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The Society of American Fight Directors

Fall 1991

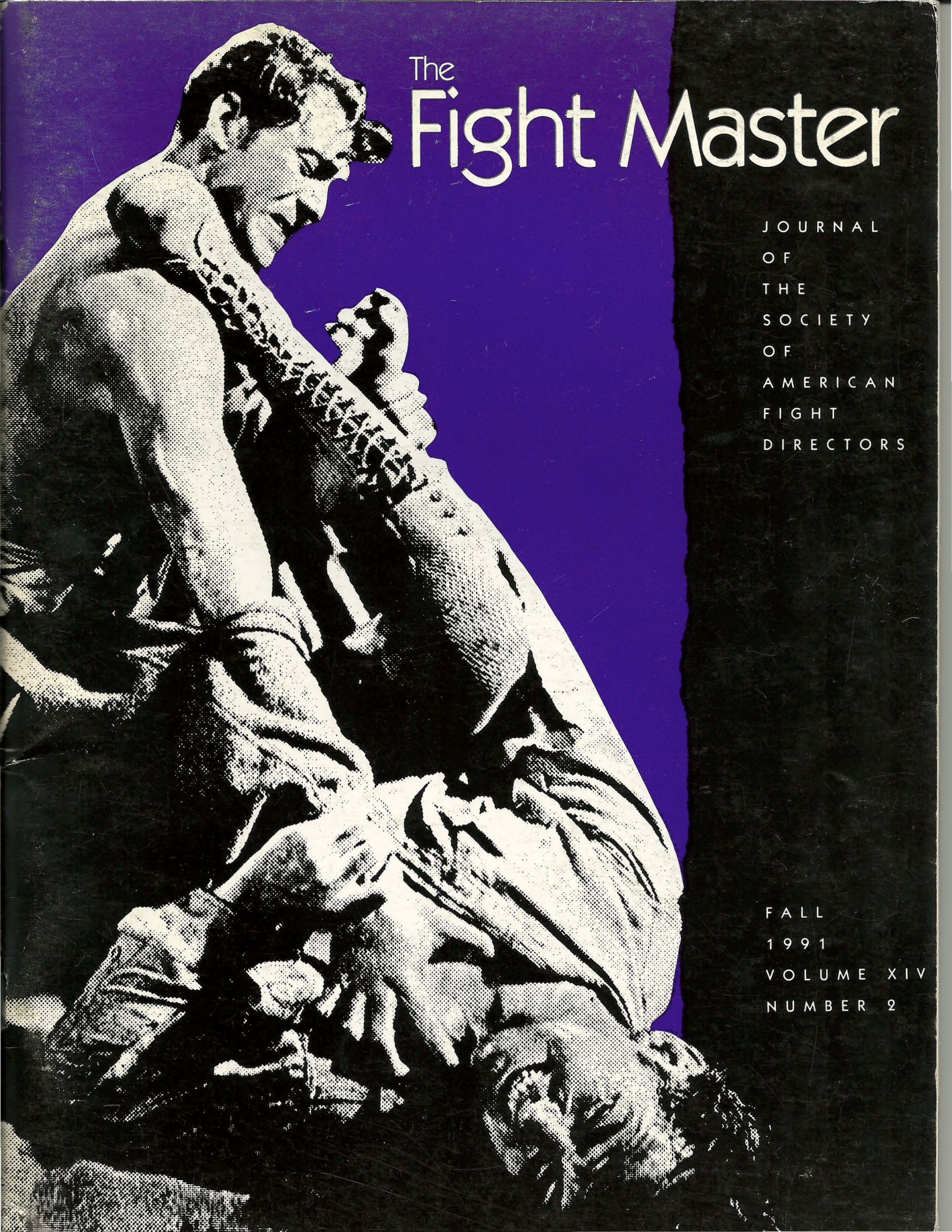
The Fight Master, Fall 1991, Vol. 14 Issue 2

The Society of American Fight Directors

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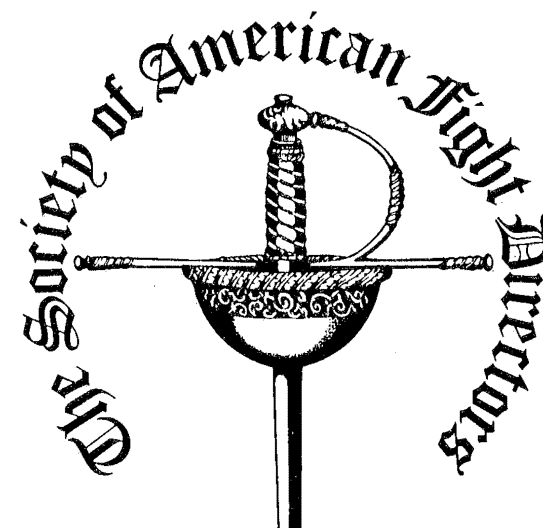
The Fight Master

JOURNAL
OF
THE
SOCIETY
OF
AMERICAN
FIGHT
DIRECTORS

FALL
1991
VOLUME XIV
NUMBER 2

The Fight Master

is a publication of
the Society of American Fight Directors,
a national non-profit organization
dedicated to the art of stage combat.



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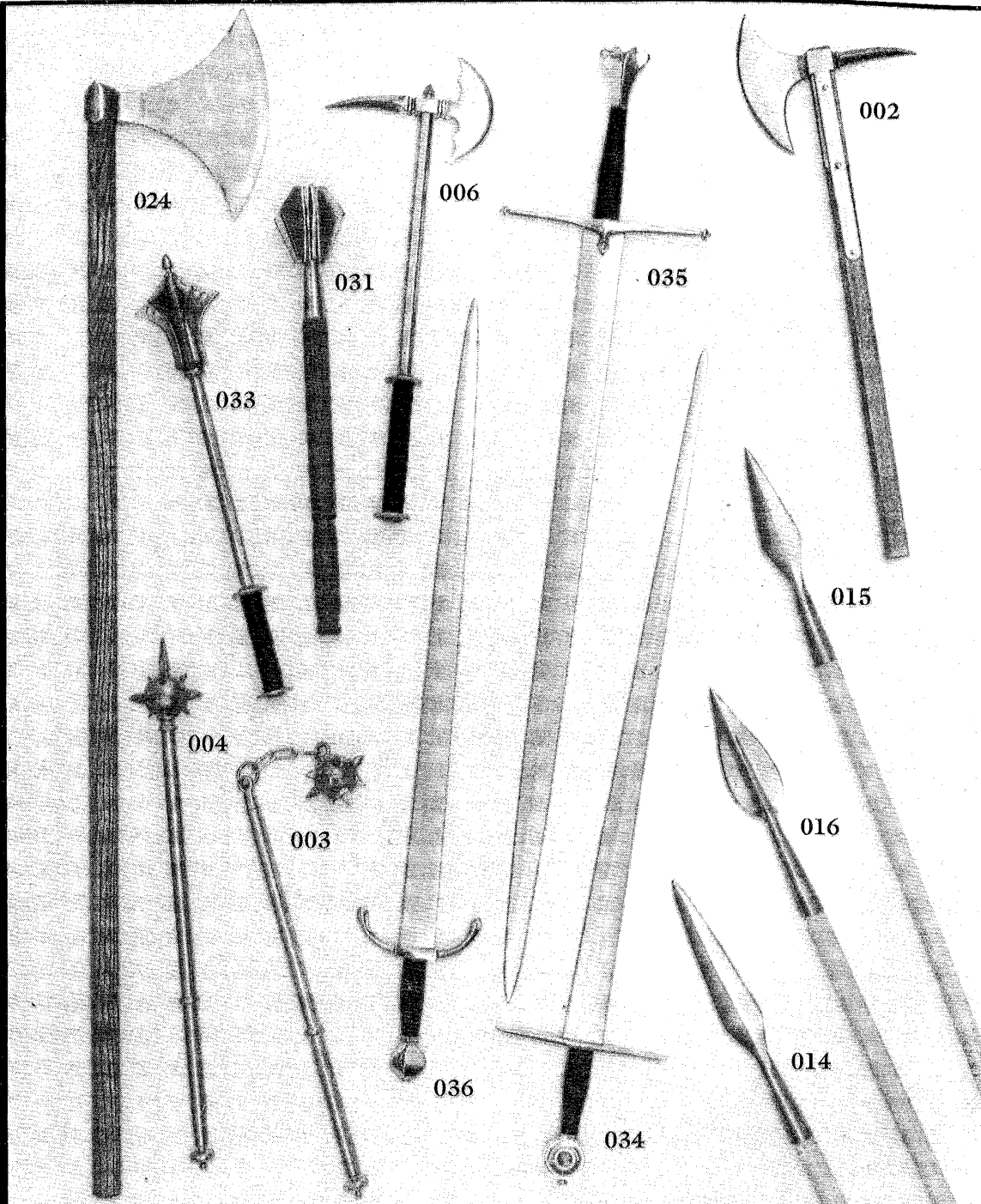
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The Fight Master

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21 WEST MEETS EAST; A WESTERN FIGHT DIRECTOR'S FORAY INTO KABUKI

BY DR. ROBIN MCFARQUHAR

Staging the fights for Japan's highly-stylized Kabuki theatre involves making some major adjustments. The cast was American, the director an internally renowned Kabuki artist, and the production was slated to tour Japan (the first American Kabuki production ever to do so). Meanwhile, the fight director was concentrating on staging battles where swords are never permitted to make contact.

24 ACTOR TRAINING IN THE POLITICALLY CORRECT ENVIRONMENT

BY JACK YOUNG

Ever placed hands on a student or actor in teaching a fight? Watch yourself; because you can bet others are watching you. A sobering look at the hazards of training young actors in the increasingly paranoid atmosphere prevalent on some campuses. "In the vigilance against oppression and harassment, the fabric of trust that must exist between faculty and students . . . can be torn in no time at all."

30 "WHEN THE GUNS BEGIN TO SHOOT"

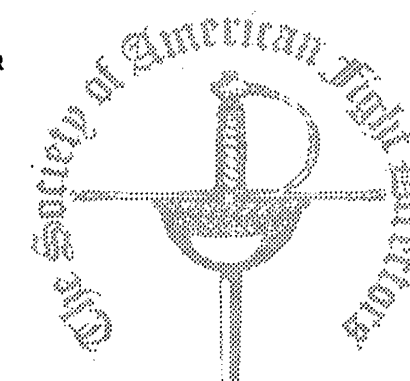
BY RICHARD RAETHER

Concluding his history of early firearms, a fight master takes a look at what happened to both military strategy and personal combat around the world once, "any drunken, illiterate lout who'd joined the army to escape the hangman's noose could spell doom for a seasoned warrior, no matter how brave, noble and skillful—a gun was the great equalizer."

35 BALLET AND SWORDPLAY: CORPS A CORPS DE BALLET

BY ELIZABETH SHIPLEY

"For the first week, it was like we were both trying to learn a new language," reports Chris Villa, choreographing fights that must be danced to music. After witnessing some serious injuries involving swords, the artistic director of the Eugene Ballet brought Fight Master Chris Villa in when it was time to stage the fights in Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet*.



Editorially Speaking



MARGARET RAETHER
EDITOR
THE FIGHT MASTER

FOR SUCH A SPECIFIC SPECIALTY SKILL, STAGE COMBAT IMPINGES ON MANY AREAS OF THEATRE.

And what do you know... this issue of the *Fight Master* demonstrates just how that happens. From Kabuki to the ballet to film, fight choreographers find themselves breaking new ground. Robin McFarquhar recounts his experience as a western fight choreographer staging fights for Kabuki. Chris Villa, meanwhile, sets his fights to music in the ballet of *Romeo and Juliet*. And we introduce a new department in this issue, David Boushey's column on film—"Wrap Time."

On a more ominous note, I particularly want to commend Jack Young's excellent article on the hazards of training young actors in the current explosive Politically Correct environment. It's both scary and sad out there.

Richard Raether (a distant relation) contributes his second (and final) article chronicling the history of early firearms. And, speaking of firearms, please give a careful onceover to Drew Fracher's "Nuts and Bolts" on working with black powder guns. What you don't know *can* hurt you!

On a personal note, I had the opportunity to visit the National Stage Combat Workshop in Las Vegas this summer. Now I know what people rave about; all that enthusiasm and concentration, the striving—not to mention the *sweat*—it's heady stuff. Sitting on the sidelines with my camera, I was boggled by the tremendous physical demands of the NSCW. And, hey—they still scraped up the strength to party at night! It sounds hokey, but it truly was inspiring.

Margaret Raether

The Fight Master

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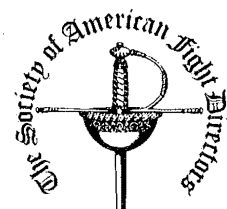
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should be sent to:

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Submitted material may be edited
for clarity and length.



SHAKE-A-LEG

THIS IS THE SECOND SUMMER that I've traveled to Newport, Rhode Island to work with an organization called Shake-a-Leg. Shake-a-Leg's purpose is to build self-confidence for spinal chord injured individuals and give them the courage to live independent and fulfilling lives.

They have a Professional Arts Program each year, culminating in a production. Last year I conducted a stage combat workshop. This year's production was a western spoof and I was asked to choreograph a comedic fight for them. The fight used able-bodied, paraplegic and quadriplegic participants.

At first I thought there'd be a difference in teaching approaches, but I discovered that they did not want me to, nor should I, treat the participants differently from able-bodied students. When a movement was too difficult, they told me (not without first trying) and I either adapted it or taught another move. I'm proud to say that the fight was a major highlight of the show.

