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The Society of American Fight Directors

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## **The Fight Master, September 1984, Vol. 7 Issue 3**

The Society of American Fight Directors

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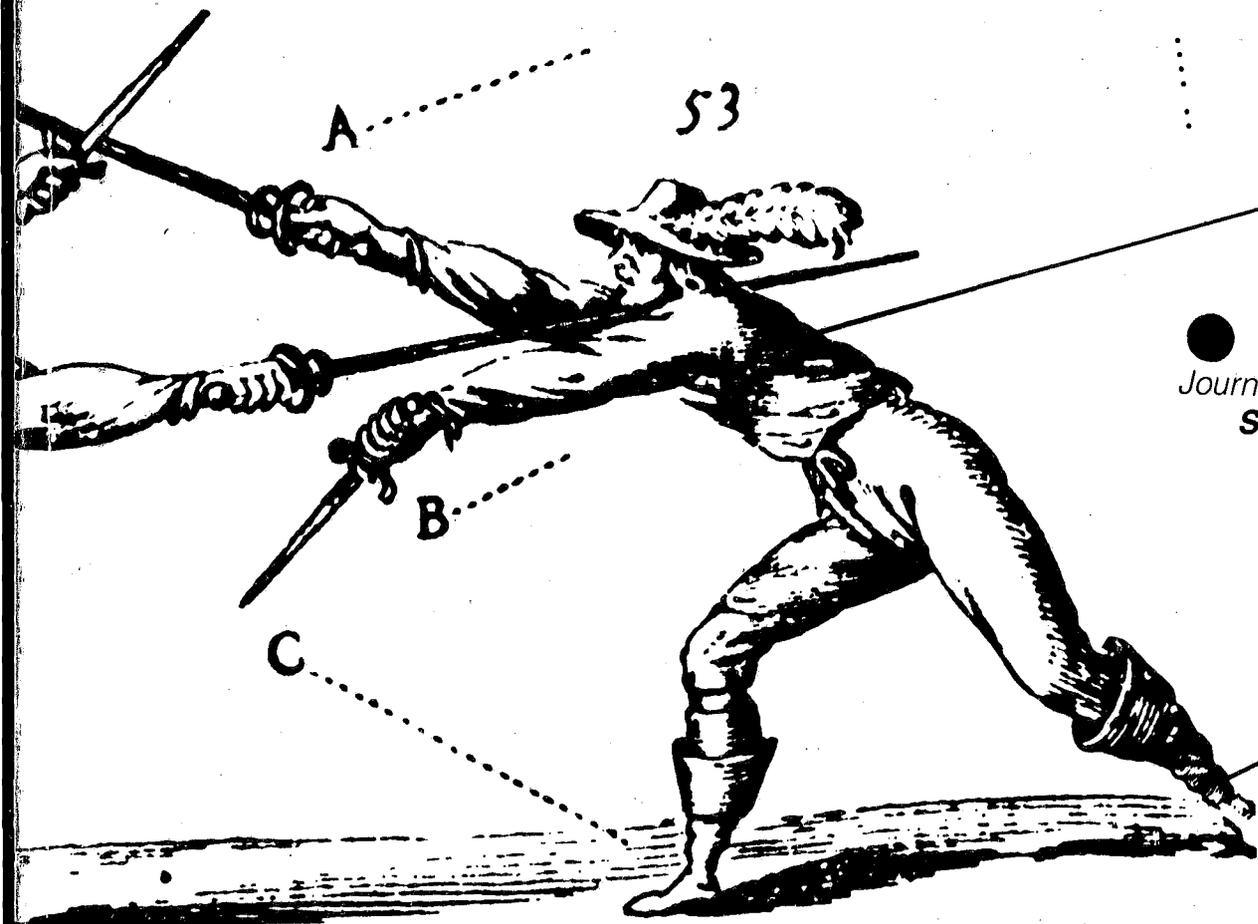


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T H E

# FIGHT MASTER



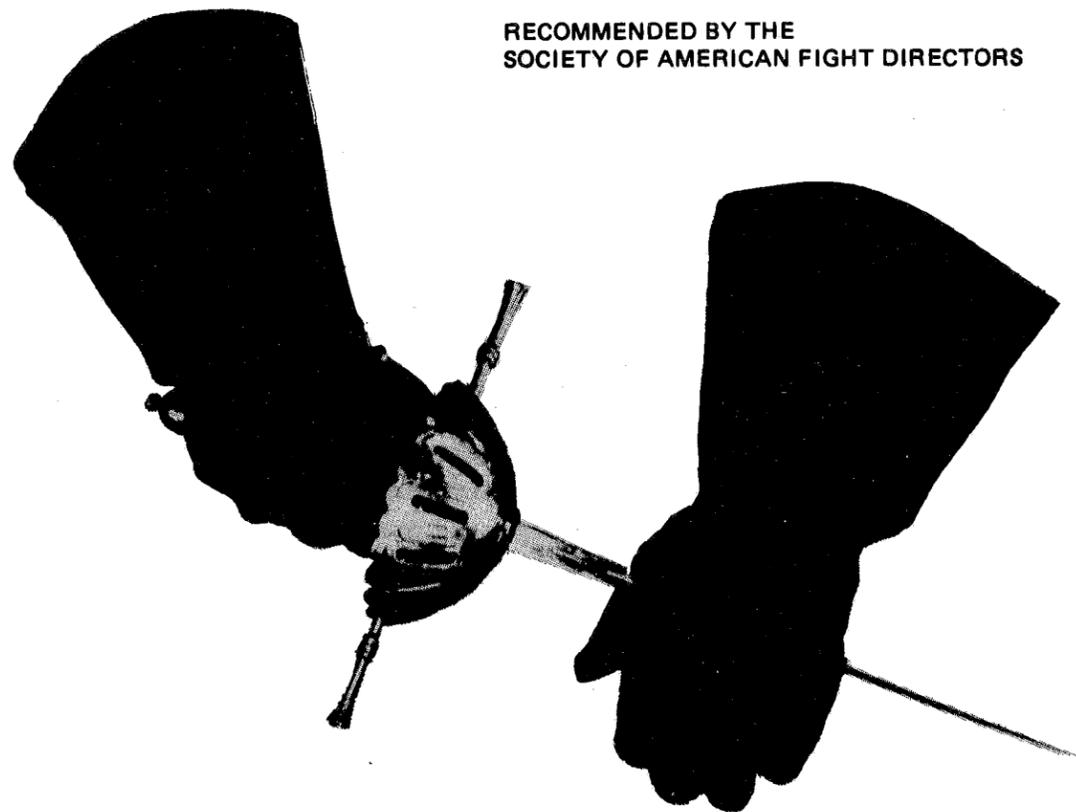
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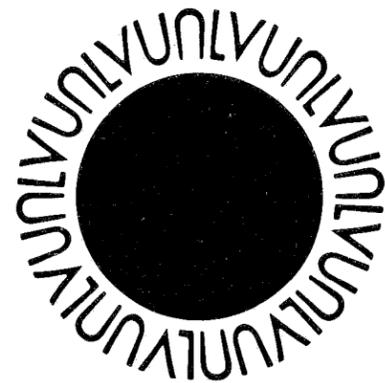
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# THE FIGHT MASTER

*Journal of the Society  
of American Fight Directors*

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Volume VII number 3

### THE FIGHT MASTER

*Journal of the Society of American Fight Directors*

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### SOCIETY OF AMERICAN FIGHT DIRECTORS

President *Erik Fredricksen*  
Vice President *Rod Colbin*  
Treasurer *David Boushey*  
Secretary *David S. Leong*

*The Society of American Fight Directors was founded in May, 1977. It is a non-profit organization whose aim is to promote the art of fight choreography as an integral part of the entertainment industry. Members of the Society of American Fight Directors serve the entertainment industry by promoting the aesthetics and safety of well-conceived fight choreography.*

## EDITOR'S COMMENTS

By attending the National Stage Combat Workshop in Salem this summer, I was able to meet many of our members on the east coast as well as the participants in the workshop, many of whom have since joined the Society. While the skills and expertise and the individual goals and objectives of the Society members varied, their common denominator was a genuine interest in well staged fight choreography.

Because of this diversity, what seems to be basic information on stage combat and related fields to some members may be new information to others. Those full members who are actively involved in fight choreography at a professional level are in contact with a totally different level of awareness, problems and concerns than those who are teaching stage combat, movement, acting and occasionally directing or the actor/combatant who is eagerly waiting for the opportunity to use his combat skills on stage. Some of our members have become very specialized in their areas of expertise. Some members are beginning to apply methods, concepts and skills in their areas of interest (such as stage movement, acting, body mechanics, mime) and to relate these principles more specifically to the area of stage combat.

We are a young organization but our impact is gradually being seen in the industry. Reviewers are beginning to recognize the contribution of the "fight director" and awards have been given for stage fight choreography. Equity has added a segment on stage fighting to their contracts and directors are beginning to seek out trained actor/combatants for their productions. These inroads have been made through the continual perseverance of our members who are working in the stage/film/television/live entertainment industry and have begun to open doors for the fight choreographer and the well trained actor/combatant. Progress may seem slow at times but in retrospect a great deal has been accomplished in the seven years of our existence as a Society.

We seem to be moving into a new phase as more people are certified in the proficiency and skills of stage combat and, as they continue to use these skills, there is a need to advance, polish and fine tune what they already have acquired as well as to add additional skills. There may come a time when different levels/degrees of certification are awarded. But it takes time, and each level of competency takes years of experience to truly become a master of the art of stage combat.

As I get into the rhythm of being editor, it is becoming clearer how much time is needed from the receipt of material for consideration in the journal to its preparation for publication and distribution. Articles will be accepted at any time. Those articles intended for consideration in the January 1985 issue need to arrive by

November 15, 1984 to guarantee their possible inclusion. Regrettably several articles which were intended for publication in this issue were not available at the time of publication and will be published later.

Many of you have asked about the length of articles. This certainly may vary, so please do not hesitate to share information with your fellow members because of concerns over an article being too long or too short.

I sincerely thank the former editors, David Boushey and Joseph Martinez, for their continued support and editorial contributions to the journal. Their input, screening and forwarding of material in their possession has been a tremendous and invaluable help to me.

Again, I encourage letters to the editor so that we, as members of the Society, can continue to have an open forum for the sharing of ideas and the expression of opinions and concerns.

We have before us so many possibilities for the future. . .

*Linda Carlyle McCollum, Editor* ■

September 1984

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

I am delighted to report that at the Fifth Annual National Stage Combat Workshop in Salem, a quorum of Full members was present which added immeasurably to the prestige and availability of access to the Full members by the Associates and Affiliates in attendance, as well as to the new members. There were so many positive suggestions and feelings expressed by students and members at the workshop. I will also report a few of the items of concern that were raised and discussed by the Full members.

It appears that an issue which I brought before the membership via this column two years ago, has again resurfaced. I wish to deal with this issue briefly so as not to negate the many positive suggestions that were put forth.

Members of the Society: When only one or two members abuse credentials, recommendations, or the nature of their status in the Society, the entire Society suffers. The idea of assessing fines or going on witch hunts and trying to enforce codes of morality is simply beyond the scope or intention, and (honestly) the capability of the officers of the Society. We cannot legislate morality, but *certainly* inherent in this Society's aspirations as much as any others, a code of conduct seems inferentially obvious. PLEASE—do not engage in behavior that is in a word, untruthful. We will, sadly, entertain FULLY SUBSTANTIATED claims of misrepresentation of status and credentials and, where supported to the full satisfaction of the executive officers, demand withdrawal from the Society and accordingly notify theatres and institutions as seems appropriate.

To move on to the points of a more positive nature: specifics as to promotion from Affiliate to Associate, and from Associate to Full were debated at length and finally voted on. Any member applying for promotion will receive a clearly detailed procedure sheet as to the exact requirements. This will entail a greater amount of work and participation from *all* Full members, but in fairness to the Society, it must be done. Our Secretary, David Leong, will be in charge of informing those who wish to be considered for an upgrading of membership status of the necessary procedures.

A majority vote of the assembled quorum also amended the By-Laws to rename the status of "Full member" to "Fight Master." Frankly, I have read many resumes where an individual with honestly no more than ten credits (none of them professional or union) had under his name. . .yes, you guessed it — FIGHT MASTER. Now, anyone may choreograph fights and call themselves a "fight master". . .we are not divinely ordained. Nevertheless, we as a Society must obviously take a strong stance on the legitimacy of anyone call-

ing himself a Fight Master under the aegis of the Society of American Fight Directors.

Also at this meeting, the procedure and dates relative to the election of new executive officers was clarified and our secretary will outline this procedure in the following issue.

Mrs. Susan Crean, wife of our esteemed colleague, Patrick Crean, has designed what we feel is an extremely handsome Society pin which the Full members have voted unanimously to adopt as the official Society pin. As "negotiations" for the striking of the prototype are solidified, we will make this pin available to the entire membership for the very best price we can set. I am certain you will find it a handsome and desirable accessory.

We are already into planning for the next National Stage Combat Workshop and, as has been clearly evident, we are trying to locate the workshop in different parts of the country so that we can reach as many members and non-members as possible. Next year's workshop will be in Cedar City, Utah on the campus of Southern Utah State College in conjunction with the Utah Shakespearean Festival.

