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The Society of American Fight Directors

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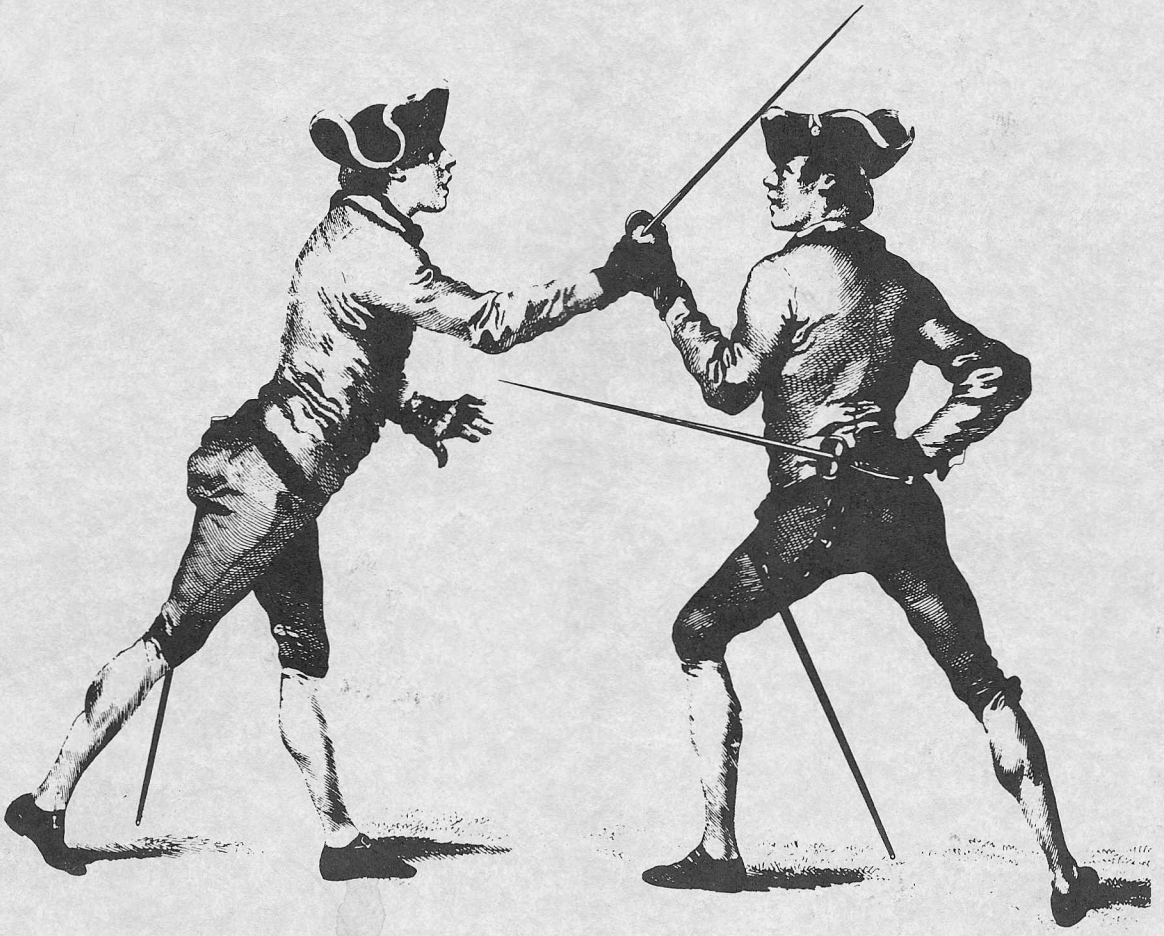

the society of american fight directors

THE FIGHT MASTER

The Magazine of the Society of American Fight Directors.

NO. 19 OCTOBER 1982

Editor - Ann C. Long Lay-out - David L. Boushey

Typed and Duplicated by Ann C. Long

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SOCIETY OF AMERICAN FIGHT DIRECTORS

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

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President	Erik Fredricksen University of Michigan c/o Theatre Arts Dept. Ann Arbor MI 48109
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Secretary-Treasurer	David L. Boushey 4720 38th N.E. Seattle WA 98105

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THE FIGHT MASTER

As previously mentioned in the July issue of "The Fight Master", the Society's magazine will be transferred to the state of Illinois under the jurisdiction of Full Member Joseph Martinez. The official address for members of the Society to send their articles or request information regarding the magazine will be:

University of Illinois
Krannert Center for the Performing
Arts, Division of Theatre
c/o Mr. Joseph Martinez
Urbana IL 61801

ALL ARTICLES FOR THE MAGAZINE SHOULD NOW BE SENT TO JOE. THE JANUARY ISSUE WILL BE PRODUCED IN ILLINOIS.

Having produced "The Fight Master" for the past five years, I have gone through some difficult times. At times I wasn't sure whether the magazine would have substantial material to make it worth while. These times were primarily in the beginning. I found myself writing half the magazine in order to make a newsworthy issue. In recent months, there has been an upswing in the number of articles forwarded to the Society. The number of articles has grown as the membership has grown. It is absolutely vital that the membership continue to provide information for the Society's magazine. There are still many members who to this day have not contributed a single article to the magazine, and unfortunately, some of these members have full status.

It cannot be expected that the same individuals continue to provide the bulk of the articles for the magazine. It cannot be expected that the same members do 95% of the work of the Society. The membership must take some of the responsibility off of the shoulders of those who guide the Society. Joe Martinez is going to need your help to make the magazine an ever more important source of information for the membership. He cannot do it all just as I couldn't do it all. This is becoming a large organization. We have to spread the work around.

I will continue to collect annual dues, seek advertising revenue, keep the Society's roster (including all changes of address), and provide the Society T-shirts. Membership inquiries, membership status, certifications and business letters should go to the president, Erik Fredricksen. Anything regarding the magazine, of course, goes to Joe.

Sometimes, being an officer in an organization of this type can be a thankless job. Many of the members do not realize how many hours are donated by the officers and many full members to this Society. What will

help immensely will be those members to the Society offering more information to the Society through its magazine as well as promoting the Society in their own regions through various A.T.A. conferences and other such organizations.

This article is not meant to impugn anyone. The Society is growing. More people have to take an active part. You cannot sit by and expect the benefits from the Society while a select few continue to do the bulk of the work in the organization. If you are wondering what you can do, contact the president. He will give you suggestions regarding what you can do to further this Society as a viable part of the theatre/cinema community.

In closing, I wish to thank Ann Long for her fine work in editing and typing "The Fight Master" over the past three years. She has set a strong precedent for those who are to follow her in making the magazine an attractive, coherent, informative source of information.

David Boushey

From Anthony Soper

Dear Erik:

I have to agree strongly with A. Jaspe that we should seek to unionize ourselves. Our credibility, prestige, and bargaining power cannot be but increased treble-fold. We would be doing ourselves and that rare breed, the stage actor, the same favor that was done to the early film actor when the movie stuntmen unionized. Aside from protecting our own job security and assuring quality fight direction, we could prevent a Vic Morrow style tragedy from afflicting some hapless stage actor because of shady or irresponsible decision making by a theatre's director, Artistic director, producer, or what-have-you. Let's face it, an incompetent or irresponsible member of our association would be a danger to the life and limb of all who worked with him.

At the least, I think we've all got to start thinking like a union.

For example, I'm not aware of any of my colleagues who unfailingly use a well-drawn, iron-clad contract! If any do, I think we'd be well advised to get together and turn out at least a basic proto-type for use by all of us. I think it's professional suicide to conduct business as a "professional" choreographer and not have a legal contract.

I think that the strongest way to achieve all three of our Society's stated purposes (especially "To promote the art of fight choreography in such a manner that the 'fight director' will be an integral part of the theatre and cinema") is to bring the legal system (such as its masquerades) into play, on our side.

What would we stand to lose?

The contract I first used I've sent along for you to look at. It has much wrong with it, but it was born of necessity. I used it for a high-school production of the Three Musketeers I did. Lucky for me, I though ahead. The production was in such a shambles, the people responsible so ireesponsible, that I was hard pressed to allow any weapons play on the stage at all! I kept all the swordplay to an almost non-existent minimum and tried to make use of the kid's natural rambunctiousness and awkwardness by distracting the audience with lots of "sound and fury", but almost no fighting.

At any rate, at one point one of the boys quit the show. This was a rather common occurrance (7 times during my involvement alone!) which made rescheduling and reteaching the choreography more time consuming than profitable rehearsal. Unfortunately, his fight-scene partner took it in his head that he would teach "the new guy" his fight, which was

admittedly simple. I had repeatedly stressed to all involved that there would be no rehearsing of violence allowed unless under my personal supervision (for I could not trust them out of my sight). But apparently our hero was motivated out of some misguided sense that "the show must go on". Upshot--a broken nose for the new guy's pains. Thank God, they brought him in to me, I applied first aid, called his parents, the hospital, and the principal.

