PROPERTY OF BRUCE LEE

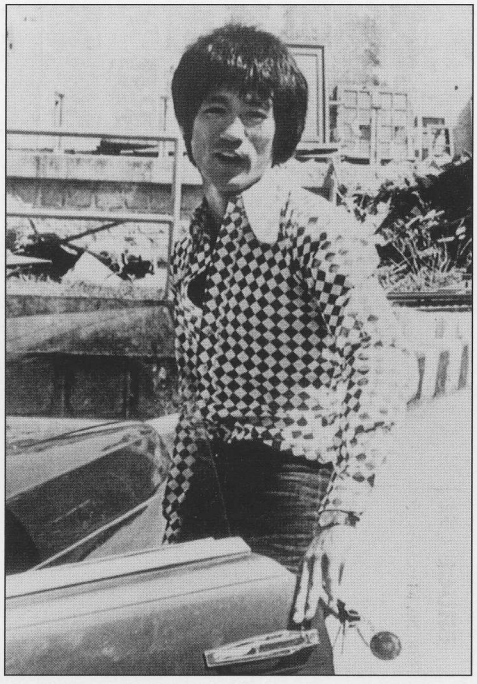
Selections from the Personal Library of Bruce Lee

By John Little

This Month:
Zen in the Art of Archery

Author: Eugen Herrigel
Publisher: Pantheon Books Inc., New York, NY.

Date of Publication: First Printing, September 1953; Fifth Printing, August 1960



One of the books from Bruce Lee's library that served to have a continuing influence upon his thought processes, from the time he first picked it up in Seattle during the early 1960s until his passing in Hong Kong in 1973, was a little 109 page hardcover book entitled *Zen in the Art of Archery.*

Lee purchased the title while he was living at 1122 Jefferson Street, in Seattle, Washington and recommended it highly to his close friends and students such as Taky Kimura. According to Kimura, Zen in the Art of Archery was a profound book in Bruce's development:

> "I think that book epitomized what Bruce was all about. When we see the message that Bruce left us, it's not that we should all be militant and warriors, but peaceful. That's how you get the job done. It's becoming conscious that there is a higher level of what one can achieve. I remember Bruce recommending it to me while he was living at Ruby Chow's, so, of course, I went out and bought a copy. And the message I got from it is that there is a higher plateau of one's being that one needs to achieve rather than stopping at just the physical aspect. If we are to leave any legacy behind us, then we have to know who we are - otherwise you're simply a false copy of something or someone else. It spoke to higher principles and looked at archery and swordsmanship as merely the vehicle to this new state of consciousness, which was exactly how Bruce looked at the martial arts."

The book featured an introduction by the famed Zen master, D. T. Suzuki and was written by Eugen Herrigel, who had been a professor of philosophy at the University of Tokyo during the 1930s. It was during this time, in fact, that Herrigel took a six years' course of instruction in the art of archery with one of the great masters of this "chivalrous art."

According to the book's description on the inside of the dust jacket:

> The Japanese understand archery not as a sport as a religious ritual; it presupposes a spiritual attitude taught by Dyhanna Buddhism, which in Japan is known as "Zen." "Zen" is not speculation but immediate experience of a mystical character. The author's lessons in archery therefore were actually mystical exercises. He describes his training step by step, recollecting in detail all the resistances and inhibitions he had to overcome before he succeeded in penetrating into the spirit of Zen doctrine. A doctrine as elusive as Zen is not so much explained as demonstrate din the process of training. The very fact that the teachings of the master are not bound up with something as tangible as bow, arrow, and target, make it possible for the Western reader to get more than a glimpse of a fascinating realm of spiritual life - perhaps the strangest the Far East has to offer.

Let us now review the contents of Bruce Lee's copy of this peculiarly fascinating book and allow Bruce Lee himself to point out the passages he found particularly significant to his life and philosophy of martial art.

Key:

Plain writing = a sentence or passage that Bruce Lee considered significant enough to warrant underlining.

Italics = notations that Bruce Lee felt compelled to make in the margins of the book, next to a particular passage.

[square brackets] = passage either before or after a sentence underlined by Bruce Lee that is necessary for purposes of context.

FROM THE INTRODUCTION BY DAISETZ T. SUZUKI

[One of the most significant features we notice in the practice of archery, and in fact of all the arts as they are studied in Japan and probably also in other Far Eastern countries, is that they are not intended for utilitarian purposes only or for purely aesthetic enjoyments, but are meant] to train the mind; [indeed,] to bring it into contact with the ultimate reality.

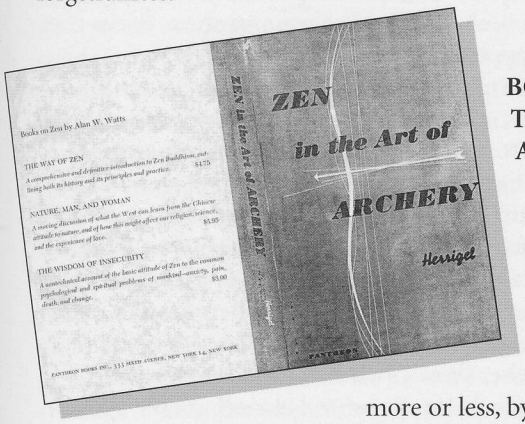
[If one really wishes to be master of an art,] technical knowledge of it is not enough. One has to transcend technique so that art becomes an "artless art" growing out of the

Unconscious.

[In the case of archery, the hitter and the hit are] no longer two opposing objects, but are one reality. [The archer ceases to be conscious of himself as the one who is engaged in hitting the bull's eye which confronts him.] This state of unconsciousness is realized only when, completely empty and rid of the self, he becomes one with the perfecting of his technical skill, though there is in it something of a quite different order which cannot be attained by any progressive study of the art.

As soon as we reflect, deliberate, and conceptualize, the original unconsciousness is lost and a thought interferes. We no longer eat while eating, we no longer sleep while sleeping.

Man is a thinking reed but his great works are done when he is not calculating and thinking. ["Childlikeness" has to be restored with long years of training in] the art of self-forgetfulness.



FROM THE BOOK "ZEN IN THE ART OF ARCHERY"

...by the "art" of archery he does not mean the ability of the sportsman, which can be controlled, more or less, by bodily exercises, but an ability whose origin is to be sought in spiritual exercises and whose aim consists in hitting a spiritual goal, so that fundamentally the marksman aims at himself and may even succeed in hitting himself.

In the margin next to this underlined passage, Lee has written:

1.) *"Tools" to unlock the spiritual.*
2.) *Tools to unlock the opponent's defense.*

That a physical activity such as martial art or archery should be looked, not primarily as a means to dominate an opponent, but rather as a key to unlock certain spiritual truths, would be a belief that would continue to resonate throughout Bruce Lee's life. Years later, after Lee had created Jeet Kune Do, he would write the following:

And so it is with martial arts. To the Westerner, the finger jabs, the side kicks, the back fist, etc., are tools of destruction and violence which is, indeed, one of their functions. But the Oriental believes that the primary function of such tools is revealed when they are self-directed and destroy greed, fear, anger and folly. Manipulative skill is not the Oriental's goal. He is aiming his kicks and blows at himself and when successful, may even succeed in knocking himself out.

