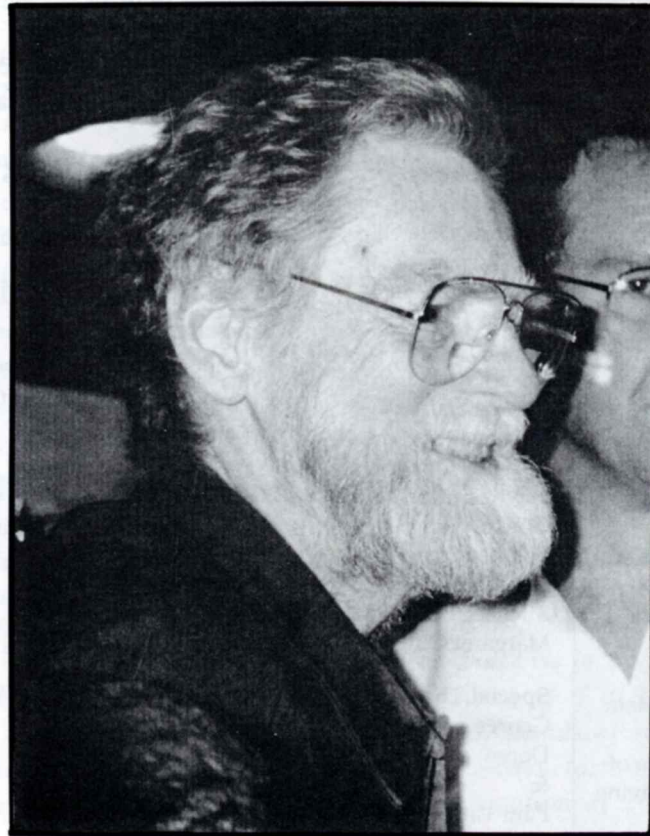
In this issue we reprise a condensed version of the only extensive interview **Patrick Watson** gave in his lifetime. Included with the text are unique photographs of him during his early days as an actor in San Francisco, and a selection of memories and reflections from his students.

## Did Professor Cheng ask you directly to be a teacher?

He sure did. I was there with Judy Deane and I would never have asked the question. Judy asked him: 'Should Patrick teach?' There was no question in his mind; it wasn't a matter of 'Should I teach?', it was a matter of: 'You *will* teach.' I was ordered to, I had no choice in the matter.

It just went from there, and in the progression of hierarchical systems it was like being accepted as a little disciple, then a worthy, receiving permission to teach, then getting permission to teach teachers specifically, and then being accepted as a little brother, which is elevating if you understand the Chinese system to his level and age.

But to have come that far—especially as a Caucasian—with the prejudiced outlook of martial arts from the Chinese point of view, just showed you that there is reality in such a man as Professor Cheng. He didn't look at the externals, he only looked at whether



## Patrick Watson talks about his life and times with Andrew Dell'Olio

Choy's father and Professor Cheng were classmates under Yang Ch'eng-fu, by the way.

I even had a Taiwanese copy of Professor Cheng's book, which we used to call 'the little blue book,' and when I read it I knew he was the man I wanted to study with.

or not you were serious about doing the work.

As Oscar [Ichazo, founder of the Arica school] says, he tested him twenty four hours around the clock and he found no openings. He said the man was pure consciousness, and that was my experience of him too.

**You studied with Professor Cheng for nine years—beginning in what year?**

Oh gosh, let's see—I'm 55 now—it was 30 years ago. But I'd studied with two other teachers prior to that in the same tradition. I studied with Master Choy and before that with Doctor Liu, so I had been studying the same form of T'ai Chi for a number of years. It's interesting that I discovered the Yang Style Short Form so early on. Master

Photo: Paul van Loenen



**Is there a difference in the way your teachers teach T'ai Chi and the way that you teach T'ai Chi?**

The differences are that I've been teaching since I was seven years old. Both my parents were teachers and I grew up by learning and teaching. When I went swimming at the Jewish Community Center—I was in the Jewish Children's Theater then—whatever it was you learned you had to turn around and teach it, in other words you couldn't hold on to it, you had to pass it on to someone else. We try to keep that attitude in the T'ai Chi

tape recording of Oscar's teaching to the Americans in that first year down in Chile I said: 'Gosh, he sounds just like Professor Cheng!' What he was talking about, in terms of the instincts, the tan t'ien, the kath—everything he was talking about was exactly the same, there wasn't any difference. It was like: 'Hey, I understand this because I've been studying it for years with Professor Cheng.' To quote Oscar: T'ai Chi and Arica have the same origins; they appear to be travelling parallel but soon they'll be back together again.

of it being a mystical approach. Professor Cheng talked about the Tao, and when you talk about the Tao you have to be aware that we're talking about a mystical path.

