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The Society of American Fight Directors

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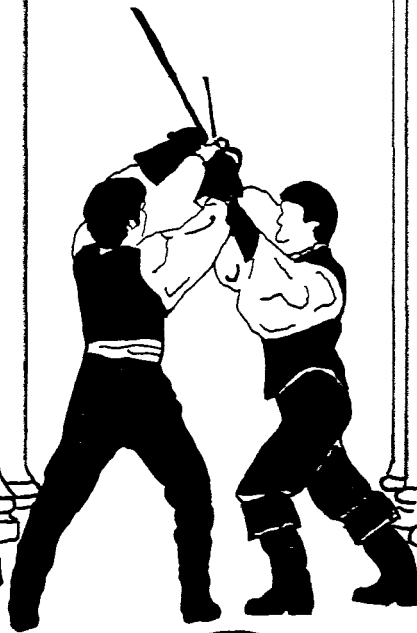
May 1987

JOURNAL OF THE

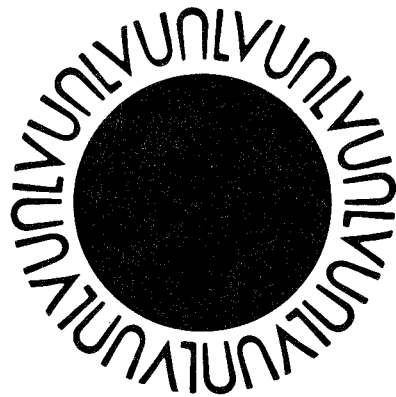
SOCIETY OF
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The Fight MASTER

JOURNAL OF THE SOCIETY OF AMERICAN FIGHT DIRECTORS

May 1987
Volume X number 2

FEATURE ARTICLES

- 9 CHARACTERIZATION BY COMBAT
by Dennis R. Henneman
- 15 RALPH FAULKNER
by Richard J. Gradkowski
- 19 STUNT ARRANGING FOR "KAY O'BRIEN"
by Craig Turner
- 24 "Kill Men I' Th' Dark?"
by Julie Tjaden
- 26 SLAPSTICK IN THE COMMEDIA DELL'ARTE
by Lloyd Caldwell
- 34 MAKE SCABBARDS THE EASIEST WAY
by Rod Casteel

REVIEWS

- 37 Shogun Macbeth
- 37 The War Of The Roses
- 38 As You Like It

DEPARTMENTS

- 3 Editor's Comments
- 4 President's Report
- 6 Vice President's Report
- 7 Treasurer's Report
- 40 Letters
- 43 Points of Interest
- 47 Society News

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 internal 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.

On May 16, 1977 the Society of American Fight Directors was incorporated in the State of Washington by the founder, David Boushey. Ten years later, in conjunction with our tenth anniversary, the Society, with the help of Dr. Leonid Tarassuk of the Metropolitan Museum in New York and Fight Master Richard Gradkowski, has published its first monograph, **Parrying Daggers and Poinards**, which investigates the evolution of the parrying dagger in double fencing.

At the same time, David Boushey, who has served the Society as President and Secretary/Treasurer during the ten years since its founding, steps down from his current position as treasurer and passes the baton on to others while still remaining an integral and active part of the organization he helped to establish. It seems only appropriate that we publish Dennis Henneman's article on David and his work on **Romeo and Juliet**, a show he has choreographed so many times over the years. The article reveals not only some of David's choreography but how his work with the actors on the fights helped their character development in other parts of the play, showing how a fight choreographer's work is not just stage combat.

Richard Gradkowski who was so instrumental in helping us publish the monograph also secured some pictures on Ralph Faulkner from Polly August of the Falcon Studios in Los Angeles for this anniversary issue of **The Fight Master**. His article on Faulkner gives us but a brief glimpse of this man who was both a competitive fencer and a choreographer whose career spanned the "golden age" of Hollywood. There must be literally hundreds of noteworthy anecdotes connected with Mr. Faulkner and hopefully those who knew him might share those with the rest of us.

In this issue Charles Conwell talks of the advantages of competitive fencing as part of the training of the fight choreographer in the Letters section. Lloyd Caldwell begins his two part article on slapstick in Commedia dell' Arte which reveals many of the origins of

some of the techniques that are still used today, and Rod Casteel begins a series of articles on techniques used for building swords, scabbards and sword belts. Julie Tjaden, an actress in Montana, reveals how working with one of our members on the violence in **Othello** helped her overcome many of her fears about stage violence, and Craig Turner shares his experience staging a stunt on a television series in Canada. T.J. Glenn, Tony Soper and myself review some fight choreography around the country and David Boushey gives us some thoughts on the Society as we enter our second decade.

I want to thank the officers and the members for their continued support and trust in me as editor and secretary. I truly enjoy working with them and with editing the journal. It has been so rewarding to gradually meet so many of the members of the Society and to get to know you as individuals and not just as names on a roster. I hope to meet more of you this summer. During the National Stage Combat Workshop in Memphis the officers are planning on setting the compulsory moves for oriental sword work and on meeting with the Fight Masters who will be in Memphis for the workshop. Many of our associate members will be there taking the Advanced Workshop and testing for classification as Certified Teachers. Please contact any of the officers, Fight Masters or others you know who will be in Memphis this summer if you have input or issues you want discussed at the annual meeting.

I would like to take this time to thank Joe Aldridge and Steve Coulter on our faculty here at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas for introducing me to the Macintosh and for enabling the Society to have access to the computer through a joint grant here at the University. And very special thanks goes to Gregg Hillmar for taking on the task of laying out this issue of **The Fight Master** and setting up a usable format for the future which promises to make my life so much simpler.

As we begin our next ten years the potential is truly there and the best is yet to come.

Linda Carlyle McCollum

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The Officers have instituted a number of changes in Policies and Procedures for the Society of American Fight Directors.

Member Classifications

It seems apparent to us that the Society is split between those members who are professionally active and those who are academically interested in the Society of American Fight Directors; or who are less active professionally, but wish to continue to be affiliated with the Society.

In order to serve both types of members, the Officers have decided to promote the active membership with new classifications and to streamline the old classifications. The new classifications are: Certified Fight Master, Certified Teacher, and Certified Actor/Combatant Proficient in (weapons). Only these Certified Classifications will be promoted professionally by the Society. All other classifications will remain with the exception of Student. All members holding the status of Student will be re-classified as Friend. A Friend of the Society who is currently enrolled in a school full time will receive a discounted rate on his annual dues.

Any member who wishes to re-classify in a Certified Classification may do so by satisfying the professional requirements. No fee will be imposed on members in good standing who wish to re-classify in the "Certified" professional classifications at their same status level (i.e. Affiliate to Certified Actor/Combatant, Associate to Certified Teacher). All other persons wishing to join the SAFD, or past

members whose dues are in arrears, must pay a fee and be re-classified by the Fight Masters.

Actor/Combatants (Affiliates) may automatically re-classify as Certified Actor/Combatants by submitting to the secretary a current resume listing the weapons used in his certification test, the date of the test, the instructor and the adjudicator. Certified Actor/Combatants must renew their status every three years. If a Certified Actor/Combatant wishes to be certified Proficient in a weapon(s), other than those in which he originally tested, then he must take the certification test again, incorporating the desired additional weapon(s) and pay the certification fee to the Society. If a Certified Actor/Combatant does not renew his certification within three years, the membership is re-classified to the status of Friend.

The Certified Teacher classification is new. A written and practical test will be required of all persons seeking Certified Teacher classification. Naturally a sufficient resume, letters of recommendation and an example of work as a teacher/choreographer will also be required. A copy of requirements for re-classification as Certified Teacher will be available from the Vice President by September 1, 1987. Certified Teachers must submit a resume to the SAFD once every three years indicating that the member is actively teaching in a structured format. If the Certified Teacher does not teach within three years of classification, then the Certified Teacher Classification will be revoked, and that member will be automatically re-classified. In July, at the National Stage Combat Workshop in Memphis, the first SAFD Teacher Training Program will be conducted. If you have opinions as to what would constitute standards for Certified Teacher Classification, please forward those to me.

<p>Initial membership in the SAFD is \$25. Dues for Fight Masters, Certified Teachers, Recognized Actor/Combatants, Associates, Affiliates and Friends are \$25 annually. All membership dues are to be paid in January to the Secretary, Linda McCollum, P.O. Box 218, Blue Diamond, Nevada 89004</p>	<p>Inquires concerning new memberships, status or change of address should be addressed to the secretary, Linda McCollum, P.O. Box 218, Blue Diamond, Nevada 89004</p>	<p>Applications for change in status within the Society should be addressed to Drew Francher, c/o Abiding Grace Farms, 780 Bushtown Road, Harrodsburg, KY 40330</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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A panel of three Fight Masters, which will include the Vice President, will act as a committee to review questions and applications for SAFD classification.

Certification Testing

It was decided that the certification test should be a maximum of seven minutes in length rather than six minutes. New certification forms will be printed with the cup hilt logo, as is now the case on the new membership cards. To continue to be certified as proficient by the SAFD, the certification test must be renewed every three years. All persons who have previously passed the SAFD certification test must re-certify before September 1, 1989. Renewal may be performed live before a Fight Master, or on video tape. In the future, each weapon used in the certification test fight will be adjudicated individually by the judges to determine certification proficiency. The weapon(s) which qualify will be listed on the certification certificate. In other words, a person taking the test with the requisite two weapons, may either be considered proficient in one or both of those weapons. In addition, a person may elect to be classified as proficient in any number of weapons for which the Fight Masters of the SAFD have established proficiency standards.

The implications of this change are very far reaching. I am certain that a renewal requirement will enrich the standards of performance among our active members. A number of members may become interested in gaining SAFD certification in weapons other than those in which he originally tested.

In order to offer the widest possible opportunities for certification in particular weapons taught by the Fight Masters, we will add to the list of "compulsory moves" other optional weapons available for certification testing by the SAFD. By September 1, 1987 all Fight Masters and Certified Teachers will have complete copies of the list of "compulsory moves" required for certification test weapon.

There will be a fee for renewal of certification and for certification in additional weapons. That fee will be determined by our Treasurer, Mr. David Boushey.

I know I haven't answered all the questions raised by the new classifications. Please write to me with your comments, questions, or objections. I do want to consider your opinions.

New Treasurer

As you all know, David has announced that he is stepping down as Treasurer. As President, it is my responsibility to appoint David's replacement. I am pleased to announce that we have an excellent, well-qualified Associate member who has agreed to take over the responsibilities of Treasurer, Mr. James Finney.

James is an Assistant Professor of Theatre at the University of Iowa. He is an experienced fund raiser, with a private accounting practice for artists. He has been granted secretarial support by his University, and he is eager to lend his energies in promoting the fiscal health of the SAFD. James will travel to the National Stage Combat Workshop in Memphis in July, to confer with David Boushey, in order to affect a smooth transition in this very important position.

Miscellaneous

Drew Fracher will be Acting President from August 1987 until January 1988, while I am on sabbatical leave from Washington & Lee University and travelling.

The Cup Hilt Rapier is currently being used on our badges and pins as the Society's official emblem. The new membership cards, which incorporate the design, will continue to unify our image. We will try and get camera-ready copy of the Cup Hilt Logo to you as soon as possible so that you may incorporate the SAFD image into your own promotional material.

Enrollments for the National Stage Combat Workshop in Memphis are as expected. Joanna Helming is our on-site contact person. If you want to get information, or sign up quickly, you may call her at 901-454-2565 or 901-454-2573 during regular office hours.

I extend my best wishes to all of the membership for a productive and successful summer season.

J.D.Martinez, President
May 1987

VICE-PRESIDENT'S REPORT

I trust all of you are well and readying yourselves for the onslaught of the warmer weather. Time to move those swordfights outside! I find myself very excited, having just returned from the Southeast Theatre Conference in Richmond, Virginia where our President, Editor/Secretary, Workshop Coordinator and myself spent many hours in meetings trying to work out the particulars on many new policies and procedures for the Society. Rather than deal with those particulars here, I would like to make two comments on our time there.

First of all I would like to publicly thank Linda McCollum, our Editor/Secretary, for being in attendance at those meetings all the way across country from her home state of Nevada. My fellow members, we are blessed with a secretary of rare worth and great skill. Her untiring efforts to investigate all aspects and options of any new business or proposal by the executive committee serve always to improve the quality of our organization. She serves continually as the voice of reason and a devil's advocate, always thinking of the membership as a whole first and foremost. In short, she keeps the rest of us on track and helps immensely in keeping the process of change moving forward. We are lucky in the extreme to have such a secretary and I pray that she will continue at that post for as long as possible. She deserves a huge pat on the back for a continued job well done.

Secondly, I was thrilled at the number of members in attendance at the meeting in Richmond that was announced in the January issue of **The Fight Master**. It was great to see so many familiar faces once more and even better to finally be able to put faces with many of the names I have seen on the roster over the years. People were highly supportive of the changes in the works and it helped us, the officers, a great deal to hear some immediate feedback on some of the more complex issues. I have contacted some of the membership in the New York City area and asked that they too hold a members get-

together just get to know each other a little better if nothing else. I would like to urge those of you in other metropolitan areas where there is a concentration of Society members to organize and get together and see what is happening with each other. This sort of communication can only serve to strengthen what we have going. It might build a little solidarity among the ranks, which is a thing I think we desperately need. Our organization is growing and improving daily; however, our real strength lies in our fraternal aspects and this must be nurtured with commitment and purpose.

While at the conference in Virginia a rather well known producing director was holding interviews and told me that he was very surprised at the number of actors he had auditioned over the week-end who were Society members or at least trained and certified by the Society. This bodes well for us my friends. It truly is only the beginning...serve it and in the long run it cannot help but serve you. My best wishes to you all for continued health and happiness in all you do. Have a great summer.

Your comrade in arms,
Drew Fracher

TREASURER'S REPORT

By now, most of my colleagues are aware that I am stepping down as treasurer of the Society of American Fight Directors. I have been an officer of the Society since it was founded in 1977 ten years ago. I have hounded many of you on several occasions and I shall hound you once more! Many of the members have not paid their dues for 1987 and I must remind you that there is the new ruling put into effect this year. I will reiterate the ruling once more. If a member's dues are not paid in full by July 1, 1987, he will be dropped from the roster and be required to submit a new application for membership in the Society. This especially effects the Associate members and Fight Masters as they will have to submit video tapes of their work along with recommendations to gain their prior status. In other words, they will have to go through the same procedure as any prospective new member trying to gain Associate or Fight Master status. Therefore, it behoves you to pay your dues by the deadline as the ruling will be enforced. Everyone has been notified through the past two issues of **The Fight Master** of this change and therefore, there can be no excuses as to why dues were not paid by the proper deadline. Please don't put the new treasurer of the Society in a compromising position by not paying on time. He is required by the rules of the Society and the Board of Directors to carry out rules and regulations of the Society. It seems easy enough to simply pay your dues and thus avoid problems in the future. It has always been like "pulling teeth" to get some of the members to pay their dues and this is why the Board decided to take action against delinquent members. It is nothing personal; it is simply good business. The membership must remember that this is a professional organization with specific agendas to consider. One of those agendas is the paying of bills. If we as an organization do not have the capital to pursue our financial obligations, we are all put into a compromising position. We as officers to the Society realize that the

members do not deliberately disregard paying their dues. We realize that it is usually a matter of forgetting. but you all know what happens if you forget to pay your water bill or the rent. We as a professional organization have similar responsibilities as do most profit and non-profit organizations. I urge you to pay your dues by July 1st. I am being quite emphatic as this will be the last time I address you as treasurer of the Society and I want the membership to realize just how important the paying of dues is to the solvency of the Society of American Fight Directors.