[Source: Bruce Lee's essay entitled "True Mastery," published on pages 205-206 of the book *Bruce Lee: Artist of Life*, edited by John Little, Published by the Charles E. Tuttle Publishing Company, Boston, (c) 1999 Linda Lee Cadwell]

[The "Great Doctrine" of archery tells us...archery is still a matter o f life and death] to the extent that it is a contest of the archer with himself; [and this kind of contest is not a paltry substitute,] but the foundation of all contests outwardly directed [— for instance with a bodily opponent.]

Bruce Lee has written in the margins next to the above passage:

Confucius: "From inward to outward."

And:

The spiritual training as the foundation of all contest outwardly directed.

[For access to the art - and the master] archers of all times are agreed in this - is only granted to those who are "pure" in heart, untroubled by subsidiary aims.

In the margin next to this sentence Bruce Lee has written:

Requirement to be an artist.

...it is necessary for the archer to become, in spite of himself, an unmoved center. Then comes the supreme and ultimate miracle: art becomes "artless," shooting becomes not-shooting, a shooting without bow and arrow; the teachers becomes a pupil again, the Master a beginner, the end a beginning, and the beginning perfection.

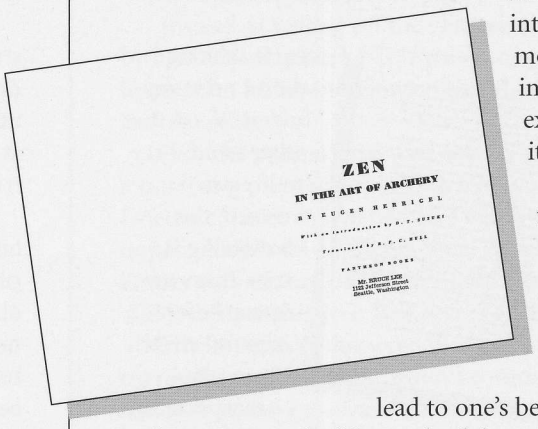
Next to this underlined passage, Lee has written:

The returning to the "common"

And:

Emptiness = totality
a) totality of mind
b) totality of physical structure

[All of them presuppose a spiritual attitude and each cultivates it in its own way - an attitude which, in its most exalted form, is characteristic of Buddhism and determines the nature of the priestly type of man. I do not mean Buddhism in the ordinary sense, nor am I concerned here with the decidedly speculative form of Buddhism, which, because of its allegedly accessible literature, is the only one we know in Europe and even claim to understand. I mean Dhyana Buddhism, which is known in Japan as "Zen" and is not speculation at all but] immediate experience of what, as the bottomless ground of Being, [cannot be apprehended by intellectual means, and cannot be conceived or interpreted even after the most unequivocal and incontestable experiences:] one knows it by now knowing it.



[For the sake of those crucial experiences Zen Buddhism has struck out on paths which, through methodical immersion in oneself, lead to one's becoming aware, in the deepest ground of the soul, of the unnameable]

Groundlessness and Qualitylessness [— nay more,] to one's becoming one with it. [And this, with respect to archery and expressed in very tentative and on that account possibly misleading language, means that the spiritual exercises, thanks to which alone the technique of archery becomes an art and, if all goes well, perfects itself as the "artless art," are] mystical exercises, [and accordingly] archery can in no circumstances mean accomplishing anything outwardly with bow and arrow, but only inwardly, with oneself. Bow and arrow are only a pretext for something that could just as well happen without them, only the way to a goal, not the goal itself, only helps for the last decisive leap.

Bruce Lee then writes:

*All the physical, technical form are means to the goal, and not the goal itself.**

And:

Outwardly doesn't amount [to] much, inwardly is the goal of no goal.

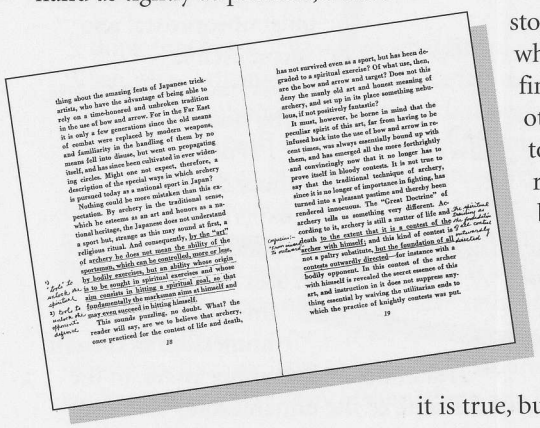
[* — This first point is particularly important, as it is a recasting - and perhaps the genesis of - Bruce Lee's belief in martial art as a vehicle to the transcendent, rather than being the "thing in itself;" an encouragement that the purpose of the pursuit is, again, not domination of an opponent, but mastery of oneself. And, to extrapolate from this, if the goal is enlightenment and the means are arbitrary, i.e., "Bow and arrow (or martial art for that matter) are only a pretext for something that could just as well happen without them," then any "means" - from painting to woodworking - can serve this purpose]

Unless we enter into mystic experience by direct participation, we remain outside, turn and twist as we may.

[No less decisive, on the other hand, is the fact that] his [experiences, his conquests and spiritual transformations, so long as they still remain "his," must be conquered and transformed again and again until everything] "his" [is annihilated. Only in this way can he attain a basis for experiences which, as the] "all-embracing Truth," [rouse him to a life that is no longer his everyday, personal life.

[Everything must hinge on the art of archery, which, I sometimes feel, is even] more difficult to expound than to learn...

["I understand well enough," I said, "that the hand mustn't be opened with a jerk if the shot is not to be spoiled. But however I set about it, it always goes wrong. If I clench my hand as tightly as possible, I can't



stop it shaking when I open my fingers. If, on the other hand, I try to keep it relaxed, the bowstring is torn from my grasp before the full stretch is reached - unexpectedly, it is true, but still too early.]

I am caught between these two kinds of failure and see no way of escape." "You must hold the drawn bowstring," answered the Master, "like a little child holding the proffered finger. It grips it so firmly that one marvels at the strength of the tiny fist. And when it lets the finger go, there is not the slightest jerk. Do you know why? Because a child doesn't think: I will now let go of the finger in order to grasp this other thing. Completely unself-consciously, without purpose, it turns from one to the other, and we would say that it was playing with the things, were it not equally true that the things are playing with the child."

You do not wait for fulfillment, but brace yourself for failure.

[So I must] become purposeless...

[Was not this] letting go of oneself, [of which the Master had spoken, a state on] the way to emptiness and detachment?

...why try to anticipate in thought what only experience can teach?

["When you come to the lessons in the future," he warned us,] "you must collect yourselves on your way here. Focus your minds on what happens in the practice-hall. Walk past everything without noticing it, as if there were only one thing in the world that is important and real, and that is archery!"

[If the shot is to be loosed right,] the physical loosening must now be continued in a mental and spiritual loosening, so as to make the mind not only agile, but free:] agile because of its freedom, and free because of its original agility; and this] original agility [is essentially different from everything that is usually understood by mental agility. Thus, between these two states of bodily relaxedness on the one hand and spiritual freedom on the other there I s a difference of level which cannot be overcome by breath-control alone, but only by] withdrawing from all attachments whatsoever, by becoming utterly egoless; [so that the soul, sunk within itself, stands in the plentitude of its nameless origin.