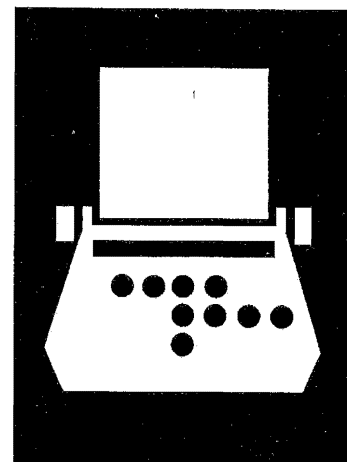
Working with Shake-a-Leg is an incredibly emotional and rewarding experience.

Working with Shake-a-Leg is an incredibly emotional and rewarding experience. It's great to see the art of stage combat used to open up a new world and give so much pleasure to people of all abilities. I'm looking forward to working with Shake-a-Leg again next year.

My other summer project was a firearms seminar with Rick Washburn, president of Weapons Specialists in New York City. He's worked as actor and firearm specialist on numerous films and furnished weapons for over 200 films including *Black Rain*, *Cotton Club*, and *Dances with Wolves*.

READER RESPONSE

LETTERS



expectation due to the combat-heavy nature of the production.

As a matter of fact, the class almost didn't happen this summer because not enough people were interested in paying for the class to make it financially feasible. If, as nearly happened, the class had fallen through, Mr. Ford would be guilty of offering something that didn't exist.

Johnny Pickett
Technical Director
The Legend of Daniel Boone

PRAISE FOR NSCW

I JUST WANTED TO THANK THE staff at the NSCW for all of the great instruction and information you gave me at the '91 NSCW. The education that I received from all of the instructors far surpassed anything I have previously been exposed to.

The entire spirit and energy of the SAFD was uplifting and exciting. The friendly attitude and overall eagerness of the instructors to teach us created a truly magical environment in which to learn. It was a very good time and I will remember it with good thoughts.

David Cameron
Aptos, CA

Ron Piretti
New York, NY

PROBLEMS AT BOONE

THIS LETTER IS TO EXPRESS MY concerns about the combat certification class offered at *The Legend of Daniel Boone*.

At auditions, *Boone* producer Bob Ford promises the availability of an SAFD-approved fight certification class to prospective cast members. This aspect of the job is a major draw, the opportunity to certify attracting several people to *Boone* each summer that might otherwise go elsewhere.

The problem is that Mr. Ford is promising something that he does nothing to implement. The fees for the instructors come entirely out of the pockets of the students. The fee quoted to those auditioning would probably not begin to pay a certified teacher, so auditionees tend to assume some financial backing for the class will come from the producing organization. This is not an unreasonable

ABIDING GRACE FARM

I WANT TO RECOMMEND ABIDING Grace Farm to all SAFD members. After taking the National Workshop in 1990, I decided to continue my training at Maestro Drew Fracher's Abiding Grace Farm.

Not even rain or jet lag could daunt my exuberance about studying privately with a fight master.

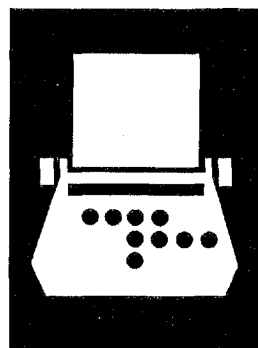
I looked forward to taking a break from the "Seattle Rains" in beautiful Kentucky. Turns out, the "Rains"

LETTERS *continued*

followed me! But not even rain or jet lag could daunt my exuberance about studying privately with a fight master. I was quite nervous about fighting with Drew, however Drew and his family immediately made me feel welcome.

The farm is lovely, and the food is home-grown and home-cooked! Drew and I started with rapier and dagger. Drew got my thighs burning with advance and retreat drills. Then we got to the good stuff. It is wonderful to work with someone who is *much* better than you are; Drew is a marvelous teacher. I was amazed at how he could see my mistakes while fighting himself!

Next we worked on broadsword. I never enjoyed this weapon until I studied with Joseph Martinez. He demonstrated the finesse and excitement of this weapon and Drew continued his good work. Drew gave



me several drills to practice by myself to keep my broadsword fluid.

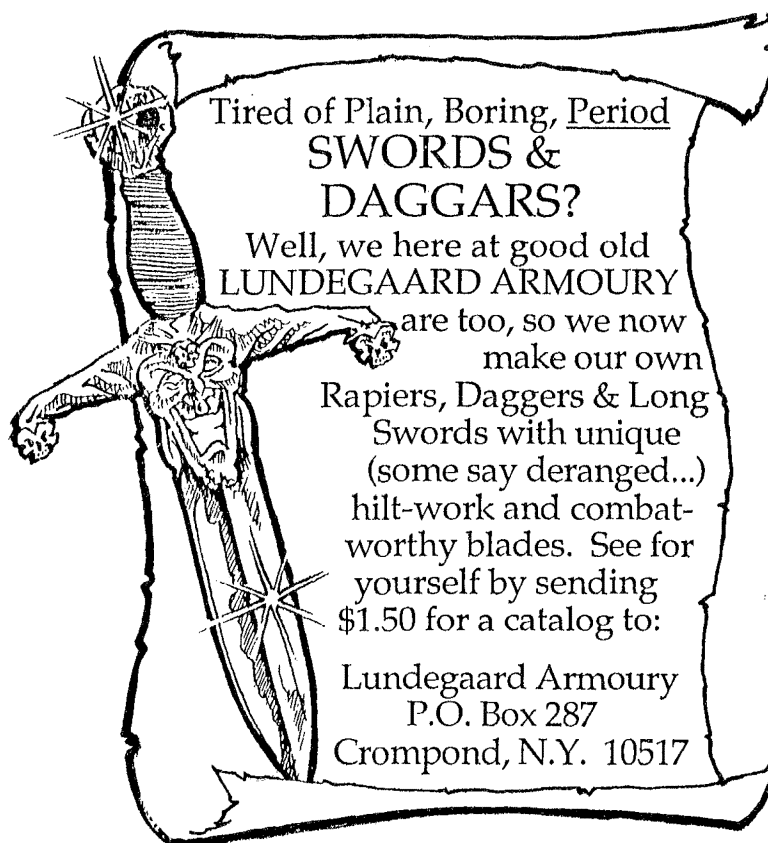
The we moved onto smallsword, spending the most time here, since I had only a little NSCW training. Drew is exceptional with smallsword . . . simply beautiful. I only aspire to his lightness and agility.

I learned so much about my fighting and where I need to go with it, that I cannot begin to write it all. Drew gave me insight and direction. He let me read several of his books, and gave me numerous handouts.

My only regret about the week I spent at the farm, is that there just wasn't enough time. Drew and I were so exhausted after fighting six to eight hours, at night we generally crashed. I had to leave after our last class, but I would have loved to spend that last night with Drew and his family at the farm. Quite a special place to get away, and concentrate on your craft.

Willis Middleton
Seattle, WA

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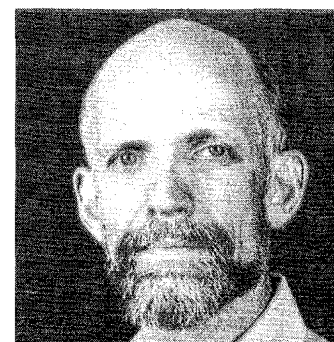
Cover Art
by
Duane Orlemann

Cover art for this issue of the *Fight Master* is based on a great western fist-fight from the 1930 film *The Spoilers* starring Gary Cooper and William Boyd.

The artist is Duane Orlemann, an SAFD member, certified actor/combatant, and, happily for the SAFD, a professional graphic artist.

Duane can be contacted at:
513-961-6400

from the
President



J. ALLEN SUDDETH
SAFD PRESIDENT

MY COMRADES IN ARMS! HERE WE ARE AT THE START OF ANOTHER FALL SEASON, THE SUMMER WORK BEHIND US. I HOPE THAT, FOR ALL OF YOU,

the past few months have been filled with exciting work, and no injuries! Society members have been involved around the country at Shakespeare festivals, summer theatre productions, renaissance fairs, and training camps. To all, a job well done!

Both the national and advanced stage combat workshops were again this year the focus of the society as a group. We're very pleased that this year's workshop was the second largest in our history. This year's workshop also saw the highest percentage of students passed, and/or recommended in the NSCW's history. I think we owe a certain nod of thanks for that to SAFD certified teachers, as many of this summer's students had already studied with them.

The Second Time Around . . .

Something else that impressed me this summer is the fact that students are beginning to return to the national and advanced workshop for further training. People who have already taken these workshops return in order to achieve depth in their training. Because SAFD's policy is to rotate teachers every year, returning students get new perspectives on each weapon discipline. The value of this kind of study is obvious. I meet so many students who, after taking one national workshop, or a series of private classes, believe that their training is over. It's refreshing to see that "instant gratification" is not a concept shared by everyone.

The ATHE Convention

SAFD has been represented in both the academic and professional arenas recently. Erik Fredricksen and I traveled to Seattle recently to attend the ATHE Convention (Association for Theatre in

Higher Education). This is a gathering of all the theatre departments, and faculty from around the United States. I am pleased to report that the Society of American Fight Directors is a recognized force for training and safety in university circles. Many members of the movement faculty, and the acting/performance and directing faculty perceive the SAFD as a legitimate, well-run organization devoted to safety, actor training, and aesthetics.

StageSource

In the same vein, I recently addressed a group of professional directors and producers in the Boston area, through a group called StageSource. These working professionals already had a working knowledge of fights, and fight directors, though there are still many misconceptions. During my one-hour talk, we covered subjects ranging from weapons safety and purchase, how to pick a fight director, what to do about over-zealous actors, and theatre liability.

NSCW Scholarships

I'd like to announce that the SAFD will offer two scholarships in conjunction with the national workshop. The first will be for a movement professional who will lead morning warm-ups for us. We are looking for an individual who is well-versed in movement training, sports medicine, massage, strengthening, or combinations of the above. This person should have a strong theatre background, and be experienced in working with performers. This person will receive a tuition waiver, and housing for the 1992 NSCW.

The other scholarship that the SAFD is sponsoring will be given through the American College Theatre Festival, to an

From the
President

Irene Ryan Award finalist. It will be awarded at this year's finals at the Kennedy Center. It will also include a tuition waiver and housing for the national workshop.

Congratulations, Dan Carter

Before I close this report, I'd like to add my congratulations to this year's Patrick Crean Award winner, Mr. Dan Carter! Dan has been head assistant at the NSCW for six years and, through his efforts, the workshop has run smoothly. Dan is responsible for handling innumerable details of daily scheduling, logistical problems, paperwork nightmares, and interpersonal conflicts.

Dan's efforts are instrumental in getting the final performances off the ground, and then struck, while the rest of us are partying. He is the first one up in the morning, and the last one down at night, with an endless fountain of good (?) jokes in between. So, thank you, Dan, from a grateful Society of American Fight Directors.

Happy 15th Anniversary to Us!

Finally, 1992 will mark the 15th anniversary of the founding of the Society of American Fight Directors! We are planning a series of special events, including celebrations at the national workshop next summer. I hope that many of you will make plans now to join us next summer to share in these festivities. We should all be proud of the work accomplished by our founders, the fight masters, the certified teachers, and the many thousands of certified actor/combatants that have trained with us over the years. Let's keep up the good work!

With Respect,

A. Allenfudde

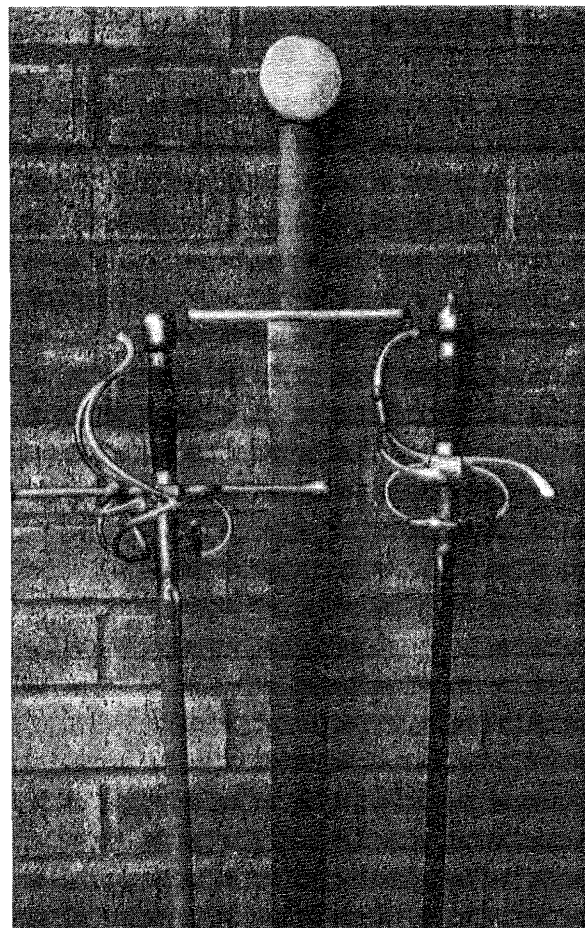
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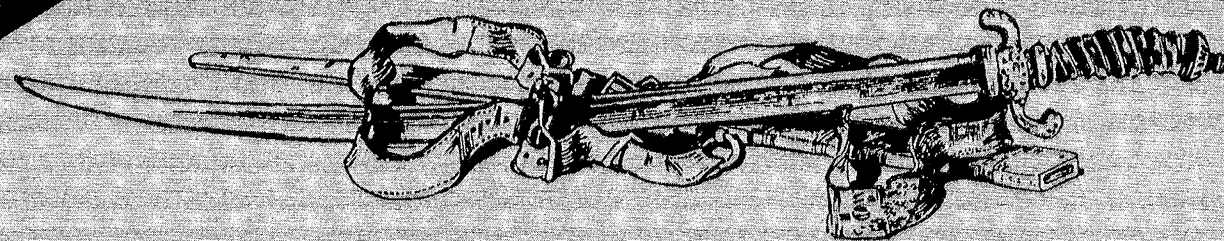
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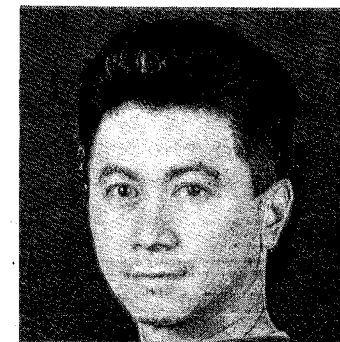
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the NSCW report



DAVID S. LEONG
NSCW
COORDINATOR

1991 NSCW STAFF

ADVANCED WORKSHOP

Fight Masters

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Erik Fredricksen

Teaching Assistants

Ken Smith
Tina Hansen

Journeyman

David "Pops" Doersch

NATIONAL WORKSHOP

Smallsword

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Teaching Assistant, Geoff Alm

Rapier and Dagger

Fight Master Drew Fracher
Teaching Assistant, Susan Eviston

Unarmed

Fight Master David Leong
Teaching Assistant, Dan Carter

Broadsword

Fight Master Richard Raether
Teaching Assistant, Martino Pistone

Quarterstaff

Fight Master J.R. Beardsley
Teaching Assistant, Geoff Alm

NSCW Journeyman

Michael Chin

Head Assistant

Dan Carter

THE TWELFTH ANNUAL NATIONAL STAGE COMBAT WORKSHOP WAS HELD FOR THE THIRD YEAR IN A ROW AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA-LAS VEGAS, JULY 15-AUGUST 2, 1991.

