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The Society of American Fight Directors

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## **The Fight Master, May 1986, Vol. 9 Issue 2**

The Society of American Fight Directors

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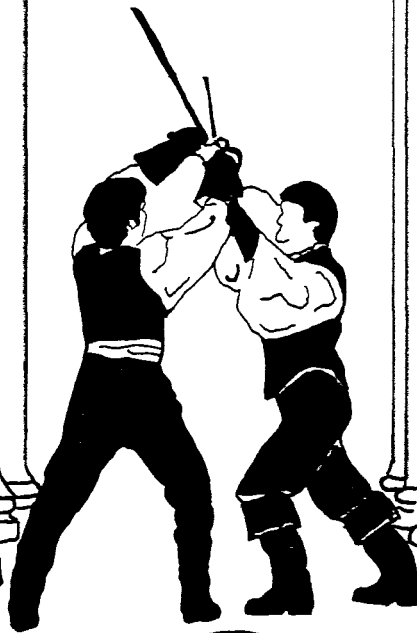
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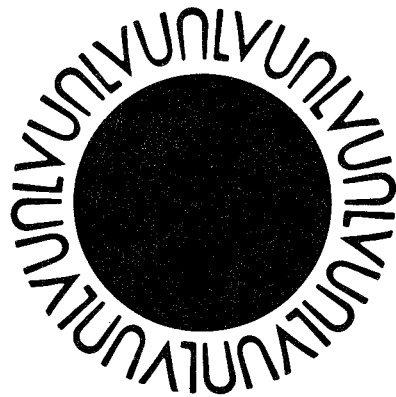
SOCIETY OF  
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# de ARMOURY



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UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA, LAS VEGAS

# The Fight MASTER

JOURNAL OF THE SOCIETY OF AMERICAN FIGHT DIRECTORS

May 1986  
Volume IX number 2

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### THE FIGHT MASTER

Journal of the Society of American Fight Directors

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### SOCIETY OF AMERICAN FIGHT DIRECTORS

President Joseph Martinez  
Vice President Drew Fracher  
Treasurer David Boushey  
Secretary Linda McCollum

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.

Application for change in status within the Society should be addressed to Joseph Martinez, P.O. Box 1053, Lexington, Virginia 24450.

The response by the Associate members to Drew Fracher's request for updated information and input into the Society has enabled us to update the membership files and has allowed us to see what a tremendous untapped resource is available through the individuals in the Society with their diverse backgrounds, interests and training. There is some incredibly high caliber talent within the Society.

The National Stage Combat Workshop in Memphis, July 14th through August 1st, is progressing well under the leadership of David Leong and Susan Chrietzberg. There are still some spaces available as I write, so if you have students who are interested or are in need of further information on the workshop please contact either Susan at Memphis State University in the Department of Theatre and Communication Arts, Memphis, Tennessee 38152, phone (901) 321-0948, or David Leong in the Department of Theatre, Northern Kentucky University, Campus Station, Highland Heights, Kentucky 41076, phone (601) 572-5420.

In this issue several of our members are sharing some personal experiences and insights. Richard Albright gives us a behind the scenes look at working with Fight Master and Founder, David Boushey, at the Missouri Repertory Theatre and how some specific problems were solved in staging fights in three different productions. Charles Conwell shares his delightful and rewarding experience of working in Canada this past Spring one on one with the "Dean of Fight Choreographers," Paddy Crean. Paddy himself gives us the "triple salute" which he staged for *Hamlet* after some historical investigation. Armorer Dennis Graves has some pointers on sword construction and gives some historical views on the confusion between parrying with the flat or the edge of the blade. T.J. Glenn reviews some fights in the videos giving us a new slant in the Review section which may encourage some others to write, and there is some surprising information about the much mentioned Elizabethan fencing master, Rocco Bonetti which reveals the character of the man who was Shakespeare's "butcher of a silk button."

Richard Gradkowski's lead article on Japanese Fencing with his excellent illustration has brought to mind the lack of information that has been published in the journal on the oriental swordsman. I hope Richard's article will stimulate some others to write and share their knowledge and expertise in this area so that we might in the near future devote an entire issue to the oriental swordsman.

■ Linda Carlyle McCollum

Over the last several issues of *The Fight Master*, we have been reading articles and letters from members of the Society who disagree with their fellow members. The disagreements might center upon style of sword-play, or training techniques, or testing for standards, or the fitness of an instructor or combatant. We have occasionally read some very heated opinions on these and many other subjects.

In all of this dialogue I think it is very important for us to remember that it is indeed the very diversity of our opinions, perspectives and skills, which underlies the vitality of the Society of American Fight Directors.

We are geographically dispersed and each and every one of us experiences very different milieus in our professional lives each year. These differences in our educational history (who we've studied with), coupled with the intensely personal ways we have continued to develop our styles, skills, and comprehension of theatrics, must necessitate differences among us. I welcome and enjoy these differences. I am proud of the diversity within the Society.

The history of dissension among Fight Masters and sword-wielders is an ancient tradition; probably pre-dating written history. More recently, say four hundred years ago, we have the celebrated differences of opinion among the English Masters of Defence and the new Italianate Masters who settled in London. As many of you know, George Silver in his *Paradoxes of Defence*, 1599, speaks long and heatedly about his disagreements with the new fangled Rapier and Dagger men... and so it continues today.

After the dust clears, and the healthy differences of opinion are aired, we remain a Society. The Merriam-Webster Dictionary lists these definitions of "society:" "Companionship, community life, a part of a community bound together by common interests and standards, a voluntary association of persons for common ends." Yes, by those definitions we are truly a "society."

Regardless of our differences, we will continue to develop standards of excellence for our members new and old to live up to. We will strive together to improve the standards of excellence within the entertainment field. We will collectively work toward creating a measure of safety for the performers of stage combat throughout the country. This and more, as a Society, we have taken on. To accomplish our goals we certainly need unity, but it needn't necessarily be a harmonious unity! Do you agree?

■ J.D. Martinez

**VICE-PRESIDENT'S  
REPORT**

**TREASURER'S  
REPORT**

Greetings and salutations to the entire membership. I hope this finds you all well and fighting safely. I have survived my first quarter as your Vice President and am happy to report that things are going well on that front. I sincerely believe that we are on an upward swing that, with your continued help and support, will continue to push us into the forefront of the industry.

This letter is a plea to the membership, especially the Associates to get those lines of communication open. I wrote the Associates in January asking for personal information and input from them regarding the organization. Having heard from roughly one-third of them to date, first let me say thank you to those that have replied. Your letters and packets are being circulated among the officers, and I can assure you your voices are being heard. To those whom I have not heard from yet, please do get in touch with me as soon as possible. If you never received a letter please consider this communication as good as the same. I need resumes, reviews and most importantly your ideas and/or beefs about the Society and its workings. If you did not receive a letter it probably means we do not have a current address, so send that as well. Please send your information to me at my new address:

Drew Fracher  
c/o Abiding Grace Farms  
780 Bushtown Road  
Harrodsburg, Kentucky 40330  
(606) 366-5549

Send our secretary, Linda McCollum, a copy of all correspondence as well.

If you have received a letter from me and have not responded, please do so immediately. We desperately need your input if we are to make the organization more useful and viable to ourselves, the industry and the public. All of this information will help us in choosing the regional representatives and will guide us as we focus on new areas of need.

Again thanks to those Associates that have responded. I will be in touch with you all soon.

May the summer months be safe and most fruitful for you all. Feel free to contact me for any reason regarding our organization.

Your Comrade in Arms,

■ **Drew Fracher, Vice President**

There are many members still in arrears on their dues for 1986. Please note that dues are an important part of the structure of the Society. We cannot pay bills or pursue promotion of the Society if we have no funds to cover such expenses. I am asking you to please pay no later than June 1st. The annual dues structure remains the same. If you have been a member since before July 1st, 1985, you owe twenty-five dollars. If you joined the Society after July 1st, 1985, you owe half the dues or twelve-fifty. Remember that everyone pays twenty-five dollars a year except Students who pay fifteen a year. Please take care of this business as it will no longer be a policy of the Society to let members hedge on their dues. Without the dues, you cannot receive the journal *The Fight Master*.

If your students are being adjudicated, please contact me so I can proceed under the rules set forth by the executive committee of the Society. I will contact a full member in your area. Remember that a group will have to be large enough to pay the hundred dollar honorarium plus transportation and housing (if necessary). Usually this means at least ten students taking the test.

We still have T-shirts (gold on black) and cloth badges and enameled Society pins. If you want one, please send me a check and I will promptly send you one. Note the ad in the back of the journal.

Please send all dues or requests to: The Society of American Fight Directors, 4720-38th N.E., Seattle, Washington, 98105.

■ **David L. Boushey**

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| <p>Initial membership in the S.A.F.D. is \$25. Dues for Full, Associate, Affiliate Members, and Friends are \$25 annually. Students are \$15 annually. 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, status or change of address should be addressed to the secretary, Linda McCollum, Department of Theatre Arts, University of Nevada, 4505 Maryland Parkway, Las Vegas, Nevada 89154.</p> | <p>Application for change in status within the Society should be addressed to Joseph Martinez, P.O. Box 1053, Lexington, Virginia 24450.</p> | <p>Articles for consideration in <i>The Fight Master</i> should be submitted to the editor, Linda McCollum, Department of Theatre Arts, University of Nevada, 4505 Maryland Parkway, Las Vegas, Nevada 89154.</p> |
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# KENDO: JAPANESE FENCING

by Richard J. Gradkowski

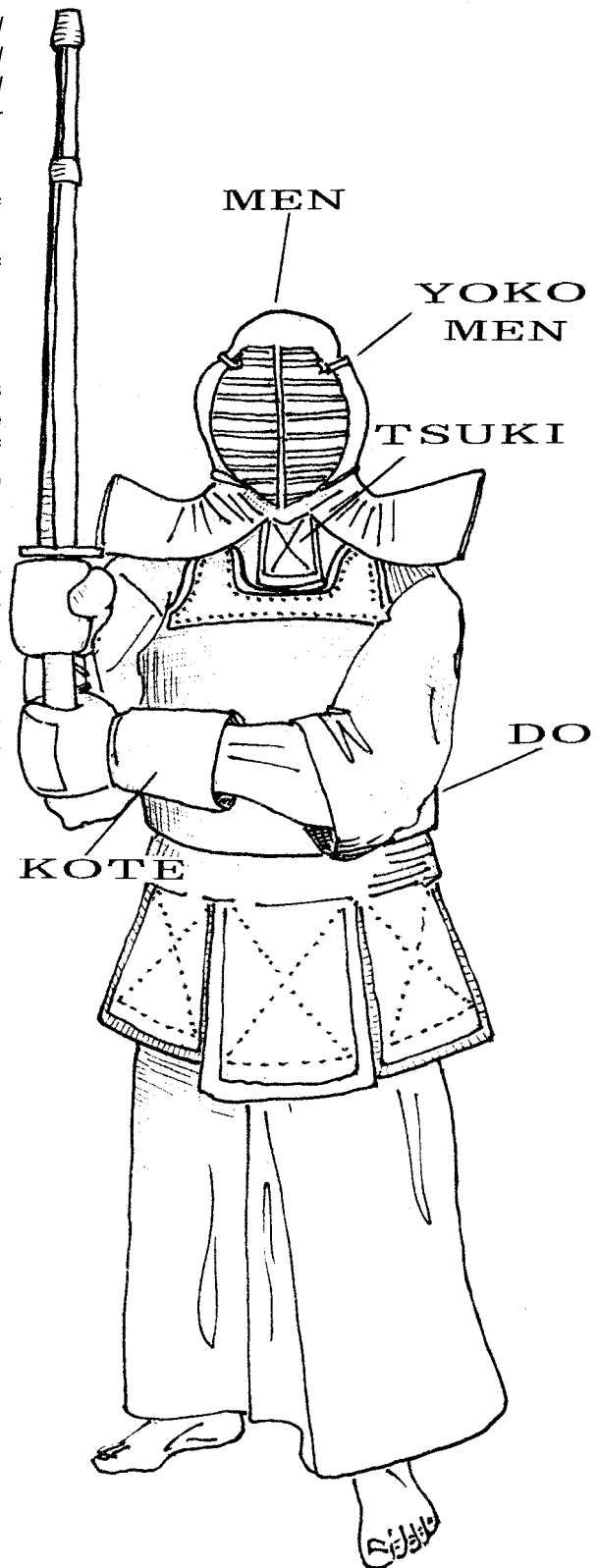
*(Richard is a Fight Master in the Society, a Fencing Master, and a licensed international fencing official. He has a black-belt in Kendo, which he studied in the U.S.A. and Japan. In this article he has tried to avoid a too technical exposition, with all the usual boring vocabulary definitions, leaving that for the bibliography or, perhaps, another article in the future.)*