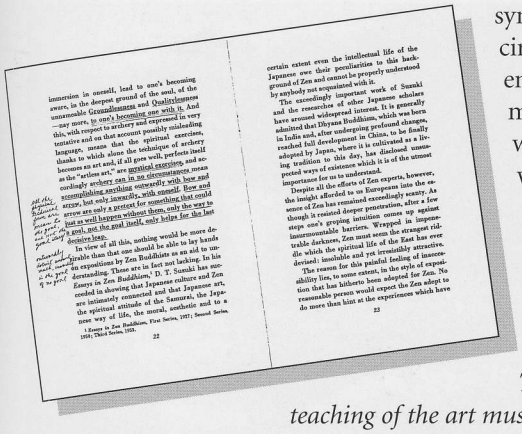
The demand that the door of the senses be closed is not met by turning energetically away from the sensible world, but rather by a readiness to yield without resistance.

[This exquisite] state of unconcerned immersion in oneself [is not, unfortunately, of long duration.]

The only successful way of rendering this disturbance inoperative is to keep on breathing quietly and unconcernedly, to enter into friendly relations with whatever appears on the scene, to accustom oneself to it, to look at it equably and at last grow weary of looking. In this way one gradually gets into a state which resembles the melting drowsiness on the verge of sleep.

This state, in which nothing definite is thought, planned, striven for, desired or expected, which aims in no particular direction and yet knows itself capable alike of the possible and the impossible, so unswerving is its power - this state, which is at bottom purposeless and egoless, was called by the Master truly "spiritual."

[This means that] the mind or spirit is present everywhere, because it is nowhere attached to any particular place. And it can remain present because, even when related to this or that object, it does not cling to it] by reflection and thus lose its original mobility.] Like water filling a pond, which is always ready to flow off again, it can work its inexhaustible power because it is free, and be open to everything because it is empty. [This state is essentially] a primordial state, [and its



immersion in oneself, lead to one's becoming aware, in the deepest ground of the soul, of the unutterable Groundlessness and Qualitylessness —nay more, to one's becoming one with it. And this, with respect to archery and expressed in very tentative and on that account possibly misleading language, means that the spiritual exercises, thanks to which alone the technique of archery becomes an art and, if all goes well, perfects itself as the "artless art," are genuine exercises, and accordingly archery can in no circumstances mean accomplishing anything outwardly with bow and arrow, but only inwardly, with oneself. Bow and arrow are only a pretext for something that could just as well happen without them, only the way to one's goal, not the goal itself, only helps for the last decisive leap.

In view of all this, nothing would be more desirable than that one should be able to lay hands on expositions by Zen Buddhists as an aid to understanding. There are in fact not lacking. In his Essays in Zen Buddhism,[1] D. T. Suzuki has succeeded in showing that Japanese art, and more are intimately connected and that Japanese art, the spiritual attitude of the Samurai, the Japanese way of life, the moral, aesthetic and to a certain extent even the intellectual life of the Japanese owe their peculiarities to this background of Zen and cannot be properly understood by anybody not acquainted with it.

The exceedingly important work of Suzuki and the researches of other Japanese scholars have aroused widespread interest. It is generally admitted that Dhyana Buddhism, which was born in India and, after undergoing profound changes, reached full development in China, to be finally adopted by Japan, where it is cultivated as a living tradition to this day, has disclosed unsuspected ways of existence which it is of the utmost importance for us to understand.

Despite all the efforts of Zen experts, however, the insight afforded to us Europeans into the essence of Zen has remained exceedingly scanty. As though it resisted deeper penetration, after a few steps one's groping intuition comes up against insurmountable barriers. Wrapped in impenetrable darkness, Zen must seem the strangest riddle which the spiritual life of the East has ever devised: insoluble and yet irresistibly attractive.

The reason for this painful feeling of inexcusability lies, to some extent, in the style of exposition that has hitherto been adopted for Zen. No reasonable person would expect the Zen adept to do more than hint at the experiences which have

1 Essays in Zen Buddhism, First Series, 1927; Second Series, 1933; Third Series, 1934.

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symbol, the empty circle, is not empty of meaning for him who stands within it.]

At the bottom of this passage Bruce Lee has written:

The structure & teaching of the art must be smoothed to lead to the end. Right means toward right end.

[The necessary detachment and self-liberation, the inward-turning and intensification of life until] full presence of mind [is reached, are therefore not left to chance or to favorable conditions, the less so as the more depends on them...]

[The Japanese pupil brings with him three things:] good education, passionate love for his chosen art, and uncritical veneration of his teacher.

[Nothing more is required of the pupil, at first, than that he should conscientiously copy what the teacher shows him. Shunning long-winded instructions and explanations, the latter contents himself with perfunctory commands and does not reckon on any questions from the pupil. Impassively he looks on at the blundering efforts, not even hoping for independence or initiative, and] waits patiently for growth and ripeness. [Both have time: the teacher does not harass, and the pupil does not overtax himself.]

The Masters behave as if they were alone. They hardly condescend to give their pupils a glance, still less a word. They carry out the preliminary movements musingly and composedly, they efface themselves in the process of shaping and creating, and to both the pupils and themselves it seems like a self-contained event from the first opening maneuvers to the completed work. And indeed the whole thing has such expressive power that is affects the beholder like a picture.

[He sticks to this traditional custom because he knows from experience that] the preparations for working put him simultaneously in the right frame of mind for creating. The meditative repose in which he performs them gives him that vital loosening and equability of all his powers, that collectedness and presence of mind, without which no right work can be done.

[Sunk without purpose in what he is doing, he is brought face to face with that moment when the work, hovering before him in ideal lines, realizes itself as if of its own accord. As with the steps and postures in archery, so here in modified form other preparations have the same meaning. And only where this does not apply, as for instance with religious dancers and actors, are] the self-recollection and self-immersion practiced before [they appear on the stage.]

[More clearly than the teacher could express it in words,] they tell the pupil that he right frame of mind for the artist is only reached when the preparing and the creating, the technical and the artistic, the material and the spiritual, the project and the object, flow together without a break. And here he finds a new theme for emulation. He is now required to exercise perfect control over the various ways of concentration and self-effacement. Imitation, no longer applied to objective contents which anybody can copy with a little good will, becomes looser, nimbler, more spiritual.

[There is one scarcely avoidable danger that lies ahead of the pupil on his road to mastery...the danger of getting stuck in his achievement, which is confirmed by his success and magnified by this renown: in other words, of behaving as if the artistic existence were a form of life hat bore witness to its own validity. The teacher foresees this danger...by pointing out, casually and as though it were scarcely worth a mention in view of all that the pupil has already learned, that all right doing is accomplished only in a state of] true selflessness, in which the doer cannot be present any longer as "himself." Only the spirit is present, a kind of awareness which shows no trace of egohood and for that reason ranges without limit through all distances and depths, with "eyes that hear and with ears that see."

Thus the teacher lets his pupil voyage onward through himself. But the pupil, with growing receptivity, lets the teacher bring to view something of which he has often heard but whose reality is only now beginning to become tangible on the basis of his own experiences.

[...the teacher transfers the spirit of the right art from] heart to heart, that it may be illumined. If such should be granted to the pupil, he remembers that more important than all outward works, however attractive, is the inward work which he has to accomplish if he is to fulfill his vocation as an artist. The inward work, however, consists in his turning the man he is, and the self he feels himself and perpetually finds himself to be, into the raw material of a training and shaping whose end is mastery.

