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The Society of American Fight Directors

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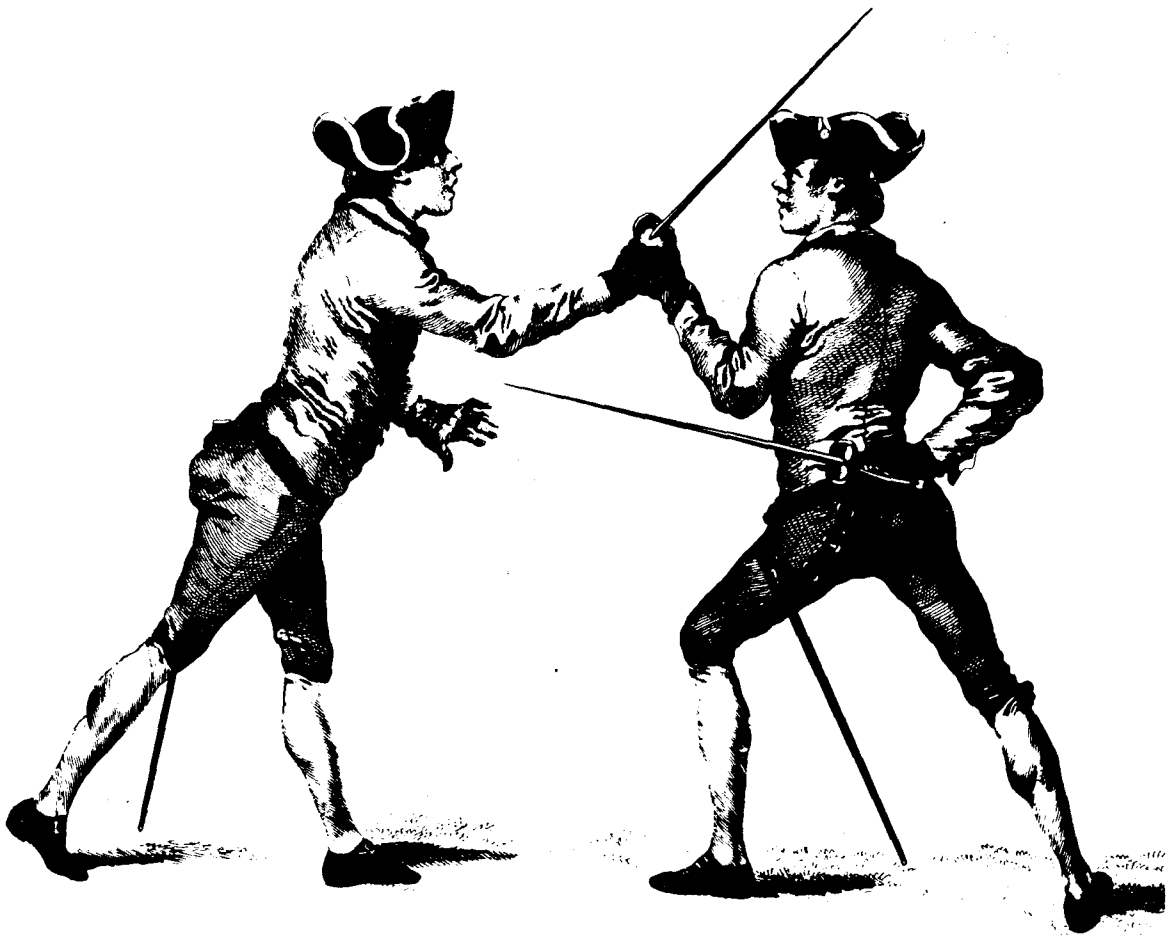
The Society of American Fight Directors

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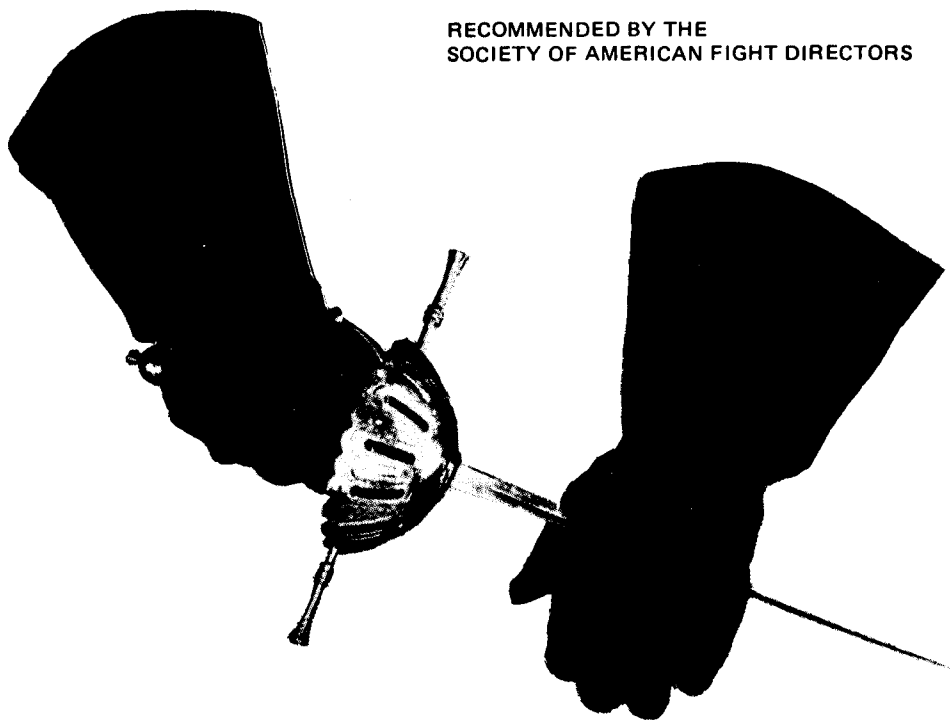


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THE FIGHT MASTER

The Magazine of the Society of American Fight Directors.

NO. 14

July 1981

Editor - Ann C. Long

Lay-out - David L. Boushey

Typed and Duplicated by Ann C. Long

SOCIETY OF AMERICAN FIGHT DIRECTORS

The Society of American Fight Directors was founded by David Boushey and incorporated in Seattle, Washington, in May, 1977.

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| | |
|-------------------------|---|
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| Vice-President | Rod Colbin 6106 Temple Hill Drive Los Angeles CA 90028 |
| Secretary- Treasurer | David L. Boushey 4720 38th N.E. Seattle WA 98105 |

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UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN HOSTS SUCCESSFUL SECOND ANNUAL
SAFD NATIONAL STAGE COMBAT WORKSHOP

July 21 through August 7 were the dates of one of the most intensive training sessions in Stage Combat and Movement experienced. This has been attested to by people who have trained with the SAFD as well as having trained in Great Britain and Canada. While our objectives were not of the "Paris Island Boot Camp" variety, we did offer 7 to 8 hours a day in a variety of Combat and Movement disciplines as well as recommending use of the recreational facilities and morning conditioning session attendance.

This year's workshop was attended by 23 teachers, actors, students, and coaches from all over the USA and Canada. The age range was from 19 to 64 and I am again pleased to report that there were no injuries. Most of you who read this magazine know that it's not just "luck" which allows people to get through three weeks of armed and unarmed training without mishap. An injury, like a dropped line in a scene, can happen in a second. Proper planning and teaching can greatly reduce the occurrence of those "seconds."

I thought that our readers might enjoy knowing the nature of the workshop, who taught, and the results of the certification tests which occurred at the end of the workshop.

David Boushey taught Rapier and Dagger as well as Broadsword Technique.

Joseph Martinez taught Unarmed and Quarterstaff.

Patrick Crean (British Society and honorary member of the SAFD) held seminars in point work and Rapier and Dagger.

David Leong taught preparation for movement, CPR (resulting in certification of students), stretching, and conducted a seminar in Circus Technique.

Erik Fredricksen taught Court Sword, Aerobics Training, and Adapted Aikido Techniques and Ki Training. In the latter he was ably assisted by Martin Katz, a second degree Black Belt who also conducted two classes.

