

# EL CAMINO

## THE WAY

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**Martial Arts Magazine**

**MAY/JUN 2025 - N° 39**



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# EL CAMINO

**THE WAY**  
Martial Arts Magazine



El Camino Martial Arts Magazine was born with the aim of promoting martial arts and reaching the largest number of people in a digital way, according to the times and technologies. We hope you like it and join us in this beautiful martial universe, with the love of always:

Graphic Direction:

Mario Segnini Fursa.

Commercial Address:

Mario Segnini Fursa.

Editorial Address:

Javier Acosta Serrano.

Main Editor (English Version):

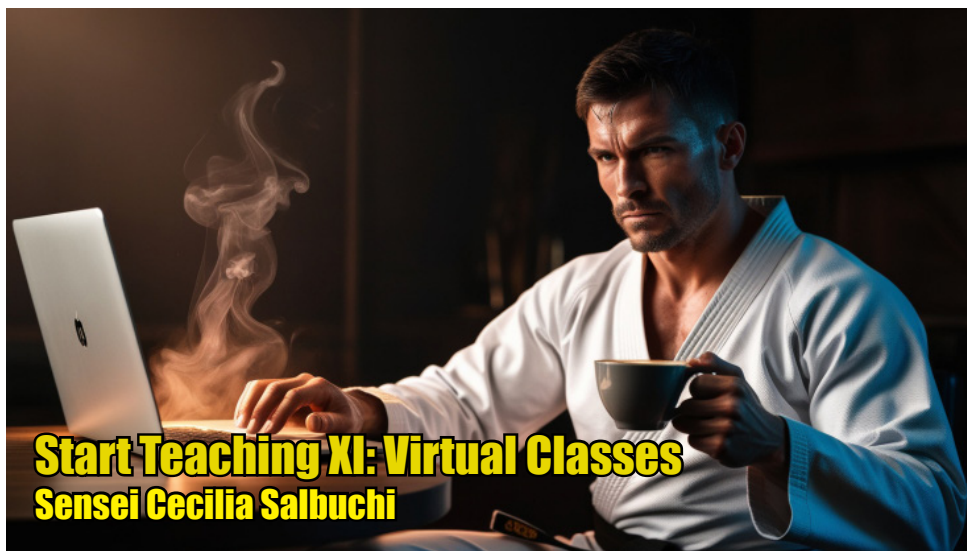
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The opinions expressed in this magazine are the responsibility of each person who is published and promoted; is made and distributed with No.25-05/06 from Montevideo Uruguay for the months of May and June.

Thank you.

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Virtual classes existed many years before the pandemic. They were reserved for black belts who wanted to join a new organization abroad and used this resource to begin training before they could travel. This method was widely used in the US, and we can say that, in a sense, it began in the era of VHS tapes, in a very crude and slow way.

As technology advanced, this modality became more dynamic. With the advent of platforms like Skype, Meet, and Zoom, among others, it became easier to schedule a meeting link between a small community or simply between two people and conduct a class. The vast majority of MAMM instructors didn't consider this modality viable. Until 2020. The COVID pandemic would change everything.

From this point on, the idea of online training began to gain acceptance among instructors and students, leading to the further development of this methodology. Those with some knowledge and/or money to invest set up virtual campuses,

similar to major university training centers.

Generally speaking, the entire section of a class devoted to taiso (physical exercise) and kata (form) is very simple to convey through a video. The challenge arises with the most specialized and complex exercises: partner work. This was, and continues to be, one of the most interesting challenges, showcasing the creativity of instructors and practitioners in supplementing part of the partner work.

During the pandemic, online training groups began experimenting with what they had at home to improvise punching bags and wooden arms so they could train against something tangible. The wooden arm, with or without mobility, was essential for correctly positioning a block and subsequent counterattack. The information provided by contact helped practitioners improve their kata work, and vice versa.

Wooden wing dolls appeared chun adapted for Karate, as well as jiu-jitsu dumbbell bags. Combined

with weights, elastic bands, weapons, and other elements, online training began to take on a life of its own. So much so that after restrictions on in-person training were lifted, many of the online groups continued.

Today, anyone can Google and see the number of academies that continue to offer online classes in different formats. Some require or recommend a specific number of in-person classes. International organizations offer seminars or special classes for their advanced degrees via teleconferencing platforms, thereby allowing them to have greater contact with their affiliates in other countries without the expense of traveling abroad.

As if that weren't enough, platforms are slowly beginning to offer simultaneous translation services in different languages... making it possible to attend a seminar with a teacher from any country without language being a limitation. Truly incredible!

To think that not so many years ago we had to travel without fail to communicate fluently with a teacher in Okinawa, and today we can attend a special class via Zoom and even enjoy this simultaneous translation service. Of course, instructors must, on the other hand, "adjust" the conditions a bit when graduating virtual students. Both instructors and students are learning to adapt to this new environment, and many questions arise, but answers are still unclear.

Training for someone new to martial arts is often slower, but



comfortable and safe. Often, students who choose this type of training do so because they don't have a dojo in their city, or because their work schedules completely prevent them from doing so. They can train from home at any time they see fit.

However, in order to advance, we need the student to experience what it feels like to receive a real attack, at different speeds, without pre-establishing it, etc., which is why many instructors adopt one of two resolutions when reaching a certain level: 1- Schedule face-to-face classes every x amount of time (for example, once a month) and/or 2- Create training groups between virtual students from the same city to train the exercises in pairs. During the pandemic, practice with members of the family nucleus was greatly promoted, which is also an extremely viable and useful option.

When it comes to exam taking, I've seen three main methods: in-person (traditional), delivered through video (asynchronous online), or virtual in real time (synchronous). The ability to take advantage of each virtual method and maximize the benefits when the virtual student can commit to in-person attendance depends on many factors.

And finally, dojos don't need to have ridden the virtual wave during the pandemic to offer this modality. Any instructor can access it as long as they know who they want to reach, what they have to offer, and are willing to learn how to use the relevant

technology.

To record videos, you'll need a tripod, a good cell phone, a lapel microphone (optional), and a willingness to spend hours recording, editing, and re-recording. Zoom or Meet classes are much easier because they don't require editing and are built around the instructor's proposed topic, along with feedback from attendees.

The instructor will need to increase their level of explanation of the techniques they wish to develop to compensate for the

lack of contact with the student. Since we cannot demonstrate a technique live, we must maximize our use of words, our ability to demonstrate a technique from different angles, and rely on the use of props and/or an on-site assistant to demonstrate techniques.

All this experience in virtual teaching can provide instructors with great learning opportunities and can help attract people who, because they live far away or have complicated work schedules, can't come to our dojo.







## Celluloid: The Eternaut Master Jesús Ricardo Félix

Aside from their success, what do series like *The Last of Us*, *The Walking Dead*, and the Korean production *All of Us Are Dead* have in common? Well, among other fairly obvious things, all three develop their dramatic core within the framework of the apocalyptic genre. And why are audiences so drawn to the apocalyptic genre? The first thing to analyze is that these types of narratives explore fears present in the collective consciousness of today's societies, although in an exaggerated way, they address crises such as climate change, pandemics, wars, or the threat of artificial intelligence. This genre allows us to reflect, from the safe distance provided by fiction, on the multiple destinies that humanity's course can take. These series appeal to the audience's survival instinct, creating the fantasy of a global reset and the possibility of a new beginning with protagonists with whom we can easily identify due to their human fragility. That's why, this post-apocalyptic week, we'll talk about the series *El Eternauta*.

*El Eternauta* is an Argentine apocalyptic science fiction series released on Netflix in late April 2025. The series can be defined as a loose adaptation of the popular Argentine comic *El Eternauta*, created by Héctor Germán Oesterheld and first published in 1957. The series is directed by Argentine filmmaker Bruno Stagnaro, known for films such as *Pizza, Birra, Faso* (1997) and television series such as *Okupas* (2000). One of the main differences from the original is that the series is set in the present day, while the comic takes place in the mid-20th century.

It's difficult to talk about the production without falling into the muddy terrain of spoilers, but we'll try to reveal as little valuable information as possible. A group of friends get together to play cards and drink whiskey, when suddenly a violent snowstorm surrounds

them, and they realize they can't go outside. The protagonist, Juan Salvo, is played by Ricardo Darín, the Argentine actor remembered for films such as *Nine Queens* (2000) and *The Secret in Their Eyes* (2009). Another difference between the series and the comic is that Juan Salvo is a veteran of the Falklands War, something that isn't the case in the comic because the aforementioned war took place in the early 1980s.

The *Eternauta* series is definitely recommended. Director Bruno Stagnaro strikes a perfectly functional balance between the dramatic rhythm provided by the cast and the aesthetics of the desolate landscapes of a city of fury, ravaged by groups of humans trying to survive. The series relies on the type of dramatic formulas with a claustrophobic atmosphere similar to *The Exterminating Angel* (1962), relying on the acting prowess of its cast.

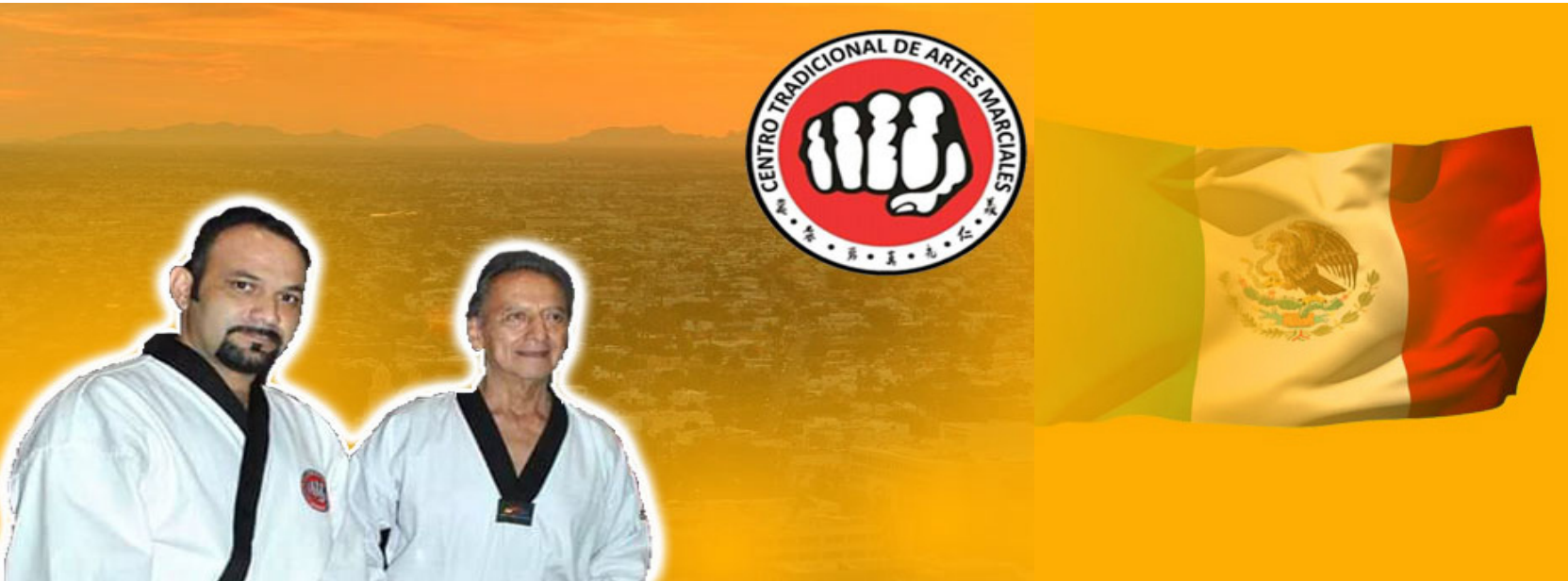
It may disappoint fans of the original because it doesn't faithfully follow the comic's characters, but it's important to understand that it's trying to reach a wider audience, recently confirming the release of another season on the streaming platform.

As for the special effects, we could be picky and say that they're a bit overused, but nothing that detracts from its quality or validity. The performances of the aforementioned Ricardo Darín and Uruguayan César Troncoso stand out. In some aesthetic aspects, it's reminiscent of scenes from Guillermo del Toro films, and that's in a good way. What did you think?