Often nothing keeps the pupil on the move but his faith in his teacher, whose mastery is now beginning to dawn on him. He is a living example of the inner work, and he convinces by his mere presence.

"The way to the goal is not to be measured! Of what importance are weeks, months, years?"

"Once you have grown truly egoless, you can break off at any time. Keep on practicing that."

["Now go on] practicing as if nothing had happened."

"Your arrows do not carry," [observed the Master], "because they do not reach far enough spiritually...[It does not depend on the bow,] but on the presence of mind, on the vitality and awareness with which you shoot.

Instead of reeling off the ceremony like something learned by heart, it will then be as if you were creating it under the inspiration of the moment, so that dance and dancer are one and the same.

[For the professional who counts his hits, the target is only a miserable piece of paper which he shoots to bits. The "Great Doctrine" holds this to be sheer devilry. It knows nothing of a target which is set up at a definite distance from the archer.' It knows only of the goal, which cannot be aimed at technically, and [it names this goal, if it names it at all, the Buddha."]

"Do not forget that even in Nature there are correspondences which cannot be understood, and yet are so real that we have grown accustomed tot hem, just as if they could not be any different. I will give you an example which I

have often puzzled over. The spider dances her web without knowing that there are flies who will get caught in it. The fly, dancing nonchalantly on a sunbeam, gets caught in the net without knowing what lies in store. But through both of them "It' dances, and inside and outside are united in this dance. So, too, the archer hits the target without having aimed - more I cannot say."

On the other hand I know that this seeing is not enough, decides nothing, explains nothing.

["That was a right shot," said the Master decisively, "and so it must begin. But] enough for today, otherwise you will take special pains with the next shot and spoil the good beginning."

But if ever the least flicker of satisfaction showed in my face the Master turned on me with unwonted fierceness. "What are you thinking of?" he would cry. "You know already that you should not grieve over bad shots; learn now not to rejoice over the good ones. You must free yourself from the buffetings of pleasure and pain, and learn to rise above them in easy equanimity, to rejoice as though not you but another had shot well.

"He who can shoot with the horn of the hare and the hair of the tortoise, and can hit the center without bow (horn) and arrow (hair), he alone is Master in the highest sense of the word - Master of the artless art. Indeed, he is the artless art itself and thus Master and No-Master in one. At this point archery, considered as the unmoved movement, the undanced dance, passes over into Zen."

[For this is what the art of archery means:] a profound and far-reaching contest of the archer with himself.

[Among swordmasters, on the basis of their own and their pupils' experience, it is taken as proved that the beginner, however strong and pugnacious he is, and however courageous and fearless he may be at the outset, loses not only his lack of self-consciousness, but his self-confidence, as soon as he starts taking lessons. He gets to know all the technical possibilities by which his life may be endangered in combat, and al though he soon becomes capable of] straining his attention to the utmost, [of keeping a sharp watch on his opponent, of parrying his thrusts correctly and making effective lunges, he is really worse off than before, when, half in jest and half in earnest, he struck about him at random under the inspiration of the moment and as the joy of battle suggested. He is now forced to admit that he is at the mercy of everyone who is stronger, more nimble and more practiced than he. He sees no other way open to him except ceaseless practice, and his instructor too has no other advice to give him for the present. So the beginner] stakes everything on surpassing the others and even himself. [He acquires a brilliant technique, which gives him back some of his lost self-confidence, and thinks he is drawing nearer and nearer to the desired goal. The instructor, however, thinks differently - rightly so, avers Takuan, since] all the skill of the beginner only leads to his "heart being snatched away by the sword."

But why is it that he, who has long since learned not to let himself be swept away by the heat of battle, but to keep a cool head, to conserve his strength, and who know feels inured to long-drawn combats and can hardly find an opponent to match him in all his circle - why is it that, judged by the highest standards, he fails at the last moment and makes no headway?

[The reason, according to Takuan, is that the] pupil cannot

stop watching his opponent and his swordplay; that he is always thinking how he can best come at him, waiting for the moment when he is off his guard. In short, he relies all the time on his art and knowledge. By so doing, Takuan says, he loses his "presence of heart" : the decisive thrust always comes too late and he is unable to "turn his opponent's word against him." The more he tries to make the brilliance of his swordplay [dependent on his own reflection, on the conscious utilization of his skill, on his fighting experience and tactics, the more he inhibits the free "working of the heart." What is to be done? How does] skill become spiritual," [and how does sovereign control of technique turn into master swordplay? Only, so we are informed, by the pupil's] becoming purposeless and egoless. He must be taught to be detached not only from opponent but from himself. [He must pass through the stage he is still at and leave it behind him for] good, even at the risk of irretrievable failure. Does not this sound as nonsensical as the demand that the archer should hit without taking aim, that he should completely lose sight of the goal and his intention to hit it? It is worth remembering, however, [that the master swordsmanship whose essence Takuan describes has vindicated itself in a thousand contests].

The pupil must develop a new sense or, more accurately, a new alertness of all his senses, which will enable him to avoid dangerous thrusts as thought eh could feel them coming. Once he has mastered this art of evasion, he no longer needs to watch with undivided attention the movements of his opponent, or even of several opponents at once. Rather, he sees

and feels what is going to happen, and at that same moment he has already avoided its effect without there being "a hair's breath" between perceiving and avoiding. [This, then, is what counts:] a lighting reaction which has no further need of conscious observation.

[Actually,] he should clear his mind of the thought that he has to do with an opponent at all and that it is a matter of life and death.

[To begin with, the pupil understands these instructions - and he can hardly do otherwise - as meaning that it is sufficient for him to refrain from observing and thinking about the behavior of his opponent.] He takes this non-observation very seriously and controls himself at every step. But he fails to notice that, by concentrating his attention on himself, he inevitably sees himself as the combatant who has at all costs to avoid watching his opponent. Do what he may, he still has him secretly in mind. Only in appearance has he detached himself from him, and the more he endeavors to forget him the more tightly he binds himself to him.

It takes a good deal of very subtle psychological guidance to convince the pupil that fundamentally he has gained nothing by this shift of attention. He must learn to disregard himself as resolutely as he disregards his opponent, and to become, in a radical sense, self-regardless, purposeless. Much patience, much heart-breaking practice is needed, [just as in archery.]

This state of purposeless detachment is followed automatically by a mode of behavior which bears a surprising resemblance to the previous stage of instinctive evasion. [Just as, at that stage, there was not a hair's breath between perceiving the intended thrust and evading it, so now there] is no time lag between evasion and action. At the moment of evasion the combatant reaches back to strike, and in a flash the deadly stroke has fallen, sure and irresistible. It is as if the sword wielded itself, and just as we say in archery that "It" takes aim and hits, so here "It" takes the place of the ego, availing itself of a facility and a dexterity which the ego only acquires by conscious effort. And here too "It" is only a name for something which can neither be understood nor laid hold of, and which only reveals itself to those who have experienced it.*

Perfection in the art of swordsmanship is reached, according to Takuan, when the heart is trouble by no more thought of I and You, of the opponent and his sword, of one's own sword and how to wield it - no more thought even of life and death. "All is emptiness: you own self, the flashing sword, and the arms that wield it. Even the thought of emptiness is no longer there."*

[Note: * — Those who are students of Lee's thought will recall Lee's application of these principles in his martial art writings and also during "lessons" he taught through the popular mediums of television and film. For example, in the television episode of *Longstreet,* entitled "The Way of the Intercepting Fist," Lee dispatches three thugs. He is approached by Longstreet and asked "What did you do to them?" Lee's response is *"They did it to themselves"* while in his last film *"Enter the Dragon,"* Lee in walking with the Shaolin Abbot, Lee states: *"There is no opponent because the word "I" does not exist. When the opponent expands, I contract; and when he contracts, I expand. And when there is an opportunity, "I" do not hit - "It" hits, all by itself."*]

The swordmaster is as unself-conscious as the beginner.