Fifty-five participants from twenty-one states and three foreign countries (England, Denmark, and Canada) were in attendance. The continued success of this workshop, especially in a year of financial recession shows the NSCW to be one of the premier movement theater arts events in the country.

THE DAILY GRIND

The daily schedule began with a warm-up conducted by Denise Gabriel, theater movement specialist at Ohio University. Warm-ups conducted by the same person daily proved to be particularly helpful in preparing the body to meet the varying demands of stage fighting. Each warm-up included principles of movement that applied later that day in class.

As in the past, the daily schedule consisted of two morning 1½-hour classes, a midday lunch break followed by two afternoon classes. Evening rehearsals didn't begin until the second week of the workshop, but once they got into gear, they moved at a frantic pace.

SWORDS FOR SALE

A fine showing of combat-related equipment took place on the first Wednesday of the workshop. American Fencers Supply promoted their new "all steel-hilted rapiers" along with their usual supply of theatrical swords and daggers from Oscar Kolombatovich's collection, as well as from their own.

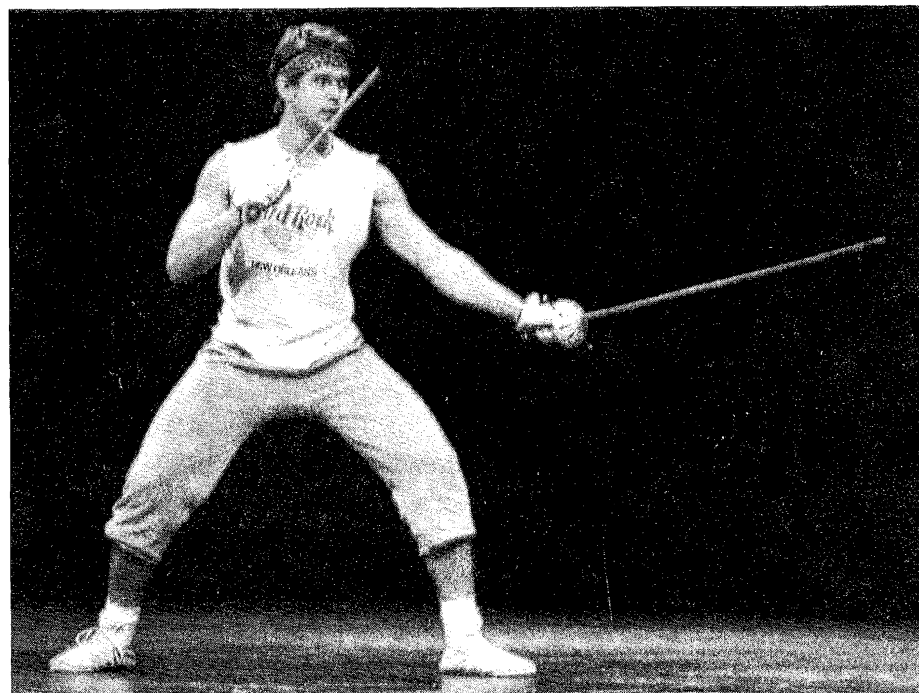
David Doersch represented Rod Casteel's Colonial Armoury with a fine sample of merchandise. He also promoted



The participants in the 1991 National Stage Combat Workshop.



Morning warm-ups at the NSCW.



Ax Norman rehearses for his upcoming certification fight test. (Practice pays off—he passed with recommendation.)

a new broadsword manufactured by Joe Manussier, who attended the national workshop last summer. The design of the hilt and pommel was very sleek and simple and the ringing sound was outstanding.

Gratzner Period Accoutrements was at the NSCW for the first time, showing their line of belts and sword-hangers.

Last, but not least, SAFF Director of Promotional Products Susan Eviston sold the new line of T-shirts and buttons designed by SAFF member Duane Orlemann.

A VISIT FROM CNN

Cable News Network (CNN) visited both the national and the advanced workshops and produced a great five-minute feature on the reemergence of

swordplay in film. It aired Monday, August 19 on Arts and Entertainment and featured clips from famous films, interviews with SAFF fight masters, footage of classroom technique and classes at the Los Angeles Fencing Salle. Try to get a copy, if you can. It serves as a great promotional device for the art of swordplay.

OLD FRIENDS STOP BY

Certified Teachers Richard Lane, David Woolley, Dexter Fidler, and Brian Byrnes each traveled from their respective summer jobs to enjoy a few days in Las Vegas. Certified teachers are always welcome at the annual workshop, however they are encouraged to contact the workshop coordinator well in advance of their arrival.

CANADIAN AND BRITISH ENVOYS

Robert Seale (1986 Memphis workshop) flew in from Canada to study the inner workings of the SAFF and to personally meet with each fight master for the purpose of

creating a Canadian society on the same pattern. In similar fashion, Jonathan Howell, a full member of the British Society of Fight Directors, took part in the advanced workshop to observe our teaching styles and approaches. His goal was to return to his country with a new fund of information to aid in further development of their society.

The staff was honored by the presence of these two individuals and wish to express our gratitude for their interest in learning about our organization.

THE BIG TEST

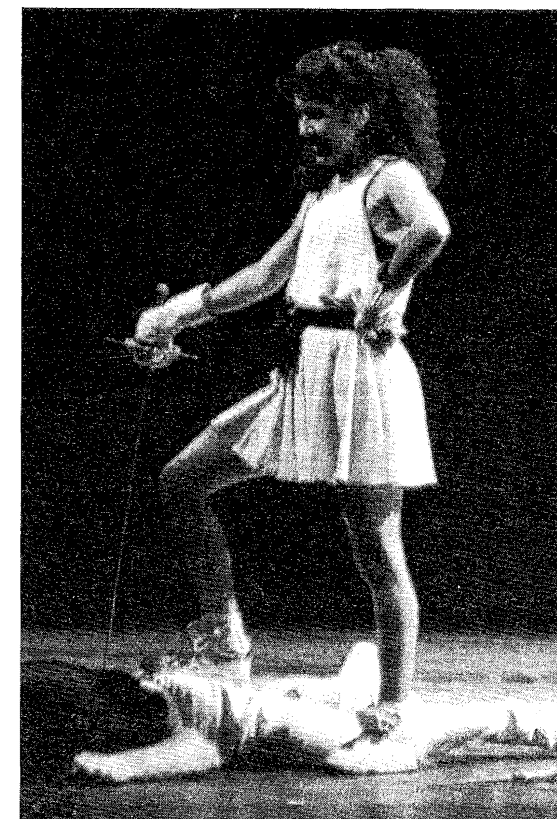
On Friday, August 2, 35 of the 36 students in the national workshop tested for their actor/combatant certificates. Twenty-six students passed and seven earned recommendations. [Detailed test results are contained in "Put to the Test". Ed.] Test scenes were well-written and executed at one of the highest levels seen at an NSCW.

A KNIGHT AT THE FIGHTS

The final, public performance of scenes, *A Knight at the Fights*, took place Saturday, August 3, allowing participants an extra day of preparation. Victoria Anzaldúa and Matt Janicki performed a hysterical scene entitled "The Wrath of Tinkerbell." "The Good, the Bad and the Stupid," showcased the comedic skills of John Cashman and Mike Mahaffey (from the advanced workshop) as Inspector Clousseau and Kato. And a host of scenes adapted from theatrical and cinematic settings made for an entertaining evening.

David Doersch and Dan Carter, along with the rest of the teaching assistants and journeymen, did an outstanding job of putting the show together under the direction of David Leong and J. Allen Suddeth.

Following the performance, the annual awards ceremony honored individuals who made significant contributions to this year's workshop. Dan Carter (this year's head teach-

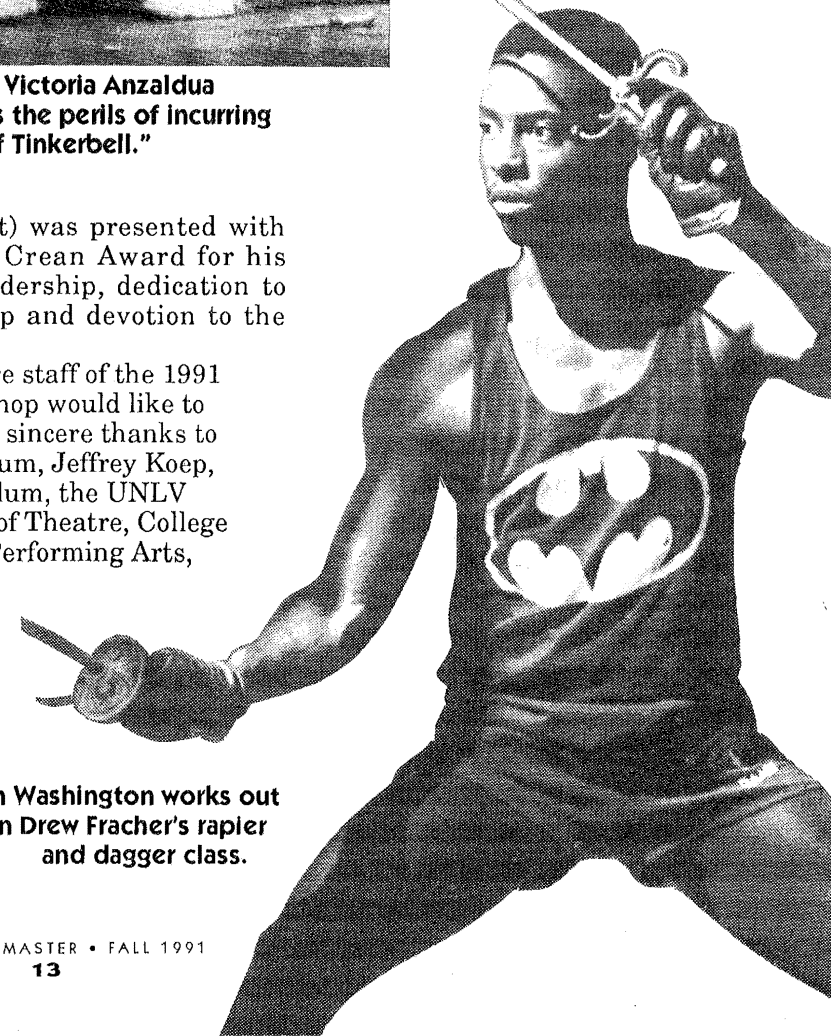


A triumphant Victoria Anzaldúa demonstrates the perils of incurring "The Wrath of Tinkerbell."

ing assistant) was presented with the Patrick Crean Award for his spiritual leadership, dedication to the workshop and devotion to the art form.

The entire staff of the 1991 SAFF workshop would like to express their sincere thanks to Dean McCollum, Jeffrey Koep, Linda McCollum, the UNLV Department of Theatre, College of Fine and Performing Arts, and the Performing Arts Center for their efforts and contributions

Isaiah Washington works out in Drew Fracher's rapier and dagger class.



in making the workshop successful. Thanks also go to Rod Casteel's Colonial Armoury and American Fencers Supply for donating the finely-crafted swords and daggers presented in the awards ceremony.

