

About Us

The American Society of Internal Arts is an organization inspired by the work and dreams of one man, the late Grandmaster Jou Tsung Hwa. A pioneer in the field of internal arts, Grandmaster Jou was founder of both the annual Zhang San Feng Festival and the Tai Chi Foundation - a non-profit organization that served as host to the event. Unfortunately, Grandmaster Jou's unexpected death in 1998, due to an auto accident, left the fate of the Festival and the work of the Foundation in doubt. While the Festival had grown to an event drawing several hundreds of people a year, its home, the Tai Chi Farm, was put up for sale after Jou's death. The last Festival was held in 1999, followed by the passing of Tai Chi Farm into a developer's hands in 2000, thus ending a unique chapter in the history of internal arts in this country.

Loretta M. Donnelly, Grandmaster Jou's former apprentice who managed his school and property throughout the 1990's to its closing, determined the story wouldn't end there. She and her husband, James, spent the next few years rebuilding. Ms. Donnelly became a founding member and president of the "Master Jou Tsung Hwa's Tai Chi Farm Foundation," a second non-profit foundation that allowed Jou's school at the Farm to continue until its closing. Ms. Donnelly also commissioned the building of a monument to Grandmaster Jou. Utilizing the proceeds from the last Festival, the public monument was erected in Warwick Town Park as a donation to the town of Warwick, NY. Warwick served as home to both Grandmaster Jou and his Tai Chi Farm. During this same period, a memorial website was built (www.taichifarm.org) to help preserve the memory of Grandmaster Jou. A new formal school was also established (www.internalgardens.com) to continue the work begun by Jou's school at the Tai Chi Farm.

The second phase in rebuilding was to revive the annual Zhang San Feng Festival. This would be done with the added goal of growing it beyond its original boundaries as one of the largest internal arts events in the country. At the same time a new organization was needed to serve as the host of the Festival. Here too, a higher goal was set. The new organization would be a national organization designed to become a leading voice in the promotion of internal arts in this country. Thus, the American Society of Internal Arts, or "A.S.I.A.," was born.

Today, the American Society of Internal Arts serves as an educational organization, promoting the spread of tai chi and the related arts through educational events. Its largest event is the annual Zhang San Feng Festival and Dao of Health Expo, the oldest and largest internal arts convention in the country. In addition, A.S.I.A. hosts a series of weekend workshops each year at Internal Gardens School of Classical Taijiquan, in Wantage NJ - its headquarters. These workshops offer training by some of the top masters of internal arts in the country.