Swords and swordsmanship have played a major role in the ethos of Japan; traditionally the paragon of Japanese virtue was the fearless and incorruptible Samurai warrior. Kendo is a sport based upon the study of the problems of swordsmanship and thus necessarily, in the Japanese view, involved the difficult philosophical questions of life and instant death.

Kendo in Japan is organized in various leagues in universities, schools, clubs, professional associations, and businesses, all under the auspices of the All-Japan Kendo Federation, the Zen Nihon Kendo Renmei. In the United States, major clubs are located on the west coast, with groups of aficionados scattered here and there, under the banner of the U.S. Kendo Federation.

Modern Kendo is an amateur sport and regular competitions are held on the local, national, and international level. While Kendo had been a traditional educational activity of the Samurai, it was not until 1911 that it was included in the middle school curriculum of the Japanese school system and was thus made available to all social classes. With the defeat of the Japanese empire in World War II, the Allied occupation forces forbid the teaching of Kendo because of its militaristic and ultra-nationalistic connotations. All Kendo equipment was confiscated and destroyed (as were many real swords). However, as might have been expected, its devotees carried on the study in secret. In 1952 it was reintroduced in a modified sport form. Now, generally, a Japanese high school student may study Kendo or Judo for the four year duration of school. It is not unusual to see six or seven year olds learning the basics, with a grim determination, and women have been admitted to the Kendo Dojos. In 1970, the International Kendo Federation was founded to promote the sport throughout the world and to organize world championships every three years.

Prior to the eighteenth century, swordsmanship in Japan was studied by the method of practicing movements with the actual sword. Preset patterns of action were rehearsed until mastered. Combat against a training partner, or practice bouts, could not be done in a realistic fashion because of the danger of the sharp blade. These forms of training fall under the name of Kenjutsu, a general term for all sword training. This method did allow for some use of dummy wooden swords as a substitute for the real blade, although a hit made even with a wooden blade could still be very dangerous. These swordsmen had to learn to practice with sufficient control to arrest their motion just before contact. Such wooden swords, called Bokuto, are still used in the martial art of laido, a study related to Kenjutsu and Kendo. The laido practitioner may use either the bokuto or, when sufficiently advanced, a real sword in his exercises. The form of these exercises duplicates certain scenarios of combative situations (depending upon the school) and viewed from aside is almost dance-like. Notwithstanding the lack of an opponent, the correct execution of laido forms requires great concentration, equilibrium, and technical proficiency. In fact, some exponents of the martial arts view laido as purer and more realistic as a combat style than the sporting form, Kendo. Kendo does retain certain aspects of this stylized approach in the Kendo exercises known as Kendo-no-kata. These ten exercises are done by two partners (Uchidachi, the attacker, and Shidachi, the defender) and cover basic situations involving the elements of swordplay. These are not competitive forms but, as in laido, emphasize the correct



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technique, mental attitude, and coordination needed for swordplay.

In the eighteenth century a form of practice weapon called the Shinai was developed which consisted of several slats of bamboo cased in a leather sheath. This relatively light and flexible weapon, when used against a person wearing the also newly developed practice armor, permitted actual hits to be made, and thus allowed the evolution of Kendo. Modern Kendo equipment is of substantially the same construction. It is interesting to note, as a historical footnote, that in Europe it was also the development of the wire mesh fencing mask in the late eighteenth century which permitted the evolution of modern sport fencing styles.

Bouts at Kendo are contested for two touches (i.e. 2-1, 2-0 scores). The points are assessed by two judges and a chief judge. There is no "right-of-way" as in European Foil or Sabre fencing: simultaneous opposing hits are not scored and a counterattack must be so effective as to entirely halt a supposed attack. The Kendoka wears a simplified version of traditional Japanese armor. A sturdy helm, a polished leather breastplate, and heavy gloves are worn over the usual Japanese costume of jacket and long culottes. Ordinarily, as in Judo, the competitor is barefoot.

The weapon, called a "Shinai", consists of four slats of bamboo, approximately three and a half feet long, held together by a leather sheath for a handle with a leather cap at the business end, all in the general shape of a Japanese sword. It is held by both hands, the left hand at the end supplying the power and the right hand near the guard controlling the direction. The Kendoist stands erect and poised, gliding about on the balls of his feet, and attacks with a sliding step forward. His front foot must coordinate with the hit so as to produce maximum striking effect, with a minimum of tension in the body. Attacks may be parried or evaded, and stop-cuts, ripostes, and counter-ripostes comprise the exchanges.

Kendo is a highly conventional sport, the purpose (as in Foil fencing) being to teach the principles of good swordsmanship. The valid target is restricted to the top of the head, each temple, the wrists, the throat, and the breastplate. A hit landed anywhere else does not count. A hit must be delivered with only about the forward third of the "blade" and with such decision as would kill the opponent instantly were a real blade used.

Thrusts with the point of the weapon may be directed only to the throat and this potentially dangerous action is only tried by the most skillful. A point is not awarded if the attacker loses his balance or form during the action. In short, only perfect touches are counted. It is not unusual for well matched Kendoists to fight for many minutes before a point is scored. As part of this conventional approach, the Kendoist must yell out the name of the target at which he is striking, a practice which encourages full mental and physical coordination. This yell is called the "Kiai", or "coming together of body and spirit". The Kendoist must also actively display the quality of "Zan-shin", which roughly translates into concentration and follow-through.

In my opinion, the Japanese have studied the psychology and philosophy of swordsmanship to much greater depth than Westerners. The resolute commitment to bold use of the sword, the sense of social loyalty, as well as the Samurai attitude toward death, characterize a profoundly different attitude towards swordsmanship than in Europe. The study of the sword is considered a means of personal and spiritual development. These ideas, based upon Taoist, Confucian, and Buddhist principles, supplied the Samurai class with a philosophical rationale.

When first entering the Kendo dojo the newcomer is often overwhelmed by the cacophony of bamboo bashing against helmets and breastplates, the stamping of feet upon the springy wooden floor and the constant yelling of the trainees. The sound must be somewhat like that of a medieval battle. Kendoists usually fight continually, without taking any breaks after scoring a hit. Thus there is constant furious activity with an occasional retirement to the sidelines. Initially, Kendo appears very exotic to the Western fencer, but soon one recognizes that the same basic factors of distance, line, timing and tempo are operating. The technical differences arise primarily from the two handed grip and the philosophical approach. The Japanese

swordmaster conceives of Kendo as a character building activity and, therefore, strict emphasis is laid upon decorum and courtesy. It is absolutely unheard of to question a referee's decision, and politeness and formality are the norm. Meditation is a regular part of the beginning and end of Kendo sessions.

Kendo training tends to emphasize simple direct actions executed with perfect technique and timing. The exercises are fearfully strenuous, but a pupil dare not relax under the eye of the master. As the drills proceed the pupil often nears total exhaustion. Such rigorous training is regarded as necessary to prepare one for the understanding of the deeper problems of swordsmanship. In a typical session, the Kendoists will assemble in the dojo and, after a brief meditation and obeisance to the master, perform some warmup exercises. After some attack drills, they may then pair off and practice their actions back and forth. The final part of the session consists of looseplay, rotating partners until all dojo members, from the highest rank to the lowest, have fenced each other. Finally there is another meditation and cooldown, with a departing bow to the teacher.

The study of Kendo would be interesting to any person who is involved in swordsmanship or in the theory of movement because it can give a totally different light on these activities. The western fencer, especially, will find this different viewpoint a refreshing and challenging change.

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*A counterattack to the breastplate (O-Do) made with a side step, against a downward cut to the top of the head (O-Men). Photo taken at the Zen Ken Institute Dojo in New York City.*

# THE TRIPLE SALUTE

## *HAMLET, Stratford (Avon), 1975*

By Paddy Crean

I was asked by the Director to create a salute of some length that would embody a religious cum chivalrous commencement to the duel scene. So I delved into the past and came across the motto of the Knights Templar "Friendship Unto Death." It seemed to have some significance, so I drafted the following, which is very loosely based on the rituals of the Knights Templar, an organization created in 1118 A.D. The exhortations are in French—the international language of fencing. The whole I named THE TRIPLE SALUTE.

OSRIC *Messieur — etes vous pret? (Gentlemen — are you ready?)*  
HAMLET and LAERTES nod.

OSRIC *Le Salut a Dieu! (The Salute to God)*  
HAMLET and LAERTES raise their swords, place the blades parallel to the ground across their chests, the middle of the blades below their chins, the points to their left.

They grasp their blades by the forte with the left hand, bring their swords to their left sides, hilts towards the ground, at the same time kneeling face to the audience.

They raise the hilts, kiss them, raise the sword high in the air, still holding forte with the left hand, slowly bring swords to their left sides, bow heads.

OSRIC *Le Salut au Roi! (The Salute to the King)*  
HAMLET and LAERTES rise, face THE KING.

They raise their swords, place the blades parallel to the ground across their chests, the hilts below their chins, points to their left.

They grasp their hilts with their right hands, raise their swords high in the air towards THE KING, dropping their left hands to their side.

They bring the hilts to heart level, then kiss the hilts, raise swords high towards THE KING again, bring swords down in sweeping homage gesture to their right, at the same time bowing their heads.

They lift their heads together, describing an arc with their blades and finishing with their points touching the ground at their right.

OSRIC *Le Salut d'amitie jusqu'a la Mort! (The Salute to Friendship unto Death)*

HAMLET and LAERTES turn and face each other. They hold their swords with points down in front of them, sword arm bent, the back of their swordhands under and touching their chins.

They grasp the forte of the blade with left hands, hold swords straight out in front, their hilts towards each other.