Look at Professor Cheng and his age—Oscar commented about this, and I saw it too—here I was, in my prime, and this guy who was in his late sixties bounced me around like I'm a toy, and I should be able to take him out easily, I mean he's a little old man, right? God, it was like nothing: I was breaking out in a sweat, he was fine; he was moving faster than I was, it was amazing.



School, and we try to keep that balance: that no teacher can be a teacher per se unless they're a student. But I am considered a Master teacher, even Professor Cheng recognized that, so there is also that difference.

**When Professor Cheng asked you—ordered you—to teach, was he aware of the connection between you and Oscar Ichazo and Arica, and that you would go in that direction with the School?**

Oh yes. I had the pleasure of bringing them both together.

When I first heard the John Lilly

**And you encourage your students to do Arica work?**

Absolutely. I encourage them to do Arica work and for Aricans to study T'ai Chi, because they are sympatico. And the people who have a contradictory attitude about 'this is better' or 'that's better—it's nonsense; it's just another side up the same mountain.

**In your opinion would you consider T'ai Chi more of a mystical or spiritual discipline than a martial discipline?**

It certainly is at its highest levels and in the way we teach it, in terms

Because at that level, as Oscar says, it's pure consciousness. There's no technique, there's no strength: it's pure consciousness; and so it has to be, it can't be anything else.

**In the past, in traditional ways of teaching such arts as T'ai Chi and mystical traditions, there is a need for a one-to-one relationship between the disciple and the master.**

There's always been a master disciple relationship, yes. Both in Arica and in T'ai Chi we have given a method across the school, but it doesn't mean you don't have to come into contact with a Master at



some point, it's essential to the process—you can't eliminate that part.

Teaching is what Oscar said our School is about: we have to become teachers and we have to train teachers. I see a lot of people who think they're going to become Masters—well gosh kids, you'd better take another look at what that means: it means you're going to lead a life of service to humanity and you'd better learn how to teach, and if you've been avoiding that you've got a long way to catch up.

**Would you say that one of the major differences between this T'ai Chi School and others, is that the School of T'ai Chi Chuan is a school for learning to be of service to humanity?**

As a teacher, yes, absolutely. Both Oscar Ichazo and Professor Cheng emphasized the importance of teaching to pass on the work of each of the two schools. It's through teaching that we have an opportunity for the continuation of the process of growth.

When I asked Professor Cheng about the possibility of studying with one of the great Pa Kua Hsing-yi masters in San Francisco he said: 'Why, when you have me? Remember: the growth of the tree is at the top!' And he pointed his finger to his nose and said: 'That's where we are. Don't get caught out on a limb.' The Professor was saying to learn from him and to follow his lead. So just as he gave us the 'Eight Ways,' [see *T'ai Chi Press, Vol.1, No.1*] I've given the team teaching method to the School of T'ai Chi, and of course the children's games. So the growth at the top of the tree continues, and we're teaching our students to do the same, to be a con-

tinuation of a long line of teachers.  
**When did you first meet Professor Cheng and what was your first experience of him?**

I was studying with Master Choy, whose father had been a brother student with Professor Cheng under Yang Ch'eng-fu. Master Choy's grandfather was the first to bring Yang style T'ai Chi to the United



A rare photo of Patrick teaching Push Hands to his apprentices.

States, so there is a strong historical connection with the Choy family in this country. From Master Choy I learned Sword, Sabre, T'ai Chi, and the fundamentals of Push Hands.

I also studied T'ai Chi with another Yang stylist, Doctor Liu, who had been trained in Hong Kong. She was a Ph.D. in physical education and spoke Mandarin, Cantonese, and English. From her I also learned Sword, Sabre, and T'ai Chi.

