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The Society of American Fight Directors

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## **The Fight Master, January 1985, Vol. 8 Issue 1**

The Society of American Fight Directors

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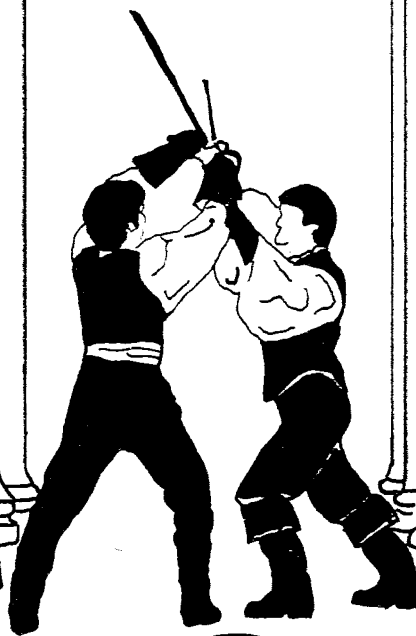
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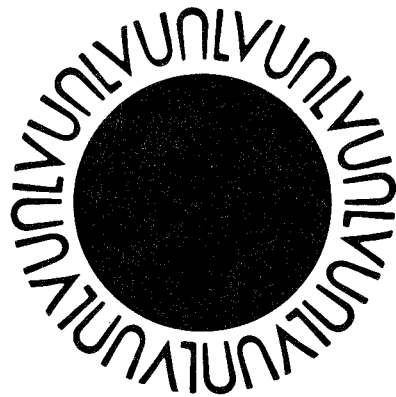
SOCIETY OF  
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# OF ARMOURY



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# The Fight MASTER

JOURNAL OF THE SOCIETY OF AMERICAN FIGHT DIRECTORS

January 1985  
Volume VIII number 1

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### THE FIGHT MASTER

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### SOCIETY OF AMERICAN FIGHT DIRECTORS

President Erik Fredricksen  
Vice President J.R. Beardsley  
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.

As we begin our eighth year, some changes are being seen within the Society and in *The Fight Master*. Some of our full and associate members, in an attempt to meet the needs for additional training expressed within the Society, will be offering specialized workshops for advanced students this summer. Our National Stage Combat Workshop, in addition to being enhanced by the high calibre of training by the fight masters of the Society, will be set in the atmosphere of the Shakespearean Festival in Cedar City, Utah and will offer the opportunity for the participants to observe in actual production the concepts being learned during the workshop.

Dr. Tarassuk of the Metropolitan Museum of New York and the Art Institute of Chicago has graciously allowed us to reprint in serialization his article on parrying daggers with an addendum which supplies us with the most thorough information available on the evolution of the parrying dagger in double fencing. Dr. Tarassuk is from the University of Leningrad and was curator of arms and armor at the Hermitage Museum before becoming a U.S. citizen. He was a consultant to the film studios in Leningrad and Moscow and was the fight master for several Shakespearean films, taking part in several fencing scenes. We are pleased to have Dr. Tarassuk's contribution to the Journal.

In this issue the Society Spotlight will focus on some philosophical concepts in addition to the regular biographical sketch. Professor Rozinsky raises some questions concerning stage movement in this country and offers some alternatives. Doug Hansen explains the armor construction techniques used in Cedar City last year and Richard Raether reveals how he managed to survive falling off a horse last summer during the Renaissance Festival in New York.

With this issue the Letters to the Editor section is being inaugurated with the intention of keeping the lines of communication open and of creating a forum for dialogue which is accessible to our members and readers.

With the New Year some exciting prospects await us as the Society of American Fight Directors continues to grow in size and reputation.

■ *Linda Carlyle McCollum, Editor*

Best wishes and New Year's greetings to the entire membership. As an organization I feel we have much to be thankful for as we approach another new year. It is mainly through the hard work of our many members and the active part that they are taking in seeking information and connections that the lines of communication have begun to open up.

Braun McAsh has been in touch with me and I am pleased to report the founding of the Society of Canadian Fight Directors. My congratulations to Braun for his hard work in getting the Canadian Society in operation. I trust that we can continue to expand our many respected professional friendships in Canada through this new avenue of communication. We as a Society wish them the very best and stand willing to offer support in any way we can. The first volume of their newsletter has been published and contains an interesting and informative article on the evolution of the lunge and the purpose and raison d'être for the fight director. I am also pleased to see an article from the "Dean" of Fight Directors, Paddy Crean, heralding the new Canadian Society. The Canadian Society is truly fortunate to have Paddy Crean's wealth of information and experience so readily available. They are certain to become as quickly indebted to this wonderful man as so many of us are.

In closing, I send best wishes for the coming New Year and much gratitude for all the good work.

■ *Erik Fredricksen, President*

**TREASURER'S  
REPORT**

We have just finished a fine year that has seen the Society grow and prosper. We now have a membership of well over two hundred. We have continued to further and develop the Society's image through a solid public relations program coupled with quality work from many of our members. As a Society of some size now, we find our annual budget growing at a similar rate. If we hope to develop all our aspirations, we must remain financially solvent.

The annual dues have always been the means by which we produce our exceptional journal *The Fight Master*. This important lifeline to the Society members is something we can all be proud of since there is simply nothing like it in the world! However, it does take money to produce the journal and it alone, in my opinion, is worth every cent paid by way of the annual membership dues. But the journal is only part of our expenses and budget. Transportation, communication, equipment and advertising are all part of our annual budget and must be dealt with.

Once more, it is that time of year again. Time to collect the annual dues. The dues for 1985 will remain \$25. Any member who joined the Society after July 1, 1984 only owes \$12.50 which is half of the annual dues. It is vitally important that the dues are paid on time! I state this every year and every year find myself having to hound members about their delinquent dues. Save me the time and money this year and get your dues in by *April 1st*. Those of you who were late paying your membership dues last year are finding yourselves owing your dues so soon again. Please avoid this problem this year by paying immediately and thus maintaining the proper dues schedule for the forthcoming years. Make your membership dues payable to:

The Society of American Fight Directors  
c/o David Boushey  
4720 38th N.E.  
Seattle, Washington 98105

We can now state with equivocation that we as a Society are an integral part of the mainstream of the theatre community throughout the United States. We have earned that distinction, and it is the responsibility of all our members to support the Society and to help maintain and to promote the Society's growth.

All the very best to each and every one of you in the new year ahead.

■ *David L. Boushey, Treasurer*

**SECRETARY'S  
REPORT**

I would like to ask the entire membership to double check their address as well as their current status in the Society. If there are discrepancies, please inform me at your earliest convenience. The SAFD roster changes week to week so please be conscientious about this matter.

I'm sure many of you wondered why my response to your letters and requests has been somewhat slower than usual. The reasons are twofold: an unusual amount of paperwork has come across my desk during the last few months causing a back log. Be assured that your letters will always receive a response even though it may take longer than you might hope. My position as secretary of the organization places a large demand on my work load and I have no secretarial assistance to help with the process. This fall has also been a busy one for me. Traveling from one place to another for the purposes of choreographing fights and conducting workshops has put a strain on my already overloaded work schedule. By now, I should be caught up on my secretarial business. If I have overlooked a request of yours, let me know as soon as possible.

During the month of October I traveled to Southern Utah State College to familiarize myself with the location of this summer's National Stage Combat Workshop. The college, located in Cedar City, Utah, is a beautiful site for this annual event. The facilities are superb, the scenery absolutely breathtaking and the climate is most comfortable in the summer. The Utah Shakespearean Festival will host the workshop in conjunction with the college and the SAFD. Spread the word to your colleagues and friends.

■ *David S. Leong, Secretary*

<p>All membership dues are to be paid in January to the treasurer, David Boushey, 4720 38th NE, Seattle, Washington 98105.</p>	<p>Inquiries concerning new memberships should be addressed to the secretary, David Leong, Department of Fine Arts, Northern Kentucky University, Campus Station, Highland Heights, Kentucky 41076.</p>	<p>Application for change in status within the Society should be addressed to Erik Fredricksen, University of Michigan, c/o Theatre Arts Department, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48309.</p>	<p>Articles for consideration in <i>The Fight Master</i> should be submitted to the editor, Linda McCollum, Dept. of Theatre Arts, University of Nevada, 4505 Maryland Parkway, Las Vegas, Nevada 89154, by March 15, 1985.</p>
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# PARRYING DAGGERS AND PONIARDS

## Part I

By Dr. Leonid Tarassuk

Research Associate, Department of Arms and Armor, The Metropolitan Museum of Art  
Consulting Curator of Arms and Armor, The Art Institute of Chicago

In the history of European fencing, the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were as important as they were in most other fields of arms history. During that period European fencing schools, developing ancient traditions of personal combat with sword accompanied by a shield, worked out a kind of double fencing wherein both hands were armed with edged weapons and played an active part in offense and defense. An excellent exercise for body and mind, this most complicated form of fencing, requiring a assiduous training and great skill, cast a sort of spell over contemporaries by its mysterious passes and combinations, infinite variety of technical ways, and elaborate motor coordination of hands and feet. The perfecting of weapons and swordplay technique finally led to the elaboration of the single-sword fencing methods that, in turn, laid the foundations for modern fencing. But this development took one and a half centuries, and during this period the sword-and-dagger form of personal combat dominated in western Europe.

The progress of double fencing and the ultimate results of this development would have been impossible without modifications of the weapons used, including those usually called *left-hand daggers*, which are the main subject of these notes. As a fencer, I have always been interested in these fascinating weapons, and this interest was given an additional impulse when I was granted an opportunity to study the excellent array of arms and rare fencing books in the collections of The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

To begin, I shall cite the authors whose works on arms and fencing enlarged my knowledge and impelled me, in a way, to write these notes.<sup>1</sup>

Lep[ido]. Circa al tenerlo [pugnale] in mano, come uolete, uoi che si tenga?

Gio[vanni]. Quasi di piatto facendo che'l fil dritto di esso guardi alquanto uerso le pari destre: perche hauerete il nodo della mano piu libero da potere spinger in fuori la spada del nimico, & massimamente la punta: oltra che hauerete maggior forza nel parare per testa, per esser sostenuto il pugnale dal dito grosso: & di piu il tenerlo come ho detto, fa che l'elzo di esso uiene a fare maggior difesa.

Giovanni dall'Agocchie, *Dell'arte di scrimia*, 1572.<sup>2</sup>

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1. Egerton Castle, *Schools and Masters of Fence* (1885; rpt. London: Arms and Armour Press, 1969). Bashford Dean, *Catalogue of European Daggers* (Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1929). Harold L. Peterson, *Daggers and Fighting Knives of the Western World* (London, 1968). Heribert Seitz, *Blankwaffen* (Braunschweig, 1968). Arthur Wise, *The Art and History of Personal Combat* (Greenwich, Connecticut, 1972).

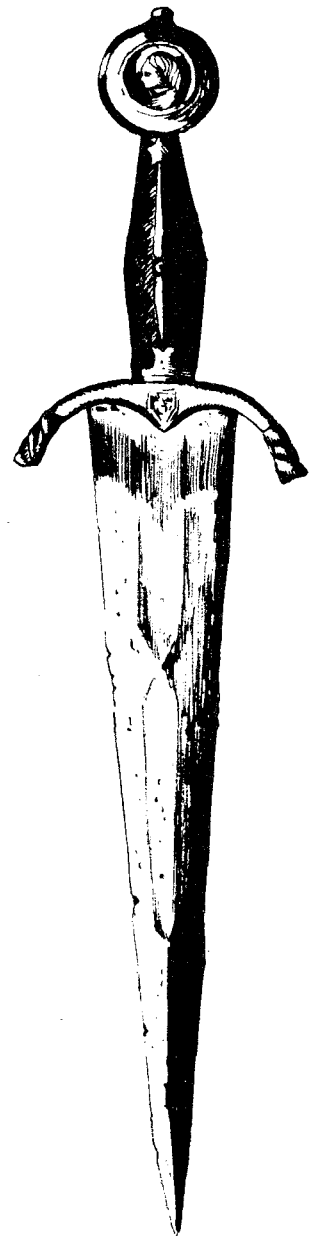
2. Giovanni dall' Agocchie, *Dell'arte di scrimia* (Venetia, 1572) ff.35 verso-36: "Lep[ido Ranieri]: As for holding it [the dagger] in hand, how do you want it to be held? Gio[vanni dall'Agocchie]: Almost flatly [vs. enemy], directing its right edge toward the right side; in this way you will have the palm freer to beat off the enemy's sword outward, especially its point; besides, having propped up the dagger [blade] with your thumb, you will have more strength in parrying above the head; and moreover, holding it as I have just said, the dagger hilt [guard] will give a better protection."



The earliest picture of a swordsman fencing simultaneously with sword and dagger seems to be an illustration in Talhoffer's *Fechtbuch*, dated 1467.<sup>3</sup> The fencer is represented here in a difficult situation, facing two opponents. Against one of them he fights with his sword, defending himself from the other with his dagger (*Dolch*) and small buckler held together in his left hand. The fencing master's concept is that in such occurrence the dagger must be held like a knife, the thumb at the pommel, the same hand somehow also gripping the buckler handle. This method can hardly be regarded as practical, since, first of all, it almost forbids any offensive actions with the dagger, and, second, a hard sword blow on this parrying contrivance, particularly on the dagger blade, could easily knock out both dagger and shield. Thus, the situation depicted here seems to be farfetched, reflecting perhaps the teacher's intention to demonstrate his inventiveness and personal technical virtuosity to his students. Anyway, this scene clearly shows an interest in using the dagger as an active auxiliary weapon accompanying the sword. Talhoffer's manual also proves that ideas about sword-and-dagger fencing were taking shape as early as the third quarter of the fifteenth century. The dagger and shield combination recommended in the book evidently points to the absence in the dagger of any effective protection for the hand, that is, of a special guard that would later become the most distinctive feature of the parrying dagger.