Trailer: <https://youtu.be/ykLTd5aTa88>







The Traditional Martial Arts Center was born with the solid intention of opening doors to the changes that our society constantly presents. From the hand of Kjn Eduardo Martinez V. First generation of black belts in Mexico, inducted into the Taekwondo World Hall of Fame and direct dan bon from Kjn Hwang Kee, always walks in observance at his side Sbn Javier Acosta, always attentive to investing in the evolution of the martial art in favor of an improvement for our society that is adapted to reversing the ideas of the past while respecting the present. The CTAM is a hierarchical martial model of the Moo Duk Kwan system full of respect among its members, all of them of great importance in our ranks and careful to carry out the professional methodology of education.

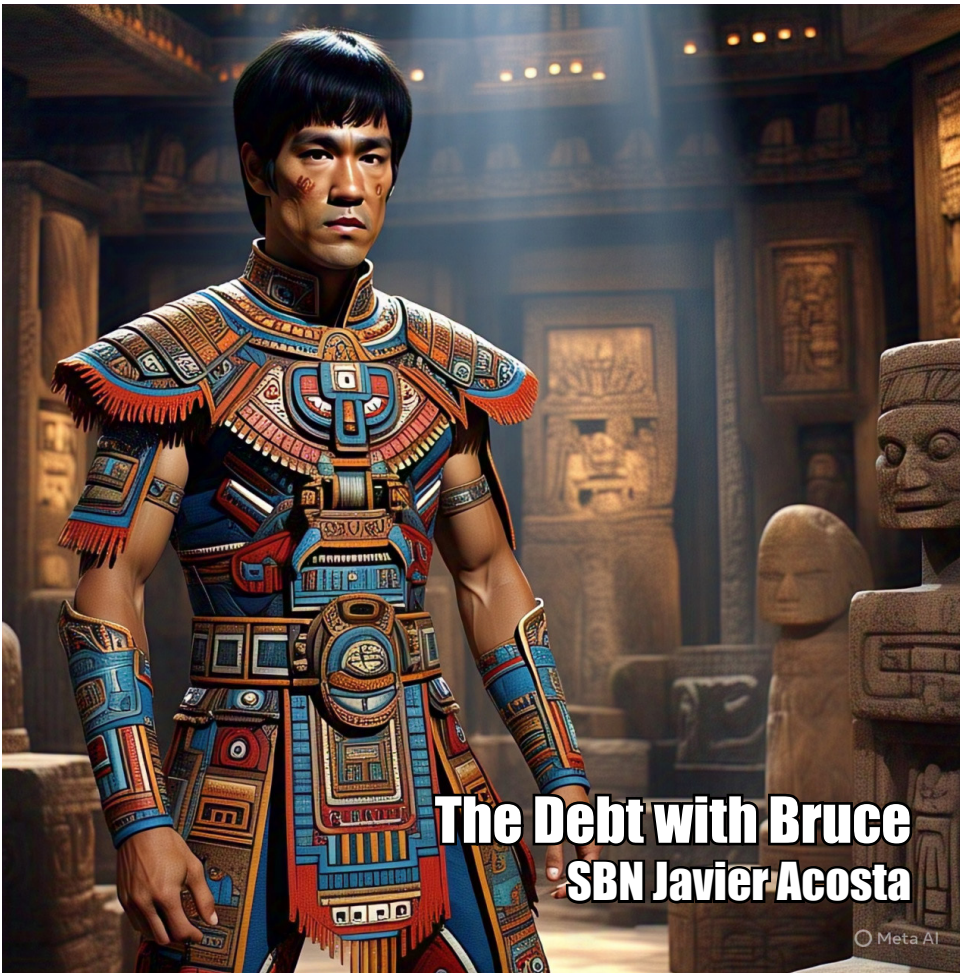
CTAM is in turn a union of professionals in different areas of competition within sport karate and Ring, committed to teaching the value of facing situations that are beyond our control and that border on the fine line between peace and battle. Therefore, Family, Education and professionalism are the fundamental axes that sustain this project in solid growth. CTAM sees as a priority the relay between individuals of

different ages with the vision of everyone learning, with the kind correction of anyone that must be responded with at least a thank you. It is the duty of every martial artist to preach with what he imposes: example. With great teachers scattered in different cardinal points and the successful coordination of Sbn John Suarez Director of CTAM South America and general coordinator of CTAM planning, the objectives become absolute fun wrapped in cordial respect and that is how it should be, fraternal coexistence is a priority and It will always be. CTAM students receive in their classes from the hands of committed instructors, the necessary tools to understand martial arts from individual and different perspectives, knowing that we are much more than what is discussed or seen through an opaque lens, for this reason, we try always be at the forefront in the methodology of professional education in support of supporting the most important institution: The family. CTAM advances without pause and without haste in union, creating, innovating, even imitating everything that should be beneficial for the project. Among other things, CTAM has contributed since the founding of the magazine El Camino with articles

of social interest, which is an honor for each member and contributes to the dissemination of our profession. For this very reason, thanks for everything and for everyone, is coined day by day and generates a wave of energy that keeps us calm and prepared to face new challenges, as well as being part of the search for equality and harmony so that by spontaneous will Teach and learn the respect that society needs through the new era of martial arts. We are CTAM, the new era of martial art.







## The Debt with Bruce SBN Javier Acosta

We all owe something to Bruce Lee. In the West, we owe him at least a photo or a quote in our Dojang or Dojo, yet there are those who look down on him out of sheer envy...

Beginnings and training in martial arts

Bruce Lee was born on November 27, 1940, in San Francisco, California, and raised in Hong Kong, where he began practicing kung fu at an early age. His passion for martial arts was cultivated by his father, a Cantonese opera actor and martial arts expert. However, it was in Hong Kong that Bruce began to take his training seriously, sparring and developing his skill through practical experience.

During his teenage years, Lee faced several challenges that shaped his character and determination. When he moved back to the United States at the age of 18, he realized that

although his training had been solid, there was still much to learn. He joined various martial arts schools in his new country and began to fuse different techniques, approaching this with an innovative approach. Lee understood that martial arts should be adaptable, so he dedicated himself to studying not only kung fu, but also boxing, wrestling, and other disciplines, laying the foundation for what would later become Jeet kune do.

The impact on cinema and popular culture

Aside from his incredible martial arts talent, Bruce Lee left an indelible mark on the film industry. During the 1970s, when Hollywood was beginning to open its doors to Asian actors, Lee became a central figure in the martial arts cinema revolution. His films, such as "Wrath of the Dragon" and "Enter the

Dragon," not only amazed with their raw and authentic fighting style, but also broke racial barriers, giving American audiences a new model of hero who didn't conform to traditional archetypes.

Despite his overwhelming success, Bruce Lee was aware of the importance of representing his cultural heritage with dignity. He often wrote and directed his films himself, an unusual approach for actors of his time. Through his characters, he managed to convey a philosophy of struggle and perseverance, urging people to overcome their limitations, regardless of their origins. His iconic battle cry and elegant fighting style became iconic, inspiring generations of martial artists and film buffs alike.

Bruce Lee's philosophy

Beyond martial arts and cinema, Bruce Lee was a deep thinker and a philosopher of self-discovery. His famous quote, "Empty your mind. Empty your mind. Be like water, malleable," encapsulates his approach to life in general. Lee believed that adaptability and clarity of purpose were fundamental to personal growth. He applied this philosophy to both his training and his daily life, always seeking truth and authenticity in every aspect of his existence.

Bruce also emphasized the importance of self-knowledge and the power of the mind. He published several writings on his philosophy, which addressed topics such as discipline, goal achievement, and the mind-body connection. Through his own experience, he made it clear that practicing martial arts was not just a means to learn to fight, but a path to achieving inner peace and emotional balance.

The Lasting Legacy of Bruce Lee

Bruce Lee passed away prematurely





at the age of 32, but his legacy lives on. His vision of martial arts has been a catalyst for the evolution of mixed-race training today. The philosophy he cultivated continues to inspire both martial arts practitioners and people seeking to improve their lives in general. His influence extends beyond the physical realm, touching the emotional and spiritual fibers of millions of people around the world. Some institutions and schools have adopted jeet Kune do in his curriculum, recognizing the relevance of his teachings. Lee's ability to break down cultural and social barriers has inspired movements for diversity in entertainment representation, and his story continues to serve as an example in many motivational talks and self-improvement books.

Final reflection on the life of Bruce Lee

Bruce Lee's life is a profound testament to what it means to be a true master of the art of living. His legacy transcends what can be measured and continues to shine brightly, inspiring those who seek not only to hone their martial arts skills but also to achieve harmony in their personal and professional lives. Adherence to his philosophy of discipline, adaptability, and lessons in self-knowledge is a powerful reminder that true martial art is a constant struggle to surpass our own limits, in every sense.

Ultimately, Bruce Lee was not only a master of martial arts, but a master of life itself. His philosophy and teachings resonate in our times, reminding us of the importance of being authentic, embracing our passions, and continually striving for self-knowledge. His life and legacy are an invitation to follow

his example and find our own ways of being like water, always flowing and adapting to the challenges that come our way.

Who was Bruce Lee?

Bruce Lee was a Chinese-American actor, philosopher, and martial arts master known for his revolutionary fighting style. He is considered one of the pioneers in popularizing karate globally.

What are the main teachings of Master Bruce Lee?

Bruce Lee's teachings focus on adaptation, creativity, personal expression, and the constant pursuit of improvement. He proposed "the way of water," symbolizing the need for fluidity and flexibility in combat.

What impact did Bruce Lee have on the world?

Bruce Lee positively impacted the world through martial arts, acting, and his philosophy. He influenced new generations of martial artists and remains a global cultural icon.

What does "Jeet" mean? Kune Do?"

"Jeet Kune Do is the fighting system created by Bruce Lee. It translates as "The Way of the Vanquished Warrior" and is based on the synthesis of different martial arts, adapting to any situation.

Where can I learn more about Bruce Lee and his legacy?

You can find a wealth of information about Bruce Lee in books, documentaries, fan websites, and museums dedicated to his life and work.

If Bruce felt defeated, let's do something to preserve the alter ego dominated by this master in those who need to do it, at the Traditional Martial Arts Center if we are like water my friend and we are small, but we are the best.





### 1. The seed

My journey in martial arts began in 1980, in a Uruguay marked by dictatorship and the lack of individual freedoms following the military coup. Curiously, it wasn't a fighting motivation that led me to the dojang, but rather a love affair, one of those that shakes the heart and pushes us to seek a new balance.

Back then, without the internet or social media, information circulated simply and directly. It was thanks to a paper flyer distributed on the bus that I discovered "Korean Karate," which was none other than the Taekwondo taught by Grandmaster Byung Sub Lee at his dojang and residence in Old Town.

The practices were demanding and intense. The fights were unprotected—no one wore breastplates, gloves, or helmets—and it was common for someone to get hurt. That toughness was part of the training, and in some ways, part of the era as well.

A few months later, I earned my

yellow belt, but then moved to a dojang closer to home. There, I met Colombian Master Germán Arciniegas, who encouraged me to return to a white belt and start from scratch. With him, I discovered a different form of discipline, one that was more patient and formative. I ended up being one of his longest-serving and highest-ranking students.

### 2. From Taekwondo to Hapkido

After many years of intense practice and competing in various tournaments, a turning point came: my teacher returned to his hometown, Bogotá, and I was already feeling somewhat estranged from his guidance. It was a moment when I began to explore new activities, driven by the same physical and mental restlessness that had led me to martial arts.

I took self-defense courses, experimented with some Brazilian Jiu Jitsu, and for several years immersed myself in the world of adventure racing, a period I shared

with my wife. We trained every day, very early, at six in the morning. Cycling, long-distance running, rowing, kayaking, ropes, rappelling... it was training as demanding as it was diverse. We actively participated in competitions both in Uruguay and Argentina, especially in mountain bike circuits, marathons, and combined long-distance events (approximately 250 km) (running, cycling, kayaking, and rappelling). It was five years of intense physical activity and personal growth, in constant contact with nature.

It wasn't until 2006, thanks to a Taekwondo classmate, that I discovered Hapkido. I started slowly, without high expectations. But over time, I became deeply involved, to the point of becoming passionate. I had discovered something that Taekwondo, due to its sporting and striking nature, didn't offer: tools for hand-to-hand combat, for controlling opponents through locks, throws, and joint manipulation techniques.

Since then, I have dedicated more than 18 years to the study of Hapkido, under the guidance of Master Mario da Silva, director of the Uruguayan Hapkido Center, who was key in my training and in my integration into this new martial stage.