It was around this time that I showed Professor Cheng's book to Master Choy and asked him if would he help me to attend the Professor's classes should he ever come to San Francisco to teach. When he did eventually come there Master Choy sent his son, Frankie, and myself to study in the first class the Professor taught, at the Chinese Art Gallery in Chinatown.

It was quite an experience learning T'ai Chi from this gentle man, who was teaching us in a salon with his own paintings displayed around the walls. The only other Caucasian in the room was Tam Gibbs, who was working with the Professor as a translator. Tam had already learned the form in New York. Otherwise, the class consisted of Chinese people who spoke only Cantonese and no Mandarin, so English was the language of instruction for all of us.

During that time Tam and I developed a close rapport. We had a lot of good times following Professor Cheng around and taking him places in the car.

**Can you give an example what you did?**

Well, one of the trips we made was to Monterey to teach T'ai Chi to some Chinese students, one of whom had opened an art gallery. A gentleman there, who was a teacher of Mandarin at the Monterey Language Lab for the Military, asked us this question: 'How can I teach the concept of *chi* to westerners?' And I said to him: 'The only way you can do it is to teach your students T'ai Chi and let them experience it.' So he set up a T'ai Chi



## THE PUSH OF NO PUSH

What I remember as most extraordinary about Patrick was his touch, and the lightness and quickness of his movements.

From the beginning, around 1975, whenever he would push me, in the exact moment of push, I would feel a kind of blankness of mind, a feeling of no gravity, and then wham—I'd hit the wall! He did it over and over again, and yet I could never actually feel the moment of his 'pushing' me; a real Push of No Push.

During the first year I studied with him we went to visit my family. Patrick had never actually pushed me up to that point. In the afternoon he went around the house, banging on walls and muttering, "No, not strong enough." Finally he found a brick wall, pounded on it to feel its solidity, and then began pushing me. Many times I was 'caught' by the wall as I slammed into it, and each time he'd pull me out and do it again until I was in tears. I had no idea how to escape him or what he was doing. My family looked on, horrified, imagining they were seeing some kind of beating and wondering what they should do. Finally he said, "Okay, that's enough, your internal organs should be shaken down now."

These days in the study of Push Hands we acclimatize people more gently, although the goal of learning to use the wall as a friend is still the same. The really frustrating part of that classical T'ai Chi afternoon with Patrick was that a) I couldn't find any bruises on my body that I could complain about,

and b) I really couldn't feel his pushes.

I recall an astonishing experience with him that I describe as 'Patrick and the Egg.' One day we were returning from a store together and the local teenage gang was having an 'egg war,' hurling raw eggs across Seventh Avenue at the pedestrians, a distance of about seventy feet. Patrick managed to avoid them but to my annoyance I was hit on the lapel. When we got indoors and were taking off our coats, Patrick said, "What's this?", feeling a lump in his pocket. Putting his hand inside he withdrew an intact raw egg. When it came at him he'd actually neutralized it enough to capture it unbroken!

Even at the very end of his life he did not lose his touch. In fact, this was a time when you could really see that force was not involved. He sat up on the edge of his high bed two days before he died, so weak he could barely lift his arms and unable to stand unaided. Yet his spirit glowed from his eyes and his wit was intact. Putting his hands on my arm, he uprooted me. I felt very selfish asking this fragile being to "Please, do that one more time..." I still couldn't feel the moment of push, and he still got me—or I got myself I guess, and he was just there with perfect timing.

We looked that day at Paul Van Loenen's photographs of Sherry Kent pushing John Sambolino. Patrick loved these photos because they illustrated the real quality of a T'ai Chi push.

**Pat Gorman**

class at the language school.

Many years later, when my wife Peggy and I were at her old home in Connecticut, I discovered that the husband of a woman we were visiting had studied with this man, and

he told me this story. He said:

'I've never been very athletic. I was at the Language Lab on a three year program to learn Arabic and we had to pass these compulsory physical fitness tests: running, sit-

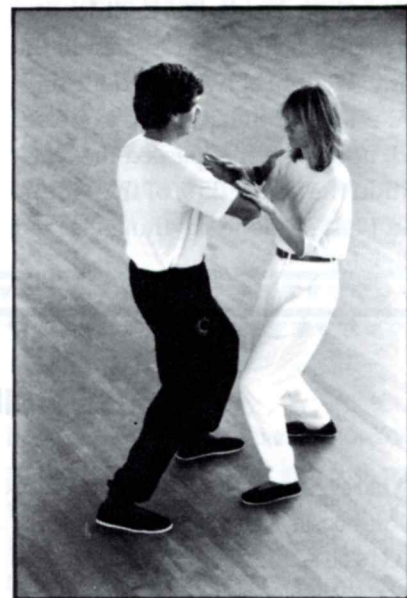


Photo: Paul van Loenen

Sherry's 'beauteous' hands sense Sam's balance and resistance with a touch of four ounces. She 'captures' his resistance by absorbing it than rather than meeting pressure with pressure. It is of the utmost importance to keep the contact at no more than four ounces.