[But,] unlike the beginner, he holds himself in reserve, is quiet and unassuming, without the least desire to show off.

[Between the stages of apprenticeship and mastership there lie long and eventful years of untiring practice.] Under the influence of Zen his proficiency becomes spiritual, and he himself, grown ever freer through spiritual struggle, is transformed. The sword, which has now become his "soul," no longer rests lightly in its scabbard. He draws it only when unavoidable. Thus it may easily happen that he avoids combat with an unworthy opponent, a cockscomb who brags about his muscles, accepting the charge of cowardice with smiling indifference; though on the other hand, out of esteem for an opponent, he will insist on a combat which cannot bring anything but an honorable death to the latter. These are the sentiments that govern the ethos of the Samurai, the incomparable "path of chivalry" [known as Bushido.]

Years of unceasing meditation have taught him that life and death are at bottom the same and belong to the same stratum of fact. He no longer knows what fear of life and terror of death are.

...he who has mastered both life and death is free form fear of any kind to the extent that he is no longer capable of experiencing what fear feels like Those who do not know the power of rigorous and protracted [meditation cannot judge the self-conquests it makes possible.]

[Since ancient times, the practice hall where the swordsman's art is learned has been called the] "Place of Enlightenment."

[Every master who practices an art molded by Zen is like a flash of lightning from the cloud of all-encompassing Truth.] This Truth is present in the free movement of his spirit, [and he meets it again, in "it," as his own original and nameless essence.

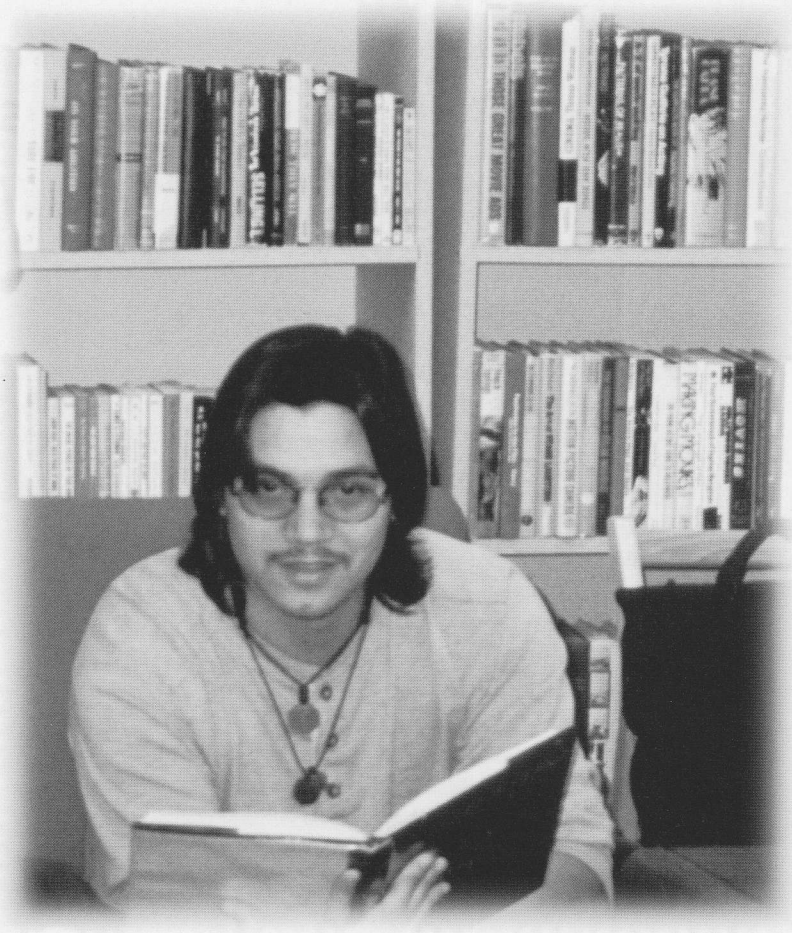
Lee has written in the margin next to this sentence:

The essence: free movement of spirit. Original essence.

[If he survives its perils, then is his destiny fulfilled: face to face he beholds the unbroken Truth, the Truth beyond all truths, the formless Origin of origins,] the Void which is the All; is absorbed into it and from it emerges reborn.

INSPIRATIONS

By Primo Ledda



Let me start by introducing myself, my name is Primo Ledda and I will be working on this new column each issue. This column is dedicated to you, our readers. This is for your stories and your lives.

In this first column I will be sharing a little about myself and how Bruce has influenced my life. Then it's your turn! I want to hear how Bruce has influenced you.

Over the years we have heard so many people tell the stories of how Bruce impacted their lives. The stories I've heard have always been so heartwarming and interesting. I've always had in the back of my mind that I would like to do a column like this but until now I have never had the chance to put that thought into action. When the Nucleus said it would like to have a column dedicated to the readers, I jumped at the chance.

I hope you enjoy reading this column as much as I enjoy putting it together. And if you have had in the back of you mind to share your story of how Bruce inspired you, this is your chance, jump!

To say my life has been hard would be an understatement. I was sent to a foster home when I was one and half years old. My father was a Filipino immigrant who was very poor. He could barely take care of himself, let alone take care of me. My mother, well that would be a book in itself. Let's just say motherhood was not her strong suit.

Due to my surroundings and lack of parental care, I was placed in the foster home. I do not really remember going into the foster home because I was so small, so most of the time I was there I thought I was part of the family. By four I started to figure out that I didn't fit in. Maybe it was the difference in the last names or maybe it was the way I was treated but I could feel that I didn't belong. It wasn't until I was a little older that I was even made aware that I was not my foster parent's natural child.

Don't get me wrong, looking back I know I was lucky to get the foster home I did. There are much worse places I could have ended up. It was a tough neighborhood though and I had to learn to survive. I had a foster brother who was older than me and it was my responsibility to protect him.

One time he was beaten up at school and when we got home my foster mother beat me with a broom for not protecting him. So I trained to fight. I became a pit bull, nothing could stop me. It didn't matter how many or how big it was my job to protect my brother.

Besides dealing with the circumstances within the home I now had to deal with some realities that I was not prepared for. I remember one day an old man came to visit me. I was told to be nice to him and we had a nice but confusing visit. I remember hearing my foster mother talk about my visit with my father and was very confused by what she was saying.

Then I started hearing about my mother and how I might be going to live with her. I don't know if my foster parents ever sat down and explained to me what was happening and I was just too young to remember or if they just didn't know how. Nevertheless the day came to leave. I packed up my things, said my good-byes and went to live with my mother and her new husband.

My mother and stepfather had two children that lived in the home and then there were my other brother and sisters from different fathers that were older. Although they did not live in the home I had to deal with them on a regular basis. My mother was on welfare and my stepfather worked in the fields. My mother and my older siblings all drank heavily and were very abusive. My mother usually left the discipline up to my older brothers, which basically meant a few would hold me, and the others would beat me.