The dues are twenty five dollars a year for those members who have belonged to the Society prior to July 1st, 1986. If you joined after July of 1986, the dues are twelve dollars and fifty cents. Students still pay fifteen dollars annually in consideration of their financial status.

Please send your dues to:

Society of American Fight Directors
c/o Linda McCollum
P.O. Box 218
Blue Diamond, Nevada 89004

I will still handle the mailing of T-shirts, badges and pins. If you wish to order any of these items, you can still send the check to me as I will retain this job for the Society as a matter of convenience.

Certification will be handled by the new Treasurer of the Society. It will still be up to teachers to contact the treasurer before soliciting an adjudicator for his students. This is the treasurer's job (or I should say one of them), and the teachers who have their students adjudicated must contact the treasurer to set the gears in motion. Please do not set up adjudication on your own without first contacting the treasurer. It avoids a great deal of trouble if you approach the treasurer first. And remember, the total revenues from the adjudication fees must be sufficient to cover the costs of adjudication. The difference must be made up by the institution or students receiving the adjudication. The Society cannot pay money to have a teacher's students judged and it is the treasurer's job to make sure that there are enough students to cover all the costs (travel, meals, stipend). Please keep this in mind when looking to have your students adjudicated. Remember that adjudication costs the student \$25.00 each to cover costs.

I hope in the past that I have not come across too abruptly when trying to implement the rules of the Society, but it has to be done and I hope you can understand the dilemma when we are unable to collect dues or when guide-lines are breached when dealing with certification. The job of treasurer is a non-paying job and we need not make the new treasurer's job any more difficult than necessary. Thank you.

David Boushey

CHARACTERIZATION BY COMBAT

by Dennis R. Henneman

(Dennis R. Henneman is coordinator of theatre studies at Youngstown State University, Youngstown Ohio. A frequent director of Shakespearean productions in the academic theatre, Dr. Henneman has previously published material on directing Shakespeare in The English Journal.)

Conflict is the basis of all drama, and stage combat often epitomizes its ultimate expression in the theatre. In some plays, combat emerges as the central element of plot advancement, mood creation, and character development.

When producing a play in which violence plays a central role, it is essential the producer pay special attention to the violent elements in the production by enlisting the professional assistance of someone trained in stage combat. A qualified fight master not only protects the producer in terms of liability in case of injury, but can also add immeasurable class to the staging of key scenes and assist in the development of plot and character through stage combat. The Youngstown State University production of **Romeo and Juliet** illustrates how a director and fight master can collaborate to accomplish these objectives.

When I agreed to direct **Romeo and Juliet** with an undergraduate cast, I did so with the proviso that we would engage the services of a highly competent fight master with a specialty in edged weapons. Fortunately, David L. Boushey was available and his contribution to our production was a significant one.

Because as a director I consider the fight scenes in this play to be vitally important in terms of plot advancement and character development, I was concerned that the fight master not only be competent in the stage use of weaponry but also be familiar with the play and the acting considerations of the principal characters. David responded to these considerations admirably.

We began our collaboration with discussions by phone in which I explained how I viewed the function of violence in the play. These discussions were direct and efficient because we quickly agreed that violence was a clear expression of the enmity between the Capulets and the Montagues. We discussed the dramatic purposes of the four armed conflicts in the play in general terms.

I explained that I wanted the opening fight (I,i) to underscore the violent tension in Verona and provide a basis of expectation for the fights that were to follow. I also wanted the Mercutio/Tybalt fight (III,i) to be a more elaborate extension of the qualities created in the opening fight with special considerations given to character development. At that time I saw the Romeo/Tybalt fight (III,i) as a brief encounter growing out of Romeo's passion of the moment. The final Romeo/Paris fight (V,iii) was discussed in terms of the passion of the dramatic moment and I indicated that although I wanted to set the scene for the dual suicide without taking undue focus or emphasis, the length or brevity of this encounter would very likely be determined by factors discovered in rehearsals. We also decided that additional character information regarding the fights would wait until rehearsals were well under way.

Because we agreed on the usual rapier/dagger format, the rest of our pre-rehearsal preparation consisted of selecting and ordering

the weapons, foot gear, and special costume considerations that would facilitate movement.

We decided that David would join the company three weeks into the rehearsal schedule. At this point the cast would be off book, have a good start on characterization, have the entire action blocked (except for the actual fight choreography), have the dramatic beats identified, and be fairly comfortable with the language. It was determined that this would allow David to see where we were going with the production and still give him three weeks to teach the basic elements of sword play, choreograph the actual fights, and polish the action before opening. We later discovered that this was one of the wisest decisions we made.

On his first evening on campus David watched a complete run-through of the production, without costumes of course, but on the completed set. He was able to evaluate the physical abilities of the cast members who were to fight, see the set first hand, and observe the overall shape of the production and the direction characterization had taken. The following day he was able to begin basic instruction in principles of stage combat (the cast had already previously seen his excellent instructional video tape on Elizabethan Combat) where he could further evaluate the technical capabilities of the fighters. We were now ready to begin the important collaborative work on developing character through combat.

There are two important ways in which a fight master can assist an actor in developing characterization. The first is in selecting the manner and style of fighting a particular character uses.

The fighting style of Tybalt clearly illustrates his social class, haughtiness, and reputation for skill as a swordsman. Tybalt's properly erect fencing posture, combined with the very classy and precise maneuvers David gave him, contrasted sharply with the dramatic image each of his three combatants presented.

Justifying his Verona-wide reputation as swordsman contained in his "cat" appellation, Tybalt arrogantly dominates the peacemaker Benvolio in the opening fight. Although Benvolio shows his class standing by employing proper style and manner, his approach to the conflict is basically non-aggressive and defensive. The fight choreography develops this concept by giving Tybalt the offensive edge. Benvolio spends most of the fight parrying Tybalt's cuts and thrusts. The image presented is that Tybalt is merely toying with Benvolio and in a serious confrontation he could dispatch him straight.

In the Mercutio/Tybalt conflict (III,i), Tybalt's properly erect posture is contrasted with Mercutio's slightly hunched street fighter's approach to fencing. Although Mercutio's fencing style may not be as precise or well-honed, he's obviously aggressive and clearly an excellent match for Tybalt. Their fight is a battle between Mercutio's strength and street-wise ingenuity and Tybalt's finesse and polished dexterity.

A similar character development through combat style is evident in the Romeo/Tybalt fight when Romeo charges Tybalt in a flurry of passion. Although he demonstrates a class-conscious proclivity for a proper fencing style, his passionate fury clouds his judgement, and we quickly see that in this emotional state he is no match for the more controlled Tybalt. In a moment of more controlled passion, however, it is conceivable that Romeo's level of fencing skill

may very well exceed that of Benvolio, although perhaps it would not supersede that of "the cat."

One of the problems we encountered in the production was the development of Romeo's strong masculine, forcefulness of character that would allow us to accept his determination to take his own life in the final scene. David Boushey helped provide an answer to this problem with the wildly passionate beginning of his fight and the viciousness of his slaying of Tybalt. This physicalization of passionate determination not only illustrated this aspect of Romeo's character to the audience, but also provided the actor with a physical sense upon which he could elaborate a deeper and more meaningful character portrayal.

The second way in which a fight choreographer can assist an actor is in treating each fight as a complex dramatic unit; each fight is almost a "play within a play" that has a beginning, a middle and an end, complete with possibilities for sharp, dramatic turns and reversals. Again, the Tybalt/Mercutio and Tybalt/Romeo fights(III,i) illustrate the special way in which such a treatment of a violent action can contribute to the overall characterization and dramatic movement of a production.

Because this fight sequence occurs at a major pivotal point in the play, I wanted it to reflect the sharp shift from the comic possibilities of the Romeo/Juliet romance, the Nurse/Juliet interactions, and the Mercutio/Benvolio comic word-play to the serious consequences of violence which lead to the tragic actions of the principal characters at the end of the play. To accomplish this effect, it was decided early that the beginning of the fight would involve light-hearted taunting and then shift into a more serious confrontation which ends tragically.

After a brief exchange ending in a corps-a-corps in which Mercutio wins a test of strength, Mercutio taunts Tybalt by whetting his two blades as he crosses to a new position. On his cross he adds further insult by chasing Tybalt's friends to the opposite side of the playing space. He then interrupts the exchange by waving to a pretty girl positioned in a balcony over Tybalt's head. As the onlookers become engrossed in Mercutio's relationship with the girl as he blows her a kiss, Tybalt finally allows himself to be distracted enough to glance upward. At this moment, Mercutio thrusts to Tybalt's chest, thereby scoring another point. In reaction to being out-done twice in a row, Tybalt runs at Mercutio who ducks a diagonal cut to the body as he delivers a tap on Tybalt's rear end.

Realizing he has lost three consecutive points, Tybalt begins to concentrate on technique in an attempt to regain face. In the following flashy exchange, Tybalt demonstrates his superiority in the finer techniques of swordplay.

TYBALT	MERCUTIO
Cut horizontal to left shoulder----->	Parry dagger up left
Cut horizontal to right knee----->	Parry sword down right
Cut vertical to head----->	Parry both up (crossed weapons)
Cut to left hip----->	Parry prime
Parry sword overhead<-----	Mollinello to head vertical
Parry sword up left<-----	Cut horizontal to left shoulder

Parry sword up right<-----	Cut horizontal to right shoulder
Thrust to right knee----->	Parry sword down right
Parry down right<-----	Thrust to right knee
Thrust to right knee----->	Parry down right
Parry up left<-----	Thrust to left chest
Thrust to left chest----->	Parry up left
Parry up left<-----	Thrust to left chest
Thrust to left chest----->	Try to parry up left
Deceive with double(Place point on chest and walk under blade, flaunting his winning of the point.)-----> React to lost point	

The next exchanges not only demonstrate the evenness of the match, but also the distinct contrast in the characters of the two combatants. Mercutio emerges as stronger and more clever, whereas Tybalt is perceived as the more polished swordsman. Although the ensuing exchanges retain the comic tone of adolescent "one upsmanship," each combatant increases his frustration at a lost point and the attitude shifts to include more desperation as each fighter becomes more vicious in his attacks.

Sensing this viciousness, Romeo intercedes and grabs Tybalt's arm in an effort to stop the fray. Mercutio, spinning to launch another attack, accidentally runs on Tybalt's sword which is held pinned under Romeo's arm. Only Mercutio and Tybalt (and the audience) realize what happened as Tybalt and his friends run from the scene.

The next major fight in the play, that between Romeo and Tybalt, follows immediately. As a director, I wanted to use this fight to demonstrate Romeo's capacity for strong action. A common weakness in many performances of this play is that Romeo can appear wimpish and incapable of strong emotionally-based action. Such a portrayal would provide Juliet with little reason to fall deeply in love with him. Although most of the play shows Romeo as a romantic young man who prefers peace to violence (in fact it was this trait which led him to his ill-fated intervention in the Tybalt/Mercutio fight), I wanted some demonstrated support for a side of Romeo's character that would allow for violent action and determined zeal. David Boushey provided material for such character development in the fight itself.

As with the Tybalt/Mercutio fight, Boushey built a conflict that told a story with a beginning, a middle, and an end. Furthermore, the development of the conflict was punctuated with interesting twists and turns of action.

At the top of the fight, Romeo begins as a man possessed by anger and frustration. As most fighters will tell you, a combatant in this frame of mind is out of control and less able to fight effectively. Indeed, Romeo's first cuts and thrusts portray this uncontrolled anger as Tybalt appears to merely toy with his frenzied adversary. There appears to be little hope for Romeo's success as he picks up Mercutio's dropped sword and wildly flails it in his impassioned assault on Tybalt.

Then, full of arrogance and confidence, Tybalt taunts Romeo only to trip over Mercutio's body, which was left on stage especially for this purpose. This distraction allows Romeo to run Tybalt through with the sword.

The six inches of steel in Tybalt's side more than evens the odds, but the fight doesn't end there. The wounded Tybalt is now attempting desperately to defend himself from the onslaught of an

enraged Romeo who moves in for the kill much as a shark who smells blood will attack his prey. The action is now fast and furious as Romeo chased the beleaguered Tybalt around the playing space.

ROMEO	TYBALT
Approach----->	Back up, taunting Romeo; ...Trip on Mercutio
Thrust to right side----->	Hit!
Reel back<-----	Cut across stomach
Pursue<-----	Stagger up stage
Cut vertically to head----->	Parry overhead
Reel Back<-----	Beat blade stagger to pole
Thrust to right side----->	Parry sword up right
Thrust to left side----->	Parry sword up left
(stagger by poles)<-----	(Grab wrist and throw by)
Pursue----->	Run across ramp Go around pole
Thrust by pole----->	Avoid
Parry up left<-----	Thrust to left chest
Thrust to left chest----->	Parry up left
Thrust to left chest----->	Parry up left
Slide in--	
stagger back to pole<-----	Push face --stagger down stage --Go to knee
Cut vertically to head----->	Parry sword up --Beat blade aside
Reel back<-----	Cut across stomach
Stalk!<-----	Get up and back off
Cut to left shoulder----->	Parry up left
Cut to right shoulder----->	Parry up right
Cut to left knee----->	Parry down left
Cut to right knee----->	Parry down right
Cut vertically to head----->	Parry overhead
Thrust to left chest----->	Parry up left --Wrap blade with arm
Let go of sword<----- (Disarm)-----	Cut across stomach --Drop to knee (Let go of sword) --Approach slowly

With this disarm, the complexion of the fight suddenly changes again as we now watch a wounded and desperate Tybalt stalk an unarmed Romeo. It appears that Romeo has little chance as he helplessly backs upstage while Tybalt slowly moves in for the kill. It is at this point, however, that Romeo demonstrates both his resourcefulness and his capacity for passionate, violent action as he grabs Mercutio's doublet, which had been placed over the body several moments earlier, and draws his dagger. Up to this point the dagger had been unused and hopefully unnoticed until Romeo viciously stabs Tybalt several times in the following exchange:

ROMEO

TYBALT

Backs upstage to Mercutio's platform
and stands like a cornered animal
waiting for the kill

Avoid to the side<-----
Grab Mercutio's doublet

--Approach slowly
Cut diagonally to body

Throw doublet in face----->
Pull dagger and stab to the stomach---->

Struggle
Hit!
In agony, turn to face Romeo

Stab to stomach----->

Hit again!
Slide down Romeo's body
and die

Romeo watches in terror as Tybalt slowly slides down his body and dies at Romeo's feet. His realization of what he has done is an important element that sets up the second half of the play by giving Romeo a reason for taking desperate action. The multiplicity and viciousness of Romeo's stabs not only add the character dimension of desperation and capacity for violence, but also give additional support to his exit line following the fight, "O, I am fortune's fool!"

These two fights specifically illustrate how a well-trained fight master can assist actors and a director in character portrayal and the development of dramatic movement. By treating the specific moves in terms of character and by orchestrating the action as part of a scenic unit with a beginning, a middle, and an end, together with shifts in tone and direction, the fight choreographer becomes an integral part of directing process.