In his narrative about the duel between Pierre Terrail, seigneur de Bayard, and Alonzo de Soto-Mayor, which took place in Naples in 1499, Brantôme (about 1540-1614) writes that *estoc* and *poignard* were chosen for the occasion.<sup>4</sup> It cannot be deduced with certainty from Brantôme's account that both weapons were simultaneously used by the fighters. Most probably, the poniards were included in their armament as reserve weapons, to be used whenever convenient, for a poniard was employed by Bayard in the finale of the duel only and in a very traditional way, namely, to force his thrown-down opponent to surrender.

An unquestionable proof of an active use of the dagger with another edged weapon is to be found in Albrecht Durer's *Fechtbuch* (1512), which shows a fighter armed with *malchus* and dagger.<sup>5</sup> In two episodes, the fencer holds the dagger like a knife with the thumb at the pommel; in the third scene the dagger is gripped in the mode that came to be accepted as more sensible in handling parrying weapons, this well illustrated by later sources. Durer's drawings, while reflecting a period of experiments in the use of the dagger in swordplay, are evidence that not later than the first decade of the sixteenth century this method began coming into use in Germany. But for this new mode to become universally practiced, as it was throughout the sword-and-dagger era, one essential step was necessary in the development of the dagger as a parrying weapon, namely, the designing of a protective device for the holding hand. Dagger guards then in existence either were unhandy for proper parrying use or could not preserve the wrist sufficiently well from various concussions and cuts while repulsing the sword blade. Even the crossguard dagger (Figure 1) was fit to stop the sword and protect the hand only if the fencer had mastered a parrying technique



**Figure 1.** Dagger with arched crossguard (daghetta of *cinquedea* type). Italian, about 1500. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Collection of Giovanni P. Morisini, presented by his daughter Giulia, 1932, 32.75.97. Such daggers, lacking a side ring, could give but limited protection to the holding fingers

3. Talhoffer's *Fechtbuch aus dem Jahre 1467*, ed. Gustav Hergsell (Prague, 1887) pl. 240.

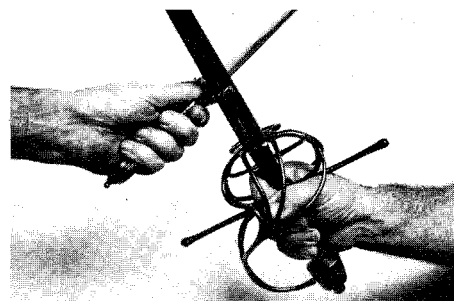
4. P. de Bourdeille, seigneur de Brantôme, *Mémoires. . .touchant les duels* (Leyden, 1722) pp. 38-40.

5. "Albrecht Durer's *Fechtbuch*," *Jahrbuch der Kunsthistorischen Sammlungen des Allerhöchsten Kaiserhauses*, XXVII, 6 (Vienna-Leipzig, 1910) pl. 64, figs 38-40. *Malchus* - a short sword with curved single-edged blade obliquely cut at the point.

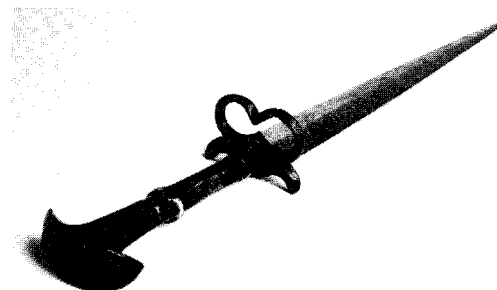
that directed one of the quillons toward the opponent's blade (Figure 2). However, this mode has several disadvantages, since it considerably lessens both an important function of the thumb (propping up the dagger blade) and the gripping power of the hand, enabling the opposing sword to knock out the dagger by a strong blow on a quillon or on the edge of the blade. These and similar practical observations could not escape attention when fencers began initial experiments with sword-and-dagger fighting, and an urgent necessity to contrive a special guard for the hand was surely realized as soon as daggers started their very first performances as parrying weapons, and not, as has sometimes been said, decades later.<sup>6</sup>

Looking at early sixteenth-century daggers from the point of view of their suitability for double fencing, it can be seen that just at this time various modifications of the dagger guards evolved in one definite direction, that is, to afford better protection of the hand when it grips with the thumb on the heel of the blade. Signs of such a development are to be found, for instance, in a group of Landsknecht daggers whose guards appear as though cut off in half, the internal part of the horizontal S- or 8-shaped guard being removed (Figure 3). If not yet ideal in design, this form allows proper parrying actions while protecting, more or less, the wrist, especially when such a guard is supplemented by a crosspiece, even a short one (Figure 4), though this part is generally less important in parrying weapons than a side ring.<sup>7</sup> A Landsknecht roundel-hilt dagger in an early sixteenth-century German painting (Figure 5) seems to have been modified in the same way. Here, too, the rear part of the guard appears cut off so as to provide a better grip when the dagger is in use as a parrying weapon.

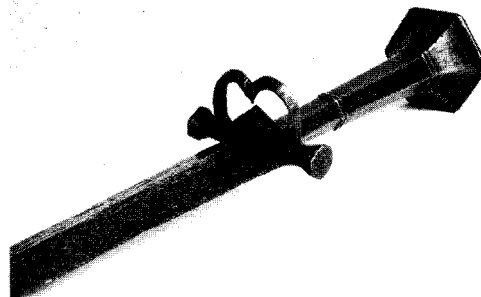
Important evidence from the early period of sword-and-dagger fencing can be found in the dueling code first published in 1521 by Paris de Puteo, an Italian connoisseur of dueling customs and conventions. Discussing the selection of weapons for a combat, Puteo related a case of "two gentlemen who came to Italy from north of the Alps to combat without armor, only with swords and daggers."<sup>8</sup> The author is preoccupied, in this passage, with the duelists' decision to fight without any body protection, which was not yet a common practice. Therefore, he makes only a casual mention of their offensive weapons. It is very significant, at this point, that he uses the expression *con spada e pugnale*, which is well known from a multitude of later sources as a standard idiom to designate sword-and-dagger fencing. This passage, taken together with Durer's drawings and with contemporary daggers fit for parrying actions, suggests that the new fencing methods were in use in the second decade of the sixteenth century, though without the universal adoption known later under the combined influence of Italian fencing schools, the dueling fashion, and the sportive attractiveness of double



**Figure 2.** A method of high quarte parry, protecting inside lines, with the dagger of Figure 1



**Figure 3.** Landsknecht parrying dagger. Swiss or French (?), early 16th century. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Jean Jacques Reubell, 1926, in memory of his mother, Julia C. Coster, and of his wife, Adeline E. Post, both of New York City, 26.145.43



**Figure 4.** Landsknecht parrying dagger. Swiss or French (?), about 1512-20. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Jean Jacques Reubell, 1926 in memory of his mother, Julia C. Coster, and of his wife, Adeline E. Post, both of New York City, 26.145.40

6. It is not uncommon to read in the arms literature that "left-hand" (that is, parrying) daggers came into being in the middle of the sixteenth century. In this context I recall what took place during the filming of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* in Yalta in 1954. Some threescore student actors who had studied historical and stage fencing in Moscow institutes were to take part in the fighting scenes, playing with swords and daggers. After only two rehearsals, there was hardly one among the company without finger wounds, all of the same kind. When I was invited in to advise, I discovered that none of the daggers had side rings. Side rings were made and welded onto the crossguard daggers, after which the fighting was staged without further trouble.

7. Nine more Landsknecht daggers of about 1500-25 in the Metropolitan Museum belong to the same typological group and can be considered as prototypes of true parrying weapons (nos. 26.145.26, 35-41, 43).

8. Paris de Puteo, *Duello* (Venice, 1525, 3rd edition) f.G(VI): "et accade che uenendo in Italia doi Cauallieri oltramontani per combattere desarmati solo con spate et pugnali."



**Figure 5.** Detail of painting *Landsknechts, White and Moorish*. German school, about 1510. Formerly Eugene Bolton Collection, London

fencing itself. If the interpretation of these data is correct, it must be emphasized as well that by the 1520's sword-and-dagger fencing was practiced in a country adjacent to Italy, possibly in France or Switzerland but most probably in Germany, where various forms of fencing had long since been elaborated by professional masters from the Fraternity of St. Mark. It would be difficult, however, to affirm flatly that specially designed parrying daggers first appeared in Germany, although attempts seem to have been made there to adjust some traditional dagger forms to the new use. At this period, the leading role in the development of swordplay belonged, above all, to Italian schools that were actively shaping new fencing methods. It is hardly astonishing, therefore, that a completely formed type of parrying dagger was first shown in a treatise published in 1536 by a renowned Bolognese fencing master, Achille Marozzo.<sup>9</sup>

In the chapter that gives the earliest known description of sword-and-dagger fencing, Marozzo recommends that one parry with a weapon he calls *pugnale bolognese* (Figures 6, 7).<sup>10</sup> This dagger with a large double-edged blade intended for cut-and-thrust has a well-developed cross-guard and a massive side ring — that is, a complete guard necessary for effective parrying functions. A specific element in this type of dagger is the form of flat cross-guard strongly curved toward the side ring, giving additional protection to the wrist from a more vulnerable side.

The Bolognese school played a most important part in the development of European fencing at least from the early sixteenth century, and it seems highly probable that the term *pugnale bolognese* simply reflects the place of origin and introduction of this particular form. According to a Bolognese chronicle, Achille Marozzo was born in 1484 and began to work on his book in 1516, presumably having by this time considerable experience as fencer and teacher.<sup>11</sup> The methods of the sword-and-dagger fight being elaborated just at this period, probably with the active participation of Marozzo himself and his own teachers, Bolognese masters and swordsmiths must have designed the proper parrying weapon recorded in Marozzo's book. The principle of the side ring for hand protection was anything but new by this time, for it was present on some types of sword from the first half of the fifteenth century and thus could have been well known to Bolognese masters.<sup>12</sup> Thanks to its famous university, Bologna was an international academic center, and doubtless many of the students took lessons with local masters, afterward bringing the new swordplay to different parts of Europe, not



**Figure 6.** Woodcut in Marozzo's *Opera nova*, 1536 edition, f. 15 (detail) The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Thomas J. Watson Library, Gift of William H. Rigs, 1913. This figure illustrates methods of fighting with sword and *pugnale bolognese*. The laterally curved quillons of the dagger protect the fingers better than a simple crossguard. Position of the dagger hides its opposite surface where a side ring was probably welded to the quillons (as can be seen in the next illustration).



**Figure 7.** Woodcut in Marozzo's *Opera nova*, f. 19 verso (detail), showing the *pugnale bolognese* employed in dagger-and-cloak fight. This is the earliest representation of a parrying dagger with guard formed by side ring and curved quillons. The dagger is apparently of the same form as shown in Figure 6 but its position here lets us see a sturdy side ring.

9. Achille Marozzo, *Opera nova* (Modena, Antonio Bergola, 1536), copy in the Metropolitan Museum. Jacopo Gelli, in his *Bibliografia generale della scherma* (Milan, 1895) pp. 130-138, wrote of a claimed discovery by F. Tribolati in the Biblioteca dell'Università di Pisa of a much earlier copy, published in 1517. Relying on information received, Gelli described this copy as unique. His assertion was repeated by Carl A. Thimm in his *Complete Bibliography of Fencing and Duelling* (London, 1896) p. 181. When I examined a microfilm of the book discovered by Tribolati, I could see that the original date in the colophon, MDLXVII, had been altered somewhat by a scratching out of the L. The 1567 edition is very close to the 1536 edition in both text and illustration, but their layouts differ slightly. Since there are omissions concerning this book in standard bibliographies, I list the editions known to me: Modena, A. Bergola, 1536. Modena(?), about 1540 (copy in the Department of Prints and Photographs, Metropolitan Museum). Venice, G. Padovano — M. Stessa, 1550. Venice, Heredi di M. Stessa, 1567 (copy in Library, University of Pisa). Venice, A. Pinargenti, 1568. Corrected and newly illustrated, retitled *Arte dell'armi*, Venice, A. Pinargenti, 1568. Verona, 1615.

10. Marozzo, ff. 15, 19.

11. Gelli, *Bibliografia*, p. 134.

12. R. Ewart Oakeshott, *The Sword in the Age of Chivalry* (London, 1964) pp. 69, 70, 120, pl 43A.

to say of Italy itself. No less assiduous as students and proselytizers for the Bolognese school, surely, were soldiers from Germany, Spain, France, and Switzerland: participants in the Italian Wars in the first quarter of the sixteenth century.

An important Italian document, recently discovered and published, adds a new insight into the beginnings of the sword-and-dagger fencing. An inventory of the property of Lorenzo de' Medici (called the Magnificent), compiled upon his death in 1492 in Florence, includes three "pugnali alla bolognese," which were kept in Lorenzo's bedroom among other personal weapons.<sup>13</sup>

This information provides a significant link in a series of scarce data on the early period in the use of daggers as a second weapon in double fencing. The 1467 Talhoffer's *Fechtbuch* reveals an initial phase in such experiments. The next available source, Durer's *Fechtbuch* of 1512, demonstrates a dagger already conveniently used as an active parrying weapon. But the first reference to and graphical description of the *pugnale bolognese* occurred, until discovery of the 1492 inventory, only in Marozzo's treaty written and published during 1516-1536, which illustrates already well-developed double fencing and its weapons, the parrying dagger of Bolognese design among them. Apparently, the hilt of this construction, both simple and efficient, was occasionally applied also to longer weapons as can be seen from another entry in the same inventory listing a "scimitarra alla bolognese."<sup>14</sup>

The dagger with the hilt designed in Bologna was a competent response to a demand for better hand protection, which arose as soon as the dagger was given an active part in the swordplay. Thus, in accordance with the new evidence provided by the 1492 document it will probably be correct to assume that the sword-and-dagger fencing made a notable progress, at least in Bologna's fencing schools and the regions within their reach, already in the last quarter of the fifteenth century.