. . . which brings me to my final point. The journal is the only realistic communicative arm we. . .you. . .the members have. While at the workshop this year, I, of course, heard suggestions and complaints regarding ideas for the Society. Are you aware that this is YOUR journal? Over three-fourths of your dues go into getting this published AND that does not include ANY fee for any of us involved in publishing the journal? PLEASE share your ideas and concerns in this handsome and potentially exciting forum for healthy debate and the exchange of ideas and views. Our editor, Linda McCollum, would be delighted to *have to* devote a section of the magazine to new ideas, suggestions, complaints, and viewpoints. If you have ideas or grievances, why pass them on through the mono-directional path of the "beer-bitch"? I know that many of you have excellent ideas and suggestions. By expressing them you can have a real effect on the growth and the direction of the Society.

I would like to see ideas and suggestions not only from some of our Full members, who have yet to contribute to the Journal, but also from some of the individuals who participated in the most recent workshop.

And, in conclusion, my heartfelt thanks to the *many* members of *every* status that continue to support the Society through the journal as well as through their professionalism.

*Erik Fredricksen, President* ■

## TREASURER'S REPORT

Congratulations to Joe Martinez for another successful National Stage Combat Workshop. Again, through attendance, we have shown how vital well-conceived fight choreography is to the theatre community. Every year seems to bring with it more awareness regarding the importance of trained combatants who can execute innovative, well-defined fight choreography. We certainly seem to be "catching on" as a viable part of the theatre/cinema industry.

A quorum of the full members voted to initiate an amendment to the certification process which allows adjudicators to receive a \$100 fee for adjudicating the certification test. While the adjudicator's transportation costs are usually covered by each student's certification fee of \$20, the adjudicator has frequently had to take off from work and pay money out of his own pocket while traveling to the test site. This will no longer be the case. An adjudicator will now receive a \$100 adjudication fee in addition to a \$25 per diem. *This is non-negotiable* and cannot be higher or lower.

If the number of students being adjudicated at \$20 each does not cover the transportation, per diem and adjudicator's fee, then the host school or the individuals taking the test must make up the difference. On the other hand, if the fees from the number of students taking the test exceeds the transportation costs for the nearest Full member, the per diem and the adjudicator's fee, the difference would go into the Society's general fund. For example, if twenty people take the test, \$20 per student is sent to me in advance. I locate the nearest Full member in that area. If it costs \$250 for transportation, \$25 per diem plus the \$100 for the adjudicator, this would total \$375. This means that all costs are covered by the twenty students and their fees. Twenty five dollars would remain and would go into the Society's general fund.

The officers and Full members realize that some schools may have to foot part of the expenses for the certification test but feel the service provided will enhance their department image and perhaps will encourage various theatre departments to get more of their students involved in fight certification.

Please contact me when you wish your students to be adjudicated and if you have any questions regarding the new adjudicator's fee. I will be glad to answer them. Remember, I must be notified and student fees (\$20 per student) must be sent to me sufficiently *prior* to the test to insure that a Full member will be available.

It was agreed by a quorum of the officers and Full members in attendance at the workshop conference that some schools should be allowed to certify their students by way of video taping. This would apply only to those schools having few applicants and being such a substantial distance for the adjudicator to travel that the certification test would be impossible financially. An

example would be the University of Alaska having four people to adjudicate and costing \$400 for the nearest Full member to fly to the test site.

Under these circumstances, a video tape that showed the fight from the audience's perspective *and* from a rear or back stage perspective would be required. Thus the adjudicator could see the fight as the audience would see it and at the same time could see all the necessary techniques being employed, i.e. knaps, point work, distance, etc. *The video cannot be edited!* The sound should be the natural sound coming from the fight itself such as the knaps, grunts and sounds of the blades in contact. *No music is allowed.* Keep the fight to those involved in actual fighting and don't forget to *ACT* the fight. A scene should have a beginning, middle and end. The certification test need not surpass four minutes in total length. It must have all the prescribed moves shown in the May 1984 issue of *The Fight Master*. Unarmed combat, and Rapier/Dagger are mandatory. The third area must be either broadsword, courtsword or quarterstaff. It should be choreographed by your instructor if possible. Safety and realism should be two major ingredients.

If a school feels it fits into this category and wishes to take the certification test via video, it must contact me to get a confirmation before actually filming the certification fights. Once completed the video will then be sent to the nearest Full member for adjudication. Remember, it costs \$20 per student to take the test via video. The adjudicator will send the applicants a written evaluation of their work with the test results. As there is no per diem or travel in this case there is only the \$100 adjudicator's fee for the Full member viewing the video which should be covered by the student's fees. If five combatants take the test, that will total \$100 which will cover the adjudicator's fee. If more than five take the test, any extra money will go into the Society's general fund. If only four take the test, either the school must pick up the other \$20 or each applicant could pay a \$25 certification fee.

There are still some members who have not paid their 1984 dues and I am put in the unfortunate situation of having to strike them from the Society roster. If you are aware of any member who has not paid his dues, please encourage him to do so as he will not be receiving any more notices or journals from the Society.

Thanks to those who answered my call to pay their dues. We had a number of members who did so. May I remind you that dues come to bear in January. Try to pay your dues at the top of the year thus eliminating paying dues so soon once more.

We are solidly in the black as an organization which means more money for advertising and promotion. The Society is looking strong and healthy due to you, our members.

*D.L. Boushey, Treasurer* ■

I'm sure that many of you are settling down into your fall routine and still others are in the midst of starting new ventures here and there. Wherever you are, please take the time to read *The Fight Master* and submit your suggestions and viewpoints as well as potential articles for publication. Remember, this publication is the only means by which we can all communicate with each other.

At the National Stage Combat Workshop this summer in Salem, Massachusetts, seven of the twelve Full members (who were in residence at the workshop) met to discuss issues related to the Society's business matters. A few amendments to the By-Laws were proposed and accepted. Over the next few weeks, I plan to retype this document, duplicate copies and once again send it to you. At the same time, I will send you your membership card if you have changed your status in the Society or if you request a new card. Please send me a note if you need a card mailed to you along with the By-Laws.

One item that you should be aware of at this time is the new criteria for attaining the rank of Full or Associate member. (This will appear in the By-Laws this fall).

Candidates for Full membership in the Society of American Fight Directors must be ratified by a majority vote of all Full members based upon high evidence of professional teaching and choreographic standards. More specifically, two Full members must observe the work of the candidate in person. "Work" in this sense means a finished choreographic product. A videotape must be made and sent to the Secretary of the Society along with a duplicate copy for circulation amongst the other Full members. At least two other Full members must view this tape. The videotape must be taken with a stationary camera positioned center of a proscenium stage. Sound must be live. There is to be no visual or sound editing of the tape and the tape must include work with students, i.e. teaching and choreographing.

Paper work to be included consists of three letters of recommendation. Two letters are to be from the producer and/or artistic director and one letter from an academician/director.

A letter of intent and resume should be enclosed with a twenty dollar non-refundable application fee to cover mailing and distribution. For more details and questions, contact the nearest Full member in your area.

Candidates for Associate membership must be observed by one Full member in a classroom situation. A letter of intent, detailed resume and three letters of recommendation must be sent to the Secretary. The Full member observing the candidates work will then forward a report to the Secretary who will then circulate the credentials to the other Full members. Three Full members must approve the candidate's work for acceptance to Associate status.

Notification to those individuals seeking the rank of Associate or Full membership will be made in writing by the President of the Society.

Again, please watch for the upcoming By-Laws and consult your nearest Full member for further questions.

The site of next year's National Stage Combat Workshop has been selected. From July 22 to August 9, 1985, Southern Utah State College and the Utah Shakespearean Festival will co-host the workshop with the Society. I will be the coordinator for next year's event and will keep you informed of the particulars.

I'm sure I'll be hearing from many of you in the weeks to come regarding membership, dues, and procedures. Remember, financial matters should be addressed to David Boushey and promotions and other concerns to Erik Fredericksen.

Have a nice fall and stay in touch.

David Leong, Secretary ■

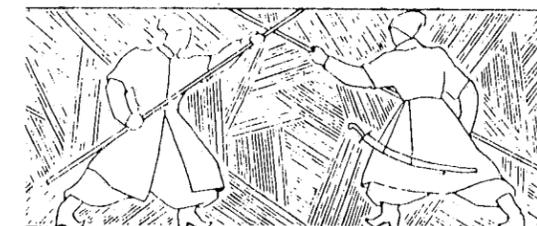
# UKRAINIAN LANCE FIGHT TECHNIQUE IN THE XVI-XVII CENTURIES

Part II

by Edward Rozinsky

## PASSAGES FROM ONE DEFENSE POSITION TO ANOTHER

To parry a series of attacks one should pass from one Defense Position to another. This is used both when in a lance duel or when fighting with two or more opponents. Only after mastering all of the five basic Defense Positions described in the May 1984 issue of *The Fight Master* can one begin to learn the passages from one line to another, for they demand a great deal more coordination. Lance combat requires twice the space as foil fencing; therefore, be sure you have enough space to practice in.



### Passage from the Third to the Fourth Defense Position

From the Third Defense Position with the lance slanted upward and to the right covering the upper right or outside line of the body, shift the metal tip of the lance to the left into the Fourth Defense Position with the point slanted upward and to the left covering the upper left side or inside line of the body. This can be done quickly and easily by allowing the left hand to move the lance from the Third Defense position into the Fourth Defense Position.

### Passage from the Fourth to the Third Defense Position

This is accomplished in an opposite direction from that described in the passage above. The metal tip of the lance is shifted from the upper inside line to the right into the upper outside line with the left hand moving the shaft of the lance.

### Passage from the Third to the First Defense Position

This is done by first shifting to metal tip of the lance from its upward slanted position covering the upper outside line downward and then secondly shifting the lance to the left into the First Defense Position covering the lower inside line with the metal tip pointed downward and to the left and the right hand slightly above and to the right of the head on the butt end of the shaft. Through practice all two movement passages should be executed as one continuous movement.

### Passage from the First to the Third Defense Position

This is done in two movements opposite to those described above. From the First Defense Position with the metal top pointed downward and to the left covering the lower inside line, first bring the metal tip to the right or lower outside line and then move the top up into the Third Defense Position covering the upper outside line.

### Passage from the Second to the Fourth Defense Position

From the Second Defense Position with the metal tip slanted down and to the right covering the lower outside line, lift the lance with the left hand while simultaneously moving the right hand down. Then move the metal tip of the lance to the left into the Fourth Defense Position with the tip slanted upward and to the left covering the upper inside line of the body.

### Passage from the Fourth to the Second Defense Position

The metal tip of the lance is dropped from the upward slanted position covering the upper inside line of the body to the lower left and then moved to the right with the point down and covering the lower outside line of the body. The right hand is next to the ear on the shaft of the lance.

All membership dues are to be paid in January to the treasurer, David Boushey, 4720 38th NE, Seattle, Washington 98105.

Inquiries concerning new membership should be addressed to the secretary, David Leong, Department of Fine Arts, Northern Kentucky University, Campus Station, Highland Heights, Kentucky 41076.

Application for change in status within the Society should be addressed to Erik Fredricksen, University of Michigan, c/o Theatre Arts Dept., Ann Arbor, Michigan 48309.

Articles for consideration in *The Fight Master* should be submitted to the editor, Linda McCollum, Department of Theatre Arts, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, 4505 Maryland Parkway, Las Vegas, Nevada 89154.

#### **Passage from the Second to the First Defense Position**

This is done in the quickest and most efficient direction by shifting the downward pointed metal tip of the lance from the right side covering the lower outside line to the left side to cover the lower inside line, with the butt of the lance remaining to the right side of the head.

#### **Passage from the First to the Second Defense Position**

This is done by reversing the above shift of direction of the downward pointed lance from covering the lower inside line to covering the lower outside line.

#### **Passage from the Second to the Third Defense Position**

This passage involves the metal tip of the lance making a semi-circular movement before stopping in the Third Defense Position. The tip is raised up from the Second Defense Position covering the lower outside line and to the left in a semi-circular movement that then shifts to the right, stopping in the Third Defense Position covering the upper outside line of the body.

#### **Passage from the Third to the Second Defense Position**

This is again a semi-circular passage, the opposite of the above. The lance tip is moved from its forward slanted position covering the upper outside line to the left and then downward and to the right in a semi-circular movement, ending in the Second Defense Position with the point downward protecting the lower outside line.

#### **Passage from the First to the Fourth Defense Position**

This is a semi-circular passage with the metal tip of the lance ending in the Fourth Defense Position covering the upper left or inside line. The tip is moved up from its downward slanted position covering the lower inside line and to the right before moving left and ending in the Fourth Defense Position covering the upper inside line.

#### **Passage from the Fourth to the First Defense Position**

This movement is the opposite of the above. The metal tip of the lance is first moved to the right and then downward and to the left ending in the First Defense Position with the tip slanted down and to the left covering the lower inside line.

#### **Passage from the First to the Fifth Defense Position**

The lance is shifted by the quickest method from its downward slanted position in the First Defense Position covering the lower inside line into the Fifth Defense Position protecting the head and shoulder with both arms raised and bent slightly, holding the lance in a horizontal position above and in front of the head with the metal tip to the left and the butt of the lance to the right.

#### **Passage from the Fifth to the First Defense Position**

This passage is done by first shifting the metal tip of the lance in the overhead position down and to the right with the second movement of this passage moving the lance to the left and into the First Defense Position with the metal tip slanted downward and protecting the lower inside line.

#### **Passage from the Second to the Fifth Defense Position**

This passage is accomplished by shifting the lance from the downward slanted position protecting the lower outside line and bringing it up and to the left into the overhead horizontal position by the most direct route.