Christopher Villa again attended the workshop, received a Recommended on his certification test and assisted with weapon instruction and weapon maintenance.

We were pleased to have, in addition to all of the above, a very thorough and entertaining evening on Black Powder. Three members of the 31st Michigan Volunteer Infantry (a company formed during the Civil War) demonstrated loading and safety features with vintage weapons and uniforms and side arms. We captured Paddy Crean on camera with a Union cap firing (one must imagine) at the entire Southern Army.

The emphasis this year was not just on presentation of techniques common to the usage of various weapons and unarmed combat, but also the relation of the weapon to movement patterns, physical and psychological, in terms of the performing, moving actor. This is not to imply that this did not happen last year or is not happening in various training programs throughout the USA, Canada, and Great Britain.

Those of us who are familiar with actor training and more specifically, ACTING, have been aware for a long time that the essence of stage combat lies not in the surface techniques an individual may pick up if he is very adept in a 2-4 week crash course in this thing called "stage combat". Stage Combat can no longer be conveniently swept into the pile of "precious skills", certainly not by knowledgeable actor trainers aware of this area of training. Relaxation DURING movement, concentration, extension, balance, psycho-physical committment, are all results of properly conducted training in Stage Combat Core Movement pursuits and, of course, essential in the mounting of specific scene work. We are happy to have joining us in this "awareness" campaign such respected Society "movement" teachers as Craig Turner and Hollis Houston. We welcome articles and views relative to this aspect of Stage Combat Training from other movement leaders and teachers.

I mentioned earlier that the three-week workshop culminated in a certification test, and I am delighted to report that everyone passed with seven receiving recommendations.

The following is a list of those students and the certificate number they were awarded:

| | | | |
|-------------------|------------|------------------|------------|
| Ray C. Fishburne | 122 | Ted Levine | 134 |
| Warren Treisman | 123 | Louis Brockway | 135 |
| Joseph Pechinsky | 124 | Richard D. Smith | 136 |
| David Leong | 125 | Jeffrey Dill | 137 |
| Martin Katz | 126 | Bruce Vieira | 138 |
| Ty Smith (Rec.) | 127 | Andrea Gonzales | 139 |
| George W. Bellah | 128 (Rec.) | James Nosedo | 140 (Rec.) |
| Richard Hayden | 129 (Rec.) | John Bacon | 141 (Rec.) |
| Christopher Villa | 130 (Rec.) | Eric Hagen | 142 |
| Gregg Zellen | 131 | Charles Heffeman | 143 |
| Joe Zubrick | 132 | Teresa Kochowicz | 144 |
| John Koensgen | 133 (Rec.) | Rick Sordelet | 145 |

I must say, in closing, that I was delighted (as indeed was everyone connected with the workshop) to have Mr. Patrick Crean among us. It has been my aim as President to demonstrate to the American Society and the British Society that collaborative effort is possible and even desirable. The spirit and kindness of this gentleman demonstrates more aptly than any words how petty and unimportant boundaries and national "allegiances"

really are. Any Aikido practioner worth his salt is aware of "positive Ki". I doubt that Paddy has ever had a class in Aikido but he is certainly the living example of Positive Ki.

At this point, plans for next year are not certain. I do want to close, however, reminding you that you are members of a body of individuals who are very special. We have a fine, Positive, organization and must continue to think and act that way. Our voice is our work and our magazine. Let's keep it proud, but not arrogant; loud, but not strident. And, most of all, do keep SPEAKING.

Sincerely,

Erik Fredricksen, President

* * * * *

MORE CERTIFICATION TESTS

Besides the extensive testing that was conducted at the national workshop in Ann Arbor, Michigan in which all 23 participants passed, there were two other certification tests which took place.

May 1 - Test at Southern Illinois University:

This was a very small test in that only two people took part, but it was a very effective demonstration. The students were taught by Michael Meyers, a graduate of last year's national fight workshop conducted in Macomb, Illinois. They improvised their own acting scene with rapier and dagger, quarterstaff and unarmed being employed very effectively. The only complaint I had as adjudicator was the odd high cut to the shoulder. Other than that, the fights were very safe. I was especially impressed in that the students didn't have the opportunity to work as extensively as they would have liked due to the amount of time and expertise Mr. Meyers had to offer. But Michael certainly got the basics across as the combatants did a fine job for those of us who attended.

Tim Hannon (Passed)

Instructor: Michael Meyers

Joe Kinney (Passed)

Adjudicator: David L. Boushey

May 25 - Test at Drama Studio, Berkeley (London):

This test was also quite small but effective. These students were taught by David L. Boushey and J.R. Beardsley. This is a new school structured and guided by Peter Layton of the Drama Studio London (England). The school appeared to be off to a good start with some very good physical people attending. I wish that more students had taken the test, but this of course was their option. Rapier and dagger, quarterstaff and unarmed combat were employed by all the combatants. The students did very solid work but no recommendations were awarded. It is hoped that Drama Studio will continue its association with the Society and will once again submit students for certification this coming academic year.

Joseph Nassi (Passed)
Paul V. O'Connor (Passed)
Tim Roberts (Passed)
Karen Armstrong (Passed)

Instructors: David L. Boushey
J.R. Beardsley
Adjudicator: Byron Jennings

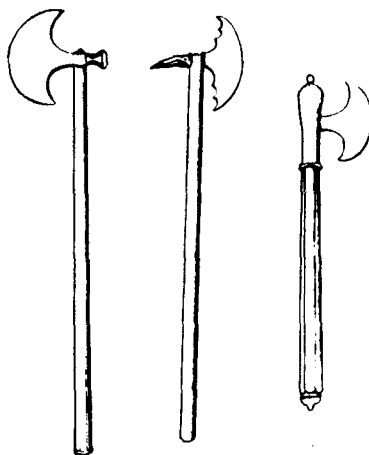


Medieval jousting. *Encyclopedia of Source Illustrations* □

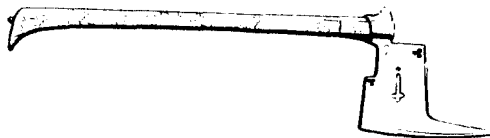
Battle Axes continued



Knight wielding a battle axe *Old Engravings*



English battle axes, 10th century. *Ancient Armor*



Dutch battle axe dated 1685, with ivory-ornamented handle. *Ancient Armor*



Axe of the variety used by the first English settlers in America. *Benneman's*



18th century Persian axe, demasked with gold. *L'Art Pour Tous*

THE MATRIX OF STAGE VIOLENCE

Part II (Con'd. from Issue 13)

Ball games are a good introduction to dealing with rhythm, external awareness, and total physical involvement. Throwing and passing one or more balls in set patterns and at random can be an interesting way to start to open up. Some possible combinations are: a) one person in the center of a circle of students who passes around the circle, first in order, then at random using not only hands, but also different parts of the body; b) passing drills, with one person throwing to the other students, in succession, as they run at, away from, or perpendicularly to the pass. Include in this category passes which hit the receiver at the top of a leap from the ground and from a stack of mats. These are similar to football passes, but may be done two-handed; c) the group runs in a large circle, passing the ball backwards (either looking or blind), forwards, and across the circle. Variations are endless, but concentration should be on watching the ball, timing the arc of a pass to meet the top of a jump, relaxing the hands, working without breaking rhythm, and developing different speeds.

In these games, it is possible to push those who are capable of fast, hard, or intricate patterns, as well as adapt to those with less experience, confidence, or coordination. I have found that women appreciate this opportunity to develop skills (e.g. throwing and catching) they have traditionally been denied. All of the games develop a group spirit; it is not unusual to hear cheering and encouragement among the students as speed and intensity pick up.

Another aspect to the ball drills involves games such as dodge ball. Played intensely, I look for the capability to throw the ball hard and accurately in preparation for fight focus (we aim for the feet to minimize the possibility of accidents), as well as the courage necessary to stand in the circle and be hit. This game demands an especially high level of energy and impulsivity, and you can quickly spot those who may be timid or unfocused. Ball games become an objectified way to see the range and quality of image focus from the actor; the ball only moves in response to what the actor wants.