In one of his stories, Brantôme gives a detailed account of a duel fought by two Spanish officers, Azevedo and Saint-Croix (Santa-Cruz, evidently), in the early 1510's, at Ferrara (about 25 miles from Bologna). For this combat, the duelists chose "rapieres bien tranchantes" and "poignards." Azevedo began fighting with both weapons in hand, but Saint-Croix sheathed his dagger and preferred to fight with his rapier only. Perhaps he simply was not trained in the then new technique but whatever the case, Azevedo proved to have an advantage and, being the more skillful, he won the duel.<sup>15</sup>

A remarkable feature of the Bolognese dagger, the flat crossguard strongly curved toward the side ring, is to be found on an excellent parrying dagger in the René Géroudet Collection (Figure 8); this stays very close to the pictures in Marozzo's book and may be considered one of the earliest known specimens of the type. In a heavier variant (Figure 9), the side-ring function is played by two massive scrolls; these probably protected fingers less effectively and so did not become very popular. The basic pattern of the Bolognese dagger was widely used during a long period, as seen by the number and dating of weapons

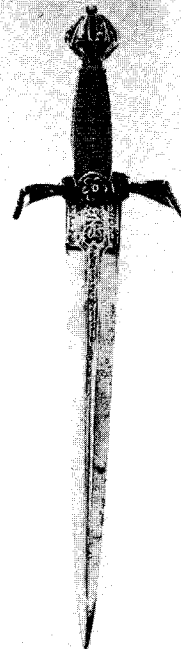


Figure 8. Parrying dagger, Bolognese type. North Italian, about 1530-40. René Géroudet Collection, Geneva

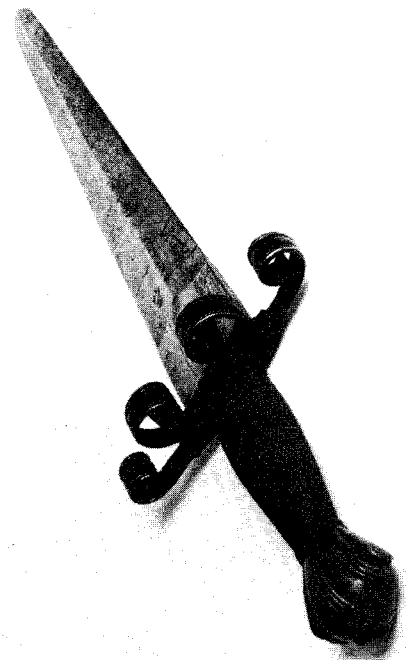


Figure 9. Parrying dagger, variant of Bolognese type. Italian, about 1530-50. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 04.3.125

13. Mario Scalini, "The Weapons of Lorenzo de' Medici", *Arts, Arms and Armour. An International Anthology, Vol. I: 1979-1980*, ed. Robert Held (Acquafresca Editrice, Chiasso, 1979), p. 22, no. 12.

14. Scalini, p. 27, no. 124. *Scimitarra* - a type of sword, of Oriental origin, with a wide curved blade.

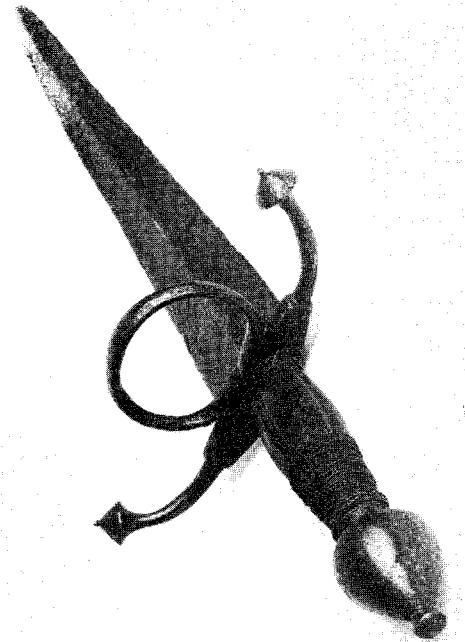
15. Brantôme, *Memoires*, pp. 27-34.

extent (Figures 10-14), although other types of parrying daggers and poniards were later developed as well in response to more sophisticated modes of double fencing. It is significant, in this respect, that the *pugnale bolognese* was still pictured in the late 1620s, in a treatise by a master of the Spanish school teaching in Flanders.<sup>16</sup>

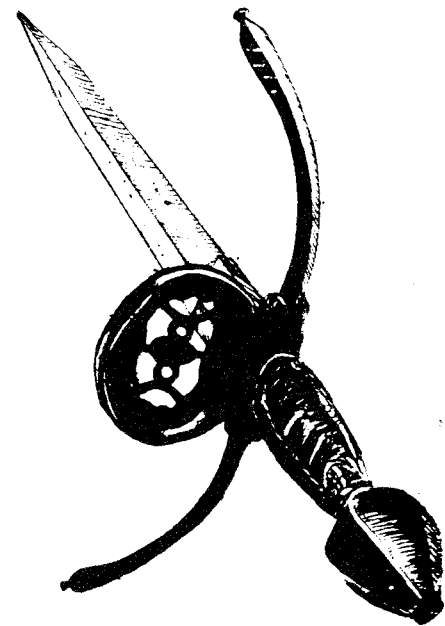
The Bolognese dagger guard seems to have directly affected some changes that began taking place in German daggers early in the sixteenth century. This influence is manifest, in particular, in a peculiar shape of the crossguard, strongly bent outward, in certain Landsknecht daggers (Figure 15). Later this form, clearly going back to the Bolognese type, found a graceful manneristic fancifulness combined with a manly appearance in Saxon body-guard daggers (15 e).

The tendency to adjust earlier dagger types to practical requirements was mentioned above in connection with the German daggers equipped with "halved" guards. A similar alteration of the guard, with the same purpose, seems to have been performed on some roundel daggers (Figure 5), whose abandonment, in their traditional form, during the first quarter of the sixteenth century apparently was not fortuitous but rather related to their ineffectiveness for parrying actions. At the same time, a half-guard version of the roundel dagger could play a part in the designing of Landsknecht parrying daggers provided with a sturdy shell guard, which served as a wrist-protecting device while deep cuts in the shell were contrived as casual traps for the parried sword blade (Figure 16). A variant type has the shell fully dismembered to form a small shield and two strongly arched quillons (Figure 17). The shell guard had been known by the end of the fifteenth century, and its pattern may have suggested a guard for parrying daggers that could entangle the opponent's sword blade.<sup>17</sup>

This process of adjustment of the edged weapons to the new sword-play style touched upon the "kidney" dagger as well. One of its later variants, with a very short but pronounced crossbar, probably became a prototype of German parrying daggers with side ring and stout crossguard slightly bent toward the point and terminated by globular finials (Figure 18).



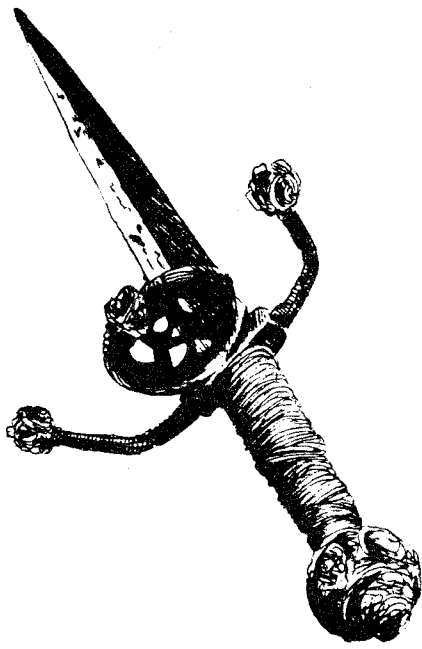
**Figure 10.** Parrying dagger, Bolognese type. North Italian, about 1540-60. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Bequest of Jean Jacques Reubell, 1933, in memory of his mother, Julia C. Coster, 34.57.22



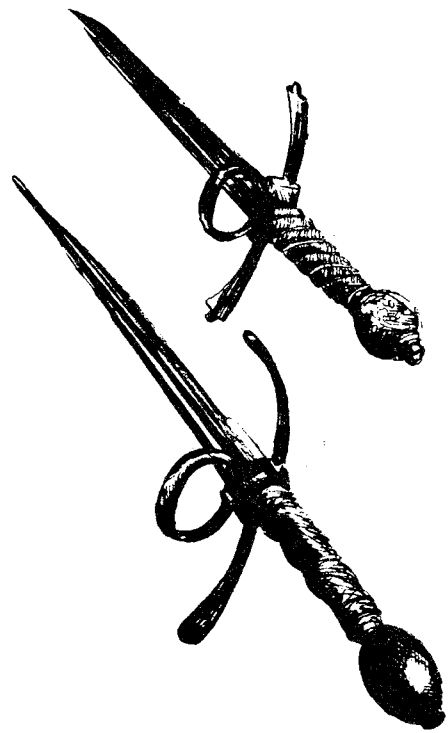
**Figure 11.** Parrying dagger, Bolognese type. Italian about 1550-70. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Bequest of Jean Jacques Reubell, 1933, in memory of his mother, Julia C. Coster, 34.57.21

16. Girard Thibault d'Anvers, *Académie de l'espée* (Leyden, 1628/30) II, pls. v, vi. Two slightly different versions of the Bolognese dagger guard are shown. One almost exactly follows the sharp forms of the guard in Marozzo's book, the other has more flowing, rounded contours. It may be noted that both the Bolognese dagger and its first promoter successfully passed the same time trial, Marozzo's work having been published at least seven times in eighty years.

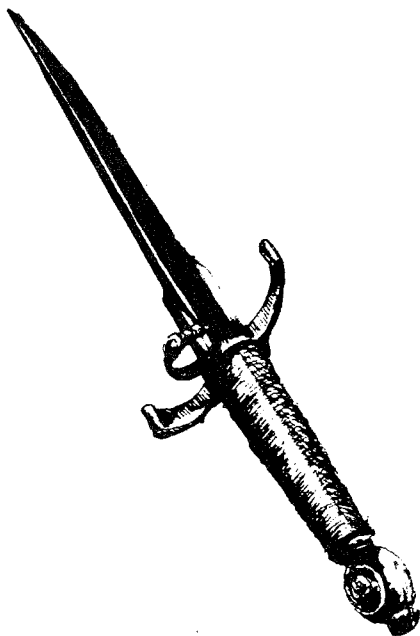
17. A French dagger of about 1500 in the Wallace Collection, no. A809 (James Mann, *European Arms and Armour* [London, 1962] II, p. 404, pl.138).



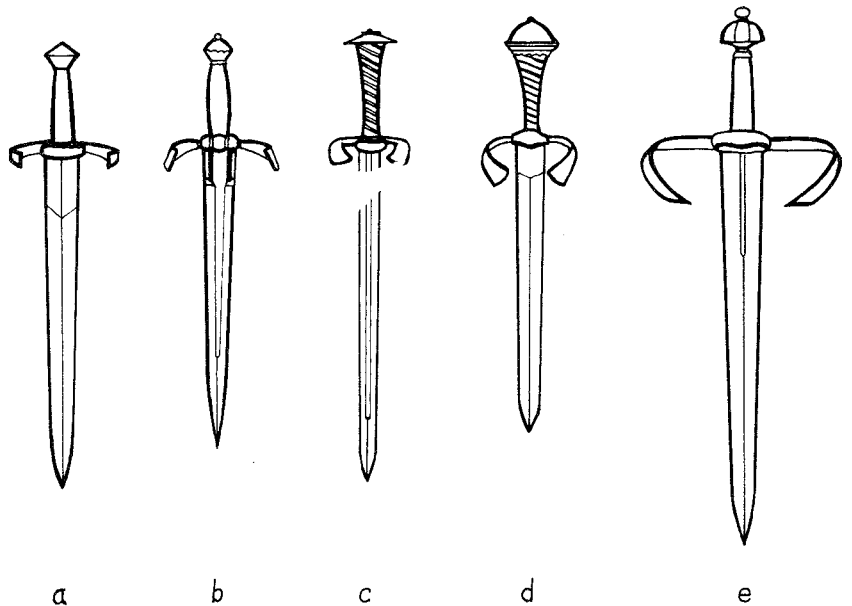
**Figure 12.** Parrying dagger, Bolognese type. North Italian, mid-16th century. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Jean Jacques Reubell, 1926, in memory of his mother, Julia C. Coster and of his wife, Adeline E. Post, both of New York City, 26.145.100



**Figure 14.** Parrying poniards, Bolognese type. French or Italian, last quarter 16th century. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Jean Jacques Reubell, 1926, in memory of his mother, Julia C. Coster, and of his wife, Adeline E. Post, both of New York City, 26.145.108 (left), 26.145.109 (right)



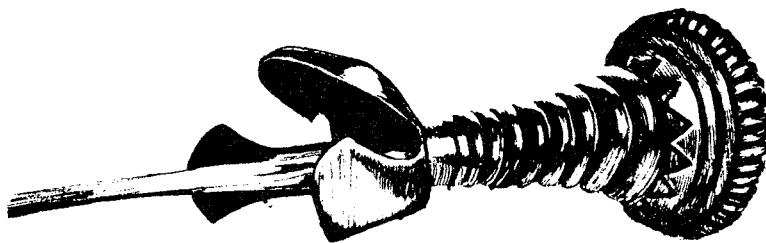
**Figure 13.** Parrying poniard, Bolognese type. North Italian, third quarter 16th century. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Jean Jacques Reubell, 1926, in memory of his mother, Julia C. Coster, and of his wife, Adeline E. Post, both of New York City, 26.145.117