The good that came of all this was that because I had exercised my professional rights and protected my responsibilities with the law, that the principal put his foot down with these kids. No more monkeying around, or no more show. But if I hand't had the contract to back me up, I'd have been powerless.

Tartar Archers. *Leslie's*

As TV presses for more spectacular stunts, the casualties are mounting and performers are rebelling

By Ellen Torgerson Shaw

Jessica Walter—Trapper John's ex-wife in *Trapper John, M.D.*—last year co-starred in the flick "Going Ape!" The movie was mostly about orangutan antics, but it also included an obligatory car chase—with Walter at the wheel of a Mercedes sports car. Driving like crazy. Driving the way viewers love to see it. Dangerous high speeds. Dangerous swerves. Missing other cars by inches. Except, of course, that a stuntwoman was going to double for Walter while the actress sat comfortably in her chair and drank coffee. Safely.

But the stuntwoman didn't show up. So the director, ever conscious that every hour spent waiting costs as much as a day in the hospital, ordered Walter into the car.

"Get in the car and drive like hell," he said.

Walter climbed into the car and drove a timid and decorous 50 miles an hour.

"I could hear the director shouting through the bullhorn, 'Faster, faster'," she recalls. "Actors don't like to say no to dangerous stunts because it makes them look like bad sports . . . as though they're scared. Most actors are afraid to say no."

But Jessica Walter said no.

Walter, a vice president of the Screen Actors Guild, like other actors is doing more than saying no these days. The deaths of Vic Morrow and two small children, killed by a helicopter's tail-rotor blade while on location for the film "Twilight Zone" in late July, have galvanized the Hollywood community into searching for ways to make a television or movie set a less hazardous place to be, and a special actors' committee has been formed to study new safety guidelines.

"There's often no one to tell you if it's safe or not; no real last stop for the actor to say yes or no. There have to be stricter standards," says Walter.

Suddenly, Hollywood actors—and stuntpeople—are able to talk about something that has long been as much a dirty little trade secret as how Hollywood studio accountants juggle their books. In the past few years more than 20 crew members have been injured or killed on the set and on location, actors have been hurt and stuntpeople have lost their lives. Many people in Hollywood say production companies often do not take measures necessary to protect the lives and limbs of the people they employ to act out ever-more spectacular scenes.

"It costs about $10 to have a tank of oxygen on a set," Walter says, "yet most companies won't spring for it. The values are misplaced."

Robert Marta, cochairman of the ad hoc safety committee of Camera Union Local 659, has said in a New York Times interview, "Nobody paid any attention until a well-known actor and a couple of kids were killed. The helicopter accident would have been hushed up if it hadn't been for the kids. There might not even have been an investigation. What does that make *us*—dog meat?"

Sometimes, yes. Often it is a me- →

continued

chanical failure. The stunt coordinator may not always check the terrain thoroughly. Explosives are never totally safe. Thus death, disaster and near-catastrophe are endemic to the television and moviemaking world. Actor Peter Barton was severely burned last November when he fell on a magnesium flare while shooting a scene for the new series *The Powers of Matthew Star*. Louis Gossett Jr. suffered burns on the back of his head and both hands in the same accident. Last August, a stuntman on *The Dukes of Hazzard*, sailing through the air in a car, hurt his back on impact and was hospitalized. In 1980, cameraman Rodney Mitchell was crushed to death under a camera car in *Dukes*. A dozen other people were injured in the same accident; one of them emerged brain damaged, his face paralyzed. David Cadiente, a stuntman who was working as fire-safety coordinator for *Fantasy Island*, burned his arm putting out flames on a supposedly fire-retardant suit worn by a stuntwoman, in July. In 1980, Robert Van der Kar, a *Magnum, P.I.* cameraman, on location for the series in Hawaii, was catapulted through a helicopter windshield into the vehicle's main blades while it was hovering over the ocean; his body was never recovered.

Although there were no major accidents on *The Thorn Birds*, stunt coordinator Kim Kahana, a veteran Hollywood stuntman, left the show because, he says, he thought the actors and actresses were being exposed to unnecessary peril.

"There was a big fire scene in which a whole community is supposed to burn down," Kahana says. "It was a dangerous stunt and a dangerous scene. The director wanted his stars—Jean Simmons, Allyn Ann McLerie, Rachel Ward and Stephanie Faracy—to be directly involved even though they didn't have to use the stars. I had hired 19 stuntpeople to double for the stars. When you have a scene where there's fire, smoke and wind, you can't tell if it's a double; it doesn't matter."

In one scene, Simmons, McLerie and Ward were supposed to beat out flames with burlap bags. According to Kahana, who was there with two other stuntpeople (and fire extinguishers), "The fire got out of control." Both McLerie and Simmons were terribly frightened, Kahana says.

Kahana left the show after completing the fire scene. "I can't work under those conditions. But 10 other guys will take the job and keep their mouths shut." And because he has been outspoken, "I probably won't ever work again at Warner Brothers." (Warner is coproducer of *The Thorn Birds*.)

Warner is also the studio under whose auspices "Twilight Zone" was being shot and which produces *The Dukes of Hazzard* as well.

Stan Margulies, producer of *The Thorn Birds*, angrily denies Kahana's allegations—and says Kahana never complained to him about the safety of the fire scene.

"We did everything that we could think of to run a safe operation," Margulies says, "and that's what we did. No one was injured."

Margulies says the fire that Kahana ultimately complained about "never got out of control." Indeed, Margulies insists, he personally eliminated "one part of the fire sequence which to me had the possibility of the flames getting out of hand." Margulies says he even insisted on a "walk-through" the Saturday before the fire sequence was to be shot, to assure "a safe-and-sane sequence." A local fire-department official was present to oversee that walk-through, Margulies says.

Stars who felt "uncomfortable" with the fire scene were "absolutely free to leave," Margulies says. Two of them did just that—McLerie after two takes, Faracy after one—although Margulies concedes that he didn't really want to use doubles.

"The point of getting an audience interested in the show is to make them feel, if that's part of the story, that the hero or heroine is in jeopardy," he says, "and you can do that only by being close enough to the person to see that it *is* really the star." →

continued

Kahana says the actresses' willingness to allow themselves to be encircled by a fire they were afraid of is not atypical. Performers haven't been able to say no easily to a director's or a producer's commands, no matter how great their danger—or their fear. Vic Morrow's death may have changed that attitude.

Kim Fellner, information director for the Screen Actors Guild, says, "The real issue is not to assess blame but to give the performer the fortitude to say no. A performer will now be able to discuss if he or she will perform a stunt that has in it inherent safety problems. Performers have felt vulnerable in saying no. We are re-educating our membership to say no and to have the right to ask questions. There has been a lot of pressure to perform."

Fellner is confident that the matter of safety on the set or on location will not be gradually forgotten, ignored or dismissed as it has been in past years (studios hate negative publicity and worry about insurance claims and extravagantly high premiums). SAG is pursuing protection for its members by insisting on safety measures in upcoming contract negotiations. "After all, the cost is in *our* lives; it's our members that suffer. They're the dead people."

Why are accidents proliferating in Hollywood?

"An increasing push to do exotic kinds of stunts," Fellner says. Stunts, like special effects, excite viewers and reviewers alike. They get big box office and big Nielsen ratings; Emmys and Oscars, too. So directors try to top each other—and themselves.

Years ago, actors and stuntpeople fell off horses and broke their legs or arms, on occasion their necks. A cracked tibia or fibula is not—despite the pain and annoyance—exactly the same thing as losing one's life. And today's stunts—more breathtaking, more dangerous—can be life-threatening. Especially since some directors don't seem to care that some people who do stunts are not professional stuntpeople.

"So many people are not qualified; that's the scary part," Jessica Walter says. "For expediency's sake, they're upped from stand-in to stuntman."

And now, more than ever, actors say, some directors are asking their stars, rather than doubles, to dare the devil. Not all stars are reluctant to do so, of course. Some—young and brave, macho and arrogant in their assumption of their invincibility—think they can be stuntmen as well as actors.

Larry Manetti, Rick in *Magnum, P.I.*, is a brash, courageous man from Chicago's mean streets. "I was shooting an episode in which I was supposed to jump in front of the girl and take the bullet meant for her," he says. "I landed on a sewer pipe, hurt my back and cracked several ribs." Another time, Manetti, hooked to a cable, stood with one foot on the skid of a helicopter high in the sky and fired a machine gun. All went well. "I was cocky city," he says.

No more. Helicopter deaths on his set and others have given him new resolve: "Ain't no way they'll get me off the ground," he says.

Even on the safest-seeming set, unpredictable menace abounds and the unexpected sometimes happens. In 1981, James Garner, shooting the first segment of *Bret Maverick*, was bucked from a mechanical bull. He broke nine ribs and spent eight weeks recuperating. Yet Garner is an old stunt hand who used to drive racing cars to relax.