We have also developed a game called "matball." Played on a 20' x 20' free-exercise mat, it involves four teams, each one just off an edge of the mat and parallel to it. The game involves "serving" a volleyball, hitting the mat at least once on its way to the team opposite. After

the receiving team has hit the ball, then it may be hit in any direction long as it strikes the mat at least once. If it crosses a side of the mat and hits the floor, then the team receiving it gets one point against them; ten points knocks the team out. A team may set the ball up to its members, equal to the number of people on the side (e.g. three players, two sets and one shot, or any combination less). This game involves all styles of serving and receiving, since any part of the body may be used to contact the ball. Since hits and serves are not allowed when in contact with the mat, the mat becomes a crucial playing surface, and encourages leaping for the ball, dives and rolls, and provides a safety factor. This is a game which encourages peripheral vision, cooperation and trust, impulsivity, strong external focus, and commitment, and development of a group objective.

Whatever kind of games you may develop as a teacher, make it clear from the beginning (and keep reinforcing) the idea of a clear image which is reinforced by good physical technique. Encourage the student to bring quick, hard, and violent images to those games. Look for aggressive and energetic choices. If the game is clearly explained and the rules are adhered to (the teacher may participate but must observe and ultimately be in control) the violence and energy will express themselves safely, but the whole point of developing a violence-game series is to create a base on which the fight techniques may grow.

If you are a movement teacher in tandem with acting and voice teachers, make sure they understand what you are doing and why. The acting coach I work with, Robert L. Hobbs, is a strong believer in developing the above qualities in the first quarter of training, and much of his acting work dovetails with mine. We are both looking for the ability to respond fully, energetically, and with total physicality to images and impulses. I also work closely with the voice teacher in combining voice with body work. Vocal focus and projection take on a new meaning when combined with leaps, rolls and falls and underscore the integrative nature of the violence work.

The training previously described takes five to six weeks. At this point, the introduction of empty-handed stage fight techniques follows logically. I reinforce the expectation that we see character intentions and acting values in stage fighting. The fact is, almost anyone can do a stage slap or punch if taught clearly and properly. But by reminding the actor that we are still talking about acting, we can encourage and attain a meaningful context.

I require a stage-fight scene for a final to the quarter, conceived

and choreographed by the student. I try to keep the fight to no more than three people, although we frequently see "extras" involved in setting the scene or background. Normally the students choose their own partners, but I reserve the right to balance scenes--women can fight men and more accomplished technicians can be paired with those less skilled. Through this, I can assure that the general level of technique remains high, without the few better fighters simply keeping to themselves.

Normally, I review each scene twice before they are done the final time. My concern is twofold: a) make sure the techniques are correct, safe and masked properly and b) establish that there is a clearly acted scene being played. One aspect of the new certification process which needs to be encouraged is the level at which the fight scene develops. We need to ask such questions as: Do all the characters have an initial strong objective (besides to fight, which is meaningless)? Does the scene vary rhythmically, that is to say, do the characters employ a variety of actions, get energized and then weaken, overcoming smaller obstacles? Do we see the fighters constantly making choices? We see more variety and creativity in a fight when these questions are answered clearly and consistently.

Achieving proper violence values in a combat scene and encouraging the actors to explore their responses to the material are much more important than focusing solely on proper masking or technique, thereby reducing movement to a spiritless form.

The strength and value of stage fighting techniques will grow in proportion to the vigor that combat teachers connect to the fundamental concerns of the actor. There is a tendency to teach it in a vacuum, as an end in itself, which the actor then has to connect to his art. This often happens in fight training since we can say with assurance that the actor will probably have to use it at some point in his/her career. But elucidation of technique alone does not satisfy the demands of the theatre. The nature of a theatrical moment is much more complex than a series of safe moves. Like realism or Restoration or *commedia dell'arte*, stage fighting is really a theatrical style, a way of doing things, and must be given character logic.

Not every student coming out of a training program will be able to generate a convincing level of fight violence on stage, technically or emotionally. But we should guarantee each student the opportunity to experience the kind of sensibility required for fighting, an organic sensibility developed through a matrix of violence. An actor is unlikely to develop the tools, experience and emotional training for stage fighting in the professional performance situation...and so must be given the chance within the context and support of his training.

NEWS FROM THE ARMOURY

The Armoury has made further progress recently, be adding a number of new items to its selection. Recent additions are as follows:

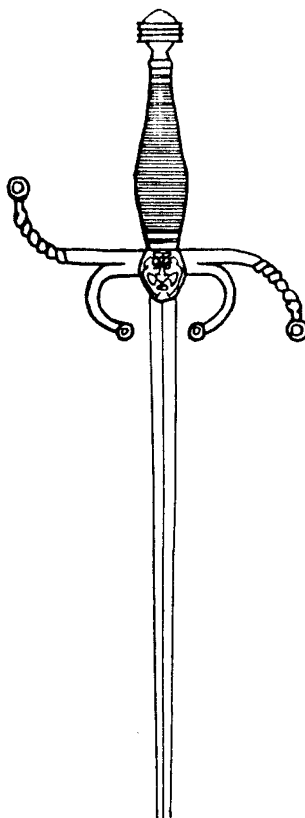
As David mentioned in the last issue of the Fight Master, the Armoury now offers a beautiful replica rapier blade in the guise of the German schlagger blade. It is stainless steel, holds up very well to combat use, looks much more authentic than the standard epee blade and is made with the same fine quality that is indicative of most German craftsmanship. One important new note in reference to the schlagger blade...henceforth, it will be referred to as the 100R replica rapier blade. Please refer to it as such when making future inquiry. The new rapier blade is slightly more expensive than the epee blades, but considering its functional and aesthetic superiority, it is well worth the investment.

For those of you who are ordering the blades individually with the intention of fitting them to your own hilts, handles, pommels, etc., it is important to note that these blades are designed with a much wider tang than the epee blades have. This, of course, is good, because it adds much strength to the tang. It also creates a problem in that the other components of the weapon must be modified to allow the 100R to be inserted. If you are willing to undertake this task yourself, there is no problem. If you are not equipped to do so, we invite you to contact the Armoury and perhaps we can arrange for you to send your items to us for modification. In any case, this important factor should be noted whenever purchasing an individual 100R blade with hopes of combining it with items you already possess.

Also new to the Armoury, are these new Japanese Samurai weapons; the DAITO (longsword), SHOTO (shortsword) and the TANTO (dagger). All three are pictured in the diagram accompanying this article, along with their respective prices. The blades on these weapons are of steel, and the DAISHO (long and shortsword), have black scabbards, guards and handles. The TANTO is encased in natural wood, with no guard whatsoever.

And finally, the Armoury is now offering its most recent manganese castings. The new castings are of the #5 Renaissance Sword, the #21 Florentine Sword, the #13 "El Cid" Sword, the #69/1 Oriental Broadsword pommel and a new edition of the #51 Conquistador Sword. The #51 guard is now a figure eight guard, which can be used by itself as a courtsword guard, or in conjunction with the new #5 casting to form a combination figure eight with crossguard, reminiscent of the old #51. The Armoury will continue to recast old designs in the new manganese form and I will inform readers, through the Fight Master, as to availability.

castings.