David S. Leag

AWARD WINNERS

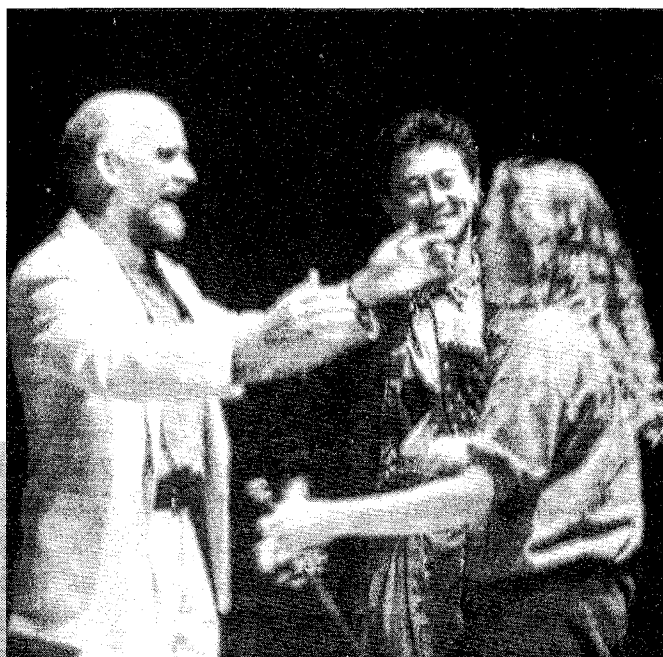
Best Male Combatant-NSCW
John Scheidler

Best Female Combatant-NSCW
Regan Forman

Best Scene-NSCW
Victoria Anzaldúa & Matt Janicki
"The Wrath of Tinkerbell"

The 1991 Patrick Crean Award
Dan Carter

**SAFD President
J. Allen Suddeth
congratulates
Regan Forman,
named the NSCW's
Best Female
Combatant.**



Jubilant students take an illicit dip into a campus fountain to celebrate completing their fight test.



1991 AACW

Mike Anderson
Randy Bailey
John Cashman
Edward Hamilton Clark
Charles Conwell
Kit Davlin
Steven Eliasson
Jean Francois Gagnon
Larry Henderson
Gregory Hoffman
Johnathan Howell
Michael Kirkland
Mike Mahaffey
David McClutchey
Willis Middleton
M.A. Richards
Jane Ridley
Scott Thrasher

AWARDS

**Best Male
Combatant-AACW**
Johnathan Howell

**Best Female
Combatant-AACW**
Willis Middleton

Best Scene-AACW
John Cashman and
Mike Mahaffey
"The Good, the Bad
and the Stupid"

1 991 MARKS THE SECOND YEAR IN A ROW THAT WE HAVE OFFERED THE ADVANCED ACTOR COMBATANT WORKSHOP. THE AACW IS FEEDING THE GROWING INTEREST

in advanced training around the country—and abroad! Along with sixteen students from the United States, we were very excited to have two students from Canada, as well as Full Member of the Society of British Fight Directors, Mr. Johnathan Howell.

TECHNIQUE – ACTING AND FIGHTING

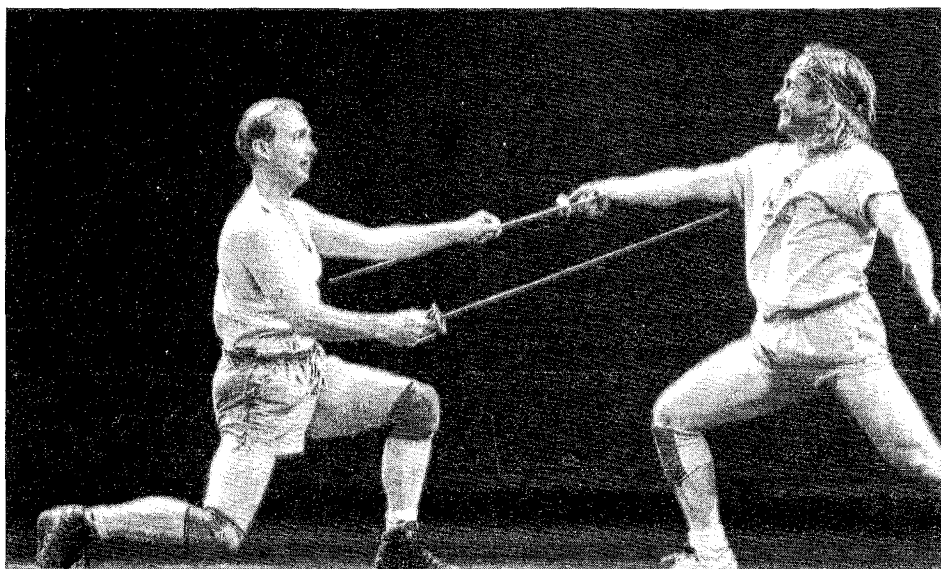
The format of the workshop remains extremely demanding, with the focus on performance, rather than choreography, or teaching. The first week's work was taken up by technique classes, with acting sessions in the evening. The second week

focused on learning the choreography for the five certification test fights, as well as guest classes taught by the fight masters. The final week consisted of dealing with the test material, as well as introductions in advanced techniques such as rapier/cape, rapier/buckler, and rapier/gauntlet. Videotaped critiques were used throughout the three weeks, to enable the students to see their work, and the fight masters to make their comments.

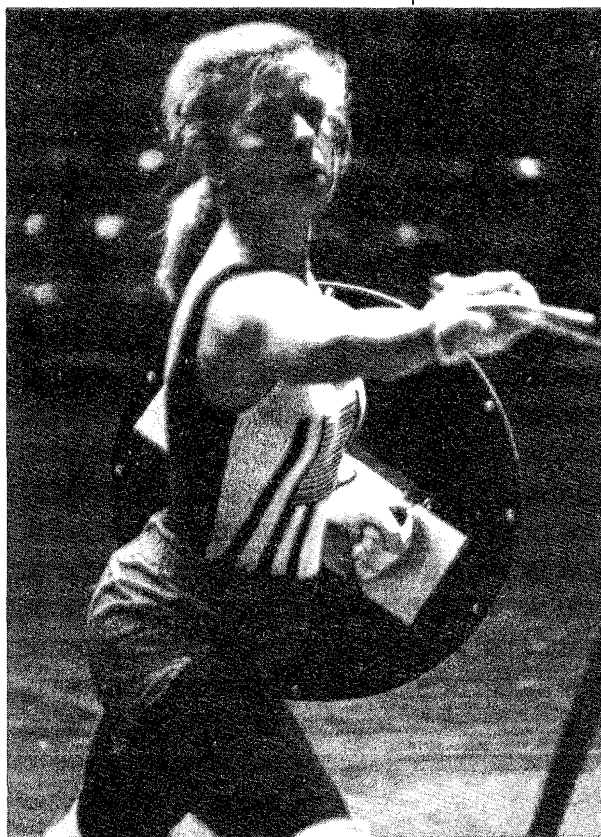
A highlight of this year's workshop was an opportunity for the students to



The participants in the 1991 Advanced Actor Combatant Workshop.



British Fight Master Jonathan Howell, named Best Male Combatant in the AACW, rehearses with partner Larry Henderson.



Willis Middleton, named Best Female Combatant, works out with broadsword and shield.

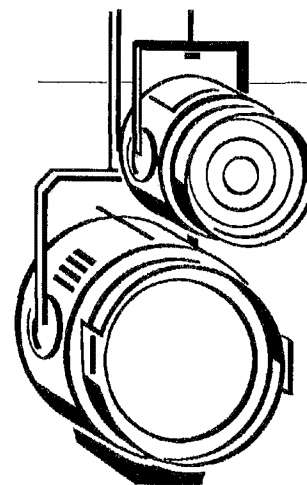
certify in Broadsword and Shield. The SAFD spent thousands of dollars equipping the advanced workshop with these weapons, which held up well, were very popular, and are now available for next year's workshop, which will focus on teacher training.

It is our hope that still more advanced students will take advantage of the opportunity to return to the summer workshop, and further their studies with the fight masters. The current plans call for the next advanced workshop to be offered in 1993. We plan to rotate the fight masters who teach this workshop, so that the curriculum and focus will vary slightly each time it is offered.

I personally encourage students who have previously attended a national workshop, or who have been certified at a university, to consider attending an advanced workshop at some time in the future. You will find the experience fulfilling, demanding, and worth the time and effort!

To all who attended the second annual Advanced Actor Combatant Workshop—congratulations!

J. Allen Fuddeth



Spotlight

on fight master
Erik Fredricksen

ERIK WAS ACTING AT THE GUTHRIE WHEN HE WON A FELLOWSHIP TO STUDY SWORDPLAY.

He had joined the acting company there in 1971, shortly after Michael Langham had taken over as artistic director. Although he had some martial arts background, he had no formal training in fencing at that time. During the course of the season, "I did a small fight and everyone liked it very much. I was encouraged to apply for a Tyrone Guthrie Fellowship, which I got." Erik found himself heading for Stratford to study with some fellow named Patrick Creaan.

It was the beginning of a tradition for a number of American fighters who have trekked to Canada to study with Paddy, a renowned fight director and teacher. Although Erik liked what he was learning, he never considered earning a living at it. In fact, although Erik juggles three hats simultaneously—actor, fight director, and teacher—he never planned three careers. Things just happened...

The choreography began back at the Guthrie, with *Cyrano*, starring Christopher Plummer. "Paddy and I had devised the fight together, then Paddy was offered Valvert in A.C.T.'s production of *Cyrano de Bergerac*. So I was left alone when Plummer came in."

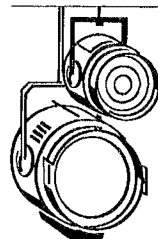
Erik recalls his first brush with star temperament. "It was on the second day of rehearsal for *Cyrano*. I was very nervous, of course, and Paddy was in San Francisco. The first day had gone well. We started to review the first day's work, when Mr. Plummer said, with some expletives, 'This *isn't* what we did yesterday.' In truth, he was having trouble remembering and doing what we had rehearsed yesterday, so he found fault with the choreography.

So I thought, 'This is a major decision,' and politely but firmly (after all, I still had my contract at the



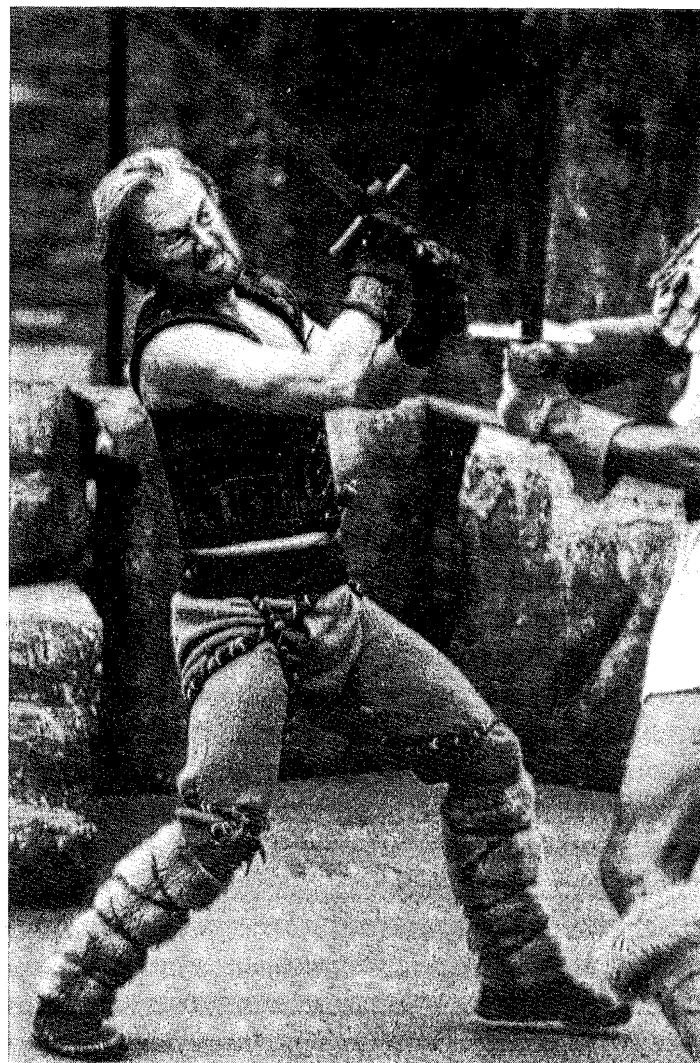
Guthrie) said, 'Mr. Plummer, what we did yesterday is what I have written down. And it's what you said you liked yesterday. If you'd like to change that, we can do that. But, if you want to do what you agreed to yesterday, that's what we're doing now.' (... pause ... pause ... pause ...) Finally he said, 'Well, let's give it a shot, why don't we?' And after that he was wonderful. It worked out well; I got very nice mentions in the *New York Times*. And so I began a sort of parallel career."

Erik's busiest period as a fight choreographer came when he moved to New York in 1974. He began staging fights for Joseph Papp and the seduction of work "right here in town" was difficult to resist. During this period, Erik pursued choreography assignments in earnest for



Spotlight

on Erik Fredricksen



Erik Fredricksen enacting the title role in *Macbeth* at the Colorado Shakespeare Festival.

the first time, though he still primarily earned his living working as an actor.

Cyrano de Bergerac remains Erik's favorite play to choreograph; perhaps his favorite play, period. His love for Rostand's masterpiece is apparent as he cites the play's "heightened language, heightened physicality, heightened emotions." Erik has been involved in three or four productions of *Cyrano*, including one where he played Cyrano and choreographed his own fight—an experience he remembers as "difficult—you always want to give yourself the best moves!" The next time he had occasion to tackle the role, he had Patrick Crean brought in to stage the fights.

In 1981, Erik began what turned out to be his third career. "A fellow who'd run the theater department at Carnegie-Mellon, where I had taught two or three times, saw me play the title role in Ibsen's *Brand* in New York. He took over as chairman of the theatre department at the University of Michigan and offered me a combination teaching/acting position. So that's how the university thing started."