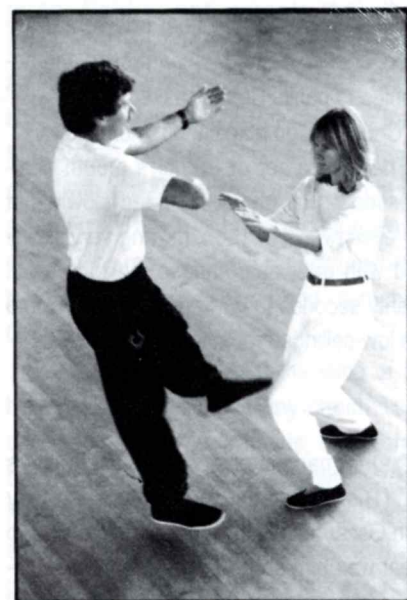


Photo: Paul van Loenen

Using only a slight forward shift, Sam's resistance is returned to him, resulting in a complete uproot, both of his feet leaving the ground simultaneously. Notice that Sherry is perfectly still while Sam is in flight. She has not overcommitted or added any force to her move.

ups and push-ups, etc. in order to stay in the school and remain in the army. Well this guy offered a T'ai Chi class and that's all the exercise I did, nothing else. I passed the test within the upper 25% of the group, and I hadn't done anything else but T'ai Chi!

I told him that this is a common experience: T'ai Chi will always enhance whatever it is you want to do; it gives you the energy to do what you need to do, especially on a physical level. Professor Cheng used to say: "T'ai Chi will enhance whatever you do, but whatever

else you do will slow down your progress in T'ai Chi.' And each time I've found this to be true. I used to observe it in San Francisco where there are a lot of hills: people would come to me after the first ten hours of class and say: "You know what happened to me today?"

I'd say: "No, what?"

"At lunchtime I walked up the hill I walk up every day and all of a sudden I was at the top and I wasn't winded! And the only thing I've been doing differently is T'ai Chi!"

And I'd say: "That's it, you're starting to embody principle—good for you!" These stories keep recurring and are not surprising to a good teacher.

**What was your first impression of Professor Cheng? What was your sense of him?**

Well, he came on very softly. I'd been with other masters in the hard martial arts and they could seesaw back and forth and be very brusque and heavy. Professor Cheng was always very gentle and soft, always healing. He was a fine artist, a poet and a calligrapher with a delicate touch. My mother said she thought he was the gentlest man she had ever met.

**What were the Professor's methods as a teacher?**

His teaching method was mostly traditional. In New York, after we eventually learned the form, he'd demonstrate the first move in silence, maybe speak a little Chinese, then he'd leave the room and the senior students would be left to teach the remainder of the class. But in the very early days he stayed with us the whole time to help us through.

Ben Lo was the one who

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## IN THE BLINK OF AN EYE

Bradley faced in his direction as Patrick demonstrated the move three times.

"Let's do it," he said.

Bradley blinked awake.

"Uh, could you show the last part again?"

Patrick frowned. The question emerged under eyes slitted with a pretense of deep thought about what he had seen. A smile flickered at the corner of Patrick's mouth as he got into position.

"Okay," he said, and moved so fast that Bradley only saw the final position. Wide eyed, cheeks flushed, embarrassed and beginning to panic, Bradley asked,

"Could you do it again, but more slowly?"

The left corner of Patrick's mouth compressed as he shook his head slowly, but his eyes twinkled. Then, moving very slowly and with utter smoothness, he took a full twenty seconds to go from having sunk into the low-ceilinged room to ward-off left.