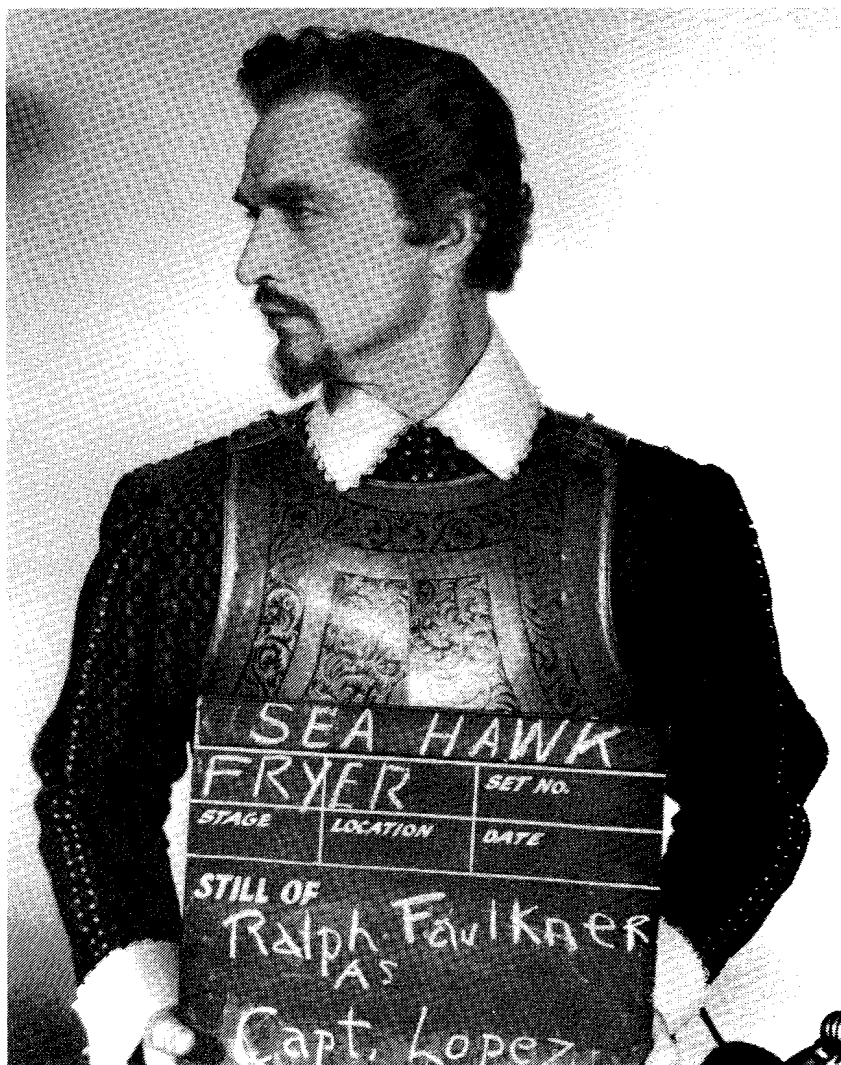
My personal experience working with David Boushey was a highly gratifying one. Not only was I impressed with his professional skill as a teacher and choreographer, but also the production itself was significantly enriched. The fight scenes in the first half of the production clearly established a tone of excitement and a basis for characterization that carried the audience through the rest of the play. This experience reaffirmed my contention that characterization can indeed be developed through combat.

RALPH FAULKNER
COMPETITOR
CHOREOGRAPHER

by **Richard J. Gradkowski**

On January 28th, Ralph B. Faulkner, Fencing Master, Olympic team member, actor, and choreographer died at the age of ninety-five in Burbank, California.

Faulkner's impressive accomplishments in fencing form a unique blend with his acting and choreographing achievements. He was a complete swordsman and would undoubtedly have been entirely comfortable as a Cavalier of the seventeenth century, a role he played many times in films.



By any measure, Faulkner's competitive record is outstanding. From 1929 to 1935, he won thirteen medals in the Pacific Coast Championships, held under the auspices of the Amateur Fencers League of America (now the United States Fencing Association). Of these

thirteen, he was champion five times in Sabre fencing, once in Epee fencing, and won four silver medals in Foil, a remarkable accomplishment reflecting a well rounded knowledge of these different fencing techniques. In 1934, the first year that U.S. National rankings were awarded, Faulkner was ranked fifth in the U.S.A. in Sabre.

Perhaps the peaks of his competitive career were his selection to the U.S. Olympic fencing teams in Sabre for the 1928 Games in Amsterdam and the 1932 Olympics in Los Angeles. In the 1932 Games, the U.S. Sabre Team came in fourth place, equaling the best U.S. standing in that event.

After the 1928 Olympics, Faulkner won an international Sabre tournament in Dieppe, France, and a silver medal in an Epee tournament in Ostend, Belgium.

Faulkner also had an outstanding record as a teacher of national caliber fencer. His pupils, Sewall Shurtz, Polly Craus August, and Janice Lee-Romary were all U.S. National champions, as well as Olympic team members (Romary won the national championship ten times and took fourth place in the 1952 and the 1956 Olympics). His Falcon teams won the U.S. National Women's team championship four years in a row, from 1949 to 1951.

Hailing from Abilene, Kansas, where he was reputed to be a fishing partner of Dwight D. Eisenhower, the young Faulkner attended the University of Washington where in 1916 he took a B.S. in Forestry. With this background, the tall and handsome youth decided to try for a career in show business. One of his earliest roles was in the silent film **Hope** costarring with the young Mary Astor. Shortly thereafter, while working on a film on location in Canada, he suffered a serious injury to his left leg. Coming to Hollywood in 1922, he took up fencing as part of a rehabilitation program and immediately found his metier in the mastery of swordplay.

Finding work in the motion picture industry as a choreographer, actor, and double, he performed in a series of films which have become classics of their type. They form an essential part of the genre of the "swashbuckling" adventure on shipboard or in a castle. Such productions as **The Sea Hawk**, **The Prisoner of Zenda**, **The Foxes of Harrow**, **The Court Jester** and **The Bandit of Sherwood Forest**, are well known to us, and indeed may have evoked in many of us our original interest in swordplay and stage fighting. In the 1935 film **The Three Musketeers** he played five roles, being killed all five times. A skilled professional, Faulkner was noted for his care in insisting on safe procedures in his choreography. In a 1940 incident, while working on **The Fighting Guardsman**, starring Willard Parker, Faulkner threatened to walk off the set when the director called for the combatants to "improvise" their swordplay. The director backed down.

Possibly because of his deep knowledge and experience, Faulkner never distinguished between an artificial style of stage swordplay and the real thing. In his opinion swordplay was swordplay. In comparing competitive fencing to stage fencing he said "On the stage, things are done a little more dramatically. But the method is essentially the same."



Douglas Fairbanks Jr. rehearses fencing with Ralph Faulkner for his role of Rupert of Hentzau in **The Prisoner of Zenda**, David O. Seznick production with Ronald Colman, Madeline Carrollo, Mary Astor, C. Aubrey Smith, Raymond Massey and David Niven. On screen, Faulkner is cast as Bersonin, a henchman of Rupert.

In his long career in Hollywood, Faulkner reached renown as the "Fencing Master to the Stars." The catalog of his pupils includes such all time greats as Errol Flynn, Douglas Fairbanks Jr., Ronald Colman, Basil Rathbone, and Cornell Wilde (himself an intercollegiate fencing champion), as well as multitudes of lesser mortals and acting students. The Falcon Studios on Hollywood Boulevard, which he operated with his wife, Edith Jane, taught a variety of dramatic skills to aspiring acolytes.

In his work in over a hundred forty stage plays, films, T.V. productions and commercials, Faulkner set a standard of professionalism and panache. To the end, he presided at his studio daily, counseling and giving the benefit of his expertise to his pupils and admirers. Fencing Master Ralph B. Faulkner never retired. In the tradition of many of the roles he had played, he died with his boots on.

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Ralph B. Faulkner as Captain Lopez confronts Errol Flynn, in 1939 production of **The Sea Hawk**. Faulkner often doubled for the stars when exceptionally difficult swordplay was required, ending up fencing against himself.

All photo credits from the Faulkner Collection

STUNT ARRANGING FOR "KAY O'BRIEN"

by Craig Turner

Television stunt arranging is a far, far different thing than choreographing Shakespearean fights for the stage. Time pressures and script changes--combined with the enormous technical support required to produce a weekly series--make TV stunting a fascinating and frustrating challenge. I was recently asked to arrange an aikido stunt sequence for CBS-TV's "Kay O'Brien, Surgeon" series, and my day-to-day experiences in the week of filming taught me a lot about the TV stunt game and also provided some valuable lessons.

SAFD member Tony Soper initiated the contacts that made the week's work possible. He was appearing in a regular role in the series and had worked with the writers to try including a brief aikido fight. In addition, he had urged them to contact me, since I had experience in choreography and a black belt in that martial art.

The first draft of the script arrived about a month prior to my trip to Toronto. This gave me a lot of time to watch the show on TV and to answer some preliminary questions: How were the various rooms arranged? What sorts of props were commonly found on the set? In what ways did the characters seem to be developing? What was the filming style of the show, and how did different directors seem to be shaping that style? Were there actors involved who could present physical/temperament problems?

I carefully went over the script and tried to make some sort of sense of the various characters' intentions. This story--the Christmas show--involved a "Bum" and a "Hardhat" worker who are brought into the emergency room for minor physical complaints and find themselves side-by-side on gurneys. The bum starts to grumble about what an awful time of year Christmas is for the homeless (priceless TV Dialogue, you understand) and how they all might as well give up and slash their wrists (a young man sitting close by in another gurney, being examined by Kay O'Brian, has obviously tried to do just that). The hardhat doesn't like this kind of talk and tells the bum to shut up. A shouting match quickly develops, ending in a punch that knocks the bum off his gurney. Kayo--as she is called--rushes over to the bum and makes sure he is all right. Blood trickles from his mouth.. She turns back to the hardhat and tells him to knock it off.

By this time, a couple of orderlies have grabbed the hardhat, but he is having none of this. He struggles, and in freeing himself of their grasp, his arm lashes out and strikes Kayo in the face. She staggers back. Before anyone can stop him, the hardhat punches the bum a couple of more times ("crashing into gurneys" and breaking bottles, "now resembling a barroom brawl" as the script indicates). At that moment, Cliff (an intern, played by our hero Tony Soper) strides into the ER. He sees Kayo struck and quickly rushes between her and the hardhat.

The hardhat tries to get past Cliff to continue the fight, but Cliff positions himself between the hardhat and the bum (who is now up and spoiling for revenge). The bum tries to push Cliff, who steps slightly aside and "quickly, almost effortlessly, grabs the bum's arm and in a lightning move throws him to the floor." Cliff turns and spies the hardhat who is moving in to take advantage of the situation. Our young intern applies "another quick move and the hardhat finds himself neutralized."

Cliff ends the scene by handing over the two men to the security guards, who have finally arrived, and then informs the amazed Kay O'Brien that what he did was "Aikido, non-violent martial art."

As we can see from this version, there are lots of holes that need to be filled. Television scripts leave out detailed set descriptions and precise blocking ideas, trusting that this will naturally occur in the process of filming. The script only said "ER room." There was no sense of how the ER was set up, how much space was available, how many people would be standing around (there is only a general reference to "nurses and orderlies"), and there was little character logic to some of the physical action. This gap is typical of much television and movie action, often making it unsatisfying. Heads are bashed and cars are crashed for their own sake, relying on the simple kinesthetic thrill of destruction to hold an audience. Why, for instance would the hardhat continue to attack after seeing what Cliff did to the bum?

Now think about the initial face off between Cliff and the bum. It is crucial to know not only physical positions, but also intensity levels of the characters; this in large part determines what an attack/defense combination might be. There are many ways to stage it, BUT YOU ARE NOT THE DIRECTOR. You have no way of knowing what possible positions the actors will be in until you see what filming brings out (the director usually tells the actors how to move just before cameras roll; if you've planned another set-up, too bad). In stage fight choreography, from early rehearsals to performance, it is possible to build detail upon detail to achieve a desired effect. Time pressures in filming rule this out.

And what is meant by a "throw to the floor" or "neutralized?" Of course, I could imagine all sorts of spectacular aikido moves that might work. But who would do the throws and the falls? The initial talk was to have me be the bum so I might take the fall. I had lots of working experience with Tony, not only in movement training while he was in school, but also when I taught him some aikido, so this was a reassuring possibility. I even bought padding and tape for myself, anticipating falls on concrete or tile (forget about mats on the set, no one on the show is thinking that far ahead).

But one week before I flew up to Toronto, I found out they wanted me to arrange the stunt, using stunt men for the fight with Tony. They did, however, cast me as an "anesthesiologist" for a few scenes and I actually wound up with some lines.

"Okay, no problem" you might say, "at least you can watch and control the fight from the outside." But what about the stunt men? Very few know how to act and fight at the same time and fewer know aikido arts; most who claim to know "martial arts" study karate and the harder styles, which means they are very stiff. As I found out later, the stunt men were called in because the Stunt Union got all up in arms about an "outsider" coming to Canada and taking money from a Canadian. Understandable, of course. They had also wanted their own stunt arranger to do the aikido choreography, but Tony reminded them that since he would be doing his own throws he wanted me, his former teacher, to be there. We finally settled on me as something like "stunt consultant," the Canadian stunt men as the fighters, and a Canadian stunt arranger who would direct everything that preceded the aikido moves.

I was wary of this two-choreographer situation. There could be friction between our different stunt interests. Also, not knowing what the Canadian stunt arranger had in mind and where I would come in further complicated the assignment.

The first evening in Toronto I sat down with Tony. He had a new version of the script, with a shorter fight and no mention of a large ER brawl as in the original. We could only trade speculations about what might work. We would have to face re-writes up to the last minute. For the time being I could only review all my options and be ready to change moves on the spot.

Watching the crews film other scenes the following day reassured me somewhat. I could visualize the possible set situations, the props available and how the camera angles were working. I had a chance to meet the Canadian stunt arranger (who was also working on the camera crew) and tentatively talked about some moves I had in mind. He didn't have any idea what he wanted to do, and planned to set up moves on the spot using men from his own stunt organization.

The day of filming finally arrives. We had been on the set the night before until eleven, which meant that we didn't have to get on set much before noon (there is a minimum twelve-hour break required between shooting days, though once filming begins, the cameras roll as long as they can).

Once we arrived on set and the director started work, it was apparent that we wouldn't get to the fight scene until well into the afternoon. All the stories you have heard about "hurry up and wait" on film sets are true. No one but the director himself really knew which scene might come next, though we were, for the most part, filming in sequence. And this particular director was covering all his bets, with lots of inserts and close-ups for later use in editing.

Tony and I went off into a far corner of the building (a corner of the make-shift dining room, to be exact) and went through various moves, trying not to bump into actors sitting and eating at the tables. I cannot over-emphasize how reassuring it was to have worked together before. Tony knew my thinking and we both talked about various options/moves/set pieces that might be used. Fortunately, I didn't have to teach aikido to Tony; I can only imagine how difficult it would have been to work with an unknown actor or stunt person to get some flavour of the art. We agreed on some basic moves and then Tony had to go resume filming.

I continued to watch carefully and hang around the set. I wanted the crew and actors to get used to my presence, to know that I was interested in all aspects of the filming. I had, of course, made a point of going around the set and introducing myself the first day.

Finally, late in the afternoon, we were ready to start shooting the scene. First the actors went through it (you get one rehearsal, where no one particularly cares about your performance, but everyone is concerned with lights, cameras and sound) and it was immediately clear that one actor would be a problem. He was told by both the director and the Canadian stunt arranger not to punch at the end of the first dialogue sequence, only to cock his fist and then we would "cut." Of course, he went ahead and nearly knocked the other actor off the gurney. The director began to panic a bit at this moment. I found out later that he had seen some very nasty and even some fatal accidents in his career and was almost paranoid about injuries and

possible lawsuits. Due to Canadian rules, he, not the company, would be initially liable should there be an accident.