### 3. Dojang Garza Hapkido

The origins of Garza Hapkido date back to the complex and transformative years of the COVID-19 pandemic. But the true seed of this school had been planted a little earlier, in 2018, when we attended a seminar in Santo André, Santa Catarina (Brazil), and I was fortunate enough to meet Grandmaster Ung Seo Ju.



His Hapkido had a profound impact on me. For the first time, something in me began to seriously consider traveling to South Korea and training with him at the legendary seminars he leads in the Deoktong Mountains . That encounter marked a turning point in my approach to martial arts. Thus, on June 2, 2021 , I officially founded Garza Hapkido . At the time, I was still training under Master Mario da Silva , but as is often the case, my technical and personal growth created natural tensions in the relationship. Ultimately, after a heartfelt conversation with my Master, I decided to follow my own path.

It wasn't an easy decision. I had to go through a real period of grief. It's not easy to leave behind 18 years of camaraderie, shared trips, and seminars. That bond, with all it represented, was the hardest thing to let go of.

Today, however, I can confidently say that it was the right path. This decision allowed me to grow enormously as a practitioner and as a martial artist, to rediscover my purpose, and to build a school with its own identity.

In September 2022 , I finally made the trip to Korea to participate in the famous mountain training. There

were only four black belts at that seminar: Eric Dalleves, Benjamin So, Jonathan Rega , and me. The following year, in 2023, I returned to Korea for another seminar, and in 2024 I returned accompanied by my student Jorge Ferreira . And for 2026, we are working to go to the mountains again. It would be our 4th trip to South Korea, with at least two or three more students.

With my school, I seek to faithfully integrate and transmit the techniques of the Euljikwan School, spearheaded by GM Ung Seo Ju, and to work on their application in realistic defensive contexts to verify and reinforce their effectiveness . I aim for a crude, direct, and functional system that wastes no time on useless techniques. I discard from practice techniques that lack real impact and focus on those that cause damage, control the opponent, and generate efficiency in a short period of time.

My students, mostly adults or veterans, need a precise, straightforward methodology that allows them to progress quickly. At Garza Hapkido, we train hard and realistically, maintaining the teaching tradition I learned in Korea. Pain is part of the journey, but also of the transformation.

Beyond technique, my goal is to develop better people who truly know how to defend themselves, who are physically prepared, and who, through Hapkido, also find a better quality of life.

#### 4. Training at 60

As time passes, the body naturally begins to show its limits. In my case, after a lifetime of running, jumping, and intense training, I now live with wear and tear on my knees, an inevitable consequence of so many years of physical activity.

Therefore, my training has had to adapt to this new phase. I no longer go running like I used to. Instead, I do cardiovascular activities inside the dojang or at my home gym, maintaining the level of rigor but with a more conscious approach. The same goes for jumps and flying kicks: over time, they naturally fell by the wayside. In combat, I now seek effectiveness in the shortest possible time, with precise movements, firmly rooted in the ground, that allow me to connect a fist or leg technique and quickly move on to joint control or a throw. Today, I prioritize the actual effectiveness of the technique over its spectacularity. I train to be as





close to my limit as possible, with the injuries I have, yes, but also with the clarity that I want to reach the next few years in good shape. The focus is on longevity, but without sacrificing intensity.

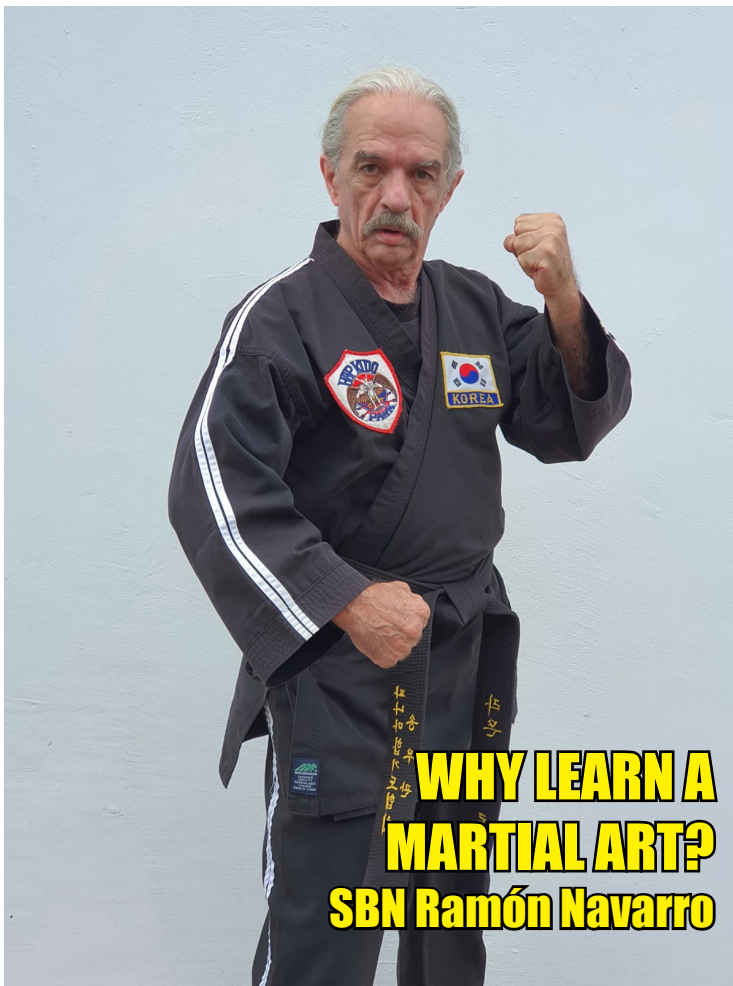
I continue training and teaching because it keeps me active and motivated. I love sharing the journey with young people and adults, seeing them to advance, grow, and improve. But also because teaching forces me to continue learning and to remain committed to my own practice.

Being a martial artist at 60 isn't a label you hang on yourself: it's a way of being in the world. It's perseverance, it's discipline, it's responsibility to yourself and to others: students, family, training partners. It's accepting pain—physical and emotional—knowing how to manage it, and continuing. It's pure resilience .

It's also gratitude, to all the teachers who trained me. From each of them, I took something valuable that is now part of who I am. And above all, being a martial artist is a path without end . It's not something one "is" definitively. It's something we seek, with effort and humility, and perhaps—with luck—we achieve it in our last breath, but never before.

SABON CARLOS GARCIA AROCENA





academies that focus on participating in many competitions over time distance themselves from what MooDo or BuDo are, which includes more than just focusing training on forms, Kata, or Hyung, whether Japanese, Chinese, or Korean arts, among others, and on competitive or sporting combat.

This causes, as I mentioned, that it can alienate new students, since they are most likely not interested in learning to become champions, but rather in improving their physical condition, among other things, such as losing or gaining weight to feel more secure. It also, for example, teaches children to acquire discipline, and adolescents to value and respect themselves, as well as authority. By authority, we know, I don't mean the law, but rather elders, for example, parents, teachers, and their peers, whether older or younger than the student of a martial art.

Of course, there are many more benefits, such as helping children grow, learning to pay attention, control their concentration, and appreciate things, as well as developing their patience. It helps teenagers understand themselves and work under pressure, as well as working toward goals and appreciating themselves.

Adults can manage their weight, coordination, concentration, and stress, as well as build confidence. It helps adults navigate the next stages of life that come as time goes on and you continue training in the martial art you're learning.

Wow, this sounded like what benefits children also benefits adults, but the truth is that what benefits

We're already halfway through 2025 this June. The first thing I want to say is that we all have a good rest of the year. I, Ramón Navarro, a HapKiDo Master, have 48 years of teaching experience, but 52 years of studying Tang SooDo, and what more.

I still think it would be good if the governments of the country where we live allowed martial arts to be taught in schools, but it seems that this is not the case, nor does it seem likely that this will happen soon.

There's a lot of marketing for everything these days, and those of us who teach Karate, Jujitsu, or whatever martial art, let's make ourselves known, but not just for going to competitions.

It seems to me that many times it is seen that to learn martial arts you have to do everything possible to be good enough at learning it and be part of those chosen to go and represent that Academy in competitions or tournaments.

This can cause many potentially good students to turn away. It's better to announce that what they'll learn is how to maintain their physical and mental health, as well as self-defense, and they'll be eligible to represent their academy in competitions.

I could be wrong, but I don't think so. I also think that







children and adolescents also benefits adults, among other things. That's why it's said that martial arts should be learned for life, because they will primarily provide youth or physical skills such as flexibility and strength to the adult as long as they continue training or practicing that martial art.

Not all martial arts are the same. Although they have many similarities, they also don't have the same focus. However, they all aim to help their students develop in ways that will benefit them in the future. Therefore, we need to return to the original principle of a martial art, which is that the individual gains control over their character, grows in patience, and strengthens the balance that should exist between body and mind. This will also allow for spiritual development, which in reality has nothing to do with religion, but with humanity.

The younger or younger you start learning a martial art, the better. But age doesn't matter, and when you begin learning this art, the important thing is to take it slow, whether you learn it quickly or not. The important thing is to grow with this learning process. Instructors or teachers, just because they are teachers, of course, will have less experience than the teacher, although that doesn't mean the teacher doesn't truly know how to transmit it to their students.

Let's remember that what we're supposed to learn is to be humble, respectful, to work in a group, and to be a good example. Furthermore, I believe that the way a person develops through training in a martial art will

depend on what kind of person they become, and not on falling into the trap of someone who thinks they're superior and picks fights. Also, when a person learns correctly, they will teach better, setting examples that benefit their students more than if they grow up to be a troublemaker.

Let's remember that we don't know which of his students nature will choose to be his future instructor, who doesn't have the desire to become independent and be the support, passing on this knowledge to future generations. For a student to reach this point, he doesn't have to be a great competitor; he just has to be interested enough to continue training and enjoy fighting so that experience teaches him, in addition to what he learns from his teacher, and he knows how to win without worrying about that moment of having to use his art and defend himself, but he transmits what that martial art is supposed to have as its principle and function.

Karate is about 100 years old, of course, with older foundations, regardless of where it comes from, whether it's Okinawa or China. Well, in Korea, its history is very rich in centuries, so since the history of Korea was distorted for at least 35 years, from 1909 to 1945, we shouldn't say when teaching that our arts like TaeKwonDo, TangSooDo, and HapKiDo are ancient arts, especially if we know TaeKwonDo and HapKiDo, which are arts no older than the 1950s.

Today there are many teachers who distort the original teaching and what they teach is nothing more than what is known as the famous McDojos or, although



they teach what it is, but they distort the curriculum in some way and are no longer exact giving excuses that they removed what does not work on the street today, although they are not really McDojos academies there are many instructors, teachers and even many large and small organizations that are supposed to represent a martial art.

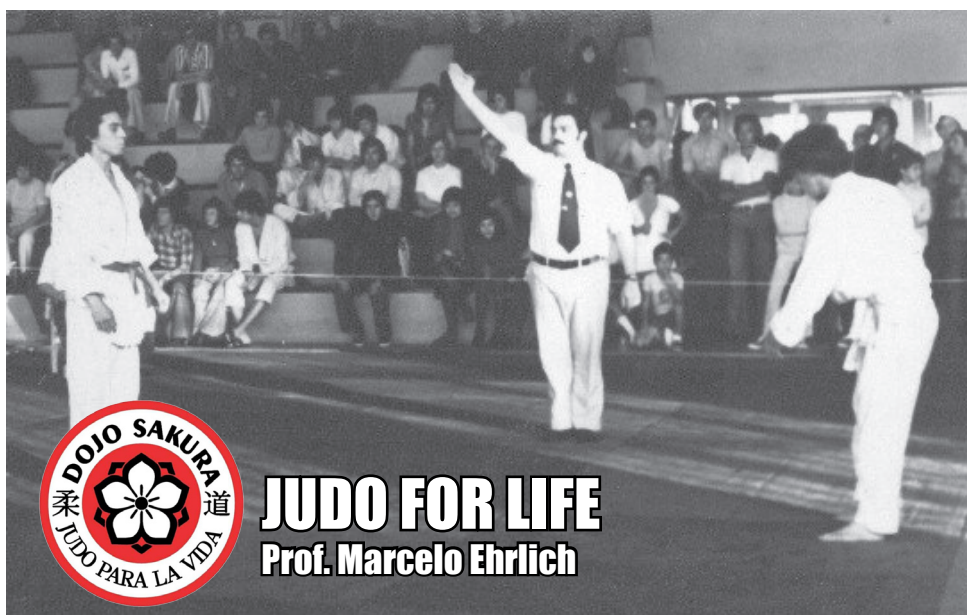
People who invent ranks or obtain them by jumping from one organization to another and achieving high Dan degrees, even those who invent a name to represent what they are going to teach and not only deceive the parents of minors but also adults who pay for their lessons, let's say the monthly fees, and the worst thing is that they are joined by supposed martial artists who allow themselves to be dragged into this walk, but those who deceive themselves are themselves, but they end up stealing from their students since the ranks or degrees they give are not valid.