Patrick had persuaded the Chile Peppers (The first group of Americans to study with Oscar Ichazo in South America. Ed.) to meet with him so he could give them a private demonstration of T'ai Chi. He wanted them to make T'ai Chi part of Arica's official activities, and knew that the best way would be to start with a 'special' class for this more advanced group. But he had to convince them first. He took me along.

They had a hard time focussing on his

talk, so he asked if they wanted to see martial applications. They came awake.

There was no clear wall in the small hotel room, so we faced off in the middle of the carpet. After a few circles in which I wobbled more and more wildly to the general approval of the watchers, Patrick uprooted me with an imperceptible touch. I flew a few feet thru the air, landed in an awkward heap amid gasps of surprise and immediately began to spring up to work again. Without thought or hesitation, Patrick's right leg flicked and his foot raced toward my temple with astonishing speed. It stopped against my head softly and delicately.

Patrick's jaw dropped, his body stiffened and he shambled quickly, sticklike, towards me. He slammed his hands roughly against the sides of my head, then rubbed and jolted it, all the time apologizing,

"I didn't mean to do that! It was just a reaction. I thought you were going to attack me. You should have stayed down until I told you to get up. Are you alright?"

I had to jerk my head away from the pummeling. His attempt at fixing things was giving me a headache.

"I'm fine. You don't have to do any more. Your foot barely touched me. It didn't hurt until you used your hands!"

Next he lectured the Chile Peppers on the speed and accuracy of automatic response by a trained body.

George Hall

summed it up when he saw a video of Professor Cheng teaching in New York. He said: "My God, he puts his hands on you!" So, literally, we had the hands of the Master on us, which is something they didn't have in Taiwan. There he taught in the traditional way: you touch him, you get pushed.

He never put his hands on the junior students to correct them, it was always verbal or through the senior students. So the fact that we had free access to him and that he corrected his senior pupils with his own hands was a real blessing. This shows that Professor Cheng was a true Master of Change since he was totally able to adapt his teaching to the Western style. This was our gift from him, that we received direct transmission from his hands on approach.

#### **Did he tell stories of his own teachers?**

Oh yes, he told stories about Yang Ch'eng-fu and about Yang Ch'eng-fu's family, his uncles, his father, and he told stories about T'ai Chi students and their processes and how they came to him. Because of the types of teaching stories he used to tell, some people in New York regarded Professor Cheng as a Chinese Sufi master.

#### **Can you recall any of those stories?**

Well, this may not be what you'd call a Sufi tale, but I do recall one story he told us about Yang Ch'eng-fu.

Yang Ch'eng-fu was a northern Chinese, very heavy and big, almost seven feet tall. In the photographs of him in books doing the form it looks as if his wrists are broken backwards, and it looks like he's leaning. I asked Professor Cheng

about these anomalies and his answers were very interesting. He said that Yang Ch'eng-fu's wrist joints were so open he could take his own two fingers and put them inside the joint, which was why he could bend his wrist up rather than keep

Beauteous Hand. It was open so the chi could flow, it was not locked up like it would be for us. *Sung* is the quality: relax and sink. You're sinking chi but at the same time the chi is relaxing through the sinews, muscles, and the joints, letting them all

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## REELING AND TUMBLING

It's the Fall of 1978 and Greg Woodson and I are travelling through Europe with Patrick promoting and teaching T'ai Chi. It's an evening lecture-demo in London and Patrick is showing the films of Professor Cheng demonstrating T'ai Chi and doing Push Hands. The house is packed. The films end and Patrick takes questions from the audience. Someone asks if there are any other teachers of T'ai Chi in Europe who he respects. He answers simply, "No," and goes on to the next question without missing a beat.

At the end of the evening I talk with a former Arica trainer of mine, who is dressed in orange and wearing a Rajneesh mala. He tells me his teacher, a student of Yang Ch'eng-fu (or his direct lineage) named Master Chu, wishes to meet Patrick.

This teacher, a young and intense looking red-eyed man, dressed in a black Chinese outfit, meets us next day at his home. Also present are his two students, who identify themselves by their spiritual names of Raju and Sangten. Patrick, Greg and I are joined by Richard Royds and Laurie Hoose, who witness the day's events.