They walk slowly towards each other, halt.

They place their right hands lightly on the other's sword hilt.

They retreat slowly backwards to their places, halt.

They raise their swords parallel to the ground across their chests, hilts under chin.

They grasp hilts with right hand.

They raise swords high in the air towards each other, at the same time dropping their left hands to their sides.

They bring the hilts to heart level, then kiss the hilts, straighten swords towards each other.

They bring swords to right side, arms straight (sword arm, that is), with swordpoints at an angle of forty-five degrees to the ground.

OSRIC With his sword point he makes a figure nine on the ground between HAMLET and LAERTES to commemorate the nine Frenchmen (a reason, if needed, to have the exhortation in French!), who founded the Templars.

OSRIC Takes post and says: *En Garde!*  
HAMLET and LAERTES assume guard.

All this mayhem actually worked, and was as absorbing, although I say it myself, and a point of discussion, for actors and audience alike. It took a long time and appeared to be a piece of authentic historical reconstruction. The Director was very pleased, which always helps.



# A FIGHT DEVELOPED

by Robert W. Albright

For what was said to be the first time in its twenty plus year history, the Missouri Repertory Theatre hired a professional fight director for the 1985 season. Past practices included using members of the cast with fight experience to put things together, or as once happened, hiring an experienced fighter/choreographer to do the musical numbers for one show and then asking him to choreograph the stage violence for *True West* as an afterthought.

In the '85 Season, however, David L. Boushey was to create the fights for *Romeo and Juliet*, *Masters of the Sea*, a new play by Gardner Mackay, and *Peter Pan*. I was privileged to work as Dave's assistant and as fight captain for the Rep's winter 1985 season. The following is a record of Dave's fight development and rehearsal process.

Leon Rubin's concept as he directed the Missouri Repertory Theatre's production of *Romeo and Juliet* was a Victorian look in which no swords were to be carried. In addition, Dave was presented with a monstrous multilevel Gothic set, designed by Herbert L. Camburn. As they discussed possible approaches to weaponry that would satisfy textual requirements while fitting into the overall look of the production, one could hear the anguish in Dave's voice as he asked if Leon was positive that he didn't want to use swords on this particular set. One fact that Leon emphasized during this initial conference was his desire to illuminate the humor he felt was often overlooked in the play. He wanted the fights to reflect that aspect whenever possible. He hoped to establish that the rough and tumble attitudes of the young men made fighting a sport they were used to that would degenerate occasionally into deadly combat.

After this session, Dave met with the principal actors to discuss their ideas about character development. It was interesting to listen as he probed the actors for their attitudes and ideas while preparing to develop their fights.

Next on the agenda was a mass meeting with principals and extras for the purpose of assessing physical ability and levels of experience, with the overall aim of developing fighting partners for the initial brawl. By pairing people off and having them practice basic hand to hand moves, Dave quickly determined what he had to work with. (Only two Equity actors claimed to have previous combat experience, though one had taken fencing lessons upon learning he had been cast as Mercutio; and several students had had limited classroom fight training).

In retrospect, I am impressed that from this initial meeting Dave not only selected his combinations of fighters, but also began to envision *when* to bring on the weaker combatants and *where* to place them on stage in order to be more peripheral to the action and not pull focus.

The next decision to emerge concerned weapons. There was no problem in producing a variety of knives for the servants to carry, but each weapon was examined for safety purposes before the actors were allowed to use them. It was agreed that Benvolio would obtain his weapon through a disarm of one servant as he tried to break up the fight.

The set designer agreed to create a market stall of four poles and an awning, that would easily collapse as actors fell into it, as well as provide quarterstaves for further use.

Dave asked the prop people to build a mean looking, long bladed knife with a brass knuckle affair built into the handle (similar to a WWI or II trench knife) for Tybalt and a swagger stick with a dagger (rapier) blade inside for Mercutio. (Romeo would later pick up this weapon for his fight with Tybalt).

To enhance the idea that the Tybalt/Mercutio fight began as a game of one-ups-manship, it was decided that Tybalt would carry a strap with loops at each end which the actors would place around their wrists, thereby linking themselves together for the contest. (We all found it laughable that a piece of cloth scrounged on the spot for rehearsal lasted better than the fancy leather strap constructed by the props department. It was fitting that the cloth was used in performance and that it finally gave way on closing night at the end of the fight!) Dave's homework consisted of wrapping the strap around a doorknob in his apartment and working the moves for each part.

During the first week of rehearsal, one grim fact emerged. Since *Romeo and Juliet* would be in rotating rep with two other shows in which the actor playing Romeo had major parts, fight rehearsals for him would be at a premium, therefore two weeks of rehearsal passed before any substantial time with Romeo was given, petitions to the production manager and stage manager notwithstanding.

The other fights, however, progressed nicely. Phrase by phrase, group add-

ed to group, level upon level, the actors learned moves and safety rules as the fights were meshed together. The servants' fight began with Sampson breaking an egg over Abram's head. As the fight spread and people moved into the brawl, a contrast to the deadly intensity of the feuding families was provided by the egg seller wending her way through the melee as she tried to protect her wares and by a more timorous townsfolk using the blind apothecary as a shield. Foes united momentarily as an interfering woman was run off through a doorway. Finally, the chaos was brought to a halt by a pistol shot by the Prince's attendant.

The Tybalt/Mercutio fight was built around a series of escalating moves wherein one character (usually Tybalt) would place his opponent in a seemingly indefensible position, only to be topped by his opponent (usually Mercutio). For example, Tybalt trips Mercutio by wrapping his strap around his ankle, dives on top of the man and presses his knife toward the throat only to be pulled into an amorous embrace by Mercutio, who feigns erotic ecstasy, thereby causing Tybalt to disengage and roll off in disgust. Or later, Tybalt wraps his cord around Mercutio's throat as he also brings his blade up to the throat only to find Mercutio's blade tickling his crotch—once again bringing the series to a standoff.

Whereas the major action in the Tybalt/Benvolio and Tybalt/Mercutio fights took place on the forestage, the Tybalt/Romeo fight traveled all over the stage, moving up level by level as the tempo increased and the fight neared its climax. To fit the stage area, the moves of this fight were broader, more brutal and required less finesse, thereby logically reflecting both the nature of Romeo's passionate wildness and Tybalt's cruelty, which had been held somewhat in check in the previous fights.

It was interesting to watch how Dave handled each fighter. Like any good director, he transferred none of the anxiety he felt about an individual's capability or the problems concerning rehearsal time to the actors. He set a comfortable and positive yet demanding tone for all rehearsals. Quick to encourage, he was also quick to correct; and we were never in doubt as to when he was displeased with careless or sloppy work. But his sense of humor kept things from getting too tense or out of hand. He kept channels of communication open by asking for reactions and feedback from all involved. He graciously considered all suggestions and integrated ideas whenever appropriate, while tactfully sitting on one actor who felt he could tell us what was lacking. As one would expect, he pressed for safety, accuracy and realism from all fighters. But I believe I can speak for all the other actors when I say that we never felt we were under the gun, so to speak, as we rehearsed.

Like many productions, this version of *Romeo and Juliet* was not without flaws, but local reviews unanimously agreed that the energy and believability of the fights created some of the best moments of the show and set a level of expectation that was difficult to maintain in later scenes.

#### Beyond *Romeo and Juliet*

While *Masters of the Sea* required a realistic fight, there was a unique twist at the end as the text called for one character to beat the other senseless. . . with a mackrel he had carved from deadwood, "as a sprat." The height of the two men, both well over six feet, coupled with the low ceiling of the two storied fishing hut set made for some interesting logistical adjustments.

The flow of the fight was short and quick. The aggressor, Collum, took the advantage from the outset as his fury at the captain of a British trawler was manifested in a series of blows, from which the Captain recoiled before falling over a chair, which he then flung into the path of the advancing Collum. A blow from the chair was used to put the Captain onto a low day bed. At this point in the fight, the carved fish was swung in an upwards arc toward the Captain's face. The knap was created by using the instinctive move for self protection to get the Captain's hands in position to take the impact of the blow, to create the illusion of contact with the head that would deflect the swing of the blow upwards and to topple the Captain through the breakaway back rail of the day bed, where he could take the barrage of blows from the fish out of the direct view of the audience.

Finding the right sound for the blows administered behind the bed while protecting the actor took some creative problem solving. Possible solutions included the actor pulling a pillow from the bed on top of himself as he rolled across the bed and presetting a baseball glove for the actor to use. Finally, the actor suggested covering his arms with knee pads so that it would appear as though he was taking a beating while, in reality, he was painlessly absorbing the shock of the styrofoam covered board. This proved to be the best solution and was found, to be totally believable by the audiences.

The final show of the season was an extravagant production of *Peter Pan*. For this production, David returned from Seattle a week and a half after rehearsals had begun. Three fights required his attention: the pirate's attack on the underground home of Peter Pan, the pirate's fight with the lost boys on board ship, and the final duel between Captain Hook and Pan.

The controlling factors for the fights in this show were set by:

1. Flying considerations, set by the Foy representative. If he said it couldn't/wouldn't be done, that was it. No more discussion. That is not to say that he was not willing to work for a solution, but that the flying tracks allowed only so much latitude in movement.
2. Set considerations: between the wires needed for flying and the elaborate set pieces, which Dave said were among the best sets he has ever seen, safe footing had to be a primary consideration. The underground home, for example, was anything but. The top reached at least ten feet off the stage floor and had such steep sides that ascending and descending was treacherous. The ship had prow and stern sections, each ten to fifteen feet high, railings, mast and a huge hatch cover that made for careful staging.

The tone of the fights was decidedly comic and required precision timing.

The fight on the underground home was deceptively simple. The pirates charge up the mound, overwhelm the Indians and leave. But despite the care in establishing safe routes up and down the dimly lit set, the fight didn't quite come off as expected. . . until the idea popped up to shift the fight into slow motion. So, on a given vocal signal, the flow of people across the roof of the house stopped, and a wave of movement from the waist up (like a reed bending back and then whipping forward) sent the momentum and the sound of the fight into slow motion. The effect was just what was needed to make the fight fit the fantastic mood one would expect in Peter Pan.

The fight between the pirates and the lost boys required careful timing as Peter had to fly on board ship, be hidden momentarily, step down to a specific spot on the hatch, then fly up to the railing on the prow piece. The intricacy of Peter's movement showed up one night when he hit the deck off his mark and instead of flying to the prow, ended up getting caught and tangled in the mast behind him. His timing affected the start of several fights, so it was crucial that paths be clear for his flight. Dave constructed the action so that the pirates could stall if necessary, and cover for lapses in flying patterns.

Another problem existed in that Peter had to remain hooked to the cables during most of the action, so Dave had to be very careful about not using overhead cuts that could hit the wires. He also needed to set up distracting action at the crucial points when Peter had to be unhooked or hooked in his harness. If all this were not enough to have to deal with, Dave also was faced with having to work with a couple of very undisciplined child actors.

His solution was to treat each fight as a small vignette. Except for two fights that moved from the deck to the upper levels of the ship, the action took place in confined areas so as to minimize congestion. Kids threw a net over Smee and dragged him off stage. Two pirates ran each other through when their young opponents ducked thrusts aimed to finish them off: one staggering off the gangplank as the other draped himself over the railing. Pan knocked another pirate over the prow and swooped down to the deck to be unhooked for his fight with Hook.