#### **Passage from the Fifth to the Second Defense Position**

This is a semi-circular movement. The metal tip of the lance in the overhead horizontal position makes a semi-circular movement in the air as it travels downward and to the right, stopping in the Second Defense Position with the tip slanted down and to the right, protecting the lower outside line.

#### **Passage from the Third to the Fifth Defense Position**

The lance is shifted from the Third Defense Position covering the upper outside line to the overhead horizontal position of the Fifth Defense Position by the shortest route possible.

#### **Passage from the Fifth to the Third Defense Position**

The passage is the shortest route possible from the overhead horizontal position to the Third Defense Position which covers the upper outside line.

#### **Passage from the Fourth to the Fifth Defense Position**

The lance shifts from covering the upper inside line to the horizontal position by the shortest route possible which is accomplished by bringing the butt end up and in front of the head.

#### **Passage from Fifth to Fourth Defense Position**

The butt of the lance in the horizontal overhead position is shifted down in the first movement of the passage. The second movement moves the lance to the left stopping in the Fourth Defense Position with the metal tip slanted upward and to the left protecting the upper inside line.

#### **CIRCULAR DEFENSES**

In lance combat a circular defense is often used. This movement allows the metal tip of the lance to make a full circle and return to the starting point. The following are the techniques used for the Second, Third and Fourth Circular Defenses.

#### **Second Circular Defense**

Beginning in the Second Defense Position with the metal tip slanted downward and to the right, allow the metal tip to make a full circle by traveling upward and then moving in a counterclockwise direction in the air, returning to the position from which the movement began. This way you can repel your attacker if he repeats his last attack. This may also be used for disarming your opponent. This motion can be very strong but one must remember that people can be hurt and objects around can be broken. Therefore, it is wise to stop one's motion at the point of contact with your partner's lance and allow your partner to throw his weapon in a safe direction.

#### **Third Circular Defense**

This movement is done by allowing the metal tip of the lance to make a full circle under the opponent's weapon and return to the same Third Defense Position. Start the circle by moving your left hand down and your right hand up. Then, with a counterclockwise motion, disarm your opponent by throwing his weapon up and to the right.

#### **Fourth Circular Defense**

The edge of the lance makes a circular motion under your opponent's weapon from the Fourth Defense Position and returning to the starting point. This clockwise motion ends with a repulse on the opponent's weapon.

#### **BLOWS WITH THE BUTT OF THE LANCE**

#### **Right Flank Blow with the Butt of the Lance**

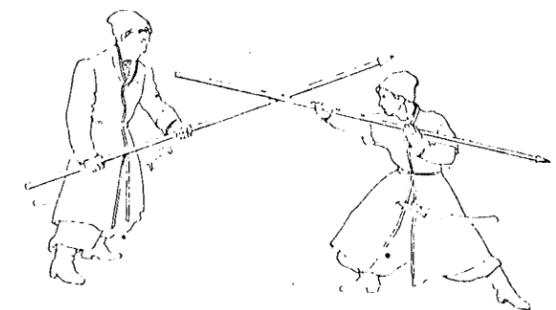
This is done usually after taking the Fourth Defense Position. After contacting your partner's weapon, do not stop the lance but allow it to follow through so that the butt will come to the left of your partner's body. Now thrust forward and strike your partner's flank, shoulder or leg with the butt of your lance. (see picture 17).

#### **Forward Blows with the Butt of the Lance**

After taking the Fifth Defense Position, point the butt toward your opponent's body and attack with a thrust. Remember that the attacked area must be the same area you indicated. Try to avoid deceptive movements on stage. A forward blow using the butt may also be done after taking the Fourth Defense Position. Do not stop the motion of the lance, and, when the butt is pointed toward your partner, attack in the same manner as above (see picture 18).



Picture 17



Picture 18

### Blow Backward with the Butt without a Turn

When in combat with two or more opponents and one is behind you, a strike to the rear may be used with the butt of your weapon. But first show your partner behind you that you are going to attack: extend both your arms forward and up, so that the metal tip of the lance would rise above the head of the opponent in front. Now strike with a thrust backwards with the butt of the lance. If your partner is close, make a thrust with your right foot. If he is out of distance, thrust with your left. It is convenient to do this motion from Third, Fourth or Fifth Defense Positions.

### Blow Backward with the Butt, Turning Around

The partner behind you can also be attacked with the butt and with a turn around. To produce this attack, make a hundred and eighty degree turn on the heels of your feet. At the same time shift the lance up above your head. Right after the turn, point the butt to the chosen target. Now you can make the thrust with your right foot if your opponent is in range and with your left if your opponent is out of distance.

### DEFENSES FROM THE BUTT BLOWS

Against the Right Flank Blow with the Butt of the Lance take a Second Defense Position with the metal tip of the lance to your left and thrusting the lance to your left. You can do this motion either with your right or with your left foot.

Against the Forward Butt Blow use the First or Second Defense Position with a thrust or without it.

To parry the Backward Blow Without a Turn, take the First or Second Defense Position and make a jump backwards.

Against the Backward Butt Blow with a Turn take the Third or Fourth Defense Position.

### REPEATED ATTACKS

As in foil fencing, lance combat also makes use of repeated attacks. This might be done while a partner is retreating whether he is defending or not. Because of the added distance created from his retreat, and additional attack is possible. Repeated attacks may be produced by a Blow or a Thrust. Before proceeding with a Repeated Attack one must first get back into a Fighting Position by shifting one's right foot forward. Only then can one begin a new attack. Repeated Attacks need not be the same as the previous attack. If the first attack for instance was focused on a partner's chest, the Repeated Attack may be aimed at his leg. This all depends on the defense position your partner used with the first attack.

### ATTACKS ON THE WEAPON

It is common for one to attempt to disarm or break the opponent's weapon through attacks on it. An attack on an opponent's weapon may also be used simply in order to open an opponent for a further attack.

One of the attacks on the weapon is a Beat (a sharp blow). A Beat may be produced from right to left Engagement by a short strong blow on the opponent's weapon. Your opponent will then be open for attack by quickly coming in with a thrust.

Another attack on the weapon is the Seizure. After you have taken the Fourth Defense Position, shift your lance downward so that the Butt is resting on the floor next to your right foot. Now you are able to release your left hand. Grab "unexpectedly" your opponent's lance and pull it toward yourself. This way you may disarm your opponent or cause him to lose his balance.

You may also disarm your opponent if he were to attack your right leg and you took the Second Defense Position. Step on the butt of his lance with your right foot and with the butt of your lance make a short but strong Beat on his from above. Your opponent will lose his lance and might have to use another weapon to continue to fight with you.

# SUPER SWORDSMITHS

by Stuart Fleming

Upon the death of Valentinian I in A.D. 375, the Roman army and the court life connected with the large military residences such as that at Trier in Gaul held the society of the western Roman Empire tightly together. Over the next eighty years his successors — Theodosius I, Honorius and Valentinian III — gradually increased the involvement of the senatorial aristocracy in the business of government. This aristocracy, not a little encouraged by the bishops who had been irked by Valentinian's effective policy of religious tolerance throughout the Empire, became increasingly antagonistic to the *nouveau riche* of the Roman colonies.

So it was that the new governing class of the western Empire was left somewhat to their own devices when, in A.D. 406, barbarian hordes swept across the Rhine and began to cut a path of destruction that was to reach into Spain and even Italy itself. A contemporary source reports that hermits were killed, priests burned alive, nuns raped, and vineyards and olive groves devastated. A Gallic bishop, Orientius, summarized matters dramatically when he wrote, "The whole of Gaul smoked in a single funeral pyre."

Clearly these were violent times, and times that were to last over a century, including the destructive excesses of Attila's Huns in A.D. 447. So it is not surprising that as a sense of law and order returned to north-western Europe — expressed, for example, in the Visigothic codes of Euric and his successors late in the fifth century — the literature of the day laid heavy stress on warring exploits, and an exceptional degree of technical effort was given over to the decoration and manufacture of weaponry. The making of swords in particular, many of which became *the* fashionable gift among the households of the new nobility of north-western Europe, reached a peak of artistic beauty and metallurgical skill.

This is the period of Weyland the Smith, a ubiquitous character who is credited with having made almost every famous sword and piece of armor mentioned in subsequent Medieval legends, including the giant Beowulf's "splended mail coat" in the eighth-century Anglo-Saxon poem, and the three swords Naegling, Ekkisax and Mimming in the Scandinavian *Thidrik's Saga*.

Although English oral traditions place Weyland's forge in a cave in the Vale of the White Horse (in Berkshire) and German sources recall "the wonderful smieth of Westphalia," from internal evidence it seems more likely that his story stems from Jutland and the court of Nithhad in southern Scandinavia. There, we are told, Weyland was ensnared and lamed so that the king could retain exclusive access to his weapon-making expertise. The smith's revenge, as scenes on the famous *Frank's Casket* well illustrate, was swift and savage. ("Weyland's Revenge" is luridly depicted on a side panel of the whalebone "Frank's Casket" which dates to about the eighth century after Christ. On the left Weyland holds the head of one of King Nithhad's sons over an anvil; the corpse lies below. In the center, Nithhad's daughter Beaduhild carries a flask of drugged beer; subsequently, when stupefied, she is raped by Weyland. To the right, Weyland's brother catches birds, their feathers to be used to fashion wings for the smith's flight away from any reprisal by Nithhad).

Sagas like this are usually assumed to be heavily embroidered. For example, no one is particularly eager to believe a tract from Beowulf that records the blade of one noble sword being "hardened in blood," a gory notion that recurs in the tale of Sigfus' sword in the thirteenth-century *Njal's Saga* from Iceland. Consequently, there has been much skepticism about the ancient descriptions of Weyland's manufacture of Mimming.

*Thidrik's Saga* tells how Weyland labored for seven days to produce a conventional sword which satisfied the king. (It was tested by cutting a sheet of velvet floating on water). "Conventional" at that time meant the production of a blade by *pattern welding*, a skill gathered no doubt from earlier Roman tuition in the Rhineland. First, the blade was built up of thin bars which were prepared from iron that had been packed in charcoal and kept red-hot until its surfaces had absorbed enough carbon to turn them into steel while the bar's core was still relatively carbon-free. Then, to distribute the steely parts more evenly through the blade, these bars would be repeatedly cut up and reforged while twisted together in a different order. The central position of the blade would comprise a group of such twisted bars welded together, and the cutting edge would be two strips of the finest steel welded onto the surface. Final grinding and filing to lethal quality, plus perhaps some deliberate etching, would bring out a beautiful pattern of light and dark, sometimes resembling sheaves of corn, sometimes coiling serpents.

Weyland the Smith, however, was not a man to be satisfied with the conventional. Taking a file, he reduced the sword to dust. Then, mixing the filings with meal, he prepared cakes to feed starving poultry. The bird droppings were subsequently put in a forge and all the soft parts of the iron worked out. To the king's surprise, even a sword fashioned from this metal did not satisfy Weyland. Mimicking emerged only after this entire process had been repeated.

Why did Weyland go through such a rigmarole? Part of the answer lies in the fact that, before the Keller-Bessemer era of steelmaking of the late nineteenth century, and particularly before blast furnaces were capable of raising slabs of wrought iron to fusion point, the quality of steel manufacture was greatly enhanced by fine division of the metal. Also, ore reduction processes yielded wrought iron with quite a low carbon content: pre-filing of the stock led to a superior product, since carbon-diffusion into the iron's volume could be accelerated.

As for Weyland's poultry-feeding, in 1955 experiments in France along these lines — but using a duck — yielded completely slag-free iron. Since slag is the enemy of quality welds, credibility of the mythical metallurgy was much improved.

More important yet is the fact that the high ammonia content of the avian dung may well have provided the iron produced by each reforging with much higher nitrogen content. Simply dispersing nitrides throughout the sword would endow it with far greater strength, while heating a finished sword in a forge fired by charcoal and manure would make the cutting edge very keen indeed. This nitriding process would actually override the brittleness caused by residual phosphorus, a regular contaminant of the bog-iron ore sources probably available to Weyland.

It was not until the Gilchrist Thomas Process was developed around 1870, in which a limestone lining was included in the ore converter to remove phosphorus deliberately, that such ore bodies could be used in modern blade-making. All credit then to Weyland's empiricism. He may not have been a physical giant, as legend describes him, but his stature in metallurgy deserves far fuller recognition.

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## FIGHT DIRECTING IN OPERA

by William Hauserman

There are many differences and special problems which a fight director must solve when working on an opera, as opposed to a play. Although there are many similarities, the focus here is on the differences because they are what makes fight directing an opera special.

One of the primary difficulties a fight director is faced with is the physical capability and mental attitude of most operatic performers. Although there are many exceptions, in general, opera singers have exceptionally well trained voices, breath control, etc., but have not focused their training on great physical movement and/or stage combat. It is unlikely that the combatants will have had any stagefighting experience or training.

It is a common belief in opera that music is the most important element so the director will not place as high an emphasis on the athletic abilities of the performers while casting. It follows then that for the most part the singer/combatants will be of only average athletic ability, whereas in plays the director tends to choose athletic or physically oriented actors to do the stage fighting. If the fight director is involved in the production before casting, this problem can be alleviated by making sure that the director is aware of the importance of movement capabilities for the stage combatant.