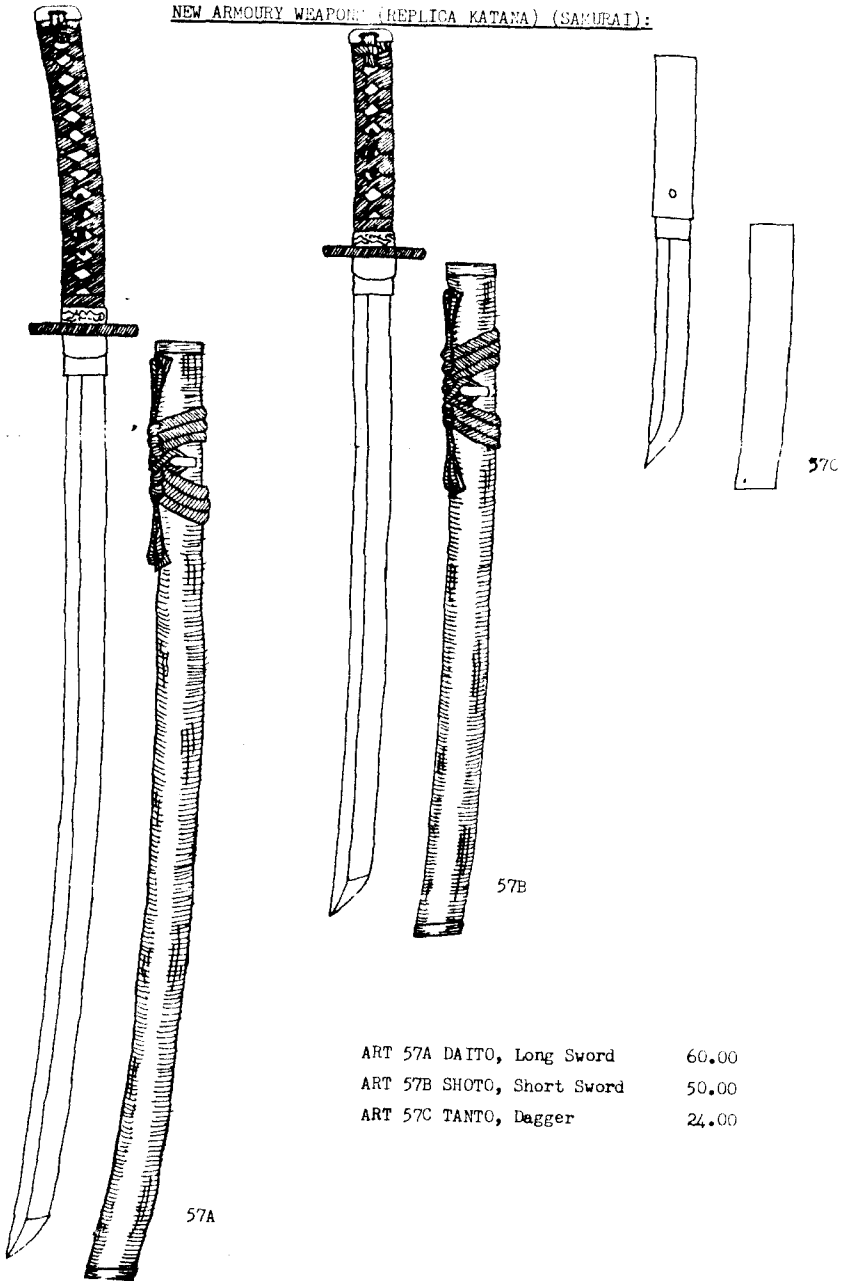
ARMOURY SHOWCASE NO. 1

As a further means of familiarizing members with the Armoury's selection of theatrical weapons, we will be submitting to future Fight Master issues, a showcase of sorts, in which a different weapon from the Armoury will be featured, accompanied by a detailed diagram and all specs. We hope to have one in each of the upcoming issues. This is a means by which each member can gain a good understanding of the weapons discussed and the more issues a member gets, the more references they will have to weapons the Armoury offers.

The first weapon we are featuring is the 17th Century Rapier & Dagger. This weapon was one of the more popular Armoury weapons in the past, until its European manufacturers stopped producing it. It is now cast in new manganese castings and available again. As you can see in the diagram, the guard consists of two arms, one turned up - one turned down, as well as pas d'anes to protect the forefinger. The hilt and pommel are standard Armoury stock and are available in manganese, or in the old style. This guard is extremely durable for combat purposes and by turning the guard over and adding a 14" dagger blade, a beautiful rapier & dagger combination can be made. All pieces are cast in color. It can be fitted with an epic blade, or with the new 17th century replica rapier blade. For further information contact the Armoury.

2

NEW ARMOURY WEAPONS (REPLICA KATANA) (SAMURAI):



| | |
|----------------------------|-------|
| ART 57A DAITO, Long Sword | 60.00 |
| ART 57B SHOTO, Short Sword | 50.00 |
| ART 57C TANTO, Dagger | 24.00 |

As always, the Armoury welcomes questions and comments in reference to our selection and anyone wishing further information can contact the Armoury in San Francisco, or myself, in Boston.

Jerome Smith

SOME METHODS OF WEAPONLESS STAGE COMBAT
(Continued from Issues # 11 & 12)

PART III

A slap is a blow with the open hand to a person's facial area - the palm or fingers of the hand on the cheek or neck. There are three primary slapping techniques: two artificial, and one real.

The safest slap is not a slap at all but a trick using the idea that "the hand is quicker than the eye." The actor who is to be slapped, the slappee, stands with his back to the audience, and the slapper makes the motion of striking the person. The slappee's head turns in the direction of the blow and a sharp noise is heard by the audience at the precise moment of contact. In actuality, the slapper has never struck his fellow actor but completely missed the head. The slappee turns his head voluntarily with the motion of the slapper's hand. The noise heard is produced offstage by someone striking his hands together. This simple slap is one of the hardest to perform because it requires perfect timing by three people: the two actors performing and the offstage individual who must precisely time the noise with the exact pretended moment of contact. The offstage noise must also be close enough to the actors to be realistic. A slapping sound coming from upstage right while the actors are downstage left would be ludicrous (on the other hand, such an action could be a delightful bit of farcical business). However, due to the complexities of this slapping technique, this author does not recommend it.

In the second technique, everything is exactly the same as in the fights, but the person being slapped, the slappee, produces the noise. With his back to the audience, and his hands in front of himself, the actor being slapped turns his head with the blow and violently strikes his hands together, timed with the turning of the head. Or, the slappee merely places an open hand in front of his own face (with his back hiding this move from the house) and the slapper hits the palm of the open hand to produce the noise. A variation of this is for the slapper to strike his own hand by cupping the slappee's face with his free, non-swinging hand, and then hitting the free hand with the slapping hand, a rather violent method of clapping. All of these methods can be quite effective and with careful timing and blocking, they can even be staged profile to the audience. These slapping techniques are most useful for extremely violent slaps, such as George striking Martha in Edward Albee's Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf? or Othello slapping Desdemona in Shakespeare's Othello. The audience sees the slapper's arm move towards the other actor's face. They see the head violently jerked around and they hear the sound of flesh striking flesh--

consequently, the audience "sees" something that just didn't happen: a vicious slap.

The third technique, and the single most effective one, is an authentic slap. A real slap requires only two people and can be staged in any manner--there is no need for artificiality.

The first lesson to be learned is that a properly administered slap, even with a good deal of force and weight behind it, has some pain, a sharp sting, but no injury or lasting pain. The pain of any slap should dissipate within a few minutes. The amount of pain is well within the limits of all but the most sensitive people. The slap will remain reddish in color for only a few minutes.

The second, and most obvious lesson, is where and how to deliver the slap. A slap should always be done with a loose open hand. The striking portion will be either the fingers or the palm. The two best striking areas are the cheeks and the side of the neck between the ears and the shoulders. The fingers should be used in slapping the cheeks, while the palm is recommended for the neck. Of the two, the noise produced is louder and more effective in the palm striking the neck. By slightly cupping the palm, a blow on the neck can result in a sharp, crackling noise. Also, the neck area can sustain a greater amount of force than the cheeks, and has a higher tolerance of pain. In both cases, the slappee should turn his head away from the blow, to soften somewhat the force of the slap, as well as to increase the realism.

In production, the main problem in using a real slap occurs in the slappee's flinching from the blow immediately prior to the action. It is a quite human reaction, but it destroys the theatrical illusion of "the first time." The slappee, as the character in the play, would not presumably know a slap is coming, therefore flinching "telegraphs" the movement. This can be avoided by casting a fearless actor, or by the director's keeping a keen eye open for any flinching. But the director must be on the lookout for flinching, for it absolutely destroys not only the illusion of theatre, but the effectiveness of the slap itself.