The Captain Hook/Peter Pan fight was the piece de resistance. Boushey filled it full of flashy looking moves and hilarious bits that do not translate to the printed page. Picture in your mind's eye Hook sitting on his metal hook, after a push off from Pan, and leaping to his feet with a scream of pain while slashing at the offending appendage with his own sword; or Pan's cocky bravado as he twirled his weapon on its point between phrases and then let it spring to his hand as he prepared to do battle. Imagine Hook's increasing frustration throughout the fight and then his ultimate humiliation when his double results in his sword being tossed to the poop deck.

Truly, the fights were a crowd pleaser; particularly the night when something in the air was literally making sparks fly every time blades touched! Who would not wish to duplicate that phenomena every night?

All in all, the Rep benefitted from its exposure to Dave Boushey. But on a more somber closing note, I must observe that his experience reflects the ignorance that still exists toward stage combat within the professional theatre. Budget considerations in a theatre that prides itself on the technical aspects of the production still do not cover the purchase of weapons suited to each production. Rather, what can we get away with as cheaply as possible appears to be the attitude. The initial lack of rehearsal time was eventually remedied, but only after some serious complications arose. Involving the fight director in the casting process will probably remain low on the artistic director's priority list for years to come, but as has been pointed out in articles and reviews in *The Fight Master*, more attention needs to be paid to this facet of production. As Dave remarked to one interviewer during his stay in Kansas City, "You never know what you're going to get in the way of actors. . . One of the great frustrations of my job is finding that the cast has a great swordsman who isn't in a fighting part, or a weak swordsman who has to play Cyrano de Bergerac!"

# ROCCO BONETTI

by Linda McCollum

Rocco Bonetti, the most famous Italian fencing master in Elizabethan England, is said to have been immortalized in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. Little is generally known about Rocco other than his having a fencing school in the Blackfriars where he supposedly came into contact with Lord Chamberlain's Men and Shakespeare himself.

Bonetti arrived in England from Italy in 1569 evidently provided with good introductions and readily finding employment teaching rapier and dagger play, which was the craze among the court people at the time (Smith 156). Bonetti's first house was in Warwick Lane near Newgate which he leased for an incredible sum of money and where he taught fencing to the noblemen and gentlemen of the court, charging them anywhere from twenty to a hundred pounds for fencing lessons (Jackson 562). Bonetti preferred to call his fencing school a "college" for he felt it would be a disgrace for "the most famous master of the art of arms in the entire world" to call it merely a "school." His fencing salon was large, with benches and stools all round for gentlemen to sit and watch while he taught. Placed on the walls were drawings of the arms of all the noblemen and gentlemen who were his "scholars," with their rapiers, daggers, gloves of mail and gauntlets hanging underneath. His school was also a sort of club for the young gallants of the court whom he provided with ink, pin-dust, sealing wax and fine gilded paper so they could write their necessary letters while remaining to follow the fights. In a separate room, Bonetti taught his private classes and revealed to his scholars his secret techniques and rules (Jackson 562-3).

On June 6, 1572 Rocco Bonetti, a Venetian captain, became a subject of the realm (Calendar of Patent Rolls, no. 2790, 411). Bonetti was married to Ellen, the late wife of Richard St. John. In 1575 Bonetti appealed to the Privy Council because his wife had died while he was in Italy and his house and goods were seized by a John Vavasour and a Robert Burbage (Dasent, Vol. 8, 395). Bonetti appealed to the Privy Council on June 6th and again on November 1st of 1575. He later complained that Burbage had died and his goods were in the possession of a Mr. Goring of Sussex who was married to Robert Burbage's daughter. He also complained that he had been further molested by other actions by them (Dasent, Vol. 9, 41).

Three years later in September of 1578, Rocco appealed again to the Privy Council complaining that the "common fencers" of the city vexed him daily and offered to do him violence. He attributed this harassment to the fact that he "professeth the use of weapons" (Dasent, Vol. 10, 333). He asked that as a subject of the realm he be allowed to teach the use of weapons within his house to any gentlemen that would like to take lessons from him. He requested that bands for the good behavior of those common fencers who vexed him be taken and that he be allowed the freedom of the city as a foreign master.

By 1579 Rocco had remarried and he issued a new complaint in July to the Privy Council concerning the insolences and disorders of the common fencers towards himself and his new wife (Dasent, Vol. 11, 183). He names specifically Francis who taught at the Blackfriars and an Issac who taught in Whitefriars and claimed he could show and prove his accusations if these fencers were called. The two "common fencers" identified in his complaint were members of the Masters of the Noble Science of Defence, a corporation chartered by Henry VIII in 1540. Issac Kennard had just played his master's prize the year before and Francis Calvert was either a free scholar or a provost at the time, later receiving his master's prize in 1581 (Hutton 277).

Not much is to be found in the public records of England to show Rocco's activities for the next couple of years. The French Ambassador to London, Mauvissiere, later claimed that Rocco had to leave London because he was hated and disliked by Edward de Vere, the Earl of Oxford (Boyd 380).

The Earl of Oxford, who some credit with being the real author of Shakespeare's works, was the Lord Great Chamberlain and the highest ranking nobleman in England, as well as a patron of the arts noted for being extravagant, eccentric and quarrelsome. As a royal ward of Lord Burghley, Oxford





as a young man spent an excessive amount of money on rapiers and daggers and actually killed an undercook in the Lord Treasurer's household on the point of his sword, which the courts ruled to be a suicide (Ogburn 454-5). Oxford's Men were often in trouble for causing frays and he had among his retainers and friends such noted swordsmen as Sir Roger Williams (the prototype of Fluellen in *King Henry V*), "Denys the Frenchman" (Captain Maurice Denys who wrote under the pen name of John Soothern), George Gascoigne (the poet and soldier adventurer) and Rowland Yorke (his receiver who is credited with introducing into England the practice of foining with a rapier in dueling) (Camden 301).

After leaving London, Rocco Bonetti appears to have been in the service of the sixteen year old James VI of Scotland, for in February of 1583, King James wrote to Queen Elizabeth requesting her protection for "Rocho de Bonettis," who had been in his service for some months, having been recommended by the Duke of Brabant, and who needed to return to London to take care of affairs he had left behind (Boyd 295).

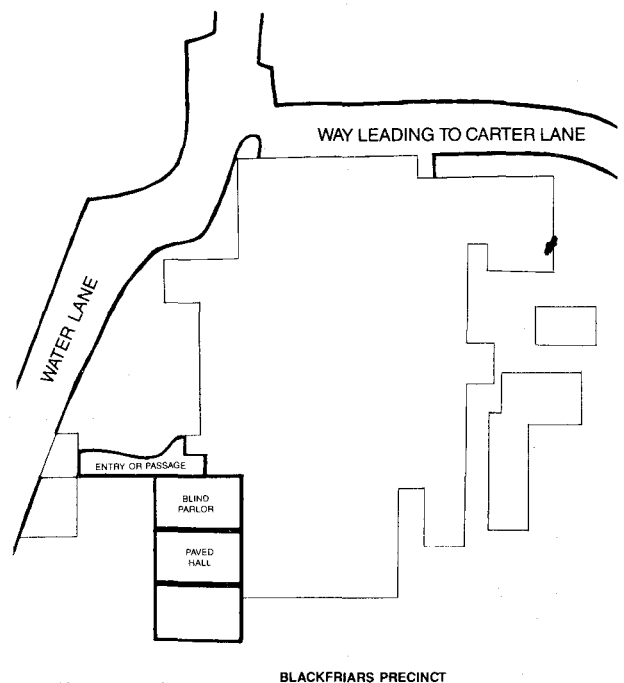
A little over a month after King James wrote to Queen Elizabeth, a French secret agent in Scotland used Rocco Bonetti to carry letters to the French Ambassador in London. This secret affair was revealed to Robert Bowes, the treasurer of Berwick by Rocco's intimate friend and companion, Eustace Rogghe, a Fleming who had done service as a secret agent in the past for Sir Francis Walsingham, the Secretary of State (Read, Vol.II, 380). Through judicious bribery, Bowes arranged to get copies of all the letters Bonetti carried. Francoise de Ronchorerolles Mainville, the French secret agent in Scotland, recommended Bonetti to Mauvissiere, the French Ambassador, as a man he had many reasons for trusting and whom he described as an Italian Catholic who had made a profession of honor in many countries and could be employed either here or in France (Boyd 349). Mauvissiere in turn advised Mainville that he had known Bonetti for a long time and that he had always "tried to please him" (Boyd 380).

After Rocco received the letters from Mainville, Eustace made word for word copies of the originals and then returned them to Rocco, closed and cleanly sealed. Rocco put the letters in his chest to be sent by sea to London, but when the winds at Leith proved unfavorable, Rocco traveled by land in the company of Mr. Davison, the English Ambassador in Scotland who was privy to Bowe's dealings with Rocco.

On April 26th, ten days after receiving the letters delivered by Rocco Bonetti, the French Ambassador wrote to Walsingham asking his aid in recovering the goods of Rocco's second wife who had died in 1582 while Rocco was absent from London and a trunk with some clothing and leather articles that had been taken from "his boy" (Butler 269). He further mentions that Rocco was being threatened by the people of the Earl of Oxford and was unable to live securely in the realm. On May 19th Mauvissiere again appealed to Walsingham asking for a recommendation for Rocco who had returned from Scotland as "poor as Job," and who was presently sick in bed. Mauvissiere requests Walsingham's help in recovering Rocco's goods and makes an enigmatic remark about "the bad turn" Rocco's wife and her ruffians had played on Rocco (Butler 329).

During the time Rocco was acting as a secret agent in the Spring of 1583, the Earl of Oxford had acquired the lease on William Joyner's fencing school in Blackfriars from a Henry Evans along with the hall above where he housed his troupe of actors. He later turned these properties over to his secretary and protege, the playwright John Lyly (Bradbrook 299).

William Joyner's fencing school occupied the blind (or windowless) parlor and the paved hall on the lower floor of the western refectory of Blackfriars precinct and was reached by a passageway off Water Lane. The two rooms, encompassing a space that was fifty two feet wide and seventy feet long, were directly below the Parliament Chamber and would become part of the Blackfriars Theatre in 1596 when the property was acquired by Richard Burbage. Evidence shows Joyner, a Master of the Noble Science of Defence, or one of his assigned, occupying both spaces in 1572. Prior to this time a man named Woodman had an ordinary table in the paved hall and had done some damage to the property. The ordinary could only be reached through the fencing school. Some London ordinaries were notorious gaming houses. Later leases specifically forbade the premises being used in any manner of a "victualling-house" or a "tippling-house" without the landlord's consent. Woodman later rented the paved hall to Joyner who used it either as part of his fencing school or as domestic quarters. Because of the slope of the hill in this part of the Blackfriars precinct, the Paved



Hall had two vaults or cellars under it.