Furthermore, opera singers feel less comfortable doing physically demanding activities like stagefighting than their non-operatic counterparts. They may be unwilling or reluctant to do vigorous activity. It takes extra time and patience to convince them to try what you want them to do. Also, avoiding the more strenuous and/or dangerous movements while choreographing will help their confidence and be more in keeping with their physical abilities.

Another physical limitation which may be placed on the singer/combatant is if he or she must sing either during or immediately after the fight. It may be extremely difficult or impossible to convince either the performer or director that the singer/combatant can or should sing while out of breath. To solve this problem there are two solutions you can choose from or a combination of both. The first is to avoid choreographing moves which will wind the singer. The second is to carefully plan the number, size, and placement of each breath the singer is to make so you can be sure that he/she is getting enough oxygen to prevent getting winded.

Another major consideration the fight director must take into account is that the fight is usually set to a particular piece of music. Listen to the music many times before deciding anything about the fight. Talk with the director about it. The music will also have a tempo which should be felt in the fight. You may or may not want to choreograph each blow to a particular note of music. If you do decide to do this, the fight will probably be less realistic and, perhaps, more like a dance. Continuity and fluidity are often hampered by this approach. If you decide not to go that route, the fight will still have to fit the music somehow. A very realistic approach is to let the music cue each beat of the fight, not only in mood, tempo, and rhythm, but also in timing. In other words, the beat of the action should correspond thematically with the music and the combatants can listen to the music for their cue to begin each beat (or at least the key beats).

Another important indication the music will give is the length of the fight. You shouldn't choreograph a thirty-second fight to fifteen seconds of music. The music will also tell you if the singer/combatants will have to sing during or after the fight, a problem already discussed.

These are a few of the special problems to be considered when working on an opera. As can be seen, there are similar but different concerns in fight directing an opera as opposed to a play.

# SCHLAGER DUELING

by J.D. Aylward

Seventy years ago, I was a student in Germany, and knew something about the play of the schlager. It is a weapon and a play which differs entirely from anything we know in Western Europe.

The art of arms has always been much cultivated in Germany, where there is a tradition descending from the Marxbruder and the Federfechter of the fifteenth century through such famous masters as Johann Schmidt of Nuremberg, Anton Kahn of Gottingen, and Wilhelm Fehn of Strasburg, as well as others too numerous to mention. But in effect, the cult of the schlager is peculiar to the German universities, and the punctilio surrounding it has developed with the university life of a thousand years.

Whatever may have happened to them since, the German groves of Academe were pleasant in my time. Matriculation was a matter of putting down the equivalent of about a sovereign in English money, against which one received a card making one a member of the university and endowing one with academic privileges of which not the least was immunity from the civil law. Instead, we were subject to the university, which had a convenient prison ready to receive us, and there were men who thought that a week or two "Kerker" was a good opportunity to do a bit of neglected reading.

Life in a German university was so cheap that practically anybody could become a student, but the better class of men tended to segregate themselves in one of the five Korps, or fraternities, which are the successors of the ancient student secret societies having as their prime objective the unification of Germany. These secret societies were contrary to the law, but the Senates could not suppress them; I am not sure whether their successors, the Korps, are unlawful or whether they are tolerated by the university rulers.

The Korps are governed by regents known as a Konvent, and these gentlemen exercise an iron discipline over the members of their fraternities, who are bound by an unwritten code of etiquette. Members of a Korps are known by their caps in the Korps colours; the one I knew most about, Saxo-Borussia, wore the Prussian white.

If the age-old political objective of the fraternities had been attained sixteen years before I was in Germany, they still had their ancillary one: the encouragement of arms, and the schlager was the peculiar weapon of the undergraduates.

In 1820, when Mr. John Russell, an Edinburgh lawyer, visited the university of Jena, he described the then schlager as an exceedingly nasty little weapon. As the statutes of the university forbade its appearance in public, the undergraduates had designed a model which could be carried inconspicuously; the handle unscrewed and was pocketed, the triangular blade was sheathed in a walking-cane, and the guard was a large "tine" plane which irreverent students called "the soup-plate of honour".

It looks as if "schlager" must be a generic term describing the weapon affected by the Korpsstudent, for the schlager of the present day is completely different. It has a flat blade about 36 inches long, and about half an inch broad, stiffer and stouter than the blade of the Italian dueling sabre, but less uncompromising than that of the practice sabre formerly used in our cavalry regiments. Weight for weight, however, the

two weapons are about the same, but as the centres of percussion differ to suit the antithetical methods of play, the schlager is as light in the hand as the cavalry sabre is heavy.

This is attained by the large basket of the schlager which has a strong knuckle-guard rising from a steel baseplate or shell, and also a system of counter-guards which are lined with a light metal painted in the Korps colours. The upper side of the squared handle is hollowed to take the thumb, for the value of the leading edge has always been recognized by the Germans, and below a buff leather loop is fitted, through which the fore-finger is passed.

For business purposes, the end of the blade is sharpened for about a span, or eight inches, on the right edge, and for about four inches on the false edge; the point is not used, and is left rounded. In training, it is regarded of the greatest importance to learn how to use the edge.

The stance is an upright one with the legs a little apart, the right foot advanced, the left arm kept behind the back as in sabre play. The sword-arm is extended straight out from the shoulder and must not be bent, a cut is made by a circular movement from the wrist and fingers, and a parry by moving the hand laterally. The swordsman must keep his ground, and he must parry with the blade; even to lean backward to avoid a hit is disgraceful, as is flinching from a cut which has gone home, or when in the hands of the surgeon afterwards. A man who betrays sensitiveness to pain risks expulsion from his Korps but the regents are said to relax their rigour in the case of a novice, who is given an early opportunity of recovering face. There are four cuts: Aussen-Prime and Innen-Prime for the top of the head, and Aussen-Terz and Innen-Terz for the sides of the face.

While Korps etiquette demands that a member of one Korps should always appear to ignore the existence of a member of another except when facing him on the floor, their regents are in regular contact, at which, among other things, they arrange for the Paukereien which must be held twice a week during term. The system followed is for men of a Korps to put down their names for the honour of meeting men of another Korps; exceptionally, regents add to the lists names of members who seem to be getting insufficient practice with the sharps. Then the Senior Konvent, who has a pretty fair idea of the calibres of individual aspirants to fame, pairs them off as fairly as may be. According to the rule, there must be at least three couples to take the floor at any meeting, but it is said to be unknown for the regents to have to use their prerogative of nomination to fill up a list.

If protective equipment is deemed essential in the play of the conventional foil, the rebated epee, and the flimsy Italian sabre, how much more is it required when the play is with sharp blades! In a Paukereien the men wear a kind of padded leather apron which extends from the neck to below the knees, and their jugulars are shielded by silk bandages with a high leathern collar strapped overall. They have protruding iron goggles with strong wire-mesh covered openings, and the ear-pieces continue with leather bands strapping behind the head, designed to hold the ears as flat as possible. The swordarm is so heavily bandaged that it cannot be bent, even if such a movement were permissible.

All being prepared, the first men on the list come forth to take their turns, they are escorted and supported by their Sekundants or seconds, who are to care for them until they return to the dressing-room victors or vanquished. The ideal second has always been a man with special qualifications. In a Paukereien he must have an expert's knowledge of the play, the eye of a hawk, the eloquence of a lawyer, and the impudence of a politician.

First of all, the seconds bring their men to the place of combat, usually the end of a long inn room in which their friends are making merry. They present the combatants to the Judge, who places them, gives the order "Auf die Monsur" (On guard), asks if they are "fertig" (ready) and immediately explodes with the word "Los!" (go).

The second, who all this time has been supporting his charge's bandaged sword-arm, must dodge swiftly out of the way, for there is no time given him to escape from the cuts which come fast and furious. A Paukeri has to take fifteen minutes, and we all know how exhausting ten minutes can be on the floor; it seems like half an hour. This is where the experienced second comes in; he tries every dodge he knows to hold the play and so give his man rests. He claims a blade is bent or broken, that his man has been wounded and must be inspected by the surgeon, that something against the rule has been done, and he argues the matter until it is, finally, decided against him by the Judge.

However, these rests, and others caused by the necessary attention of the doctor, do not count in the regulation fifteen minutes; the time-keeper stops his watch, and only restarts it when he again hears the word "Los!" The last word is, of course, with the medical man, who stops the play if he thinks it might be dangerous for one or the other to continue, but in that case the event is counted as a drawn game, and is not reckoned among the three combats a Korpsstudent must fight in order to become free of his Korps, and wear the coveted ribbon in the Korps colours over his waistcoat. When he has received that honour, he need fight no more, but in practice he puts down his name as often as before — it is said that the great Prince Bismarck fought thirty-nine times when he was a Korpsstudent.

When Sergeant MacBane, who had fought under King William and under Marlborough, found himself at last in Chelsea Hospital, he took up stage-fighting as a relief to the tedium of retired existence. "What's in a few cuts?" he moralises in his little autobiography. "They're soon cured!" Such, too, is the philosophy of the Korpsstudent. In the Welfare State, he would be taken off to the Hospital in an ambulance, attended by his anxious friends. But the Korpsstudent, after doing his duty in a Paukeri, rejoins his colleagues over lunch even though, occasionally, he finds it difficult to eat and drink for the next day or two. Actually, in a play in which drawing cuts cannot be given, wounds are usually superficial, even though they may be quite sufficiently gory to satisfy both principals and spectators. Perhaps something of the gravity of a cut may be inferred from the fact that a "field dressing" consists of a leather patch lined with lint, the leather being some protection against another cut in the same place.

In the days of Queen Victoria and of muscular Christianity, a good many exotic activities, such as German gymnastics, were transplanted to London, where they flourished for a time. But while Englishmen flogged one another with singlesticks, and bruised one another with foils and sabres of astounding ponderosity, they were never attracted by the schlager, and the weapon remained exclusive to the German universities. Nowadays, certainly, there is less chance than ever that we should assimilate it, because from the modern point of view it has fatal defects: it cannot be emasculated, it defies the amateur legislator to improve its simple rules, and no complicated mechanism is required to signal touches which are obvious to all beholders. These are formidable drawbacks, but they are balanced by exhibitions of skill, endurance, and stoicism which call forth astonished admiration. But the schlager is a weapon for men.

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# Weaponry, Inc.

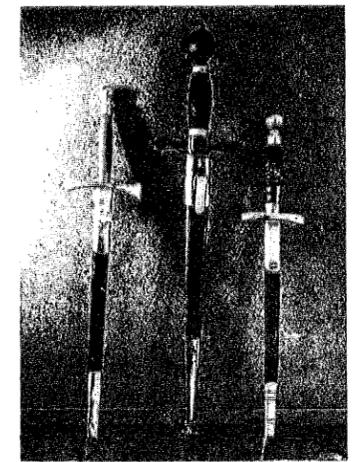
Weaponry, Inc. is the exclusive North American distributor of weapons and armour designed and crafted by Alan Meek of England. Mr. Meek has been producing weapons and armour for theatre and television all over Great Britain, including the B.B.C. Shakespeare Series, the National Theatre, the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden and Royal Shakespeare Company. Mr. Meek's implements are made of the purest materials and are first quality items meant to be used in normal stage combat. Working in association with B.H. Barry, winner of the Drama Desk Award for excellence of stage combat choreography in 1983, Alan Meek has created swords and armour suited to the unique needs of the actors and combat specialists.

Among the North American theatrical companies to whom Weaponry has supplied fighting implements are: The New York Shakespeare Festival, the Metropolitan Opera, CBS T.V. New York City, Circle in the Square Theatre on Broadway, New York University and Julliard Drama Schools, the Boston Ballet, the Folger Theatre and the soon to open Broadway musical *The Three Musketeers*.

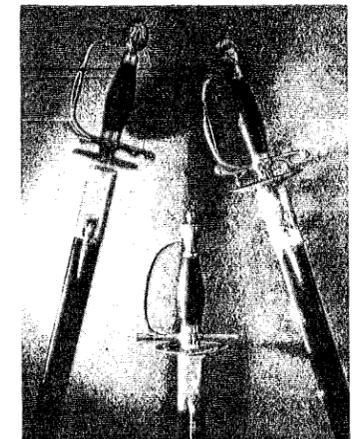
Weaponry stocks historically accurate swords and armour ranging from Graeco-Roman to the nineteenth century which can be used for reasonable stage combat. All items are based on, or sometimes actually copied from authentic period designs and there is a wide range of stock items. All blades are of steel and hilts are of brass which can be finished in various ways (polished, bronzed, silvered, gilded, etc.). All items are of the highest quality materials. The swords and daggers have tempered steel blades, solid brass quillons and pommels and wooden grips wrapped in leather thong. Normally these are sold in a natural brass finish, but a nickel colored finish is also available at a higher rate.

Sword belts are in two styles, waist and baldric, and are made of heavy English leather with solid brass buckles. Armour is of layered fiberglass and chain mail is of crocheted string. Sallets and pot helmets of fiberglass are also available. Shields come in various shapes and materials. Scottish targes for display or combat are available in fiberglass. There is also a round 21" metal shield and a ten inch buckler in either curved steel or wood covered with leather and studded. Some items are strictly non-combat, such as the cast aluminum halberds, battle axes and pikes. Everything offered is based on or actually cast from authentic period weapons. Weaponry can also create special items such as sword canes and a limited number of unusual designs. If you have specific designs in mind for your production, Weaponry will assist you.