There are a great variety of body kicks; i.e., blows with the feet to any part of an adversary's body. Kicks can be simple as in street-fighting, or sophisticated as in Savate, the French art of self-defense by means of the feet. And Karate, the empty-handed method of attack, also contains a number of body kicks. But probably the most basic kick is striking an opponent's posterior with the foot. This is useful both for humorous and serious situations.

The posterior portion of the body is a good anatomical structure

to kick for its consists primarily of fatty tissues, giving insulation between skin and bone. Consequently, the derriere can be kicked with soem force without fear of injury. However, a kick should always be placed high on the posterior (midway between the small of the back and the top of the thighs) due to the presence of male or female genitalia and the so-called tailbone.

If the kick is performed with the foot extended so that the toes point downwards, as in ballet, the blow should be delivered completely on one buttock, to the outer hip side. This removes any danger of striking the opponent's sex organs. If the kick is executed with the side of the foot, the blow should be spaced across both buttocks and relatively high on the rump.

This kick is extremely easy to learn, and particularly useful in farces or farce-comedies. The only danger involved is in the kicker striking his adversary's genitalia or tailbone, but proper rehearsal can avoide this possibility.

A more theatrical body blow is the savate (also karate) standing side kick whereby the person doing the kicking strikes his opponent with the naturally curved part of the foot. The kicking actor has a large area in which to place his blow, as the outside hip can be hit fairly hard without damage, or the area above the hip bone and below the rib cage is a soft portion and can be struck without bone damage (but it cannot be struck too hard as this area contains many of the human viscera, particularly the kidneys toward the rear). The standing side kick can be perofmred to any side, and with either leg. The actor being kicked must have his arms raised high enough above his waist so as not to interfere with the movement of the kicking actor's foot. When struck, the kicked actor should move his body away from the direction of the blow while at the same time audibly expelling air from his lungs. This aids in dissipating any force of the blow, and contributes to the realism of the movement.

A common variation of the standing side kick is one in which the actor being kicked is struck on the side either while on the ground or while trying to raise himself up from the ground. Such a blow can look extremely realistic, even brutal, and is recommended mostly for serious melodrama (such a situation occurs in Beckett's Waiting for Godot). Kicking a man when he is down may be ungentlemanly, but it is theatri-cally effective and relatively easy to perform. Once again, the kicking actor has a fairly broad target area to choose from, the side of the hip or the viscera section. It is the kicking actor's responsibility to see that he places the outside curved portion of his foot snugly on the other actor's body, but pulling his leg short at the moment of impact.

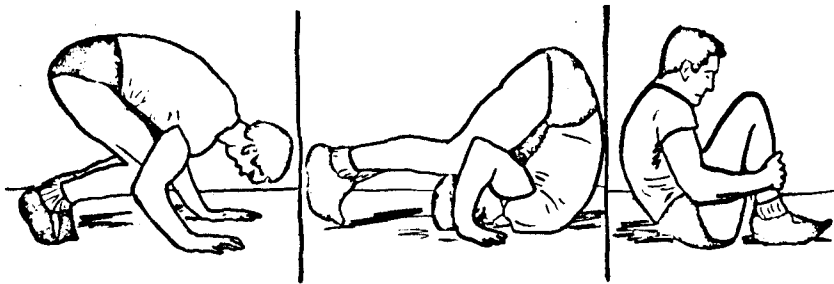
At this precise moment, the actor kicked should propel himself sideways away from the blow, expelling air loudly, at the same time clutching his kicked side (this works best if the kicked actor is on his hands and knees at the time of the blow). In reality, the kicking actor has merely touched the other actor's side, hard enough to look realistic, but soft enough to prevent injury. The rest is up to the abilities of the kicked actor. As with most Stage Violence techniques, this requires precise timing. If the timing is exact in this technique, kicking a man when he is down can be performed from any and all angles, and is compatible with any type of staging from the proscenium opening to the theatre-in-the-round.

A fourth body kick is the familiar knee to the face. There are a number of ways to stage this sort of kick, but the most successful would seem to be an illusion whereby the actor "kneed-ed" is not touched at all but merely appears to have been struck. For full effectiveness, the head of the actor who is about to be kicked should be lowered somewhat. His body might be doubled up from a prior blow to the stomach, or perhaps he is raising his body up from the floor. The actor who will perform the kick will stand sideways to his opponent and will grip either his opponent's chin or his hair with the upstage hand. In a swift movement, he will raise his adversary's face upward by tilting the chin up, or pulling the hair back, at the same time bringing his knee up to the level of the other's face. However, his knee should be at least four to five inches away from and in front of the other actor's face. There is no contact between the face and the knee. The opponent will fling himself up and backwards from the supposed point of contact (perhaps being assisted--pushed--by the upstage hand of the kicking actor), while at the same time making some sort of painful noise to cover the lack of any sound when the bodies do not meet. Once again, timing is of the essence.

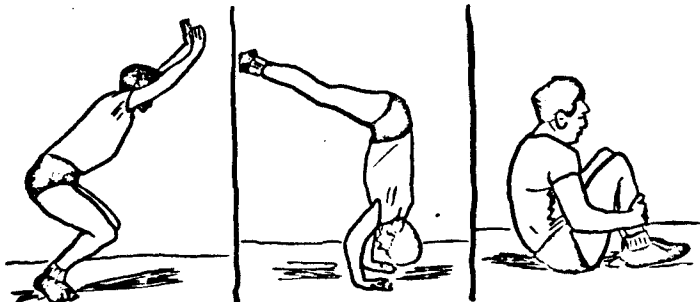
However, the illusion of this kick requires an audience seated directly in front of the action--most commonly a proscenium stage--and would not work if blocked sideways. As in the faked slap, the audience sees the head raise up, the knee come up to it, they see the actor's body topple backwards and they hear the cries of pain, and consequently the audience sees the illusion of a violent kick by a knee to the face. It is this very technique that is most commonly used by the cinema, with the motion-picture camera being placed directly in front of the action. Of course, the tremendous advantage of the cinema is in this ability to position the camera, and also in the addition of a soundtrack to which the sounds of a kick can be added. I have found that with extremely careful movement, and much rehearsal,

a very effective knee to the face can be executed sideways or profile to the audience, but that the time needed to perfect the movement so that it looks realistic every time is out of proportion to the results obtained. Therefore, although a knee to the face can be performed profile, it is recommended that it be staged with the audience directly in front of the action as this is expedient for both actors and director.

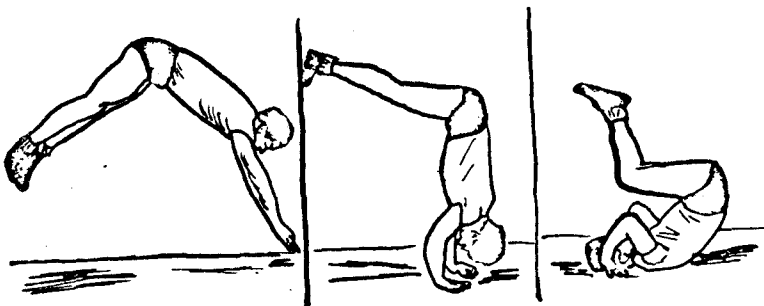
THREE SOMERSAULTS⁵



1. Simple Somersault: Front Roll



2. Front Handspring From Person's Height



3. Difficult Somersault: Front Flip

FIGHT PLAYS FOR MEN AND WOMEN

The following is a duplicate of the RADA Playlist. It was compiled by Henry Marshall and the Librarian some years ago to give RADA students a choice in choosing weapons and texts for the Prize Fights. There are two reasons why I am publishing this alone in this issue. One is that it is a comprehensive collection and it merits publication on its own, and two, it is the only response I have received thus far. My many thanks to Mr. Marshall and to the Society of British Fight Directors for answering the call of their friends.

Now to all you Swashbuckling dudes in the Society of American Fight Directors, WHAT'S GOIN' ON? This is your big chance to answer Mr. Boushey's call to a little input into the Society. If you don't have time to write essays, you certainly have time to jot down a fight or two and send it along. If you can think of any, please do it--it is for the benefit of everyone. I'm sure teachers, fighters and students could use a little more to add to their repertoires. Thank you.