From that moment a conflict developed between the director and the Canadian stunt arranger, the arranger attempting to set up possible moves and the director nixing or changing them. It was impossible to tell exactly where the fight would end. Oddly enough, the script was never really considered an authority. As the director kept setting up various random shots, the stunt arranger became more agitated.

Finally, realizing he could do no more, the stunt man strode over to the location producer and proclaimed in a loud voice, "If I'm not given some authority to set up shots on this set, then I'm leaving and you can all be responsible for what happens." There was a quick huddle. A ten or fifteen minute blocking rehearsal suddenly looked like a good use of filming time. This seemed to satisfy our stunt arranger. The filming began to follow the dictates of the fight and not the other way around.

Simultaneously, I began to see my own options for the aikido fight. When the stunt arranger had finally finished his section (the first punch, the hit to Kayo's cheek and the initial spacing) Tony and I stepped up. In the theatre there is usually (I know not always) a little more tendency for people to step back and let the fight experts do their work and give them time--or maybe I should say there is lip service given to the idea. But on a film set, with all kinds of hidden agendas ("Will they get a good angle for my face?" worries the actress; "How can I possibly light that obscure move?" mumbles the light man; "This is costing me so much money," says the producer) and under the constant pressure of time and people standing around, you must establish rapport with actors, director, stunt men, and crews at the same time that you work efficiently and quickly.

Again I say that my prior work with Tony was a godsend. We quickly showed the set up we wanted, Tony demonstrating very slowly on the stunt man, and me standing aside making slight corrections. Between takes of various angles, I coached Tony a bit to show the best style for the moves and demonstrated on the stunt man exactly what a "real" move would feel like (a joint lock called ikkyo that forces the head and torso down and over).

There was also a funny moment that demonstrated what difficult personalities can be like around a set. I was demonstrating to the stunt man how to throw the best punch when I heard the star say, "His character would never punch like that." I turned to her, smiled, and turned away to continue working, biting back my own riposte: "Gee, if you had shown character detail like that in your own work this season, the show might not have been canceled." My less-than-gracious thought aside, we were working well with the stunt men and it was obvious that we knew exactly what we wanted, so the feeling on the set from everyone else was very positive.

After the basic or "master" shot had been filmed, we then worked on all the inserts, which was fun because it gave me a chance to work off camera, going through moves with Tony so that other actors might have something to react to besides their imagination. I think doing this also gave me more visibility with the crews so that my acting scenes a few days later were more comfortable for me.

The Canadian stunt arranger was very helpful in showing us some possible inserts for the aikido moves. If you are familiar with aikido, you know that it has little of the classic "resistance" and "forcing" feel that most combat does. You frequently hear people say that an aikido move looks so smooth that it looks "set-up." The attacker never says that, but the more masterful the movement, the more misleading it can appear to a viewer. With a couple of suggested inserts, particularly in the joint lock, the feel of the fight was more apparent, and for that I am grateful to the stunt arranger. Film fighting, in my opinion, is almost totally a function of how the editor and director piece it together. For this reason, the stunt arranger's help was invaluable.

My advice to other stunt arrangers or specialists in TV and film is this:

- 1) Read the script and know it well. Expect it to change. Prepare as many variations as you can.
- 2) Don't expect anyone to be thinking much about character movement or internal consistency. If you can sell it to the director and the actors, and it doesn't take much time, try it, but be ready to opt for expediency when necessary.
- 3) Once you are on set, you are like a mechanic; no one will be much interested in discussing fine points. You are expected to explain, set up, rehearse and shoot as quickly as possible.
- 4) The director of photography is your best friend. Ask for his help: "Would the shot look better from this angle?" "Would you like me to turn more out at this moment?" "What can I do with this to give you a good shot?" A good camera crew can save you by emphasizing and enhancing your ideas through creative angles and camera movement. Show them you care about what they are doing by being solicitous of their needs.
- 5) Your biggest ally will likely be your previous experience coupled with a talent for improvising. You cannot foresee every possible complicating factor, so don't try. Trust your instincts and sense of professionalism. You must learn to work like most actors do on set: be ready for anything, and carry off the unexpected with intensity and finesse.
- 6) You must tread a fine line between cooperation and pushiness. I was lucky having Tony there; he was a regular on the show, had built up his contacts with all the key people, and was not shy about strongly suggesting other ideas. But even with the two of us, the final show was a compromise. Ultimately, if you show your concern is for the show and not for egos, you will get farther, or at least be artistically satisfied with what you do.

"Kill Men I' Th' Dark?"

Doing Stage Violence in **Othello**--An Actor's Perspective
by Julie Tjaden

Iago shouts this ominous epitaph for the night's destructiveness. Iago's final evil deed will be the murder of a woman--his wife, Emilia. I was playing that role! The last time I was killed on stage, I was ten years old. I was in a Children's Theatre production of **The Ice Wolf**. I remember the wooden knife and trying to instruct another actor on how to kill me and then falling to my death onto a mattress hidden behind a platform. Over the years I had become uncomfortable with stage violence. On one occasion during a dress rehearsal of **Peter Pan** I was "accidentally" thrown with too much vigor across the stage by two "mean" pirates and sprained an ankle. More recently in a comedy in which I was performing opposite a rather large faculty member, I was "unintentionally" tackled and my leg became lodged between parts of the set. Badly bruised and with tears streaming down my face, I meekly asked, "Can we mark this?"

I had become leery of stage violence with or without weaponry. Here I was doing an acting role to fulfill a requirement for the MFA at the University of Montana. Even when I found out that a real dagger would be used I couldn't back out with my degree on the line. A REAL DAGGER! Don't they use plastic or wooden weapons painted silver and gold anymore? No--the real thing!

Fortunately our production was blessed. The Drama Department hired a fight choreographer. For one week we had the pleasure of Bob Macdougall's expertise and imagination. Bob was to choreograph two large fight sequences and other smaller skirmishes and, of course, the murders. Bob brought a relentless energy and excitement to the staging and to his instruction. He mixed classical and modern fencing techniques to mesh with our production style. Our **Othello** was gutsy and fast-moving, riddled with pockets of boiling tensions and eruptions.



I watched Bob instruct the company. The first day was spent establishing a common language and learning the basics. Bob stressed the notion of fight choreography as a dance with a partner. Bob's rapport with the performers was great. There was an immediate trust

and enjoyment of the hard work ahead. Eight of them on a small thrust stage in close proximity to the audience with foils and fists flying was quite a sight, yet Bob's care for our safety was predominant and well appreciated. The safety factors did not diminish the exciting fight choices he choreographed. It was fun to watch their skills and confidence increase day by day. Before the week was over, the fight movements and scoring were well on their way to stage speed. Bob fine tuned these fights with an emotional scoring of grunts and groans as well.

By the time we got to my murder, I trusted Bob's ability. I was impressed by his fine eye at detecting our misuse of the techniques and his subsequent corrections. He inspected all the weaponry and made suggestions for alterations as needed. He looked at the dagger Iago would use and had the handle altered for a better grip, the end dented, and the blade dulled even more. He staged the sequence with a concise and careful step-by-step coordination of eye and movement--action and reaction.



As Emilia, I would back into Iago's path as he pushed me to the stairs. As I got up, Iago would then grab me around the chin in what seemed to be a tight vise and stab me in the back. I would then arch up and as he released me, I fell to the stairs. Bob taught me how to control my movements and fall correctly yet have the energy and intensity needed for such an interchange. We marked out each bit slowly and ran the sequence until the appropriate energy and fluidity was accomplished. All I felt in the actual stabbing was Iago's hand against my back. So that's how the magic works!

Before Bob left he established with the company the fight rehearsal calls and running the sequences in a slow time, half time and three quarter time warm-up. We ran **Othello** for ten performances and each time as I peered through a side curtain, I marveled at the intensity and reality of the sword fights. Bob's mixture of the classical methods with dirty street fighting heightened this dramatic effect. Foil and dagger twirling, body punches, falls and kicks abounded. The audiences were riveted too, and what better compliment to Bob Macdougall and his work with this company. So, that is indeed how the magic and hard work--WORKS!

SLAPSTICK IN THE COMMEDIA DELL'ARTE

by Lloyd Caldwell

Slapstick as a comic form has received surprisingly little attention given its importance to the history of comedy. The earliest documents that treat slapstick as a distinct comic element are the *zibaldoni*, or *gag* books, of the *commedia dell'arte*.¹ These books were working journals for the players of the *commedia*, containing snatches of contemporary literature and poetry, bits of dialogue, local gossip from wherever they were playing at the time, and the comic routines called *lazzi*. This miscellany was used by the players to add spice to their performance, which was part improvisation and part acting.

The slapstick as we know it was recorded in the form of *lazzi*. We have long lists of such *lazzi* dating from very early *commedia*, but few technical descriptions of how they were performed. This information was passed on orally and visually. Stock characters became more or less fixed early in the *commedia's* development. These characters were known as "masks or *machere*," due to the practice of most characters appearing in half masks. Each player specialized in a certain role or mask, and to each mask belonged certain *lazzi*, which were augmented as a player fit his special talents to the role. A new player replacing one of the older masks was expected to learn this *lazzi* by observation and practice before taking stage with the troupe. Some of the *lazzi* were common to all troupes, so that one would not necessarily have to start from scratch. Nevertheless, the tradition was primarily an oral one of teaching new members old tricks. This oral history of the techniques of slapstick has only recently been written down by modern practitioners of clowning and stage combat.²

The origins of *commedia* itself are somewhat obscure. The term *commedia dell'arte* translates roughly to "the comedy of the professional," as opposed to the amateur players and *litterati* of the *commedia erudita*. Other terms for the *dell'arte* are *commedia a braccia* (comedy off the cuff), *commedia improvvisa* (comedy improvised), and the *commedia a soggetto* (comedy of subject). The three most widely held theories of its origins are those of the Aetellan farce, the Plautine comedies and the medieval farce. The merits of these arguments are discussed in full elsewhere, and it is not necessary to go into them here. Suffice it to say we have solid evidence of a troupe of professional players formed in February of 1545 to perform plays in the style of the *commedia dell'arte*.³

¹ Giacomo Oreglia, The Commedia dell'Arte, trans. Lovett Edwards (New York: Octagon Books, 1982), p. 12.

² One of the better examples of this literature is Joseph Martinez, Combat Mime, a Non-Violent Approach to Stage Combat (Chicago: Nelson-hall Publishers, 1982).

³ A translation of the articles of confederation of the Zanini troupe are available in Oreglia, p. 140. For a further discussion of the origins of the *commedia dell'arte*, see K. M. Lea, The Italian Popular Comedy (New York: Russell & Russell, 1934) chap. IV, and

What was this "style?" The plays were based on scenarios, or canovaccio, drawn from legend, fable and romance. They were amply provided with disguising, mistaken identities, long-lost children, love triangles, conniving servants, and evil, importunate suitors. The plays were peopled with stock characters, or masks, making use of a customary association of characters to maximize comic potential. Thus we have the ancient master Pantalone in association with the bumbling servant Pulcinella, the clever servant Arlecchino, the lusty female Columbine, or the old hag Ruffiana. The lovers, played "straight" and without mask for sentimental effect, were often connected with the importunate bully Capitano, the callous father Pantalone, or the comic servants described above, collectively known as zanni.

The scenarios themselves became sufficiently formalized over the decades to be collected and written down, but this by no means reduced the vitality or popular appeal of the commedia dell'arte. Though the scenario, characters, and some of the dialogue were fixed beforehand, there remained a good deal of room for improvisation. To a degree this was a reflection of the transient nature of the troupes. The key to their survival and continued popularity was adaptability. Traveling the length and breadth of Europe, they might perform in the great hall of some villa in the evening and the next day in the marketplace on a rough trestle stage. Some companies transported their scenery and stage in wagons resembling pageant wagons, while others more prosperous might take up semi-permanent residence in hotels and other public performance spaces.

Upon arriving at a particular place, and gaining the required permit to perform, the leaders of the troupe quickly gauged the level of their audience and chose their material. For nobility the troupe might perform a pastoral comedy, or even a tragicomedy. Rougher fare was reserved for plainer tastes. Once the story for the evening's performance was chosen, the members of the troupe set about filling in the details of the play. Bits of dialogue, cues, entrances and exits were agreed upon. Then the lazzi at which the dell'arte players excelled were added for comic relief. If during the performance the audience turned listless and disinterested, the players would add more active lazzi, improvise comic scenes, and leaven the dialogue with bits of local gossip. The origin of the term lazzi is unknown; perhaps it derives from the word azione (action). Lazzi possessed a certain latitude of meaning among the players themselves and could be used to describe comic bits, songs, dances, or slapstick turns.

One example of the commedia scenario is **The Portraits**, a pastoral comedy involving disguise, mistaken identity, lost loves, and miraculous recognition.⁴ Emilia, daughter of the king of Scotland, is betrothed to Leandro, son of the King of Macedon. They have exchanged portraits from afar, and have promised to meet one another in Arcadia, where they can be married free from parental interference. Emilia journeys to Arcadia, but cannot find her love, who has lost his way

Anthony Caputi, Buffo, The Genius of Vulgar Comedy (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1978) p. 53-62.

⁴ Lea, p. 561-567.

enroute. To protect themselves in a strange land, the lovers separately decide to adopt the disguise of the opposite sex. Emilia in this guise attracts the serving girl Nespola, Leandro the attentions of two bravos, Cardone and Lelio. Both avoid being compromised through trickery. There follow various complications and sub-plots involving the servants Nespola, Pantalone, Burattino, and Gratiano, too complicated to go into great detail here.

Cardone and Lelio, duped and abandoned by the hero Leandro, hear of the beauty of Emilia, and have resolved to have her. They meet, draw swords, and fight. Bloodshed is averted by intervention of a Zanni, who suggests they submit themselves to Emilia's arbitration. Cupid appears and makes the love of Leandro and Emilia known to the bravos Cardone and Lelio and to the serving girl Nespola. Cardone and Lelio are reconciled at the fountain of Cupid and go off to seek romance in Carthage. They no longer play an active part in the comedy. Meanwhile Leandro and Emilia enter separately and fall asleep by Cupid's fountain. Upon awakening, each brings forth the other's portrait, and to their amazement, find the person sleeping near them to be the image of the one in the portraits. All is resolved, and the company lives happily ever after.

It is evident that the characters, though fulfilling the same function of the original mask, change names from time to time. Emilia and Leandro are the lovers, or innamorati. Cardone and Lelio appear in the Capitano tradition, and Nespola as the female zanni. Pantalone appears as himself, this time in the role of an old reprobate rather than parent. Pulcinella appears here as Burattino, and the Doctore as Gratiano. All of this can be confusing if one is not familiar with the characteristics of the original mask. Possessing this knowledge adds to our understanding of the lazzi as well. For these reasons we now turn to a brief discussion of the characters of the commedia; more specifically, the zanni who performed the slapstick lazzi.

In historical development Arlecchino is the youngest of the zanni family, yet he is arguably the most famous. The slapstick bat and diamond motif of his costume are familiar to any schoolboy. Arlecchino was reputed to have developed from the medieval clown from Bergamo, in the Bretano valley. Other names he might be found under are Truffaldino, Bagatino and in France, Harlequin. In the woodcuts of the period Arlecchino is shown as a limber, acrobatic figure. His role in the scenarios is generally one of mischief-making servant, interfering in the amorous intrigues of his betters and cheating his fellows out of money and food. The early Arlecchino was portrayed as a bit of a fool despite his animal cunning. Lea says of him that he "has what brains are left over from Pedrolino's composition and an inverse share of the beatings."⁵ In the lazzi of slapstick we find Arlecchino a central figure, with his penchant for mischief, his physical agility and his famous bat.