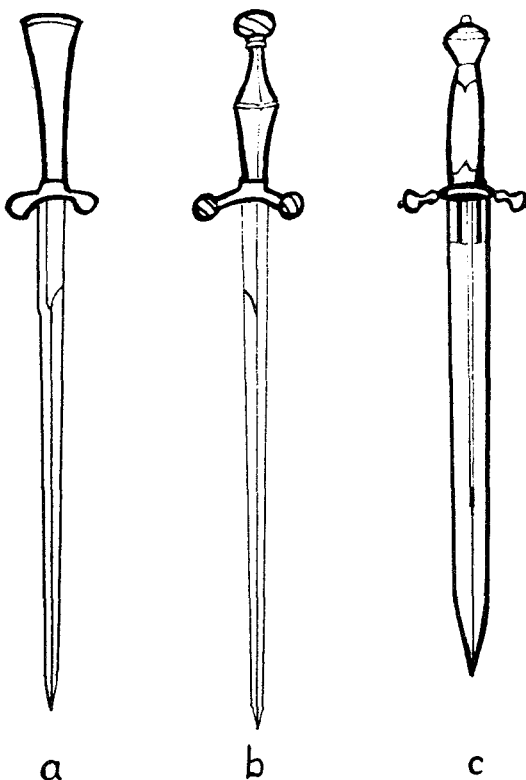
**Figure 15.** Modifications of the Bolognese type. a: Pugnale bolognese, about 1515-40, after Marozzo (compare Figures 6, 7). b: Italian, about 1530-40, René Géroudet Collection (see Figure 8). c: German, second quarter 16th century, after K. Ullmann, "Dolchmesser, Dolche und Kurzwehren des 15. und 16. Jahrhunderts," *Waffen-und Kostumkunde*, 1961, II, figs. 29, 34. d: German mid-16th century, Hungarian National Museum, Budapest, after K. János, *Régi Magyar Fegyverek* (Budapest, 1971) p. 116, fig. 201. e: German (Saxon), about 1600, Tower of London Armouries, no. X.266, after A.R. Dufty, *European Swords and Daggers in the Tower of London* (London, 1974) p. 25a



**Figure 16.** Landsknecht parrying dagger. German, about 1540-60. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Jean Jacques Reubell, 1926, in memory of his mother, Julia C. Coster, and of his wife, Adeline E. Post, both of New York City, 26.145.48



**Figure 17.** Landsknecht parrying dagger. German, mid-16th century. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 04.3.140



**Figure 18.** Modifications of the “kidney-dagger” guard. a: Flemish (?), about 1460-1500, after G.F. Laking, *A Record of European Armour and Arms through Seven Centuries*, III (London, 1920) p. 39, figs. 808, 809. b: German, early 16th century, Metropolitan Museum 26.145.71. c: German (Saxon), by W. Paller (d. 1583), about 1560-70, Metropolitan Museum 29.158.662

(Drawings of Figures 1, 5, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16 and 17 by Akiko Onaka.)

# DIARY OF A JOUSTER

by *Richard Raether*

I spun my horse around and charged down the field at Steve, who was galloping full tilt towards me. Mentally, I checked off my list. Shield in position? Lance on target? Feet out of stirrups? BANG! Steve's lance collided against my shield. CRASH! I bellyflopped onto the ground. Another mental inventory: yes, limbs still in working order.

"Great," Steve said cheerfully, trotting up to where I was cautiously getting to my feet. "One more time and then we'll work straight on through the fight." Great. Oh, he was right, but as I remounted, I decided I was glad tomorrow was opening day because I'd only have to do this once 'in front of 3,000 people. And I tried to recall how and why I'd gotten myself into this.

This, of course, was jousting. Not your every day occupation. How I got into it was simple. Steve Vaughan, a fellow FIGHTS R US member and good friend, has done the joust at the New York Renaissance Festival for the past four years. Looking for a new partner this season (No, no, it's not what you think. The old partner is alive and intact.), he asked me if I was interested.

Why did I say yes? You got me. Maybe to test myself, maybe to prove something, maybe just a sneaking desire to fulfill my childhood fantasies of being a Hollywood stunt man and doing all those great things my heroes did. The problem is that a stunt man performs a stunt once, perhaps twice if they miss the take. In between shots he takes a break. And he can use camera angles to hide his tricks and intensify the action. I had to joust, fall off a galloping horse, get back up, get knocked down, get back up, pull Steve off his horse, and do a broadsword battle with him. All this was nonstop in front of a live audience that completely encircled the field, all of which makes for a rather crucial difference between stunt work and stage combat.

I've studied, performed and choreographed stage combat for a number of years, but jousting was completely different from anything I'd ever attempted. No matter how much we planned and rehearsed our moves, there was always the "great variable" — the horses. No two jousts we ever did were exactly the same. The horses were carefully and thoroughly trained, but if one of them was edgy or just having a bad day, both Steve and I had to compensate and adjust for this in mid-battle. And still, anything could happen, and occasionally did.

So, for anyone who finds himself, as I did, tasked with learning to do a genuine joust, here's a breakdown of the training I underwent with Steve Vaughan's coaching and constant encouragement.

First, a brief outline of the joust as we eventually performed it each day of the Renaissance Festival. In the storyline that runs throughout the day, Steve is the villainous Edwin Feckingham (eats nails, tortures babies — not a nice man) and I am the hero who rebels and meets him upon the field of honor. After opening ceremonies of the joust, we part to opposite ends of the field. At a mutual signal that we are ready, Steve raises his lance, the drummer pounds on the timpany, and both horses leap into a gallop for the first pass, done with a double hit. A second pass with double hit follows. On the third pass, Steve sustains an arm injury and drops his lance. His squire brings him a replacement which is a specially made breakaway — solid ash at the base joined to a balsa tip which is scored in a jagged line where we want the break to occur. Then the real fun begins.



On the fourth pass, Steve's lance shatters against my shield and I am unhorsed. Rising to one knee after my fall (our signal that I am unhurt) I stagger to my feet. Steve gleefully hurtles down on me with the remainder of his broken lance and clubs it across my helmet, just above the face mask. More balsa goes flying and so do I. My squire comes running out onto the field bringing my broadsword. He never reaches me because Steve, having acquired a new lance (another breakaway), intervenes. Steve then amuses himself by galloping down my fleeing squire and smashing his lance across his unprotected back. By this time, I'm back on my feet (proving that you can't keep a good man down) and Steve charges back with the remainder of this second lance. I deflect his blow with my shield. On his next pass, he hurls his lance, javelin style, at me — I deflect again with my shield. Throwing the shield down, I leap for Steve and drag him off his horse. A broadsword battle follows and, in the end, the villain is defeated and I get to make my victory lap and ride off with the princess. That's what we ended up with; here's how we got there.

First stage: passes. We began by training the horses. Both my horse, Sterling, and Steve's, Champaigne, had performed the joust previously, but they'd had a long easygoing winter to forget everything. Plus Sterling and I needed to get acquainted. The first step in working on passes was simply walking them towards each other, passing on the left. As soon as they were keeping a straight line without veering aside when they drew near, we moved up to passing at a trot — and eventually, at a canter. I learned later how crucial this early stage of training was. Once encumbered by lance, shield, and in full gallop towards Steve, any variation in Sterling's gait or direction could spell disaster.

Second stage: hits. The target area was smaller than I had thought. I was aiming for a six inch square on the top outside corner of Steve's shield. Steve was wisely standing perfectly still in the center of the field holding his shield up over his head. I was squinting at it down the length of my lance, which I was trying to keep from wobbling. I could hit the shield, all right. It was striking that specific target area that I was working on. For any would-be knights, the key is to isolate yourself from the horse's movement by riding in a two point — that is, to raise your seat out of the saddle, absorbing the movement with your legs so that your upper body can glide motionlessly, much like a jockey.

The next step for me was adding the shield. Trying to control a spirited horse while wearing a ten pound shield on one arm and balancing a ten foot lance awkwardly with the other, is, to say the least, a challenge. Once I finally maneuvered Sterling into position, I did another pass, this time not only aiming at my target, but also simultaneously keeping my shield out in front of me at approximately a seventy degree angle from the horse, not to mention keeping Sterling, who was feeling frisky, strictly under control. I missed. Eventually, I mastered presenting a target (my shield) while simultaneously hitting my own target. And we moved on.

Now I had to hit a target that was charging towards me. To begin this stage, I carried my lance only and Steve carried his shield only. First we did open passes (in position and on target, but without contact). Then hits. The force of two charging horses concentrated onto the two inch tip of a lance is amazing. For this reason, a gentle grip on the lance is necessary to give with the blow and soften the impact. Not too gentle, though, or the lance shoots backwards out of your hand on impact. I also learned all over again how important accuracy is. Too low a hit and the lance can bounce off the shield and into your partner's leg. Dead center of the shield and the impact will raise a welt on your partner's shield arm that isn't pretty. High and inside, and the lance can bounce off into your partner's face.

Next, I dropped my lance, picked up my shield and took hits. At last, we put it all together. Shields and lances in hand, we did open passes first. Then passes where Steve hit me, then I hit him, and finally (the version we performed in the joust) simultaneous hits.

It was at this point, I learned a further lesson in the knightly art of jousting. On our first double hit, my left arm flinched back with the impact on my shield. Only natural. Except that my shield arm also holds the reins. Sterling, responding obediently to signal, cut hard to the left. Meanwhile, I, standing up in my two point with my weight out over his shoulders, promptly shot headfirst over his right shoulder. After that, I absorbed the shock of a hit without moving my arm.

Jousting is as mentally exhausting as it is physically draining. I learned that it demands a hundred ten percent of your concentration at all times. My focus had to be split between what I was doing, what Steve was doing, and what Sterling and Champaigne were up to. If the horses were, as I mentioned earlier, the great variable, it was up to Steve and me to constantly adjust, compensate, and carry on.

Stage Three: the fall. Doing the fall was a considerable mental hurdle for me to conquer. Contrary to every instinct to roll with a fall, the safest, most consistent way for me to go off the horse was in a flat out bellyflop. The momentum of the horse provided the lateral force to send me sliding backwards along the ground. Flattening out ensured that the force of the impact was dispersed over my entire body as I hit, remembering to exhale on impact.

Easier said than done.

My first problem was ditching my lance and shield before falling. The lance was easily thrown, but the shield required some special attention. Customarily, a shield is fitted with two straps — the arm is passed through both, one strap across the forearm and the other gripped in the palm of the hand. My shield was fitted with a handgrip and a hook that passed over my forearm. Thus, I could throw my arm back, releasing the handgrip and the hook would slip off allowing me to throw off the shield quickly and easily.

I worked up to the fall slowly, falling from a standing horse, at a walk, and then at a trot without weapons. Smooth sailing so far, so we complicated things. I fell at a trot with weapons, then at a trot with weapons and on cue. Then my mental training shifted into high gear as I prepared to try a fall at full speed. I broke down my actions into a series of steps that began just before our last jousting pass:

1) Feet out of stirrups (vital, and easier to do ahead of time, than in the middle of the pass).

2) Lean forward in the saddle (helping to maintain balance for the moment when Sterling would leap into a gallop from a stand).

3) Say a short prayer and mentally accept that I *am* going to fall off the horse. I can have no doubts.

4) Signal "ready." The pass won't begin until I signal Steve.

The pass begins. On this, the fourth pass in our performance, I didn't go for a hit, but merely presented my shield as target and concentrated on the upcoming fall. When Steve makes his hit:

5) I release the reins.

6) Lay back, almost horizontally, on the horse.

7. Throw off the shield.

8. Throw off the lance.

9) From my horizontal position, roll off to the right.

10) Bellyflop onto the ground, skidding on impact.

11) Take inventory of body parts. Seriously.

12) Signal Steve that I'm unhurt and ready to continue.

From the point of impact to hitting the ground took less than two seconds.

Moving up to the fall at full speed was a big step for me mentally, even though technically it was a little different. Although I eventually learned that doing the fall at a faster speed is actually easier, the first time was pretty scary. I knew I could do it. I knew I was ready. I just wished it was behind me instead of looming ahead. For my own safety, it was necessary to control that fear and relax into the fall. Again, easy to say.

The first few tries, I had a tendency to want to catch myself with my hands that played havoc with my wrists. But as my confidence grew, I could relax more thoroughly into the fall and that problem vanished.

Not that everything was pie from then on. The first time I tried on my helmet was something of a shock. It limited my vision to two tiny horizontal slits. Talk about tunnel vision — during a pass when I was focusing on my target I couldn't see my horse or the ground or anything at all but the narrow strip of world directly in front of my eyes.

Then we had to deal with artistic temperament, not ours, the horses. They weren't afraid of the joust — they loved it, not wisely, but too well. During a performance both horses were so fired up it was all we could do to keep them under control between passes and a groom had to be stationed at each end of the field to hold their heads. Champaigne, in particular, was noted for getting so excited that the groom was lifted off her feet trying to hold him still.

Then there were other days when one horse or the other was balky. It was hard for me to look or feel heroic on the day Sterling insisted on trotting in circles in the center of the grounds because he didn't like the looks of the crowd down at my end of the field. Encumbered with lance and shield, I couldn't get him to behave and had to be rescued by my groom who ran out and walked us both sedately down to our proper place.

But the life of a joustier has its compensations. There was a real rush when I heard the crowds cheering us on during a performance. Where else could I live out my fantasies so completely? It's hard to resist feeling like a genuine hero when small boys trail behind me muttering, "Boy, you're really gonna get that old Feckingham, aren't you?" And as veteran stage combat addicts, Steve and I got a thrill from choreographing and performing the joust, which managed to appear both violent and risky, while remaining controlled and safe.

So, while there are easier ways of making a buck, jousting makes them all seem just a little mundane.



Medieval jousting. Encyclopedia of Source Illustrations ©

# ARMOR TECHNIQUES

*By Doug Hansen,  
Armorer, Utah Shakespearean Festival*

The armor for *Troilus and Cressida* at the Utah Shakespearean Festival last summer was made of plastic using a vac-u-form process. Three by four foot sheets of plastic were secured in a metal frame and then heated in a vac-u-form machine until pliable. While still hot, the frame was dropped over the machine and the vacuum pulled the plastic over the desired mold. Different molds were used for a variety of designs. After the plastic cooled, it was taken off the form and the edges were trimmed and smoothed.

Each piece was lined with heavy felt to give the plastic the needed reinforcement. Leather strips were glued to the sides and to the shoulders of the breast and back plates to help secure the riggings. The breast and back plates were then joined by leather tabs which snapped together on one side so that the actor had easy access in and out of the armor. Shoulder pieces were also attached in a similar manner.

