

Photographs by Carrie Austin
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Dr Yuree Makee

An ancient answer to a modern day problem

Dr. Yuree is the founder of the Combat Self Defence (CSD) system and is one of the World's leading martial arts Masters, and an unarmed combat veteran specialising in using military defence tactics. He is anti-terrorist trainer and expert on security, explosives and search and recognition and also a lecturer to various Government Security and Intelligence Agencies. Dr. Yuree is the President of the World Combat Self-Defence Federation and Founder President of the World Butthan Martial Arts Federation. Now resident in the UK we recently spoke to him exclusively regarding his plans to establish his specialist system in this country.

Where were you born and when did you begin training?

I was born in Dhaka, Bangladesh and was schooled in a British missionary school there. I took up martial arts at the age of nine. Later I took part in a leadership programme at a military institute where I received strict mental and physical training education aimed at creating leaders and making students strong. I remember how we had to wear full military uniform during classes! I studied military science in addition to my regular studies and became a physical training demonstrator. I became instructor of the institute's Self-Defence Society. I was privileged to be part of such a system and the qualities of honour and integrity that I learned from a very early age are with me today!

Which martial art did you become involved with?

I learned the martial art of Varma-kalai, which is the art of healing and killing developed in South India. It origi-

nated from a healing system called Varma Cuttiram. This has its roots in Siddha medicine, which is said to be the oldest medical science on earth.

Varma-kalai identifies basic 108 Varma points, the striking of which can knock-out, incapacitate or even kill the other person! Other side effects include delayed death or paralysis. These effects can be neutralised by specialised techniques or a pressure on a related vital point.

As you might imagine, this is an extremely dangerous system, which is not taught except at government level, and then to special forces only. However, you can find places in India where the Varma-kalai Aasaan (Master) acts as a local doctor - though the government's strict control over this art has made the combat form of Varma-kalai almost extinct.

Have you ever needed to use Varma-kalai in a combative situation?

Yes! Like everyone at some stage of life you have to deal with such situations and in my case, my training gave me the upper hand in every sense of the word when I most needed it.

India has a rich cultural heritage of martial art, doesn't it?

Yes it has, and I have recently published a book on this very subject, though I admit that much of what I have written comes from a compilation of existing books, the contents of which are well supported by many paintings, statues and writings.

Most historical sources acknowledge that martial arts originated in India and travelled with Bodhidharma to the Shaolin Temple. However, attention then switches to the Shaolin Temple while India's arts are thereafter largely marginalised. There is no doubt that India is the motherland of martial arts, and Bodhidharma is the father of many of the systems still practised today.





I have gone back from the Shaolin Temple to Kanchipuram (the birth place of Bodhidharma as 3rd Prince of King Sugandha). I gathered physical first hand information from translated Chinese documents, Tamil documents, and from professors of history at these important locations. I believe that readers will gain many new insights through the information I have uncovered.

So what elements of this long-established culture will you be teaching UK practitioners?

I wanted to introduce something that works for all modern people, delivering an effective system for ensuring their personal protection and safety within the minimum time-frame. I have named and registered what I teach as 'Combat Self-Defense (CSD)'. My system covers



psychological preparation and application of effective approaches to modern day threats. Most of us never even realize the need of such training until it's too late!

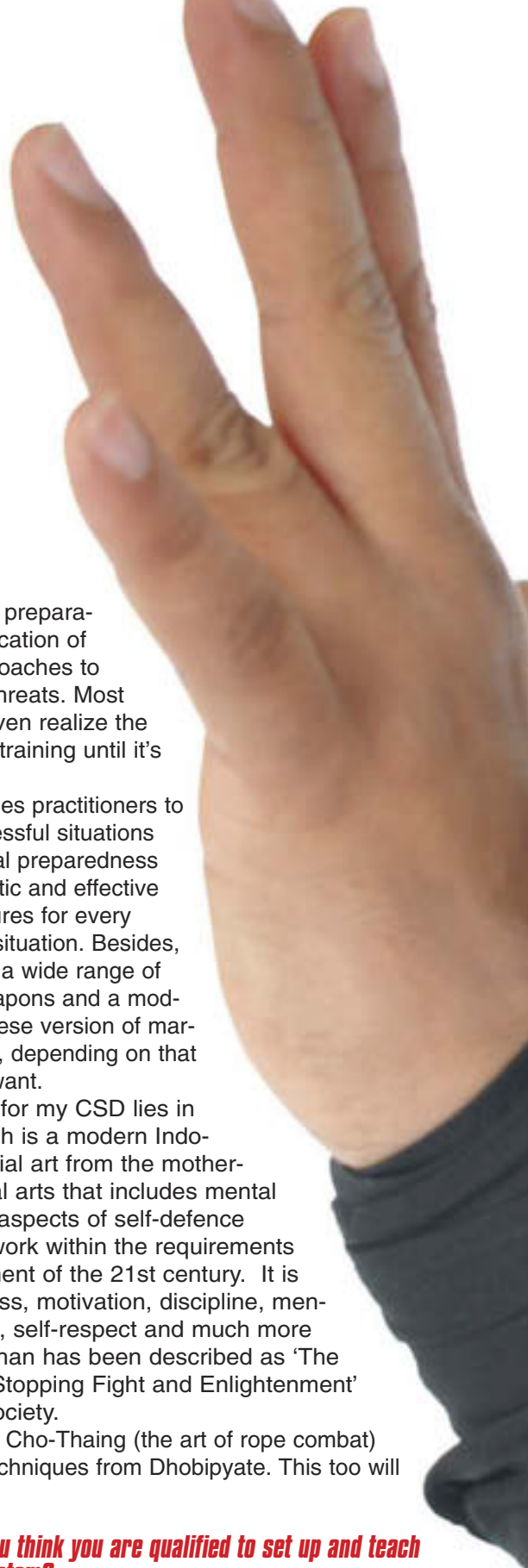
CSD teaches practitioners to overcome stressful situations through mental preparedness allied to realistic and effective countermeasures for every threat-based situation. Besides, I wish to offer a wide range of traditional weapons and a modern Indo-Chinese version of martial art as well, depending on that my students want.