Asked how regards himself, as actor, choreographer or teacher, Erik laughingly protests that unfortunately, these days he's an administrator. Last year, after several years teaching at the California Institute of the Arts, Erik accepted the chair at Michigan, where he had first begun his teaching career. He is content to have his academic career dominant at present. "I know some friends who make their living as teachers, but they are unhappy—they think of themselves as actors. The problem is that they never quite share that part of themselves that could make them extraordinary teachers."

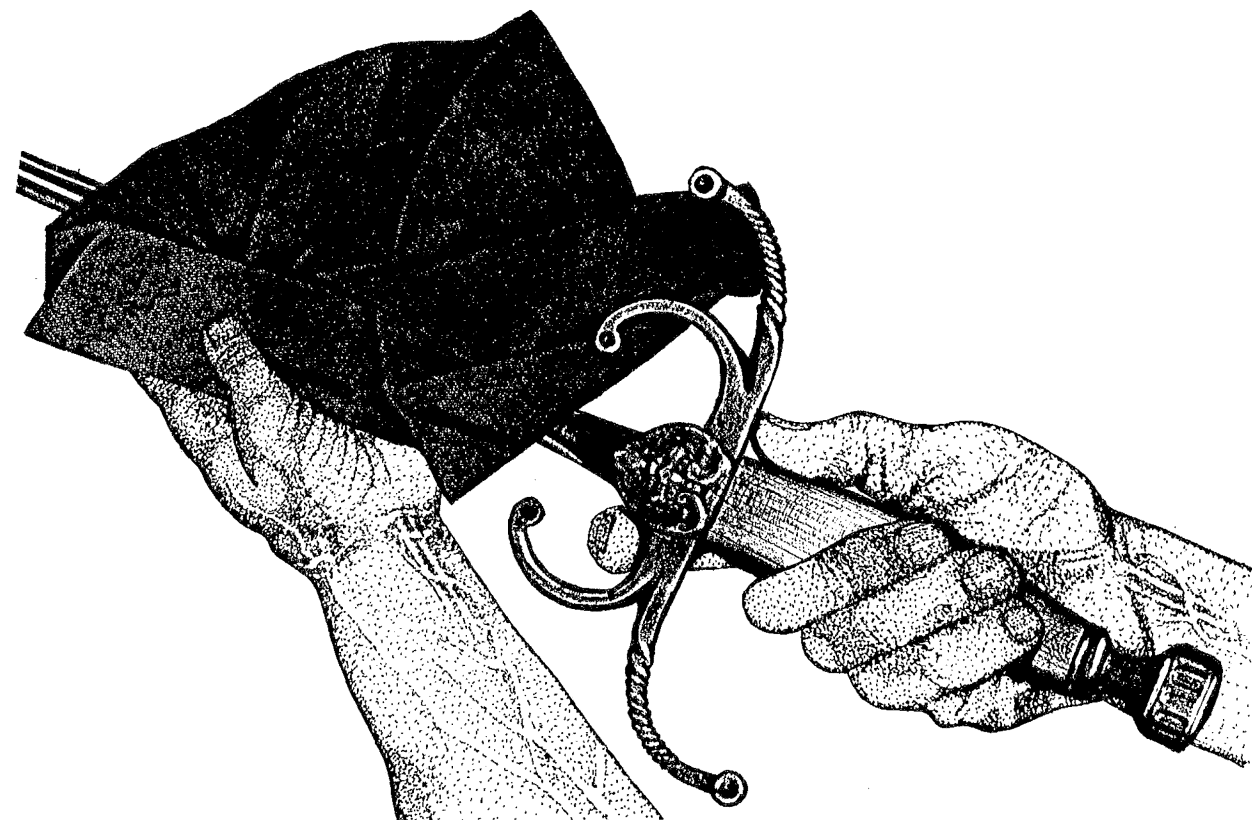
Though Erik scored a considerable success acting in *Shoe Man*, a new play by Jeff Daniels produced this summer at the Purple Rose Theatre, then choreographed at the Colorado Shakespeare Festival, then flew to Las Vegas to teach at the NSCW, he has no hesitation in defining himself, first and foremost, as a teacher, saying, "I think as long as you have respect for what you've done, you have to understand when you move on to a new phase. I continue to act, but I'm primarily a teacher—who acts and choreographs when occasion and time permit."

Erik's current game plan is to keep his nose to the grindstone at University of Michigan for the next three years, sharply limiting his professional commitments as he reshapes his department. After that point, he hopes to be in a position where he will be able to accept occasional professional offers.

Seemingly somewhat bemused at the twists of fate that have landed him in the role of chairman of a university theatre department, Erik notes that the stereotypical chairman loaded with scholarly degrees is something of a myth. "More and more professionals are heading up programs. And when this offer came my way I thought, 'Well, that's a role I haven't played yet.'" There is, after all, nothing extraordinary in casting against type, especially with a multi-faceted character around like fight master Erik Fredricksen.

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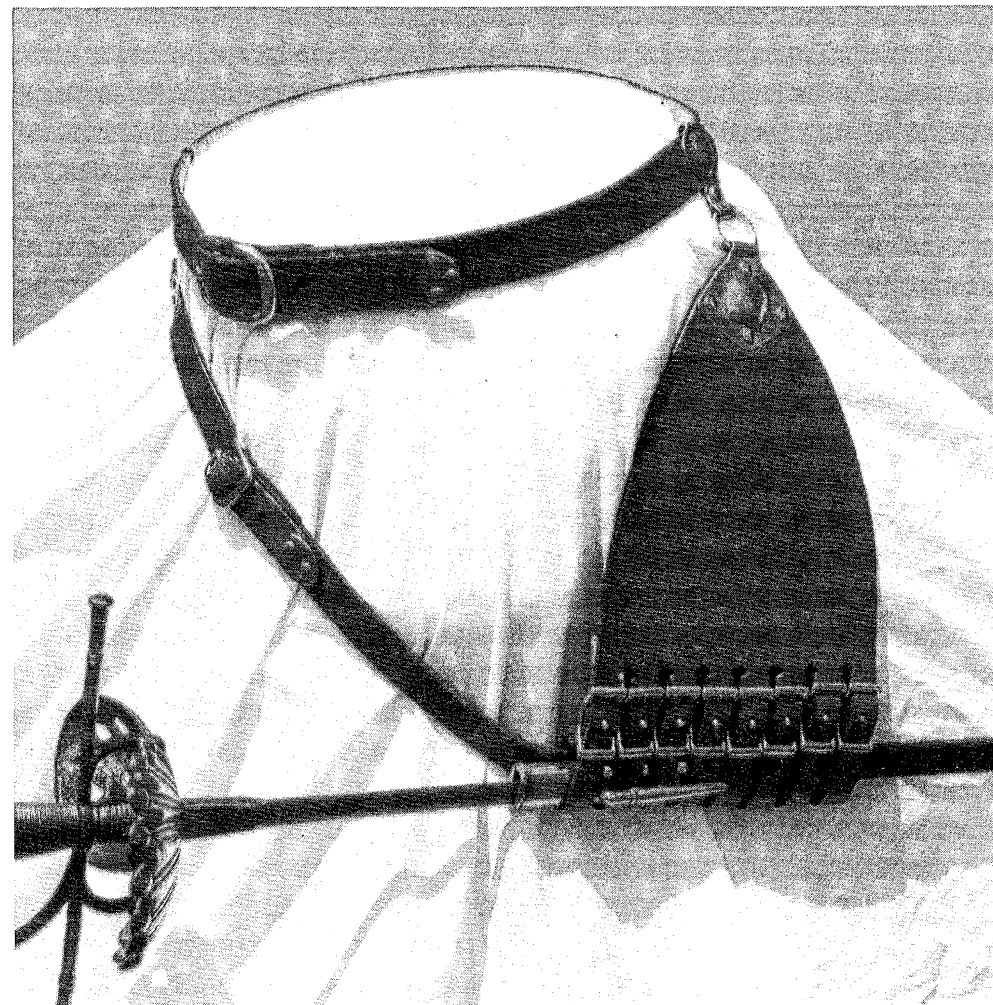


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STAGING FIGHTS FOR A KABUKI PLAY

WEST MEETS EAST; A WESTERN FIGHT DIRECTOR'S FORAY INTO KABUKI

Kabuki theatre presents unique challenges and rewards to the western fight choreographer. A look at new perspectives gained from working in this traditional form of Japanese theatre.

BY
DR. ROBIN
MCFARQUHAR

During the winter of 1990-91 I had the opportunity to choreograph battle sequences for *Achilles: A Kabuki Play* under the direction of internationally renowned Kabuki artist Shozo Sato (Kabuki name Nakamura, Kanzo IV). The production was mounted by the Illinois Kabuki Theatre and performed at Krannert Center for the Performing Arts at the University of Illinois before touring Japan in February 1991.

Shozo's other productions that members may have seen include Kabuki productions of *Macbeth*, *Medea*, *Faust*, and *Othello*. So to say that I was both excited and somewhat overwhelmed is an understatement! Still, the chance to work in a new style with an acknowledged artist in the form was an experience not to be missed.

It was daunting knowing that the director had more skill and knowledge in this style than I was ever likely to have. Further, the production was going to be the first Kabuki production from the U.S. to tour Japan, including a performance at a three-hundred-year-old

Shinto festival in the mountain village of Damine!

Fears aside, I thought SAFD members might be interested in my experiences on this project, given that very few of us ever get the chance to choreograph a Kabuki production, let alone do so under the guidance of a director who has great skill in that particular style of stage combat.



BRINGING KABUKI TO AMERICA

I should explain first of all that Shozo's main goal since being in the U.S. has been to bring Kabuki productions to the American public in a way that they could easily relate to. What this means in practice is that his productions are a combination of "pure" Kabuki and Western ideas of theatre.

Obviously it would be very difficult to produce a completely pure Kabuki production without actors of great skill and training in that technique. In Japan Kabuki actors are literally born into Kabuki families and then spend the rest of their lives developing their technique. In addition, the high stylization could be very difficult for many western audiences brought up on a diet of "realistic" theatre.

Shozo, therefore, has extended the bounds of Kabuki. My job, then, was not to try to produce battle sequences in pure Kabuki form, but rather to create a melding of Kabuki ideas and techniques with my own skills as a western fight choreographer.

My first job was to get an idea of what pure Kabuki stage fights looked like. I read about Kabuki and watched productions on tape that included fight sequences (having seen all of Shozo's productions in the last ten years, I had a general idea of what to look for in the tapes).

KABUKI STYLE VS. REALISM

The major difference between what we might choreograph and what is done in a Kabuki production is the sense of realism. Kabuki is highly stylized, with more emphasis on how things look than on realism.

I found this difficult at the start. Nearly all choreography I had done was concerned with making fights look as realistic as possible. Now I had to create fights that gave the impression of realism, but in a highly stylized manner. The key was to create the "essence" of a fight rather than the realism of the fight.

In practice, this gives a choreographer a certain amount of leeway that we don't usually have. In the major battle sequences for instance, where the main characters were

fighting six or seven soldiers at the same time, the emphasis was not upon how realistic the fight was, but how impressive the main character looked—the soldiers were there to make the main characters look good.

It was difficult to accept the idea that if Achilles had his back turned to three soldiers, they didn't have to attack him even though they had plenty of opportunity. They could be arranged in stylistic poses awaiting

the moment to join the fight, thereby creating an impressive stage picture around Achilles, as he appeared to effortlessly fight them all at once.

EMPHASIZING THE LINE

The second major change for a western fight choreographer was that attacks did not have to be "on line." The emphasis was to be upon the line of the move rather than it actually being on target.



A good example of this are the "heaven and earth" cuts in Kabuki. As the names suggest, these are cuts made way above the head and down toward the ground, cuts that are nowhere near on target. Emphasis is upon creating a pleasing line from the foot through the body up to the tip of the sword. The extension that we work so hard to get fighters to produce is even more important in a style that often resembles dance rather than pure stage combat.

This is not to say, however, that attacks couldn't be on line, only that they didn't have to be. Once again, this was a very hard habit to break. It does, however, free one to create some very spectacular stage pictures.

SWORDS DON'T MAKE CONTACT

Another major change I grappled with is that swords don't make contact, even when parrying an attack. The attack must be pulled so that the swords stopped an inch or so from each other. The sound of the swords clashing is actually made by the Tsukeuchi (Ki) player who sits downstage left in full view of the audience ("invisible" by virtue of the fact that they are completely in black), beating a block of wood with two wooden "hammers."

Historically, the technique of not hitting swords developed for a number of reasons. Kabuki started almost as street theatre; performers could not afford "real" swords and, if they could, certainly wouldn't risk damaging the edge.

Most of the time, bamboo painted silver was used (a technique used to this day in some Kabuki theatres). Obviously, these would not make a good sound, thereby destroying the illusion of real swords. The sound of the Ki is very sharp and crisp and is used to heighten emotional, or powerful moments throughout the play so it is logical to also use it to heighten the sounds of the fights.

The technique of not allowing swords to meet was tough for many actors to grasp. One must make the attack with full commitment, but pull it at the very last moment to avoid contact. The swords we used, in fact, weren't strong enough to

permit contact anyway. They looked good, but one good hard hit would have split the blade.

Given this problem and the fact that, historically, Japanese swordplay doesn't involve a great deal of parrying, the emphasis was on avoiding attacks with big, grand body movements. This was also difficult; how many avoids can one do before doing the same one over and over? This problem was minimized by recalling that movement needn't be completely realistic, as long as it looks good.