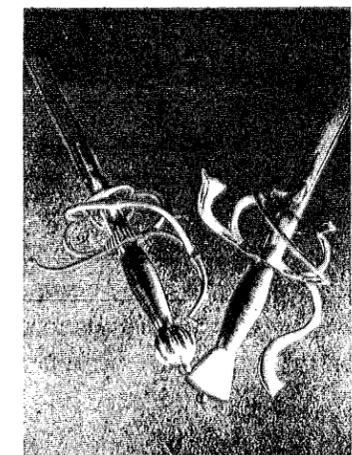
For safety, Weaponry recognizes the need to have all stage fights choreographed by a recognized professional theatrical combat expert and will be happy to recommend and assist you in contacting a fight director for your needs. Joe Toland and Richard Friedman are available for consultation and design and may be contacted by writing P.O. box 791 Cooper Station, New York, New York or by calling (212) 962-1464.



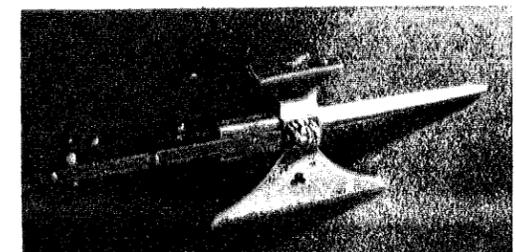
Daggers



British Officers Sabres - 19th century



Swept Hilt Epees with Scabbards



Battle Axe

# EXTRAORDINARY RISK

New clauses on hazard pay and fight captaincy have been negotiated into Equity rules for the CORST and AEA and became effective February 28, 1984. When working under Equity jurisdiction the major additions are as follows:

A second paragraph has been added to "Extraordinary Risk" on page 46 (B):

"An Actor also shall be deemed to be engaging in Extraordinary Risk if the staging or choreography require the Actor to execute movements which depart from the accepted techniques of movement and support as used in contemporary theatre dance, i.e., classical ballet, modern jazz, ethnic, tap and soft shoe.

"No Actor shall be required to perform any feat or act which places him in imminent danger or is inherently dangerous, nor shall any Actor be required to perform in a costume or upon a set which is inherently dangerous.

"The Council of Equity shall have the sole right to determine what constitutes an inherently dangerous condition and may in its discretion order that such condition be removed from the production. Before AEA makes a decision to remove the condition, a representative of AEA (other than a member of the company) shall personally examine the condition and consult with the Producer for the purpose of advising Council as to such removal. Equity's decision shall in no way reduce the Actor's right to proper insurance coverage under the provisions of this contract."

A new rule has been inserted on page 50 entitled STAGE FIGHTING:

"In consideration of the inherent hazards of participation in staged fights, the following regulations shall be followed whenever a production requires an Actor to enact a fight either with or without weapons:

"The inclusion of music shall not affect the determination of what constitutes a staged fight, and Equity shall have the right of such final determination.

"The Actor shall participate in stage fights only upon his consent in a contract rider.

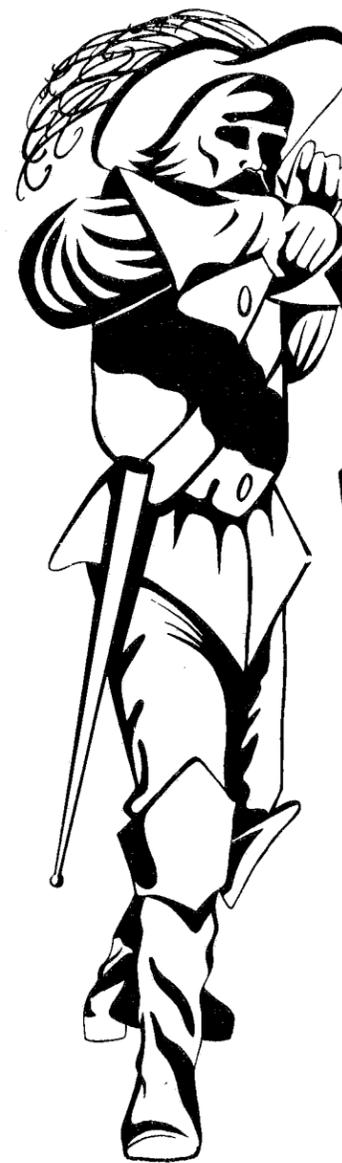
"Where the Fight Director is not available at the theatre to observe all performances, and whenever fight action is deemed to be Extraordinary Risk, or when five (5) or more combatants are involved in fight action, a Fight Captain shall be assigned. Should the person assigned be a member of AEA, the function shall require an additional payment of Ten Dollars (\$10.00) per week to the Actor so assigned.

"The Fight Captain shall have the authority to make changes in production elements of the fight or the actual routine of the fight action where such may be required for the safety of the performers. No changes may be made in a fight routine without the agreement of the Fight Director or Fight Captain.

"All Actors who participate in a fight shall run through the routine before each performance, either at the beginning of half-hour or, at the option of the Actors involved, during the fifteen minutes just prior to the half-hour call.

"Any change in the time of this rehearsal shall be at the express discretion of the Fight Director or Fight Captain.

"Performing actors shall rehearse fights with understudies. Time shall be allotted for this purpose during the specified rehearsal hours for the production."



5<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL

## NATIONAL STAGE COMBAT WORKSHOP

The Fifth Annual National Stage Combat Workshop was held in Salem, Massachusetts from July 16th through August 3rd and was organized by Liam O'Brien of Salem State College and Joseph Martinez of the SAFD. The workshop drew thirty-eight people from twenty states, the District of Columbia and Canada who came from diverse backgrounds but who all had an interest in stage combat in some form. Several participants were already members of the Society including an associate member and several people who had been previously certified and wanted to refine their technique.

Salem is a historical town known primarily for the witch hysteria of 1692, but more significantly, it was an important seaport town fifteen miles north of Boston in the early days of our country. The town has several maritime sites and some historical buildings such as the Custom House and the House of Seven Gables, both of which were described in the works of a previous resident, Nathaniel Hawthorne. The tourist attractions were approximately two miles from the campus and many of the workshop participants took in the sights as well as taking the opportunity to go whale watching during the first weekend.

The people of Salem and the college were very gracious and made the workshop participants feel like welcomed guests to the community. Liam O'Brien, our campus host, did an incredible job of planning and organizing the workshop.

The weather was warm and humid but not unbearable. There was no air-conditioning so there was a good deal of perspiration either from the humid weather or the class exertion.

The workshop participants were housed on the fourth floor of Peabody Hall, one of the two dorms on campus, while the instructors and their assistants were housed on the third floor. Each floor had a community bathroom and a common kitchen/lounge area both of which became highly congested at peak times during the day.

The thirty-eight participants were divided in half so that each class was of a manageable size to adequately and safely supervise the training. The days began at nine and went until five-thirty or six with short

breaks between classes and a break for lunch. Evening sessions began at seven. Mornings consisted of quarterstaff taught by Normand Beauregard and rapier/dagger with Joseph Martinez. Afternoons were filled with court sword taught by Erik Fredricksen and hand-to-hand with David Leong. Quarterstaff was replaced with broadsword when David Boushey arrived the second week and during the third week Patrick Crean took over court sword and Lars Lundgren did fight technique for film, replacing Leong's hand-to-hand. J.R. Beardsley came the second weekend to do sessions on weapons and their maintenance. The frequently mentioned quorum of full members in attendance consisted of Beardsley, Beauregard, Boushey, Fredricksen, Leong, Lundgren and Martinez who were all in Salem the second weekend of the workshop.

Norman Beauregard commuted an hour and a half each day from the Cumberland Company for the Performing Arts in Rhode Island. Normand brought up his associate Craig Handel and some of his students to assist in teaching quarterstaff. Normand was using seven foot rattan poles of one and a half to two inches in diameter. These light, flexible poles allowed for some exciting and flashy quarterstaff work. Those who had worked with wooden staffs previously really appreciated the maneuverability and weight of the rattan quarterstaffs.

Joseph Martinez's rapier and dagger technique had a definite historical style that was aesthetically pleasing to the eye with its lines and angles of engagement and invitations. Joseph was assisted by Tom Schall, an affiliate member of the Society. Joseph also shared his fight notation form with the participants and hopefully will share more information of fight notation in the future.

Erik Fredricksen taught court sword for the first two weeks and was also assisted by Tom Schall. Court sword tends to frustrate new students who are not familiar with fencing terminology, lines or the precise point work and precision necessary. Erik always manages to lighten things up with his humor and to hold their interest and admiration.

David Leong, assisted by SAFD member Charles Killian, conducted the hand-to-hand segment during the first two weeks. Leong's approach to teaching hand-to-hand is clear, concise and to the point with demonstrations that thoroughly break down the moves so that the student knows exactly how the action is to be executed before actually trying it himself.

David Boushey, the founder of the Society, came in during the second week and replaced quarterstaff with broadsword. His presence brought a new energy to the workshop. It is always such a pleasure to see Boushey explain his technique on executing kills. They always appear so real in his fight choreography.

The third week Patrick Crean took over court sword and, as one participant stated, "he was such a delight that he was worth the price of admission to the workshop." Paddy was charming, accessible and brought a sense of style, taste and class to the workshop. It was truly an honor for the participants to meet him besides actually getting to work with him on refining court sword technique. The night before the certification tests, Paddy did some excerpts from his one man show *The Sun Never Sets*, based on the works of Rudyard Kipling. It was a welcomed respite to the three weeks of physical activity.

Lars Lundgren took over the hand-to-hand the third week and related it to film technique and stunt work. Lars brought two of his students Larry Ball and Gwynneth Buzolich to assist with the classes. Later in the week, Larry Ball staged a stunt for the workshop by jumping off a four story building on fire. (Perhaps Liam will share with us the trials and tribulations of getting permission and permits to set oneself on fire and jump off a building). It was fascinating to see all the preparation involved in this stunt yet a nerve wracking experience to see this

done live, especially since this was Larry's first jump from this specific height and his first jump while on fire. He missed the mark he and Lars had bet on by eight inches and had to buy the first round of drinks. Stunt work is a tough business.

The various assistants to the workshop/leaders proved to be a very valuable asset with such a large group of participants. The assistants were able to correctly demonstrate a movement with the instructor and then were available to assist in the coaching, which allowed the learning of a new sequence of actions to move along quickly and smoothly.

There was a great deal of media coverage. The local television stations out of Boston were on campus filming for several days. The Boston PM Magazine covered the workshop and Normand Beauregard choreographed a sequence for the male host of the show to fight off a bevy of attackers. It was enlightening to see how well Normand knew the media and how quickly he could put together a good believable fight sequence for a media personality who, though athletic, had no previous quarterstaff training. And although the media coverage was exciting and beneficial for the Society and for Salem State, the continual disruption of the class instruction quickly wore thin for the participants who were there at considerable personal expense to learn stage combat.

Several other workshop sessions occurred during the three weeks. Richard Huggins of Theatre Magic did a pyro-technic demonstration the second weekend. J.R. Beardsley brought weapons from American Fencing Supply and demonstrated the proper maintenance for various weapons. Even though Santelli and Weaponry, Inc. sent information to the workshop through their brochures and literature, it was nice to see equipment first hand. Some of the participants and instructors had weapons from other suppliers and it was an excellent opportunity to compare, contrast and shop around. Other evening sessions involved Tai Chi, Aikido, Trager Psychological Integration and body alignment taught by several of the workshop participants and instructors.

On Friday of the third week was the certification test and as anyone knows who has been through a National Stage Combat Workshop, you are physically exhausted by the third week but somehow get through it to take the certification test. Eighteen fights were performed and from these excerpts were selected for "A Night at the Fights" that evening. Thirty-three participants took the certification test, twenty-nine passed and six of these passed with recommendation. It is always such a surprise to see what acting and imagination can do with the series of mandatory moves that have to be executed by everyone during the certification test. The following people passed the certification test at the Fifth Annual National Stage Combat Workshop in Salem on August 3, 1984:

384 William Finlay	393 Paul Munger	404 Cyril Bodnar
385 Larry Moss	394 Jane Ridley	405 Dale Girard
386 Adam Rich	395 John Pecora	406 Bob Lindsay
387 John Sipes (Rec)	396 Mark Mentor	407 Jim Houghton
388 Charles Conwell (Rec)	397 Fred Lennertz	408 Bruce Lecuru
389 David Sollars (Rec)	398 Bob McDougal	409 Max Dixon
390 Bo Walker (Rec)	399 Gus Gillette (Rec)	410 Cass Foster
391 Bob Smith	400 John Stead (Rec)	411 Lori Leshin
392 Paul Smith	401 Robert Goodwin	412 Kim Wickwire
	402 Terry Green	
	403 Rob Hall	

Although the participants' occupations ranged from a sous chef to a champion kick boxer, the majority of the participants were already

teaching stage combat, fencing, movement or directing at the college level. This gave the workshop a tremendous resource for information on varying techniques and concepts. It was unfortunate that this resource could not be fully utilized, but due to the intensity of the workshop training itself, what exchange of information that did occur happened in the evenings either in the seminar sessions or informally over a few beers in the lounge area of the dorm.

Next year's workshop will be held in Cedar City, Utah at Southern Utah State College in conjunction with the Utah Shakespearean Festival. Cedar City is approximately one hundred-eighty miles northeast of Las Vegas and three hundred miles south of Salt Lake City in a scenically spectacular area of our country. The activities of the Utah Shakespearean Festival should lend a nice period atmosphere to the study of stage combat next summer. But any way you look at it, the action packed Fifth Annual Workshop will be a hard act to follow!

