



On Chum Kiu – Seeking the Bridge:  
“Eyes are trained to be alert;  
the ch’i flows  
in a perpetual motion.”

## Moy Yat Ving Tsun Sisterhood



5<sup>th</sup> Annual MYVT Sisters Retreat in Pescadero, California

## Welcome from Sifu Pete Pajil

*read aloud by Simo Christina Pajil*

*Congratulations and welcome to the fifth Moy Yat Ving Tsun Sisters Retreat! I want to acknowledge you, each and every one of you, for your stand and commitment to make a difference in the lives you meet, share, love and support. I am present to what it took for all of you to be here. You created the value of being with your kung fu sisters, excited over the powerful experiences you will all share. You've demonstrated that you are bigger than time and money, and truly unstoppable... I am moved by your spirit to continue to elevate, study and preserve the*

*legacy of the Moy Yat Ving Tsun family. As you may know, the family is led by Madame Helen Moy, who quietly guides us on so many levels, for the family.*

*As this special group of women gather to embark on sharing the kung fu, from the Siu Lim Tao to Saam Faat, I thank you now... For who you are **being**, what you're **doing** and for what we will **have** as a result of you being here for the next several days!*

*"I don't teach technique, I teach kung fu," are the words I still hear in my head, from the day I started my study of Ving Tsun with Sifu Moy Yat, November 17, 1982. Kung fu is a kind of thinking, different intelligence, martial intelligence. Over the years, I have gathered some personal notes that speak to this development of human potential. As time permits, read and discuss your own ideas and carry them into your training. I wish you all great success and I'm so proud to honor the women of the Moy Yat Ving Tsun family.*

*With infinite love and gratitude!*  
*Sifu Pete Pajil*  
*Moy Bah Hugh*  
*Chairman of the IMYVT*



*Sifu Pete Pajil and Simo Christina Pajil*

## **Wisdom Words from Simo Mia Velez**

*(11<sup>th</sup> Generation, Disciple of Moy Bah Hugh, Ving Tsun Sum Fot)*

**On Centering:** There are things in our lives that will challenge us. They will try to knock us off our horse or keep us from moving forward. We must meet those obstacles while maintaining our commitment to our purpose. We can do this through acceptance. Welcome those challenges and stay on course. If you pursue other opportunities outside your path, then you will stray off course—chasing the hands. If you run or deny those challenges, then you will lose your way.



*Simo Mia Velez and Sifu Owen Velez*

## **Bridging the Gap**

This year's MYVT Sisters Retreat held the theme of **Bridging the Gap**. Simo Mia Velez of Ving Tsun Sum Fot and Sifu Victor Chung of Ving Tsun SITO in San Francisco were remarkable representations of that. People who arrived early were generously hosted and housed at Ving Tsun SITO and at Ving Tsun Sum Fot. Though we hadn't met previously, we were welcomed, fed, given a great place to stay as well as hours of private lessons and training with the various San Francisco family. Upon the strength of our lineage, we were greeted with *Ching Sam* (proper caring) and every detail was coordinated and attended to. San Francisco Ving Tsun SITO and Ving Tsun Sum Fot are beautiful community-building training spaces for Ving Tsun to grow and flourish.

The retreat itself was held at Venture Retreat Center in Pescadero, California, one hour south of San Francisco. With great care, integrity and clear intention, we were brought together and held by the consistent support of activities and spaciousness. Self-care, training, kung fu conversations and time to eat, socialize, be outside and have resourcing nature activities were all woven into the basket of our time together. It was incredibly enriching to *feel* our lineage and how the various descendants of Moy Yat have evolved in their own right. Upholding the shared value of relationships is a core fundamental essence that distinguishes our kung fu from others. The gap was certainly bridged between many clubs and many students in the Moy Yat lineage.



# San Francisco's Ving Tsun SITO

*"We don't teach technique. We teach Kung Fu."*  
~ Grandmaster Moy Yat



*Sifu Victor Chung demonstrating with Christina Chan*



*Mak Po, Moy Yat's Sihing*



*Sifu Victor translating stories from Mak Po*



## Words From Our Women



*Natalie Rogers, Christina Chan and Rachel Shaw*

### On Kung Fu Kinship

The Sisters retreat was an amazing experience, not just because I met likeminded and strong women, but because it also allowed me to appreciate the wider kung fu family. We have such a privilege to be part of this lineage. There is such generosity, support and kinship from the other North American clubs. This is something I will not soon forget and I will use to seek to better myself and my kung fu.

~ Rachel Shaw



*Christina Chang, Heidi Erhardt, Rachel Shaw and Natalie Rogers*

### On Relaxation

Going to the Ving Tsun sisterhood retreat gave me the time and space to reflect on how to bridge the gap between my life and my kung fu training. In both, I am realizing the importance of relaxing the mind and body to become more sensitive to opportunities. By not using force to instigate change but rather creating openings to naturally flow into, both life and Ving Tsun can start to feel easier. This is something I am sure I will be working on my entire life but something that is getting easier the more I train.

The retreat was also a wonderful chance to bridge the gap between the different branches of the Moy Yat Ving Tsun family. It brought together a group of amazing ladies from all over North America to share in kung fu, good food and community.