FIGHTING IN JAPANESE ARMOR

This particular production also presented some unique problems to be solved. The costumes were a real challenge to deal with. Three main characters fought in full Japanese armor which restricted and slowed their movement a great deal.

They also wore helmets with extra decoration. Achilles' helmet, for instance, had a golden plume of feathers that added an extra two feet of head room to the character. This made it impossible to swing the sword above the head in any kind of horizontal molinello. Blade-work had to be kept out in front of the body at all times.

In addition, the soldiers' costumes had three flags attached to the back of the upper body, extending nearly three feet above the head. Again, all of the movements had to be in front of the body otherwise one risked the sword being caught in the flags!

"KABUKI SOY SAUCE"

Once I choreographed the fight sequences, Shozo would add what he called "Kabuki soy sauce!" This involved adding poses and mies (poses specific to Kabuki) and occasionally changing a movement or adding a new move to get closer to the feeling of a Kabuki fight. His choreography suggestions were almost always concerned with the way the moves were performed rather than the moves themselves.

MOVING FROM THE "HARA"

Movement in Kabuki involves the whole body; moves and cuts all come from the "hara" (center). These ideas pertain to western stage combat as well, but perhaps not to the same extent. One must extend moves in a

dance-like fashion while remaining true to the intent of a deadly fight.

Work on this show forced me to pay strict attention to the "look" of moves more than ever before,

without losing sight of the fact that the audience still needed to believe they were watching characters in deadly combat. I found the experience both difficult and rewarding—I am sure it's influenced the way I choreograph western-style stage combat.

THE "LOOK" VS. THE LOGIC

There's been much discussion in the *Fight Master* over whether fights should remain true to real logic or whether one can choreograph moves that would never work in reality, but look good. My experience working on a Kabuki show forced me to look at that question from an entirely different perspective. I learned that if it made "good theatre," it really didn't matter if the move was logical. It's how the move is choreographed and performed, rather than whether it could actually work.

Some Kabuki fight work I have seen on tape is absolutely the most spectacular stage combat I've ever seen anywhere. It's as if by not aiming for complete realism one can create more "realistic" fights as long as there is sufficient regard to the technique of the style.

Working on a Kabuki production was a wonderful experience for me. I am fortunate to be able to learn from my mistakes, as I'm re-staging the production for the People's Light and Theatre Co. in Philadelphia for their tour to Cyprus and Hungary.

Dr. Robin McFarquhar is an Associate Professor of Theatre and Head of Movement Training in the Professional Actor Training Program at the University of Illinois.

... this show forced me to pay strict attention to the "look" of moves more than ever before...

ACTOR TRAINING IN THE POLITICALLY CORRECT ENVIRONMENT

Problems posed by attempting to appease the "politically correct" movement are turning actor training programs into potential mine fields.

BY
JACK YOUNG

In the past year, there has been a large debate over "PC," or politically correct, behavior. In various articles written on the subject, Duke University has been at the forefront of controversy over "multiculturalism," "deconstructionism," and feminist studies, some of the main topics of the PC movement.

This past year, many of the theoretical debates became actual problems in the work of Duke's drama program. While these problems aren't specifically related to stage combat, they go straight to the heart of basic ideas of acting training. They are the result of trends that have caused discomfort in areas of theory and scholarship, and serious difficulties in the highly personal, hands-on work of developing young theater artists in a college environment.

Many concepts of the politically correct movement are ideas with which most theater practitioners would agree. Degrading comments or gestures against women and minorities are not to be tolerated. Expanding opportunity to all members of society is to be encouraged. In theater, this takes the shape of efforts toward development of minority playwrights and of color-blind casting.

"Readers' response theory" holds that a piece of text is meaningless until a reader brings his own perspective to it; the important thing is not what the author wrote, but how the reader interprets it. This theory (with perhaps more respect to the playwright) fits within the realm of theater, where a script isn't a production until it's been put on its feet by the director, design team and performers.

However, the events and issues that exist in the majority of plays entail presenting characters and situations that

are not politically correct—rape in *A Streetcar Named Desire*, gay oppression in *Bent*, antisemitism in *Merchant of Venice*, depiction of slaves or black servants in *Showboat*, *Little Foxes*, and *A Member of the Wedding*.

Getting young actors to fully commit to the circumstances in a play has always been difficult. It can be said that the purpose of acting training is to teach the artist to commit completely to the moment: physically, emotionally, spiritually, imaginatively, viscerally.

Now, with the emotional and political violence with which these PC theories

are pursued, the constant search for oppression and harassment in any discourse, and the ease with which loaded terminology ("racist," "rapist," sexual harassment") is used against anyone who does not immediately agree with the position taken by PC advocates,

greater blocks are created between the actor and the moment. And, in the vigilance against oppression and harassment, the fabric of trust that must exist between faculty and students in a theater training program can be torn in no time at all. Such was the case in Duke's drama program.

THE WRATH OF THE OPPRESSED

The first incident occurred because of a mainstage production. A faculty member worked with underground comic writer Robert Crumb to develop a new musical, *R. CRUMB COMIX*, at Duke. The director had already developed a production based on Crumb's character "Mr. Natural" for a short run at the Hip Pocket Theater in Ft. Worth, Texas, and was eager to develop a show using more of Crumb's work.

In the vigilance against oppression and harassment, the fabric of trust that must exist between faculty and students . . . can be torn in no time at all.

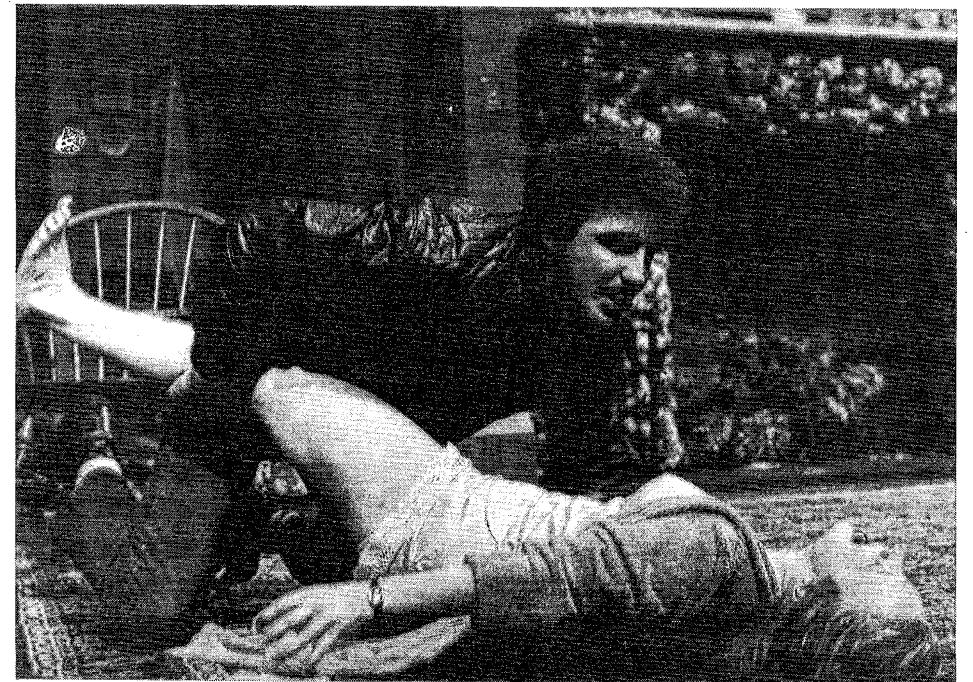
Like much of the director's work, the final product was in a strong commedia style, which also kept with the broad strokes Crumb uses in his work. What started the trouble was the reaction of another drama faculty member to the portrayal of a gay character. (This professor has written several plays dealing with gays, and is about to have a book on gay drama published.) The professor objected to the student's portrayal (including a lisp, a limp wrist, a "swish" walk and a scarf) of what the professor considered a stereotypical "fag".

The professor placed a five-page letter on the call board to put his views forward and make his anger known, but when he was invited to openly discuss his points with the program's chair in a weekly meeting of the whole program, he sat close-mouthed, arms folded, legs crossed, and refused to participate.

Despite denials of any "personal battle" between himself and the play's director or the program's chair, he made a very public display of a personal distaste. He adopted an aloof manner that was far from treating the matter as a "friendly argument," as stated in his letter.

Like many members of the PC movement, he made no room for conciliation or community harmony. Students, witnessing this behavior in a professor, soon found similar tactics to their advantage when they were disgruntled. The professor's reaction against what he perceived as "theatrical fag-bashing" is only a short step from pronouncements other schools have made against all manners of expression.

A December 24, 1990 *Newsweek* article chronicles how the University of Connecticut ordered a student off campus, forbidding her from entering dorms or cafeterias, for posting a sign on her dorm room door. The sign allegedly listed "people who are shot on sight," including "preppies," "bimbos," "men without chest hair," and "homos." Pressure of a federal lawsuit changed the university's position and she was allowed to move back.



Emotionally and sexually-charged scenes like this, from a college production of *Extremities*, are fraught with danger in the politically correct environment, where students are often advised that any situation that makes them feel uncomfortable can be labeled harassment.

Photos courtesy of David Leong

THE "ISMS" OF OPPRESSION

Webster's defines the word "oppressed" as "to keep down by the cruel or unjust use of power or authority; rule harshly; tyrannize over."

Politically correct thought takes that definition a bit further.

The January 21, 1991 issue of *New York* magazine noted that Smith College circulated a list of categories of oppression, to help students realize that they may be oppressed without knowing it. Along with familiar categories such as racism and sexism, lesser known "isms" were defined.

CLASSISM

Oppression of the working-class and non-propertied, by the upper and middle class.

AGEISM

Oppression of the young and old by young adults and the middle-aged.

ABLEISM

Oppression of the "differently abled"

LOOKISM

Oppression of those who do not fit standards of beauty/attractiveness).

The Duke drama professor's combativeness and unwillingness to work for a healing of the community is reminiscent of the fractious gay organizations at Oberlin College (mentioned in the 2/18/91 issue of *New Republic*), whose disagreements led to the breakup of the "Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Union" into four distinctly separate and combative groups: Gay Men's Rap Group (white gays), Gay Men of Color, Lesbians Be Loud (white lesbians), and Zani (lesbians of color).

EXACTLY WHAT IS PERMISSIBLE?

In this combative environment, serious questions arise about what may or may not be permissible to discuss in a class or in a rehearsal. Is the teaching of any sort of standard speech really "classism," (see box left) as it could imply that those people with regionalisms in their speech were inferior?

Would the teaching of commedia dell'arte be an example of "ageism" against the elders and professors? (There were complaints after Duke Drama's production of *A Servant of Two Masters* from members of the "Duke Learning in Retirement" program about the portrayals of the Pantalone and Dottore characters.)

In productions that may have homosexual themes (from *Merchant of Venice* to *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* to *Design for Living* to *Bent*), how do teachers approach the matters of what could show a character as "gay?" And how does one think of honestly preparing students for the real world of film and television while constrained by the threat of "lookism?"

These questions can seem absurd, like something straight out of a Kurt Vonnegut short story. However, when a recent article in *Southern Theater* profiled "manly" vocal characteristics, along with exercises to help young males attain such characteristics, the Duke acting faculty thought twice about posting it on the pro-

gram's bulletin boards, because of possible accusations regarding "value judgements" on manly/unmanly characteristics.

GUARDING AGAINST HARASSMENT

With the matter of *R. CRUMB* still in the air, a letter surfaced from a student to the administration accusing the acting teachers of being "soft" on sexual harassment. The letter referred to an Advanced Acting II class in the spring of 1990. Students were comparing stories about their experiences at the Southeastern Theater Conference (SETC), where they did the annual cattle-call audition for almost a hundred theater companies from across the country, then had callbacks with individual companies' directors.

Two women had said they were made uncomfortable in a callback by a director's comments, and the adjustments he gave them for their monologues. Several other women said that the director in question had made similar comments to them, but that they didn't think it was any big deal.

The professor tried to find out just what had happened. As the only thing that the troubled women could come up with was that they were made uncomfortable with things the director said, the professor repeated his advice that none of them should ever stay in any audition situation where they were uncomfortable, but to leave immediately. However, because the teacher, and all the rest of the

acting faculty, had not come right out with a condemnation of this director, they were accused in this letter of being "soft" on sexual harassment. (The accusing student was unaware of checks the acting faculty made after hearing of the actresses' distress, including consulting with actors and actresses who had worked for the company or the director over the past five years.)

Later, during rehearsals for the

A letter surfaced . . .
accusing the acting
teachers of being "soft"
on sexual harassment.

fall mainstage production, a student was having trouble with her work on a leading role. The student had always been successful both in the classroom and onstage, but, because of illness and other personal problems, was not succeeding immediately as she always had. In rehearsals she had to be given notes and reminded of blocking factors repeatedly.

She decided that these problems were not her fault, and went to the chair of the program to complain that the director was "harassing" her. The chair's informal investigation with other cast members didn't turn up the same view of events as the actress; to her friends outside the production, the student complained that the chair "wasn't doing anything" about her complaint. Her friends passed her sentiments on to some of the administration.

AN INVESTIGATION IS ORDERED

Given second-hand complaints about the chair's "lack of action" in this case, and the acting faculty's "softness" in dealing with the summer company director at SETC, Duke's University Counsel directed the Provost's Committee on Sexual Harassment to conduct a general investigation of the entire drama program. (This Committee is mandated by Duke's Academic Council, and the committee members are appointed by the Council.)