I was nine when I saw my first Bruce Lee movie. I remember feeling for the first time that life had to be better than what I had. The way he moved, the pride he had and his fighting skills. Now that was something I needed. I would watch him move and then mimic him move for move. Now at nine years old I was no Bruce Lee but it gave me a confidence in myself that I needed to survive. My only outlet during this time was the Saturday Action Theatre at the movies. My

mother would let us go to the movies on Saturday. It was cheap and it kept us out of her hair for the day.

I lived my life through those movies. It was the only positive aspect of my life and I needed whatever I could get at this point. Both physically and mentally.

Unfortunately, I was able to practice Bruce's moves quite often. Although this was from the age of 9 through the age of almost 11 I was learning to be a formidable fighter. When it is you or the other guy and you have to face it every day, you learn quickly.

My stepfather didn't get too involved with me. He worked long hours in the fields and as long as he was able to get a good meal and a little rest he was happy.

My grades were dropping and it seemed like my life was spiraling out of control. I didn't have much time to think about school. There was so much physical and mental abuse that as I look back now I wonder how I managed to stay in school as long as I did.

My real father would come around from time to time and I would go and spend some time with him. He lived in what can only be described as a small wooden shack. The showers and the outhouse were shared by several of the shacks. My father was also an alcoholic who drank heavily when I was around. Drinking was a way of life for my whole family.

I have baby pictures of me, before I went to the foster home, where I am under a year old and my parents gave me beer to drink instead of a bottle. I still wonder why they gave me back to my mother. Things had definitely not changed since I was taken away.

At the age of eleven my mother died while drinking and driving. They thought that her tire went out and she went off the road but when she used to have us in the car with her when she went drinking at the bars, she would sometimes start falling asleep and drive off the road. So I guess we will never know for sure.

I stayed with my stepfather and younger siblings for a while until I was about thirteen. I was sure there had to be a better life out there and I was too tired to stay where I was any longer. So at the age of thirteen I put together some clothes, a backpack, a sleeping bag and hit the road. I went to look for my father thinking I could stay with him for a while. Although there was a lot of drinking, there was a lot less people to fight off on a daily basis.

When I found my father and asked him if I could stay with him he refused, saying he didn't have enough room. So he worked out a deal with a farm down the road. For $75.00 a month I could have a room in the back and dinner every night but I had to work the fields before and after school. It was some of the hardest labor I have ever had to do and often when I hear my children complain today about having to do a chore I want to take them out to the fields for a day.

The next few years I worked and went to school. I struggled to stay in school but my grades were horrible. I was so exhausted all the time. Eventually, when I was a bit older I was able to get a job as a dishwasher in a restaurant, which was better than the fields. At least I always had a meal. I worked my way up to cook and eventually manager.

I eventually dropped out of school and just worked at the restaurant. I had a lot of free time on my hands and whenever I could find anything on Bruce Lee I would pick it up and read it. I wanted answers to my life and Bruce inspired me to search out those answers for myself. It was a different aspect of Bruce Lee than the fighter and it was exactly what I needed when I needed it.

I remember the first time I read the Tao of Jeet Kune Do, it was during this time period and there was one page where Bruce talked about the Buddhism's Eight-Fold Path:

1. Right Views - You must clearly see what is wrong.
2. Right Purpose - Decide to cured.
3. Right Speech - Speak as to aim to be cured.
4. Right Conduct - You must act.
5. Right Vocation - Your livelihood must not conflict with your therapy.
6. Right Effort - The therapy must go forward at the "staying speed", the critical velocity that can be sustained.
7. Right Awareness - You must feel it and think about it incessantly.
8. Right Concentration - Learn how to contemplate with the deep mind.

I have gone through these steps and gone through the Tao of Jeet Kune Do many times and continue to use these tools in my future growth. They have helped me to change and grow and to change the path for my children. I am married and have two sons. My wife and I have known each other for seventeen years and have been through a lot. All through these years Bruce's words, Bruce's spirit to overcome circumstances, to remain proud and never give up have helped me to be a better man, a better father, a better husband and not only changed my life but have equipped me to help others in their struggles. I work with the neighborhood kids to help them stay out of trouble. Sometimes I am successful, sometimes not. I work with the youth at our church and their neighborhood outreach. Whenever and wherever I can I share my struggles with others and encourage them to never give up as Bruce encouraged me. I hope whatever circumstances you find yourself in or whatever you have been through in your life that you have had someone come along and give you the strength to overcome your circumstances. Bruce was that person for me.

I am still working my process and learning each day. Amazingly some 30 years later I can still read something Bruce wrote and learn something new. Something important, that comes along at the right time, just when I need it.

I would like to close by thanking the Nucleus members who have been inspirational to me in their own right and have always been so loving and kind.

I know that Bruce has inspired so many others over the years and I look forward to hearing your stories and sharing them with our readers.

If you would like to submit an inspirational story to this column please send it to the main office at:

Attn: Inspirations/Primo Ledda, Bruce Lee Educational Foundation, PO Box 1390, Clovis, CA 93613-1390. Your story must be under 750 words. Please send one picture with article.

BRUCE LEE'S THE GAME OF DEATH

His Greatest Film - FINALLY To Be Seen In Its Entirety

By John Little

In the five years that followed Bruce Lee's passing, the biggest buzz in the martial arts and action film world was "Bruce Lee's *Game of Death.*" Was his death a publicity stunt - to be revealed when the film finally finished shooting? If it wasn't a publicity stunt, would it ever be released? What was it about? How much footage of Bruce actually existed that had heretofore never been seen?

In 1978, Golden Harvest Films (HK), together with Columbia Pictures put together a film called *"The Game of Death"* consisting of 11 minutes and 39 seconds of footage that Bruce Lee shot for the film prior to his death. The film ignored Bruce Lee's original plot line, was poorly made and the footage of Bruce Lee appeared only during the last 15 minutes of the film - the result was hardly satisfying. In fact, it was in many ways an insult to the memory of a visionary artist such as Bruce Lee.

The film proved to a substantial success at the box office, as so many of us went to the theaters on repeated visits in order to see our hero's final performance. Despite the success of the film and the bittersweet belief that this was the "last" of the Bruce Lee footage to be seen, a rumor began to circulate - and has continued to do so for over 25 years - that there was more footage of Bruce Lee that was edited out of the film. Moreover, those who knew and worked with Bruce in the film were now saying that the story line of the finished version of *The Game of Death* bore no resemblance at all to the film that Bruce had intended to make and had intended his fans to see.

This rumor remained uncomfirmed - until 1994 when I discovered Bruce Lee's original shooting script and choreography notes for *The Game of Death* perfectly intact within a filing cabinet containing Bruce Lee artifacts and personal papers that had been placed in a storage locker in Boise, Idaho by the Lee estate. I happened upon them quite by accident, as I was working with Linda Lee Cadwell in researching materials that were written in Bruce's hand for what would become The Bruce Lee Library Series, now published by the Charles E. Tuttle Publishing Company, Boston.