Of course, making TV series and movies has never been without risk. It's not like working in a bank, a doctor's office, a florist shop or a minimarket. In 1919, during the filming of "Haunted Spooks," Harold Lloyd, the legendary film star, lost two fingers on one hand when a trick prop bomb exploded. He wore a flesh-colored glove over a prosthesis the rest of his days. Now the actors' and stuntpeople's air of cheerful compliance has disappeared. "No one should have to lose his life," Jessica Walter says. Or fingers, either. (END)

THE ACTION MEN

From: The Fight Director
Society of British Fight Directors

E.M.I. Studios, Eltree, London, England, was the site where the current firm of the "Star Wars" series "Revenge of the Jodi" was being filmed. The producers had pulled together the combined expertise of Peter Diamond, actor and action co-ordinator with 30 years experience in films of all types. Bob Anderson, ex-British Olympic Fencing Coach, also with 30 years experience in the film industry, and Colin Skeaping, a stuntman with 15 years experience.

Between the three of these action men, the experiences of acting, coaching and performing are combined to produce the action sequences for the film phenomenon called "Star Wars". The whole is controlled by the imagination and creative genius of the Executive Producer, George Lucas.

Peter Diamond believes he must make the star performers (the actors) look expert when quite often they are not.

Bob Anderson says "quite often an excellent actor, although just right for a particular part, does not have the ability to participate in an action sequence at the level demanded by the script. The action co-ordinator has therefore two priorities to ensure that the action achieves the high standard required by the Director. The first is to coach the actor so that he/she is competent for the scenes when he/she cannot be 'doubled'. The second is to ensure that a suitable 'double' is available to do the 'long shots' and particularly difficult or dangerous stunts".

Colin Skeaping, training in his dressing room during a lull in filming says, "every stuntman owes it to himself and those with whom he works, especially if they are actors, to be as fit and competent as possible. You never know when one is going to be called upon to perform an act of supreme human endeavour. My personal safety depends largely upon my fitness and ability to perform well".

Diamond takes a less physical standpoint when discussing arranging action sequences--"This type of work involving coaching of actors for action sequences is varied and interesting. Because all sequences are mostly pre-determined and well rehearsed, the tedious, drawn-out learning of basic techniques which sports performers must go through in their early, cognitive stage, can be cut short, allowing more time for practicing and perfecting the final act. It is like the Olympic skater starting on his final routine on the first day of practice--he would have an expert choreographer to work out the routine, an expert musician to write and conduct the music and an expert skater to do the more difficult and dangerous

jumps. He would also know that at the end of it all, when it was 'in the can', he would win the gold medal." "This leaves the co-ordinator", Peter concluded, "with an imaginative and artistic performance which will be pure magic on the screen." He uses the term advisedly as much of the action in Star Wars involves the use of magical quantities.

Bob Anderson: "In the world of film make believe the final outcome of any action sequence - like the laser sword fight between Luke Skywalker and Darth Vader in the Star Wars films - is known from the very beginning. The winner, therefore, if there is to be one, is usually the hero and the action is a 'fait accompli'. The action co-ordinator quite often starts at this point and works his way backward, changing the 'mood' of the action to suit the script or the Director's interpretation.

All three stunt performers believe that there are certain qualities action co-ordinators must have before they can succeed in this industry. Knowledge of the skills of acting, use of sets and props, safety factors especially when working with artists, practical ability in the basic skills of falling, landing, fighting (martial arts), riding, driving, aquatics, all are essential background abilities to do the job competently.

Bob Anderson sums it up; "This knowledge and ability is as essential to the action co-ordinator as a physical education degree is to the sports coach". The action co-ordinator will enquire into the artistic world of camera angles, use of different lenses, special effects and the psychology of actors' performances to enhance his abilities". "All of this is to no avail", warns Colin Skeaping, "if the action co-ordinator is unable to communicate". "This is what we all should have in common", Skeaping continues, "the coach to his or her performer, the co-ordinator to the stuntman, the director to the actor, the actor to the audience. Communication must be at the top of any list where knowledge and ability, performing and achieving are the objectives". Mark Hamill, star of the Star Wars films, has had ample opportunity to be coached by directors and stunt co-ordinators during his acting career. It is only fitting therefore, that the last word on coaching should be made by the recipient of coaching philosophy.

"'Empire Strikes Back' and 'Revenge of the Jedi' were unique experiences in that the physical requirements for me were extensive enough to warrant a training programme that began four months prior to filming. I took daily classes in the martial arts and weight training to prepare myself for what proved to be the most physically demanding role of my career. When it comes time to choreograph the fight sequence, I started from scratch with Peter Diamond, incorporating what I had learned previously but, of course, remembering that this time it was for the camera. In a film of this kind", Mark Hamill continues, "your stunt co-ordinator

second only in importance to the director. He is aware of one's capabilities and limitations and should have the actor's safety as his main priority. More important, he knows what looks "good in camera". I found myself putting my complete trust in the stunt co-ordinator, a relationship I had only previously had with my directors."

"I've enjoyed a most dynamic and exhilarating professional relationship with the Star Wars stunt department of Diamond, Anderson and Skeaping. I have enjoyed meeting the challenge and am most grateful for the all-around coaching received from them as an action actor. I must have been a good and attentive pupil", Mark concluded,"as I have been made an honorary member of the British Stunt Register under Equity. For this honour I ma most grateful."

"Okay, now shift your weight onto the left leg during the follow-through."

HAMLET...GOING LONG...THE PASS... HE SCORES!

By Ron Powers

Early 1984. After fierce bidding by all three networks, NBC Sports proudly announces the most significant breakthrough in sports packaging concepts since Celebrity Challenge of the Sexes. Exclusive rights--to the Shakespeare Tragedies! Bryant Gumbel himself is on hand to anchor the historic first telecast. Bryant?

Bryant Gumbel (shouting): from Elsinore in historic Denmark! Welcome to Week One of NBC Sports Tragedy! (softer) We have full slate of top dramaturgy in store for you today. We'll be switching you to Scotland for Macbeth. We'll be shuttling between Venice and Cyprus for Othello. And, if time permits, we'll go to pre-Christian England for highlights from King Lear. But the big one, the classic, right here. A grudge match between the untested teen idol, Hamlet and the veteran, the man everybody here simply calls "the King." Claudius. A crafty monarch. Some say a dirty monarch. Does all that bother the kid? He talked to Al McQuire just a few moments ago.

(Hamlet appears in Chroma Key inset. His modish, long hair is secured by a Nike headband.)

HAMLET: Give me the cup. Let go. By Heaven, I'll have it.

GUMBEL: You heard him! He wants the cup! A lot of people say this kid's another Bjorn Borg. Look for plenty of swordfighting in this one. Now, before we get underway, let's quickly run down the main rules of tragedy--the story line. For that, a guy who knows all about tragedy, ha! ha! Pete Axthelm!

AXTHELM: It's not Hialeah, but it's still great to be here in Denmark. People who say there's something rotten here, they just don't know this country. As for our matchups today, look for three main elements in all of them. One, man of noble nature! Two, fatal flaw! Three, big consequences for the whole society! When you got all these, Bryant, you got tragedy! And I know we're going to see a lot of it out here this afternoon. But the key to victory as you said, Bryant, is the swordfighting.

GUMBEL: Thanks for that report, Pete. Right now at Elsinore, the dramatis personae are coming out on the field. While they do that, let's switch

you to Scotland and Dick Enberg, who's calling Macbeth--without a color man!

ENBERG: Bryant, this is very difficult without the analyst. But let's recap the action thus far. As you can see by the graphic, we had a scoreless act one. A few witches, a prophecy, but no real catharsis. Then, early in the second act this play: Macbeth went backdoor on Duncan, king of Scotland. A big assist from his wife. So the home team drew first blood. Now we're midway through act three. The bat hath flown his cloistered flight, and the shardborn beetle hath rung night's yawning peal. It looks bad for Banquo. But the big star so far--Lady Macbeth. She has really taken charge of this tragedy. Back to you Bryant.

GUMBEL: Super job, Dick Enberg. Here at Elsinore, we're underway. So far it's gone pretty much the way Pete Axthelm said it would. Hamlet holding back, feeling out Claudius, soliloquizing perhaps more than he had intended in his gameplan. But in Cyprus they've just had a major turnaround. Let's go there, to Bob Trumpy and Bob Costas.

COSTAS: Thank you, Bryant, and for those of you who have just joined us from Hamlet, welcome to Othello. An unbelieveable turn of events here in the closing moments. Othello has just taken out Desdemona. And we're going to show you that replay right now.

TRUMPY: Bob, it happened right here--fifth act, second scene. Watch the left-hand portion of your screen. We've isolated on Desdemona's chamber--and here comes Othello. Just bulls his way in. Just smothers her. No flags--just like that, we've got a brand new tragedy.

COSTAS: Bob, it looked to me for a moment like Desdemona simply thought he was coming to bed. She just didn't react in time.

TRUMPY: Bob, you mentioned flags. But I've got to think Othello was drawn into this move by Iago. Iago gave him some kind of fake with that handkerchief, and Othello was just over-eager. Othello's going to wish he had that scene before this tragedy's over. Bryant?