Everyone who knows each other, and among the martial artists who know you, if you know that your art is from a specific place, and that false master or instructor of a lower rank is teaching, we should publicly denounce them. The truth is, that's very difficult, though not impossible. Should we do something about it? Of course. If you're one of those people and you decide to make public that you're going to create a new martial art, you should make it clear that it's based on art from that place and not claim to be the heir to a type of martial art from Okinawa, Japan, Korea, or China. I shouldn't say this, but at least you won't fool yourself or others as much, and I hope you know enough to teach something that seems real.

The best thing in my opinion is to belong to a group or a formally registered association, wherever it may be in the East, among the most well-known ones such as China, Japan, Korea, etc. I'm going to leave it there, so that those of us who know teachers of this type of people, I don't know what to say. I would just like those of you who know them to gather them together and ask them to renounce that path or find a more truthful way for them to do what they want in a legitimate manner. See you soon and those interested and become part of the Song Moo Kwan HapKiDo family with headquarters in the Republic of Panama, I am the technical director of this expanding art and you can call me or write to me at WhatsApp +507 67808222 with SabomNim Ramón Navarro.







Hello readers of the international Martial Arts magazine "El Camino".

We continue to respond to questions and concerns from everyone who communicates through all means, even in class, asking questions or making strange faces when they don't understand something.

It is very important not to be left with doubts, to ask, study, compare, put into practice, and adapt to each person and each situation.

As we mentioned in the previous article, thanks to technology, we have access to a vast amount of specialized information, which didn't exist in my younger years, and we blindly trusted what our teachers said and showed us. We had photocopies of technical and theoretical material that we treasured, almost always in Japanese, English, or French (I still have many of them). And of course, some books arrived as well, almost always in those languages.

When professors came from abroad, it was our way of acquiring greater knowledge, but not all of our professors liked that. It was as if the educational and training aspects of many were exposed. Some would say, "This is how it is and it should be done this way!" You couldn't question what they had said!

It wasn't until I began traveling regularly to Brazil and Argentina and learning about other Judo techniques that my mind fully opened up. The Judo taught by those Masters and Professors, who held nothing back, always shared, was what shaped my style, my way of understanding and developing what I did.

They taught me the knowledge, and I had to put it into practice in front of them. They corrected me and demanded a lot of repetition (they told



me it was the only way). When I left, they told me, "Practice a lot, and when you come back, show me!"

And as I wrote in other notes, I always repeat the phrase that Master Yoriyuki Yamamoto once told me, after a training in Buenos Aires/ Argentina: "You have to be like a sponge, absorbing everything, what is not for you will go away and what remains will be for your essence."

I learned the fundamentals of martial arts, combat sports, and how to apply them to self-defense. Whenever I could, I went to Buenos Aires to classes, special courses, and championships, and also to southern Brazil, to São Paulo and Rio, through the Uruguayan Judo Federation, and most of the time, on my own.

And of course, the number of Judo practitioners, compared to that of Uruguay, was overwhelming, and that's when you realize how important it is to always practice with people who are different in physique, personality, training level, and level of knowledge!

I learned to adapt my technique to very different fighters. It's not the same with bigger and heavier fighters, or faster fighters, more technical fighters, fighters with more competitive experience, etc. I learned to study and apply combat strategy, tactics, technique, applied physics, and their development for learning, teaching, and developing the mentality of combat sports and real combat in extreme situations where our lives or the lives of others may be in danger.

Always searching for material on Judo and Martial Arts, I ended up having one of the largest libraries and video libraries on the subject in Uruguay. Friends would come over to my house to read and drink coffee, or they would take study materials.

I've already told you that as a child, I began learning Judo and Boxing at the Young Men's Christian Association, which later led me to understand the different distances and mentalities in combat. Years later, I would delve into parallel studies in Karate, Taekwon-Do, Aikido, and Jiu-Jitsu. I saw how their different actions could be combined, in sports or real combat. And more and more, I met like-minded people who were on the same wavelength!

Training sessions, championships, and training camps continued in other countries in the Americas and Europe, and I met more and more people who thought like me. They had even developed their own combat systems. This meant that, apart from the traditional systems that had practically become sports, the doors were opening to systems that until just a few years before had been designed for military and police forces.

When I trained in military or police camps, where situations were





practiced that were as close to reality as possible, I saw how the repetition of movements, to the point of becoming reflexes, and the ability to adapt to circumstances made the difference. And then I saw how those same people put on the judogi (judo uniform) and practiced the sporting and martial arts aspects, so as to maintain the humanism, morality, respect, and spirit of budo in their lives.

For many years, elite competitors, international referees, professors, and teachers have come to Uruguay through our Federation, sharing their knowledge with us. When we attend international courses, we must share what we've learned with the local judokas through a seminar. Always share!

Those starting out in judo at a young age will find the adapted game, recreational judo, which will prepare them for subsequent endeavors, always according to pre-established ages. Instructors will be trained to serve this age group, which will be the foundation for the future development of youth judo. Children compete in friendly and official sports matches. They make friends at other institutions through joint classes, always encouraging them to do better every day, learning respect, discipline, hygiene, and helping one another. They support the education of parents at home and of teachers and professors at educational centers.

When they are in Junior Judo, the teaching and training begins to increase, especially in the sporting/competitive aspect, with frequent championships, which prepares them for increasingly demanding national and international competitions. Competitions also provide an incentive to increase training, to keep up with classes, to always be eager to participate, to improve, to achieve increasingly relevant positions, and to be included in a ranking to attend top-level international championships.

If we continue to grow in age, it will also be in the demands of Senior Judo, where the top performers will be. Competitors are at their peak in World Championships, Olympic Games, and Professional Championships. Very few competitors reach these levels, and they all prioritize competition over other aspects of life! We understand that it's a very difficult choice to make when things aren't going well.

The way we want, when we lose competitions, when we don't bring home the coveted trophies, and when we no longer have the scholarships we used to receive. It's a little different for the average competitor, who operates in our local environment where the level isn't as high. And they're so used to competing that they keep doing it, because it's where they feel good!

And of course, those who didn't like being competitive eventually gave



up on judo! Because they didn't really feel competitive, didn't have the level of those who came after them, or they were really looking for something else... And they couldn't give it to them, or they didn't care about losing a student!

We must understand that the sporting aspect of judo is just that, a part. It's very important due to its international development and scientific advances that now support its training and supervision in physical and mental health.

And Judo is so broad in its representation that we can all find things within it that we like, that make us feel good, that meet our expectations, that truly help people. And it is in non-competitive Judo that we can find the meaning of life, Judo for everyone, without restrictions, each according to their limitations, aspirations, and beliefs.

One area that stands out is the application of the fundamentals and techniques of Judo, for use in self-defense activities, physical attacks with and without weapons, and training of military and police special forces who, by profession, must deal with these situations.

The same technique, for example, a throw I use in a sports competition, I can use in a real-life defensive situation on the street, modifying or not modifying its finish to avoid causing unnecessary damage or to achieve complete control. The same applies to striking techniques, joint locks, and strangulations.

What changes in these cases is the mindset of the user, who must adapt these tools to a specific purpose: controlling the environment, ending the aggression, disarming, achieving complete control of the aggressor, and restoring calm. Those who practice and train for these purposes also have an incentive to continue practicing: to stay up-to-date and prepared, since their lives and the lives of others may depend on their actions. Similar to competitors, whose incentive is to train as hard as possible to compete in every championship and win medals for themselves, for the institution they represent, for the country they represent!

But, for those who come to my classes and are not looking for sports competition and perhaps never to be involved in physical aggression, what motivation do they have for not missing it?

Maybe it's just learning Judo! Experimenting, improving, teaching, sharing, adapting, and feeling great about what you do!

You'll always find me at the Dojo, waiting for you!

Prof. Marcelo Ehrlich.





# Dr. He-Young Kimm and the Round Table Alliance: Reviving Martial Wisdom Across Continents

by GM Ernst Jan Rolloos

In the world of martial arts, where ancient tradition often clashes with modern trends, few figures have walked the path with as much grace, scholarship, and visionary purpose as Dr. He-Young Kimm. As the founder of Hanmudo and a world-renowned historian of Korean martial traditions, Dr. Kimm has devoted his life not only to preserving martial knowledge, but to evolving it—bridging East and West, past and future.



(photo: Dr.He-Young Kimm)

Today, his legacy takes on a new dimension through his collaboration with the Round Table Alliance, a neutral European collective of martial masters dedicated to safeguarding and revitalizing the true spirit of martial arts.



(logo: Round Table Alliance)

## A Life Devoted to the Martial Path

Born in Korea and later settling in the United States, Dr. Kimm is a living bridge between continents and cultures. Holding advanced ranks in Hapkido, Taekwondo, Yudo, and Kumdo, his magnum opus—Hanmudo—is a synthesis of traditional Korean martial principles emphasizing flow, balance, internal power, and philosophical integrity.

Yet Dr. Kimm's influence extends far beyond the dojang. As a Ph.D. and prolific author, he has documented the roots, development, and philosophies of Korean martial arts like no one else, offering the world a priceless archive of martial heritage. His works are cornerstones for practitioners, teachers, and historians alike.



(photo: Dr.He-Young Kimm)

### Hanmudo: The Korean Martial Way

Hanmudo (한무도), meaning “The Korean Martial Way,” is more than a system of self-defence—it is a holistic path of self-cultivation. With techniques that include throws, joint locks, circular redirection, meditation, and breathing practices, Hanmudo trains not just the body, but the character.

Dr. Kimm envisioned Hanmudo as a living philosophy, one that encourages harmony in movement and integrity in life. This vision aligns powerfully with the ideals of the Round Table Alliance, where martial arts are not just practiced—they are lived.

**A European Renaissance: Reawakening Hanmudo**  
The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted countless martial arts schools and lineages worldwide. But from the ashes of that global crisis, Hanmudo is experiencing a renaissance in Europe. Spearheaded by a new generation of martial visionaries and supported by the Round Table Alliance, Hanmudo is being revived and reimagined on European soil.

This revitalization effort includes seminars, intercultural exchanges, training camps, and educational projects—all with the aim of restoring martial depth in a fast-paced, surface-level world.



(photo: European masters)



(photo: Hanmudo)

### A Historic Gathering: June 7, 2025 – The Netherlands

A major milestone in this movement will take place on Saturday, June 7th, 2025, with an international seminar in the Netherlands. Open to practitioners of all styles and levels, the event will showcase the shared philosophy of Hanmudo and the Round Table Alliance through hands-on instruction, cultural dialogue, and mutual exchange.

This will not simply be a seminar—it will be a moment of connection, where martial artists from different paths meet under one circle to train, reflect, and celebrate the wisdom that unites them.





(photo: CM Rolloos. GM Serio, Dr.Kimm, CMvan Workum)

#### A Statement from Chiefmaster van Workum

“Dr. He-Young Kimm is more than a martial artist—he is one of the most important martial historians of our time,” says Chiefmaster van Workum, senior representative of the Round Table Alliance.

“He has given the world an invaluable understanding of Korean martial arts—not just as techniques, but as living traditions with ethical and educational power. Through Hanmudo, he offers a blueprint for building martial values like discipline, balance, and inner peace into the fabric of modern life.”

“Our collaboration with Dr. Kimm is not about imitation—it’s about mutual enrichment. Hanmudo offers Europe a way forward: one that fuses depth with action, tradition with transformation.”



#### East and West: Different Roads, Same Heart

While both Asian and European martial traditions boast deep roots, they reflect profoundly different worldviews. In East Asian martial arts, the focus often lies on internal transformation—shaped by Taoism, Buddhism, and Confucianism. Combat becomes a metaphor for life. Movements become meditations. The ego is tempered. Mastery means flowing with nature and overcoming oneself.