*Linda McCollum*

## FIGHTS R US, The Stage Combat Ensemble of New York

*by Richard Raether*

Fights R Us began in 1979 when Allen Suddeth and a group of fellow stage combat enthusiasts in New York put together "A Night at the Fights." Even though many people coming to see the show had the vague idea that the show was about boxing, once they shed their misconceptions the response was phenomenal. "A Night at the Fights" became a showcase for all forms of stage combat, either set in short scenes or done to music and was followed by more showcases—"Fight Extravaganza" and "Fight Extravaganza II". Several people involved in the first showcase are still present-day members of the Fights R Us organization.

The official birth of Fights R Us was in 1981 when the Westbeth theatre planned to hold a weekly Cabaret Night featuring a constantly changing lineup of comics, singers and mines. Allan Suddeth was approached about putting something together for the weekly Cabaret Night by a booking agent who had seen "A Night at the Fights." Fights R Us became the only regular weekly featured act for thirty-five unbroken weeks with material created by and for the group. Allen did most of the choreography at first, but as time passed every member of the troupe began to create pieces and Allen served as Artistic Director, with all material passing under his critical eye before it was performed.

Some fights were set to music. One immensely popular piece was "Short People," a tongue-in-cheek fight set to Randy Newman's tongue-in-cheek song. The very short hero and heroine were beset by three very tall and menacing hoods who abused them, broke their spectacles and stole their picnic lunch all to the beat of the music. But, beneath their mild-mannered trenchcoats, the short people were wearing kung-fu pajamas, and they trashed the bad guys, every punch and kick timed to the song. To the music of Rossini, Allen Suddeth and Nancy Sigworth did a domestic fight that featured flying dishes, grapefruits in the face and ended with Allen's bald head being plastered with raw eggs, toast and jam and triumphantly being electrocuted with the toaster as the music built to a rousing climax.

Emily Conable and Richard Raether did "The Apache," the masochism tango with Emily in the traditional slit skirt and high heels and Richard as the lounge lizard who blows smoke in her face and mistreats her as they snake through the tango together. Emily and Richard used this piece for the hand-to-hand section of their SAFD certification test.

Fights R Us did futuristic fights such as "The Chronicles of Benedict X-11--Traitor to the Federation" in which Benedict X-11 and his band of scurvy cutthroats were tracked down by the Amazon Police and were brought back to face Trial by Combat with Cromwell Speed, the People's Champion. They staged westerns. "Cowboys" was a John Wayne sendup in which the town marshal, known only as "Duke," takes on the infamous Carmichael Brothers in a gigantic saloon brawl, aided and abetted by Duke's sweetheart, Nell. And they did swashbucklers. "The Revenge of the Crimson Blade" was a pirate serial wherein each chapter ended in a cliffhanger. Set in Quando Realdo (somewhere in the Carribbean) the action centered around a stolen treasure map, a heroine, Miss Vivien Blunt, the nefarious villain, Trevor Plunderhaven and the rope-swining, swashbuckling hero, The Crimson Blade, played by Allen Suddeth.

When they were stuck for a new piece they would do "Create-A-Fight." The audience was invited to vote (from a multiple choice selection to keep out the more bizarre suggestions) on the setting, weapons, names of characters and to choose who would live, die or be horribly maimed. Fights R Us would retire while other acts went on and come back in half an hour with an instant fight. It was increasingly easy for them to work very fast because they knew each other's capabilities and the level of skill within the troupe was uniformly high. After the inevitable pulling back and simplifying that is done when you perform



with or choreograph for less-experienced fighters, it was pure pleasure to work on an expert level, constantly learning from and with each other.

By the end of the season groupies were dragging their friends to every performance and the Fights R Us logo designed by Margaret Raether began being seen frequently on publicity material, T-shirts, jackets and hats all over New York. The thirty-five week run at the Westbeth ended with "Fight Extravagnaza III" featuring the best of the material from the season. The performance was sold out with SRO crammed into the theatre.

A New York based CBS program, *2 On the Town*, picked up on Fights R Us and did a feature on the group showing a film of rehearsals, classes and a small excerpt from "The Crimson Blade." Another program, *Nickelodean*, invited the group to perform "Short People" on their show. "Livewire" and Allen did an interview on the program and spoke to the kids about stage combat.

When Belvedere Castle re-opened in Central Park after renovation, Fights R Us was hired to perform. They were given free reign to come up with a show and responded with "The Abduction of Gwendolyn Twekesbury." Gwendolyn's unscrupulous relatives attempted to hurl her from the topmost turret of the castle into the lake below, thus inheriting her millions. Fortunately for Gwendolyn, her dashing fiance arrived in the nick of time by horsedrawn carriage, rowed across the lake, scaled the cliff beneath the castle and battled his way to the rescue, accompanied by the cheers of the crowd gathered to watch, and covered by all the evening newscasts that night.

"Smash Hits" was another group project that was hosted by Orson Bean who is now on their Board of Directors. It consisted of an assortment of silly and serious fights evolving from scenes or set to music. Some of the featured pieces included "Mexican Lace and Spanish Steel" wherein a lecherous bandito and a gallant lover clash over the affections of a certain hot tamale; "Cowboys," a sequel set ten years later; "The Club Fighter," about a flim flam man and a rigged amateur boxing match; and the tour-de force was "The Beat of the Blade" wherein Allen Suddeth battled enemies with rapier, quarterstaff, rapier/cape and rapier/dagger.

Then in 1983 Fights R Us commissioned a script that involved a single story line and plenty of stage combat that could be produced as their own off-Broadway show. That project which centered on the Robin Hood legend with special emphasis on Maid Marion who works as an undercover agent and trains in the skills of combat to allow justice to triumph became *Maid Marion (and Robin Hood, too)*. *Maid Marion* opened at the Lamb's Theatre last December with script by John Pell, original music by Larry Siegel, directed by Christopher Catt and fight choreography by J. Allen Suddeth and scored a lively off-Broadway success. Each performance was followed by a short educational demonstration of stage combat techniques used in the production.

Following its off-Broadway run, the show was picked up by Producers Association, which is currently booking tour dates for the production. The cast—all Fights R Us members and many SAFD members—includes Emily Conable (affiliate) as Maid Marion, Sterling Swann as Robin Hood, Steven Edwards (affiliate) as Prince John, Ron Piretti as Will Scarlet, Steve Vaughan as Little John and Katy Winters (affiliate) as Gwen.

This past February, Fights R Us was hired to stage a brawl in a diner on the set of *One Life to Live*. The choreography by Allen involved several members in the shoot, Nancy Sigworth, Sterling Swann, Tony Farentino, Jim Manley (affiliate), Steve Vaughan and Emily Conable (affiliate). The sequence is part of the reel submitted for competition in the Emmy Awards for *One Life to Live*.

In April, Fights R Us mingled at a college dance for *The Guiding Light* and, at the appropriate moment, swung into action against the leather-jacketed hoods who crashed the party. Preppies who wiped the floor with the bad guys included Richard Raether (associate), John Bachelder, Robert Walsh (affiliate), Sterling Swann, Emily Conable (affiliate) and Pat Tallman with choreography by Allen Suddeth.

Fights R Us is a unique organization and difficult to classify into a specific category. The common assumption is that Fights R Us is a stunt group and it is true that they do stunt work on the soaps quite often. They don't crash cars, but they do fall down stairs, take punches and double for principal players. But Fights R Us really isn't a stunt organization. Most of the members consider themselves to be primarily actors, although the membership includes musicians, costumers, artists and directors as well.

The group was forced to define themselves and amended their title to Fights R Us, the Stage Combat Ensemble of New York. People looking for individual fighters or choreographers or a group to do a melee contact Fights R Us. Allen Suddeth remains the primary person to contact in regard to hiring individuals or the whole group. They do lecture/demonstrations on stage combat, stunt work, choreography and their own full scale productions.



Emily Conable in "Maid Marion and Robin Hood Too." Photo by Jim Manley

## REVIEWS

### TROILUS AND CRESSIDA

The Utah Shakespearean Festival at Southern Utah State College in Cedar City included Shakespeare's seldom produced and most openly anti-war play, *Troilus and Cressida*, as part of the 1984 season. Under Libby Appel's direction and David Boushey's fight choreography, movement, spectacle and character interest added a new dimension of physicality to this rather long, intellectual play that assaults the romantic values of honor, love and military glory. Boushey's fight direction showed just how valuable the knowledgeable fight director can be to the total production and to the development of believable and consistent characterization on stage, even in scenes that do not involve physical combat.

At the beginning of the first act, the traditional Elizabethan stage was strewn with the decay and clutter of war — a partially dismantled cannon, broken wagon wheels, parts of a dead horse, and a hanging, decomposing body. This visually decayed environment stood out in bold contrast to the opulence of the blue and silver Trojans and the brown and gold Greeks in their hand painted Elizabethan costumes.

The play is full of parallels and contrasts — Trojan and Greek, love and war, passion and reason, tragedy and comedy, intrinsic and extrinsic values. All through the play various characters are seen in each opposing camp debating merits and values. Hector and Troilus debate the worth of Helen. Ulysses and Achilles discuss the merits of a hero. By the time we reach the climactic sequence of fights in Act V, each character is a distinct individual representing specific points of view, and it became Boushey's challenge to incorporate these various eccentricities and foibles into the fights.

Hector and Ajax fight in the lists, playing the game according to the rules of knightly combat, a game ironically at odds with the action and language of the play. The ceremonial gestures of the chivalric code hold off chaos while ignoring the cause of the strife. The fight takes place with lance and shield in a roped off area with the Greeks and Trojans almost agog with the excitement of the orderly kill. The noble Hector hesitates just short of the kill because Ajax is kin and keeping with the rules of the game the fight is stopped. Ajax, at this moment, is seen to function within the code of honor in contrast to the brawny, slow-witted Ajax seen previously kicking and pursuing the war scrounging slave, Thersites while bellowing about his heroic capabilities in front of his corporate peers.

Previous to the ceremonial encounter, the audience, returning from intermission, was treated to a special look into Achilles' camp and the activities of the Myrmidons as they lounged about in their loincloths, their oiled bodies glistening while they drank and wrestled with one another to the amusement of their fellow comrades. Some exciting throws were accomplished in this scene with one of the skilled gymnasts in the group doing some high flying flips that had the audience gasping. This scene, the beginning of Act III, iii, added an awareness of the sexuality of Achilles' camp besides shrewdly getting the audience back into the action of the play after the intermission.

Boushey, by choosing to stage the final series of fights in Act V as one large battle, reinforced visually the chaos and anarchy that occurs when the system/state fails. The

whole scene was transformed by fog and the eighteen actor/combatants filled the entire stage using the various levels, including a silhouetted fight in the inner above. A wide variety of weapons was used — everything from found objects in the debris on stage, to short swords, bucklers, various shaped shields and polearms with sinister shaped heads meant to ensnare the opponent. This wide assortment of weapons lent a startling contrast and variety of movement to the battle.

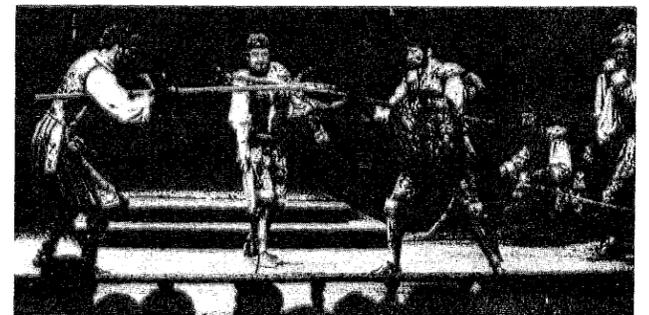
The degradation of the spirit and the loss of value and justification in war was exemplified with the continually intoxicated Menelaus struggling with Paris like siblings fighting over a blanket. The three way fight between Troilus, Diomedes and Ajax was handled adroitly and in keeping with the characterizations by having Ajax and Diomedes practically fighting with each other as they push and shove each other in their furious attempts to get at Troilus. This incredibly exciting climactic fight ended with a stage full of even more debris and littered with bodies as the smoke gradually cleared and the war scroungers began picking at the booty.

The decadence and brutal perversion of Hector's assassination was horrifyingly realized when the Myrmidons arose from their faked deaths to surround the unarmed Hector, repeatedly stabbing him as they entrapped him in a net and strung him up, while the masked high priest Achilles looked down upon the slaughter from above. This moment alone brought home the horrifying realities of the world at cross purposes and the atrocities of war. The action was so quick and so ferocious that the limited use of blood packs was barely noticeable.

The only error in the staging of the final fight sequences concerned Hector's bloodthirsty lust to kill the Greek for his "sumptuous" armor which is a crucial revelation of Hector's change in values since the "list" fight. The director, Ms. Appel, chose to place the armor on Cassandra who had been an ever present figure wandering through the scenes of the entire play. This choice was ambiguous and destroyed what was a relevant point thematically in the play, especially when considered in parallel to Hector's discovery of the "most putrefied core" immediately preceding his own gruesome demise.

*Troilus and Cressida* is a philosophical play and a challenge to any director. This production was greatly enhanced and well supported by David Boushey's fight direction.

Linda McCollum



Fight sequence, *TROILUS AND CRESSIDA* 1984 Utah Shakespearean Festival, Director-Libby Appel, Fight Director-David L. Boushey  
Photo by Boyd D. Redington, U.S.F. Photographer

## "SHOULD BLOOD FLOW ON STAGE?"

Walter Kerr in an article appearing in the *New York Times* on December 4, 1983 responded to the number of "drawn daggers" during the 1983-84 season by posing the question of how much stage blood do we need to see?