The stage property most associated with Arlecchino, and the one which gave its name to physical or mock-violent comedy, is the slapstick. The slapstick was a bat made of two limber pieces of wood bound at the handle. A blow delivered by one made a resounding slap, hence the name "slapstick." The blow was fairly harmless, as the

⁵ Lea, p. 78.

energy of the blow was dissipated between the two pieces of wood.⁶ A variation of the bat was used as an instrument of corporal punishment in China, one side of the bat being weighted. The weighted side lent impetus to the blow, the resulting injury being a severe bruise. Whether the genesis of the slapstick can be found in this Chinese weapon I do not know, but it cannot be discounted.

Pulcinella could well be the oldest of the zanni. He is the simple servant, sometimes cunning and sometimes incredibly dense, who facilitates the intrigues of masters and lovers. His costume is of a white, loose fitting suit, a sugar loaf hat, and a dark large nosed half-mask. He sometimes appears hunchbacked, especially in the first centuries of the commedia's popularity. The character in this form is easily recognizable from the Plautine comedy. Pulcinella is generally well-meaning, but for all that is most often the victim of the beatings in the scenarios. As such the lazzi of slapstick frequently revolves around some mishap of poor Pulcinella. He appears under various names, but the character can always be recognized by his servile status, ravenous hunger and incredible stupidity.

No scenario could be complete without the duplicitous old fool, Pantalone. A figure as ancient in origin as Pulcinella, Pantalone can be found wherever the younger generation are pitted against old. We find him under the names of Pandolfo, Bartolo, and in the comedy of Moliere, Orgon. Pantalone is one of the most eye-catching of the commedia characters in dark half-mask with large nose, paunch, scarlet suit, and black cloak with scarlet trimmings. He is also the most foolish in a company of fools. His appetites drive him to extreme lengths of intrigue and humiliation. Old and unattractive, well beyond the age of youthful virility, his lustful yearnings nevertheless run riot, resulting in aborted dalliance with every female figure on the stage. All of his efforts come to naught of course, and he ends as cuckold and fool.

Of the zanni, Pedrolino seems the most trustworthy in appearance. He is a charming and innocent servant, easily moved in love and misled by all about him. He is also known as a prankster, though most of his pranks seem harmless in comparison to Brighella or Arlecchino. One of the most endearing and comic characteristics of this mask is his penchant for confessing to anything, guilty or not. Pedrolino is sometimes known as Bertoldo, Pagliaccio, Giglio and in France, the gentle Pierrot.

Brighella is a sinister character, most cunning and most dangerous of the zanni. He is the cutthroat, the hired assassin, and carries the knife unsheathed in secret. There are lazzi in the scenarios requiring one character or another to be "stabbed." It was not beyond the technology of the time to produce a telescoping knife. We have records of such properties, though not among the documents of the commedia dell'arte. Regardless, Brighella can be found in the midst of any serious plot in the scenario, stilleto ever ready. Even his mask is sinister; olive green, long hooked nose, thin pointed moustaches, and small reptilian eyes. The rest of the body is suited in tight fitting white jacket and trousers, trimmed in green, and short cloak. Brighella is more widely recognized as Scapino, Turlupin or

⁶ Lea., p. 60, 78.

Sganarelle.

The Doctor, or Dottore, is familiar to every school boy. The pedant who always confuses words and issues, the Doctor bumbles his way through the scenario in a constant state of confusion. Most amusing are his malapropisms. Another lusty old man, he is frustrated in all of his amorous designs. The slapstick of this victim is often self-inflicted.

The female characters of the commedia also enjoy their share of slapstick. Columbine is an example of one such zanni. A maid to the innamorata, or female love interest, Columbine often pairs off with one or another of the zanni in an amorous sub-plot. These liaisons could be extremely risqué. In her role as an old gossip Columbine is known as La Ruffiana, though she is more often portrayed as a young and lusty house servant.

As for the slapstick lazzi, her weapons of choice are common kitchen utensils, chamber pots and various foodstuffs. Violence to her person became less frequent as the commedia progressed. The commedia of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries featured female characters who fomented discord but rarely were physically abused. I can only offer conjecture in regards to this change in performance convention. From what I can gather of the literature of the period, female servants underwent a metamorphosis from the "lusty serving wench," or general servant, to one more specialized in her duties. Such servants had to be trained, and hence were less easily replaced. Corporal punishment in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was still common regarding female house servants, but it was on the whole less brutal and arbitrary due to the difficulty of finding suitable replacements. As a result, this diminution of violence is reflected in the comedy of the period.⁷ However, the combat between the sexes expressed in slapstick retained its popularity and was never completely banished from the commedia stage. Indeed, we find it in a mild form in many of our contemporary films today, attesting to the resilience of the convention.

The braggart warrior of the commedia dell'arte is found in the Capitano maschere. A cowardly bully, he speaks thunder and threatens lightning, but is inevitably driven from the stage in a rain of blows. Italy was victim of dynastic and religious strife from the fourteenth century well into the middle of the nineteenth century. Much of this warfare was conducted by proxy in the form of foreign troops and mercenary bands. The Capitano mask was conceived as the object of revenge for all the wrongs ordinary people suffered at the hands of these professional soldiers. The early Capitanos were Spanish mercenaries, who dominated Italy in the sixteenth century. Their haughty Spanish pride, conceits and exaggerated courtesies became the target of wicked satire.⁸

⁷ I base this conjecture on my readings of current social historians and the literature of the period. I readily confess my lack of expertise in the area of Women's Studies and Social History. I would be most appreciative of any suggestions the reader might have on the topic.

⁸ Daniel Boughner, The Braggart in Renaissance Comedy. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1954), p. 21-32.

The Capitano sported fierce mustaches and an extra-long rapier. The significance of the long blade is clear. It served as a symbol of his supposed sexual prowess, a pretension exposed and made ridiculous in the course of the play. Further, the rapier being primarily a thrusting weapon, one could make one's fight from a comfortably safe distance. Not that matters often progressed that far. The Capitano was a notorious coward, taking to heel at even the slightest danger. When forced to fight, an extremely rare occurrence, he invariably proved woefully inept.

The use of weapons in slapstick pose some interesting questions. In most of the surviving prints and woodcuts of commedia, the male characters carry slapsticks, cudgels or rapiers and daggers. The slapsticks were relatively harmless, and "soft batons," or bastonates, had been available since the middle ages.⁹ Rapiers, however, were always potentially harmful, whether left sharp, as it appears they were in surviving woodcuts of the early commedia, or baited in the manner described in Hutton's work.¹⁰ There are many instances on record of fencers seriously hurt with one of these "baited" weapons. One common precaution was to wear a shirt of chain mail under one's blouse. The mail shirt, extending from the collar bone to the groin, provided adequate protection to most killing or wounding thrusts.¹¹ The difficulty with such body armor is that it would make any form of agility, other than that involved in fence, extremely uncomfortable, if not impossible. As much lazzi involved acrobatics of some sort, a chain mail shirt would prove a hindrance to the performance.

It is my contention that blows to the body with edged weapons were strictly avoided, Brighella's knife proving a possible exception. Rather, the fun was in the "wild blows" away from the body, aimed at the opponent's weapon, which would underline the comic element. Referring again to the early woodcuts, we find the figures threatening with unbaited weapons but not actually coming to blows. Should contact be required however, as with the "lazzi of terror" in which Pantalone is stabbed with a sword and falls writhing to the floor, blunted tips rather than sharpened edges would have been preferred. Padding at the point of contact would have been provided by Pantalone's "pot belly," consisting of wool padding beneath the doublet.

The vainglorious Capitano often takes pleasure, and cowardly refuge, in the punctilio of the duel. Fencing was the subject of intense study and investigation in the age of commedia. In those lawless times one's surest safety lay in one's sword, and some of the commedia players were reputed to be very able swordsmen. In the commedia, the Spanish system of defence based on geometric patterns, with its angles and parabolas and fine shades of meaning, was made much fun of.

⁹ Lee Simonson, The Stage is Set (New York: Theatre Arts Books, 1963), p. 184.

¹⁰ Alfred Hutton, The Sword and the Centuries (London: Prentice-Hall International, Inc., 1973), p. 74-75, 245-247.

¹¹ Hutton, p. 116.

Another aspect of dueling etiquette that came in for ridicule was "giving the lie." This was a system of graduated insults that gave pretext to a duel. Of these, the "lie certain" was the most effective in provoking a quarrel. "You lie in your throat..." were fighting words uttered only in deadly earnest. The next gradation is the "lie general;" for example, "Whoever has said that I am a traitor lies." Last, there was the lie conditional: "If you say I have stolen, now or ever, you lie."¹² These phrases seem ridiculous to us today. In the context of the commedia they proved equally so. One by-play, to serve as an example, was the issue of the "lie certain," which the Capitano would immediately downgrade to the "lie general" when his victim remained unintimidated. Words would fly, of which exchange the Capitano would lose. Bested in wit and physically beaten, he would shout the "lie conditional" as he took to his heels. Later he would explain away his cowardice through the excuse of "not wanting to soil my blade with so unworthy a creature."

A variation on the Capitano mask worth mentioning is that of Scaramouche, or "Little Skirmisher." This character is a diminutive form of the Capitano; a little bully, if you will. He is armed with a long and pointed rapier, with which he "pricked" one and all, especially when they are bent over. Care, however, would have to be taken in the performance of this function. A novice or unskilled Scaramouche with too-keen a blade could elicit strong response from his fellow players.

I conclude this portion of our examination of commedia slapstick with this thumbnail sketch of Scaramouche. Briefly reviewing progress thus far, we've discussed the aspects of commedia dell'arte most associated with slapstick, rather than taking a more comprehensive historical approach. This is in aid of brevity and clarity. We are after all primarily interested in the performance aspects of commedia slapstick. Within these parameters we've discussed the importance of slapstick to the lazzi and masks. Both topics will be treated in more depth in the next discussion. Then we'll examine the lazzi themselves, culled from the collection of scenarios for their relevance to, and use of, slapstick. Some of these examples should be most familiar to us; we find the same "routine" performed in our modern circus some three hundred years later. The focus in the second part will be on techniques of performance and their significance to modern fight choreographers. I hope you will bear with me. The material covered is interesting of its own, and most valuable to modern fight choreography.

The following is a limited Bibliography of titles one might wish to consult on the commedia dell'arte and its origins. I have placed asterisks next to publications which I found were most rich in information. In addition there are the collections of documents concerning the commedia not readily available to students in the U.S. I include them should the reader at some point have the opportunity of consulting them in person. Concerning lazzi:

¹² Hutton, p. 77-78.

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 Pietro Maria Cecchini, **Frutti delle moderne comedie et avisi a chi le recita**, circa 1628, quoted in part in Lea, below.
 Notes of Giovan Domenico Biancolelli, circa 1688, Bibliotheque de l'Opera, Paris.
 Corsiniana Collection, Academia dei Lincei, Rome.
 Circo Monaraca Collection, Biblioteca Cascatense, Rome.
 Modena Collection of the Este Library, Modena State Archives.
 Collections in the Vatican Library.
 Museo Correr Collection, Venice.
 Father Placido Adriani Collection, Biblioteca Comunale of Perugia.

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MAKE SCABBARDS THE EASIEST WAY

by Rod Casteel

Have you ever watched an Errol Flynn movie and wondered "Who built all those great looking epee scabbards back then?" I asked myself this question a couple of years ago because I hadn't heard of anyone building them in recent times. Chances are that many scabbards (and swords) were originals in those days. If this amazes you, realize that the business of making reproductions of such historic pieces did not occur on a grand scale until about twenty years ago.

In fact, a friend sent me a copy of an old Robert Abels catalog recently. Abels was a key source for original historic weaponry until approximately the 1960's. During his heyday in the 1950's you could have purchased original rapiers, circa 1600, for an average cost of a hundred twenty five dollars each!! (Please don't cry...we all realize that the same weapons would sell today for at least two thousand dollars...if you can even locate one that is for sale!). I make this "painful" disclosure only to illustrate how easy it was for the motion picture industry to stock their property departments with original weaponry. As late as the 1960's it was an economical proposition. By now, you may have also realized that a great many of these original weapons were damaged, even destroyed in the process of making movies. This is why such originals are both rare and expensive to obtain in these times. It is also why sword-makers like Dennis Graves and myself are always busy.

Dennis and I keep in touch and he tells me that he isn't really "fond" of building scabbards. I can see why: he's awfully busy, as I am, building swords and daggers. In my opinion, scabbard-making would be a waste of his considerable skills, because I believe he may well be the premier sword-maker on this planet. If you've seen his highly specialized work, I am sure you will agree that his swords and rapiers look exactly like museum originals...except that they are NEW!

In this article you will see how easily you can make up your own respectable-looking epee scabbards. It is the method I use to build scabbards for my stock of rental epees.

The first thing you must do is obtain one or more (used) ski poles. (Yes, I said ski poles. But no one will even know your finished scabbard is basically a "ski pole" unless you tell them!) The best place to find used ski poles is in a second-hand/thrift store. (If you live in Florida, this may be a problem). It is not difficult to find used ski poles for about five dollars a pair. They don't even need to be a matched pair, but they should be straight and not too skinny. Once you have them, remove the fittings at the tips and then measure against the length of your epee. Allow about two inches more than the length of your blade. This is the point at which you should saw off the top of the pole. Use a hacksaw and this will be a breeze. Once cut, try your blade in the hollow shaft of the pole. At this stage a "sloppy" fit is okay.

Next, you will need about a four inch length of slightly oversized steel tubing. The open top of the pole should be able to slide into the tubing with ease. Finally, you need a short length (about one and a half inches long) of quarter diameter round steel stock (this is a solid piece of mild steel stock). The latter must be bent to the

approximate proportions shown in Figure 1. To do this, place this piece in a bench vise, allowing only about three eighths to extend from the vise. Now hammer the extended portion until it is bent at ninety degrees to the portion clamped in the vise. This piece becomes the HOOK for your tubular COLLAR. Its purpose is to prevent your scabbard from falling THROUGH the frog or hanger on your swordbelt. It must be brazed onto the tubing. Only this step in construction requires special equipment: brazing rod and a torch. Even a propane torch will work. Or, seek help from the metals shop or maintenance department of most schools or universities. If none of the aforementioned is possible for you, write to me for a hook/collar assembly. Order one for three dollars plus a dollar for shipping or two for five dollars plus a dollar for shipping. Do remember to include the diameter of the open end of your pole when ordering and send to:

Rod Casteel, 106 Lynnbrook, Eugene, Oregon 97404

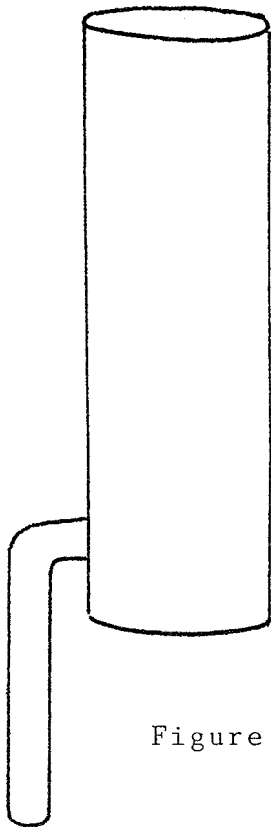


Figure 1

Figure 1

When you have your finished hook/collar assembly, slide it onto the mouth of your ski pole, place open end in bench vise and tighten vise until collar opening is elliptical. It is now friction-fitted to the pole and should not come off. It is best to do this with your epee blade in the pole. Compress with vise until the collar is snug against blade surfaces (hook should point downward toward tip of pole).