In European traditions, shaped by the realities of warfare, honour, and survival, the emphasis is on decisiveness, application, and external readiness. The ego is not dissolved—it is harnessed. Martial training is grounded in pragmatic tactics, bold action, and courage in adversity. Despite these differences, both traditions share a core: discipline, respect, and the forging of character through challenge. Both offer tools not just for defence, but for transformation.

#### The Round Table Alliance: A Circle Without Hierarchy

The Round Table Alliance represents a new era in martial collaboration. Modelled on the ideals of chivalry, it is a circle without hierarchy—where no master sits above another, and every voice is honoured. It is a space for honest exchange, technical exploration, and mutual growth.

Dr. Kimm’s honorary participation in the alliance marks a symbolic union of East and West. His insights enrich the European scene with historical depth and philosophical clarity, while the Alliance offers Hanmudo a fertile ground for renewal and intercultural dialogue.

Together, they embody the highest principle of martial arts: unity through diversity.

#### A Living Legacy

In an age of fast trends and shallow practice, Dr. He-Young Kimm stands as a guardian of authenticity. His life’s work bridges centuries and continents, disciplines and doctrines. Through his partnership with the Round Table Alliance, the spirit of Hanmudo is not only preserved—it is reborn.

To follow Dr. Kimm is to follow a path of harmony in conflict, strength in humility, and wisdom in motion. His journey reminds us that true mastery is not confined by borders—it is shared, lived, and passed on.

For those who walk the martial path today, he offers more than techniques. He offers a vision. [www.hanmudo.com](http://www.hanmudo.com) and [www.round-table-alliance.org](http://www.round-table-alliance.org)



(photo: Dr.He-Young-Kimm)





## Mate and Karate Ksn Renso Perez

Kyokushin: The Path of Truth and Strength

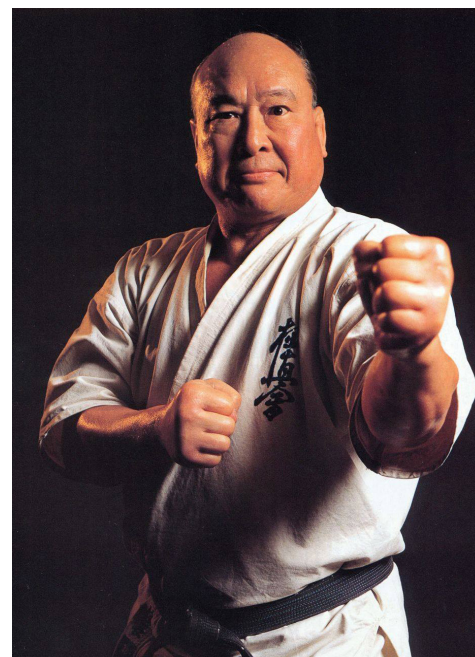
In the vast universe of martial arts, Kyokushin Karate shines brightly. Founded by the legendary Masutatsu Oyama in the 1960s, this style has earned the respect and admiration of the world for its direct approach, its physical demands, and its indomitable spirit. Kyokushin means "the ultimate truth," and those who practice it know that this path is paved with sweat, discipline, and courage. Origins and Philosophy Mas Oyama, born in Korea but trained in Japan, combined his knowledge of various martial arts—including Shotokan karate and Goju-Ryu—with an ironclad training ethic. He retreated for years to Mount Kiyozumi to perfect his technique and strengthen his spirit. From that isolation, Kyokushin was born, not as just another variant of karate, but as a revolution. Oyama believed that only by facing pain, fear, and exhaustion could one find their true essence. The philosophy of Kyokushin is based on three pillars: self-discipline, humility, and perseverance. It's

not just about hitting harder, but about surpassing oneself in every training session. In every kata, in every fight, character is forged as much as the body. A true contact style What distinguishes Kyokushin from other styles is its full-contact combat. In tournaments, competitors fight without body protection (except in junior categories), and blows to the face are permitted only with kicks. This forces the practitioner to develop a solid defense, great resistance to pain, and a steely mentality. The training is rigorous. It includes intense physical conditioning, striking techniques (kihon), forms (kata), and kumite (combat), all focused on true effectiveness. Each class is a challenge to the limit, and those who persist gain not only physical strength, but also an unbreakable mentality. The Greeting of a Strong Spirit The Kyokushin dojo has a special energy. At the beginning or end of a class, everyone greets each other with a powerful "Osu!", an expression that embodies respect, determination, and willpower.

It's not just a greeting; it's a declaration: "I'm here, I'm giving my best, and I'm not giving up." Legacy and Worldwide Expansion Since its founding, Kyokushin has spread to more than 120 countries. Its international tournaments bring together thousands of fighters, and its influence can be seen in disciplines such as kickboxing and mixed martial arts (MMA), where many Kyokushin-trained fighters have left their mark with their toughness and lethal technique. Today, various organizations continue Oyama's legacy, each with its own nuances but maintaining the essence of the style: the warrior spirit, honesty in practice, and the constant search for personal truth.

### Conclusion

Practicing Kyokushin is not for everyone. It is a demanding path that demands commitment and total dedication. But for those who accept the challenge, it becomes a journey of profound transformation. Because in Kyokushin, beyond technique or strength, the soul is trained. "A strong spirit, a firm mind, and a trained body: that is karate."





## The Rise of Judo and the Dawn of a New Era (Part 2)

by JAVIER ORUE

These borrowed additions by Kanō coincided with the interests of the Japanese government, which in 1882 had decided that the four fundamental principles of public education were: to form a strong constitution through physical exercise, to fill the hearts of students with loyalty and patriotism, to instill the necessary knowledge, and to produce the necessary strength for the military. In this new Japan, judo could find a receptive audience; all it would have to do was survive against the other schools of jujutsu. Almost immediately, the Kōdōkan found itself under attack from other jujutsu schools.

These schools were run by former samurai, many of whom had been advocates of *sonno joi* ("reverence the emperor, expel the barbarian") and disliked Kanō's judo and his incorporation of "modern" and "foreign" ideas. Considering jujutsu to be a birthright of their caste, they were openly outraged at Kanō's idea of making judo open to all, including foreigners (the first being the American Dr. F.W. Eastlake in 1885) and later even to women (although the Kōdōkan's first official female student was Sueko Ashiya in 1893, Kanō had been instructing his wife and housewives in judo for years before that date).

As soon as the Kōdōkan opened its doors, rivals from other jujutsu schools began lining up at its door. Kanō later wrote in his memoirs about this period: "It seemed as if the Kōdōkan had to conquer all of Japan."

A noteworthy incident occurred in 1883, when during the ceremony to award the first dan ranks to Shida Shiro (better known as Saigo Shiro) and Tomita Tsunejiro (who also had the honor of being the Kōdōkan's first student); the celebration was interrupted by a jujutsuka named Yokoyama Sakujiro. Known as "Oni" or "Demon" for his

fearsome size and fighting style, Sakujiro had come to challenge Kanō and demonstrate the superiority of Teshin Yōshin-ryū over his *gendai budō*.

Unfortunately for him, Kanō had recently retired from participating in these challenges, so Shida Shiro was selected to represent the Kōdōkan. At the time, Saigo was only 17 years old and small in stature, like his teacher, but he was fiercely loyal to the Kōdōkan, and had intensely studied Oshiki-uchi, the secret fighting style of the Aizuhan, before taking up judo.

The "Demon" was shocked to find himself defeated by Shiro, but was so impressed with the techniques demonstrated by his opponent that he immediately pledged allegiance to Kanō and became a judo student.

Soon he, along with Shida Shiro, Tsunejiro Tomita, and Yamashita Yoshiaki, who would join them in August 1884, became known as the "Kōdōkan Shiten'nō" or "Four Guardians of the Kōdōkan" (although the literal translation is "Four Heavenly Kings of the Kōdōkan"). They would become famous as defenders of judo during the numerous contests or *shaia* (derived from *shi-ni-al*; "until death") to which they found themselves challenged.

The "soft path" would require such champions, because the stakes in those competitions were high, as Yokoyama Sakujiro later recalled:

"In those days, the competitions were extremely tough and often cost the participants their lives. Therefore, whenever I went out to take part in one of these competitions, I invariably said goodbye to my parents, as I had no guarantee of returning alive."

In 1886, the Tokyo Metropolitan Police Board deemed it appropriate to organize a *bujutsu taikai* (a martial arts tournament or match) between Kanō's Kōdōkan and the Totsuka branch of Yōshin-ryū.





It was a great achievement for the four-year-old judo club to be given this opportunity, as not only was Totsuka's ryū in China the larger (with some 3,000 students compared to Kanō's few dozen) and more prestigious of the two, but only two years earlier these two schools had faced each other in a shia at the University of Tokyo on behalf of the administration, and the judoka had been easily defeated. As Baelz stated at the time, the contest:

" He made it clear how much training is needed to learn the art, because of all the young men who had been working at it in Tokyo, none, not even Kanō, could stand up to the police officers who had been trained by Totsuka in Chiba ." After that first encounter, the Kōdōkan judokas rededicated themselves to their craft and achieved great success, defeating most of the other major jujutsu ryū in the Tokyo area, until they, along with their rivals in Chiba, were recognized as the two best.

This, coupled with the interest shown by the Mombusho (Ministry of Education) in the potential of judo for educational purposes, led Mr. Mi-shima, the 5th Chief of the National Police Agency, to organize a rematch to determine who would teach unarmed defense techniques to his police officers.

For the taikai, each side selected ten men, and the representatives of Yōshin-ryū Jujutsu were some of the most renowned jututsuka of the time. By comparison, the young men of the Kōdōkan seemed woefully inexperienced. As Kanō himself wrote when speaking of his opponents:

" Totsuka Hikosuke was considered the strongest of the Bakumatsu jujutsu practitioners. After Hikosuke, (his son) Eimi carried on the school's name and trained many outstanding jujutsu practitioners... Truly, the Totsuka side had powerful fighters and they were no braggarts... When you mentioned the name Totsuka, you were referring to the greatest jujutsu masters of that era. My own Tenshin Shinyo-ryu and Kito-ryu masters were hard pressed when they faced Totsuka's jujutsu masters at the shogunate's Komusho dojo ..."

Although many of the details of bujutsu taikai have been lost, we do know how Shiten'nō fared. In the case of Tomita Tsunejiro, although the name of his opponent has been lost, records show that he emerged victorious. Yamashita Yoshiaki likewise defeated the Yōshin-ryū Totsuka-ha exponent and master, Enchi Kotaro, by throwing him with a seoi-nage.

The most anticipated bout of the Taikai was the one between Yokoyama Sakujiro and Nakamura Hansuke. Nakamura was not actually a Yōshin-ryū student, but a Ryōi Shintō-ryū sensei whom Totsuka had asked to participate on his behalf. He was also considered the toughest man in Japan, standing 176 cm tall and weighing 94 kg, and was famous for his ability to hang from a tree by his neck

without feeling pain.

The 169 cm, 95 kg "Demon" Sakujiro, who had reached the rank of 4th dan in just his third year, would prove to be a more than worthy opponent. The bout itself was a brutal and grueling affair that lasted 55 minutes before finally being declared a draw. In the end, the referee had to pry their fingers apart to force the two to release their tight grips.

The final bout between Shiro Shida and Terushima Taro was destined to become the most famous in judo history. Few gave Shiro, then 20, much of a chance against the older (27) and bigger (listed at 83 kg to Shiro's 58 kg) Terushima, who was known to be Hikokuro Totsuka's favorite jujutsuka and the chosen heir to lead Yōshin-ryū. But after 15 minutes, Terushima made a mistake and was exposed, and to the surprise of those present, Shiro knocked Taro down so hard that he suffered a concussion and was forced to retire from the fight. The technique he used was called "yama-arashi," or mountain storm, and has since been lost to time. As many have said, "There is no yama-arashi before Saigo, and no yama-arashi after Saigo."

With Shiro's victory, the final total was nine wins and one tie in favor of the Kodokan. It was a landslide victory for the Kodokan that not only made judo the martial art of the Tokyo Police Department, but also confirmed its place in Japan's future.

In 1888 another taiki competition was held, involving fifteen members of the Kōdōkan. They were challenged



by an equal number of jujutsuka, including ten proponents of the Yōshin-ryū Totsuka-ha bent on avenging their defeat in honor of Tosuka Hikosuke (who died shortly after the Police Competition), along with five other masters from various schools. This time, Yamashita faced Terushima (who had taken over as leader of Yōshin-ryū Jujutsu), and Saigo faced Enchi Kotaro, but the result was the same; with the exception of two draws, the Kōdōkan swept their opponents.