By July 1584 Bonetti, who had been a "poor as Job" the year before, had acquired the lease on William Joyner's fencing school from John Lyly and had rented other rooms and yards in the Blackfriars precinct and had spent a fortune repairing and improving the properties (Smith 156-7). His funds ran out and he found himself in trouble for having built structures without the landlord's consent on lands that were not his. When the landlord claimed forfeiture on a technicality and with his leases about to expire, Bonetti enlisted the aid of his influential friends to get the landlord, Sir William More, to come to terms.

The first friend to come to his aid was Peregrine Bertie, Lord Willoughby, who was one of the Queen's best swordsmen (Nauton 400). Willoughby first wrote to Sir More in July of 1584, appealing on Bonetti's behalf for an extension of his leases (Wallace 188). The only extant lease dates from March 20, 1585, after Lord Willoughby's appeal, but does not include the fencing school which Bonetti had acquired from Lyly. Other influential friends appealed to More on Bonetti's behalf concerning the properties under dispute in the Blackfriars precinct.

Sir John North, the scholar and soldier, after writing to More on several occasions, wrote again in October of 1585 about Bonetti's miserable condition and his poor estate and appealed to More's charitable mind concerning the matter. He wrote again in November stating that there were a "number of honorable gentlemen" joining him in supporting Rocco.

Apparently Rocco was in prison for disobeying an order of Chancery through his "over zeal" in executing a trust in favor of the son of his old master, Sir James Harvey whose sons-in-law had tried to nullify the lawful disposal of his properties among his children after his death (Calendar of Salisbury Manuscripts, Part XIII, 264). More's solicitor, Robert Sothebie of Lincoln's Inn, who had drawn up the lease on Blackfriars, visited Bonetti in prison in November, where he may have been incarcerated for some time.(Wallace 189).

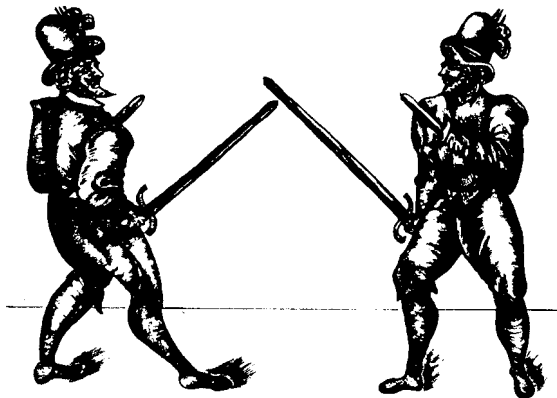
In November of 1585 North and his friends were able to secure an agreement with More to arbitrate on Bonetti's behalf. Sothebie sent a report on the arbitration to More. In December More was petitioned by workmen requesting that their claim be taken care of before granting a lease to Rocco Bonetti, since Bonetti owed them some hundred marks for timber, plastering and labor. North continued to urge More to grant Rocco his lease, appealing to his conscience. In January of 1586 North urged the final action and More seems to have agreed to granting a lease but only for seven years and not for the promised twenty-one years.

Sir Walter Raleigh was another friend that came to Rocco's aid. Raleigh made a strong personal appeal, asking More to extend the lease an additional four or five years in view of the two hundred pounds that Bonetti had spent on improvement to the property. Evidently Rocco's situation was resolved and he continued to live in Blackfriars and may have taught fencing there.

The only extant account of Rocco's swordsmanship in an actual duel comes from a description by George Silver in *The Paradoxes of Defence* in which an English fencing master, Austin Bagger (with more heart than skill), went to Blackfriars and challenged Rocco to a duel(Jackson 563). Bagger called him: "Signior Rocco, thou that art thought to be the only cunning man in the world with thy weapon, thou that takes upon thee to hit any Englishman with a thrust upon any button, thou that takest upon thee to come over the seas, to teach the valiant Noblemen and Gentlemen of England to fight, thou cowardly fellow come to fight with thee." Bagger, armed with a sword and buckler, fought in the street outside Blackfriars against Bonetti's two handed sword. Bagger, because of his height and his strength, was able to stop the heavy sweeping strokes of Bonetti's attacks with the two hander by parrying "double," and almost instantly closed with Bonetti and so badly chopped him up that he was all but slain outright. According to Silver, this was the first and last fight that Rocco Bonetti ever had except for the time he drew his rapier on a waterman and was thoroughly beaten with oars and stretchers, an embarrassing defeat for "the most famous master of arms in the entire world."

Rocco retired from public life and is believed to have died about 1590 (Wallace 186). His place was taken by "his boy" Jeronimo who went into partnership with Vincentio Saviolo who taught rapier fighting at Court and in the country for seven or eight years.

George Silver and his brother Toby challenged the two Italians, Jeronimo and Vincentio, who had claimed that Englishmen had no cunning and that they backed off too much in a fight (Jackson 564). The Silvers challenged them to



play with single rapier, rapier and dagger, single dagger, single sword, sword and target, sword and buckler, two handed sword, staff, battle axe and Morris pike on scaffolding at the Bell Savage Inn to see who really backed off in a fight. They had bills printed and distributed announcing the challenge with hand delivered notices to the Italians, but Jeronimo and Saviolo never showed up for the challenge.

Silver claims that Jeronimo taught fencing at Blackfriars as an usher (or provost) who taught as a substitute for his master. But there are no extant leases showing either Jeronimo or Saviolo having a fencing school in Blackfriars. When Richard Burbage acquired the Blackfriars playhouse in 1596 there was a Thomas Bryskett in the fencing school. A.L. Rowse points out that this may have been another Italian fencing master, for Bryskett is the anglicized form for the Italian name Brushetti (Rowse 226).

Jeronimo, who may have been Bonetti's son, met a similar embarrassing end to his career as a swordsman as did Rocco (Jackson 570). It seems that Jeronimo was in a coach with a woman he dearly loved and was pursued by a tall Englishman named Cheese who had a quarrel with him. He followed Jeronimo's coach and after catching up with it called him out. Cheese, having no skill with the rapier, was prepared to fight with sword and dagger. Jeronimo emerged from the coach and drew his rapier and dagger. Jeronimo put himself in the *stoccata* guard which he and Vincentio Saviolo taught as being considered the best for attack or defense. Even with all his Italian skill, Jeronimo was run thru and slain within two thrusts of Cheese's sword.

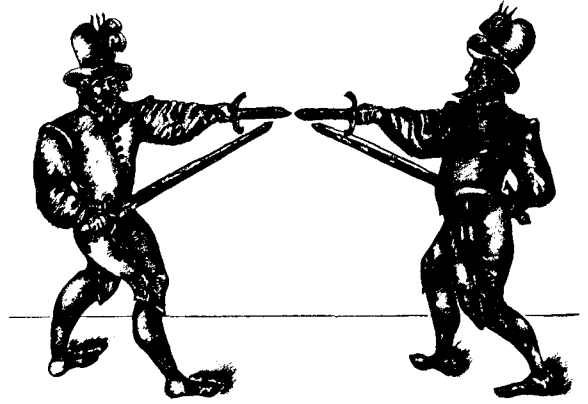
Of the three known Italian fencing masters in Elizabethan England, Vincentio Saviolo was the most successful and celebrated. John Florio described Saviolo in 1591 as a man resembling Mars himself, an excellent soldier skilled in every kind of weapon who taught fencing at the sign of the Red Lyon "in the little street where the well is" (Florio 117):

He will hit any man, be it with a thrust or *stoccata*, with an *imbroccada* or a charging blow, with the right or reverse blow, be with the edge with the back or with the flat, even as it liketh him (Florio 119).

Saviolo was born in Padua and traveled in eastern Europe earning a reputation as a fencer before coming to England in 1590 and being taken into the service of the Earl of Essex and joining Jeronimo in his fencing school in London (Einstein 71). Saviolo was well schooled in Italian rapier and well acquainted with the theories and practices of the Spanish school of Caranca and Narvaez (Wise 57). He combined the best aspects of both, insisting on the calmness and coolness of the Spanish style with its circular movements and attacks made in "passing" along with the Italian cutting style of Marozzo. Saviolo's guard position with the rapier and dagger had the right foot forward with the knee slightly bent and the heel of the right foot directly against the middle of the left. The rapier was drawn in short and the dagger held out at length so that one could move to his adversary's left side while keeping good measure and advantage (Wise 58). He basically recommended three thrusts, the *imbroccata* which was over the adversaries sword and dagger hand, the *stoccata* which was below the hand and the *punta reversa* which was delivered from the inside line or left side.

In 1594 Giacomo di Grassi's book the *True Arte of Defence* appeared in English and was based on an Italian book published in Venice in 1570. The book was an outdated discussion of the fencing styles at the time it was published in England, but it did provide a simple and practical system for most hand weapons and Grassi was the first to consider lines of attack. A year later Saviolo published *His Practice* in two books, dedicated to the Earl of Essex. The first book, in dialogue form is a discussion of Rapier and Dagger fencing, accompanied by woodcuts. The second book, *On Honor and Honorable Quarrels*, consisted of a series of essays dated 1594 which was a literal translation of an earlier book by Girolamo Muzio, *Il Duello*, which was been published in Venice in 1551 (Jackson vi). Saviolo added a chapter deploring the fashion of secret combat, gave an account of four famous quarrels and added an unrelated discussion of the nobility of women. One of the episodes in the second book closely resembles Orlando's duel with Charles in *As You Like It*, and Touchstone's discussion in Act V scene 4 of the various forms of the lie is reminiscent of Saviolo.

The style of fencing that Saviolo describes in *His Practice* is in line with the Spanish style of fencing that is seen in the description of Tybalt's swordplay



in *Romeo and Juliet*. Since Rocco does not really appear to be teaching fencing in the 1590's (if he was even alive), it seems more likely that Shakespeare came into contact with Vincentio Saviolo. He describes Saviolo's style in Tybalt and Rocco's character as he ridicules the fantastic fencing terms of the Italians and pokes fun at the "very butcher of a silk button."

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# ONE ON ONE WITH PADDY CREAN

by Charles Conwell

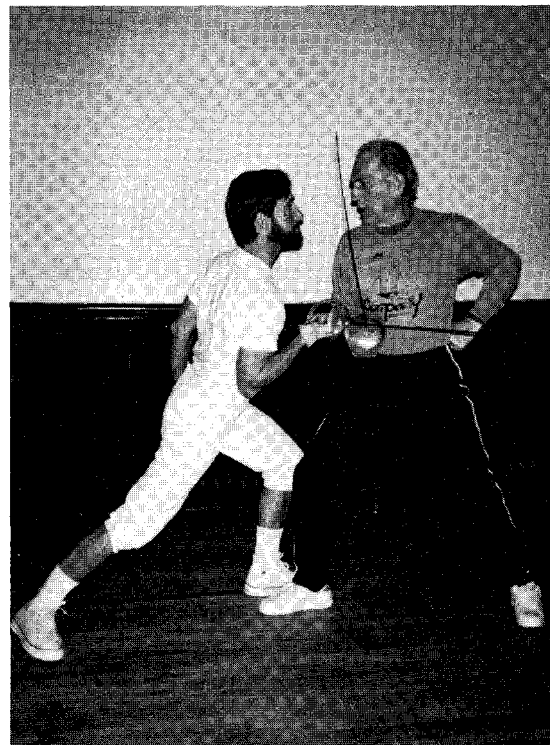
Patrick Crean (almost everyone calls him "Paddy") is North America's premier stage swordsman. He must also be one of the world's great raconteurs. I enjoyed him in both capacities when I engaged him for two weeks of private study in Stratford, Ontario, during January. Ideally one should study with Paddy while the Stratford Festival is in progress. This year you can see plays from April 16th to October 25th. If you come in the off-season as I did, it is smart to bring a lot to read. Stratford has only one movie theater and it is not an art cinema! One advantage of studying in the off-season is economy. A room with a private bath at the Queens Hotel was only seventy nine Canadian dollars a week. Unfortunately, there is a lot of snow and cold weather in January, so if you are very wealthy, fly Paddy and yourself to the Bahamas.