On Master Chu's wall are photographs of Yang Ch'eng-fu and several other Chinese who he describes in the lineage. After tea we adjourn to another room, which is thinly carpeted. Master Chu assumes the role of teacher to Patrick, doing much talking and explaining. They face each other with Chu's

back to the wall. Chu assumes a 70/30 stance with his hands in a push position as Patrick puts up a ward-off. The moment Chu touches Patrick's ward-off, he is repelled and sent reeling towards the wall, which he hits, losing his balance and tumbling to the floor. I didn't see Patrick's arm move.

Chu stands up, red-faced and looking confused and embarrassed. They engage again for a few more tries. They move quickly and, it seems to me, with increasing force. Neither one uproots the other. Suddenly Patrick laughs his deep baritone and suggests they return to their tea. Chu is saying something about Patrick using force to push him. He calls for his students to engage with him and pushes them both at the same time. They reel backwards the length of the living room and fall. Patrick replicates the feat. Chu pushes Greg and somehow Greg is hurt.

Chu pushes me. I feel the sting of his hand as it slaps against my chest. They don't feel like Patrick's hands; I'm pushed backwards to the wall. A few minutes later Patrick pushes me. As usual I feel nothing except my feet leaving the floor and my body mass accelerating into the wall. Chu accuses Patrick of being forceful with his arms.

I experienced both sets of hands—those of the one who called himself a Master and the one I call Master.

Neil Gumenick



fall open like a child's.

**Do you know the story of Yang Ch'eng-fu being locked up?**

It was said that he was locked in a room by his father for three years because when he went to work in Beijing to teach T'ai Chi—the public form, not the private family form—to the bodyguards of the Emperor, he got into carousing and drinking. When his father heard of this he got quite angry and called him home and locked him up. He fed him, saw to his studies and made him practise special T'ai Chi work. After three years he emerged with a mastery that stayed with him for the rest of his life.

**I'd like to ask you about your own beginnings as a teacher of T'ai Chi. Is it true that you originally taught at the Esalen Institute?**

Yes, that was before I met Oscar and before I did Arica work. In the very early days I started in a little garage in San Francisco owned by the Noyes family, who were the owners of the Chinese press and periodicals, but they were real small classes I taught there.

In those early days I also taught at the San Francisco Jewish Community Center on Presidio and California Streets, where the old California cable car line used to go. When I was a kid I went there to learn how to swim and do gymnastics, judo, dancing, and theater. So it was only fair that I return there to teach them T'ai Chi.

It was then that I first coined the

name 'The School of T'ai Chi Chuan.' I'd been reading Idries Shah's book on the Sufis and prior to that I'd been reading about Gurdjieff and his travels. He talks about the Sarmoun Brotherhood in the Pamir, who refer to themselves as *The School*, and I thought that would be a wonderful name, so that was when the 'School of T'ai Chi Chuan' was christened.

I was also teaching at Esalen



Patrick teaching T'ai Chi at the Arica Reunion in Hawaii. Note the degree of his rotation in 'Cloud Hands.'

around this time. It was there that I started hearing about what was going on in Arica, Chile, with Oscar Ichazo—who was referred to at that time as a Sufi Master of the 'rapid method' (Naqshbandi). Needless to say this is only one of the things Oscar knew about, since he himself is an original and his work to this day proves that. He truly is a source of a new tradition.

At that time we were getting reports of Oscar via what we referred to as *The John Lilly tapes*, and we used to sit around and listen to

them. He sounded so much like Professor Cheng, in terms of what he was saying, that I thought the two of them should meet.

Eventually I had the great privilege of bringing these two masters together, and it was like the meeting of two lost brothers.

**The School has grown significantly since then—how did you attract students in those early days?**

We went to a lot of street fairs and did demonstrations of T'ai Chi and gave out cards that had koans on them with little graphics. For example, there'd be a picture of a mouth with teeth and tongue showing, and it would ask the question: Why does the tongue far outlast the teeth?', and inside it would say: *Because in softness there is real strength*, School of T'ai Chi Chuan, our phone number, etc.

We had a whole series of cards like that for giveaways.

We'd answer questions and pass out information sheets and so on.

**Where do you see the School right now, and what do you see for its future?**

Well, I think we're doing our job, and we'll continue to do our job. If the load ever lightens it would be wonderful, but this is what we train for. We train to be of service, and we've learned to work with nothing. Certainly the School of T'ai Chi Chuan has woven whole cloth from nothing; we've had to scrape and scratch for everything. I'm totally ap-

Photo: Paul van Loenen



preciative of the many, many people who have contributed to forming and maintaining the School.