With this final victory and Kōdōkan Judo on firm ground, Kanō began to focus more on his true career as an educator, going so far as to accept a position at the Ministry of Education, although he continued to play an important role in the spread of judo among the Japanese population and in seeing his vision of a codification of jujutsu realized. Many of the jujutsu ryū had already begun to reform their methods, incorporating some of Kanō Jigorō's innovations after having witnessed his success firsthand.

In 1895, the Dai Nippon Butoku Kai was established as a sort of governing body for jujutsu, with the intention of sanctioning and standardizing the disciplines nationwide. In 1899, the Butokukai jujutsu competition rules were formulated, in 1900 the rules for the Kodokan Judo Randori Shobu Shimpan-ho, and by 1905, a uniform set of rules for jujutsu kata had been developed.

The shiai era was coming to an end, although there was still a great battle to be fought, one in which judo ironically grew stronger by losing. In 1900, Kōdōkan judo suffered a huge shock when it lost a challenge match against Fusen-ryū jujutsu, a school that specialized in ne-waza, or "ground work." To Kanō's credit, he did not ignore his ideals of taking the best of jujutsu and incorporating it into judo.

Recognizing the benefits of ne-waza, he gathered the masters of Fusen-ryū and asked them to teach several of their judoka their jujutsu methods. These new ground-fighting judoka would go on to instruct others while forming the foundations of Kosen judo.

As Kanō became more focused on his other responsibilities, he began to leave the running of the Kōdōkan in the hands of the Shiten'nō. At first, it was Shiro, who had now taken the surname of his adoptive father, the Aiki-jūjutsu master Saigo Tanomo, who would assume the position of Director of the Kōdōkan. This did not last long, as in 1891, Saigo Shiro abruptly stepped down from the position.

The stories about his departure are many. Many involve excessive drinking or fighting. One tells of Kanō being forced to banish him after a fight the police tried to break up, resulting in him being either injured or thrown into a river by Shiro. Another tells of a duel with a 200 cm, 140 kg sumo wrestler named Ara-umi, in which Shiro killed him with a blow to the chest.

The most likely and most poetic conflict was the one Shiro

felt between Kanō and his first teacher, his adoptive father. When one pledged oneself to a sensei, it carried with it a strong obligation to serve, known as giri. Shiro had been raised and taught at Oshikiuchi by Saigo Tanomo, who had visions of him continuing the family jujutsu.

At the same time, he had dedicated himself to Kanō and his Kōdōkan Judo. He could not dedicate himself to both, and yet he could not choose one without betraying the other.

Shiro's solution was to move to Nagasaki and become a reporter, abandoning both Oshikiuchi and Judo in the process. In this way, Shiro avoided having to surrender his giri to either of his two teachers and never took up another hand-to-hand combat discipline, choosing instead to dedicate himself to Kyūdō, or the Way of the Bow and Arrow.

Years later, Shiro would be immortalized as the main character of the novel Sanshiro Sugata, written by Tomita Tsunejiro's son, Tsuneo Tomita, which would be released as a film in 1943 by Akira Kurosawa.

Shiro's former opponent, Sakujiro "Demon" Yokoyama, eventually became the head of the Kōdōkan and sensei to the future "God of Judo" Kyuzo Mifune. Once the most feared of the Shiten'nō, as Sakujiri aged he became more diplomatic, honoring Kanō's unofficial ban on dueling as best he could. When a ruffian and his dozen cronies tried to steal his jacket while Mifune and I were dining, the nearly 50-year-old seventh dan was wise enough in his advanced age to leave half for his dinner guest. while





teaching the others some manners.

In 1911, Yokoyama Sakujiro, who had discontinued that first dan ceremony, made a count of those currently holding the rank of dan or higher...

In less than 30 years, the Kōdōkan had grown from fewer than a dozen students working toward their first dan, to now include 2 7th dan (7th-degree black belt), 3 6th dan, 6 5th dan, 30 4th dan, 120 3rd dan, 300 2nd dan, and 750 1st dan. That same year, an even greater triumph was recorded when judo was added to the Japanese national school curriculum.

To understand judo's incredible success, one must know that in the 1870s, when Dr. Baelz was promoting the benefits of physical education, the governor of Chiba told him that jujutsu would be a splendid method of exercise, but regretted that it "had completely fallen into disuse." It was now compulsory for schoolchildren to study it.

The benefits and successes of the Gentle Way method would not be limited to Japan. In 1903, Yamashita Yoshiaki set sail for the United States and arrived first in Seattle, where he gave a judo exhibition that inspired the local Japanese population to found their own judo club, the Seattle Dojo, which remains the oldest judo club in the Americas.

Yamashita subsequently traveled east to Washington, where early the following year he met President Theodore Roosevelt. Roosevelt, an enthusiast of wrestling and boxing, was equally fascinated by judo and took lessons from Yamashita.

In fact, he was so impressed with Yamashita's demonstrated skills that he hired him to teach at the U.S. Naval Academy. For two years, 1905 and 1906, Yamashita was the "wrestling" coach, before resigning to return to Japan (his replacement would be former American Catch-as-Catch-can heavyweight wrestling champion Tom Jenkins).

Yomashita was followed on his journey to the United States by another of the "Guardians," Tomita Tsunejiro, who arrived in New York in December 1904, accompanied by his student Mitsuyo Maeda. The two quickly began performing for the American public, where Tomita was quick to distinguish between judo and jujutsu:

"Jiu-jitsu is an almost extinct art, a savage art that would be better off extinct. The true art of self-defense is ju-do." They were generally successful, such as on a visit to Princeton University, where they brought down several members of the football team, although their demonstration before the West Point cadets left something to be desired. The two would go on to found a judo club in New York in 1905.

Shortly after, the two separated. Tomita remained in New York until 1910, when he returned to Japan to live out his life. Maeda, in turn, dedicated himself to professional wrestling, which led him to travel throughout America

and Europe, facing some of the best fighters of the time under the nickname "Count Koma" or "Count Combat." Eventually, he would retire to Brazil, where he would teach a young man named Carlos Gracie the art of jujutsu.

Other judoka traveled to the West, often at the instigation of Kanō, who saw an opportunity to spread the philosophy of judo. Gunji Koizumi, Sadakazu Uyenishi, Yukio Tani, Mikonosuke Kawaishi, Tokugoro Ito and many others demonstrated jujutsu to the outside world, opened schools in America and Europe, or even participated in professional wrestling.

Judo had not only conquered Japan, but was now planning to colonize the world. Kanō's creation had far exceeded his ambitious goals.

It's often easy to exaggerate the influence a single person can have on events or history, but in Kanō Jigorō's case, it's almost impossible to do so. Without Kanō, not only would we not have Kōdōkan Judo, but there's a good chance jujutsu would have gone the way of wrestling and become an obscure, almost forgotten discipline.

Furthermore, without Kanō Jigorō there is a good chance there would be no Mitsuyo Maeda, W.E. Fairbairn, Vasil Oshchepkov or Bill Underwood, and therefore no Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu, Defendu, Sambo or Combato. And for these reasons, any period that produces a Kanō Jigorō should be labeled a "Golden Age."



# The Spiral Mind: How Circular Combat Rewires the Brain

## by Grandmaster Ernst Jan Rolloos

I was born on January 9th, 1970, in the Netherlands. I grew up in a world shaped by entrepreneurship and Calvinist values. We were taught to work hard, set goals, and move forward. But I've come to see it differently: we move forward through circles. Like the seasons, like breath, like the pulse — success isn't a straight line, it's a return with deeper meaning.

There were three great influences in my martial arts journey — three points in the circle that shaped the orbit of my development. In my youth and adolescence, I was guided by Master Janssen. He was the one who introduced me to the art of motion — not just as a technique, but as a way of life. Through him, I learned the discipline of being an athlete, the humility of training, and the value of staying grounded. He was pragmatic, firm, and deeply human. He gave me my first steps into the circle. Then came Grandmaster Han Jung Doo. Where Janssen was pragmatic, Han was fluid and free — like wind moving through the trees. He taught me to listen to the body, to move with intuition, and to embrace motion as an expression of spirit. The third was Dr. He-Young Kimm, the scholar. Systematic, profound, and structured, he laid out the deeper frameworks — the cultural, historical, and philosophical underpinnings of martial knowledge. From him, I saw how tradition could be preserved without being rigid.

These three masters — the pragmatist, the liberated spirit, and the scholar — formed a perfect triangle in my personal orbit. Each added a layer to how I understood martial skills, and together they reshaped my entire vision of movement, purpose, and personal transformation.

In martial arts, we often speak of technique, timing, and tenacity. But at the core of all true



(GM Ernst Jan Rolloos)

mastery lies something deeper—motion. Not just any motion, but circular motion: the arc of a strike, the pivot of a stance, the rhythm of the breath. Circular motion is ancient, intuitive, and profoundly transformative—not only for the body but for the brain.

When we train in Circular Combat, we do more than learn how to strike or evade. We reshape our neurology. Circular movement



activates both hemispheres of the brain, engaging coordination, rhythm, spatial intelligence, and creative adaptability. Where linear drills can feel repetitive, circular training demands presence. It awakens the mind to flow—training us to respond rather than react. This spiral path builds new neural connections, linking logic with intuition, structure with spontaneity. Stress dissolves into movement. Focus sharpens. The body calms. Over time, the nervous system learns to self-regulate, anchoring attention in the now—through motion, breath, and embodied awareness.

But the benefits of Circular Combat don't end there. In a rapidly changing world, this style of training meets two rising demands: personal sovereignty and holistic health.



(Logo of the art of motion)

### 1. A Warrior's Sovereignty in Uncertain Times

Across the globe, people are seeking more than physical safety—they're seeking resilience. The ability to stand grounded in the face of chaos. Circular Combat offers this path: not aggression, but mastery. Through spiral-based movement, practitioners build dynamic strength, situational awareness, and

the confidence that comes from refined skill—not brute force.

### 2. Martial Arts Meets Wellness

The martial path is no longer reserved for fighters alone. A new wave of practitioners is turning to martial arts for health, stress relief, and mental clarity. Circular training fits this shift perfectly. Its flowing nature supports cardiovascular health, joint mobility, core strength, and emotional resilience—without the wear and tear of high-impact training. This is where the circular martial philosophy, finds its home: As both a discipline for those who seek strength, and a sanctuary for those who seek balance.



(Bow and arrow practise by GM Rolloos)

## The Five Dimensions of Health Through Circular Motion

In my book *We Love the Art of Motion*, I explore how the circular path enhances five essential areas of human health:

### 1. Physical Health

Circular movement builds full-body strength and mobility through natural, three-dimensional patterns. Muscles work in arcs, joints remain fluid, and the spine learns to move with grace and adaptability.

### 2. Cardiovascular Health

Flowing sequences elevate heart rate gently but effectively. The breath guides the tempo, creating a harmony between exertion and calm—strengthening the heart while preserving joint health.

### 3. Weight Management

Circular Combat keeps the body in constant motion. It engages deep muscle chains, burns calories efficiently, and supports metabolism—without ever feeling like punishment.

### 4. Mental & Emotional Health

As we move in spirals, the mind lets go of linear thinking and enters the realm of flow. Stress fades. Awareness sharpens. Mood stabilizes. We experience joy, clarity, and a

deep connection to the present moment.

### 5. Bone Health

Circular motion loads the skeleton dynamically. It strengthens bones and joints not through impact, but through wave-like energy transfer—promoting longevity and structural integrity.

### A Path to Remembering

Circular Combat is more than technique. It's a philosophy—a martial art that trains body, brain, and breath in unified motion. In walking the Way of the Circle, we remember something essential: that movement is life, that strength and softness coexist, and that through spirals we find not just power—but presence.

In a world that moves in straight lines, the circle brings us home.

In my book *We Love the Art of Motion*, I explore how movement not only refines martial skill but rewires the brain, strengthens the body, and restores mental clarity. From ancient instincts to modern neuroscience, from self-defense to holistic health—this is a path where motion becomes medicine.

Discover how Circular Combat can transform not just how you fight, but how you live.