GUMBEL: This is just a sample of the nonstop action you're going to see here on NBC Sports Tragedy! Next week, we'll be in historic Rome for Julius Caesar. But, meanwhile, live action. You're looking at Elsinore from the blimp. And things have really opened up while you were away. First Hamlet opened up Polonius from behind the arras. It was a busted play. Let's look at it. There's the sword. Ouch! Later on, we got an injury report on Rosencrants and Guildenstern. Neither one is expected back on stage today. Right now as we watch, Hamlet is going one-on-one with Laertes. A terrific swordfight. But we have a stunning development in Scotland. Let's go to Dick Enberg.

ENBERG: Bryant, this is so difficult without the analyst. But what you're seeing right now on your screen tells the whole story of this tragedy today. Birnham Wood is coming--there, you can see it--Birnham Wood is coming to Dunsinane. It's been that kind of an afternoon for Macbeth. Whatever could go wrong has gone wrong. Not a happy tragedy for the Scotsman. You can't blame the guy for thinking that life's but a walking shadow. He just has to remember, like my sidekick Merlin Olsen is fond of saying, that there's always tomorrow. And tomorrow. And tomoroow. As for Macduff, what a superb tragedy he's had. He's had some kind of epiphanies, and he may be on his way to denouement. In fact, it looks like Macbeth and Macduff are squaring off for what could be the decisive swordfight...

GUMBEL: Dick, I'm afraid we have to leave you for just a moment. Back here at Elsinore, pandemonium has broken loose. We'll try to re-cap it for you. Ophelia was eliminated from this tragedy. Then, in rapid succession, Queen Gertrude, King Claudius, Laertes and, finally, Hamlet himself. Out of it. So all of the top-seeded characters in this tragedy have been eliminated. This is unbelieveable--it looks as though we're not going to have a winner here. Let's go to Cyprus and Bob Costas!

COSTAS: Bryant, the upsets continue. Desdemona's out of this one, as we reported earlier. Iago has knocked off his wife, Emilia. Then Othello put away himself. So it looks as though Iago will win this one by default--which would be an unpopular decision with the crowd, and probably the tragedywriters as well.

TRUMPY: Bob, I just want to say something about the way the tragedywriters have been getting on Iago's case all week. You know, I was a spear carrier for several years in this league, and I can really sympathise with a guy like Iago. He can't pick up a newspaper without reading what a villain he is. I wouldn't blame him if he punched out a couple of these so called...

GUMBEL: I'm sorry, Trump. We've got to break away. We're out of time. Late word from Scotland--Macduff outduels Macbeth in a thriller, paving the way for Malcolm to be crowned at Scone. We'll have highlights of that on the news tonight.

Just one closing thought. There's getting to be too much violence in tragedy. You have to blame the directors for letting it get out of hand. If it keeps on like this, it'll ruin the game. Stay tuned for the bloody highlights. So long everybody.

(from Inside Sports)

SOME METHODS OF WEAPONLESS STAGE COMBAT

Part VI By John Callahan

Karate (which translates as "empty hands") is a method of weaponless attack by use of the open hands, and is Sino-Japanese in origin. In the Asian countries, karate has a semi-religious connotation, and requires many hours of introspective contemplation. However, in the United States, karate is known mostly as a devastating means of attack by use of the hands and feet as weapons. Judo is composed primarily of throws and pressure holds, but karate consists mainly of slashes, jabs, and punches with the extended rigid fingers, the slightly curled fist, or the straight edge of the hand. And though geographically and historically quite different in origin, karate and savate share a great number of foot kicks in common.

Karate has gained increasing popularity in this country in the last decade (perhaps helped by the American occupation of Japan following World War II), and elements of it can be seen in many current movies and television shows. However, because of its comparative newness, karate should be utilized only in plays laid in modern settings. For example, some elements of karate might be effective and believable in Kenneth H. Brown's The Brig, but ludicrous and anachronistic in Christopher Marlowe's Tamburlaine. If you are interested in viewing an extended staged karate fight, one of the best to be found is in the 1962 John Frankenheimer directed movie, The Manchurian Candidate . The climactic fight sequence in the James Bond Goldfinger movie also contains a goodly number of karate techniques.

An audience will accept and beleive in a non-karate trained character in a play using some basic karate techniques, for the same reason they will accept judo tosses--because they are accustomed to seeing such techniques in many of the current films and television shows. And if the karate techniques employed are kept simple enough, the audience's "suspension of disbelief" will not be endangered.

Accompanying every karate movement is a loud, sudden, violent shout (made by the attacker) which serves three purposes: (1) this shout is supposed to startle and confuse the person being attacked; (2) it clears the attacher's lungs of any excessive air so that if he should be struck down, his wind is not knocked out of him; and (3) the shout increases the seeming strength of the blow. This karate shout is called a Kiai.

This authentic shout is very adaptable for Stage Violence purposes, as it covers the lack of any flesh-striking-flesh sounds. The struck actor can, of course, grunt and groan after being hit.

The most effective karate chops, theatrically speaking, are the

Adam's apple chop and the neck chop. The latter is colloquially known as a "rabbit punch."

The Adam's apple is a projection of the thyroid cartilage at the front of the male throat, and since women have no such projection, the "Adam's apple chop" is an ideal movement for a woman to perform on a man. The opponent's head and chin must be raised so that the Adam's apple is visible (a favorite method of mine to accomplish this tilting upwards is to use one hand to pull back the hair of the opponent), and then with the straight, flat edge opposite the thumb of either hand, palms facing up or down (whichever is easier), strike the Adam's apple hard. With enough force such a blow will smash cartilage and push tissue into the throat, causing some choking and loss of breath. If administered lightly, the opponent is momentarily stunned, and an easy target for any other blows. For Stage Violence, the attacker will touch his hand to his opponent's neck, placing his blow slightly below or above the Adam's apple, but definitely not on it, arresting or pulling his punch at the instant his hand touches the other actor's throat. The motion is accompanied by the Kiai or karate shout.

The neck chop is performed with the flat edge of either hand on the back of the opponent's neck just above the shoulders. This blow can also be administered with a closed fist. With great enough power, such a chop can dislocate spinal vertebrae, or at the least, can stun. This chop is favored by the author to follow a fist to the solar plexus--when the opponent bends over, the chop is delivered to the neck. For Stage Violence purposes, the attacker must touch his hand to the opponent's neck, pulling the punch. With the karate shout of the attacker, the visible touching of the hand to the back of the neck, and the reactions of the actor struck, the audience will witness a seemingly vicious neck chop. Incidentally, as I stated previously in Chapter I, it takes much more strength to successfully pull a punch than it takes to follow one through.

These two karate blows, the Adam's apple chop and the neck chop, are adaptable to all types of theatres, but most particularly proscenium-opening ones, as the chops are most visible when seen in profile by the audience.

A karate kick which may or may not be of use to a director, due to its look of karate professionalism, is the flying drop kick. It works like this:

> You are standing a little away from your opponent--
> he steps towards you, his arms outstretched (perhaps
> carrying a knife). You take a running leap of a few
> steps, hurling yourself bodily feet first at
> your adversary. One leg is extended straight, the

other leg is tucked under. When the extended leg hits your opponent, the bent leg will kick out with as much force and power as possible--it is the kick of this second leg which does any real damage. If your reflexes are fast enough, you can land safely on your feet by pushing yourself off of your opponent, otherwise you will fall on your side executing either a break-fall, roll, or simple stage violence-type fall. Your kick should be placed in your opponent's face or chest areas for the most damage.

As with the karate chops, the entire secret of simulating this kick lies in pulling the blow. Since the attacker cannot stop his body's forward motion in mid-air, the pulling of the punch is performed by the combined efforts of both men. The attacking actor will aim for the shoulder so that if the blow should accidentally be delivered with force, the chest or face will not be injured. The object of the attacker is merely to touch the shoulder, not to hit or kick it. For his part, the attacked actor will offer no resistance to the kick, and upon the first touch of his attacker's foot, will drop to the floor opposite the direction of the kick. With practice, the attacking actor will be able to gauge his kicks so well that his body will begin its downward ascent at the moment of the kick; i.e., if the distance of a flying drop kick is four feet from the spot where the attacker makes his leap to the point where his feet touch his adversary, his body would fall to the ground at four feet, even without the opponent's body to assist his halting.

The karate flying drop kick looks professional, but it is a truly spectacular Stage Violence stunt and works in any blocking situation. It is most effective when staged profile to the audience, but looks realistic from any angle. The karate shout, of course, accompanies the kick.

THE FIGHT DOCTOR

By Tony Soper

TAPING

From the top, let me say that the guidelines offered in this article should be taken for nothing more than just guidelines. All taping techniques must be adjusted to the individual.