~Helen Guilding



*Mais Lee, Christina Chan, Natalie Rogers, Rachel Shaw, Helen Guilding, Carrie Collins, Iris Peng and Melanie Waltrich (Victoria, Toronto, Philadelphia and San Francisco Clubs!)*

### On the Yin of Ving Tsun

This year's retreat help to reveal more subtle aspects of my Ving Tsun practice as well as for myself as a human being. It was about a softening and embracing a more yin quality of how I move through my life and how I want to develop my kung fu—stepping back from the yang way of things to conserve energy and avoid crashing up against things literally and figuratively. I'm focusing on:

- Developing better sensitivity and skill rather than defaulting to force and anger.
- Cutting deep childhood threads about my worth being tied to my achievements.
- Cultivating that space between the stimulus and the response, to momentarily pause rather than react and rush in.
- Decreasing traffic and stepping back, as not all conflicts are meant to be a battle.

Now that I have trained a solid foundation within the Ving Tsun system, I wish to take my kung fu to a level of exploration and curiosity, the elements less tangible, elusive, slippery. These are aspects I am unfamiliar with, having grown-up in a strict, goal-oriented household.

This retreat has motivated me to work toward embodying what it means to practice kung fu with more than just my physical body, because I may be tiny, but my soul is mighty.

~ Christina Chan



Mais Lee, Natalie Rogers, Christina Chan, Mia Velez, Chhunleng Tov

## On Bridging the Gap

Before bridging the gap, one must define the gap. One must know where one is and where one wants to be, and then make an appraisal of the space in between. That's my main discovery from the retreat: in order to grow my kung fu, I first need to clarify where I stand right now in relation to my goals. This means that I need to be more proactive in my training. More curious. More honest.

~ Natalie Rogers



Christina Chan, Heidi Erhardt and Natalie Rogers

## On Seeking the Bridge

Bridging the gap for me was about finding my horse and activating chung chi when I move. This is a perfect analogy for where I am in the system, as I'm learning the Chum Kiu form at the moment—

finding my roots deep in the earth and yet being able to move with balance, force and whole body precision. This is a personal practice for me, as home is now a place I carry with me as I move between Victoria, BC and Maui, Hawaii. As I "Search the Bridge" I activate my inner kung fu, deepening the martial art into the cells in my body and likening it to the work I wish to bring into the world.

I entered the retreat with the intention of gaining an understanding how the 'feminine' would embody and hold the system differently than the 'masculine'. What I came away with was a heart nourished from so many conversations with my SiJe, where each was focused on 'walking the art of Ving Tsun' in their lives, living, modeling and practicing an inner kung fu that would benefit themselves, their families and their communities. I was most grateful to share this experience with my kung fu sisterhood in Victoria, as so many of us from the club attended and we have now built a strong *bridge* across the continent of North America and between Canada and the US. Deep bows to the source of our system, Ng Mui and Ving Tsun as well as Grandmasters Ip Man and Moy Yat for carrying it forward; to the relationships between teacher and student and to all of us who practice and deepen the timeless wisdom of this precious Ving Tsun lineage, in our own way.

~Heidi Erhardt



Rachel Shaw, Heidi Erhardt, Christina Chan and Natalie Rogers





*Preparing medical kits for homeless outreach*



*Mok Po demonstrating with Sifu Victor Chung*



*Rachel Shaw and Natalie Rogers*



*Suzanne Blanchard leading a yoga class*



*Christina Chan & Mais Lee*



*Kaley Shaw, Mia Velez and Kim Enman, braving the ocean!*



*Butano State Park expedition*



*Sifu Victor Chung demonstrating with Helen Guilding*



*Yet another epic dinner orchestrated by Simo Mia Velez*



*Rachel Shaw,  
Helen Guilding,  
Christina Chan,  
Mais Lee,  
Natalie Rogers  
&  
Melanie  
Waltrich*



*Christina  
Chan,  
Natalie  
Rogers,  
Helen  
Guilding  
&  
Rachel Shaw*



## Guest Speaker: Sifu Victor Chung

*11<sup>th</sup> Generation Disciple of Grandmaster Moy Bah Hugh*

Every year MYVT Sisterhood invites a guest speaker to address the attendees. This year, Sifu Victor Chung of San Francisco's SITO hosted a seminar entitled *"Bridging the Gap, from Form to Function"*. The focus was on real life application of Pak Da\* and Lop Da\*. His Socratic way of questioning enabled each of us to engage with the drills and work to look within, beyond what we'd been taught. Some wise words from Sifu Victor: "What's better than one technique. No technique." "The best Kung fu happens the day you didn't know it." "Injected humility. No one is born humble. Life humbles you." Sifu Victor arranged for elder Mak Po to come and share stories as well. Mak Po is Grand Master Moy Yat's Sihing. He shared stories about his Sije from the early days with Ip Man, back in Hong Kong. He also shared some specific techniques for us to use in attack.

*\* Note: spelling varies for this term: i.e., dah and dar are also used.*



## Special Thanks to the Organizers:

Mais Lee, 12<sup>th</sup> Generation, student of Sifu Liz Parry  
Chhunleng Toy, 12<sup>th</sup> Generation, student of Sifu Victor Chung  
Mia Velez, 11<sup>th</sup> Generation, student of Sifu Pete Pajil  
Melanie Waltrich, 12<sup>th</sup> Generation, student of Sifu Jay Hitchman

## Special Thanks to the Presenters:

Suzanne Blanchard: Yin Yoga  
Christina Chan: Community Acupuncture  
Sifu Victor Chung: "Bridging the Gap from Form to Function"  
Carrie Collins: Opening & Closing Ceremonies  
Heidi Erhardt: Closing Ceremony  
Simo Mia Velez: "Owning Your Power Through Kung Fu"