The actress mentioned above was surprised when the committee called her in to ask if she wanted to file sexual harassment charges against the director. Though not happy with her treatment in the show, she emphatically denied any wish to file any charges at all, much less ones of such a damaging nature. She was greatly distressed that the matter had been blown out of proportion, and that others had volunteered her to the committee without her permission or knowledge.

Other students, male and female, were called in by the committee members to be questioned. One female drama major was called to be asked if she wanted to file charges. She had been upset over the fact that she

had been advised to wear more eye make-up for the SETC auditions. (The student's face tended to wash out in large spaces. She had red hair, very fair skin, and light brows and eyelashes.)

Like the previous actress, this student's displeasure was brought to the Sexual Harassment Committee by other students. Committee members repeatedly led her through the reasoning as to why she might be able to use this matter as grounds for charges of sexual harassment against her teachers. The student explained to the committee that she felt her teachers were only trying to help her, and denied any wish to file charges. She ended up ignoring further calls from committee members and their requests for names of other students whom they could question.

With the knowledge that a powerful committee was investigating all facets of the drama program, the trust between faculty and students withered.

One student, concerned for her craft teacher, told his supervisor that the teacher had referred to the men's penises in class; she was worried that someone would report the teacher, and she hoped the supervisor would warn him.

A student's complaint about the way push-ups were done in class, phrased as, "He treats women different from the men," became quite ominous in the closely-watched atmosphere.

At the end of the spring semester, a female drama student confessed to a professor that she now saw his holding her hand, during a moment of crisis three years before, and a kiss on the forehead he gave one of her friends after the opening of a show two years before, as a "pattern of harassment," "if not sexual harassment, something close, and just as dangerous."



The classic commedia dell'arte character, Pantalone, whose appearance in a college commedia production prompted cries of ageism from an alumni association.

The explosion of the seriousness of these elements from the everyday concerns of a disgruntled actress and the wearing of make-up to implications and accusations of sexual harassment may seem surprising to outsiders. However, there are events going on in the academic community and the outside world that put what normally would be considered good advice and efforts to console into a dangerous context.

A LAWSUIT OVER MAKE-UP

On the matter of makeup, professors from other disciplines could compare the drama student's case to the recent suit against Continental Airlines by a female employee over whether she could be required to wear make-up in her job. They would not be aware that there is a great difference between an employee being fired from her job and a student being advised about an audition, or that what "reads" across a two-foot wide ticket counter does not "read" across the forty feet between the stage and the auditors.

In addition, the concentration on date-rape on college campuses has stretched the words rape and harassment to include any type of contact or discussion of sexuality. The *New York* article relates how Swarthmore College has put together a training manual stating "acquaintance rape . . . spans a spectrum of incidents and behaviors ranging from crimes legally defined as rape to verbal harassment and inappropriate innuendo." It further cites, according to journalist Stephanie Gutmann of *Reason* magazine, that surveys are coming up with higher rates on date-rape not because there has been an increase of rape on campus, "but that the word rape is being stretched to encompass any type of sexual interaction." Gutmann discovered a study by Catherine Nye, a University of Chicago psychologist, that found "43 percent of the women in a widely cited rape study 'had not realized they had been raped.' In other words, they were victims of false consciousness."

In a world of reader's response theory, where it is not what happened

that matters, but how the person interprets what happens, any verbal or physical communication becomes fraught with danger.

New York magazine quotes Andrea Parrot, a professor at Cornell who has promoted the idea of the date-rape epidemic, as saying, "In terms of making men nervous or worried about overstepping their bounds, I don't think it's a bad thing." These kinds of guidelines and the "awareness" training that universities are putting together can cause problems in the venues of actor training.

Duke University has published a pamphlet on sexual harassment that states "Sexual harassment introduces a personal element into what should be a sex-neutral situation." While very few would disagree with this as a guideline for classes

Many young actors end up confronting aspects of themselves they do not like; many are cast in roles that are frightening to them, because the roles demand that they be ugly, or pretty, or violent, or sexy or just themselves.

How can a teacher work through these fears when students have already been told that any discussion of matters of sexuality that makes them uncomfortable is grounds for charges of harassment?

in chemistry or accounting, under it the conducting of an acting class is next to impossible.

At some point, acting students have to come to grips with the fact that something of themselves, something personal, ends up in their work. A great majority of the students in actor-training are between the ages of 18 and 28, still a time of personal discovery in terms of self and sexuality. Many young actors end up confronting aspects of themselves they do not like; many are cast in roles that are frightening to them, because the roles demand that they be ugly, or pretty, or violent, or sexy, or just themselves.

How can a teacher work through these fears when students have already been told that any discussion of matters of sexuality that makes them uncomfortable is grounds for charges of harassment?

Many fundamental parts of vocal and physical training depend on the teacher's manipulation of students' bodies, guiding with hands to help with alignment, breath support, and the like. These manipulations often leave students initially uncomfortable or scared. How long can a teacher talk about the work in an attempt to gain the students' trust without "protesting too much"? How can a director challenge young actors to live up to the characters in a play, and support them when their confidence is shaky, when those efforts later come back as harassment?

At Duke, the professors often gave class time to discussion of scary elements of the training; in production, the directors encouraged young actors into very strong work; three years later a female student realized that her professor had held her hand. As much of PC literature is designed to do, she'd had her "consciousness raised." And the trusting environment necessary for good actor training dried up.

FALLOUT

In the previously cited *New York* article, John Taylor tells the story of Professor Stephen Thernstrom of Harvard. Professor Thernstrom, the winner of two Pulitzer Prizes, an

editor of the *Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups*, and one of the foremost scholars on American race relations, taught an undergraduate course on the history of race relations called "Peopling of America." In 1987, several anonymous articles in the *Harvard Crimson* accused him of "racial insensitivity" in the teaching of the course.

When his accusers finally came forward, they presented Thernstrom with a six-page letter. In it, he was accused of being a racist for calling "Native Americans" by the racist name "Indians," for referring to an "Oriental religion," for assigning a book that stated that some people regarded affirmative action as preferential treatment, and for endorsing a point of view that the breakup of the black family is a cause of persistent black poverty.

Thernstrom was informed that these words, opinions, and historical approaches were racist. Given the nature of that accusation in his line of work, he considered taping his lectures in order to protect himself; he then realized he would have to tape any out-of-class discussions of the material as well. Finally, rather than deal with the matter at all, Professor Thernstrom dropped the course. It is no longer taught at Harvard.

THE INTIMIDATION OF DISCOURSE

A frightening thing, this intimidation of discourse. For Duke Drama, it has meant the cessation of Alexander work, cutting off any acting process work that gets close to strong emotion, leaving the door open in all conferences with all students (even the most private or personal), and tiptoeing around any references to sex or violence in rehearsals.

The *New Republic* reports an incident at Oberlin College where two African-American women were asked to leave a local bakery's outdoor eating area because they were eating food bought at a competing establishment. Their reaction was to initiate a boycott against the "racist" establishment, continuing the protest even after the owner apologized to them, saying "We'll

stand out here every day until a public apology is made to Oberlin's entire black community."

Newsweek reports, at Madison last fall, an alcohol-free "All-American Halloween Party" was cancelled because the Student Senate felt that masked students might use their anonymity to poke, pinch or make rude comments to women and minorities.

How does a teacher handle the difficult matters in theater with this kind of hair-trigger atmosphere? How can a teacher challenge students to find within themselves the Stanley Kowalski, the Hedda Gabler, *The House of Blue Leaves*' Bananas or *Biloxi Blues*' Wykowski without offending the student, or any of the rest of the class, or anyone that might hear the conversation secondhand?

There is always disappointment in the posting of a cast list; who dares do it, with threats of "racism," even "lookism" lurking over the shoulder?

WHAT DO WE DO NOW?

Again, many goals that are part of the PC movement are admirable. It is in the ferocity of their pursuit that problems have arisen. The splintering of groups in an effort to stand out from the majority has led to vitriolic separatism. Readers' response theory does not allow room for trying to imagine where the creator of the work is coming from, but stays stubbornly grounded in the reader's point of view.

The focus on making sure people watch what they say and to be on guard against others only serves to make greater estrangement within the community. In the efforts to protect against harassment, the method often used is intimidation, with labels like "racist," "sexist," and "homophobe."

Ironically, it is in acting training that real "sensitivity" can come about, where a sense of community can be developed. In discovering who the persons are that they are playing, actors discover elements of themselves: their sexuality, their politics, their prejudices, their vulnerabilities, the things that make them part of the human race. Sometimes they

affirm things they already knew; sometimes they discover things about themselves they have hidden away, or never knew existed.

In this process, the students can become aware of the things that make them like other people, including those who may seem different because of their race, or religion, or sexual orientation. While it can be argued that a Caucasian from Seattle will never really know what it is like to be an African-American from Alabama, or a Puerto Rican from Brooklyn, or a person of the opposite sex from anywhere, part of what it means to work as an actor is to figure out what that kind of existence is, through imagination, personal experience, craft and talent, and make that character come to life.

That is the art of the actor. In actor training, the possibility exists to create the kind of awareness and sensitivity that the PC movement seeks. Actors can discover strong aspects of human existence—aggression, prejudice, lust, domination—where the dangerous ramifications of those aspects are held back by the nature of the fact that the actors are "playing" within an environment of trust. It is seriously troubling to see that trust suffocated by the stifling measures that have given the PC movement its notoriety.

Jack Young is an SAFD-certified teacher of stage combat and is assistant head of the drama program at Duke University.

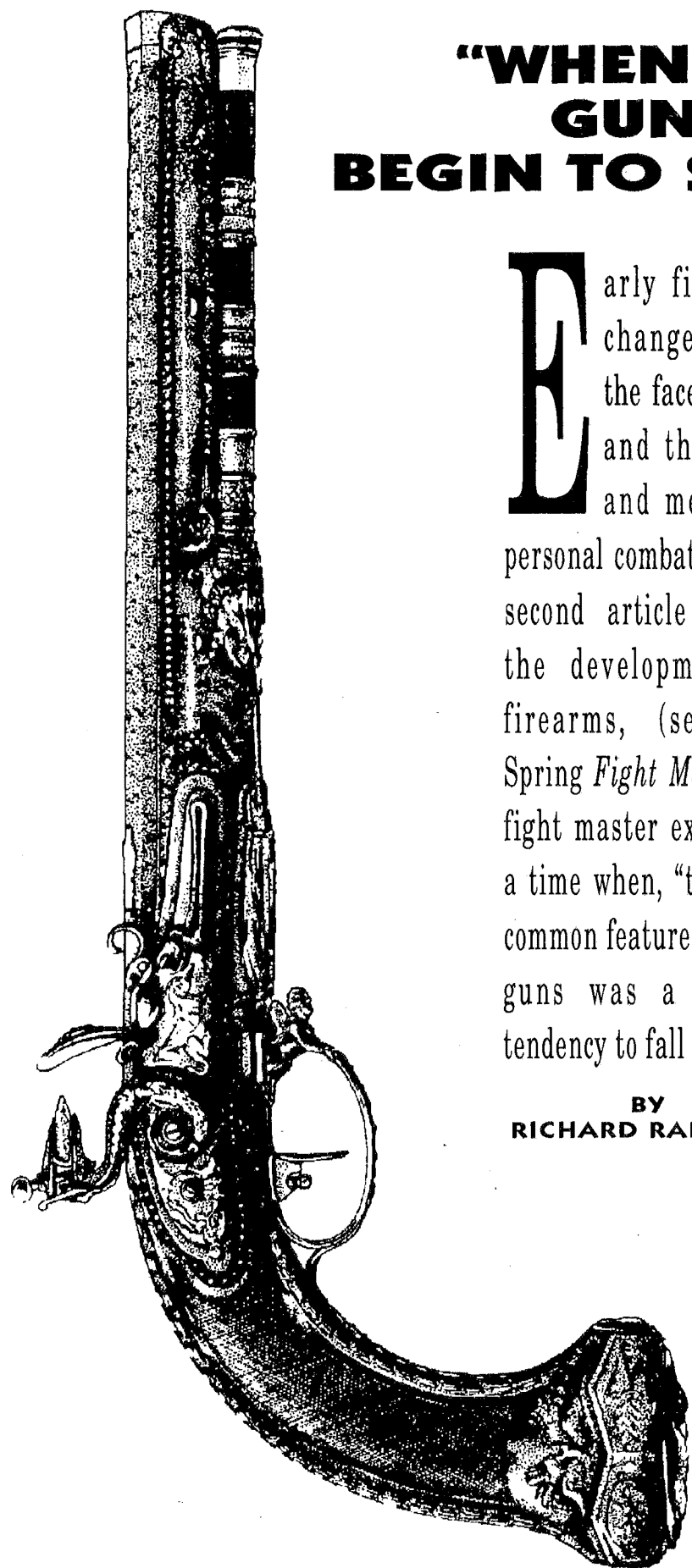
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"WHEN THE GUNS BEGIN TO SHOOT"

Early firearms changed both the face of war and the ways and means of personal combat. In his second article tracing the development of firearms, (see the *Spring Fight Master*) a fight master examines a time when, "the only common feature of most guns was a strong tendency to fall apart."

BY
RICHARD RAETHER



*"Oh, it's Tommy this, an' Tommy that,
an' 'Chuck him out, the brute!'
But it's 'saviour of his country
when the guns begin to shoot."*

Rudyard Kipling's cynical lines expressed a truism that many military leaders were still trying to accustom themselves to during the 17th century.

Chivalry was dead. Any drunken, illiterate lout who'd joined the army to escape the hangman's noose could spell doom for a seasoned warrior, no matter how brave, noble and skillful. A gun was the great equalizer.