A very clear distinction should be made between taping procedures used for first-aid purposes, and taping done to prevent re-injury of a combatant during rehearsal or performance. In a first-aid situation, never do anything more complicated than compression with an ACE-type elastic bandage (to hold down the swelling). You should never use the following techniques unless and until permission is given by the consulting physician for return to rehearsal or performance. Premature stress of the injury is risking chronic or permanent injury to the muscle or ligament, possible impairing the actor for life.

ANKLE INJURIES

The most common injury to the fighter is "turning the ankle", or spraining of the large ligament on the outside of the ankle.

"Stirrup" strapping gives good support and can usually be worn under any costume. The idea here is to let the tape take the function of the injured ligament, providing support against lateral movement of the ankle.

First, before taping, the ankle should be adequately warmed up. It should be "statically" stretched to the point of pain for at least two minutes. This stretching prevents the scar-forming collagen fibers from hardening into a glue-like substance that restricts the elasticity of the ligament and makes it prone to re-injury.

Therefore, care should be taken that the stretch is slow, steady, and controlled, no bouncing or jerking allowed. This stretching should be performed at least three times a day for a minimum of two to three minutes, and always prior to taping.

Before applying the tape, make sure any cuts or abrasions are disinfected. The entire area should be clean and dry, and if particularly hairy, shaved (sorry, guys).

To begin, place an anchoring strap around the leg, about six inches above the ankle bone. Mold all the tape to the leg as you go, as air-bubbles will cause blisters. Attach the tape firmly, but not so tight as to cut off circulation.

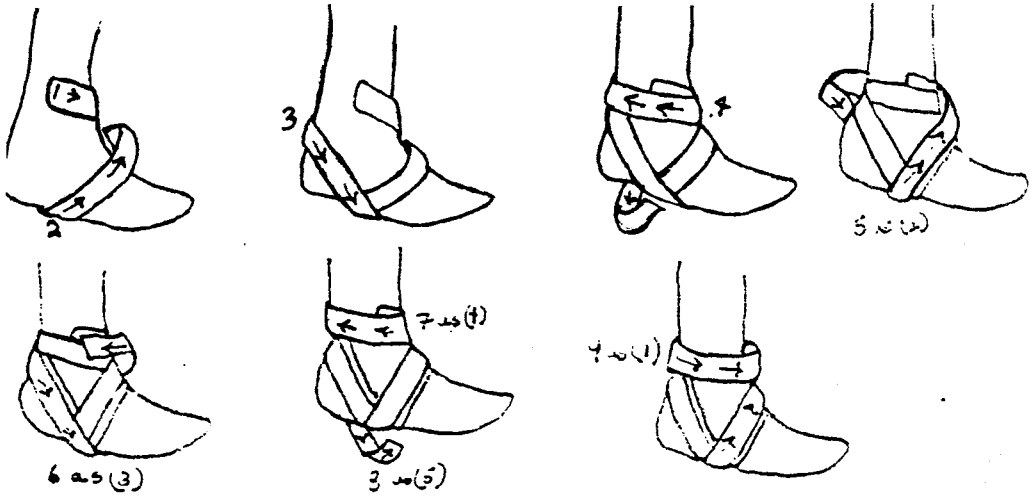
Take a second strip of tape and tack it lightly to the anchor strap on the inside of the leg, run it straight down the leg, under the foot and up again to the anchor strap. Pull gently but firmly straight up, then anchor the tape and smooth out the air bubbles. Repeat twice more, starting No. 3 slightly behing and No. 4 slightly in front of the initial strip. You'll end up with a "fan" shape (see diagram.)

When strapping in this "stirrup" style, try to put as much weight on the foot as possible, keeping it in the bent position for best results.

For maximum support, use one continuous strip of tape, and strap over the "stirrup" in the following manner:

Start on the outside of the ankle just above the ankle bone, (1), run down under the arch and over instep, moving from right to left (2). Continue around the ankle and down across the outside of the heel (3). Follow under the foot and up on the inside of the leg, pulling the tape to the back across the starting point (4), then down on the inside, and up again over the instep as in (2). The sixth pass (6) then duplicates (3), remember to "fan". Likewise, (7) fans over (4), and (8) fans over (5). (9) then brings us back to the same direction as (1), and there we secure the tape on the inside of the leg just above the ankle.

To complete the taping, add locking strips (about three) from the initial "stirrup" anchor strap down to the last point of the "wrap".



Next issue: KNEE INJURIES

The Body Language of Aggression: Training the Combatant Actor

David E. Shapiro
John Heil
Linda Beltz

The special skills of a fight director should go beyond choreographing weapon play or fisticuffs, just as the emotional impact of a fight scene should extend beyond the fracas itself. Directors can and should teach actors not only how to work with violence in the theatre, but also how to maintain continuity and integrity of feelings portrayed before, during, and after the fight. This means integrating actors' total expression -- choreographing not only the ballet of movement, but also the emotional flow of the scene.

Gestures and expressions, which are the symbols by which we communicate emotion, derive from natural patterns of movement. Thus consciousness of action patterns can give actors greater facility in portraying emotion.

Students of dueling may be familiar with the origins of certain formal gestures. One example is the open hand extended in greeting, a custom of universal meaning whose origins reach to antiquity. This gesture is believed to have originated as a sign of friendliness showing that no weapon was held and that no physical threat was intended. In contrast, it is theorized by social scientists that the narrowed eyes and tense jaw, neck, shoulders and arms of the angry human derive from the primitive instinct of our apelike ancestors to fix their vision upon an enemy, and to attack with hands and teeth if necessary.

While historians shed interesting light on the development of formal gestures through the age of chivalry and earlier, the writings on body language most germane to fight directors are those of other social scientists. Since the time of Charles Darwin, psychologists and anthropologists have studied body language, especially that related to aggression. Desmond Morris, author of The Naked Ape, develops the view that expressions of emotion are derived directly from primitive behaviors existing in modern humans as vestigial representations of instincts. A research group led by Paul Ekman and Wallace Friesen, of the UC - San Francisco Medical Center, have focused their study on the human face. In Emotion in the Human Face, they identify a set of categories of feeling that may be detected in facial expression and show that facial expression constitutes a universal language. In Unmasking the Face, they reduce all facial displays of emotion into combinations of designated muscle movements. This work also functions as a training manual that provides instruction on how to read faces; and, how to construct credible emotional expression through careful attention to specific small muscle movement. So thorough and so applied in orientation is Unmasking the Face that Ekman and Friesen might just as well have designed this work specifically for the use of directors and acting coaches.

The task of the director is to ensure congruence and continuity so that the movement of a fight scene proceeds naturally from the postural and other physical messages presaging it. The director must guide the actors in their work with voice qualities, movement, posture and facial expression so that these elements are built into the flesh of a play, to clothe the bare bones of the script.

For example, when in King Lear, Oswald confronts Edgar, the scene is fraught with menace. It would be astonishing to see Edgar fight and then kill Oswald if the actors slouched and spoke calmly during the preceding conversation. Any member of the audience - bellicose or benign - would sense the incongruence of the scene played in this way.

An actor with martial arts training is best prepared to engage in stage combat having dwelt in the experience of aggression and having become familiar with caution, confusion, anger, fear, helplessness and triumph in the context of the fight. A fight director can therefore draw on the heightened sensibility that this emotional base provides. In the case of actors without this combative experience, there is still a reservoir of personal knowledge on which to draw. For all who wish to engage in stage combat, bridges must be created between this reserve of personal knowledge and the practical demands that the fight sequence places upon the actor, so that the fight may be played in a way that maximally enhances the development of the character. The foundation upon which these bridges are to be built is body awareness.

There are many theatre games that either teach or can be adapted to teach body awareness. The "tense muscle" exercise that Viola Spolin describes in Improvisation for the Theatre is one example. Fight directors can (and many, no doubt do) develop exercises that will enable students to tap their reserves of personal knowledge. An example follows which is oriented in particular to fight training.

> Have a pair of students spar "freesytle" in SLOW MOTION using any weaponed or unarmed approach with which they have some familiarity. The other students should observe the action taking care to attend to those stylistic elements of movement that compose a physical attitude. These include: orientation to the opponent, posture and facial expression, weapon grip, breathing patterns and rhythm of motion, etc. When at least one of the combatants has developed a distinct physical attitude (this may take some time!) the action may be stopped and this "attitude" studied. Begin by describing in a holistic way what the combatant has conveyed. This can be followed by a more detailed look at the particular stylistic elements of movement. It may also be useful to tap into the actors' "stream of consciousness" having them note the flow of images and feelings that they experience during the fight. The others should then mimic this "attitude" taking their turn at sparring "freestyle" in SLOW MOTION. If work with the physical attitude in its holistic form proves unsuccessful, it would then be advisable to work with one or more of the stylistic elements which compose the physical attitude. If this activity does not yield satisfactory results it would be worthwhile to lead the actors through a sequence of "guided imagery." To do this have everyone lie down, close their eyes and let themselves relax. After a time have them recreate in their imaginations the fight they have observed and then have them imagine themselves performing those same actions. This particular process may be enhanced by having everyone focus on the images that were experienced by the initial set of combatants; by imagining significant literary or historical figures engaging in combat; by calling to mind "stage fights" of high quality that had been observed on previous occasions, etc.

