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The Cutting Edge

The Society of American Fight Directors

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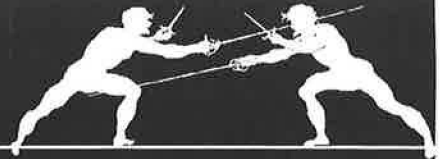
The Society of American Fight Directors

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The Cutting Edge



Newsletter for the Society of American Fight Directors

Volume VII, Number 1 ♦ Jan/Feb 1996

Election Results for SAFD President and Vice-President

Congratulations to **Drew Fracher** and **Colleen Kelly** on their election as President and Vice-President of the SAFD
Congratulations also to **Mark Olsen** and **Mark "Rat" Guinn** on their reappointments as Secretary and Treasurer.

Nominations for Member Representatives Due by April 30

With new officers, it is time to elect new member representatives as well. Two representatives are needed for a three year term:

Friends & Actor/Combatants Rep
Certified Teachers Rep

The nominees must come from their respective ranks and are nominated and voted on by their peers. (e.g. the Certified Teacher Rep must be a Certified Teacher and is nominated and voted on by Certified Teachers).

Remember, these two people are very important in communicating **your** needs, ideas, goals, complaints, praise, and recommendations to the SAFD.

Please send your nominations along with your name and rank in writing to:

Drew Fracher
Abiding Grace Farm
780 Bushtown Road
Harrodsburg KY 40330

Nominations must be received by April 30, 1996. Ballots based on these nominations will go out with the next *Cutting Edge* after that date.



New Certified Teachers

Seven new Certified Teachers had their names and addresses left out of the last *Fight Master*.

Paul Denhardt
320 1/2 S. Randolph Street
Macomb IL 61455
(309) 837-6744

Michael Donohue
4201 Massachusetts Ave NW #7091W
Washington DC 20016
(202) 686-6369

Jeff Jones
10008 Ponderosa Place
Sarasota FL 34243
(402) 438-3389

k. Jenny Jones
5684 Candlelite Terrace
Cincinnati OH 45238
(513) 772-6564

Nick Sandys
2206 West Granville #2
Chicago IL 60659
(312) 274-0581

Tim Tait
1331 Downing Street #102
Denver CO 80218
(303) 830-7916

Michael Johnson
816 E Street, SE
Washington DC 2003
(202) 543-2571



DUES!!!!

are now PAST DUE
Please send your check for \$35
to Mark Olsen at address
directly below.

CHANGES OF ADDRESS

must be sent to:
Mark Olsen
Secretary SAFD
School of Theatre
University of Houston
Houston, TX 77204-5071
(713) 743-2915 (W)
(713) 265-0945 (H)

ATTENTION! ALL CERTIFIED TEACHERS AND FIGHT MASTERS

Please send your head shot
and a brief bio to David
Doersch for inclusion on
the World Wide Web Page.

David "Pops" Doersch
Route 5 Box 169
Oxford MS 38655
ddoersch@sunset.backbone.ole
miss.edu