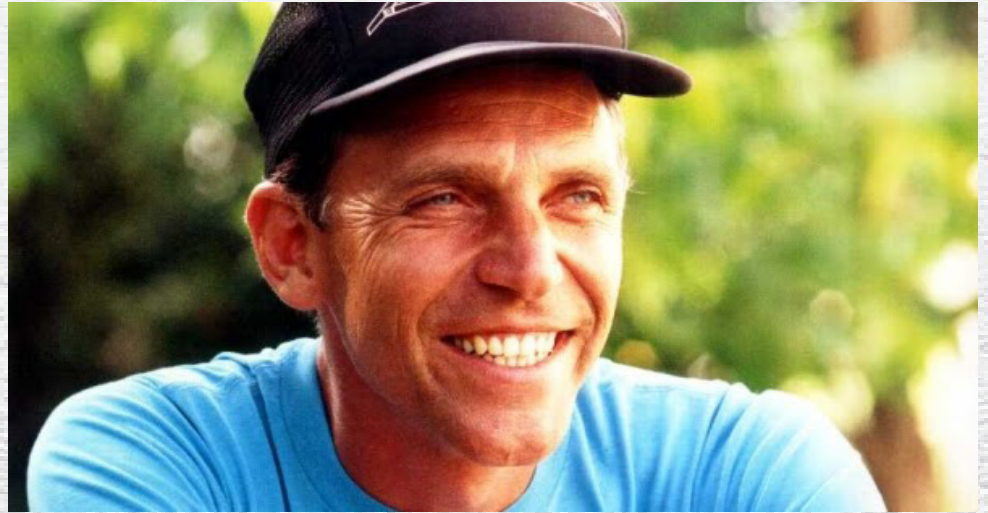
More information: [www.i-complete.biz](http://www.i-complete.biz) or [www.round-table-alliance.org](http://www.round-table-alliance.org)



(Book “we love the art of motion!” with Larke and Rolloos)



# **AN INTERVIEW WITH FILMMAKER SAM FIRSTENBERG (PART 2) by Javier Orue**



JO: In this movie demonstrated a gift for lead the action. To the see her by first time, I never thought it would be his first action movie.

SF: Thank you! Look, when I was working with the screenwriter and Sho Kosugi, who was very involved in this film, I knew two things right away: the first was that, after I Sho me will show so many movies of kung was of Hong Kong, I decided that this No was the guy of movie that wanted to to do, that was only of martial arts. I wanted do something more like James Bond; not just martial arts, but a Hollywood-style action movie. So I decided to mix martial arts action with Hollywood action. Second, I wanted to have a big action sequence at the beginning, a very action-packed ending. and one great persecution in medium. Other stuff that had in mind was that We were going to have 50% action; about 45 minutes of pure action, something that many films of this guy No have. Us we take our time. We had all it necessary. Was of Low budget, but certainly not a small film. We shot for nine weeks with two units.

JO: In my opinion, the persecution in van and the fight in he roof of the final continues being two of the best sequences of the history of the cinema of action. Which of the two did you find more difficult to assemble?

SF: The persecution that you mention begins with a fight. Since the gallery, outside, on the street, on top of the van, inside the van... we filmed everything together. I would say that we he took ten days. We use two units, and even when the unit major HE was, I left the second unit with a list of what was missing to complete the sequence. This was technically challenging, but only in the sense of shooting all these small elements to make the sequence work. The rooftop fight took a little longer. The main challenge was that we were working on a 25- to 30-story rooftop with limited space.

The challenges were purely technicians; as that a sword HE broke during a fight or someone spraining their hand and having to go to the hospital. Aside from these details, there isn't much difference in the action sequences, except for the length of the fight and how spectacular it can be.

JO: Do you remember? he crossing between the two buildings in the end?

SF: Only appeared some seconds in screen, but us he took almost a day whole get it, and when we finally shot it, we did just one take.

JO: This movie was very bloody. I noticed that there is scenes in he trailer that No appear in the film. You mentioned that a decapitation was cut in the commentary, but do you recall anything that had to be removed, either for violence or pacing?



SF: As I told you before, I love samurai movies. In Japanese movies, the violence is very graphic. In Japan, they don't have "X" or "R" ratings. For them, it's a element aesthetic. Me loves. So that when we did THE REVENGE OF THE NINJA had a lot further material graphic of the that HE included in the movie. To the edit it, Canon stipulated a duration of 95 minutes. This facilitated the sales in the exhibition. Also We had to get an R rating. We submitted the first cut and they gave it an X rating. I don't know how it works today, but back then they never gave us detailed notes about what they thought was too graphic. The notes were very general in description, like "too violent" or "violence toward children." Now you have to analyze it, send it back, and hope it gets approved. We had already wasted 20 minutes, which was good because they only want to keep the best scenes. One of the scenes we cut was a decapitation to the end, fair before of the fight in he roof. We presented the film three or four times.

JO: Sho Kosugi was charismatic in screen. Really captures his attention.

SF: That's right! Editing started right away. Michael Duthie was the editor of ENTER NINJA (1981), of this movie, of NINJA III (1984) and of many others movies. Is an excellent action editor. He made the initial cuts. We began production by shooting only the action first to impress the company. With the choreography of Sho, his students, Steve Lambert, and his assistants, we realized that the fights were truly spectacular. When we returned to Los Angeles, we edited the entire film in the first cut and realized we were missing something important in the story. Menahem agreed, along with Sho and I, that the film was missing something, so we brought of lap to the screenwriter James Silke and we did a rain of ideas for determine what we needed to make the story work. So we added the opening sequence in Japan. We believed that we needed grasp the background of the character of Sho Kosugi before he came to America. We added that and also the fight with Sho's son, Kane Kosugi, in the park. This was categorized as "Additional Photography." We also added some things at the end, like the police arriving at the plant. low. We had all inside of the building, but No it that we needed that happen- in he abroad. Also we needed you take additional of the ninjas arriving to the building. Menahem liked what we had done, so he thought it was worth spending the extra money on this additional photography. They saw something in the film. But still, I I saw it as a low-budget B-grade action movie that looks good.





We realized we had something special when MGM decided to distribute it. Cannon had a relationship with MGM. In that so, MGM was in Culver City, where today HE finds Sony. Cannon was wearing a lot time searching to MGM. They had been looking at Cannon products, but they didn't accept any. The first film that MGM impressed it enough as for distribute it was THE REVENGE OF THE NINJA (1983). They took it on, they carried out a enormous Campaign advertising for this movie of low budget, with between 500 and 600 copies... So that was left clear that No was the typical movie low-budget film that comes and goes. It performed very well, especially in New York, where it topped the box office for two weeks.

JO: He script of NINJA III: THE DOMINATION always had the intention of have that element of terror?

SF: REVENGE OF THE NINJA had been very successful all over the world, so a sequel was immediately requested. Menahem Golan, just came to me and asked for 'Ninja number three'. But for some reason, I never asked him why, but he wanted to make NINJA III with a Caucasian actor. He asked me if we could make it with a female actor. I don't remember why, but this was his request: not to use Sho Kosugi as the lead and in instead choose a woman. Sho didn't agree with this. He wanted to be the main character. But still further that this, No you liked the idea of that a women out he main ninja character. He argued that a woman doesn't have the power necessary for this role. In one of the Hong Kong kung fu movies I saw, there was a group of female ninjas. Sho me said that historically there was ninja women murderers, but for this movie Sho was in against. No we were able to solve he problem between us and Sho Kosugi because we needed it at the company's request. There was a very popular film at the time called POLTERGEIST (1982) by Tobe Hooper. So I came up with the idea of the female character being possessed. Since her body had been taken over by a ninja, this would reassure to Sho Kosugi, who believed that the women No was it strong enough; and he accepted this logic (laughs)! That's how the approach to the script was born. We all got carried away by the idea (laughs).

JO: NINJA III had very little blood. Was some reason by the that this movie was it softer than the previous one?

SF: I think it was the nature of the story. We had a woman who's an aerobic dancer; we had a history of love that No we had before, So that HE lent to be less gory. Still, we had... an "X" rating. You won't believe this, but we had a scene where Lucinda Dickey's head spins like Linda Blair's in HE EXORCIST (1973). Was in the sequence with he sorcerer. We had that cut it to get an "R" rating. There were a couple of other things, but I think the story lent itself to being less gory than the previous film simply because we were dealing with evil spirits instead of physical violence.

JO: Remember as chose to David Chung as the villain?

SF: Simply came to the casting and No we needed to a superatrist martial. Knew enough for the role. We only see him at the beginning and a little at the end. We just liked him his aspect. Had a face that fit with he character wicked that performed; and knew enough martial arts to do the opening sequence.

JO: Was it left? Sho Kosugi satisfied with he result end? Could explain to us by What did Cannon leave behind after NINJA III and go to work at Trans World?

SF: TO Sho No you taste that No it we had as protagonist, So that was furious. In fact, he didn't like making this film. Trans World was Cannon's rival, a company founded by two Israelis. Trans World was also run by an Israeli, Moshe Diamant. They were competitors... they hated each other (laughs). Moshe Diamant wanted to be another Cannon. Were very competitive. No HE a lot to the regard, but believe that Moshe you offered to Kosugi gave him a large sum of money. He was already furious with Menahem Golan and wanted to leave.

JO: Was in contact with he after of that let Cannon for the possibility of vol-see to work together?





SF: Yes. When I was working on the TV series THE MASTER (1984), he invited me to the set several times. We stayed in touch on other occasions after that, but he was busy. and I also. But further late, when Menahem Golan HE separated of Cannon To create 21st Century, he invited us both to his office to see if we would make another film together, and never HE materialized. While so much, Sho return to Japan and then to States United; was going and came of Japan to Los Angeles. No we kept a friendship very close, but we talk on the phone from time to time.

JO: We are in AMERICAN NINJA (1985). Remember Yeah before that will select to Michael Dudikoff, has anyone come forward to read for the role of Joe Armstrong?

SF: It was an open call. Anyone could come. Some casting sessions HE do only to through of agents. In this, we decided do a call open. We send messages to schools of arts martial arts, acting, agents... a lot of people came for the role. We saw between 300 and 500 people.

JO: As was the relationship of job with Tadashi Yamashita in comparison with Sho Kosu- gi?

SF: Both are teachers in their respective disciplines. Tadashi was further consolidated because there was made HE OCTAGON (1980) and was wearing further time doing movies. Both they had their own students and had their own aura of leadership, with the ego that this entails. Sho Kosugi was a very eccentric character. He stood out more with his great aspirations to become a movie star. Tadashi was more humble, faithful to the beginning of a fighter of arts martial, with his serenity and Self-discipline. I'm still in touch with Tadashi. We just call each other to chat. He always helped out on set.

It was a real pleasure working with him. We had many martial artists working on the set of this movie. Mike Stone was he choreographer; Tadashi was in he set; Richard Norton, also was in he set; Steve Lambert and Steve James also were artists martial... So that there was a lot camaraderie on the set. Everyone respected each other.

JO: AMERICAN NINJA, compared with Their others movies of action, the atmosphere is further familiar. Was that the intention from the beginning?

SF: He atmosphere in AMERICAN NINJA was very jubilant! To the principle, Michael Dudikoff worked with Mike Stone for two weeks preparing him for the fight scenes. As soon as we saw the first moments, we knew we had something special with two strong leads: Michael and Steve James. From day one, it was noticeable. Those two guys were charismatic. They both had a lot of movie-star appeal. Plus, shooting in the Philippines was so cheap





that there was no budget limit. We could pull off any crazy idea we could come up with. The Filipino crew was very capable. We had everything we needed. Anyone who had an idea, we could pull it off—at least try. There was no schedule pressure, as we had three great teams working together—it was quite luxurious. We immediately had the feeling that something big was happening. We all stayed in the same hotel, the entire cast and crew. So we shot together, ate together, went to the pool together on Sundays—we all had a great time. There was camaraderie between all of us. It was also hard work. It did a lot heat in Philippines; further of 40 degrees all the days, 43-46 degrees. Michael Duthie was editing in Los Angeles and we saw the sequences and they all looked good, so we felt the magic. I directed 25 movies. None of them compare to the popularity of AMERICAN NINJA (1985). People still talk about it. Young people watch it and enjoy it; it's truly a phenomenon for a low-budget movie. Sometimes I think about what makes this movie different from others. Every once in a while, there are movies that, for whatever reason, connect with people. ROCKY (1976), for example; it only had a million-dollar budget, but it became a classic. Nobody believed in it at first, and it went on to become huge. Another example is CASABLANCA (1942). It was a low-budget movie. The director, Joe Cortez, was a B-movie director. He made Tarzan movies. The entire movie was shot in a studio, but the magic was there.