The use of dialogue should be reserved until the combatants are quite comfortable with the physical dimensions of the fight. However, in the early stages of practice, the use of non-verbal vocal utterances might prove helpful given that these arise naturally. Finally it would be useful to explore the effect of the physical attitude as developed or in intensified or in diminished form on simple physical behaviors - entrances, exits, approaches toward other actors, etc.

In addition to those works previously mentioned there are other works by psychologists that may help the actor to come to an enhanced understanding of the relationship between mind and body and, of the human mechanisms of emotional expression. In Nonverbal Communication, body language researcher, Albert Mehrabian details the relationship between physical gesture and emotional state focusing on the role of body language in the communication of mood states. In contrast, bioenergetic psychotherapist, Alexander Lowen, is more concerned with the relationship between deep seated muscular tension and personality type and with the insight into personality that may be gained by the study of body type.

By recognizing posture, facial expression and other elements of physical attitude that occur during fight training and by working with physical attitude both fight directors and combatant actors can enhance the effectiveness with which they may play a fight. In this way fight directors can better ensure that stage combat is well integrated into the emotional flow of the drama and can better help actors develop their craft.

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THE FABULOUS SAMURAI SWORDFIGHT

Compiled by T. J. Michaels

Part I

ITS EVOLUTION FROM STAGE TO SCREEN - By Daniel M. Furuya

The fabulous swordplay of the chambara film has entertained millions, both East and West, for the past half century. Although the production of new chambara movies has peaked and fallen dormant in Japan, films from the chambara's golden age have won an enthusiastic and loyal following of American viewers. Toshiro Mifune (Yojimbo, Sanjuro) and Katsu Shintaro (Zatoichi), normally play to full houses whenever their films are screened. Recently, the influence of Japanese cinematic swordplay is becoming more and more evident in American and European films, especially in martial arts movies and the "sword and sorcery" genre.

Despite the importance and mystique of these films, hardly anything has been written about the history and evolution of the chambara's sword-play art itself. However, to fully appreciate and understand the techniques which continue to captivate today's viewers, it is necessary to return to the roots of chambara in the traditional kabuki theater of Japan.

Kabuki Fight Scenes: History and Techniques

The word chambara was coined from the slang "chan-chan bara-bara," which is the sound of swords banging and clashing away in the swordfight swquences. Chambara is popularly used to refer to the samurai film genre, or swordfight action films set in feudal Japan. These films are properly known as jidai-geki which means "period" or "historical" pieces. More specially, the chambara films were derived from ken-geki, the swordplay theater which enjoyed great popularity during the turn of the century. As a stage production with plots focusing on the final climactic sword-fight scene, the ken-geki was heavily influenced by the traditional kabuki and tales of popular folk heroes.

The actual fight sequence in the kabuki is known as the tachi-mawari which literally means "standing and turning." "Standing" refers to the different stances truck by the hero to dramatize the effect of fighting; "turning" refers to the falling victims. (Tachi-mawari also has the double meaning of tachi, "sword", and mawari, "swinging", or "sword swinging" sequence.). The individual techniques used in the tachi-mawari are called tate. Tate literally means "stance" or "pose", but the Chinese characters used to write the term means "killing sequence" or "killing techniques." Both kabuki terms, tachi-mawari and tate, emerged in popular usage around the turn of the century, with the development of the chambara

genre. The terms are often used interchangeably.

Most terms used in ken-geki refer to stances and postures rather than to martial arts techniques. This is due to ken-geki's origins in traditional kabuki theater. In kabuki, the principal actor controlled the major aspects of dance, acting, dialogue, and singing. During the fight scenes, however, his role was reduced, although he remained in the spotlight. Instead of performing the martial-like techniques, the main actor on the kabuki stage might wave his hand or strike a dramatic pose (mie) to symbolize actual fighting, which the antagonist flies through the air in a somersault. The hyoshi ki (percussion clappers) struck the flor with a resounding bang as the main actor stamped his foot on the ground and swung his sword, again striking a dramatic pose. At the same time, in perfect coordination with the actor's movement, a dozen villains would suddenly turn somersaults. It appeared that the hero had downed all his enemies with a single mightly blow. The principal always concentrated on the dama and impact of the scene, while the antagonists carried the action.

These antagonists were known as karumi, and functioned very much like present day stuntmen and extras. The literal meaning of karumi is "twisting" or "winding" and refers to the somersaults and gyrations the karumi perform as they are being "killed" by the hero. Karumi also carries the meaning of karu (light) and mi (bodied). "Light bodied" suggests the acrobatic nature of the techniques employed. The appearance of dramatic fighting on stage was impossible without the tumbling and somersaults of the karumi, who carried off all the fight scenes. This type of action, typical of kabuki, shaped all early chambara and swordfight sequences.

Specific techniques of the karumi were not institutionalized in the formal kabuki theater until the 1770's. About this time, approximately 200 techniques were used to create the dramatic illusion of swordplay action. In 1804, the Gekijo Kummo Zuroku (Illustrated Instructions on the Theater), the first book to have illustrations and explanations of the karumi's swordplay techniques, was published. Dance-like movements were combined with classical poses to produce an aesthetically "tasteful" swordplay style. Realism in the fighting sequence was discouraged as muku inu no kenka or "dog fighting."

The 200 techniques of kabuki fight scenes were condensed into 16 basic categories forming the basic repertoire of the karumi. These techniques had many variations, and were often used in combination with each other on the stage. They were not evaluated for their martial application or realism but for the dramatic effect they produced.

1. Tonbo (dragonfly). This technique, also known as tonbo gaeshi (dragonfly turn) and tonbo kiri (dragonfly cut), is one of the most important and more popular techniques used by the karumi. In fact, in

the kabuki and early film world, the karumi were often nicknamed tonbo. Tonbo is a compl-te somersault or hand spring executed by the karumi when he is "cut down" or "thrown" by the hero. There are many variations to the tonbo such as the hirama tonbo, for example, in which the karumi does a complete backwards somersault from a sitting position.

2. Ebi Zori (shrimp curl). When the principal actor is surrounded or pursued by his assailants, he strikes a dramatic pose and stamps his foot on the ground. Simultaneously, all the karumi fall back curling their bodies (like shrimps). The hero seems to be pushing away or throwing down all of his opponents with one sweep.

3. Giba (breakfall, no literal equivalent). When creating the effect of being thrown, kicked, or cut down by the hero, the karumi throws his legs up and falls back onto his butt. The skill and dramatic effect of this technique is judged by the height at which the karumi can throw himself upwards and fall back. This is a difficult technique due to the obvious danger of injuring the tailbone. Variations of this technique include mune giba (chest breakfall), hara giba (stomach breakfall) and yoko giba (side breakfall).

4. Jya Kago or Hebikago (snake train). This technique is used when the hero is being held back or pulled by many pursuers. The karumi line up in a highly stylized snake-like formation with only one karumi actually holding on to the hero. The "tug-of-war" situation, which creates the effect of many people attacking the hero, is common in kabuki plays centering around Robin Hood-type folk heroes. These plays were very popular because the audience sympathized with the hero and enjoyed the great number of action scenes in which the hero was pursued by the law. Another dramatic use of the jya kago technique occurs in Kyokanoko Musume Dojoji (The Young Dancer of Dojo Temple) in which a young dancer transforms herself into a dragon to wreak vengeance on her lover who jilts her. When she assumes the dragon persona, the karumi line up behind her to form the dragon's body and tail. This gives a larger-than-life effect of a hugh terrifying dragon.

5. To-ate (distance striking). In this technique, the hero moves sharply as if cutting with a sword or throwing someone down to the ground. The karumi across the stage suddenly makes a turn as if feeling the sharpness of the blade. Although both actors are separated from each other on the stage, the effect is quite dramatic. Many of the action techniques were overly exaggerated to convey their effect to a large audience in a big theater.

6. Gantsu (eye sting). This technique simulates a strike to the eyes.

7. Tenchi (heaven and earth). In the action scene, the hero slashes his sword high and low repeatedly, creating the effect of actual sword combat. The same technique is used for a spear fight, when the spear is thrust high and low repeatedly.

8. Yanagi (willow). When the hero is attacked with a sword, he deflects the attack and springs back with a counter-movement. The name was suggested by the image of a willow deflecting the falling snow. This technique dramatizes the action of a skilled swordsman against his opponent.

9. Yamagata (mountain). The karumi continually attacks the principal with overhead blows of the sword, cutting to the left and right of his head. This gives the dramatic effect of a barrage of sword cuts.

10. Chishima (plovers among the waves). As a group of karumi attacks the hero, he cuts them down one by one to the left and right. This technique, used for the dramatic presentation of a massive swordfight, became one of the special characteristics of the chambara genre, especially films which were shot outside and used a large number of "opponents."