Finally, the pole should be covered with thin leather, naugahyde or canvas. The covering should extend from collar base to within four inches of the tip of pole, and the seam should run the length of the pole on the side opposite the hook. The hook faces

frontally when worn. Contact cement works best for attaching the covering and both the inside of the covering material and the surfaces of the pole should be coated. Attach seam of covering (only) to the length of pole (rear side), then carefully wrap and press material around pole until original seam is overlapped. Now, careful cutting of excess material with a razor knife should result in a nearly invisible seam. See figure 2 (black area is the area which should be wrapped).

Now you have a finished scabbard which is no longer a "ski pole." If you have access to a bench grinder with a wire wheel you may want to burnish the exposed tip of your scabbard before attaching the covering or sand with fine emery cloth.

Your finished scabbard should prove more durable than most wooden-bodied scabbards; but, because it is a stiff scabbard, you should practice wearing it and using it until you're sure you won't trip over it. Best of all, you have made it yourself! Didn't I tell you it would be easy?

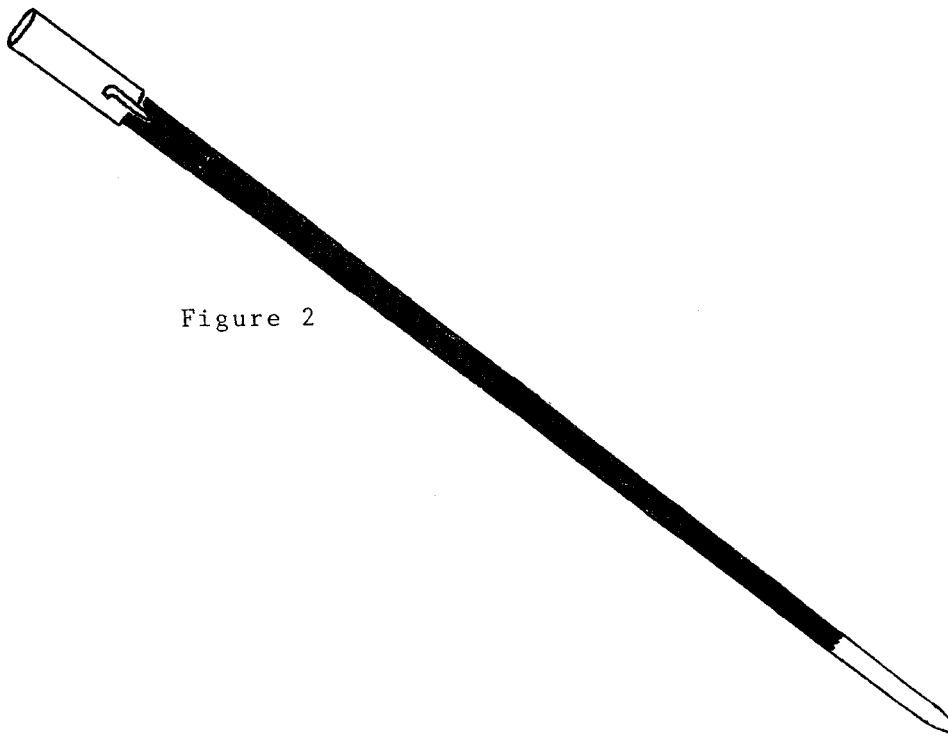


Figure 2

Figure 2

Miscellaneous Notes: Steel tubing can be used instead of ski poles, but then the tip must be closed off and finished. For "Musketeer (wide) epees," use larger diameter ski poles/tubing. To eliminate "rattle of blade inside the scabbard, push a small piece of foam rubber down inside the tip of the scabbard. If all else fails write to me and order a finished scabbard.

SHOGUN MACBETH was performed by the Pan Asian Repertory Theatre of New York. The production was directed and adapted by John R. Briggs with fight choreography by David Leong and Japanese movement by Sachi Yo Ito.

The idea of transposing **Macbeth** to feudal Japan was done by Akira Kurosawa in 1957 in the film **Throne of Blood**. It worked there, but **Shogun Macbeth** is an uneven blending of styles.

In terms of movement it has Kabuki stylization worked throughout (even in portions of the fights) but when these stylized movements collide with the dialogue, it proves very unsatisfactory. Mr. Leong's fight choreography does a better job of bridging the naturalistic west and the Kabuki east.

The murder of Banquo (by Ninja using Katana instead of the correct ninjat-to) is perhaps the least successful in that I wasn't sure if the movement was supposed to be stylized or the combatants were just off mark.

The death of Lady MacDuff was a nice piece of work with the lady instructing her son in Kenjitsu (swordsmanship) with wooden practice swords at the top of the scene. When the ninja attack the lady fights them off with a practice naginata (halberd) until her son is killed and she is distracted by his cry.

The final battle scene is exciting, but the death of young Steward by strangulation that was less than satisfying. I tend to think the actors were just off that night.

The Macbeth/MacDuff fight was brilliantly staged and performed, all the more so because it was performed by the understudies. Compliments to everyone concerned for keeping the understudy fight so well honed.

Mr. Ernest Abuba moves with grace and power as Macbeth and was an all around excellent combatant.

T. J. Glenn

THE WAR OF THE ROSES, a three part adaptation by O'Neill expert Travis Bogard opened in mid February at the University of California, Berkeley. The play, based on **Henry VI, Part I, II and III** and **Richard III** was directed by William Oliver with fight choreography by J.R. Beardsley and supervised by Touche Unlimited, the new theatrical swashbuckling stage combat company in the Bay Area. The production involved some fifteen fights in a company of fifty six performers, an undertaking of considerable magnitude. One San Francisco reviewer noted "the battling houses of York and Lancaster have more bloody sword fights and axings than a 1940's grade B film..." Fortunately rehearsals began in November of 1986 with Touche Unlimited and its staff of trained combatants, Dexter Fidler, Raub McKim and Maggie Taylor, working with the cast of the trilogy on the choreography set by J. R. Beardsley.

On an undertaking of this scale and working with actors who had had no previous stage combat training this was an incredible task in itself. The task was complicated even more by the grey set designed by Henry May on a twelve degree carpeted rake with a step unit in the center. But staging swordfights on a raked stage was nothing new to J.R. who had just come from doing the San Francisco Opera production of **Macbeth**..."just try walking backwards in a ten foot cape on a fifteen degree rake while swordfighting!"

The fights literally exploded onto the stage from the front pits, the wings and over the rear of the stage, filling this otherwise rather grey production with exciting action. J. R. used the stage space well with falls and leaps off the step unit and with bodies rolling down the stage in his well executed and dazzling fights. His kills were ferocious but bloodless which was in keeping with the concept and style of the production with its clean lines and orderly arrangement of scenes.

While well conceived and executed, the fights were not well acted, especially by the principals whose body language revealed none of the struggle, survival or sheer exhaustion of this bloody civil war. Warwick fought off two opponents but showed no intention in his body. He just kept slinging steel and marking time. A few angles revealed technique and knaps were often missing in the hand-to-hand

work. The vocal work in some scenes needed some thought as there was far too much simultaneous grunting. Too often the battle would stop all of a sudden for an actor to deliver his line and far too much time was spent removing bodies from the stage awkwardly and out of character. The entire production lacked pace and timing.

In some instances the fights lacked the "master's touch" and polish such as Warwick being killed on his right side upstage and then rolling downstage and grasping his left side in pain, or a combatant having his leg cut so severely in the fight to disable him and then getting up and adroitly running up the stairs and off stage. Yet in other instances there was revealed some nice shield work and one combatant did a well executed roll downstage off the step unit with a broadsword and shield.

The climax of the third play, "The Black Rose," was the Richmond/Richard fight. Originally conceived as a fight using a burning torch as a diversionary tactic, the fire marshall banned the torch and a cape was substituted instead. A nice piece of action involved the Earl of Richmond stalking his sword-bearing adversary, never taking his eyes off of him. When the moment was right, he threw a cape in Richard's face and grabbed a battle axe. In the action that ensued, Richard with his deadly sword was able to disarm Richmond and, on his follow through after whipping the battle axe out of Richmond's hands, exposed his dagger which Richmond pulled and used to kill Richard thus ending the scene. The eye contact and stalking were convincing and gave the scene a threatening and emotional reality. Richard, played by John Zerbe, also had a marvelous fight with a soldier with a shield and hammer earlier in the show.

The best executed fight in the entire production was that of Jack Cade the rebel, played by Michael Abruzzo. with Aleznader Iden, a Kentish gentleman, played by David Smith. The timing, pacing and intention were there, as well as the vocal work. This was the best acted fight by far, which was probably due to the fact that the two combatants had minor roles in the trilogy and probably spent some time perfecting their one and only fight scene.

Congratulations to Touche for a successful first outing. Since its founding a few months ago it has staged numerous fights

on the West Coast. The two fight masters in the company are J.R. Beardsley and Chris Villa who, under the management of Richard Lane, have in a few months staged **The War of the Roses** at Berkeley, **Romeo and Juliet** at Cal State Fullerton and South Coast Repertory, **Carmen** at Western Washington University, **Bent** at San Francisco Repertory, **Bullshot Crummond** at San Jose, **Macbeth** at the San Francisco Opera, **Cyrano** at Milpitas High School and **The Very Last Lover of the River Cane** at San Jose Rep. They also teach beginning, intermediate and advance classes in their studio in El Cerrito and workshops and residencies up and down the West Coast. Their next major undertaking is a prison break on Alcatraz Island. We have only seen the beginning of this exciting new stage combat company. The best is yet to come.

Linda McCollum

AS YOU LIKE IT at the University of Washington was choreographed by Jeff Klein. Set in a Manet inspired nineteenth century French Impressionist Forest of Arden, this production suffered from the decision to use a student choreographer rather than a professional. Apparently, the expense was not considered justified for the wrestling scene. This curious attitude (they do seem to get the idea that outside help is warranted if attempting **Macbeth**) seems particularly prevalent in the very university acting programs that could benefit most from guest-professional instruction.

The student receiving program credit as "fight choreographer," also played Orlando. While an uncommon practice, choreographers who simultaneously essay major roles must have a high degree of professional skill and training in both areas. More on this later.

In Act I scene i a possible physical confrontation is indicated in the text between Orlando and his abusive older brother Oliver. This scene provides an excellent opportunity to foreshadow the outcome of the wrestling scene in Act II, scene ii. Does Orlando's advantage lie in his youthful strength and agility? Or did the training that he complains has been withheld include physical and martial skills? Here, the confrontation was limited to a modern arm-lock on Oliver that seemed to point to Orlando's martial training.

Charles' first entrance should likewise presage his expected behavior. Typically, his physical size is what we first notice, but there are other cards to be played here to heighten the tension. For example, the trouble Charles has taken to inform Oliver of Orlando's intention to wrestle might bespeak cowardice and underhanded "strategy" (fixing the fight), or an honorable kindness, gentility and professional courtesy. Here, Charles' youth and Prussian military cadet uniform (complete with jackboot heels to click) set up an unpleasant impression of an iron-will to win at any cost.

As for the problematic wrestling scene itself, crucial issues for the choreographer include: the use of mats (are they acceptable in this historical period?) and how to get them on and offstage; Charles' condition after his previous matches immediately prior to the scene; how will Orlando win against all the odds (fortuitous accident? secret move? superior cunning or strength? or perhaps he wears Charles down, Rocky-like, by sheer grit and ability to endure?).

The top of the wrestling scene was considerably slowed by the laborious carting out of modern ten by five foot grey gym-mats. From a safety standpoint, it's prudent to provide a softer surface for any hard falls, but they should not clash with the scene design. An unsuccessful attempt was made to cover this awkward stage business by having Charles and Orlando strip down to shirtsleeves, suspender's, pants and boots.

The first "fall" occurred when Charles offers to shake hands and instead throws the trustful Orlando with a "dirty" move. The second fall begins with both fighters facing off with one arm around the other's neck, and the other arm clamped about the opponent's arm in classic Greco-Roman style. There follows a confusing beat of missed knaps and pulled body-blows (in Greco-Roman wrestling?) and hair-pull spoiled by a premature reaction. Finally, Orlando throws Charles with Judo-style neck-throw (nice flip by Charles), winning the match. Orlando's line "My lord, I am not yet well breathed..." was taken literally.

Since Charles is incapacitated or possibly killed (... "he cannot speak, my lord...") at the end of the wrestling scene there is always the problem of getting his

(usually considerable) body offstage without impeding the continuing scene. An elegant solution was missed here when they failed to "wrap Charles in the mats" and slide or carry him off in them. This, however would lean heavily toward the "dead Charles" interpretation.

The net effect was of a short, unspectacular, but safe wrestling scene. Unfortunately the wrestling "style" conflicted with the setting and was internally inconsistent. The need for outside professional expertise was painfully apparent.

A tough trade-off occurs when simultaneously choreographing and playing a major fight role. A measure of safety is gained, in that you know at least one of the principals required to fight will be skilled and experienced enough to execute your best choreography. There's also the luxury of attending every fight warm-up and performance after opening. However, a compensatory draw-back emerges. The Fight Director can't wear two hats at once. In tech rehearsals when combatants are most in need of concentrated attention as they make last-minute adjustments to the sets, props, costumes, weapons and other performance obstacles (like "adrenaline" or performance nerves), the Fight Director can't be in two places at once, and his focus becomes split. It's impossible to be in the house taking "objective" notes on a climactic fight scene, and simultaneously stay in character for the performance. The switching of roles can be especially confusing and frustrating for the other actor/combatants. You must ask yourself (preferably before they do) "are these notes given as choreographer or as actor?"

Finally, it's an unpleasant task reviewing another Fight Director's work but as they say, someone's got to do it. It allows us to learn new and inventive staging for fight scenes in classic plays and also points out the pitfalls we all must be aware of. Healthy self-criticism can only do us good and therefore it should be as specific as possible. The critical guidelines that form the basis of our critique should be explicitly spelled out.

In closing, I quote another ill-at-ease critic, G.B. Shaw in his **Preface to Three Plays for Puritans**. "It does not follow, however, that the right to criticize

Shakespeare involves the power of writing better plays. And in fact-do not be surprised at my modesty-I do not profess to write better plays."

Tony Soper

**LETTERS TO
THE EDITOR**

TO BE OR NOT TO BE

It has been a good ten years. Since its inception, the Society of American Fight Directors has grown to become an acknowledged professional organization with the ranks of the stage and screen. We are not only a national organization but also an international organization. We have certainly made great strides since 1977 when I approached Erik Fredricksen and Jospheh Martinez about joining with me in founding a Society that represents American choreographers and teachers. I originally patterned the American Society after the British Society in which I was and still am an overseas member. I, like a number of us, had trained in Great Britain because there was nowhere to be trained in this country on a full time basis. My training in Britain was exceptional and I still owe a great deal to my mentors over there on that emerald isle. I especially owe gratitude to my principle mentor, Ian McKay, who had the faith in me to take me under his wing. I believe strongly in acknowledging those who have gone before you and who have had something to do with your training and subsequently your professional career. I will always hold a great deal of love and respect for those who took the time to further my career. I have done well in this business over the past fifteen years and I owe it principally to those gentlemen in Great Britain who saw something in me that encouraged them to encourage me. I thought so much of my principal mentor that I named my son after him. Perhaps my son Ian will one day be a fight choreographer and so we continue on. I would like to think that those members of the Society who have had the good fortune to have trained over here under the many fine teachers that now exist in the United States will acknowledge their mentors. After all, let's not be so arrogant as to assume we developed through osmosis, that we really didn't need training or that it all came quite naturally out of the blue. We owe just as much to those masters of old, starting with the

lies of Marozzo and continuing on, as they have all given us the means by which to pursue this ancient art. It didn't just start in 1977 nor in 1969 but has been with us since man first started fighting with sword in hand, and we must acknowledge those masters of old and the masters of present day.