John Robert Beardsley

* * * * *

FIGHTS FOR MEN

Shakespeare

| | |
|-------------------|-------------------------|
| Macbeth V.7 | Macbeth/Young Siward |
| V.8 | Macbeth/Macduff |
| Lear II.2 | Kent/Oswald |
| IV.6 | Oswald/Edgar |
| V.3 | Edmund/Edgar |
| Henry IV Part I | |
| V.4 | Douglas/King Henry |
| | Douglas/Prince of Wales |
| | Hotspur/Prince of Wales |
| Henry VI Part II | |
| V.3 | York/Clifford |
| | Richard/Somerset |
| Henry VI Part III | |
| II.4 | Richard/Clifford |

| | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Richard III V.4 | Richmond/Richard |
| Othello II.3 | Montano/Cassio |
| Cymbeline IV.2 | Cloten/Quilenius (Weapons unspecified) |
| King Lear II.1 III.7 V.3 | Edmund/Edgar Servant/Cornwall Edmund/Edgar |

Non-Shakespeare

John Arden: "Armstrong's Last Goodnight"
Scabbarded sword: spears

"Where the Rainbow Ends"
St. George/Dragon King: Single Broadsword

"Vagabond King"
Villon/D'Aussigny
Rene/Tabarie: Single Broadsword

RAPIER AND DAGGER (Shakespeare)

| | |
|---|--|
| Romeo and Juliet III.1 III.1 V.3 | Romeo/Tybalt Mercutio/Tybalt Paris/Romeo |
| Hamlet V.2 | Hamlet/Laertes |
| Twelfth Night III.4 IV.1 | Viola/Auguecheck Sir Toby/Antonio Sir Toby/Sebastian |
| Two Nobel Kinsmen III.6 | Palamon/Arcite |

RAPIER AND DAGGER (Non-Shakespeare)

| | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Oscar Wilde (one act) | "A Florentine Tragedy," Guido/Simone |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|

RAPIER

| | |
|--|---|
| Middleton: "A Fair Quarrel Act V Scene I | Physician/Chough |
| Dumas (Adapted): "Three Musketeers II II | D'Artagnan/Rochefort D'Artagnan/Three Thugs (Comedy) |
| Rostand: "Cyrano de Bergerac" 1.4 | Cyrano/Valvert |
| John Ford: "'Tis Pity She's a Whore" 1.2 V.6 | Grimaldi/Vasques Soranzo/Giovanni/Vasques/Banditti |
| Marshall: "Babes in the Wood" | Good Robber/Bad Robber (Semi-comedy) |
| Calderon de la Barca: "Life is a Dream" II | Segismund/Clotaldo Segismund/Astolfo |
| Calderon de la Barca: "Life after Death" III | Alvaro/Garcos with soldiers |
| Calderon de la Barca: "Devotion to the Cross" III | Eusebio/Curcio -rapier followed by unarmed combat Eusebio/Curcio |
| Calderon de la Barca: "The Phantom Lady" I and III | Don Manuel/Don Luis |
| Torso de Molina: "Trickster of Seville" II | Don Juan/Catalino Don Juan/Don Gonzalo |
| Schiller: "Don Carlos II.5 | Duke of Alba/Don Carlos |
| George Chapman: "Bussy d'Ambois" | Montsurry/Murderers and Bussy d'Ambois |

QUARTER STAFF AND SINGLE STICK, & CLUB

| | | |
|-----------------------------|---|------------------------------|
| J.P. Sartre | "Lucifer and the Lord" Goetz/Peasant Hercules | Sticks |
| Traditional | "Robin Hood" Robin Hood/Little John | Quarterstaff |
| Beaumont & Fletcher | "Philaster" IV.3 | Sword with single stick |
| Shakespeare | "King Lear" IV.6 | Quarterstaff and broad sword |
| Peter Barnes | "The Ruling Class" | Walking Stick |
| Shakespeare | "Henry VI" Part Two, II.3 (Homer/Peter) | Staff |
| Shakespeare (and others) | Sir Thomas More II.1 Harry, Robin & Kit (apprentices) | 'A pair of cudgels' |
| Marshall | "Jack and the Beanstalk" | Club against sword |

SABRE OR CUTLASS

| | | |
|--|--|-----------------------------|
| Barrie | "Peter Pan" V. Hook/Peter | Cutlass |
| John Osborne | "A Patriot for Me" I. Kupper/Scizynski | Sabre |
| H. Marshall | "Robinson Crusoe" II. (Crusoe, Atkins, One Eye, and Barmy) | Cutlass (one against three) |
| Anthony Hope (adapted) (Text from film script) | "Prisoner of Zenda" (Rassendyll, Rupert of Hentzau) | Sabre |
| R.L. Stevenson (adapted) | "Treasure Island" | Cutlass |
| George Macdonald Fraser | "Royal Flash" (book) Flashman/de Gautet Flashman/Rudi | Sabre Sabre |

(To be Continued next issue)

DALE JOHNSON AND ERROL FLYNN

While teaching at California State University at Los Angeles, I had the opportunity to visit Paramount Studios where I spent an afternoon with Dale Johnson who was one of the doubles in the career of Errol Flynn.

As many of the membership know, our own Paddy Crean was also a double and choreographer for Flynn.

Dale Johnson doubled for Flynn in Flynn's final years. The film that Dale remembers most was a 1956 T.V. film entitled "The Sword of Villon." He doubled extensively for Flynn in this made-for-television film. He laughed about the fact that in the film he had to jump off a wall to attach a guard; only the guard was also himself! So in theory, he was jumping onto himself where he finished himself off and commenced to pursue the enemy. They apparently needed someone who could vault a wall safely, and at the same time fight as a guard with some panache.

Dale actually started as an actor in Broadway musicals in 1952. He was an accomplished actor and singer before going to Hollywood. But in Hollywood he found himself a captive of his extraordinary likeness to Errol Flynn. This ironic twist of fact was to follow him throughout his acting career. It is not that he didn't act but he did have a difficult time with some producers and directors because of the likeness.

He referred to Errol Flynn a number of times as "a beautiful guy." That certainly dispels in Dale's mind any unpleasant references that have been made about Flynn by various individuals--in particular Chales Higham and his book Errol Flynn, the Untold Story. There is little doubt in his mind as to the merits of Flynn and he remembers with pride Errol's reference to him as "my little brother." (Dale was twelve years younger than Flynn and thus the reference to "little brother").

Flynn died only four years after Dale first met and doubled for him and therefore never had the opportunity to work with him for an extended time. But like so many other colleagues of Flynn's, including our own Paddy Crean, he had nothing but the highest regard for Flynn.

It seems somewhat strange that so many people who worked with Flynn admired and respected him. Either the various authors who have been vindictive about Flynn are grossly unfair or Flynn had one hell of a split personality!

After Flynn's death, Dale went on to work as an actor in many films and T.V. shows, such as "The Big Country," "Lassie," "Guys and Dolls", as well as two tours to Viet Nam as part of the U.S.O.

Dale is now a vocal coach for Paramount Studios and works extensively on the Mork and Mindy Show.

It was a pleasure to meet him and talk to another colleague who had worked with the legendary Errol Flynn.

D. L. Boushey

THE NEW YORK TIMES, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 1981

Dueling, Despite Derision, Grows in West German

BONN, Feb. 25 (Reuters) — West Germany's traditional student dueling fraternities are having a new vogue after years of official disapproval.

Sword scars on the cheek, chin or forehead, once the mark of the privileged, still draw derisive looks in Germany. Although critics mock "the scar-faced relics," new dueling fraternities spring up in universities every year, and the older ones grow larger.

The 1,200 fraternities, including the nonfighting academic fraternities, are estimated to have 40,000 undergraduate members and 170,000 active graduates.

Even so, the percentage of students in fraternities is far below the 60 percent of the 1920's and 30's.

The fighting fraternities belong to federations with names like Teutonia and Danubia. Their members wear the same colorful caps, pill-box hats and sashes that Sigmund Romberg made famous in his romantic operetta "The Student Prince."

In addition to providing opportunities for beer drinking and dueling, the fraternities offer comradeship and sometimes

inexpensive accommodations.