The basis for my CSD lies in Butthan, which is a modern Indo-Chinese martial art from the motherland of martial arts that includes mental and physical aspects of self-defence designed to work within the requirements and environment of the 21st century. It is great for fitness, motivation, discipline, mental sharpness, self-respect and much more besides. Butthan has been described as 'The Noble Art of Stopping Fight and Enlightenment' for modern society.

Add to this Cho-Thaing (the art of rope combat) which uses techniques from Dhobipyate. This too will be taught.

What makes you think you are qualified to set up and teach an effective system?

I've studied military science from an early age before enlisting in Special Forces and law enforcement training. I completed a Commissioned Officer's Course in the National Security Academy, USA, graduating in Security Management levels 1, 2 and 3. I became an instructor with the PR24 side-handled and extendable baton and followed through with training with America's National Rifle Association.



I completed the International Bodyguard Association Master Class during 1996, prior to my studies in USA. Now I currently serve as Director General of the Global Executive Protection and Security Training Agency (GEPSTA) which has its headquarters in Singapore. Finally I have qualified as an SIA (level 3) in close protection training in the UK.

Will studying your system make a difference in the face of increasing levels of knife and gun crime, do you think?

It wouldn't be wise to believe that studying ANY traditional martial art can make a difference. On the other hand, it also wouldn't be wise to believe that all martial arts are completely ineffective in the face of today's threat environment. Bear in mind that all reality-based systems depend upon martial arts techniques.

I recommend that, in the face of increasing gun and knife crime, people should choose a realistic system that works in real-life situations and one that is taught by an experienced and accredited teacher.

Such a system gets you used to all possible situations, so you develop a systematised approach to them in your head. After all, you will agree that it is always better to face a situation you have been taught to recognise and respond effectively to than having to deal with what comes as a total surprise.

Combat Self Defence (CSD) uses skillful seminars to teach you how to respond effectively while dealing with your unconscious adrenaline rush. However, CSD does not pretend to offer some sort of magic solution! Instead it offers a proven and scientific approach to dealing with all aspects of violent confrontation.



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Switching tracks, I believe you are a member of several Halls of Fame and International martial art organisations.

That is true. For example, during 2006 The International Combat Martial Arts Union Association recognised me as World Leader in Combat Martial Arts. In 2007 The Universal Martial Arts Hall of Fame (USA) recognised me as the Grand Master of the Year. That same year I was inducted into the World Martial Arts Hall of Fame (USA). This July, I was inducted into the World Black Belt Hall of Fame at a ceremony organised by International Institute of Martial Arts Research. I was also recognised as Grandmaster of the Year. This was both a happy and a sad occasion because it marked the very last time that I met our legendary Shaolin Head Monk, the late Grandmaster Shi-De-Qian.

Which has been your most memorable day thus far?

There have been two very special and memorable days in my life so far. The first was my invitation to meet and demonstrate my art with top grand masters of Myanmar! I was presented with technical documents and books, and asked to be ambassador for Bando in the western world. The highest ranking Grandmaster and President of the Myanmar Thaing (Burmese Martial Arts Federation), U Mia Thin, told me that he couldn't recall a reception being given for anyone outside of the country within the last twenty years!

The second was when Grand Master Khin Moun Gyi, who is President of the South East Asian Bando Association (SEABA), officially declared me his successor - despite having senior students in China, India, France and USA! He handed over the successor documentation to me at an official ceremony! This was truly a great honour indeed!



Finally, how can instructors and students contact you?

I can be contacted by 'phone at 0779-915-0506 (UK) or 0800-255-0273 (International). You can also e-mail me via: combatselfdefense@yahoo.com or butthanhq@yahoo.com. Be sure to visit www.combatselfdefense.com, www.butthan.net and www.combatselfdefense.org for detailed information.

Thank you for introducing yourself to our readers!

I look forward to hearing from them. Thank you!