Greaves or shin guards were vac-u-formed in the same fashion with leather used to reinforce the edges. Velcro straps were attached at the top and bottom on one side and then looped through D-rings on the other side.

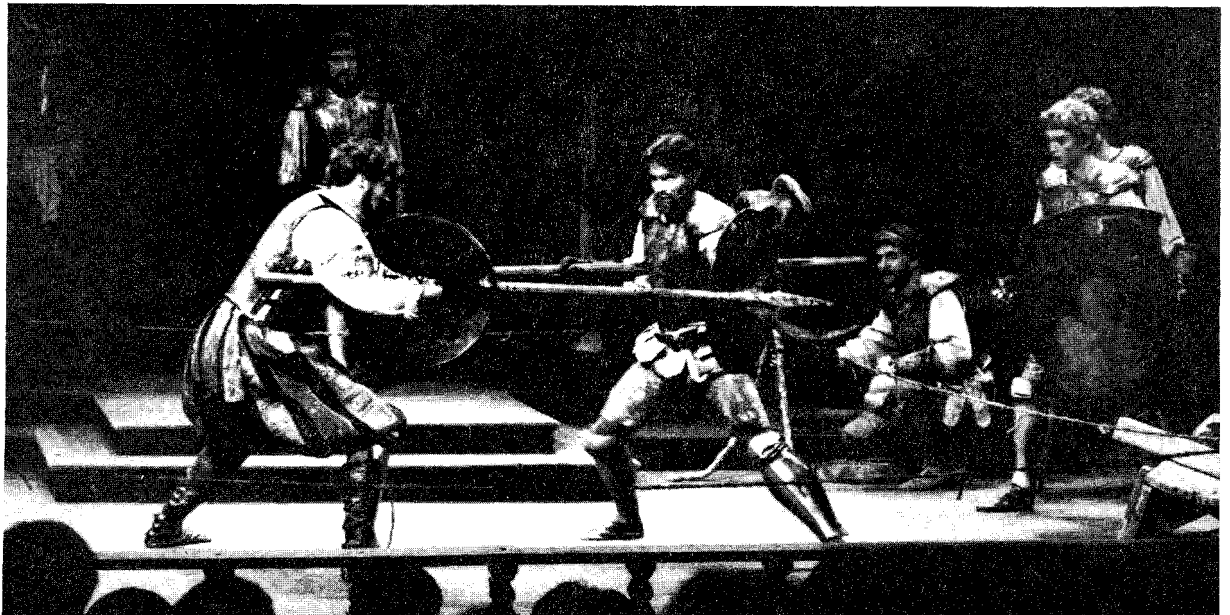
Gauntlets were composed of a plastic forearm, hand and fourteen finger pieces that were attached to a glove through holes punched into each of the plastic pieces.

Helmets were made in halves and then riveted together at the forehead, crown and nape.

All armor pieces were painted black as a base coat. Using the black base coat as shadowing, the pieces were then sprayed silver for the Trojans or gold for the Greeks according to the designer's choice.

The armor was then stippled to achieve an aged look by using several different colors of paint. After stippling, a coat of polyurethane was sprayed on for extra strength and for protection against chipping. Extra time should be taken to cover each of the plastic pieces with muslin before painting, as the paint adheres better to a cloth surface than to a plastic surface.

Fight sequence, *Troilus and Cressida*. 1984 Utah Shakespearean Festival. Director: Libby Appell; Fight Director: David L. Boushey.



# CYMBELINE IN FOUR DAYS?!

by J.D. Martinez

In August of 1984 I was engaged by a new outdoor drama company, Lime Kiln Festival Arts, to choreograph a beheading and the mass battle scene at the conclusion of Shakespeare's *Cymbeline*. For various reasons, financial and otherwise, I was forced to choreograph nine fights utilizing broadswords, Roman short swords, clubs, bows and arrows, shields, and knives, with a company of ten actors in four days!!! Again, for various reasons, I broke a long standing vow I have for not undertaking the impossible and accepted the assignment.

The outdoor drama site is indeed an old abandoned lime kiln and quarry. It is truly an impressive theatrical space carved into a limestone basin. The fight was to take place in twelve various spaces within the ruins of the site. The surfaces we had on which to perform the various vignettes of the battle were clay, rock and cinders. The height of the playing areas ranged from ground level to thirty feet in the air. The depth of the playing area was approximately eighty feet, while the width was approximately sixty feet, not including a possible playing area behind and to the right of the audience, who were seated on bleachers.

Since *Cymbeline* is rarely performed, allow me to present a brief synopsis of the play taken from the Martin & Harier's *The Concise Encyclopedic Guide to Shakespeare*: Cymbeline, King of Britain, banishes Posthumus from the Kingdom when told of his secret marriage to his daughter, Imogen. Upon his departure Posthumus exchanges gifts with his wife, giving her a bracelet, while she presents him with a diamond ring. In Rome, Posthumus is induced by Iachimo to wager ten thousand ducats that his wife is incorruptible. Iachimo, by unscrupulous means, gains access to her bedroom and steals the bracelet, which he later uses to prove to Posthumus that Imogen has been unfaithful.

Meanwhile, the Queen, who had wished to arrange a marriage between her son Cloten and Imogen, has obtained some poison from her physician, Cornelius, and plans to kill Posthumus. The doctor, however, distrusting the Queen, gives the messenger a drug which is not poison but a heavy sedative. Posthumus writes to Imogen telling her to meet him at Milford Haven and orders his servant Pisanio to kill her on the way. Instead Pisanio persuades Imogen to disguise herself as a man and to join the Roman general, Lucius, who has declared war on Britain.

Meanwhile, Cloten attempts to force his attentions on Imogen, who rejects him. The princess meets Belarius, a banished lord, and his two sons in their mountain cave, unaware that she has been followed by Cloten, who, disguised as Posthumus, plans to ravish her and kill her husband. However, before he can find her, he is killed by her two brothers. Alone in the cave, Imogen feels ill, takes the Queen's restorative and falls into a dead faint. When her brothers find her, they carry her apparently lifeless body into the forest and place it beside the body of the headless Cloten.

When she awakens, she mistakes the corpse for Posthumus and goes to join Lucius, whom she serves as a page. Posthumus disguised as a British peasant, Belarius and the two princes fight valiantly in a battle against the Roman armies, one led by Iachimo, and the Romans are defeated. The Queen goes mad when she learns of the death of her son. At a meeting before the king, all relationships are revealed, lovers united, villains exposed and peace is made with Rome. (Is it any wonder that *Cymbeline* is rarely performed?)

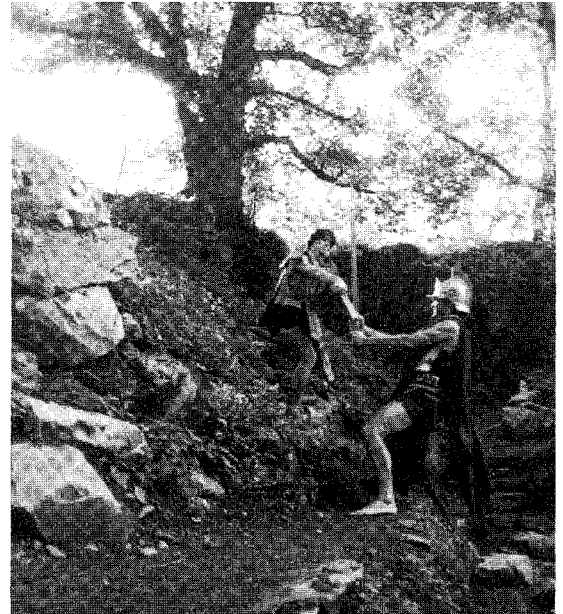
The battle was variously lit so as to define space and to cloak the fact that we did not have substantial armies waiting in the wings. A group of musicians supplied much crashing of cymbals and suitably dramatic transitional music, which was primarily ambient and merely supportive, as it was impossible in four days to set the fights to music. We worked important aspects of the battle i.e., those visual moments which advanced the already chaotic plot. For example, *Cymbeline*, the King, is captured by the Romans at one point in the fight, yet struggles bravely with a jeweled knife against three Romans (wounding one) before being disarmed and heroically submitting. The central fight—here blessed with two physically adept actors who are attending Julliard and the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, as MFA candidates in acting—is between Iachimo, the treacherous Roman, and our hero Posthumus. This fight utilized almost the entire playing area with much leaping about, near misses and culminated in Posthumus graciously sparing the life of Iachimo, down center.

The audience was particularly thrilled by watching a fight begin very far away and then continue to approach until it was almost on top of them, which heightened their suspension of disbelief. Of course the King is rescued in the climactic moments when all of the combatants battle together, with lights flashing, blades clashing, drums rumbling, and no one stumbling. All in all this was a well constructed mass battle of which the company could be proud.

The rehearsal process, though short, was quite thorough. I naturally completely simplified the technique and designed a host of safety cues into the choreography to minimize the potential for mishap. And there were no accidents through the three week run of the show.

I enjoy the scale of outdoor drama productions. Although once again, the producers failed to realize the importance of adequate rehearsal time for the fights, which are almost always intrinsic to the outdoor drama scripts. This was certainly the case with *Cymbeline*. And sadly, the producers in outdoor dramas often fail to budget for a Fight Director early on, so that in some small way your services are resented for drawing off funds at a crucial budgetary point in rehearsal. Nevertheless, after the work is completed and the Director and Producer see the tremendous, almost magical in their eyes, improvement in the production which clever and safe choreography engenders, invariably the Fight Director walks away with one more theatre company being converted and becoming a staunch supporter of The Society of American Fight Directors.

*Cymbeline* — Rehearsal August 1984.  
“Posthumus” and “Iachimo.” Lime Kiln Festival  
Arts, Lexington, VA. J.D. Martinez: Fight Master.



# NOT JUST STAGE COMBAT

*by Edward Rozinsky*

A funny thing happened to me last summer at the American Theatre Association Convention in San Francisco where I presented my Method of Stage Movement for the Actor. I mentioned that Stage Combat was only one part of the Stage Movement Program along with basic stage movement, period movement, mime for the actor and rhythmic. During the discussion one of the panelists asked if I really taught all these subjects myself. When I confirmed that I did, she replied, "Good for you." Not many people actually believed that I taught all these topics, although they easily believe that one person is capable of teaching acting, movement and voice. I teach all these subjects with equal proficiency because every one of them is an intricate part of what we call Stage Movement.

The reason I have related this story is to demonstrate that the theatrical profession has become far too specialized. A mere hundred years ago the functions of the director, producer and choreographer were all performed by the playwright. Today we seem to feel that the more "specialists" we have the better. Admittedly, the theatre has changed and has become more technically sophisticated, but not too much for we still use the false moustache and the wind machine. One can understand the need for specialization in a field such as Biology where there are specialists in microbiology, marine biology, plant biology, biology of man and even the biology of outer space. The field is too broad for any one individual to fully comprehend all these areas completely. I don't believe that this is true of theatrical education.

Let us see what is happening in our already narrow profession of the stage movement specialist. To begin with, one never knows what one will learn from a movement specialist. It may be anything from Alexander technique to T'ai Chi or both. It also may be circus technique, mime or stage combat. They still call a class in fencing taught by the fencing coach "stage movement." And the fencing coaches may even call themselves Fight Directors, but even they can't agree on what they ought to know or be teaching. Some deal solely with unarmed combat while others are experts in armed combat. I am afraid we are going to soon have specialists in Shakespearean era combat or specialists in Lope de Vega or Calderon. And of course we will need somebody who knows everything about combat in the Roman era.

There is nothing wrong in being a specialist in a field but it seems like this type of differentiation is emerging in movement education where it is not needed. There are instructors who teach only the Alexander technique and others who deal solely with stylized movement and still others who know everything about the Laban method. But all of these are the methods which solve just a part of the problem: posture and walking in one case, body awareness in another, relaxation in still another case. No one University could ever afford to have a specialist for every one of these areas. For many Drama Departments one movement instructor is considered to be a luxury so this person is also required to teach acting or something else (and somehow it seems to be agreed that just about anyone can teach acting). The result is that students are not getting the knowledge and skills they actually need in a movement class.

There is an old saying that one must know everything about something and something about everything. In the case of the movement specialist THE SOMETHING one must know is everything about the various aspects of stage movement for the actor and that it is something that has to be learned within a lifetime. Why should a student study six to ten years to become a doctor and just a few months to become a movement specialist? There are basic principles in each part of the study of stage movement and students need to be familiar with all of them. If the movement instructor is not capable of providing this knowledge, the student will be forced to take a dozen other classes after graduation to fill in the "blank spots" in his movement education.

Constantin Stanislavski, while creating his System, dreamed of a well rounded and universal Method of teaching actors stage movement. Through a collective effort of many people this unique method now exists. This Method which

has been used for many years in the Soviet Union is now gaining more and more recognition in Europe. It is based on Stanislavski's System and modern achievements in psychophysiology. The Method uses about five hundred systematically group exercises to develop all the physical facilities and special skills the modern actor needs for a professional career. Each group of exercises is responsible for the development of one or more facilities. A variety of special skills are positioned and taught in different parts of the program. These parts are: Basic Stage Movement and Rhythmics followed by Period Movement and Hand-to-Hand Combat, which is in turn followed by Mime for the actor and Stage Fencing. The entire program is designed to be taught within five semesters (two and a half years) with classes meeting for an hour and a half twice a week.

The Method is critically different from anything in this country in terms of stage movement. What makes it distinctive is the Methodology is based on the psychology of the student-actor, and the program of learning is designed to be exciting, for we are teaching future artists and not athletes. It gives the instructor with a creative mind a chance to make each class a small performance.