Although they have not shaken off their nationalistic image, fraternities today have members who are conscientious objectors and students of theology. The male members of a fraternity in Bonn have set a precedent by accepting two female students as nondueling members.

Candidate members are known as foxes and usually serve two semesters on probation. How often members must duel varies among the fraternities.

Many Germans consider the duel, or Mensur, a barbaric act, but for the fight-

ing fraternities it is a ritualized test of courage.

The duelists are armed with razor-sharp sabers and fight at a specified distance. Their sword arms are heavily padded and they wear leather masks little changed from those developed by fraternities in the 19th century. A thick scarf protects the neck.

Flinching Is Frowned On

Each duelist has a masked and padded second to safeguard him from any violation of the rules — if necessary, by step-

ping in front of him. A doctor and an umpire complete the team.

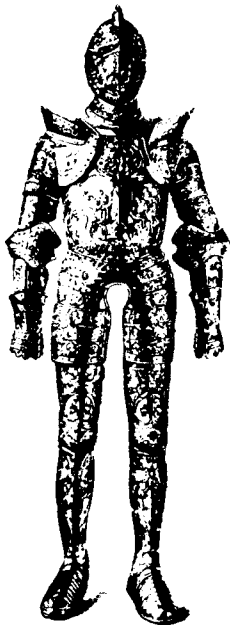
In the usual duel, the duelists make diagonal cuts at each other in a pre-

scribed manner at face height. The duelist receiving the blows can parry the with his saber or padded arm, but flinching is regarded as cowardice.

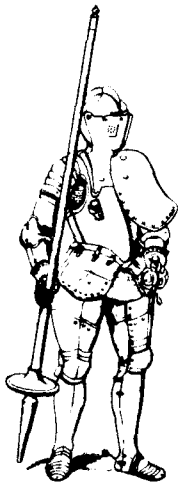
Fraternity members insist that the object is not to wound the other duelist. Some exchange silver medallions of friendship on ribbons of their fraternal colors to emphasize the friendly nature of the duel.

The ritual exercises an undoubted fascination. Pieter Bauer, 27 years old, a student at Tübingen University said, "It's impossible to describe what it means to take part in a Mensur. I get wonderful feeling of fellowship and of belonging."

Complete Suits of Armor continued



Armor worn by Henry II of England.
L'Art Pour Tous



Tournament armor,
dated 1586. *Ancient Armor*



Fantastical suit of armor designed by Van Mabuse, 16th century. *L'Art Pour Tous*

DUELS IN BRITAIN

Continued

(The Duke of Hamilton and Lord Mohun) agreed to meet in Hyde Park with their seconds, Colonel Hamilton of the Foot Guards for the Duke, and a certain Maccartney for Lord Mohun. Describing the encounter the same day in a letter to Mrs. Dingley, Swift wrote:

"Before this comes to your hands, you will have heard of the most terrible accident that hath almost ever happened. This morning, at eight my man brought me word that Duke Hamilton had fought with Lord Mohun, and had killed him, and was brought home wounded. I immediately sent him to the Duke's house to know if it was so, but the porter could hardly answer his inquiries, and a great rabble was about the house. In short, they fought at seven this morning. The Mohun was killed on the spot, but while the Duke was over him, Mohun shortened his sword, and stabbed him in the shoulder to the heart. The Duke was helped towards the lake-house, by the ring, in Hyde Park (where they fought), and died on the grass, before he could reach his house, and was brought home in his coach by eight, which the poor Duchess was asleep. Maccartney and one Hamilton were the seconds, who fought likewise, and both are fled. I am told that a footman of Lord Mohun's stabbed Duke Hamilton, and some say Maccartney did too. Mohun gave the affront, and yet sent the challenge. I am infinitely concerned for the poor Duke, who was a frank, honest, and good natured man. They carried the poor Duchess to a lodging in the neighbourhood where I have been with her two hours, and am just come away. I never saw so melancholy a scene, for indeed all reasons for real grief belong to her; nor is it possible for anyone to be a greater loser in all regards--she has moved my very soul. The lodging was inconvenient, and they would have moved her to another, but I would not suffer it, because it had no room backwards, and she must have been tortured with the noise of the Grub Street screamers dinging her husband's murder in her ears."

Judging by the number of wounds that each of the two duellists received, this was one of the most savage sword fights ever recorded. The Duke of Hamilton had a wound about seven inches long in the right leg, another in the right arm, a third in the upper part of the right breast, running down into the body, and a fourth on the outside of the left leg; while Lord Mohun had a large wound in the groin, another in the right side through the body and up to the hilt of the sword, and a third in one arm.

As for the seconds, Colonel Hamilton was found guilty of manslaughter but "prayed for the benefit of the statute". Maccartney fled to Holland, but was tried for murder in the Court of King's Bench in 1716 and likewise found guilty of manslaughter. The only amusing incident in the

whole grim story occurred while he was still at liberty. A reward had been offered for his capture, and a gentleman who was attacked by highwaymen one night hit upon the idea of posing as the wanted Macartney. Tempted by the reward, the robbers took him before a justice of the peace, and were dumbfounded when their victim gave them in charge for attempted highway robbery.

As a consequence of the terrible Mohun-Hamilton fight, a bill was introduced into the House of Commons for the suppression of duelling, but after two readings it was lost. However, a few years later a more effective curb than any Act of Parliament was put on the practice by the death sentence passed on Major Oneby in 1726 for the murder of Mr. Gower. The two men in question had been gambling in a tavern with three other people, and had exchanged first words and then blows, Oneby throwing a bottle at Gower and the latter retaliating with a candle stick. They had then gone to fetch their swords, but had been prevented by the others from fighting, and had sat down again for an hour. At the end of that time, Gower had offered his hand to Oneby, but the latter had spurned it, saying: "No, damn you, I will have your blood." A little later, when the company had been dispersing, Oneby had called to Gower: "Young man, come back, I have something to say to you." And when the others had eventually been readmitted after hearing the sound of clashing swords, they had found the young man mortally wounded.

The judges were unanimous in finding Oneby guilty of murder, arguing that he had acted with premeditation and not out of sudden passion. The main point on which the judgment turned was the evidence of "express malice" in the remark "I will have your blood" and the contemptuous appellation of "young man"; and the Court held that the full hour during which the two men had sat together after their quarrel had given the accused "reasonable time for cooling." Oneby was accordingly sentenced to death, but cheated the executioner and public curiosity by committing suicide.

"POINTS OF INTEREST"

We wish to welcome two new members to the Society of American Fight Directors. We hope that they will be viable, contributing members to our growing organization. They are as follows:

| | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| JEFFREY DILL (Actor/Combatant) | 974 Carlyle Way, No. 606 Mobile, Alabama 36609 |
| RICHARD JOHN YOST (Student) | 2808 W. Claremont Phoenix, Arizona 85017 |

* * *

There are a number of address changes the Society wishes to acknowledge:

George Bellah
5310 Hyada Blvd. N.E.
Tacoma, Washington 98422

Michael Sokoloff
1417 East College Street
Iowa City, Iowa 52240

Byron Jennings
c/o P.C.P.A.
Theatre Arts Dept.
800 S. College Drive
Santa Maria, California 93454

John R. Tobinski
2421 E. Washington St., #14-142
Bloomington, Illinois 61701

Chris Villa
1736 Santa Ana Canyon Road
Orange, California 92665

David Leong
University of Maryland
c/o Comm. Arts & Theatre
College Park, Maryland 20742

(The above addresses are all new addresses. Please take note.)

* * *

Richard Gradkowski recently wrote the Society and informed us that CASTELLO FENCING CO. is out of business. It is a pity that the old saying "Like father-like son" didn't apply here. Even though the Society didn't receive monies owed it by Castellors', at least we can lay the matter to rest.

* * *

ROBIN HOOD produced at Riverside Church was reviewed favorably in "New York Reviews". Allen Suddeth received special notice for his fine choreography. It is nice to see our members' names in print (especially when it is favorable).