Stumbling upon those script notes and choreography writings filled me with hope that the footage that they indicated had been shot in 1972 might still be in existence and that, if it could be located, these materials would point the way to their correct reassembly. With Linda's blessing, I established contact shortly thereafter with Golden Harvest Studios and even flew to Hong Kong in 1994 to meet with their senior executives about the project. A search was initiated for the footage that Lee's handwritten script had indicated had been shot - but had never been seen publicly.

In a detective game that lasted over 6 years, the impossible happened: over 95 minutes of excised and outtake footage was eventually discovered in the vaults of Golden Harvest studios. The gentleman's name who actually physically removed the footage from their storage shelves and who shared my passion for the project was Bey Logan, a writer for *Martial Arts Illustrated* in the U.K., who also works full time for Media Asia.

Now, after 28 years, Bruce Lee's script and footage have finally been reunited. That the footage and the script and choreography notes should still be in existence at all after a passage of more than a quarter of a century is nothing short of incredible. But as if by Bruce's own hand, I find myself in a position to be able to finally re-edit his film to his own exact specifications, replacing all of the scenes that were

unceremoniously excised from the Golden Harvest release in 1978. Having always been a fan of Bruce's, this project has truly been a dream come true for me - in fact, just seeing the footage for myself was a dream come true for me!

The choreography notes that Bruce left behind are both meticulous and precise - thank God! With his written directions, I am simply lending Bruce my hands to physically put the film together again. His notes are much like the directions to assembling a complicated model; without them, it would be impossible to know exactly which takes of which scenes Bruce wanted included and the exact sequence that he wanted them edited into. Now it will be perfect.

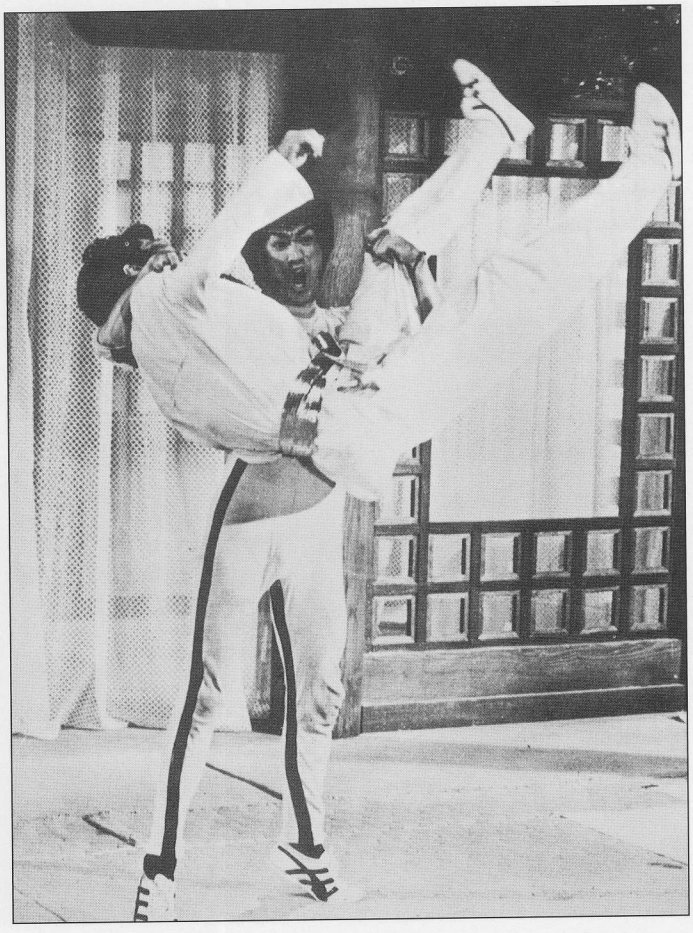
Not to mislead you; *The Game of Death* is not a complete film - with Bruce's passing, there is just no getting around this unfortunate fact. But it is at least now possible for you to share with him his vision, to see the drama, the pacing, to experience the motif as he had intended. Already, with just the footage that Bruce shot, it is a completely different - and far superior — film to the one that we all saw back in 1978 (and, perhaps more recently, on video and DVD).

There is also one scene still missing that has evidently been lost to the ravages of time; the fight scene between Dan Inosanto and Chieh Yuan, in which Chieh Yuan attacks Dan with a huge log and Dan dispatches him with his escrima techniques. This fight scene was choreographed by Bruce as the first fight sequence he filmed in the movie - where it is now is anybody's guess.

Having conceded this, I'm delighted to say that every scene involving Bruce has been preserved; from the moment he first enters the scene by sprinting up the stairs to face Dan Inosanto, to the moment he walks down the final flight of stairs in a state of near collapse after having disposed of Kareem Abdul-Jabbar - it's all here, and all Bruce.

The format in which I will be presenting this footage will be that of documentary, for the simple fact that we've already once suffered through another person's "interpretation" or "version" of Bruce's last work. If the "*Game of Death*" movie taught us anything, it was this: leave Bruce's material alone! Let us see what Bruce had envisioned, don't give us a heavy-handed, grossly interpreted and ultimately butchered version of Bruce's last remaining piece of cinematic art brought out by businessmen who care not a whit for Bruce's art, but think they know better than he "what the fans want."

To this end, my hope is to educate the audience as to the



deep significance of this film, to shed some light so that they might better appreciate the work that Bruce put into it, and what Bruce's message in this film was, instilling (hopefully) a deep seeded appreciation in the audience for the footage that have waited so long to see.

It should give us pause in reflecting on this film to recognize that it was occupying Bruce's final thoughts on the last day of his life. It is an important film and it must be treated with respect and reverence as representing the last on-camera communiquÈ from Bruce Lee to we, his public. And do not worry, dear reader, my attempt to instill this appreciation shall be mercifully brief, for I realize how long you have waited to see this footage. At this point, which shall run approximately 30 minutes, you will then see the footage in its entirety from start to finish, all that there is, just the way that Bruce had intended (or just the way he had intended with what he had shot of it, at any rate).

Removing all of the superfluous footage; that is to say, all of the retakes that Bruce himself had indicated were NOT to be included, I've discovered that we are left with approximately 36 minutes and 40 seconds of footage. Considering that the movie entitled *The Game of Death* that was released to theaters in 1978 contained only 11 minutes and 39 seconds of footage of Bruce, you will be seeing an additional 25 minutes and 1 second of footage that has never before been seen - nor has it ever been seen in its proper sequence. All of it features Bruce in some capacity.

And, finally, there is no question but that this will be a "real" Bruce Lee film and, if you are willing to accept my (not impartial) opinion on the matter, it is, quite frankly, the best Bruce Lee film of them all. My reason for saying this is simple; this is pure Bruce Lee - not Bruce Lee playing a role such as he did in his first two films, but Bruce Lee from top to bottom. He wrote the storyline (which will finally be presented in this documentary after years of speculation), he choreographed all the action, he was the cinematographer, the lighting man, the set designer, the director, the producer and the star. Gone are the flashy classically stylized gung fu techniques of *The Chinese Connection,* replaced with the simple, direct and non-classical techniques of Jeet Kune Do.

There is so much more that I wish to tell you about the film - but that will have to wait for a future article, as I don't want to tease you too much, when you will soon be able to see the film for yourself.

I shall conclude this brief piece on a personal note: It has been my most fervent wish for well over two decades to locate this footage and re-edit the film "as Bruce Lee intended." Ever since I was 12 years old I had pondered what Bruce's vision had been for this film. Now, with the assistance of Linda Lee Cadwell (Bruce Lee's widow), this wish has finally come true.