The foundation of this method rests in the belief that movement training is in fact the training of the mind and the nervous system. It is also obvious that every stage movement method must be connected with the acting technique. This however does not mean that a movement instructor should duplicate the acting teacher. Each program must have its particular objectives. The Movement Program must be presented in such a way as to help the student to develop certain facilities and movement skills as part of the acting technique. But the time for study must be limited. It is ridiculous to study acting for ten or fifteen years and finally to be too old to get a part as a young character. This is why I feel that in many schools students are wasting their time trying to adopt all these specialized movement techniques. Of course it wouldn't hurt if every actor could do a somersault. But it will take so much time to learn how to do this that it loses all sense. In fact, we do acrobatic exercises just to develop a facility called courage (or resolution) and a simple forward roll serves the objective just as well as a somersault.

I think some instructors do not always clearly understand what a particular exercise does to the student's body. Some of the existing methods used by instructors to teach students stage movement were created by actors. It doesn't automatically mean that these methods are good to teach other student actors.

A stage movement program presented as a combination of various aspects of body movement is a comparably new subject in theatre education in America. There is a demand for movement specialists and naturally, since Nature cannot stand a vacuum this void is being filled. But what is being offered, with the exception of a small group of experienced people, does not meet the needs. Former actors, dancers, fencing coaches, and voice teachers are taking on the responsibility of teaching stage movement after attending a few seminars or workshops, or in many cases, simply reading a few articles on movement technique. That is why the movement education being provided in many drama schools is poor and insufficient. After teaching Master Classes at several reputable Universities I have discovered that students are often lacking in such major and basic facilities as balance, coordination and stamina.

It is time to begin to think seriously about the education of our future movement specialists. The Drama Department of the University of Miami, where I am currently teaching, is planning to open a MFA program aimed at the development of movement instructors. The first step towards the establishment of this program has already been taken. A professional workshop in Basic Stage Movement will be conducted in the summer of 1985. This is a three week intensive program entailing a six hour day schedule of lectures and practical work. In addition to basic movement exercises, period movement, stage falls and carries, hand-to-hand combat will also be covered in the workshop. The number of attendees is limited. The workshop is for people who are working professionally or who are planning to make Stage Movement their profession.

In addition to the tropical weather, the beautiful campus and the summer stock theatre, the University of Miami's Drama Department has excellent facilities for this type of a workshop. For more information about the Leningrad Method of Stage Movement or about the Stage Movement Workshop, you may contact me at the University of Miami, Drama Department, P.O. Box 248273, Coral Gables Florida 33124 or call (305) 284-4474.



### Cimmerian Combatives Company

Performing safe and effective fights in large outdoor festivals can be extremely difficult. The Cimmerian Combatives Company did a fine job in meeting these goals last summer at the Maryland Renaissance Festival.

Performing fights at festivals poses some special problems in addition to the usual ones of a scripted play. First of all, there is no script per se. Festivals are improvisational by nature and the stage fights are not. Therefore there has to be a bridge between these two realms. The Cimmerian Combatives Company dealt with this problem quite well in the two shows I saw.

The first show consisted of the company pretending to be taking a fencing lesson. It started with their leader, Jamie Smith, giving instructions on their drills, while the company members practiced their rapier and dagger moves. This was nice as a warm-up and attracted a crowd but did not prove to be too interesting. It was followed by several humorous improvisations which were interspersed with fighting. The alternation of fighting with improvising was effective and safe because the combatants were obviously well-trained and able to maintain eye contact and telegraph their opening moves through gestures and/or cue words.

The second show was part of a human chess game. They cleared the chessboard and fought whenever one of the major chess pieces was going to be taken, with each combatant representing a chess piece. Since there was little or no dialogue between the combatants, the shift from improvisation to stage fight was simple—just clear the board and fight.

Another problem festivals pose is that of audience control and sightlines. Both shows were done in three quarter round but the moves were carefully choreographed and masked so as not to present a problem. In the first show, the audience was kept away from the combatants by a roped off area and in the second show by the raised platform of the chessboard. Both worked well, although the combatants came uncomfortably close to the audience in the first show.

The fights themselves were well conceived and safe—this was apparent throughout both shows. The first show, however, was marred by sloppiness. Perhaps the could have rehearsed it more and/or freshed it up by making some changes. It is a shame though, that the quality of the first show was not equal to that of the chess game show. There were numerous times when something went wrong—a missed move or concentration lapse, which temporarily destroyed the illusion. I was impressed, however, that at no time did a combatant either begin or complete a move if his partner wasn't prepared—this shows good training.

The chess game fights were much more effective and clean. They used a greater variety of weapons (quarterstaves, broadswords and unarmed) which resulted in a greater diversity of moves without any apparent missed cues. They were believable, exciting, well varied and well paced. The quality of their stage fighting was as good as can be found in a festival.

The Cimmerian Combatives Company is based in Sarasota, Florida and its director is Roy William Cox. Company members include Vosco Call, Jr., Jody Kielbasa, Diane Lancaster-Cox, Mike Pointek, Jamie Smith and apprentice Robert Guigilo.

William Hauserman

### BOOK REVIEW

*The Sword and the Centuries* or *Old Sword Days* and *Old Sword Ways* is a description of the various swords used in civilized Europe during the last five centuries, and of single combats which have been fought with them. by Alfred Hutton, F.S.A.

*The Sword and the Centuries* is an extremely valuable resource to Combat Choreographers, Stage Directors, playwrights and basically anyone involved in the artistic production of period plays. Captain Hutton's work is not a "how-to" manuscript, but is written from the spectator's viewpoint as a log of actual duels, battles and the like, covering four centuries (fifteenth through nineteenth), four countries, and five periods of sword-play. Often these events are recounted from written histories of actual eyewitnesses, as authentic as could possibly be hoped for. As Cyril G. R. Matthey states in his introduction:

In addition to the bare record of the details of the different encounters described, and the circumstances to which they owed their origin, points of etiquette are constantly cropping up and explained, which tend most forcibly to illustrate the remarkable social conditions under which men have lived and died.

To the Stage Combat Choreographer this information is invaluable in his research of fighting styles. To the playwright this offers hundreds of scripts and circumstances to be built upon. To the Stage Director it offers an opportunity to acquaint himself with the mood of a particular point in time which may give him greater insight into the character of a play itself; insight which can certainly aid the actor. Hutton refers at one point to Benvolio in *Romeo and Juliet*. Benvolio is often viewed as a very mild fellow, a peacemaker. Hutton makes clear that at that time in Italy, men would fight at a cross word, or at the lack of a sufficiently respectful greeting. The picture which is painted is one of men almost prowling the street, *looking* for a fight. Mercutio reinforces this view when he reminds Benvolio the Mild that he (Benvolio) drew his rapier on a man for waking his sleeping dog. Establishing such an environment is certainly in keeping with the author's intent, and can certainly influence an actor's efforts towards authenticity of characterization.

The single greatest drawback of this volume is likely to be its lack of availability. First printed in 1901 in London, its author is very dead and gone. It was reprinted by the Charles E. Tuttle Company, Inc., in 1973, with a second printing in 1980. I found my first copy (1901 edition) in the closed section of a major library. The second Tuttle printing was in Japan so copies may be difficult to find. Regardless of its price when located, *The Sword and the Centuries* with its marvelous commentary, eye-witness

reports and forty eight illustrations is a treasure well worth searching for.

Rob Hall

*Editor's Note: Alfred Hutton's The Sword and the Centuries is currently available from the publisher Charles E. Tuttle Company, P.O. Box 410, Rutland, Vermont 05701 at a cost of \$14.50 plus \$1.50 for postage and handling.*

### **Tis Pity She's a Whore at the Drama Studio**

The Drama Studio of London at Berkeley presented scenes from *Tis Pity She's a Whore* late in October. The object of presenting a series of scenes rather than staging the entire production was to give the students an opportunity to work in a limited time span on the Jacobean style and to incorporate some swordplay into their scene work.

The fight choreography was by J.R. Beardsley, Associate Director of the Drama Studio. What was so rewarding in this exercise was the understanding of the Jacobean audience's love of blood and gore and the actor needing to believably portray the horror and the shock of such actions rather than the melodramatic approach that is so often taken. This proved to be a valid acting exercise.

The first piece of physical violence was preceded by Anabella's blood curdling scream off stage before Soranzo forcibly dragged her down the stairs by the hair. Soranzo proceeds to physically and emotionally assault her, and her pregnant condition, coupled with her terror and hate of Soranzo, instilled in the audience a sense of concern for her well-being. This same actress was also quite convincing in the tender, intimate bedroom scene with her brother Giovanni. In their final farewell embrace with its strongly erotic overtones, the audience was able to see Giovanni draw his dagger during this intimate moment and to see Anabella's reaction when the dagger was plunged into her back.

When Giovanni enters Soranzo's party with his sister's heart impaled on the dagger, his sick deranged state sent quivers through the audience. An incredible moment of imminent danger occurred with Giovanni slamming his dagger into the table which confirmed for the audience a sense of the "real danger" with the weapons being used.

The fight between Soranzo and Giovanni began with Soranzo ripping a broadsword off the wall mount and attacking Giovanni who barely retrieves a sword in time to parry the attack. The fight moved well, covering the many areas of the stage and using the pommel and cross guard of the broadsword as the bludgeoning weapon it was intended to be.

In the Vasquez-Giovanni fight sequence Beardsley achieved a nice contrast in styles between Vasquez's Spanish technique with rapier and cloak and Giovanni's double rapier style. When the two bandetti became involved, a three way fight ensued which was well timed and executed, ending in the final gang-style slaying of Giovanni.

The audience was really caught up in the action of the play not only because of the excellent swordplay but also because of the believability of the actors who were involved in the stage violence.

Linda McCollum

### **Romeo & Juliet at TheatreWorks**

Mark Clark's fight choreography for *Romeo and Juliet* at The TheatreWorks in Palo Alto had the Bay Area buzzing with excitement last summer with one local reviewer describing it as the "finest Shakespearean swordplay" he had seen. *Romeo and Juliet* was staged in the small outdoor amphitheatre where Mark did *Cyrano de Bergerac* last year. The main sixteen foot hexagonal playing area was surrounded by a low railing with exit aisles through the audience. The director chose to set the action in a non-recognizable time period, a sort of "every-when" time frame, and he did not want the actors wearing swords.

To solve the problem of actors not carrying weapons on their person, all weapons were placed in "buckets" about the perimeter of the playing area. Their ominous presence was a constant reminder that the means to violence was readily at hand—and analogy to the availability of the "Saturday Night Special" of today. This placement of weapons became an integral part of the environment for the actors and lent for some exciting stage business when an actor/combatant was disarmed during the fight sequence and scrambled to obtain any weapon readily at hand, supposedly never knowing what he might draw out of the weapons cache—a rapier, dagger, practice sword. Even the "bucket" itself, when found to be empty, was used on one occasion during a fight.

To set Tybalt's fencing style apart from the others in this "every when" period, Mark had Tybalt using an Oriental style of sword play adapted to the rapier. Many of Tybalt's moves were done with both hands on the hilt and with samurai parries of head cuts. In Act I scene i when all kneel before the Prince, Tybalt kneels in an Oriental manner in contrast to the others. And this style served well when Tybalt went into a Zen-like meditation/breathing trance while Mercutio taunted him unmercifully in Act III, i, just before their encounter. The oriental style was exotically different from the rest of the fencers and the discipline necessary for this type of swordplay was incongruous with Tybalt's fiery character.

In this production, Mark Clark played Benvolio as a visitor to Verona in some kind of trouble with the authorities and having to toe a thin line in his newly adopted city, thus his attempt to stop the servants' fight in the first act, and his later disappearance from the rest of the play after lying to the Prince as to who started the fight in which Tybalt and Mercutio were slain. Benvolio was also actively involved in the Mercutio-Tybalt-Romeo encounters trying to pass a weapon to Romeo, hold off Tybalt for awhile or physically restrain Mercutio. As one reviewer noted—it was the first time he'd realized Benvolio was in the play.

Hats off to Mark Clark for bringing new life into a well known play!

Linda McCollum

### The Ultimate Stage Weapon

I am writing due to the fact that so many people have so many ideas of what an ideal stage weapon is or should be that I was getting rather distressed. Thus I thought I might collect the opinions of our members in order to find a good and solid compromise. I am not really looking for a "name brand" or a "good for what you pay" type of weapon. I am really interested in what you personally look for and want in a good solid stage combat weapon.

I would appreciate receiving as much technical information as I can. I am interested in the tang size, grips, handles, wraps, pommels, blades, widths, lengths, weights, everything! Even if it seems impossible: "the ultimate stage weapon"---I am interested in hearing how YOU think it all should go together, feel, look and last.

With your permission I would like to collect all this information, all that you can possibly give, and pass it on to Dennis Graves in hopes that through his art and your collected knowledge we might all see our dreams made true---the best stage sword ever made available at a price we can all afford.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Dale A. Girard  
1217 29th St. Road #209  
Greeley, Colorado 80631

### Change in Terms

At the National Stage Combat Workshop last summer in Salem there was much ado about qualifications and resume representation. The Society creates its own confusion by the use of the terms AFFILIATE and ASSOCIATE. These words are synonymous and meaningless. They imply membership. Since this is the Society of American Fight Directors, these terms imply that the user is an affiliate or associate fight director. I know that the Society does not want to imply this. I recommend that AFFILIATE be changed to the old ACTOR-COMBATANT, and that ASSOCIATE be changed to STAGE COMBAT INSTRUCTOR. (One could make a case for APPRENTICE FIGHT MASTER.) ACTOR-COMBATANT and STAGE COMBAT INSTRUCTOR are specific and meaningful to anyone unfamiliar with the Society's nomenclature. They allow no confusion with FIGHT DIRECTOR, FIGHT CHOREOGRAPHER, or FIGHT MASTER. The change of FULL MEMBER to the romantic FIGHT MASTER is an improvement. I would have preferred PROFESSIONAL or CERTIFIED FIGHT DIRECTOR for clarity. If the stage combat workshop is any indication, many of our members are practicing or aspiring teachers. Certification as a STAGE COMBAT INSTRUCTOR would be as valuable to them as certified ACTOR-COMBATANT is to our actors. The certification process might be very similar to that currently being used for ASSOCIATE. I have followed my own advice and call myself a CERTIFIED ACTOR-COMBATANT on my resume. I look forward to adding CERTIFIED STAGE COMBAT INSTRUCTOR. The world doesn't carry the Society's constitution around for clarification of vague terms. Let's make it easy for them.