11. Kara Usu (empty mortar). This technique dramatized a desparate, hit-and-miss style of fighting by two or more unskilled characters. As one actor cut and missed, the other spins around. Then he, in turn, would cut and the first person would do a turn-around. The effect was of a highly stylized struggle in which neither antagonist accomplished anything. Hence, the name implies the "grinding away in an empty mortar." Although this type of scene was often used comically, it was also used to dramatize a cruel and painful death in which the end comes after many unskilled cuts and stabs. This style of fight scene is characteristic of the yakuza or gambler genre.

12. Monshichi (lucky seven). This term describes a scene in which the principal is pursued or attacked from both sides. Monshichi is the name of a notorious bandit who figures popularly in the kabuki plays where this scene was made famous.

13. Hayakiri (quick cutting). The hero makes lightning cuts with the sword and karumi begin falling all over the place. This is also used to dramatize a massive swordfight.

14. Kiri Kaeshi (cutting turn). When the principal cuts with the sword, the karumi does a complete turn-around, as if being killed.

15. Jizo Taore (falling jizo, a stone Buddhist statue). This technique is also called shogi taore (falling chessmen). When the karumi is cut down by the hero, he falls over backwards without bending his back much in the manner of falling dominos. This technique is often executed with a number of karumi giving it the name of shogi taore.

16. Oh Mawari (major tuning). Oh mawari or tachi mawari, the

generic term for swordfighting sequences, have basically the same meaning and are often used interchangeably. It is quite possible that the later term of tachimawari evolved from this word. In the swordfight scene, the karumi circumambulate around the principal actor much like the Indians attacking a wagon train in the cowboy movies.

There are many variations to this style of fight scene and, in effect, all fight scenes, especially the samurai swordfight scenes, are a type of oh mawari. The most famous and most elaborate oh-mawari is taken from the kabuki play Benten Kozo (Benten the Thief). Benten was a notorious Robin Hood-type hero who lived during the mid-Edo Period (1700's). In the play, he tries to swindle a merchant out of money by posing as a female customer. Later, he is pursued by the police across the rooftops of the city. The play is famous for exploiting every method of tachi-mawari in the kabuki repertoire. Benten is finally trapped on the roofs by the police, who use poles and ladders to block his movement and trap his arms so he can't wield his sword. The use of ladders by the police in kabuki is called hasigo damawari or major ladder fighting. In the feudal days, during the time of Benten, the police had the most difficulty in apprehending skilled samurai swordsmen because the police themselves came from the lower classes and were not expertly trained fighters or martial artists. To capture these samurai-type criminals, the police used ladders, doors (wood panels), and long poles to trap and hinder their movement. On the stage, these techniques created an intesely dramatic effect. Audiences enjoyed this most popular scene of the swordfight sequence which was adopted early in the development of the chambara movie.

As mentioned previously, the sixteen fundamental techniques of the tachi-mawari were used in combination to produce over 200 variations. Using the traditional techniques as a base, the karumi continued to create new effects to surprise and entertain their audiences. These effects usually varied with the individual karumi's interpretation of timing, spacing, and dramatic effect. It was these techniques that formed the basis of the early chambara movies.

MORE DUELS IN FRANCE

From The Duel by Robert Baldick

The institution of duelling, which Louis XIV had failed to destroy, took on a new lease of life under the Regency of Philippe d'Orleans, since no attempt was made to enforce the law on this point. Six weeks after the King's death, two officers of the Guards fought on the Quai des Tuileries in broad daylight; but since the young men came from families of the "long robe", the Regent, out of respect for the Parlement, simply suspended them from the corps and sentenced them to a fortnight's imprisonment. This duel had been fought over an Angora cat; and the duke, when reprimanding the young men, remarked that a matter of that sort should have been settled with claws instead of swords. The feeble wit and elnient punishment dispensed in this case offer a blatant contrast with, say, the death sentence carried out on Bouteville early in the previous reign.

Soon other duellists followed the example of the two officers, scorning any effort at concealment. Thus a duel took place between Contades and Brissac, in which both were wounded, in the palace itself, without any proceedings being taken against the two parties. Another duel, fought in broad daylight in the centre of Paris between two noblemen, Jonzac and Villette, also went unpunished; and Duclos, in his secret memoirs, asserts that the Regent openly stated that duelling had gone too much out of fashion.

With no curb on duelling, offended parties did not need to resort to the Court of Honour, and its services were called for even more rarely than under Louis XIV. Even so, it restricted its labours still further by refusing to intervene when one of the parties was not of high birth or distinguished rank. A case of this sort which caused something of a scandal in Paris concerned an abbe called c'Aydie who had fought with a clerk, allegedly at an opera dancer's house, and wounded him. The Duchesse de Berry, the Regent's daughter, immediately had the Abbe d'Aydie deprived of his preferment, and compelled to become a knight of Malta. This did not prevent the clerk, once he had recovered from his wound, from repeatedly seeking out his antagonist and forcing him to fight four duels, until at last the duchess brought both parties before the Court of Honour. Here, however, her efforts to make peace were thwarted by the President of the Court, Marshal de Chamilly, who, on hearing of the social rank of one of the parties, exclaimed "What the devil has he come here for? Does a fellow who calls himself Bouton presume to think that we can be his judges? Does he take us for bishops or keepers of the seals? And the fellow dares to call us

my lords!"

It should perhaps be explained, with regard to this last point, that the Marshals of France were only called my lords by the aristocracy, and regarded the same appellation from a commoner as an insult. It should also be added that d'Aydie was the lover of the Duchesse de Berry, who was not unnaturally afraid that the clerk might deprive her of him in a duel. The Court recommended the Regent to imprison his daughter's lover as a punishment for having fought the low-born Bouton, whom they ignored as being beneath their notice. This, of course, was not at all what the duchess wanted; so, after obtaining d'Aydie's release, she persecuted the unfortunate clerk with such relentless spite that she finally had him hanged, thus arousing, according to Madame de Crequi, 'the horror and the animadversion of all Paris.' Morality, however, was saved; the vindictive duchess died a month to the day after the execution of her victim.

Matters did not improve when Louis XV took over the government of France, receiving from the Regent, as one historian put it, 'a sceptre stained by corruption and a crown dimmed by depravity'. True, in the first year of his personal rule he resolved to check the practice of duelling, and issued an edict to the effect that any gentleman who struck another should be degraded from his rank and forfeit his arms; and he solemnly declared that he would religiously observe the coronation oath, by which he had bound himself to enforce the law. But under the influence of his libertine court, his coronation oath was soon forgotten; and when a counsellor at the High Court of Grenoble was condemned to be broken on the wheel for having killed an army captain in a duel, it was only an effigy which was executed, the man himself having made his escape.

The greatest duellist of this time was undoubtedly the celebrated Duc de Richelieu, who was forever engaged in affairs of honour, and even killed one of his own relations, the Prince de Lixen, in 1734. The two men were at supper at the Prince de Conti's during the siege of Philippsbourg. Richelieu, who had exerted himself considerably during the day, was hot and tired, and beads of sweat broke out on his forehead. The Prince de Lixen, offended by some of the duke's witticisms, remarked "that it was surprising that he did not appear in a more suitable state, after having been purified by admission into his family." The suggestion that Richelieu had bettered himself by his marriage was all the more intolerable in that it was true; and at midnight the two men met in the trenches, where the Prince fell a victim to the duke's sword, which, as contemporary wits observed, was only poetic justice, since Lixen had himself killed one of his relations, his wife's uncle the Marquis de Ligneville.

ENGLISH BATTLE ARMS AND ARMOUR OF THE FIFTEENTH AND SIXTEENTH CENTURIES

Part IV By William Hauserman

The breastplate in the early part of the fifteenth century was made in one piece. Its shape was globular and it extended from the shoulders to the waist. There was also a corresponding backplate. The breastplate remained in an awkward and rigid state until about 1445 when it was made into two pieces, the lower hald overlapped the upper, and was strapped in place to make the torso more flexible. The lower portion of the breastplate was called the demi-placcate. It rose from the waist and the upper part was formed into a series of cusps, the apex of which came to about heart level. The demi-placcate allowed greater flexibility and gave more strength to the breastplate as a whole. Shortly after this fashion caught on, the backplate, too, was formed from several pieces to obtain greater flexibility.

Another innovation, although small, was the lance-rest. This was added to the breastplate in the latter half of the fifteenth century. It was simply a hook that was hinged so that the knight could put one end of his long lance on the hook and hold the other end. This way he did not need to support the weight of it when it was not in use. When the lance was needed he lifted it off the lance-rest and off he went to the charge. Often the lance-rest had a spring mechanism so that when it was not in use it could fold up against the breastplate.

Another way of gaining flexibility in the torso throughout the fifteenth century was the way in which the skirt of the breastplate was constructed. The skirt was called the taces and can be described as follows. "From the waist, and connected with the breastplate, depended a row of plates or lames of steel overlapping each other and made in various designs; these weredenominated the taces. To support them a lining of leather or other strong material was used underneath, to which they were firmly affixed." A lame is a narrow strip of metal which makes up part of the taces. These taces allowed the knight to bend at the waist and sit on his horse.