CHANGE OF ADDRESS FOR FM DAVID BOUSHEY

David Boushey
2723 Saratoga Lane
Everett WA 98203
(206) 290-9973

SAFD HOTLINE

Ricki G. Ravitts
(800) 659-6579
9 AM—5 PM EST



Profile
 Certified Teacher
Michael Jerome Johnson
 by Dale Anthony Girard

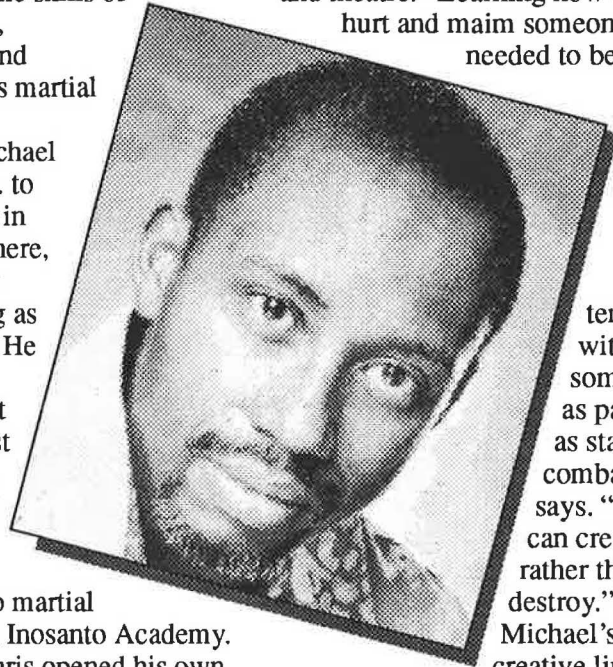
LIKE MANY OF US, I first met Michael Johnson at a Patty Crean Workshop in Washington, DC. Among the various classes offered, his drew a crowd and kept the audience attentive. As an enthusiastic actor, director, martial artist and stage combatant, Michael's energy is contagious and his love and respect for what he does carries over into his class. He takes on the responsibility to step outside the vacuum of technique to touch the moral soul of the artist. He feels that without understanding the cause and effect of violence, the actor has little knowledge on which to base choices and little responsibility for what is done. His students respect this in him and his example of commitment. Born and raised in Washington DC, Michael was first exposed to the cause and effect of actual violence in Jr. High. Unlike many stage combatants who turned to the SAFD after a bad experience in a staged fight, Michael turned to the martial discipline of Tae Kwon Do after several scuffles with bullying classmates. Here a life journey began, one that has carried on into his present activities. Michael

it intriguing," he says. "It was interesting to find something that required the same skills of listening, focus, concentration and commitment [as martial arts]."

In 1985 Michael headed for L.A. to pursue a career in acting. While there, he began a new level of training as a martial artist. He began studying with Chris Kent (one of the most knowledgeable practitioners of Bruce Lee's Jeet Kune Do and the Filipino martial arts) at the Dan Inosanto Academy. A year later, Chris opened his own school and Michael found himself shuttling between both schools training both with Mr. Kent and with Cass Magda. Mr. Magda introduced him to the Silat arts of Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines (named by Mr. Inosanto: Maphilindo Silat).

Not until his return to the East Coast was Michael reacquainted to stage combat. While acting in a NCSF school tour he met Jack Cirillo, an SAFD Actor/Combatant. Soon thereafter he found himself studying with CT Brad Waller. In 1991 he took and passed his first skills test. He and his partner being recommended by FM Joseph Martinez. What had intrigued him in college was now beginning to

become part of his life. It became his link between the martial arts and theatre. "Learning how to kill, hurt and maim someone needed to be



tempered with something as passive as stage combat," he says. "Here I can create rather than destroy."

Michael's creative link of martial and theatrical arts saw him attend the "TTW" in Las Vegas last summer where he joined the ranks of Certified Teachers. Among his continued training in the martial and theatrical arts, Michael also manages to fit in a busy schedule as an actor and director in DC. A summary of his accomplishments would take more space than this column allows, but his contributions to productions at such theatres as the Kennedy Center, Source Theatre the The Folger Library (to name only a few) has earned him such honors as the 1995 Source Theatre Award as well as entries in *Who's Who in Entertainment*, *Who's Who in America* and *International Men of Achievement*.

As a director and fight choreographer Michael finds that
 (Continued on page 3)

"It was interesting to find something that required the same skills of listening, focus, concentration and commitment"

continued training through High School and into college. It is while pursuing his B.F.A. at North Carolina School for the Arts that this young martial artist was first exposed to stage combat. "I found



Michael Jerome Johnson
(continued)

martial arts training is helpful in fulfilling the dramatic process and informing the movements on stage with truth rather than mechanics. Personal life experience as well as information gathered as a volunteer with the IMPACT/Model Mugging courses has made Michael aware that there are always consequences to violent actions. The play cannot stop for a fight, and the characters cannot ignore what happens between them within that fight. "Reality," says Michael, "is something that you would do at that moment—not a martial arts move or a stage fight move, but a move to serve a purpose at that moment for that particular character." For him, the cause and effect of the fight deals with the moment to moment reality of the character and the consequences of their actions. "Violence without consequences glorifies violence," he says, "and my job is not to glorify violence, but to clarify it." And that he does.