First of all, Mr. Kerr questions the moment of violence and the method of its presentation in the revived musical *Zorba*. Mr. Kerr found the unexpected demise of the harmless and appealing young widow, who is ferociously seized, her head thrown back and her exposed throat cut without drawing a trace of blood, to be confusing. What concerned him was the lack of preparation through three quarters of the play for this moment of violence, which was made light of with the lack of blood in order to fit with the musical comedy format.

At the other extreme was Ben Kingsley's varied fragments from Shakespeare in which blood actively flowed from two hand held daggers which spurted, dripped and oozed blood while Mr. Kingsley spat out viciously punctuated iambs from *Macbeth*. The visualization of Shakespeare's imagery is valid but needs a proper balance, for too much gore (or too steady a supply) can be distracting by diverting the audience's focus.

Mr. Kerr went on to discuss Peter Brook's *Carmen* with its added knife fights and two new deaths, one which occurs off-stage and the other tokenly suggested. The final thrust in the dagger-duel between Don Jose and Carmen's husband occurs off-stage with the husband reeling back into view before his last breath. Mr. Brook established a dramatic level of violence that was not "cheap melodrama." Due to the lack of distancing and the emotional, physical intimacy of the stage arrangement with the sandbag seats circling the acting area, Mr. Brook carefully prepared the audience for the subsequent carnage. Early in the play, in the Micaela/Carmen tussle, Carmen puts a knife to Michaela's forehead and draws blood — more blood than the token scratch could account for. In this way he let the audience know "we're playing for keeps tonight." The proportion of violence was kept in relationship to the intimacy and vastness of the unusual stage space.

## ROBIN HOOD at VITA

Bernard Weiner, in reviewing Alfred Noyes' *Robin Hood* at the Valley Institute of Theatre Arts in Saratoga at the Paul Masson Winery during the Valley Shakespeare Festival, found the play to be an old-fashioned melodrama/romance mixed with a fairy tale theme. The major story of the battle between the forces of Good and Evil became something of a cartoon.

Mr. Weiner found that the only thing, other than the director's handling of the staging, that made this "sticky story" bearable, indeed fascinating at times, was the exceptional fight choreography by J.R. Beardsley. His use of swords, knives, fists, knees to the groin, pulled hair and other forms of mayhem provided a "good dirty fight."

## HENRY V at N.Y. Shakespeare Festival

Julius Novick in *The Village Voice* on July 17, 1984 reviewed Joseph Papp's *Henry V* as presented by the New York Shakespeare Festival at the Delacorte Theater in Central Park. Kevin Kline gave an admirable performance as Henry V. Mr. Novick felt that the scene when Henry rallies his men to the breach at Harfleur was not clearly staged. B.H. Barry's "fight direction" in the big battle on the handsome wooden castle-like structure, painted deep red and trimmed with gold, was several cuts above the usual clink-clank, although it was never quite believable. The battle was fought amid plenty of swirling smoke which is always good to veil what will not bear too close scrutiny.

## SOCIETY SPOTLIGHT

# J. ALLEN SUDDETH

J. Allen Suddeth has been a full member of the Society of American Fight Directors since 1980. Allen has been teaching and choreographing professionally for ten years and in New York City since 1979. As a fight choreographer he has over a hundred television and stage shows to his credit. Allen has worked on Broadway, Off-Broadway and for the three major television networks as well as for regional theatre.

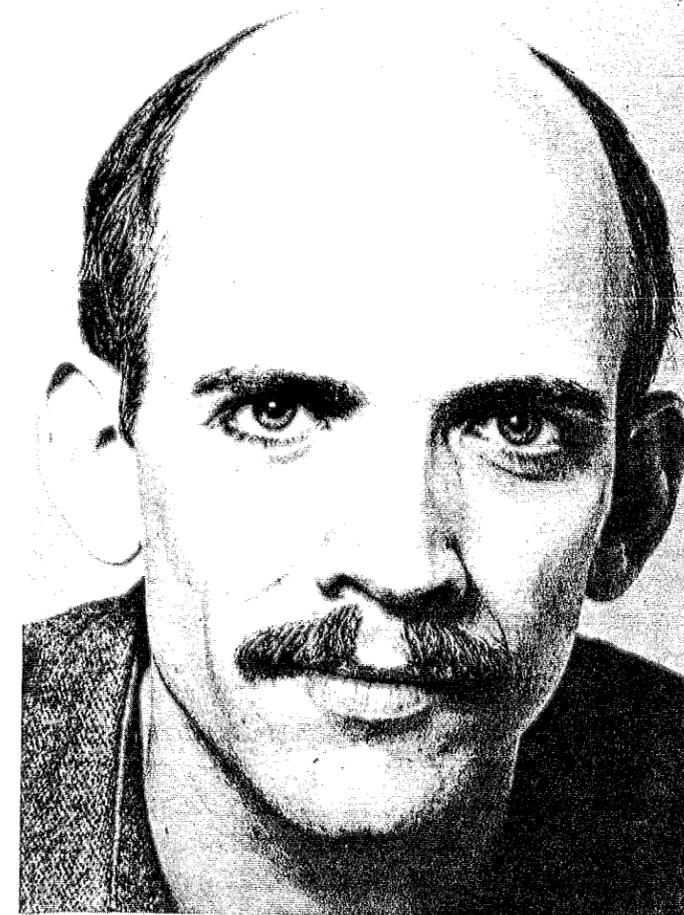
In New York, Allen runs the largest private stage combat school in the country. He has taught or been a guest artist at such universities as Fordham, Ohio and Boston. In 1981 he founded and became president and artistic director of the performance group Fights R Us. Allen is currently director and stunt coordinator for *One Life to Live*, *Guiding Light*, *Another World* and *Texas*. He sets and blocks fight scenes for actors, sets camera shots, teaches performers fights and supplies stunts and stunt doubles for stars and principals.

Allen was born in Vienna, Austria to American parents serving abroad. He trained with Patrick Crean to whom he claims he owes all he knows about safety, panache and "Za!" Allen was one of the first to give the "fight test" under the auspices of the SAFD.

As an actor, Allen has appeared in *Cyrano*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *King Lear*, *Macbeth* and T.V. soaps and commercials. He recently completed a six week run on *One Life to Live* as the sinister "Rupert Sommes" who is involved in conspiracy, sabotage and lots of physical action.

Allen wrote and choreographed the outdoor festival *Lord Baltimore's World* in celebration of the 350th anniversary of the founding of St. Mary's City, Maryland in 1634. The show and the town were specially built for the celebration.

Allen and Steve Edwards are producing their first action feature film entitled *The Hanging Ground* which was written by Richard Vetere and is being directed by Peter Masterson. Allen will be serving as second unit director and fight choreographer and the film is scheduled to begin shooting in the fall.



## POINTS OF INTEREST

### CERTIFICATION TEST

I had the good fortune again to adjudicate the combatants from the University of Washington P.A.T.P. Again, the participants were well trained and very aware of safety. Perhaps this was the greatest flaw in what could have been an extraordinary display of armed and unarmed combat. The fact that the combatants at times looked a little too safe distracted from the need for total realism. Of course we want the fights to be safe! This is of utmost importance but we as an audience must still feel the tension of the fight. I didn't feel they created enough tension. I felt the fights though skillfully executed lacked the spontaneity to make them not just good solid fights but rather fantastic fights that put us on the edge of our seats. As usual the fights were very well acted. I always have admiration for this program's students. They are always of first calibre. And by the by, we had an all-time first! A rapier and dagger fight with *banana* and *celery*. It was hilarious! (By the way, they did fight with the real things as well). All in all, it was a delightful day and I passed all 6 combatants. I didn't give any recommendations. Those who took and passed the test:

331 Simon Brooking	334 Scott Kaiser
332 Tony Carreiro	335 Christopher Combest
333 Sheila McDevitt	336 Greg Serkle

Teachers: Craig Turner  
Tony Soper

Adjudicator: David Boushey

### RESULTS OF CERTIFICATION TEST AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

On April 28 I adjudicated the students of Robin McFarquhar, Assistant Professor of Theatre. In all, twenty students received their certification. All of them took the test on rapier and dagger, hand-to-hand, and quarterstaff. Although no recommendations were given, quite a few individuals should be encouraged to take the test with this goal in mind. Robert Stormont and Christine McHugh presented a scene from *Henry IV, Part I* that showed evidence of solid acting as well as stage fight training. Linda Van Polen and Celeste Williams maintained a very high level of commitment and involvement throughout the entire fight scene. Their body language, reactions and blade work displayed a strong sense of dynamics. Overall, my only note of concern was the lack of "real intention." I felt that some of the fights were performed slower than one might want to see, so I asked them to redo some of the fights at a faster pace. All students were able to do this when called upon.

My congratulations to Robin McFarquhar for sharing his knowledge in a very thorough way. I look forward to

adjudicating his students next year. Below is the list of those who received their certificates:

337 Carrie Levin	347 David Freeman
338 Susan Schuler	348 Linda Van Polen
339 Andrew Burns	349 Celeste Williams
340 Lauren Rothenbaum	350 Natalie Cunningham
341 Steven Bergland	351 Monica McCarthy
342 Frank Nall	352 Richard Hill
343 Melissa Pachelli	353 Gilbert McCauley
344 William Kilroy	354 Marie Settem
345 Robert Stormont	355 Jamie Asch
346 Christine McHugh	356 Michael Myzkowski

Instructor: Robin McFarquhar

Adjudicator: David Leong

### RESULTS OF CERTIFICATION TEST AT RUTGERS UNIVERSITY

On May 4th, I adjudicated students trained by Rick Sordelet, graduate teaching assistant at Rutgers University. Of the eighteen people taking the test, twelve students passed. My reservations regarding the work of the students lay in some of the choreography and teaching that was provided to them by the instructor. I saw points crossing the face many times, dangerously close fencing measure, and loss of blade control. I relayed my concerns to the instructor and believe that these problems have been corrected already. On a more positive note, the students' enthusiasm and interest was at a very high level. Rick has instilled in his students a love of stage combat and a great desire to continue to study this craft. The following students received their certificates:

357 Kathleen Kelly	363 Terry Cavanaugh
358 Linda Gotz	364 Loraine Pelleteir
359 Colleen Flynn	365 Andrea Garfield
360 Keith Strunk	366 Chris Carlyle
361 Greg Petroff	367 David Banner
362 Joe Brunetti	368 Roger Bart

Instructor: Rick Sordelet

Adjudicator: David Leong

### RESULTS OF CERTIFICATION TEST AT THE DRAMA STUDIO OF LONDON

On May 14, 1984 I adjudicated the students at the Drama Studio of London at Berkeley where seven combatants stood for certification. I passed four of the combatants. The problem with those who failed was a lack of

rehearsal time. It was obvious they had been thoroughly trained but the teacher cannot do the fight for his students and it is up to them to find the time to sharpen their skills and choreography. I felt the fights were well acted, and the quarterstaff work was especially good. The Drama Studio is continuing to grow each year and the calibre of the students continues to improve. It all boils down to rehearsal time. You get what you put into it.

369 Mark Rousseau	371 Bill Ragsdale
370 Jean Schneider	372 Joe Tramontana

Instructor: J.R. Beardsley

Adjudicator: David Boushey

### RESULTS OF CERTIFICATION TEST AT WEBSTER COLLEGE

The following students of Robin McFarquhar at Webster College in St. Louis, Missouri took the certification test on June 2, 1984 and passed.

373 Dan Marderosian	379 Mae Haskins
374 Julie Campbell	380 Christa Germansen
375 Lisa Rasiq	381 Steve O'Connell
376 Rhea Cook	382 Lisa Tejer
377 Gigi Repetti	383 Bob Goodwin
378 Bethany Hanson	

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#### REMINDER:

The outdoor dramas *The Legend of Daniel Boone* and *Tecumseh* are definitely committed to hiring SAFD members as actor/combatants. Both producers tried to accommodate most of the actors that were recommended by David Leong or Drew Fracher. If you are interested in employment for next summer, watch the Points of Interest Section.

EDWARD ROZINSKY will be doing a Workshop in Stage Movement June 24-July 14, 1985, at the University of Miami in Coral Gables, Florida. Mr. Rozinsky's method of teaching movement for the actor was developed in Leningrad during the last forty years and is grounded and based on laws of modern psychophysiology as well as being based on Stanislavski's theories concerning movement for actors. The workshop will include basic stage movement, period movement, stage falls and carries and hand-to-hand combat.

#### VIOLENCE IN DRAMA

Themes in Drama Conferences are held annually in Europe at the University of London and in North America at the University of California at Riverside. The themes of the conferences vary each year. This year's theme is The Theatrical Space and next year's will be Farce and the following will be Women in Theatre. In 1988 the theme will be Violence in Drama. Papers appropriate to the themes are invited for consideration each year and should be designed for a twenty to thirty minute delivery. Inquiries concerning the conferences should be addressed to: Themes in Drama, Dept. of English, University of California, Riverside, Riverside, California 92521.