We can say that AMERICAN NINJA is not up to par with those (laughs), but first of all, are the actors. There is chemistry between them. AND then, AMERICAN NINJA is a movie very innocent. It's very much like a Western with its reluctant hero. His values drive him to act like Gary Cooper in HIGH NOON (1952), I would say. He doesn't want to fight with anyone, but circumstances and his moral values compel him to be part of the action. So this is a good kind of hero with he that the people HE identifies easily. Michael had that face of James Dean that feeds to this you-

type of hero. Then, there are two love stories. There's a romantic story between the characters of Michael and Judi; and there's the strong friendship between Michael and Steve James. So those are universal values. No all HE treats of action. All those people they seem innocent, youths, handsome, They have charisma on screen... If we add to this the character of Tadashi Yamashita, the villain, and Don Stewart as Ortega, and beautiful landscapes, we tried to capture the most beautiful places in the Philippines on screen, and the magic works. The stars aligned with this film.



JO: By that believes that Michael Dudikoff never HE converted in the next great star of action like Stallone, Norris, or Bronson?

SF: In my opinion, it's just a technical detail. It had to do with movement in Hollywood. Sometimes, one can rise to stardom, but more often it takes a lot of coordination to become a big star. I mean a lot. relations publicity, and appearing in celebrity magazines. The big studios had the time, money, and know-how to create a star; you know, to make sure she attended the right parties, had the right company, etc.; So that create a star implies a lot job. Believe that Cannon No had the knowledge or the resources to do the same with Michael. That's my speculation, of course. They just hired him for movie after movie without investing in public relations. At some point, they got very busy with Chuck Norris. At the time, he was under exclusive contract with Cannon. Even though they made 300 movies, they didn't have any big hits; not even Superman that they did it was. They had a success considerable with THE DELTA FORCE (1986), the two BREAKIN movies and the two AMERICAN NINJA movies. And a bit with Bronson and the DEATH WISH movies.

JO: Did you know to Norris either to Charles Bronson while was in Cannon?

SF: Yes, I met both of them. I only met Bronson on the set. I went to visit J. Lee Thompson, and they were shooting outdoors. I was introduced to Bronson. He was a very private man. He hung out in his RV, went out to shoot, and then came back to his RV. He didn't socialize... he wasn't that kind of person. He was a loner. He didn't talk to anyone except the director. I don't remember what movie he was making. Now, Chuck Norris, HE supposed that was going to do a movie with he. HE supposed that was going to do MISSING IN ACTION III (1988). Me I gathered with he several times for talk of the movie, But it didn't happen. I was busy with something else. My wife got pregnant; I was moved to another movie, and finally Aaron Norris directed that one. I saw him from time to time in the hallways Cannon's. I saw to practically all he world over there, from Chuck Norris until Tobe Hooper and Joseph Zito... but not Charles Bronson.

To be continued.....







## DOJO STORIES SENSEI Gerardo Balves

### Definitions and ways to understand the breadth of Karate. (Part 1)

Karate is a form of bujutsu and budō for self-protection, physical training, and refining the mind and the tools and weapons of our bodies. This is the traditional, popular, and simple definition.

Karate promotes rectitude, justice, and honor; it is founded on the principle of being a gentleman's martial art. On the other hand, hidden behind its pragmatic nature as a "combative martial art" lies the behavioral aesthetic of "eradicating errors for the sake of truth" (thus establishing kensho, a Buddhist concept meaning denying mistaken ideas and revealing correct ideas, or overcoming injustice and revealing justice).

Karate has the unconditional philosophy of killing with a single blow (ichigeki hissatsu). Therefore, when learning the techniques, it is necessary to assume a situation that corresponds to actual combat and prepare for inevitable death. Thus, rigorous technical training in life and death refines the spirit and cultivates character. Because this is the "way in which technique creates spirit," in Japan Since the postwar period, karate has generally been called karate-dō.

Funakoshi Gichin (nominated as the founder of Shotokan) and Miyagi Chōjun (founder of Gōjū-ryū) are both martial artists (bujin). The latter is known worldwide as kensei (fist saint). Both sensei defined karate as follows.

Funakoshi said:



"You can protect yourself and crush the enemy with bare hands and completely unarmed. In other words, it's the signature Okinawan kenpō called karate."

Miyagi explained:

"What is karate? It is said that in the beginning, and during times of peace, no weapons were carried on the body. The goal was to do everything possible to protect life in an emergency. That is, to defeat the enemy in man-to-man combat as effectively as possible. However, it was not unusual to use 'tools' at the same time."

Martial arts practitioners aim to practice the trinity of training: mental, self-protection, and physical training. In other words, the intention is to demonstrate the methods of moral discipline, self-defense, and physical preparation. When this is achieved, the practitioner can be considered a complete martial artist.

Practicing martial arts is directly related to mastering the art of defense, as well as mental training. Through full-body training, karate promotes physical strength, endurance, and explosiveness, and adjusts and strengthens internal organs and nerves by activating their functions.

The training process is more than rigorous, but enduring it develops willpower, nurtures courage, and develops a spirit that can deal with things habitually, no matter when or what—that is, cultivating presence of mind. By enduring the severity of practice, karate as



a martial art is a system of techniques designed to take a firm look at oneself and ultimately realize the "path of humanity."

Funakoshi Gichin explained the meaning of the expression 空 in the context of the word karate:

Karate is the art of training the body using empty hands to live a righteous life; to conduct oneself well; to improve oneself. The expression kara in karate is based on this. Those who study karate must distance themselves from their stubbornness and evil thoughts, as if reflected in a polished mirror or like a voice (echo) traveling along an uninhabited valley, and must thoroughly investigate the center of emptiness. This expression, therefore, is based on this. Those who learn karate must continually cultivate the spirit of humility inwardly and must not forget a calm attitude outwardly.

Just like green bamboo, which is empty inside and straight on the outside. So we agree that the kara in the word karate is also based on this. If you look at the vastness of the universe, everything becomes nothing. Thus, kara merges into the whole as just another part.

There are many types of martial arts, such as jujutsu, kenjutsu, sojutsu, and jojutsu, but ultimately, the goal is the same as that pursued by karate. In other words, it's no exaggeration to say that karate is the foundation of all other martial arts. "All being is emptiness" and "all emptiness is being" (central sentences of the Buddhist Heart Sutra).

Traditional Japanese martial arts (budō) have used religion (Buddhism and Zen) to explain their reasoning. Regarding what is meant by the phrase: "All being is emptiness, and all emptiness is being" (from the Heart Sutra) we can establish the following:

"All being is empty," which means:

"Material existence is the truth, but within it there is emptiness and there is no attachment there."

"All emptiness is being," which means:

"All phenomena are, in fact, empty, and each empty phenomenon is real existence."

Karate's kara is literally "empty," and practitioners need



to practice martial arts in a thought-free state of mind. If you have thoughts, you will not be able to understand reason, nor will you be able to learn the art. It can be said that a pure and simple state of mind is the ultimate goal of training.

Furthermore, it is well known that the Te (TI) of karate means skill, art, or technique. Therefore, learning karate means achieving the state of no-mind (Mushin) and cultivating the hands and feet as weapons for self-defense.

In this way, the two karate masters condensed the practitioner's mental image and their vision of the techniques as a united and unique whole. It can be said that by honing skill and strengthening the body, karate represents the unity of mind, technique, and body, which implies entering a mental state that separates one from the world in defining instances.

Karate as a martial art (budō karate).

Based on the characteristics supported by both its history and tradition, Okinawan karate can be divided into four types:

Karate as a martial art (budō karate), karate as a sport (kyōgi karate), karate for better health (kenkō karate) and karate within traditional dances (buyō karate).

I want to explain each of them briefly and use them to show the whole picture.

Okinawan karate has traditionally been based on martial arts (budō). Technically, karate is a martial art (Bugei) that considers "killing with a single blow (ichigeki hissatsu)" and "complete self-protection" as absolute truths. Okinawan karate is a bujutsu and budō that embraces these concepts as a traditional form. It



has considerable technical potential for wounding and killing, unimaginable in contrast to modern sport karate. But at the same time, it has a superb, life-giving nature. It is said to be able to kill people, and it can also give them life. Literally, it is a martial art with the ability to preserve life or cause death.

Over the past 500 years, it has been refined over the ages and generations, deepening its sophistication and refining itself with style into a vibrant martial art (bugei). While retaining the traditional qualities of the original martial arts (bujutsu), all of this has been revitalized in the modern era and enhanced along a path of ethics while consolidating itself as budō. This is Okinawan karate.

Budō karate is a training based entirely on kata, forming a complementary relationship with combat (irikumi) through the study of the proper application of its techniques, allowing for synergistic operation.

Irikumi is different from the kumite of competitive karate (kyōgi karate), which is performed under "various rules" and is based on the principle of "stopping an attack just before the target." It emphasizes the use of the definitive technique, "killing with a single blow (ichigeki hissatsu)." There are no physical or technical restrictions.

The entire body is the target of the attack. Therefore, it is necessary to train complete self-protection techniques (kanzen bōgyo). It is very dangerous due to its violent and shock techniques. It is pushed to the limit to force a desperate situation that essentially puts one's life at stake.

Furthermore, the technique of "killing with one blow" (ichigeki hissatsu) and complete self-protection (kanzen bōgyo) is embodied in the inseparable integration of defense (uke-waza) and attack techniques (seme-waza).

Morphologically, it is called to practice "reason first and act later" as a fundamental form of training.

However, this "reason" is not just an idea, but the art of the technique of body sensitivity, which matures with experience. The body teaches you how to handle techniques unconsciously. The embodied techniques of defense (uke-waza) and offense (seme-waza) appear as flexible body movements adapted to the demands of the moment without being conscious. This is the so-called mind-body unity (shinshin ichinyo).

Needless to say, a rigorous form of training is required to

achieve this dimension.

It may seem like I'm repeating myself, but the seemingly contradictory techniques of receiving (defense) and attacking are inseparable, and their simultaneous execution isn't a double count of defense and counterattack, it's a single count. That is, there should be no stationary interruption between the defensive (uke) and offensive (seme) techniques.

Until this skill is achieved and the two explode together as one. The technical skills derived from kata must have been thoroughly mastered. The simultaneous application of defense and offense and the acquisition of skills through kata practice are directly proportional. If the kata are highly developed, the level of technique chaining will be high.

Furthermore, there are some receiving techniques (uke-waza) that go beyond this dimension of "receiving and attacking in the same moment." There is also a method of forcing the opponent to submit both technically and psychologically just by "receiving."

The essence of budō karate.

In other words, the ultimate function of the category of receiving techniques (uke-waza) is to trap the opponent's movement and neutralize it. Professor Emeritus Shinzato Katsuhiko of Okinawa International University analyzes this as follows.

"Not only attacking techniques (seme-waza) control the opponent, but also receiving techniques (uke-waza). Thorough containment of the opponent's techniques is also a means of controlling the opponent. To do this, to avoid the opponent's attacking techniques, it is essential to use perfect receiving techniques.

There, at that point, is the karateka.





Karate shouldn't be discussed theoretically. Instead, the fundamental martial nature of karate should be discussed. For example, the expressions "fist that kills (satsujin-ken)" and "fist that gives life (katsujin-ken)" are used carelessly.

In true Bugei, training with an emphasis on "attacking techniques" has culminated in learning the "fist that takes life." Because he has no method for letting his opponent live, he has no way to effectively control his opponent. In other words, if only "offensive techniques" can be used to effectively control his opponent, that will be the only result. This is because he can't afford to lose his opponent's technique; his only focus is on attack. Therefore, his skill level can be said to be low.

Only those who have fully mastered uke-waza can let an opponent live. If the opponent's technique is closed and controlled through receiving techniques, neither the opponent nor you will be injured. As for the life-giving fist (katsujin-ken), it is receiving techniques that can lead to this skill.

Committing to receiving the technique requires an effort that goes beyond attack techniques.

We receive and eliminate (uke-hazushi) the opponent's continuous attacks one by one, adapting to the demands of the moment. This chain of receiving techniques leads the opponent to a dilemma until they finally lose their fighting spirit. This is precisely putting into practice the karate proverb, "Without being hit by the opponent, and without hitting the opponent, everything ends without incident." This is the spiritual and technical philosophy of karate that is characteristic of Okinawa, and it is in true budō karate where this is put into practice.

To be continued....

Gerardo Balves  
8th Dan Kobayashi ryu Kyudokan  
Coordinator of the International Group of Kyudo Mugen  
Kyudokan Dojos  
<https://www.facebook.com/gerardo.balves>