I would like to say here how proud I am of the senior students and teachers who came through with a team that was able to run the school when I was very sick recently, and who are still running the school. There are people who thought that if anything happened

to me that would be the end of the School of T'ai Chi Chuan, but all this time I've been working to replace myself so that teams and a method across the school could continue the work, so that if in another reincarnation I came back I would be able to regain my mastery again by studying here. Now I have absolute faith that this is possible. ▼



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## RECOLLECTIONS

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I was a City of Ft. Lauderdale lifeguard and a swimming instructor and a spear fisherman of some renown. I could dive to a depth of 75 feet and hold my breath for three and a half minutes. But when I began to do some of Patrick's Hawaiian Swimming exercises I discovered I had an innate fear of the water. And Hawaiian Swimming was about being *relaxed* in the water. I was determined to master the 'stroke.' After several years of working at it I was much more relaxed in the water, but I still possessed that diffuse anxiety which kept me from being completely relaxed. We have that same fear in T'ai Chi: the fear of letting go.

I asked Patrick why I was still fearful in the water. He said that to be afraid in the water was natural and that it would never really go away, but I could learn to relax despite the anxiety.

He talked about how much faster human beings would be able to swim in the future. He said that the legs needed to be balanced with the arms and that when they were swimming records would topple. At that time, in competitive swimming, the legs were not emphasized. Recently during the Olympics, many records were being broken as result of the difference in emphasis in training on the use of the legs. One distance record was broken by five minutes.

I recently talked with a competitive swimmer and she said some of her friends now went to an exclusive training camp in New Mexico where the coach emphasized the kicking part of the stroke. Patrick Watson was teaching us how to do this more than ten years ago.

**Michael Tillman**

A few weeks before Patrick died I went to visit him in New York. He lay on his bed, very thin and pale but peaceful. He asked me what we were working on in Push Hands class and I tried to explain it to him. He shook his head and sat up on the edge of the bed and had me stand in a 70/30 position in front of him. He put a frail hand on me and immediately I lost my balance. He said I was being too external with the new material I was learning and that I had to go more inside. I tried again but was completely unable to remain in principle as this old man followed and thwarted my efforts to remain in balance. He said to keep practising.

**Margaret Olmsted**

I was looking for a phone in the apartment house. I went down the hall to Patrick's room and knocked on his door to ask him where it was. He came out, picked me up, got me to a futon and pinned me down. All that happened was a lot of tickling and giggling and some light hearted screaming, but I knew I was safe. In the years that followed he often took advantage of my fear of being tickled. Eventually I came to see it as one of those relaxation exercises I would never succeed at.

I remember one evening in Amsterdam, just after his arrival. We'd usually meet at a Chinese restaurant, exchange hugs and little presents, and then enjoy a feast. This would invariably be followed by our global plans for T'ai Chi. One evening walking away from the Chinese district we spotted a huge mirror lying atop some builder's rubble, and realized it would be an ideal addition to our teaching fac-



-ility, so we decided to carry it away. The sight of our small crowd making its way slowly and contentedly down the tree-lined canal, some carrying their share of the mirror, others just chatting and ambling along with Patrick at the helm recalls for me the good humor, relaxation, and accomplishment I've so often enjoyed in our school.

Linda Coviello

### “WHAT ROUGH BEAST...”

Often fat

Dressed somewhere between a mercenary soldier and a street person

Rude, arrogant, ungracious and ungrateful,

He glided into our lives

And blew them up

Comfort went out the window.

Pride really went before a fall.

You were an object of contempt if you

disagreed about ANYTHING.

Pain was good,

So was exhaustion.

Rest of any sort

A waste, impediment and sabotage.

How will we replace him?

That huge pompous lonely

self neglecting ego

Wrapped around a glorious spirit,

That broke through like the dawn

With a blaze of love astonishing for its purity

And long absences.

To achieve so much with such a load!

Our daintier ways, our mincing egos,

Have not yet parted to reveal

so great a soul.

George Hall



Photo: Harry Meeker

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Three women whose lives were changed by T'ai Chi and Patrick Watson.  
From left to right: Pat Gorman, Peggy Watson, Margaret Matsumoto

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