



# BLITZ AUSTRALASIAN MARTIAL ARTS MAGAZINE 1999

## Zaya Zaya STRIKE, RATTLE AND ROLL

**What constitutes a realistic fight scene? Will you be the judge. If a guy gets hit, he'll fall, he'll breathe or he'll bleed – that offers some realism, but what of the fighting style itself? When Zaya Zaya began studying the martial arts he was looking for realism and believe it or not he found it in Elvis movies.**

"As a young man I wasn't too keen on martial arts or movies. They seemed to display too much and by accident, some of today's movies are just a job, there's no realism at all, so for me it all started because of Elvis. Elvis always fought one on one fight scenes in his movies and if you look carefully you can see the martial arts techniques he applies. Add that to the fact he was always getting hit and Elvis offered something that was realistic."

No sophisticated, hitting scenes of drug deals, mafia conflicts or ring assassins and coming out of it without a scratch. Let's face it, if you're attacked by a pack of thugs, you're dead.

No Zaya, already an Elvis fan but frustrated with playing rock and roll with his brother without getting anywhere took to the martial arts.

"I was looking for a school which taught the style that Elvis had studied (Karate) but I couldn't find one. With the help of my King Fu brothers (Dance, Zorro and Genet) I was introduced to El Du Coton of the Chew Wing Kung Fu Academy and that's when I began to learn about martial arts and what it means. Since then I have felt good about everything I have done and have had no more stress."

Kung Fu was a good beginning and it is something that Zaya still practices today, saying his black belt in the Chew Wing style. Yet he still had his issue set on learning Karate.

Obviously he studied a little Taekwondo under Nils Don Takasaki and noticed the Taekwondo model wasn't in a fight. Taekwondo produced some great breaks for

him as a logical order of progress to enable step by step instruction. What was clearly



him as not quite what he was looking for. Zaya wanted a close-contact martial art.

Back in 1994, Hawaii master Ed Parker, a disciple of William BS Chow, opened up his own Karate school and became one of the promoters of the modernisation of that art. Parker revised the old methods to cope with modern day fighting situations. He retained traditional but essential realistic, practical and applicable concepts. He then synthesised and categorised all the basic Karate elements

into: about Parker's methods were his emphasis on music and alphabet study. Karate is about motion. Each move is considered an alphabet of motion. Classified, they form words of motion, sentences of motion and a practitioner is able to draw on a vocabulary of motion.

One man who knew a lot about words and motion was Elvis Presley. At the time he was one of the most celebrated star film hits and adopted the use of martial arts in his films. Parker met Parker in 1980. They formed an on again off again partnership until 1990 when Parker taught Presley on a special tour until Presley's death in 1977. It was in 1961, however, that Parker introduced Presley to his Karate school and Elvis and his bodyguards would show off their skill at every available moment, including concerts where he introduced Karate routines on stage.

Zaya was watching a 1973/74 concert performance. "I had watched this in film and knew the techniques but when I saw him perform them on stage I realised how they worked and realised that these were the techniques that could lead you to deal with people in a real close up situation."

So he searched for a Karate school and finally found one – The Dragon's Lair in Portland.

"I actually began practicing Karate in 1997 and joined the school with the beginners. I studied on and off until I had the chance to become full time. At yellow grading I earned a bit of a boost, but after the whole class was graded I was recruited to tell the students about my background and to demonstrate Karate techniques. I was then awarded an honorary Black Belt. I was there to be a tutor teacher for my own students because when I received my Black Belt in Karate, I felt my knowledge had opened, but I still needed to fight to learn Karate and division as a martial art. I was honoured with the Black Belt. I didn't ask for it and I am still with them."

Zaya says he studied some about Karate after watching the movie *Doctor Brown*, starting the world's most



famous Karate exponent, Jeff Spinkman. "It gave me a clear idea of what I could do – black art, opponent and not give him the chance to reach. I'm a small person. Karate was my life."

However his martial art study and in particular his own instructor taught him that there was more to the martial art than just fighting. "El Du Coton taught me that martial art is not just to defend or fight, it's more for

self assurance, confidence, pride, patience, understanding, focus, hard work, family, politics, religion and the good and bad. Since I started learning Karate I have never used martial art in a violent way, my goal was to create peace, there was no reason for anyone to get hurt."

Zaya began teaching in early 1997 in Stone Way, Kung Fu Karate, Kung Fu with Aikido, Nils Don, Zorro and Genet. Meanwhile, a few

years earlier he had begun to create his own system, combining a few techniques and philosophies. It took five years to put together and eventually became the TCB Martial Arts system in January 1999.

Now Zaya: "All martial arts are the same in blocking, kicking and punching. The hardest steps and Black Belt is to learn the basics. I



like my students to know all the basics, Kung Fu and Judo, blocks, kicking forms, combinations and self defence techniques. It allows the students to know and interpret what comes next."

"The TCB is based on a friendly philosophy which has to states in the way Elvis practiced. "He expected all martial art styles, took out the good ingredients without changing or altering the style, he just practised in a manner that suited himself."

Says Zaya: "On one hand a student will understand how the important moves so you have an idea how to counter more effectively and opponents will also have trouble against you if you consistently change styles or stances. My students can attack using Kung Fu or Karate methods and have a wider knowledge of martial arts."

The TCB has proved a success particularly in the NAS and ISMA tournaments. Five members of the team (The TCB Little Tigers) won two titles of those and another came home with a second place trophy in the NAS second round. This year – their first tournament event. In their second tournament event they were first five places, one second place and a third. Also presented with an appreciation award presented by Dr Richard Bradburn of the ISMA. In Zaya for his support of the event. The team has now made it to the World Martial Arts Games in 2000.

Zaya has built his ethics and devotion which believe he is working off Elvis's name:

"Some people misunderstand what I'm doing. People think I'm trying to run my own Karate organisation. Some people think I can get away with this through Elvis, but in my TCB I don't teach Elvis's style, I teach what I know and the tactics I have learnt."

"By the same token I don't see anything wrong with carrying on the legacy that Elvis created or with Elvis getting martial arts in the world. Martial arts is about teaching and that's what Elvis stood for. He had the dream of studying and giving martial arts back to the

people and seeing martial arts grow. I wanted to be a part of that dream. I always wanted to contribute to the community. I have something to share with them. I tried martial art it didn't work out and I have a martial art talent and people are happy with what I teach so help yourself and better themselves. To this and Elvis will always be my inspiration!"

Thank you, thank you, thank you very much!