Nicolas Sandys choreographed a smallsword duel in *Andrea Chénier* and sabres in *Faust* for the current season at the Lyric Opera of Chicago; choreographed violence and dress marching for the world premiere of *Black Star Line* at the Goodman Theatre; and is currently arranging a duel for *Les Liaisons* at the Shattered Globe. Along with **Wooley, Coyl, Finney, Gray, MacFarlane** and **Raether**, he taught at the Winter Wonderland Workshop thrown by the Chicago mob in January.

Julia Rupkalvis announces her completion both with her Ph.D. program in Theatrical Hapology and her battle with cancer. She gratefully thanks all Society members who helped her overcome both challenges!

Michael Johnson (since becoming a CT last July) has choreographed fights for the Folger Shakespeare Library's touring troupe, *Bill's*

Buddies, *A View From The Bridge* at the Source Theatre Company (for which he got critical acclaim for his work), *Cat On A Hot Tin Roof* for the National Conservatory of Dramatic Arts, and the Rep Stage company's production of *Jeffrey*. He's teaching his first class as a CT for the *Noble Blades*, five of whom will test with Dale Girard in February. He is also preparing to direct *The Gospel at Colonus* for the Capitol Hill Arts Workshop.

Foster Solomon a recent SAFD member, has just returned from Boston where he choreographed all of the violence for *Romeo and Juliet* for Shakespeare & Company's Education Program. While there, he also held three day's of master classes in stage combat for selected students of North Andover High School. Almost simultaneously, Foster also choreographed the violence for the world premiere of *Like Two Eagles* at the Jewish Theatre of New York.



1996 Webster Movement Institute

SAFD Secretary Mark Olsen will be part of the 1996 Webster Movement Institute where he will teach a workshop titled *Relationship Characterization*. The workshop will focus on creating, developing, and refining a variety of comic and serious physical characters based on six fundamental relationships. This will be a six day intensive workshop offered in the afternoons during the week of July 22 – 27. In the morning session Joan Schirie, Director of Training at the School of Physical Theatre, will offer a mask workshop. Her work has developed out of twenty years of research, performance, and teaching. Joan is a founding member of the Dell'Arte Players Company.

Laban Movement Analysis and Bartenieff Fundamentals will be taught during the week of July 8 – 13 by Tom Casciero and Karen Kohn Bradley, both of whom are Certified Movement Analysts.

An Exploration of three basic energy systems (meridians, chakras, auras) and their relationship to actor training and performance will be led by Jennifer Martin during the morning sessions during July 15 – 20. In the afternoon Lloyd Williamson, Head of Movement Training at Rutgers University and founder of the Actor's Movement Studio in NYC, will explore basic Williamson technique exercises and their applications to text.

The 1996 Webster Movement Institute will be held July 8 – 27 at Webster University in St. Louis
Call Theresa Mitchell at (314) 963-9078 for a brochure and information

**UNITED STUNTMEN'S ASSOCIATION
NATIONAL STUNT TRAINING WORKSHOP**

Limited enrollment is still available for **The United Stuntmen's Association National Stunt Training Workshop** to be held **June 3 - 22** in Seattle, WA.

This is a three week intensive training session with emphasis on the most basic stunts found in film production, including:

- Precision Driving
- Weaponry
- Unarmed Combat
- Fire Work
- Mini Tramp
- High Falls
- Special Effects
- Harness and Rappelling
- Martial Arts
- Horse Work
- Firearms and Safety

Tuition is \$1500.00 with a \$300.00 deposit due by April 1st to ensure your place. (*Balance due by June 2nd*).

For further details please call or write:

The United Stuntmen's Association
2723 Saratoga Lane
Everett, WA 98023
(206) 290-9957

The Workshop Coordinator is David Boushey, founder of the United Stuntmen's Association and the Society of American Fight Directors.

With your deposit, submit a full body picture and resume (which includes your height, weight and any special skills you have) and any acting training.

The Cutting Edge

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Ralph H. Anderson.

The Cutting Edge
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Submissions should be sent to:
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