## SOCIETY NEWS

J.R. BEARDSLEY put one hundred and sixty students through hand-to-hand technique at ACT this summer. His *Robin Hood* at the Paul Masson Winery in Saratoga at the Valley Shakespeare Festival received highly favorable reviews for the fight direction. J.R. also did the fights for the Eureka Theatre production of *You Can't Lead a Horse to Water* which required the violence in the show to be accompanied by a choral background. His fight troupe, TOUCHE, is currently working on *A Case of Rapiers* which had a showcase production at the Berkeley Repertory Theatre during the ATA Convention in San Francisco in August. J.R. continues to be the Associate Director of the Drama Studio of London at Berkeley.

NORMAND BEAUREGARD, artistic director of the year old Cumberland Company for the Performing Arts, and his core group of stunt men and women, SWASHBUCKELRS, have taken the music video business by storm. SWASHBUCKELRS is responsible for some of the most exciting action sequences currently running on M-TV. Notably, the Heavy Metal group, KISS, has a new video "All Hell's Breakin' Loose" which features a knock-down, drag out, rapier and dagger duel "to the death" fought by two women over the lead singer as well as plenty of physical pandemonium. Normand is so well known for: fire eating, knife-throwing, stunts and fights. The video has received a huge response from the music business, being one of the most interesting and certainly one of the most visually exciting. Normand and SWASHBUCKELRS also choreographed "Too Young to Fall in Love" by the group, Motley Cure, which features a wild variety of Eastern Martial Arts. Normand taught quarterstaff at the National Stage Combat Workshop in Salem this summer. Some of his students may be seen this fall on PM Magazine when it airs at segment of the National Stage Combat Workshop.

DAVID BOUSHEY choreographed *Richard III* and *As You Like It* at the Fort Worth Shakespeare Festival in mid-May and then went on to the Idaho Shakespeare Festival in June to do *King Lear* and a tongue-in-cheek adaptation of *Robin Hood*. By mid June, David was in Normal, Illinois doing the choreography for *Pericles* and then on to Cedar City, Utah for the Utah Shakespearean Festival where he did *Troilus and Cressida*. David taught Broadsword at the National State Combat Workshop in Salem. David will be doing *Hamlet* at the Denver Theatre Center in October. He continues to teach movement at the Cornish Institute in Washington.

MARK CLARK, after doing the choreography for *Cyrano de Bergerac* at the Theatreworks in Palo Alto last year, spent two months studying kendo, boken and samurai with a Bay Area expert before doing the choreography for *Rashomon* at the College of Marin. In addition, Mark directed a hand-to-hand and knife fight at the Asian American Theatre in San Francisco and a rapier fight for *Two Noble Kinsmen* at the Drama Studio of London at Berkeley. Mark will be playing Benvolio in *Romeo and Juliet* at Theatreworks this summer as well as doing the fight directing for the production.

CHARLES CONWELL spent March, April and May working at the Shaw Festival in Ontario as assistant to the artistic director, Christopher Newton, on a production of *The Skin of Our Teeth*. He also taught a class in unarmed combat, knife fighting, and night stick brutality for the Shaw Company. These techniques will be used for some street violence sequences for the company's experimental production in September. In July, Charles conducted a workshop in unarmed combat for the Governor's School of New Jersey and attended the National State Combat Workshop in Salem.

EMILY CONABLE played Maid Marion in the Fights R Us production of *Maid Marion (and Robin Hood, too)* at the Lamb Theatre. In February Emily was seen in the fight sequence on *One Life to Live* followed in April with the fight at the college dance on *The Guiding Light*.

LYN DUTSON choreographed and played the role of Myra last year in a production of *Deathtrap*. Lyn also did a comic Amazon/Roman style fight in *The Rape of the Belt* and a comic duel in the musical *Can Can* as well as various scuffles in *The Corn in Green*, *The Ceremony of Innocence* and *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*. Lyn is to be credited with suggesting the article on "Super Swordsmiths."

STEVEN EDWARDS recently played the role of Prince John in *Maid Marion* at the Lamb Theatre and just completed eight weeks as a featured performer at Lord Baltimore's World in St. Mary's City, Maryland. Steven, along with Allen Suddeth, had the added distinction of being asked to perform selected fights for the visiting Duke and Duchess of Kent. Steven also performed his own horse stunts for the Maryland extravaganza. Besides producing his first action feature film with Allen Suddeth, Steven is also one of the two "guest artists" performing a murder mystery on a four hour cruise out of New York on August 25th entitled "Murder to Go," sponsored by Seagrams, where fellow passengers participate in trying to solve an Agatha Christie style "Whodunit."

ERIK FREDRICKSEN finished playing the role of "Williams" as well as staging the fights for *Henry V* at the Folger Theatre which was directed by SAFD member Phillip Kerr. The talented Tom Schall was one of the combatants. Erik also taught Stage Combat for the Chautauqua Institution under the direction of Michael Kahn of Julliard and left to participate in the National State Combat Workshop in Salem. The last week of August, Erik will be re-staging the Emily Frankel *Cyrano de Bergerac* starring John Cullum at the Alliance Theatre in Atlanta, Georgia. Erik will then return to the Folger to stage the *Hamlet* duel for Lindsey Anderson the first of the year. Erik continues to serve on the faculty of the University of Michigan.

ROB HALL conducted a well received workshop at the SETC Convention in Virginia as well as a workshop at the Mississippi Theatre Association Secondary Division Convention in Biloxi. Rob directed/choreographed the production of *Bus Stop* at the All Saints' School. Rob, who teaches and directs at Alcorn State University, attended the SAFD Workshop and was certified as an actor/combatant. He is forming a touring combat troupe at Alcorn State University this fall entitled BATTLE ACTS which will be the first black troupe of its kind in the country.

WILLIAM HAUSERMAN directed *Damn Yankees* and *The Last of the Red Hot Lovers* in the Baltimore area this summer. William was also involved with the Baltimore Actor's Theatre productions of *Oliver* and *Carousel*. William is currently teaching drama and stage fighting at a private school in the Baltimore area.

DAVID LEONG choreographed fights for the outdoor dramas *Lincoln*, *The Legend of Daniel Boone*, *Shenandoah* and *Tecumseh*. Drew Fracher co-directed fights with David at the first two outdoor shows and assisted him at *Tecumseh*. Three mass battles were staged with seventy people, live cannon fire, cavalry charges, high falls and many pyrotechnics. Earlier this summer David staged a fight for a new play *Loves and Hours* at the Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park. He also taught a workshop at the International Thespaian Conference and at the National Stage

Combat Workshop. This fall David will teach and choreograph for the Ringling Brothers Barnum and Bailey Clown College in Venice, Florida.

GREGORY LUCK recently choreographed a hand-to-hand sequence and a broadsword sequence at the University of Northern Colorado's family production of *The Hobbit*, in which he also performed. he is presently choreographing and presenting fight sequences for the Colorado Renaissance Festival.

LARS LUNGREN completed work on the recently released film *Chain Gang* for which he was the stunt co-ordinator as well as an actor. Lars played the prison guard with the bull whip that is gored with the broomstick. Lars also doubled for eighteen other stunts in the movies. (You might look also for David Boushey in this film). Lars was also the stunt co-ordinator on *Hyper Space* and did the stunts and fight direction for the outdoor drama *Blue Jacket* in Ohio. Besides duck hunting, Lars will also be conducting workshops this fall in fight technique.

JIM MANLEY did the fight choreography for the Renaissance Festival in New York in which several Society members performed. Jim was seen in Febuary on the Emmy nominated brawl in a diner on *One Life to Live*.

JOSEPH MARTINEZ, after returning from England, organized the National Stage Combat Workshop as well as taught rapier and dagger technique. Upon returning to Virginia, he choreographed a broadsword and Roman short sword battle in *Cymbeline* for the newest outdoor drama at the Rock Kiln Ruin Festival Theatre.

JOHN McCLUGGAGE designed the fights for Webster Conservatory's production of *Bus Stop* and the Repertory Theatre of St. Louis' production of *True West*. John will be working at Stage West in Springfield, Massachusetts this fall from September to December and can be reached there at #1 Columbus Center, Springfield, Mass 01115. John is interested in sharing fight choreography with other members.

RICHARD RAETHER has returned to exercising his swordarm again after more than a year of light comedies and a musical. In June Richard was the Fight Captain for Joseph Papp's *Romeo and Juliet* in New York as well as playing Sampson, Friar John and assorted Capulets. Richard was seen in a fantasy sequence on *Search for Tomorrow* on July 4th in which he played the villainous Ricardo (all in black) who attempts to ravish the beautiful Isabella and duels with the hero (all in white). At the Renaissance Festival in New York, Richard was involved in a climactic joust each day with Steven Vaugh and promised to write an article about jousting, if he survives a summer spent falling off a galloping horse.

MAC SMOTHERMAN choreographed *Rashomon* and directed and choreographed *Romeo and Juliet* at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. Besides staging various slaps, shoves and grabs in the less violent productions of their season, Mac also conducted a hand-to-hand workshop for the students there.

TONY SOPER is currently appearing on ABC's *All My Children*. Upcoming projects include choreographing the swordplay in a new adaptation of Dumas' *The Count of Monte Cristo* in Seattle and acting in *Angels Fall*. Special thanks goes to Tony for keeping us informed on the new Equity contract clauses.

KACIE STETSON is a member of the new fight troupe, Touche, and is working with J.R. Beardsley on his new show *A Case of Rapiers* which had a showcase production in August during the ATA Conference in San Francisco. Kacie just completed the choreography for *The Blade of Zorro*, an original script with about fifteen fights at West Valley College in Saratoga, California. Kacie will be teaching stage combat classes this fall in Berkeley.

MERRIDETH TAYLOR continues to teach combat in Denver. She also taught a workshop in unarmed combat for a children's theatre company. Merrideth continues to direct, teach and perform and recently received a grant which will enable her to work in New York City next winter.

ROBERT WALSH did the choreography for Joseph Papp's *Romeo and Juliet* which was done in conjunction with the Riverside Shakespeare Company and was performed in the New York City parks in all five boroughs. In April Robert was seen on *The Guiding Light* in the brawl at the college dance.

KATY WINTERS recently completed her role as Gwen in *Maid Marion* at the Lamb's Theatre. Katy spent the summer as a performer and company manager for *Four on the Town*, an MCL Production out of New York, currently touring on the S.S. Rotterdam, sailing the Northern Pacific with ports of call in Vancouver B.C., Ketchikan, Juneau and Sitka, Alaska.

## WORDSEARCH

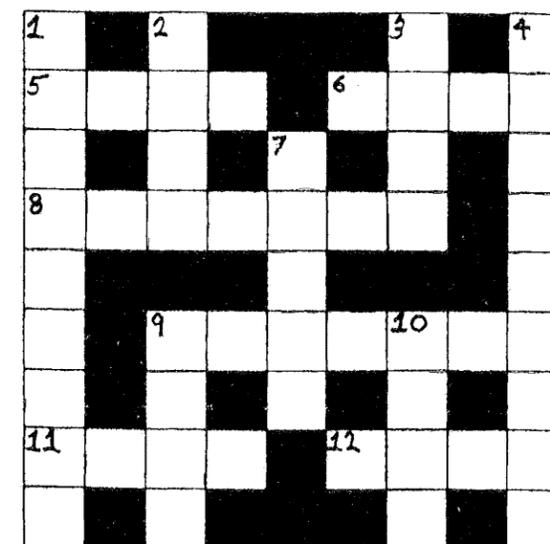
By Tony Soper

### Across

5. Egyptian goddess of fertility
6. GAUCHO's pal
8. terminator's prejudice
9. bind
11. MENSUR orig.
12. might use a MADU

### Down

1. DEGAGE
2. dudgeon
3. congealed blood
4. reprise - Italian
7. what the Vulcan pinches
9. title of ANGELO's patron
10. pillage



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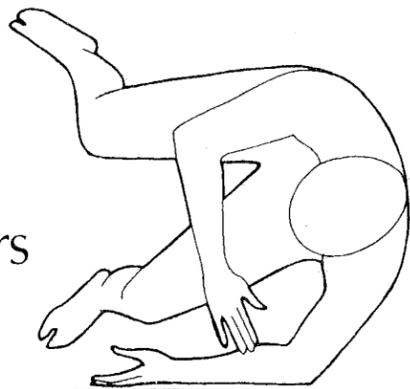
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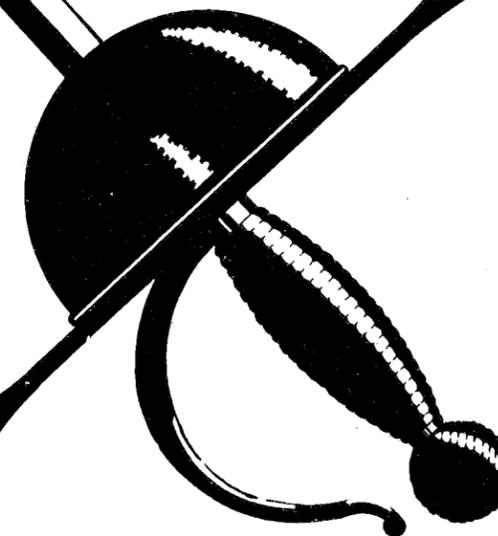
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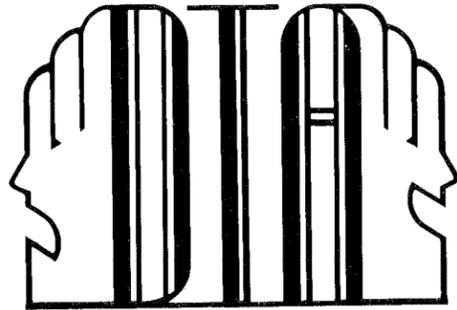
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