As I step down as an officer of the Society I want to thank my many friends and colleagues who have helped the Society to grow and prosper-- people like Erik and Joe who have put many years into their craft and this organization-- people like David Leong who has done the most to further the reputation of the Society--people like Linda McCollum who is a godsend to this organization. If it were not for her, I have no idea where the journal would be. To the many other colleagues who have contributed to the well being of the Society, I thank you.

What does disappoint me is the number of colleagues who have not spent one hour at their typewriter writing an article for **The Fight Master**. There are members who have enjoyed the benefits of the Society but have done little or nothing to further the Society. I realize that we all live busy lives but it doesn't take that much effort to contribute to an organization that has given so much to its membership. I would only hope that the membership reconsider their relationship with the Society and try to become a more active part of its infrastructure. This Society is meant for all its members, but at the same time it is the members' obligation to further the Society and not leave it in the hands of a few who do the vast majority of the work. This is one of the reasons I have stepped down as an officer. It is too easy to just sit back and let the same old guard do the bulk of the work. This Society is going to be around long after I and Erik and Joe and David and Linda and Drew and I are gone. We need new blood to further this organization. You need to pick up the fallen banner and continue on into the heat of battle. I know that I have said it before, but I am still adamant about others in the membership getting involved with the inner workings of the Society. If you really don't care about the Society other than using it as a credential to get more work and to further your career, then I suggest you reconsider your place in the Society. The Society is only as good as the

members. Write an article for the journal. Do a workshop promoting the Society. Give lip service to the Society when you are among professional people in the business. I am now pushing much more into the film industry. It is an area where we can make a difference and I expect to have a number of the membership working with me in film projects in the not-too-distant future because the time is right and there are producers out there that want quality. Those who don't opt for quality must be persuaded that we have a great deal to offer the film industry. That is my new goal--to reach the powers in the film industry and thus open up new avenues for us in the business of action. You cannot sit on your duff and wait for others to do the job. You must make the effort; otherwise, you can sit and bemoan the fact that the work isn't coming in and people don't seem to be interested in the Society. I know for a fact that they are interested and we as members of the Society must make ourselves known to the various opportunities that await us. Supporting your Society from within and without will bear the fruits of success for all of us in the times to come.

This is a great Society and we should feel proud to be a part of it. I am not giving up the ghost. On the contrary, I am going upward and onward. Who is going with me? Is it going to be the same old guard? I hope not.

It has been a good ten years, and I leave the Society as an officer, but I intend to stay actively involved. I will not do it all nor will the handful of others who care so deeply about this Society. I want to thank the membership for letting me be an integral part of this organization. I do not regret for one moment the years of effort I have put into the Society and I appreciate deeply the president's kind words in the last issue. I will always be there in the old guard trying to further the Society and its place in the theatre and cinema. All the best to my many friends. I look forward to new challenges as I hope you all do. Adieu.

David Boushey

IN TOUCH WITH REALITY

I am a stage combat instructor who has never been in a real fight. I spend a

major portion of my professional week teaching eighteen to twenty-two year old actors to fake something they have never done and can't do in reality: use a sword! There is some absurdity in this! To redress the first problem on Broad Street in Philadelphia would be foolish and dangerous. To redress the second, I added competitive fencing to the acting curriculum at Philadelphia Colleges of the Arts. I study competitive fencing with Maestro Jim Murray, the fencing coach of Haverford College. I have had an hour lesson once or twice a week for the last five semesters. We study all three modern weapons rotating one weapon every semester. Until I studied competitive fencing, I felt in part a fraud. Until I started teaching competitive foil and saber last September, Jim Murray was my one touch with reality.

I am convinced that a study of competitive fencing will enhance our swordplay on the stage. Two of our best fight masters, Paddy Crean and Ralph Faulkner were competitive fencers before they became stage and screen fencing experts. I don't know which came first in Erik Fredricksen's career, but I remember fencing with him at the McBurney YMCA in New York and never even seeing his weapon coming. He once scored a point off my *passata sotto*.

The general benefits of competitive fencing include point control, footwork, and the real experience of touching and tactics. There is a similarity between the competitive spirit and the simulated aggression necessary to a good stage fight. In two National Stage Combat Workshops and the Irish Creek Academy, I have fought with colleagues who understand point safety but didn't have the hand-eye coordination necessary to place the point exactly where they knew it should go. Good footwork is often neglected in the limited rehearsal hours offered to a fight choreographer. My greatest challenge at the Philadelphia Colleges of the Arts is to get my students to recreate the tactics of a swordfight as well as recreating the choreography. Many of my students are reluctant to thrust on target even when they learn the correct stage fencing measure. Competing with modern weapons addresses these problems. In addition each competitive weapon offers specific benefits.

Ironically the most interesting benefit of the saber is the ability to thrust in third.

This skill is necessary for authentic rapier and courtdword. More obviously one learns to cut quickly and accurately and to master the parries necessary to stop a cut. I also enjoy exploring the advantages and liabilities of the second saber guard, favored by the Italians. High second was used with the nineteenth century cavalry saber. This saber, of course, depended on a *molinea* from the wrist for an effective cut. I was surprised to learn that a *molinea* was still effective for a chest cut from prime in modern saber.

Foil and epee are invaluable for the development of point control. After mastering the four basic foil parries, one can work on the more exotic parries of high septime and prime. A *molinea* from prime followed by a thrust to center is very flashy. Jim also taught me an overhead thrust combined with a volt to the left. This was featured on the cover of **American Fencing Magazine**. My courtdword work has gained much more variety from my study of *pris de fer* (the seizing of iron). This includes opposition, envelopment, and vertical and diagonal binds. Following a counter-third parry, an off-target thrust with opposition provides a very effective stage kill. The target limitation of foil can be imaginatively overcome by pretending to kill an opponent by a thrust to the vital organs only. I find the difference between Italian and French foil very interesting. The Italians parry more vigorously with the entire forearm and the wrist straight. The pommel was strapped to the wrist. The French rely on quicker more subtle parries with the wrist and fingers. The next time Jim and I study foil, I will train with French and Italian weapons. Jim also makes a distinction between moves more favored in the "conversation of the blades" fencing earlier in the century and the extremely mobil fencing favored today.

The epee provides the imaginative swordsman with the simulated experience of a real duel and the opportunity to combine a parry and an attack in one tempo, the essence of rapier fighting. The epee gives the choreographer some very dramatic position: an attack to the toe, for example, countered by a retraction of the foot and a thrust to the right shoulder. The epee teaches the necessity of protecting the sword arm. Is this stressed enough in our choreography? I remember Paddy Crean pausing to make sure his saber

arm was not vulnerable to a stop cut while he moved from fifth parry to a counter-cut. Imagine a relatively human character, forced to fight a duel against his will, trying to end the combat without mortal injury by concentrating his efforts on a stop thrust to his opponent's sword arm.

Modern fencing has put me in kinetic and imaginative touch with the evolution of fencing. The contemporary reveals the historical and vice-versa. I don't think my competitive training has made my choreography any less exciting. It has made it more credible and varied. I no longer feel like I did when I was a sophomore in high school faking a love scene on stage without having ever kissed a girl off stage (that was 1962 and I was socially backward even for those innocent times). Knowing I can touch my adversary, if I chose to, imaginatively closes that critical six-inch safety measure in stage fencing and makes me feel a little less of a fraud. Thank you, Maestro Murray. Touchel

Charles Conwell

VIOLENCE IN DRAMA

Themes in Drama Conferences are held in Europe at the University of London and in North America at the University of California at Riverside. The themes of the conferences vary each year. In 1988 the theme will be Violence in Drama. Papers appropriate to the themes are invited for consideration each year and should be designed for a twenty to thirty minute delivery. Inquiries concerning the conferences should be addressed to:

Themes in Drama
Department of English
University of California, Riverside
Riverside, California 92521

CERTIFICATIONS

LONDON DRAMA ACADEMY

On January 10th at the London Drama Academy in Berkeley, ten actors tested for their combat certification through the Society of American Fight Directors.

These actors had been coached by J.R.Beardsley, and with the exception of the first couple, all showed extremely well. In the case of the first couple, it appears they either misunderstood that the requisites of safety (like good acting) should not be the major focus of the demonstration---or they were under prepared and "marked" the fight in order to get through the event safely. Since none of the other eight combatants seemed to "misunderstand," I am assuming the latter was the case.

Two of the individuals had already been certified previously, thus I will give only those who were new to the test....with the exception of two individuals who received a recommendation.

- 712 John Bonham
- 713 Deborah Steinbuch
- 714 Elizabeth Fendrick
- 715 Stacie Ditchek
- 716 Tara Groce(rec)
- 717 Richard Lane
- 718 Jesslyn Newhall

Dusty James (rec)

The last fight of the day, performed by the two who received recommendation was indeed the highlight. Titled "The Intention," it was well scripted and well acted...and extremely well fought.

Congratulations to Mr. Beardsley for his good work and the overall good work of the majority of the combatants.

Instructor: J.R. Beardsley
Adjudicator: Erik Fredricksen

OHIO UNIVERSITY

On March 16th, I adjudicated Drew Fracher's students at Ohio University in Athens. This seems to be a familiar stomping ground for many SAFD Fight Masters (Patrick Crean, Erik Fredrickson and Allen Suddeth). I am pleased that Ohio University believes so strongly in the value of the certification program and hope that they continue their participation. Even the head of the graduate movement program attended Drew's classes and successfully passed the test. Congratulations to Denise Gabriel for "putting herself on the line and certifying with her own students!"

The most innovative scene of the evening was an adaptation of Genet's **The Maids** performed by Katie Placko and Raleen McMillian. The integration of scene and characters with the fights was superb. And I must say at one point, their adeptness at improvisation was even more impressive. During their court sword fight (performed in corsets and bloomers) Raleen's bloomers accidentally fell down and they expertly created a solution to the problem. After being "commanded" to drop her sword, Katie was told to come over and pull up Raleen's undergarment. A brief rage of jealousy emerging from their pursuing conversation about a mole discovered on Raleen's backside quickly prompted the two to resume their stances and return to action.

Randy Bailey and Pat Anglim received passes with recommendations for their rendition of **Sunday In the Park With Darth**. Though their scene wasn't as catchy as the title, their fight skills were impressive.

Overall, the students' work was clean and safe. Many of them had tempo problems (slow) during a deception phrase of the rapier and dagger fight but their execution of the

court sword fight (third weapon) was impressive----certainly a credit to Fight Master Drew Fracher.

Mr. Fracher continues to pass on his knowledge of stage combat to many aspiring actors. His students always show their appreciation and he in turn is rewarded by their outstanding performances. I hope that more people in the SAFD can follow Drew's example and offer the certification test as part of their students' training.

The following is a list of those people receiving certifications.

719 Jerry Kernion
720 Joe Julser
721 Katie Placko
722 Raleen McMillian
723 Charles Murray
724 Bill Kimmel
725 Paul Anderson
726 Denise Gabriel
727 Kevin McCarty
728 Peter Fitzkee
729 Gretchen Brinker
730 Fran Schultz
731 Randy Bailey(rec)
732 Rat Anglin(rec)

Instructor: Drew Fracher
Adjudicator: David Leong

WESTBETH THEATRE CENTER

I can only say that never before have I collectively encountered such an imaginative, creative and skilled group of theatrical duelists. Under the tutelage of Allen Suddeth they were a rare combination of what one hopes for theatrically; extraordinary skill and great showmanship using utmost safety. I was swept away. March 1986

Recommended:

733 Steve Vaughan
734 Richard Raether
735 T.J. GLenn
736 Gary Bradford
737 Ray Blackburn
738 Richard Clark

Passed:

739 Cynthia Snyder
740 Ellen Altman
741 Michael Kamptman
742 Michael Haupt

744 Dee Meyers
745 David Brimmer
746 Duncan Eagleston
747 Bill Ferrell
748 Jim Gleich

Instructor: J. Allen Suddeth
Adjudicator: Rod Colbin

CALIFORNIA INSTITUTE OF THE ARTS

On December 10, 1986 I had the pleasure of adjudicating the students at California Institute of the Arts under the guidance of Erik Fredricksen. Again this year, there was a substantial leap forward regarding the quality of the overall presentation. The students were for the most part well rehearsed and appeared to be much more aware of "knaps" and "masking" than in the prior year. It was quite evident that Erik had made specific demands on the students and they had reciprocated with a strong showing. As is often the case, some of the students did not pass the certification this time around but I do tend to be a little tough when adjudicating as I feel quite strongly that the certificate can not be given away; it has to be earned! The acting of the fights was very good and some of the scenarios were quite clever. It is evident to me that the students at Cal Arts are as good as they care to be. If they put a reasonable amount of time into the process, they do well. If they duck and sluff they end up failing. The instructor can only do so much when encouraging his student to "go for the gold." Erik is obviously a fine teacher and cares a great deal about his students. I hope that next year if I adjudicate the Cal Arts students that they will all pass. As for this year, the following were certified.

749 Margaret Davis
750 Trish Elste
751 Robyn Rose
752 Allison Cutler
753 Mikki Kuhlman
754 Sheila Brock
755 Suzy Tyler
756 June Grushka
757 Rebecca Davis
758 Michael Edwards
759 Michael Cudlitz
760 Jim Boese
761 David Halladay
762 Kathleen Slattery
763 Perry Anzilotti

Instructor: Erik Fredricksen
Adjudicator: David Boushey

NEW MEMBERS

Paul B. Anderson Jr.
73 Franklin Avenue
Athens, Ohio 45701

Richard F. Barrows, Jr., Affiliate
905 S. Busey
Urbana, Illinois 61801

Gary Bradford, Affiliate
313 East 92nd #1E
New York, New York 10123

Lloyd Caldwell, Friend
340 E. 34th #14G
New York, New York 10016

Christopher Davenport, Friend
18220 36th Ave W Apt #H-2
Lynnwood, WA 98037

Jeffrey Dill, Affiliate
933 Vickers Drive
Richmond, Kentucky 40475

Dexter Fidler, Affiliate
5451 Lawton Avenue
Oakland, California 94618

Fran Shultz, Student
159 E. State St.
Athens, Ohio 45701

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Robert W. Albright
1426 E. 77th St.
Kansas City, Missouri 64131

J.R. Beardsley
761 Colusa
El Cerrito, CA 94530

Brian Byrnes
168 Rivington St. Apt 1B
New York, NY 10002

James Cheatham
241 Carlton Ave.
Brooklyn NY 11205

Rod Colbin
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New York, New York 10023

Charles Conwell
122 Merlin Road
Phoenixville, PA 19460

S. Campbel Echols
20 Buryfields
Guildford, Surrey
England GU2 5BH

Bob Funk
2304 West 7th St. Apt. 311
Hattiesburg, MS 39401

Rhett Johnson
1847-G Vintage Ct.
Marietta, GA 30060

Barry Lambert
664 S. Mason St.
Harrisonburg, Va 22801

Bruce Lecuru
1932 McMillan Ave.
Dallas, Texas 75206

Robert Macdougall
P.O. Box 23078
Seattle, Washington 98102

Timothy Mooney
Department of Theatre Arts
Northern Illinois University
DeKalb, Illinois 60115

Cindy L. Parker
649 Old County Road #331
Belmont, California 94002

Robert Seale
#312-22 Moon Road
North York, Ontario
Canada M3J 2S5

Robert Smith
c/o James H. Smith
Route 1 Box 540
Chantilly, Virginia 22021

Rick Sordelet
11 Liberty Place
Weehawken, N.J. 07087

J.R. BEARDSLEY currently staged fights for **Macbeth** at the San Francisco Opera, **The Servant of Two Masters** at Berkeley Repertory Theatre and **The War of the Roses** at the University of California at Berkeley. Beardsley's newest and most exciting venture is as founder and Fight Master of Touche Unlimited, a professional stage violence company serving the West Coast, offering consultation, choreography, armory, performance and training in theatrical violence.