To my knowledge, there has never before been an attempt - ever - to essentially "re-cut" a film in such a manner as to allow a deceased individual to have a say in how their legacy is presented. Rather than simply soliciting other people's opinions on the film, I am in a position to go to "the source" himself, Bruce Lee, and am thus able to - after a period of some 28 years - finally present Bruce's original version of the film. There is a feeling that attends being part of such a project that borders on the spiritual and cannot be adequately framed by words.

Now, as we approach the anniversary of what would have been Bruce Lee's 60th birthday (November 27, 2000), 28 years after he first began filming what would prove to be his last film, fans of Bruce Lee and of the martial arts genre of films will be able to celebrate his birthday in a truly significant manner: by spending time with Bruce Lee once again.

In many respects, you will come to see that this is a film about life - not death - about the "hero's journey" which each of us must take alone to confront those who would bar us from pursuing what we are destined to become. You will see in this a film of pain, effort and redemption - and the cinematic showcase of Bruce Lee's martial philosophy of personal liberation: Jeet Kune Do.

It may have been a long time coming, but it will certainly prove to have been worth waiting for.

The Code of Ethics of the Bruce Lee Educational Foundation

截 拳 道

In an effort to promote unity and to eradicate the divisiveness and dissension that often attends the formation of any organization, we are united in the common goals of perpetuating the teachings of Bruce Lee, and promoting unity among instructors of his martial art, followers of his thought and understanding and tolerance among our general members. All members of the Bruce Lee Educational Foundation agree to abide by the following code of ethics:

1. To always respect and protect the name and image of Jun Fan Jeet Kune Do and of its founder, Bruce Lee.

2. To have mutual respect for each member, and to refrain from making any negative comments about a fellow member. If a member has grievance with another member, it shall be addressed either in private, or, if both parties desire, with the Nucleus serving as mediator. The grievance shall not be debated in a public forum.

3. To share philosophical insights and technical knowledge freely with each other, in order to further enhance each person's comprehension of the teachings of Bruce Lee and/or efficiency in his martial art.

4. In martial art: To be fully responsible for the actions of your subordinates, assistants, associates, instructors, and employees, and to enforce a Code of Ethics that includes the guidelines set forth in this document. For example, if a member who happens to be a martial artist has a problem with a student of another member, they are to bring it up with that member for redress.

5. In martial art: To have respect for any other area of study or discipline a member may be involved in outside of Jun Fan Jeet Kune Do®. In other words, if a member studies another martial art, their ability should be highly regarded, although any other discipline should not be referred to as Jun Fan Jeet Kune Do®.

Membership in the Bruce Lee Educational Foundation

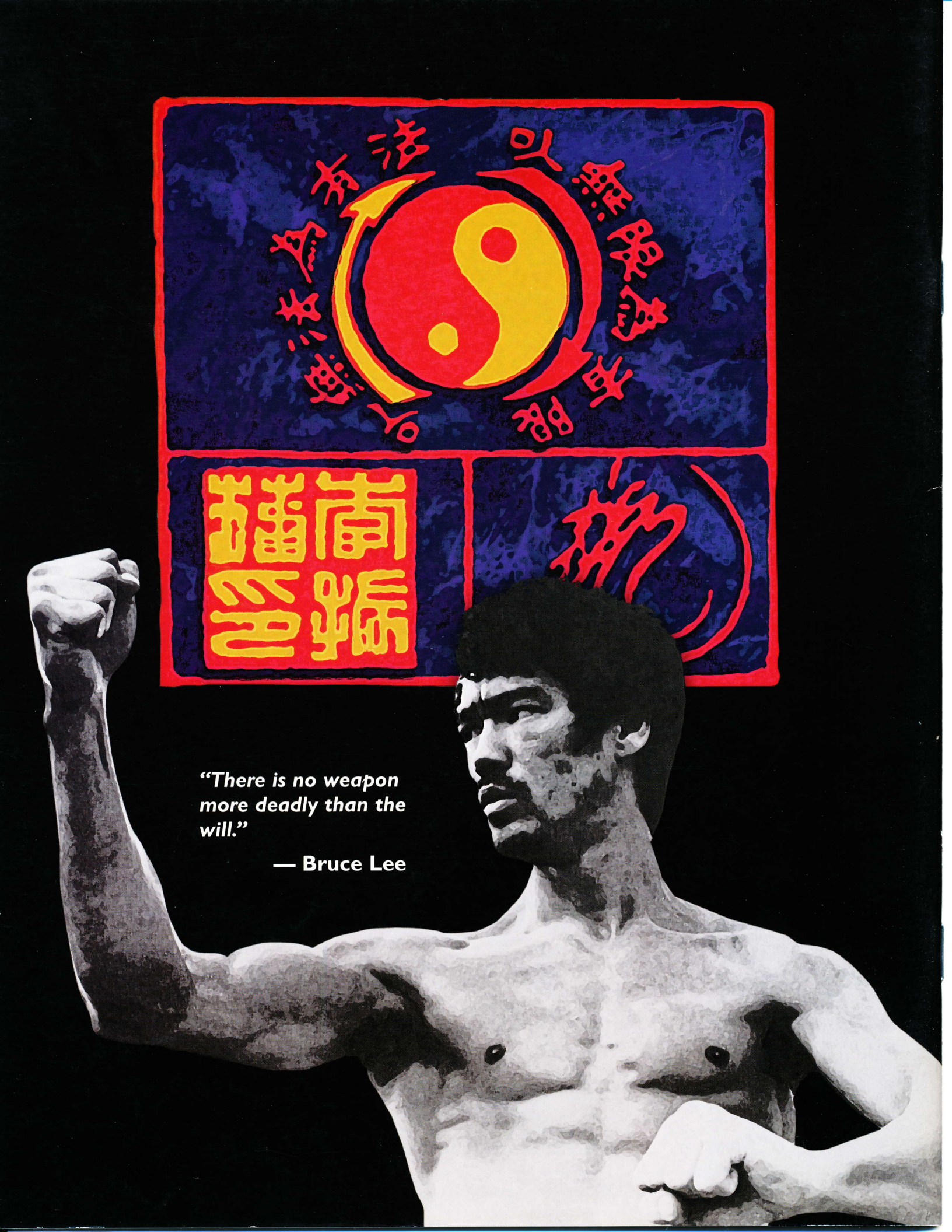
Members agree that the legacy of Bruce Lee is of value to them and may have a beneficial influence on others. In that regard they agree that the philosophy and art of Bruce Lee is worth studying, preserving and perpetuating.

Members who are martial artists or who are actively involved in the promotion and/or teaching of martial art agree to support the goal of maintaining the integrity of the art of Jun Fan Jeet Kune Do® as taught, practiced, and recorded by its founder, Bruce Lee, and to preserve and perpetuate the art for the benefit of future generations. In addition, members agree to honor the following membership guidelines:

1) To abide by the Bruce Lee Educational Foundation Code of Ethics.

2) To willingly share information about Bruce Lee's teachings responsibly and accurately, and to contribute whenever possible to the repository of The Bruce Lee Educational Foundation's database of information.

3) To actively nurture interest in the art and philosophy of Bruce Lee by becoming progressively more educated about his life, art and philosophy.


"There is no weapon more deadly than the will."
— Bruce Lee