

Advanced Kata of the Month:

Empi



shuhari
institute 

“Flying Swallow” 燕飛

The quick, darting directional changes of this kata are reminiscent of a bird in flight. Its signature sequence features a rising punch followed by a dramatic in-and-out shift that is an excellent exercise in speed, strength, and transition.

The common theory about Empi's origin is that a Chinese official named Wang Ji brought the kata to Okinawa in the 1600s. Wang Ji had a habit of throwing & jumping on his opponents - hence the dynamic moves found in the kata. The modern-day version we practice was styled by Okinawan Master Anko Itosu.

Empi is one of the Sentei Kata (important representations of our style) and it is also one of the oldest kata practiced in the Shotokan system. It's Okinawan name is “Wasu” or “Wanshu”.