DAVID BOUSHEY recently acted as stunt coordinator for the feature film **Promised Land** produced by Robert Redford as well as for the PBS television docu-drama **Choices**. He choreographed the fights in the Portland Opera's production of **Macbeth** and Seattle Opera's production of **Othello**. He is presently choreographing **The Three Musketeers** for the Seattle Children's Theatre. His teaching efforts included a master class at Cornell University in Ithaca. He will soon be choreographing the fights in the outdoor drama **Viking** in Minnesota.

GARY BRADFORD is teaching in New York at the Actors Combat Training School (A.C.T.S.) with fellow SAFD members **Allen Suddeth**, **Richard Raether** and **Rick Sordelet**. In February, Gary was elected to serve as Vice President of the New York stunt group, "Fights R Us." Gary's work as a stuntman in the New York soaps for the past three years has enabled him to finally work as a principal actor on the shows **Another World**, **All My Children** and most recently, a five day run on **Guiding Light**. Gary continues to work around the country as an actor for the mystery group, "Murder To Go," also serving periodically as the fight choreographer. Last summer, Gary choreographed and performed the joust at the New York Renaissance Festival, followed by a trip in October to The American Stage Company in St. Petersburg, Florida to choreograph an equity production of **Romeo and Juliet**. This April, Gary returns to The American Stage Company to choreograph a fighting version of **A**

Midsummer Night's Dream, as well as performing the role of Demetrius.

ROD COLBIN, after returning from England in December, performed in the Yale Repertory Company's production of **The Cemetery Club**.

JAMES R. FINNEY was the only non French master invited to the French masters' conference on ancient armed combat in Paris last January. Since then he has directed fights or served as violence coordinator for **Eddie Gein**, **Cannibal**, **Necrophile**, **Murderer**, and **Sweeney Todd** at the University of Iowa and is currently staging the rumble for **West Side Story** at Luther College.

DREW FRACHER took a few weeks off after his stint as a visiting guest artist at Ohio University before road managing a tour of the Pacific Northwest for Columbia Artists Community Concert Series Musicians, Robin and Linda Williams. In May he will choreograph fights for the Outdoor Drama **Lone Star** in Galveston, Texas. In June and July he will stage fights for Louisville Shakespeare in Central Park's **King Lear** and **Macbeth**, for the Charlotte Shakespeare Company in Charlotte, North Carolina. After that he will teach for a week at the National Workshop in Memphis. During August he will be teaching combat at the Physical Theatre Lab held in Athens, Ohio.

ERIK FREDRICKSEN staged the fight sequences in **The Fair Penitent** at the Los Angeles Theatre Center. He recently appeared in "The New Mike Hammer" with Bo Hopkins and in "Divorce Court." Erik will be staging the fight work for **Macbeth** at the Clarence Brown Theatre in Knoxville, Tennessee. He will be at the Colorado Shakespeare Festival this summer choreographing the fights and playing the lead in **Macbeth** and Antonio in **The Merchant of Venice**.

BOB FUNK continues to teach acting and stage combat at the University of Southern Mississippi. He spent last summer at the Oklahoma Shakespearean Festival as an actor and fight choreographer. Along with Patrick Lawlor and Bary Varner he choreographed the fights for **King Lear** and **Story Theatre**. In

the fall he directed **She Stoops to Conquer** at the University of Southern Mississippi.

T.J. GLENN resumed teaching stage combat at Wagner College last fall as well as a weekly commute to Boston to Perform in the King Richard's Faire. In October he appeared as a trucker on **The Guiding Light** and in November appeared as the "Horrible Hordak" in the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade. He produced and performed "Talking Shakespeare" for the Whole Theatre's New Jersey School Program and in January performed Henry in **A Lion in Winter** at the NYU Director's Lab.

DAVID LEONG is now free lancing full time as a director and fight director. He recently completed a residency at Brandeis University and conducted workshops at the American College Theatre Festival, Southeastern Theatre Conference (with **Drew Fracher**, and **Joseph Martinez**) and SUNY-Fredonia. He is currently planning fight sequences for The Pan Asian Repertory Theatre, Champlain Shakespeare Festival, Georgia Shakespeare Festival and The Pennsylvania Renaissance Faire. In addition to his choreographic responsibilities, David is preparing for his master classes at Chautauqua Institution and the National Stage Combat Workshop. His Off Broadway production of **Shogun Macbeth** is planning a revival in the winter of this year for an extended run in Albany and perhaps the JFK Center in Washington, D.C. He recently had an article published in Southern Theatre on "Choreographing Violence in Contemporary Dramas."

ROBERT MACDOUGALL choreographed the fights in **Macbeth** at Indiana University and for **Pericles** and **Getting Out** at the Cornish Institute as well as a short stint in **You Can't Take it With You** at Seattle Repertory. At the University of Victoria in British Columbia he choreographed the fights for **Zastrozz**.

GREG MICHAELS is one of the original cast members of the Universal Studio Tours: "Conan the Barbarian: A Sword & Sorcery Spectacular." He has played the "Double Swordsman" for nearly four years now.

TIMOTHY MOONEY is teaching stage movement, acting and direction for the Northern Illinois University Department of

Theatre Arts. He is also the editor of the Illinois Theatre Association **Theatre Quarterly**. Timothy is interested in helping with the networking process of theatre specialists in Illinois with an obviously strong commitment to stage combat.

RICHARD RAETHER continues to work with **Murder to Go** as well as working with **Allen Suddeth** on the soaps. He will be performing in and staging the violence in **Of Mice and Men** at the Festival Theatre in Wisconsin before assisting at the National Stage Combat Workshop in Memphis.

TONY SOPER is appearing in and choreographing fights for **Major Barbara** at Centerstage in Baltimore. He also just finished the film **Adult Education** for Delaurentis Entertainment Group due out in December. He will be costarring in the upcoming ABC series **The Clinic**.

PATRICK VALA-HAYNES was fight director for an extremely successful production of **Romeo and Juliet** at the New Rose Theatre in Portland, Oregon in the fall of 1986. Also in the fall he choreographed two productions of **Macbeth**, one for the Heart Theatre in Portland and the other at the University of Portland. He was also fight director on Moliere's **Bad Marriages** which opened at the New Rose Theatre this spring.

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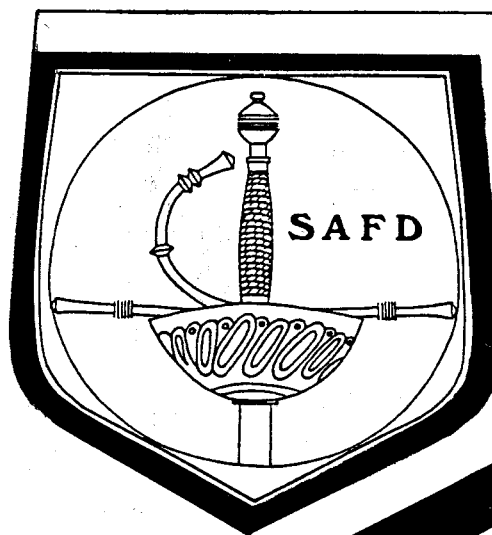
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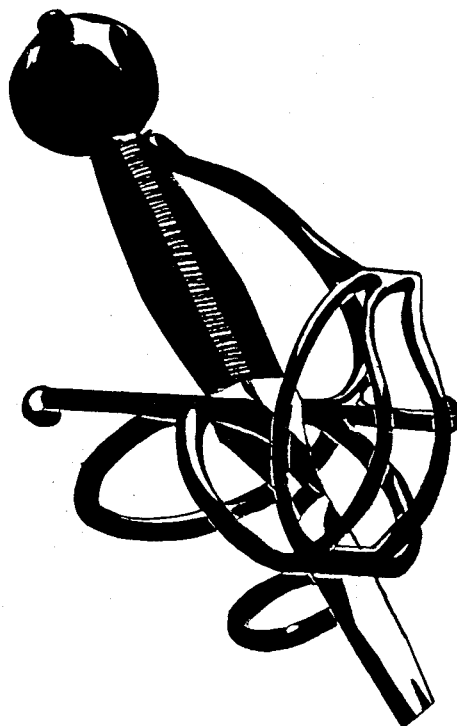


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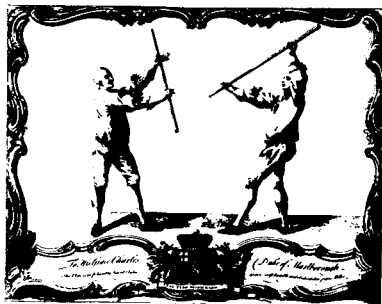
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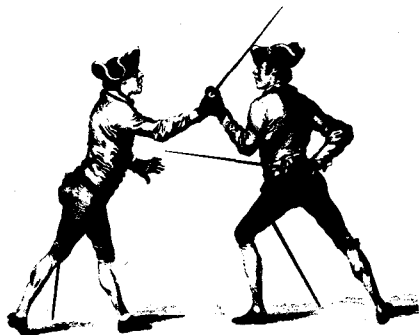
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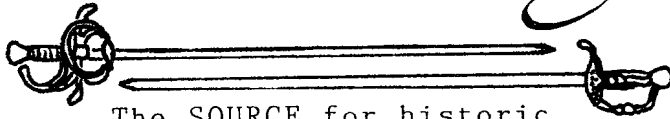
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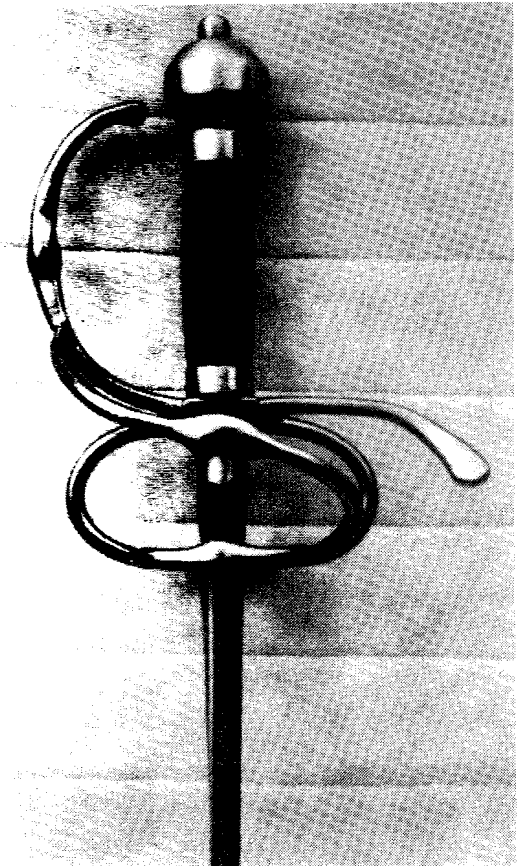
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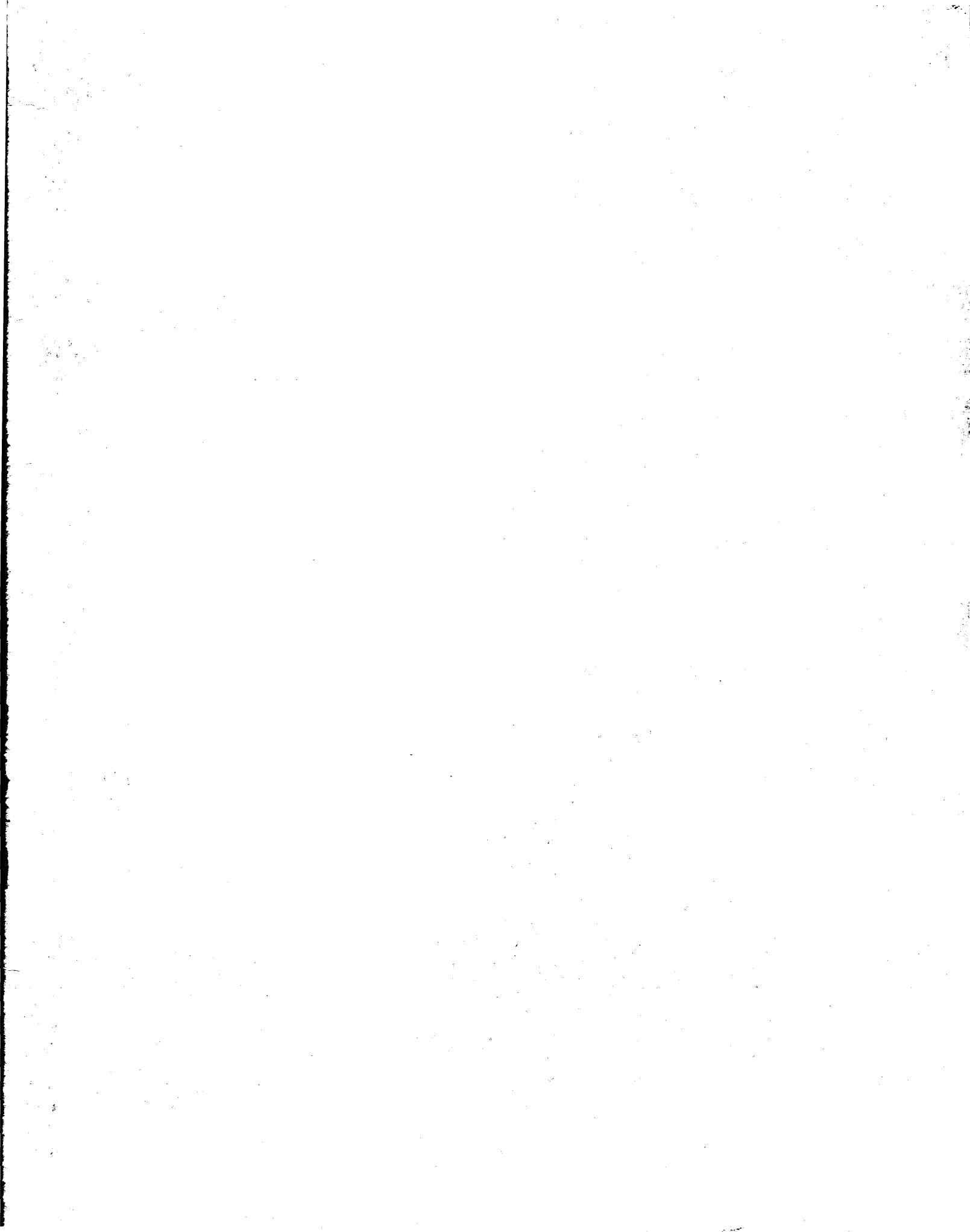
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