Charles Conwell

### Earning Your Spurs

There is a custom in India where disciples who have studied with various masters and teachers go to the largest mountain they have access to in order to praise each individual who ever had anything to do with their education and advancement, starting with the most significant master and going down to the most insignificant person who enlightened their life.

I am not implying that all fight directors and students should pack-up and head for the nearest mountain to give homage, but I do feel that individuals in the fight business should show respect and give credit to those who have taught them and helped them along the way to a fulfilling career.

What is most distressing is that some students and colleagues opt not only to give no credit where it is due but actually take credit where credit is undeserved, fraudulent or, worse yet, to take credit for another colleague's work. I find it appalling that a student or colleague would take credit for another's work. What kind of a business are we in where one doesn't have to earn his spurs through years of hard work and discipline? What other occupation in this country exists where a person takes a workshop comprising of a few weeks time in order to pass himself off as a professional, claiming all the necessary credits to compete with those who have spent years at their craft. I wish some of our colleagues wouldn't be so impatient when pursuing their careers. Rather than developing one's skills over time and trial as the masters of old, one chooses to exaggerate and pad one's credentials. In this country, more so than any other nation I can think of, we have this feeling of wanting it NOW.

To my astonishment I find colleagues who have been out of school a couple of years pursuing books, making films and going on lecture tours. Does one really have the necessary skills to pursue these options after a couple of years? I don't think so. There is an old adage in this business---the less you know, the more you think you know. I don't consider this field so shallow that a few weeks of preparation and a couple of books can make a teacher or fight choreographer out of you.

I suggest that would be choreographers start as assistants to masters or work on a high school or college level to prepare themselves for the demands expected of them when they get into the professional arena. We must adhere to certain standards if we are going to continue in our quest to make the fight director a viable part of the theatre. If just anyone is a choreographer then how can professional standards in this business be maintained? We will only degrade our profession through sub-standard work.

This is an ART dear colleagues! This is not some macho trip where we are out seeking a fight somewhere. It takes great talent to put together a quality fight sequence that enhances a production. Ego has little room in our work for it only gets in the way as it has in the stunt world. I consider myself an artist, every bit the artist who comes in to choreograph a ballet or a musical.

When we stop considering our art or our colleagues, we as a Society are doomed! We have got to start thinking about our art and how we can further it rather than how we can get a job with a minimum of credentials before someone else does.

This letter is not intended as ridicule for my fellow colleagues. I am simply addressing a very real problem that in the long run could hurt all of us. If we make this a worthy art form, we will all benefit in the long run.

Respectfully,

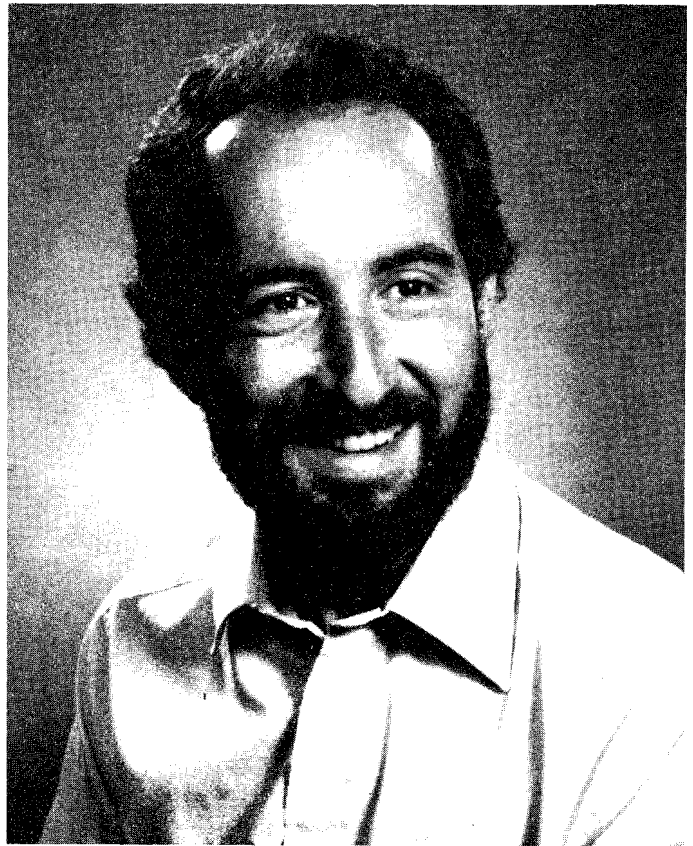
David L. Boushey

## J.D. MARTINEZ, FIGHT MASTER

Many theatre goers, and perhaps not a few directors, are under the delusion that stage combat is “controlled violence.” Injuries result from accepting the notion of “controlled violence;” there is only violence or non-violence. I believe that the Fight Master is unique in his advocacy of non-violence, for he teaches those principles of cooperation, strength through weakness, respect for others — all of the elements of a non-violent milieu, through the dramatic context of illusory conflict; translating the demands of the beast within into the safe conduct of the gentleman without.

The Fight Master wears a coat of many colors, often called upon to be a writer, designer, historian, dramaturg, director, musician, dancer, athlete, and actor. However, over the years I have embraced the conviction that the primary task of the Fight Master is to convey a cooperative attitude toward the work. In my book *Combat Mime, a Non-Violent Approach to Stage Violence*, Nelson-Hall Publishers, Chicago, I quoted Chuang Tzu, “Where there is no fight, there is no blame.” For I am certain that even careful technique training and admonitions about safety will not suffice when the performers are beneath the lights and the excitement of the audience is infusing the actors with super-human stamina and power. It is during those moments of heightened energy that the spirit of unity and genuine care for the partner, instilled by the Fight Master, will produce a *non-violent* illusion of conflict, which may dazzle or even horrify the spectators, but will leave the performers refreshed and closer in spirit.

I am continually astonished by the complexity and beauty of the Stage Combat Arts. Delving into the mysteries of weapon construction as practiced by the ancients, or discovering with a gifted Actor/Combatant a new unarmed illusion remains fascinating and affirming. I first slashed a ragged foil through the air in 1966. Today I am just as enamored with the dramatic music and patterned vision of the Queen of Weapons, L'Arm Blanc.



*Joseph Martinez has been a professional stage fight choreographer for over ten years having staged fights throughout the United States, London, Paris and Holland. He is an expert in hand-to-hand stage fighting and in the use of weaponry for the Medieval, Renaissance, Elizabethan and Restoration theatrical eras. Joseph is a graduate of the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, London, England. He has been a fight master for the Goodman Theatre, Chicago and for the Virginia Museum Theatre, Richmond. Joseph has taught at the University of Illinois and is currently teaching at William and Lee University in Virginia.*

#### CERTIFICATION

The University of Alaska at Anchorage took advantage of our new proposition regarding certification. One person applied for certification. He was assisted by two people who opted not to try for certification. The fights were properly video-taped showing all moves and knaps. The fights were solid and as an adjudicator, I found little trouble in judging the applicant's work. This new system only applies to individuals in areas where there are no full members in the vicinity. Alaska is a perfect example where the distance makes the cost of certification prohibitive by our standard procedure. (Remember that any certifications by video must be approved by myself before such procedure can be initiated.)

The applicant's teacher, Michael Hood, did a fine job preparing the applicant for this certification. I hope this system will make certification a possibility for those applicants in other remote areas of the United States.

Passed: 384 David Dahl  
Teacher: Michael Hood  
Adjudicator: David L. Boushey

#### RESULTS OF CERTIFICATION—*Tecumseh!*

My congratulations to Drew Fracher for his outstanding training of the cast of *Tecumseh!* During the summer months of June, July and August, Mr. Fracher taught classes in rapier and dagger, quarterstaff and hand-to-hand combat. Three hours a day, five days a week, were devoted to the training of thirty-four combatants. This was in addition to his responsibilities as Fight Captain, Assistant Fight Choreographer and company member!

Thirty-two people took the test on August 21, 1984. To my knowledge, this is the largest group of students adjudicated outside the National Fight Workshop. Another incredible accomplishment. Steven Zengerling and Brent Gibbs, (already certified Actor/Combatants) ably assisted Drew during these long hours of instruction. I'm sure he appreciated their efforts.

The fight choreography, designed by Drew, was certainly a fierce test of their skills. The hand to hand and rapier and dagger fights, which incidentally displayed moments of Paddy Crean's style and panache (Drew studied with Paddy during December of 1983) were choreographed quite well. Congratulations to Drew for a fine job of teaching and choreographing.

Of the twenty-six people that passed, four received recommendations. Brent Gibbs and Steven Zengerling arranged Drew's choreography so that it would take them from the top of one mountain, down and across the mainstage and up and down another stage mountain. The fact that they could maintain a safe and effective fight during this "measure of endurance" was very impressive. Another person is certainly worthy of mention. Mary Ellen Allison (stage manager) joined Drew's class after it had already started. By the time adjudication rolled around, her balance and control, clarity and confidence deserved no less than a recommendation.

*Tecumseh!* is the first outdoor drama to incorporate stage combat into their regularly scheduled summer activities. By this I mean to say that they paid Drew to teach these classes as part of his responsibilities to the theatre. I hope this will serve as an inspiration to other theatres to do the same. My sincere thanks to the producers and directors for their support and dedication.

Instructor: Drew Fracher  
Adjudicator: David Leong

385 George Brown	398 Mark Moorehead
386 Raymond Speakman	399 Jose Andrews
387 Susan Meyers	400 Jim DesChaynes
388 Dale Lakes	401 Rex Slate
389 John Hickok	402 James Mauer (Rec)
390 Mary Ellen Allison (Rec)	403 Joe Thornton
391 Amy Uhl	404 Chuck Currier
392 Sharyllyn Shaw	405 Reynardo Johnson
393 Donna Kane	406 Jeff Watkins
394 William Steckler	407 Catherine Treadgold
395 Hal Spencer	408 Steven Zengerling (Rec)
396 John Macero	409 Brent Gibbs (Rec)
397 David Lee	410 David Zum Brunnen

#### RESULTS OF CERTIFICATION—*The Legend of Daniel Boone*

On August 23, 1984, I adjudicated members of *The Legend of Daniel Boone* Company. They were trained in rapier and dagger, quarterstaff and hand-to-hand combat by Charles Killian, an associate member. Of the students taking the test, eleven passed and two received recommendations. Congratulations to Charles for his excellent training.

This group of certification fights was full of technical surprises. I wonder, though, if too much time was devoted to lighting cues, sound effects, and additional costume pieces. In my opinion, the addition of these production values should be encouraged only when the fights are enhanced by these elements, and if the fights are well rehearsed. In other words, don't take time to add these elements unless the students are completely sure of their fight scenes.

Of special note was the fight executed by Michael Donahue and Mark Guinn. Their fight entitled "The Spoils of Scataris" was like watching moments from *The Sword and the Sorcerer*, *Conan the Barbarian*, and *Star Wars* combined into one movie! Such grade B trash! But, I must say it was very funny and extremely well executed. Their technique and script writing deserves a hearty round of applause.

Several of the fights contained disarms that were a bit unsafe. Rapiers and daggers were lofted with little sense of control. The combatants were made aware of this problem during their critique.

Instructor: Charles Killian  
Adjudicator: David Leong

411 Steven Griffith	417 David Snowden
412 Mary Huner	418 Marty Evans
413 Laurie Adcock	419 Joseph McLaughlin
414 Francesca Lacy	420 Mark Guinn (rec)
415 Todd Haven	421 Michael Donahue (rec)
416 Mark Moore	

ROD COLBIN has been made an Honorary Member of the Society of American Fight Directors in recognition of his contributions to fight directing. Rod, who is the senior fight choreographer in this country, is the first American to be so honored. Patrick Crean, a Canadian, is the only other honorary member of the Society of American Fight Directors. Rod, who recently moved to New York, found it necessary to step down as vice-president and the officers at that time decided that he should be recognized as the patriarchal fight choreographer in this country. J.R. BEARDSLEY has been appointed interim vice-president until the next election.

JOSEPH MARTINEZ, Fight Master, is planning on conducting private classes for advanced students, for two weeks this coming August on his Irish Creek Farm in the Shenendoah Valley of Virginia. Mr. Martinez will be accepting a maximum of ten students who have previously studied with one of the other Fight Masters or Associate members. Mr. Martinez will concentrate on advanced techniques in rapier and dagger, broadsword, and unarmed combat. In addition, he will be conducting a concurrent course for two students in beginning techniques of choreography. Those interested should contact Joseph c/o Department of Theatre, Washington & Lee University, Lexington, VA 24450.

## CANADIAN SOCIETY OF FIGHT DIRECTORS

Those wishing further information on the newly founded Canadian Society of Fight Directors or subscription information on the Newsletter should contact:

F. Braun McAsh  
5 Ferwood Gardens #4  
Toronto, Ontario, M4K 2J8

## FIGHTS R US

Fights R Us re-elected J. Allen Suddeth as President at their September meeting. Richard Raether was elected Vice President, Emily Conable is Secretary and Margaret Raether is Treasurer. Stage Combat classes began October 5th with Steve Vaughan and Allen Suddeth teaching. For further information on Fights R Us and future classes, their address is 1261 Broadway, Suite 505, New York, N.Y. 10001 or phone (212) 725-1375.

*Murder to Go*, the murder mystery company that was recently featured in *Life* magazine, hired Fights R Us for their October whodunnit at the South Street Seaport. Sponsored by Seagram's to promote Captain Morgan's Spiced Rum, the event took place on board the U.S.S. Peking. Suspects mingled among the guests and several murders took place before the solution was revealed by the intrepid Detective Lyric (after guests had an opportunity to turn in their written guesses). Fights R Us members involved in the action that climaxed the mystery included John Bachelder (Detective Lyric), J. Allen Suddeth (who turned out to be the murderer), Bob Walsh (SAFD Affiliate), Richard Raether (SAFD Associate), Sterling Swann and Grace Tannehill as assorted thugs and cops in the fight scenes. Fights were choreographed by Steve Vaughan.