* * *

The people who put together the Society's magazine wish to thank those members who have contributed to this issue. This is another fine issue to add to your fight library. It should be noted that we are lacking

articles for the next issue to be produced in October. We strongly urge those who have yet to offer an article to the Society to do so. We also hope that those "regulars" will continue to support the Society through its magazine with articles of interest.

* * *

There are some fight films out if you are not already aware of them. Two of them I wish to critique are Zorro, the Gay Blade and Excalibur.

Again, Victor Paul fell flat. He is the stuntman/choreographer who arranged the fights in that epic of yesteryear Swashbuckler. Do you remember that one? Well, if you don't, no matter, you didn't miss a thing. I didn't think it possible to choreograph another just as horrendous, but by golly Paul did it again. Zorro the Gay Blade was about as lackluster in swordplay as the Chicago Cubs are at baseball. Again, imagination was non-existent. It was so pathetically obvious that stuntmen were doing the tough stuff (if you opt to call it "tough"). You would get close-ups of George Hamilton and Ron Liebman (Capitano) working a segment and then they would "pan" back and the "new combatants" would have physical looks and style that weren't even close. You would think that they would at least make an effort to match physical types, and in particular the very way in which the different actors/stuntmen moved, but director Peter Medak opted to do the usual sleezy Hollywood number.

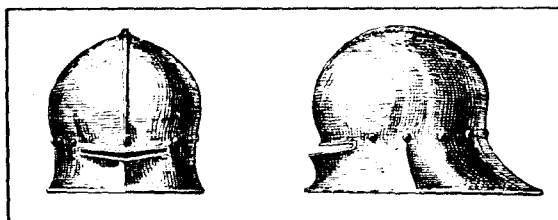
Again, Victor Paul showed that he only has a vague knowledge of Sabre (and swordplay). Everything looked like it should be on a fencing strip with the usual amount of mollinello and cut to the flank. There's nothing wrong with the mollinello, but you don't have to make it the basis for 90% of your choreography! Silly me, I thought perhaps Paul would have learned something since that atrocious, appalling Swashbuckler, but no such luck. Anyway, the film over all was adequate. There are some funny moments that work rather nicely and on the other hand, some so-called funny moments that fall as flat as the swordplay.

Excalibur also laced sorely but this was more the fault of the director John Boorman. The over-all effects were pretty tacky. I could go on at great length about them but I suggest that you see them for yourself. Do take note of the "spray-can" blood, the tinfoil castle, the rubber lizards, celastic caves and steel bras. Especially note the make-up expertise--you will be quite amazed I am sure.

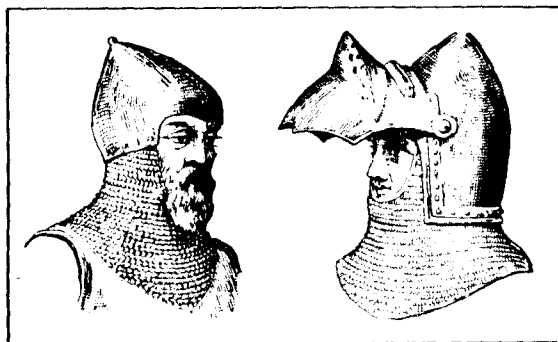
As for the fights, one gets the feeling that Bill Hobbs didn't get a great deal of time to work on the fights. We all know Hobb's work and this was not representative. I am sure some of the choices had to be the director's. Continuity and editing throughout was a problem. One example being the moment when Arthur is run through at the end of the picture. The spear

of course goes completely through his armour (by about four feet) and the very next shot, the spear is out of him with no explanation. These inconsistencies were throughout. The best fight was the one between Arthur and Lancelot. It was apparent at this moment that Hobbs was allowed to take control. Even at that, I have seen better Hobbs work. Why Boorman didn't keep better quality control is beyond me. I was really looking forward to this one, but what I got was something approaching Disney or Monty Python. At least with Python, it is tongue in cheek. This film, I assume, was supposed to be somewhat serious in nature while still maintaining the fantasy aspect. In closing, I thought the armour was one of the best things in the film. It was very effective. I only wish the other aspects of the film could have been likewise.

D. L. Boushey



Sallet, 15th century. *Century Dictionary*



French basinet, 14th century. *Century Magazine*

SOCIETY NEWS

J.R. BEARDSLEY (Affiliate) choreographed a two-minute scene "hand to hand and "single dagger" for a piece out of Othello called Shakespeare's Woman that should be aired on the B.B.C. sometime next year. He is also finishing a half hour comic sketch called Senseless Bickering to be aired on Channel 20 in San Francisco. His most recent work was in Aspen, Colorado, where he conducted an extended workshop in combat under the auspices of the San Francisco Opera.

ERIC BOOTH (Affiliate) continues his tour of St. MARKS GOSPEL throughout the country. He just finished playing at Lincoln Center. He has participated in a number of interviews including National Public Radio where he plugged the Society of American Fight Directors.

DAVID L. BOUSHEY recently choreographed the fights for Julius Ceasar at the Illinois Shakespeare Festival as well as Henry IV and Hamlet for the Utah Shakespeare Festival. He just returned from the successful national fight workshop where he was one of the instructors. He will soon be going to Louisville to choreograph The Three Musketeers for Actors Theatre Louisville. He will be heading up the movement area for Cornish Institute for the Arts in Seattle this Fall.

ERIK FREDRICKSEN recently finished the national fight workshop which he hosted. He will be heading up the movement area for the M.F.A. division at the University of Michigan this fall as well as acting principal roles in the resident professional company correlated with the university.

STEVEN EDWARDS (Actor/Combatant) is touring as an actor/dancer in the Broadway production of The Littlest Old Whorehouse in Texas.

ROBERT HALL (Affiliate) recently did choreography for The Misanthrope. He played the King in a production called The House of Delaval in Plainville, Ct. He will also be conducting an acting/fencing class as well as directing Antigone and a musical at the Chapel Hill Chouncy Hall School outside of Boston, Massachusetts.

HOLLIS HUSTON (Affiliate) performed the role of Virgil in Bus Stop for Delaware Theatre Company and conducted a combat class there. Prior to that, he performed and taught at Elmira College, Denison University, and Southwestern College in Kansas. He just finished a tour of New York State, Illinois, Colorado and Kansas. This September the MUM Company moves to St. Louis where he will be Artist-in-Residence for Washington University.

JENNIFER MARTIN (Affiliate) just fought a marvelous battle in which she triumphed! She gave birth to her second son. Congratulations, Jennifer!

JOSEPH MARTINEZ recently took part in the Society's national workshop where he was one of the instructors. He will be heading up the acting program at Western Illinois University this fall. His book Combat Mime is due out at any time now.

PETER MOORE (Affiliate) recently performed in A Moon for the Misbegotten and Othello where he arranged the fights. He is conducting combat classes at Trinity University. Also, he is teaching beginning foil at the West Side Y.M.C.A.

PETER PHILIPPS (Affiliate) has been acting on the "soaps". He is now in Bayreuth on a Wagner pilgrimage.

GARY SLOAN (Affiliate) recently played Tybalt and choreographed the fights in Romeo and Juliet for the Dallas Shakespeare Festival. He is now back in New York.

JEROME SMITH (Affiliate) is currently performing combats at the New England Renaissance Festival and is choreographing the combats in Twelfth Night for the Publik Theatre and in Henry IV, Part one, for the Open Door Theatre. Both are outdoor productions in Boston. He is also teaching stage combat at the Boston Shakespear Summer School and will begin work on Hamlet for the Boston Shakespeare Co. in August.

ALLEN SUDDETH is teaching at his studio in New York where he has built up quite a clientele. He is considering a collaboration on a new Night at the Fights to be produced in New York.

CHRIS VILLA (Affiliate) recently assisted in the national workshop in Michigan. He will be choreographing Hamlet this fall in Arcata, California. He will also resume his studies at Humboldt State as well as teaching combat for that institution.

PATRICK CRINAN (Honorary) displayed his genuine concern and professional expertise as an instructor at the national workshop in Michigan. He is now back at Stratford, Ontario, as Fight Master for that festival.

MARK HANEY

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