Another defence which hung down from the taces were the tuilles. Tuilles were rectangular shpaed, curved plates which went on the top and outside of the knight's thigh, over his cuissarts. This gave added protection to the mounted knight as that part of his leg would receive many blows from soldiers who were on foot. In the early part of the fifteenth century tuilles were of medium size. Around 1450, however, tuilles were not used at all. This can be explained by the following

"The frequent absence of tuilles at this time is held to imply that they were not used in combats on foot, then very popular." This makes a great deal of sense because they were only needed by the mounted knight whose thighs were the most exposed. As the mode of fighting returned to mounted again, the tuilles reappeared. When they did reappear, the taces were getting shorter and shorter. This necessitated the tuilles to get longer and broader in order to protect the thighs. They eventually evolved in the sixteenth century to being very large indeed. Tuilles got their name from their shape; they resemble tiles so they were named as they were.

There are two more pieces of armour which complete the suit. Both the epaulettes and the pauldrons were to protect the shoulders. The epaulettes were the first of the two to be used. They consisted of articulated lames which ran from the breastplate over the shoulder and were connected to the backplate in the rear. These articulated epaulettes allowed a great deal of freedom of movement for the shoulders and arms.

By 1440 the pauldrons were added on top of the epaulettes. The pauldrons were plates which were attached both to the breastplate and backplate and were generally of one piece and very strong. The size of the pauldrons were similar to that of the coudieres, they started out being moderate, grew to enormous proportions and finally receded to normal size again. When the pauldrons and coudieres were at their peak size, they completely overshadowed the brassarts. The left pauldron was generally larger and heavier than the right because that is the side which was most battered. They often had a lip on the top of them called a pikeguard which would prevent the weapon of the enemy from glancing off the arm and shoulder into the face and head area.

By the beginning of the fifteenth century the knight was covered cap-a-pied and all of his armour was made of steel. Under the steel armour was chain mail (equally heavy), and a gabeson. All in all, the complete suit weighed anywhere from 40-100 lbs. For this reason one can easily imagine how the armourer strived to reduce the weight by making modifications of sizes, shapes and thicknesses without sacrificing the protection it gave to the knight. Therefore, all suits had their own variations and were different from one another and can only be examined in a general manner.

"POINTS" OF INTEREST

There are seven new members to the Society of American Fight Direcotrs. We welcome these new members and hope that they will be contributing members to the Society.

Mark L. Cole	Actor/Combatant	118 East 7th St. Oswego NY 13126
Barbara L. Dilker	Actor/Combatant	484 W. 43rd St., No. 26-L New York, NY 10036
Charles Killian	Actor/Combatant	530 Garrard St. Covington KY 41011
Kenneth Morgareidge (Swordplay)	Friend	5115 Federal Blvd. Denver CO 80221
University of North Dakota (Theatre Arts Dept.)	Friend	University Station Grand Forks ND 58202
Gray Stevens	Affiliate	7120 Kensington Ave. St. Louis MO 63143
Jay Stone	Actor/Combatant	Atwood Rd., R.F.D. 3 Pelham NH 03076

* * * * * *

There have been some address changes regarding members to the Society.

Rick Sordelet
208 Sanford
New Brunswick NJ 08901

Pete Moore
310 W. 55th St., No. 3F
New York NY 10019

Anthony Soper
c/o Mark McConnell
325 W. 42nd St., No. 2W
New York NY 10036

* * * * * *

Fights-R-Us is still a mainstay at the Westbeth Theatre Center in New York. Their latest extravaganza is SMASH HITS II. They are performing through November 29. The address is: 151 Bank Street, New York City. For those members living in the New York area, drop in and say hello to some of your colleagues and pick up a great show while you're at it.

* * * * * *

I was recently in a production of Romeo & Juliet which include my choreographing the fights. How ironic it is that not one injury resulted from the fights. BUT three out of four people having to carry the funeral

bier ended up with back problems and I managed to come out with the grand prize, a hernia that must be operated on. All because of the terrible construction of the bier which the designer designed without thinking about how the actors would have to carry it with a body on it with no handles or grips!

David Boushey

* * * * * *

With a new editor taking over the January issue of "The Fight Master," I hope the articles will continue to flow. The magazine has come of age and will continue to get better as long as the membership contributes. Thanks again to those who contributed to this, our 19th, issue.

David Boushey

* * * * * *

Stuart Granger has a new book out that not only details his professional career in film, but goes into the ins and outs of the many duels he participated in as an actor. He devotes a significant amount of time to the famous seven-minute fight in the calssic "Scaramouche." The title of the book is "The Sparks Fly Upward", by Stewart Granger, Granada.

J. R. BEARDSLEY (Affiliate) is still teaching combat at Drama School of London at Berkeley. He is also acting in a musical production of Phases produced by "I Wanna Be You" Productions.

DAVID L. BOUSHEY recently choreographed the fights and acted in Romeo and Juliet starring Amy Irving at the Seattle Repertory Theatre. He is now choreographing the fights for The Three Musketeers at the University of Washington. He still continues to head the movement area at Cornish Institute in Seattle.

ERIK FREDRICKSEN is still movement coordinator and acting teacher at the University of Michigan. He is presently a resident actor with the company that resides at the university.

BRUCE KING (Affiliate) is teaching at Shasta College which includes classes in fencing and armed and unarmed combat. He recently directed a children's operetta - The Little Sweep.

JAN KIRK (Affiliate) recently choreographed the fights in a musical Rogues to Riches. He taught a workshop at Wesleyen University and Southern Connecticut State College. Most recently, he choreographed Julius Caesar and Romeo and Juliet for the Arts Educational Program at the Lincoln Center.

JOSEPH MARTINEZ is movement head for the University of Illinois at Champagne/Urbana. His new book, Combat Mime, is now on the bookshelves. He is now in the process of taking on the responsibility of editor for the Society's magazine.

DAVID LEONG conducted a workshop on special effects in combat at the Kentucky Theatre Association at the University of Kentury. A group of his students are currently in rehearsal for a fight review that will travel to Pittsburgh, Chattanooga, Lexington, and Atlanta.

T.J. MICHAELS (Affiliate) will be acting in and choreographing the fights for an independent film called Hellspawn. He is also choreographing the fights for Hamlet for the Queens College branch of the City University of New York.

PETER MOORE recently choreographed the fights for Sweet Prince at Theatre Off-Park in New York. He continues to teach fencing at the Y.M.C.A.

FRANK SPARKS (Affiliate) coordinated the stunts in "Rooster" and an episode of "Fall Guy". He will soon be coordinating the stunts for "Smokey III" starring Jackie Gleason, Paul Williams and Pat McCormach.

THE SOCIETY OF AMERICAN FIGHT DIRECTORS

WISHES ALL OF ITS MEMBERS AND THEIR FAMILIES...

A VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS SEASON AND NEW YEAR.

Each year the Society develops and grows stronger and we expect 1983 to be an even better year.

We hope also that the New Year brings joy and fulfillment to each member and family.

ABOUT THE SOCIETY

The Society of American Fight Directors was founded in May, 1977. Its aims are to promote the art of fight choreography in such a manner that the Fight Director will be accepted as an integral part of the theater and cinema industry. Promoting the aesthetics of well-conceived fight choreography as an integral part of the total production is another aim of the Society.

Full members are professional Fight Directors.

Affiliate members are fencing masters in drama schools, overseas members, or Fight Directors of limited experience.

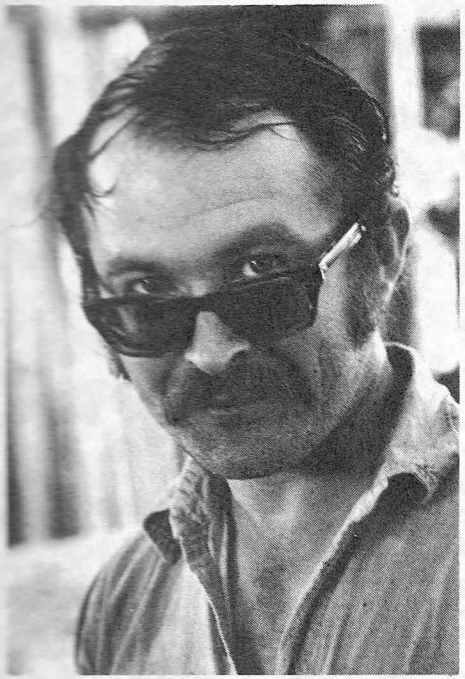
Friends are people interested in stage fighting but who are not necessarily connected with professional fight directing.

Student members are drama students who aspire to become Fight Directors.

Society Rules

Members are reminded that only full members may use the Society's name to secure employment; however, affiliate and student members may use their status in any capacity other than securing employment.

Inquiries about membership should be made to Erik Fredricksen, and inquiries regarding the magazine should be made to Joseph Martinez.



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