## BACK ISSUES OF THE FIGHT MASTER

There have been several inquiries about obtaining back issues of *The Fight Master*. There is a limited supply of the following issues available at \$4.00 a copy.

January 1983	Volume VI	Number 1
April 1983	Volume VI	Number 2
September 1983	Volume VI	Number 3
May 1984	Volume VII	Number 2
September 1984	Volume VII	Number 3

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DENNIS GRAVES is now advertising with the Society and we look forward to his contribution to the Society and the fight business over-all. David Boushey recently visited Dennis in Boulder, Colorado and found him to be a most genuine person. "His quality of work and craftsmanship is absolutely exquisite! He can make a replica rapier and dagger that could go into a museum and in fact has gone into a museum." Dennis is in the process of making a good utility broadsword which he hopes to market through the Society. If this broadsword is anything like the rest of his work, the Society is in for a real treat. He hopes to make the broadsword for under one hundred dollars which will make it competitive with other sword makers and distributors. If anyone wants replica weapons, Dennis Graves is the man to see. He makes just about everything needed for the theatre. We are glad that he is becoming actively involved with the Society for it is truly a pleasure to have him with us.

## NEW RAPIER BLADES

David Boushey had the good fortune to be one of the first to use the new rapier (epee) blade that American Fencing Supply has put on the market. David was absolutely thrilled with it! It is larger than the standard epee blade and looks much more authentic. It doesn't weigh much more than a regular epee blade, handles nicely and costs approximately ten dollars more than the standard epee blade. David found it to be a real gem of a blade. "Many of us have waited years for this development and now it is here." David, after using it in his choreography, feels that it is here to stay. For further information please contact American Fencing Supply in San Francisco.

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RICHARD ALVAREZ choreographed and advised the segments "The Battle of Edge Hill," part of the PBS series *Newscast from the Past* last February which will air this spring. It was filmed in the hills outside of Austin. He spent the summer in Chicago at King Richards Faire where he was a jousting member with the Hanlon-Lees Action Theatre. In October Richard returned for the tenth year to the Texas Renaissance Festival where he performed with his dueling partner Scott Shannon as *Triomphe*. In December the pair appeared at the Dickens Festival in Galveston where they duel as Sherlock Holmes and Jack the Ripper in the historic Victorian section of the island. Richard's company, Pierrot Productions, produced its first action theatre festival in the 1894 Grand Opera House in April on the island and has plans for another soon. He continues to teach fencing and stage combat in Texas.

J. R. BEARDSLEY choreographed the physical action in Tennessee Williams' *Camino Real* at Mills College in Oakland during October. J. R.'s cameo appearance in this production as the lewd, twisted Baron was nearly a show stopper. J. R. choreographed the fights for *Tis Pity She's A Whore* at the Drama Studio of London at Berkeley before going to Los Angeles to work on *Romeo and Juliet*. J. R. and Kacie Stetson taught stage combat classes at the Drama Studio in preparation for the certification test.

DAVID BOUSHEY is presently choreographing the fight scene in *Romeo and Juliet* for the Missouri Repertory Theatre. This is his twenty-seventh *R & J!* He recently choreographed *Hamlet* for the Denver Center Theatre and *Beau Strategem* for the University of Washington. He will also be choreographing *Peter Pan* for the Missouri Repertory this March. He is looking forward to working with Peter Foy, the man who flies all of the Peter Pans around the country. A swordfight in mid air should prove to be quite a challenge! He is still working on an ongoing film project which he hopes to complete by this spring.

CHARLES CONWELL will be beginning a stage combat program at the Philadelphia College of Performing Arts. PCPA is a four year program culminating in a BFA. Charles will teach the college's actors for four semesters and hopes to add a fifth semester devoted exclusively to preparation for the Society's certification test. The college has also agreed to create a "stage combat tutorial" reserved for working with advanced and remedial students privately. In January he will direct a violent beating in the play *Geniuses* for the Philadelphia Company.

ERIK FREDRICKSEN has just completed the wrestling match for *As You Like It* which was directed by Society member Phillip Kerr. Erik also played the role of Touchstone in this production. Erik will stage the duel in *Hamlet* for Lindsey Anderson at the Folger this February after playing Proctor in *The Crucible* which is being directed by John Cullum. This coming summer, Erik will

stage the fights in *Romeo and Juliet* for the Colorado Shakespeare Festival.

T. J. GLENN began a three month stint of hard work last April as the assistant choreographer for the Seventh Annual New York Renaissance Festival helping fellow SAFD associate Jim Manley. Then in July, T.J. began his fight captainship at the Renaissance Festival and played "The Evil Guard" Callender for the seven week-end run. T.J. staged fights for *I'll be Back Before Midnight* for the Village Performer's Theatre in Manhattan and in May appeared on the ABC talk show, "The Morning Show" teaching host Regis Philbin how to be Errol Flynn. He also produced, performed and was choreographer for "Swords Without Fantasy" at Empiricon, a gathering of S.F. Enthusiasts in New York. In August he played Lingnere and a dastardly Spaniard in *Cyrano de Bergerac* at the Gallery of Players. Todd Loweth did the choreography. In September he was found producing and performing a stage combat show "The Masters of Defense" for the Third Annual Lakewood Renaissance Festival and the Jersey City Arts Festival. Besides teaching stage combat at Wagner College, T.J. played the "Grim Reaper" in the horror film *Twisted Souls* and did the choreography for the film *Battle for the Lost Planet* which was being filmed in New Hampshire.

ROB HALL served as stunt consultant as well as an actor in *Taming of the Shrew* at the New Stage Theatre in Jackson, Mississippi, which is Mississippi's only professional theatre. This production was set in a western bar during the Gold Rush. Rob did a hand-to-hand workshop at Mississippi State University in early November and in January at the Mississippi Theatre Association Convention. His one man show *Men of Passion--Hamlet & Romeo* was staged at Alcorn State University the end of November. Rob continues to teach at Alcorn State and will be directing *Working* in February.

CHARLES KILLIAN had eleven of his students from the outdoor drama *The Legend of Daniel Boone* pass the certification test in Harrodsburg, Kentucky. Charles was also assistant director for the stunt show at Kings Dominion in Virginia. Joel Mason recently joined Charles in Kentucky and they are developing a regular flow of class work in combat for the high school and college crowd. Charles is also doing some video work--- compiling and editing "video resumes."

MARTIN LaPLATNEY was assistant director and fight arranger for Paul Giovanni's new musical *Shot Through the Heart* which opened at the Birmingham Theatre in Birmingham, Michigan. He appeared in *Detective Story* with Charlton Heston at the Ahmanson Theatre in Los Angeles for which he staged the hand-to-hand. He recently finished playing Macbeth for the Actors Ensemble in Baltimore and also staged the fights for their Shakespeare Season '84.

DAVID LEONG conducted a workshop entitled Staging Violence for Outdoor Dramas at the annual Presenters and Promoters Conference for the Institute of Outdoor Drama in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. Liam O'Brien, Drew Fracher and Joseph Martinez of the SAFD were also panelists as was Marion Waggoner of the outdoor drama *Tecumseh!* Two sketches full of stunts and fights were conceived, directed and choreographed by David for Ringling Brothers, Barnum and Bailey Circus. Both pieces will travel with the Greatest Show on Earth for their national tour in 1985. Joel Mason assisted on the project. David also directed and choreographed the action sequences for *Extremities* at Northern Kentucky University during the month of December. George Bellah, an associate member, played the rapist, Raul. January and February are filled up with workshops and choreography at Glassboro State College in New Jersey, Georgetown University in Texas and Loyola University in New Orleans. David will direct fights for *Life is a Dream* at Loyola. Also, David will travel to Western Michigan University to conduct a workshop on choreographing fights for the musical stage just prior to traveling to the Southeastern Theatre Conference to host a workshop with Drew Fracher and Joseph Martinez entitled "Staging Violence for Contemporary Drama." Look for his article on this same subject matter in an upcoming issue of *Dramatics Magazine*.

JIM MANLEY appeared recently on both *Midday Live* with Bill Boggs and *The Morning Show* with Regis Philbin, demonstrating the stage combat techniques he used in choreographing the action in *Broadway for a Day* in which Jim also appeared.

ROBIN McFARQUHAR continues to teach movement at the University of Illinois Professional Actor Training Program. In the last year he has choreographed acts of violence for production of *The Woods*, *Seascape*, *It's Showdown Time*, *Friday's Child* and *Getting Out*. He also choreographed an Oriental broadsword fight for *The Voyage of the Radiant Shield* and a courtsword duel for the opera *The Tales of Hoffman*. In addition he served as the Movement Director of *The Robber Bridegroom* and the Assistant Director of *The Beggar's Opera* all at the University of Illinois. Robin finally completed his doctoral dissertation entitled "Attention and Motor Skills" and is now Dr. McFarquhar.

JOSEPH MARTINEZ attended a panel to promote the Society of American Fight Directors at the Outdoor Drama Institute Producers and Managers Conference in Chapel Hill. He conducted a workshop at the Virginia Theatre Conference in October in Lynchburg, Virginia. In December Joseph choreographed *Hamlet* at the Wisdom Bridge Theatre in Chicago, starring Adam Quinn as Hamlet. He continues to work on his upcoming book, *The Swords of Shakespeare*.

JOEL MASON performed last summer in the western stunt show at Kings Dominion in Virginia called the *Terrible Times at Tumble Gultch* which was directed by David Leong. He then assisted David in teaching three weeks

of classes in stage combat and stunt work at the Ringling Brothers Barnum & Bailey Clown College. In October Joel went to Colorado to teach one week of classes in hand-to-hand and an introduction to sword play at Colorado State College. While in Colorado Joel visited the workshop of Dennis Graves who builds swords of museum quality. Joel is now working with Charles Killian in Covington, Kentucky and completing a video/combat studio where they will be teaching and filming stage combat instruction tapes.

TIMOTHY MOONEY recently moved from Lincoln, Nebraska to Milwaukee. Timothy is currently serving an internship in directing with the Milwaukee Repertory Theatre.

EDWARD ROZINSKY did a session on State Movement at the ATA Convention in San Francisco in August. Edward who continues to teach stage movement at the University of Miami, directed Shaw's *Arms and the Man* in November. Edward will be conducting a stage movement workshop in Miami in June.

J. ALLEN SUDDETH was fight choreographer for two off-Broadway shows that opened in November, *Short Eyes* and *The Weekend*. *Short Eyes*, a revival of the acclaimed prison drama, was directed by Kevin Conway and opened November 13th. *The Weekend*, a new play centering around a group of construction workers gathered for the weekend at their foreman's cabin, opened November 15th under the direction of John Raymond.

DAVID WOOLLEY has been working as a free-lance fight choreographer out of Chicago. After doing a pirate play at the New Broadway Theatre in May called *Bones* which received good reviews for the sea battles involving twelve people with cutlasses, David became director/fight choreographer for Moose Productions, a theatre company devoted to performing extremely physical productions. David currently directs and performs in *Dungeonmaster* an on stage fantasy role-playing game now in its second year and seventy sixth episode. David who stages one fight a month for *Dungeonmaster* has done fourteen hand-to-hand, four dagger fights and three sword fights in the past episodes. *Reign of the Child* is a new science fiction/fantasy adventure play being produced by Moose Productions which opened October 13th for which David staged the fights. There are nine sword fights--two grand mellees with eight fighters using Viking short swords and over forty special effects (airbursts, concussion pots and the like). David also staged the violence for *City on the Make* for the North Light Repertory in Evanston Illinois. There are two fights---one has a man with a baseball bat against a girl in a rocking chair and the other is a tavern fight between a bartender with a lead pipe and a legless man in a wheelcart. David also staged the stabbing for the Steppenwolf Theatre for *Stagestruck* and a brawl in a psychiatric ward for *The Madman and the Nun* at the Stormfeld Theatre.



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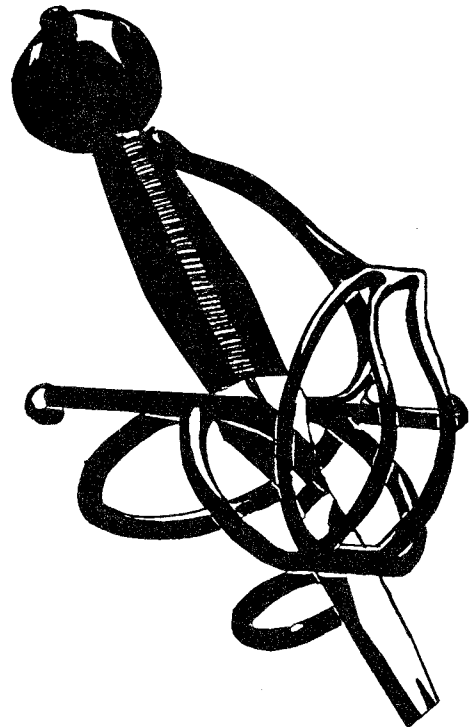
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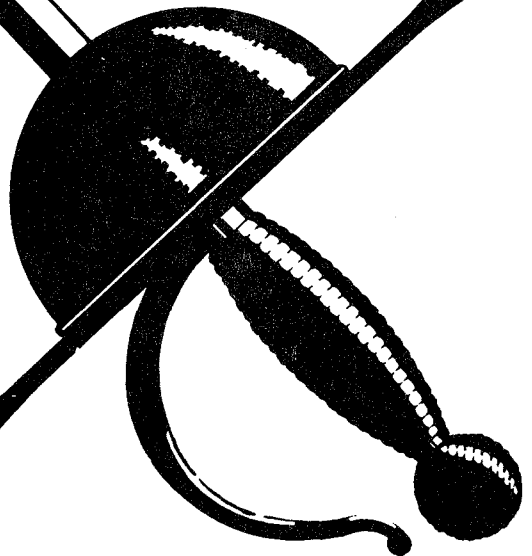
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