Because Paddy has so much to offer, and my time was limited, I chose to work on Paddy's choreography for the Calgary production of *Dreaming and Dueling*, a modern Canadian play with epee fencing, and Paddy's choreography for the Shaw Festival productions of *Cyrano de Bergerac* in Niagara-on-the-Lake and in Toronto. If you want to work with Paddy, I recommend a focus to make the best use of your time. You could choose to work on styles of fighting and not work on specific choreography as I did.

We worked together six days a week at the St. James Church whose roomy community hall provided an ample salle de arms within walking distance of Paddy's cozy home. When we began our work on *Dreaming and Dueling*, Paddy lent me his production script, reviews, photographs, notes and choreography for the Calgary production. He invited me to copy whatever I liked. Paddy describes each fight as a prose story before he writes down the specific choreography. His choreography is written like a dialogue script. We recreated every fight in *Dreaming and Dueling*. These included competitive epee matches with masks and jackets, a fantasy eighteenth century duel with mimed weapons, and a climactic duel with sharpened epees and no masks. Paddy shared many of his technical and dramatic memories of the Calgary production. I now feel well prepared to direct *Dreaming and Dueling* at the Philadelphia College of Arts next year.

Paddy also provided a wealth of written material on the two productions of *Cyrano de Bergerac* which he had directed for the Shaw Festival. These productions starred Heath Lamberts, a brilliant Canadian farceur, in the role of Cyrano. I chose to work on two versions of the Cyrano-Valvert fight in act one. We recreated a 1983 version for a right-handed Valvert and a 1985 version for a left-handed Valvert. There were many bits of comic business to capitalize on the special talents of Heath Lamberts. We concluded our work on *Cyrano* with my choreographing the Cyrano/Valvert duel, shamelessly stealing much of Paddy's choreography and adding some of my own, such as the "Conwell coupe," a quick and flashy move from high prime to a yielding carte with point threatening center. I am proud to be able to preserve Paddy's classic choreography for *Cyrano de Bergerac*.

In addition to our work on the two plays we created three versions of a brief routine using sabers. One version was exclusively thrusting, another version exclusively cutting and a third version combined both styles of attack. I intend to teach all three to my students, as they provide a very instructive comparison. Paddy insisted on all thrusts going



directly to the target (usually the center of the torso or the right bicep) and the importance of a sharp but light cut. Paddy has the lightest touch of any swordsman I have ever fenced with. He was very patient and gallant with my occasional heavy cut or off-target attack: "Charles, I feel I must comment on your last attack."

The conversation with Paddy was as enjoyable as his instruction in swordplay. We discussed stars, actors, weapons, movies, plays, Ontario's two major theatrical festivals, countless fights, and beautiful women. More than anything else Paddy conveyed a love of people and his work. His sense of humor was always in evidence. He frequently stressed diplomacy. "Make the actors look and feel good. They will have to perform the fight night after night."

An unexpected pleasure was the use of Paddy's library. I read *A History of Dueling, Cut and Thrust Weapons*, and *The Art and History of Personal Combat*, an outstanding combat book that I have tried unsuccessfully for two years to acquire. I also enjoyed Paddy's weapon collection and innumerable photographs.

On our last day together I choreographed a turn-of-the-century saber duel for Paddy and myself. I conceived it for a realistic production but my choreography included some very flamboyant attacks reminiscent of our work on *Cyrano*. Paddy helped me simplify the fight, make it more tense and more befitting an actual combat with sharps. It was splendid to watch this Errol Flynn swashbuckler take the time to make sure his saber arm was protected from a stop hit as he moved from parry to counter-cut. Paddy had always stressed psychology and the recreation of tactics moment to moment. Our saber duel was a good reminder of this important principle. I was flattered that Paddy enjoyed the dialogue I had written for this fight. In the middle of our time together, we took a day off from actual fighting to visit the Stratford Festival Theatre. The acting company had pooled their resources to reassemble Paddy's original armory and put up a commemorative plaque on the door. Paddy's lovely wife Susan was commissioned to create the plaque. After we examined the many beautiful and well worn weapons and Paddy gave the armory his blessing, I got a very thorough tour of this extraordinary theatre. Paddy showed me the nicks he had left in the festival's thrust stage during his twenty years as Stratford's Fight Master. In the afternoon we traveled to the Stratford library where we looked at a videotape created by the University of Michigan which combined an interview with Paddy with a rehearsal and performance of fight sequences in Erik Fredricksen's *Cyrano*. At the end of this tape Paddy was asked for the secret of his success. He answered, "I am very sensitive to friendship and love." I thought this was a perfect self analysis. More important than the improved technique and wonderful choreography with which I left Stratford, is the exposure to the humanity of the man himself. His personality is playful, positive, caring, romantic and eager. The work gets done superbly, but more importantly, I had a very good time doing it.

# SOME NOTES ON SWORD CONSTRUCTION

*By Dennis Graves*

With most theatres and university drama departments chronically short of usable weapons, actually choosing the right sword is somewhat of a luxury. If one does have a choice, here are some things to bear in mind.

The advantages of a well forged and heat-treated blade are fairly obvious, but the best made blade set in a poor mounting will still result in an inferior weapon. The choice of blades seems quite limited at this time, but the situation has really never been any better. The finest replica, or even outright forgery, of an antique weapon is still useless on stage. It would be deadly with its edges thin and sharp. A hilt and grip made only to withstand warfare would never hold up to the merciless edge-to-edge hammering most stage swords must endure. The blade really has to be designed dull and blunt, thus overly heavy and more difficult to balance. Any of the blades available take some work to make them usable; tangs have to be threaded to proper length, points broken, and most of all the shoulders must be evened and squared in order for the hilt to ever seat properly.

With the exception of some sabres, small swords and classical type swords, hilts should always be of steel. Brass will not take repeated bending, usually not even a drop to the stage floor, and it is difficult to weld if broken. Even a well-fitted brass hilt will tend to swell out and loosen where the tang passes through it. Brass may look spectacular, while it is clean, but is totally anachronistic. Rapiers and crosshilt swords were never mounted in brass.

Authentic rapier grips are almost always shorter than stage rapier grips, which bear the influence of modern fencing technique. Two handed sword grips were usually longer than their modern theatrical counterparts due to the more intricate point play used with them in the past. The grip is usually the part of the weapon that the eye goes to first and its aesthetics and proportion most determine how convincing it appears to the uninitiated. The wood core grips, common on stage weapons, are usually serviceable if tight, but are subject to crushing and splitting at the ends under repeated tightening and heavy parries. The initial fit of the grip on the tang is as important as the fit of the hilt to the blade shoulders. The internal taper should accurately match the tang taper and not be just a clearance hole. No amount of torque on the pommel will ever compensate for a sloppy grip. Ideally, both hilt and grip should require some persuasion to fully seat. With the blade turned upside down, hilt and grip alone should remain on the tang, even with a few light mallet blows to the blade. A preferable grip core material, even to walnut which is by far the nicest to work with, is Lexan plastic, or any of the modern impact-resistant resins. Lexan is very difficult to work by hand, especially to channel for the tang, but is virtually indestructible. Hollow steel grips, made by welding washers to the ends of pieces of partially crushed tubing can provide the same durability but require careful filing to fit properly and not rattle, as only two points bear on the tang. The weight of steel grips can help to balance an over-heavy blade. Both leather and twisted wire provide suitable grip covering; wire affording a better purchase, especially under a glove. Wire handlebinding became a separate and complicated art in itself by the early eighteenth century. It still takes some skill to manage even a few

strands of twisted black iron wire, copper and brass being even more difficult. A layer of half-dried contact cement on the core helps the wire to lay in properly and not loosen or gap. Bare wood grips are not only unrealistic, but dangerous as well, and extra effort should always be made to at least cover them with leather.

The often-neglected pommel actually serves four important functions. As well as physically balancing the blade, it provides a visual balance to the whole weapon. It serves as a handstop, making it harder for the weapon to be pulled or thrown from the hand, and it is usually the main nut securing the elements to the tang. Too often heavy broadswords end up with drawer-pull size pommels, which not only look strange, but also throw the balance unmanageably far forward. A crosshilt sword should balance a few inches below the hilt with the percussion point, the theoretical point of greatest impact, about ten inches from the point. A rapier should balance just below the hilt. Too heavy in the hand will mean difficulty in point control, and too heavy in the blade will cause the weapon to wield like a club. Pommels should, if possible, be of steel, the threads being far stronger than brass. On epee-bladed weapons a blind tapped hole is sufficient and allows for the easiest replacement of blades, but on larger rapiers and broadswords the pommel should not be simply a screw-on knob. Large pommels should have the hole drilled through with the threads at the top. More than an inch of the commonly used tang threads is difficult to tap without a special tool and adds no strength anyway. Pommels should be deeply counterbored at the base, leaving the thread at the top to facilitate ease of assembly. A locknut of some kind should jam against the pommel to prevent loosening under heavy blows. This can be a nut on top or, in the case of some large swords and sabres, a subnut or locking nut under the pommel to hold the hilt and grip before the pommel is put on. The use of threaded pommel nuts, or "buttons" as they were called, began as early as Shakespeare's time. The subnut has been used in sabre construction since the time of Napoleon.

While scrupulous authenticity may be required on rare occasion, durability usually becomes the primary concern for fighting swords. Certainly the weapons must "read" and fit the look of the production, but firstly they must not fail. Happily, about eight or ten generic types of weapons will meet most stage needs. The audience member can't usually tell if a sword is accurate for a character, but he can tell when it breaks! Weapons for any purpose have never been cheap and this situation is not likely to improve. Weapons should be considered an investment and real attention should be paid to overall durability and ease of repair and routine maintenance. One should avoid brass if possible, all aluminum, and unorthodox construction that makes refurbishment difficult and limits the theatre armorer to one manufacturer's system.

Maintenance is becoming easier with some of the new products now available such as the line of Scotchbrite products made by 3-M, and the Cratex line of rubberized abrasives. Deep nicks must still be first filed or belt-sanded out, but the Cratex wheels and the Scotchbrite unitized wheels make polishing and deburring almost fun. Rust prevention is now much easier with WD-40, Tri-Flow, Starrett MI and a host of similar products than with any oil. Unlike oil, these products dry and do not leave the weapon slick or come off on costumes. Frequent deburring and derusting is an obvious safety factor that should be stressed. Remember that the quality and usability of weapons available to theatres will only continue to improve with increased demand for better equipment. With sword prices continuing to climb, the purchaser should be all the more critical and demanding, investing his weapon budget as wisely as possible



## VIDEO VIEW

Here are some notes I've taken after viewing some of the video cassettes that are available for rent. These are not reviews of the content or story, or even the production values but they are comments of interest to a fight choreographer in hopes that others will avoid renting a turkey unintentionally.

*THE WARRIOR AND THE SORCERESS*

New Horizon 1984 89 minutes

Starring David Carradine with Tony Delongis (who is uncredited for his choreography)

This one is almost a scene ripoff of Kurowsawa's *Yojimbo* but is set in a bizarre fantasy world of T&A and lizardmen.

The numerous sword fights are a mixture of samurai and broadsword technique with some clever choreography, but no one wielding the obviously fake swords understands that they are *not* baseball bats.

The exception is, of course, Tony Delongis who is throughout the film a strong presence. His final one-on-one battle with an asleep on his feet (or drugged out or bored—who can tell?) David Carradine is the high point of the film.

*ROBINHOOD AND THE SORCERESS*

1984 Written and Produced by Richard Carpenter

Stunt coordinator Terry Walsh

Star: Michael Praed as Robinhood

Superb storybook retelling of the Robinhood legend with a healthy dose of well researched magic mixed in. The fights (quarterstaff, broadsword-cum-sabre ala Flynn Robinhood as well as scimitar) are enjoyable if not virtuoso. It was a pilot film for the Showtime/BBC-TV series which is now in its third season.

*HEARTS AND ARMOUR*

Warner Home Video

Vides Produzioni Italian 1983 101 minutes

With Tanya Roberts

Master at Arms Franco Fantasia

The story of Orlando and Bradamante against the Moors with a dozen well choreographed broadsword, quarterstaff fights with the Moorish hero fighting in a samurai type style of a Japanese retainer. There is a lot of loin in this one with some imaginative costumes and armour design. In many ways this is what John Boorman's *Excalibur* should have been.

*THE NORSEMEN*

Cornel Wilde

Lee Majors

This one is a total waste and pretentious. Vikings and Indians with no action, no sword work and no point.

*THE SIGN OF ZORRO*

Directed by Norman L. Foster and Robert Foster

Walt Disney (Buena Vista) Black and White 89 minutes

Fencing Master: Fred Cavens

Stilted, but noteworthy as a weekly dose of swash. This is the feature version of the television series. Cavens appears as the fencing sea captain in the opening scene with Guy Williams, who ought to get a special award from the Society for his fine weekly work. A lot of nostalgic fun.

*CAPTAIN KRONOS: VAMPIRE HUNTER*

A Hammer Production 1984

Written and Directed by Brian Clemens

Fight Arranger: William Hobbs (who also plays Hagen—the greatest blade in Europe—Deceased)

Nice! You can fast forward past most of it but there is a marvelous last fifteen minutes as Kronos faces the vampire fencing master in a truly exceptional screen battle with small swords. A chance to see Bill Hobbs do his stuff. Hobbs even gets killed with a sword twice. (He's a vampire don't you know!)

In his recent article concerning his work with Mr. B.H. Barry ("We Have Met the Enemy, and He Is Us," September 1985) Tony Soper expresses some surprise that Mr. Barry advocates parrying with the flat of what so many insist on calling a "broadsword." I am not a choreographer and am not really familiar with the Barry style or the SAFD technique, but I am a sword maker and, as such, would like to offer a few comments about the use of the crosshilt sword.

First I would point out that anything anyone does today with crosshilt swords is speculative. There were no fencing manuals before the late fifteenth century. Sword technique was an art confined to a small aristocracy. It was not desirable that a subjugated peasantry be able to read at all, much less be able to read about using weapons. There remains only the barest archeological evidence of how crosshilt swords were actually used.

Few, if any, examples exist of authentic swords with edges battered from serious period combat. The edges are very sharp and thin and are usually damaged only by corrosion, not the saw-like notches that would inevitably result, in even a plywelded blade, were they used in the manner of modern stage weapons. Also the hilts are not bent or cut on the underside, indicating that they were rarely relied on as hand protection anyway. The crosshilt was considered a forward hand-stop and a grasping projection for withdrawing a thrust, as one finger was usually placed around the ricasso.

The opposition parry used today was then probably used only in desperation, most defensive moves being made as a sweeping arc designed to intersect and re-direct the opponent's cut and, if possible, continue around in a "moulinet" action to return the attack. The edge-to-edge pounding familiar now was introduced with sabre fencing at a time when mass produced blades had become expendable.

As far as blades withstanding this sort of play, one should remember that the finest stage weapons available today are still a pathetic mockery of real medieval swords. It was almost impossible to break a ply-welded blade. At worst it would delaminate gradually. A solidly forged one-piece blade was almost as durable, or one-piece blades would not have replaced the welded blades. In a flat-to-flat or flat-to-edge parry the action is as two leaf springs bouncing off of each other.

If sweeping parries with the flat sound difficult to execute, consider that fighting with crosshilt swords was not thought to be an easy technique to master in its day. It seems to have required years of intense personal training to produce a competent swordsman in an age when sword technique was a survival skill. How could any one today master the art in a few week-long workshop sessions with grossly inferior weapons?

Whatever the choreographer's approach to combat with heavy swords, the fight must be severe compromise at best. The real horror of a fight with sharps, armour worn or not, with a kill involving tremendous hemorrhage, even body parts severed or spilled, is almost incomprehensible to modern stage "fighters." The action of a real fight would be too fast and over too soon to be dramatically effective, as well as the fight's conclusion being nauseatingly horrible.

"Realistic" fights can never happen on stage. "Authenticity" has to be abandoned for what will work. Far from taking a side in any debate about style of choreography, I would simply point out that all of us in the stage combat business,

sword cutlers included, are working in an interpretive manner. The more we understand about the realities of antique swordplay, the more meaningful our interpretations can be.

Dennis Graves

There have been a number of articles and letters to the editor that have concerned me. I am all for members stating their point of view regarding different aspects of the stage combat business; however, I suggest to those members writing for the journal that they not imply in any way that they represent the *majority* of the membership, the Fight Masters, or any other group within the Society. I suggest that they speak for themselves. I do not mean to sound harsh but it is disturbing when members either imply or state outright that their view is the one taken by the Society overall. A case in point was Mr. Soper's article regarding B.H. Barry's approach to fight choreography and Mr. Killian's letter to the editor. I don't necessarily disagree with either one of them but I do stand at odds with their assumptions. Mr. Barry's technique is different than many fight choreographers but in no way is it a "him against us" situation. I know that Tony was not trying to make this the issue but that is the way it came across. With Charles' letter about the points on weapons, he and other members of the Society should know that *all* of the Fight Masters do not condone the "shaving" of points off weapons. For the record, I personally contacted Fred Thorsen of American Fencers Supply Company (before Charles' letter) and suggested to him that he not take the points off theatrical weapons as he could be setting himself up for a lawsuit if a person was injured with weapons which had been tampered with. I suggested to him that he grind down the button a little on the musketeer blade since they are about the size of a dime. I am *not* referring to the standard epee or sabre blade but to the "musketeer" blade which is the new blade put out by American Fencers Supply Company. Mr. Killian did not make it clear that the issue was with the new blade but rather implied it was with all blades, which is absolutely not the case. The buttons were taken off the "musketeer" blades which are much bigger overall than your standard epee blade. I personally feel that the button should be left intact as part of the weapon and only the button be taken down a bit in size. Not all the Fight Masters feel that the buttons should be taken off so again don't imply or state outright that *all* feel a particular way unless you know for a fact that all are in agreement on a particular issue. This is not meant in any way as a chastisement but only as a suggestion that we not implicate other members of the Society unless we have personal knowledge from the various members. I hope we continue to offer articles to the Society for publication. All of our views are very important! Let us try not to be at odds with our colleagues. If the proof is not there and if there is a difference between members, perhaps a little diplomacy might be just as effective as a pointed finger. I hope I have stated my case well enough. Keep the articles coming.

David L. Boushey

**POINTS OF INTEREST**

**Certification for California Institute of the Arts**

On December 9th, I ventured down south to adjudicate the students at Cal Arts under the guidance of our past president Erik Fredricksen. It was good to see a distinct improvement in the quality of fighting and acting. There were twenty three people who took the test and seventeen of the participants passed. There were no recommendations but the quality was a definite improvement over past tests held at Cal Arts. I have to give credit to Erik who is now finishing his first year at the institute, and already a marked improvement has come to the fore. Again, it was the same old thing. Those combatants who worked hard passed the test. Those who put it off until the last moment found themselves lacking. I hope this is the start of a strong program at Cal Arts and I suspect this will be the case if Erik remains in their midsts. A couple of things that arose on a regular basis with this set of fights were the problems of hiding the knaps and the problem of missing them. Letting the audience only see what you want them to see is important. Students cannot forget the audience and where they are when staging a fight. It's all magic folks! Those who passed were as follows:

- |                    |                              |
|--------------------|------------------------------|
| 546 Dan Caldwell   | 556 Matt Davis               |
| 547 Don Cheadle    | 557 Melissa Berger           |
| 548 Rhys Greene    | 558 John Terussa             |
| 549 Doug Rushkoff  | 559 Ashton Root              |
| 550 Lupe Gidley    | 560 Ron Mesa                 |
| 551 Will Brennan   | 561 Lamar Agular             |
| 552 Bernie Lenhoff | 562 Brenda Hayes             |
| 553 Saawni Modrell |                              |
| 554 Jamie Angell   | Instructor: Erik Fredricksen |
| 555 Morgan Russler | Adjudicator: David Boushey   |

**Certification at Northern Kentucky University**

On February 2nd, 1986, I had the great pleasure of adjudicating David Leong's students. Twelve combatants took part, two of whom (Mark Menter and George Bellah) had already received Certification with Recommendation. Ten students, therefore, actually took the test. No Shakespearean scenes were given. What we saw were refreshing extracts from modern plays, and some original scripts written by participants. One combatant was left-handed, which afforded an opportunity for some delightful ingenuity within the framework of the set routine. I am most happy to be able to report that the overall standard was excellent, particularly in regard to point-work. The routine David had set the students in sword and dagger contained a number of extremely difficult deceptions of parry with the point, which were executed with a dazzling degree of pace and expertise. How satisfying it is to see actors doing a lot of blade work with style! The safety element was everywhere without being obtrusive. I felt in some cases that acting and diction could have been better, but this did not seriously detract from the general standard. Hearty congratulations to David Leong! I should like also to add a word of praise for George Bellah, David's assistant, whose work in aiding contestants (he also wrote the charming *Encounter in Sherwood*, one of the pieces) was invaluable. The rapier and dagger routine I set the students, which they had never seen before, confirmed my opinion, as I watched them carry it out, that all should pass and two be recommended. A most welcome visitor to the tests was the new SAFD Vice-President, Drew Fracher. The students got his signature, as well as David's and mine, on their certificates which—who knows?—may as a result one day become collector's items!

- |                          |                            |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| 563 Trish Dee            | 570 Illya Haase            |
| 564 Cindy Hudson         | 571 Brian Marshall         |
| 565 Pam Millay           | 572 Diana Rogers           |
| 566 Jeffrey Bentle (Rec) |                            |
| 567 Jim Wood (Rec)       | Instructor: David Leong    |
| 568 Lisa Johnson         | Adjudicator: Patrick Crean |
| 569 Tim Hennigan         |                            |

**DISCOUNT FOR MEMBERS**

Rod Casteel, a member of the SAFD, at the Colonial Armoury in Eugene, Oregon has put together some all steel fighting weapons with "no frills" that he feels are durable and economical. The Colonial Armoury offers Society members a discount as well as some special membership packages. For further information you may contact Rod Casteel at the Colonial Armoury, 106 Lynnbrook, Eugene, Oregon, 97404.

**BODY SLAMS**

Peter Wilton in the *New England Journal of Medicine* notes that body slams have a potentially lethal force, in one instance calculated at twenty-three miles per hour on impact. In pro wrestling the wrestlers are in extraordinary physical condition and can dissipate the force of impact in the body slam through the arms and legs and by using a trampoline-like floor.

**STILL WANT TO BE IN PICTURES?**

David Boushey is still accepting resumes for future film work by members of the Society. Send your resumes in triplicate to David at 4720 38th N.E., Seattle, Washington 98105.

**CHANGE OF ADDRESS**

- David Zum Brunnen  
P.O. Box 1167  
Salisbury, N.C. 28144
- Charles Coyl  
1668 Farwell, Apt. 3A  
Chicago, Illinois 60626
- Drew Fracher  
c/o Abiding Grace Farms  
780 Bushtown Road  
Harrodsburg, KY 40330
- Sally Knight  
1421 15th #205  
Seattle, Washington 98122
- Scott Leva  
2940 West Rowland Circle  
Anaheim, California 92804

**NEW MEMBERS**

- Bob Funk, Affiliate  
1801 Oak Grove Road  
Greentree Apt. #1002  
Hattiesburg, MS 39401
- Bruce King, Associate  
c/o Chico Fencers Club  
172 Commercial Ave.  
Chico California 96926
- Barry Lambert, Affiliate  
c/o Brigadoon Tour  
1330 East Gude Drive  
Rockville, Maryland 20850
- Douglas Mumaw, Affiliate  
1421 15th Ave. #205  
Seattle Washington 98122

ROBERT ALBRIGHT is finishing his third year of an MFA program at the University of Missouri at Kansas City. As part of his final residency with the Missouri Repertory Theatre, Robert will be playing Montano and choreographing the fights in *Othello*. He also team taught a stage combat class last fall with SAFD member JENNIFER MARTIN.

RICHARD ALVAREZ will be producing the stunt show at the Texas Renaissance Festival again this year along with his regular appearance with *Triomphe*. His mime troupe will be appearing at the end of May in Houston. Richard is also producing a number of "gunfights" for the Texas Sesqui-centennial.

J.R. BEARDSLEY directed and choreographed *Tis Pity She's a Whore* at the Drama Studio of London at Berkeley and *Twelfth Night* for the Berkeley Repertory Theatre. He recently appeared as the lead in The Magic Theatre's production of Paul D'Andrea's *The Bully*.

DAVID BOUSHEY recently choreographed *Robin Hood* for the Seattle Children's Theatre. He also choreographed the fights in *Romeo and Juliet* for Southern Utah State College. He will be choreographing *Hamlet* for the Fort Worth Shakespeare Festival, *Julius Caesar* for the Utah Shakespearean Festival, the fights in the new outdoor drama *Viking* in Minnesota, and the possibility of coordinating stunts in a couple of films remains to be seen. He will be teaching at this year's annual fight workshop in Memphis. His video series, *Combat for the Stage and Screen*, continues to do well throughout the country and Canada. David is choreographing stunts on the feature film *Trip Wire* in Vancouver.

TIM CARRYER & BABS BAILEY will be performing at Expo '86 and the Beaux Gestes International Festival of Mime and Movement Theatre in Vancouver B.C. in June. Carryer and Bailey will be at The Flying Club from June 8-21 and at the Waterfront Theatre on June 18 and 21. Tim and Babs are also performing at the New Hampshire Mime Festival on June 28 at the University of New Hampshire in Durham.

CHARLES CONWELL trained with Paddy Crean during January and shares his experiences with us in "One on One with Paddy Crean" in this issue. Charles teaches at the Philadelphia College of Performing Arts and has been preparing his first group of students for certification in May.

PATRICK CREAN is working on a second book, sort of a sequel to his book *More Champagne Darling*, with the working title, *I Owe It To You, Errol Flynn*. Copies of his book, *More Champagne Darling* and all information about it can be obtained from Patricia Stewart, The Patricia Stewart Literacy Agency, 105 Church Street, Suite 205, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5C 2G3 or phone (416) 366-7727.

DREW FRACHER has been teaching at Ohio University this year and performed in Sam Shephard's *Fool for Love*. In April Drew was on the road with the Nebraska Theatre Caravan playing Valvert and staging fights. In June Drew will be choreographing *Tecumseh!* before going to the National Workshop in Memphis where he will be teaching hand-to-hand. In August Drew will be teaching hand-to-hand, quarterstaff and swordplay at Ohio University's Physical

Theatre Lab which is a month long workshop in movement skills.

T.J. GLENN was voted into Fights-R-U's, the premier stage combat group in New York. He also journeyed to Boston in October to present his lecture-demo "Swords Without Fantasy." In November he fought in the Macy's Thanksgiving Parade as "The Horrible Hordack." He went on to perform, in a Monday Night Action Cabaret, excerpts of a sword and fantasy play he wrote entitled *Sisters of the Road*. In December he worked as a stunt double for Philip Carey on *One Life to Live* which was choreographed by J. ALLEN SUDDETH.

JOSEPH MARTINEZ has written and directed a new play called *Victor* at Washington and Lee University which is based on the life of Victor Frankenstein. Joseph has also received a grant to transpose the work into a teleplay for television. This summer he will be doing *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at the Lime Kiln Theatre in Virginia as well as a musical on Stonewall Jackson called *Stonewall Country* at the new Outdoor Drama Festival Theatre at Lime Kiln.

DR. ROBIN McFARQUHAR continues to teach movement at the University of Illinois Professional Acting Studio. In addition, he choreographed the following in 1985: *The Man Who Killed The Buddha* and *Zastrozzi* (an interesting experience in that seven of the people involved with the project were his own certified students—a rare experience indeed) both for the Armory Free Theatre; *Richard II*, *Cymbeline* and *The Taming of the Shrew* for the Virginia Shakespeare Festival; the duels from *Romeo and Juliet* for an evening of acting and fighting from Shakespeare plays given by the Illinois Repertory Theatre. Finally, he also served as Movement Director/Assistant Director for *The Comedy of Errors* again with the Illinois Repertory Theatre. He also gave a two week, one hour a day workshop in combat for the Director's Colloquium at the University of Illinois during the summer. This year he finished *Henry IV Part I* for Ohio State University, and will choreograph the bar-room brawls for *The Very Last Lover of The River Cane* in the spring for the Station Theatre, as well as giving workshops at Western Illinois University and for the Illinois Theatre Association.

DAVID PARKER staged the fights in *Of Mice and Men*, *Romeo and Juliet* and *Sticks and Bones* last year in the Michigan area and has conducted workshops for the Grosse Point Players and the Dearborn Civic Theatre. David recently completed roles in *84 Charing Cross Road* at the Meadow Brook Theatre and *The Miser* as well as *Monday After the Miracle* at the Attic Theatre in Detroit.

RICHARD RAETHER choreographed Roger Hedden's *Been Taken* at the off Broadway theatre, the Ensemble Studio Theatre and *As You Like It* at the New American Theatre in Rockford, Illinois.

CRAIG TURNER will be staying on at Chapel Hill permanently as the Head of Movement Training for the Professional Actor Training Program, as Company Movement coach for the PlayMakers Repertory Theatre and as the Head of Graduate Studies. He recently helped with the fight and movement work in productions of *She Stoops to Conquer*, *The Storm*, *The Dining Room*, *The Guiteau Burlesque* and *Bus Stop*.

DAVID WOOLLEY is currently teaching stage combat at Columbia College and hopes to set up a quality armory there soon where he teaches hand to hand and rapier and dagger. He has staged fights for four productions during the past year: *Incident at Vichy*, *Everything in the Garden*, *A Cry of Players* and a new play *Falstaff and Hal*. Coming next is an all-new episode of *DungeonMaster* and some courtsword fights for *The Luck of Jesse McCorker*.

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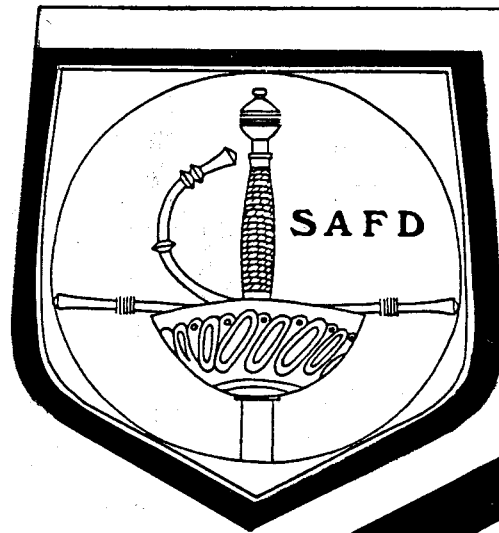
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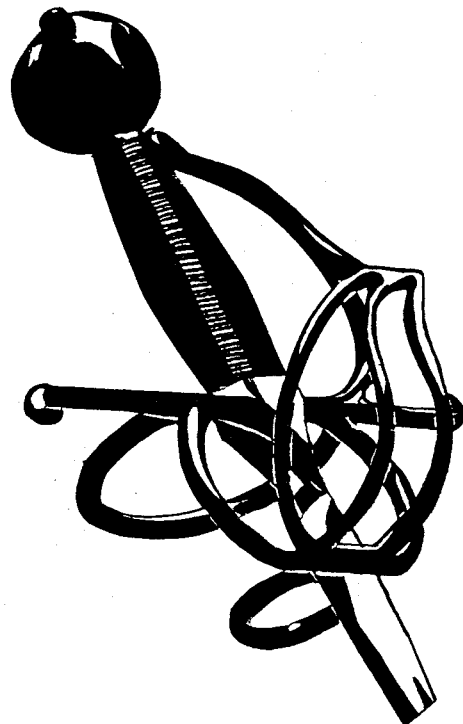


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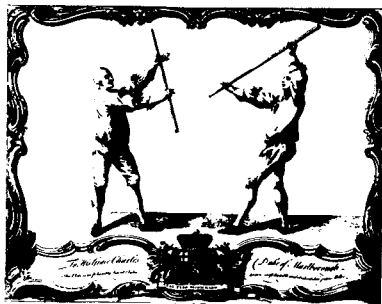
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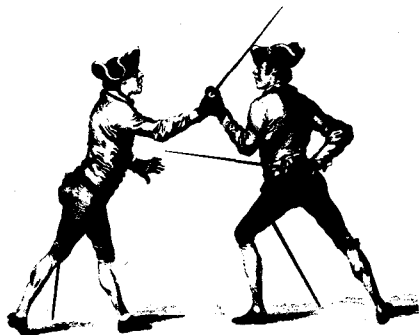
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