For the first time in history, years of training and constant practice with weapons were unnecessary. Anyone, with a few hours instruction, could be an effective killer. This unpalatable fact radically altered both military strategy and the reality of personal combat.

THE TRUE FLINTLOCK

The true flintlock was born around 1630 in France. This new lock had a wholly interior mechanism and was the most reliable and accurate lock to date, except for the wheellock, which continued to be refined and whose price continued to soar. In France, however, the flintlock became the rage and by 1660 a young Louis XIV had equipped five full regiments with flintlock muskets.

In England, with the restoration of Charles II to the throne in 1660, English nobles and gentry were free to embrace the sport of hunting beast and bird with firearms. To accommodate the new sporting life, firearms were imported from the continent by the thousands. Many were of fine quality, but more were shoddy or of questionable construction and could be counted on to blow off your hands or face before firing the hundredth shot.

The problem was that many of the imported guns had never been fired or "proved." The more reputable English gunsmiths made this a regular practice, but France, Italy, and Germany did not require it.

THE GUNMAKERS COMPANY

Raymond Chandler once wrote, "I knew one thing: as soon as anyone said that you didn't need a gun, you'd better take one along that worked."

Getting a gun that worked was no easy feat in the early days. By 1672, exploding gun barrels were taking such a toll on English gentry that a new charter was granted to the Gunmakers Company of London which made the sale of unproved barrels illegal in all of England, with the standard of proof to be set by the Company.

On April 11, 1689 the "Glorious Revolution" ousting the unpopular James II was over and William of Orange was named William III of England. Along with the throne, William acquired a powerful enemy in France and William was compelled to modernize his army—fast—if he was to retain his throne.

Louis XIV and the exiled James gathered vast armies in France and Flanders, all equipped with flintlocks, ready to invade England. William contracted with every gunsmith in London to construct nothing but military flintlock muskets for him. He also had the iron workers of Birmingham hurriedly taught enough about gun making to crank out passable guns.

This massive effort was still not enough, so William bought as many foreign guns as he could. The result of this frantic activity was an army equipped with a wide variety of weapons whose only common feature was a strong tendency to fall apart.

In 1691, to better the situation, the Gunmakers Company was charged with the supervision of all future procurements to ensure that firearms would be as uniform and serviceable as possible.

The Company seized this opportunity to implement designs that they had been developing for sport guns, creating a military firearm that was far superior to

the French counterpart. This new gun enabled the British to march farther, faster, and fire five volleys to the enemy's four. England was now secure.

THE BAYONET

The bayonet had been known since about 1580, but the bayonet used was the socket bayonet, a short stout dagger that plugged into the end of the barrel. Obviously, once the bayonet was fixed, the gun could be neither fired nor loaded. So, the bayonet saw very little use. Instead, musketeers did the shooting and pikemen, or lancers, did the charging.

Then, in 1690, military tactics underwent a revolution when an unknown Frenchman thought of attaching the bayonet to the barrel by a tubular socket. For the first time, the musket became deadly at close range as well as at a distance.

THE BIRTH OF BROWN BESS

By his death in 1702, William III had seen the birth of a modern standing army, fully equipped with modern flintlock muskets and bayonets, drilled in their use until they could fire four volleys per minute. Although he set the stage, William never got the chance to see the gun that would ensure Britain's place as the world's leading military force.

England's Tower Musket was first introduced in the early years of the War of the Spanish Succession (1701-1713) and completely replaced Williams flintlocks by 1715. Brown Bess, as it was nicknamed by the troops, weighed ten pounds, had a 46-inch round barrel, with an overall length of 62 inches, and a greatly improved lock that made it more durable and reliable.

By 1770, Brown Bess could be

counted on to fire accurately 24 out of 25 times and—some of them—up to 49 out of 50 times, depending on workmanship and materials.

THE EARL OF MARLBOROUGH

When Patton declared, "The object of war is not to die for your country, but to make the other bastard die for his," he was echoing the thoughts of an earlier military leader, the Earl of Marlborough.

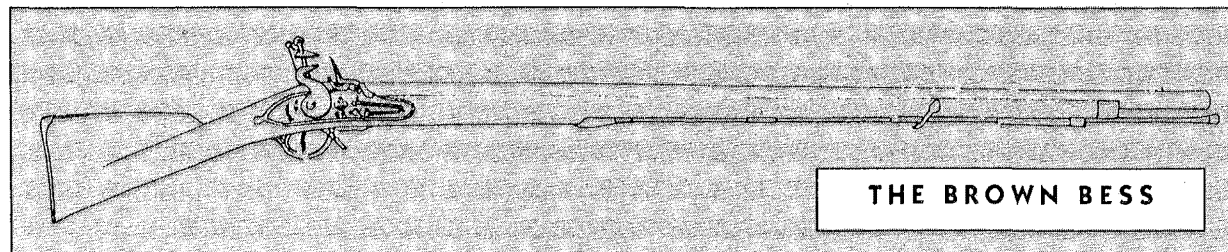
Marlborough took advantage of Brown Bess by reducing the intricacies of military strategy to simple mathematics. His forces would fire twice as often as the enemy and thus decimate the opposing forces.

Marlborough ordered his men to load the No. 11 bore of the Brown Bess with a 14 bore ball, a difference of $\frac{1}{20}$ of an inch. The resulting loose fit allowed his troops to literally drop the ball down the barrel using the ramrod only to seat the ball firmly on the powder or to push the ball once the barrel had become fouled.

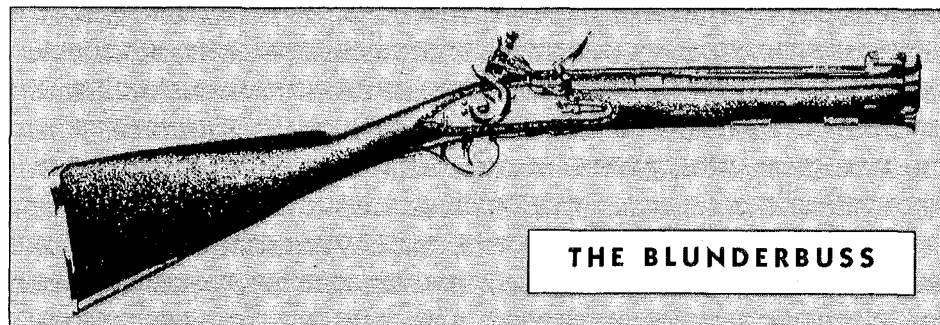
Marlborough then drilled his men until they could fire an amazing six shots per minute. Obviously range and accuracy were greatly reduced, but that didn't matter in his new style of warfare.

Marlborough marched his men to within 100 yards of his enemy and opened fire. The lack of accuracy beyond 75 yards didn't matter since by the third volley, all sight of the enemy was obliterated by the smoke. Since his men could pour six shots a minute into the enemy ranks, who—at best—could only return fire two to three shots per minute, the odds were with Marlborough. The success of the deadly British firepower can be seen by the fact that Marlborough never lost a battle.

What made the Brown Bess even more impressive was that, loaded



THE BROWN BESS



with a tight fitting ball it could hit a deer at 120 yards or more.

THE "THUNDER GUN"

The Blunderbuss or "Thunder gun" as its Dutch creators called it appeared about this time and saw continuous use for the next 200 years. The popular firearm spawned several myths concerning its use.

Myth number one: the blunderbuss could be loaded with handfuls of rusty nails, rocks, bits of broken glass, or even garbage. Nonsense. Anything of an irregular shape that could get wedged in the barrel with a full powder charge behind it had fatal consequences for the gunman. The blunderbuss was never loaded with anything but a counted or measured quantity of musket balls, pistol balls, buckshot, or birdshot.

Myth number two: a single shot from the funnel-shaped barrel of the blunderbuss could cause death across a wide expanse, such as the deck of a ship. In fact, the funnel shape of the barrel had no effect on the trajectory of the shot. When fired, the shot traveled in a straight line down the barrel, continuing in the same line when leaving the barrel.

The advantage of the blunderbuss lay in its comparatively thick, massive barrel which could be loaded with considerably greater charges than similar fowling pieces or muskets. Within a range of twenty yards the blunderbuss carried great force and was used effectively to cut down the rigging of grappled enemy ships, or thrust from a coach to deter highwaymen, or anywhere short-range power was needed.

Myth number three: the pilgrim toted his trusty blunderbuss along to shoot the Thanksgiving turkey.

In fact, hardly any blunderbusses existed in this country before the War of Independence and mostly only naval ones after that. The blunderbuss would have been of little use in the wilderness, as it is useless for hunting. Pilgrims mostly brought matchlock muskets to the New World, being too poor to afford anything else.

FLINTLOCK PISTOLS

Along with the French fashion of fowl hunting, the English also embraced the French duel of honor. By the early 1700s the dueling pistol had grown in popularity as the weapon of choice, rather than the sword. The pistol, after all, did not require long hours of strenuous, physically demanding exercise. For the first time, even a stout, elderly man afflicted with gout could prove a deadly duelist.

THE DUELING PISTOL

The finest single-shot pistols ever made were, without a doubt, the matching sets of dueling pistols made between 1780 and 1830. The pistol had all but replaced the sword as the principle dueling weapon in England and America. Since the measure of its performance was the owner's life or death, great care was taken in workmanship and materials.

Equal in importance to the firing mechanism was the pistol's balance. The protocol of the duel called for the principals to stand with guns ready and cocked at their sides. On a signal they would raise and fire.

If the pistol was too light in the front, the ball passed harmlessly through the branches overhead, but if it was too heavy in front the grass might be disturbed or, at best, the leg of the opponent. A skilled duelist didn't aim but would *feel* his pistol on target.

Many very ornate sets of "dueling" pistols were made as gift sets but were used, at most, only for occasional target practice. Highly ornate pistols with inlaid silver or gold were never truly intended for the duel. Any ornamentation which could reflect the sun or cause momentary glare could prove fatal. A set of true dueling pistols had but one purpose.

Pistols were made in every size, shape and design from the five-inch "pocket terror" to long-range rifled pistols with detachable shoulder stocks. Breech-loading, and multiple-barreled pistols abounded.

For the first time, even a stout, elderly man afflicted with gout could prove a deadly duelist.

range rifled pistols with detachable shoulder stocks. Breech-loading, and multiple-barreled pistols abounded.

THE KENTUCKY RIFLE

Rifles had been around, mostly as hunting firearms, since the early 1600s. What separated rifles from muskets was—surprise—the rifling. Rifling refers to the spiral grooves on the inside of the barrel which cause the ball to spin when fired, giving it a truer trajectory. Rifles took considerably longer to load than did muskets, and were disdained by the military for that reason. Some uncouth American backwoodsmen were to change that thinking.

American frontiersmen had far different requirements for firearms than did European hunters. European hunters only needed to carry provisions for the day, Americans would spend months in the wilderness and couldn't afford to run out of shot or powder.

So, for American gunsmiths, the challenge was to make a rifle weighing no more than ten pounds. A month's supply of bullets for the desired weapon could weigh no more

than three pounds. It would need to use only a small amount of powder, be easy to load and have long range accuracy. By 1735, these demands were met with the Kentucky Rifle.

The stock of the Kentucky Rifle was cut down to a minimum and the barrel was between 40 and 50 inches long, with an overall length of 4½–5 feet. The rifle fired the ball straight to targets up to 150 yards away. With an expert eye allowing for the drop, it could hit accurately up to 300 yards. Nowhere in the world was there a gun that could shoot so far, so accurately, and so efficiently.

MILITARY USE OF THE RIFLE

It was the Americans' expert use of the Kentucky rifle that won their independence.

At the start of the war, a rag tag American militia equipped with an assortment of cheap European-made muskets and some Brown Bess's, met a highly trained professional army—the best in the world at volley fire and bayonet charge.

The Americans' one hope lay in luring the British onto rough or wooded terrain in hopes of breaking up their massive formations into individual firing groups. This greatly reduced the redcoats' effectiveness since they were trained *not* to aim, but to work and fire as a unit. But since American muskets were no more accurate than the British, this merely put them on equal ground. America needed an advantage.

On June 14 1776, at the urging of George Washington, Benedict Arnold and Charles Lee, Congress gave the order for ten companies of expert riflemen to be raised; six in Pennsylvania, two in Maryland, and two in Virginia.

The frontiersmen were eager for the challenge. On August 15, not ten, but fourteen companies of men marched to war with their Kentucky rifles. They weren't much of an army, no discipline and no order, but they stunned New Englanders with feats of marksmanship like hitting a ten-inch plate, ten times out of ten, at 200 yards.

PATRICK FERGUSON'S RIFLE

In 1776, a 32-year-old British Captain named Patrick Ferguson was issued a patent for the Ferguson Rifle. He adapted and perfected several earlier designs to create the first truly practical military breech-loading rifle. Then he took it to war in the American colonies.

His rifle design featured a plug at the back of the barrel that could be opened by turning the trigger guard one full turn, exposing an opening on the top of the barrel to insert the ball and charge. The screw plug was completely gas tight and allowed for quick loading of a tight-fitting ball which could follow a sharper-rifled spiral creating a faster-spinning, thereby more accurate, bullet.

The tight-fitting ball also made the powder burn more completely and maximized the force of the charge, thereby making it shoot not only more accurately, but farther and harder with only a 36-inch barrel.

All this was of secondary importance to the fact that a man standing still could load and fire six to eight shots per minute—four to six shots per minute while running! Not only that, a man could load and fire while laying flat on the ground behind cover—impossible with a muzzle-loader. The Ferguson Rifle was the ultimate infantry weapon of its day.

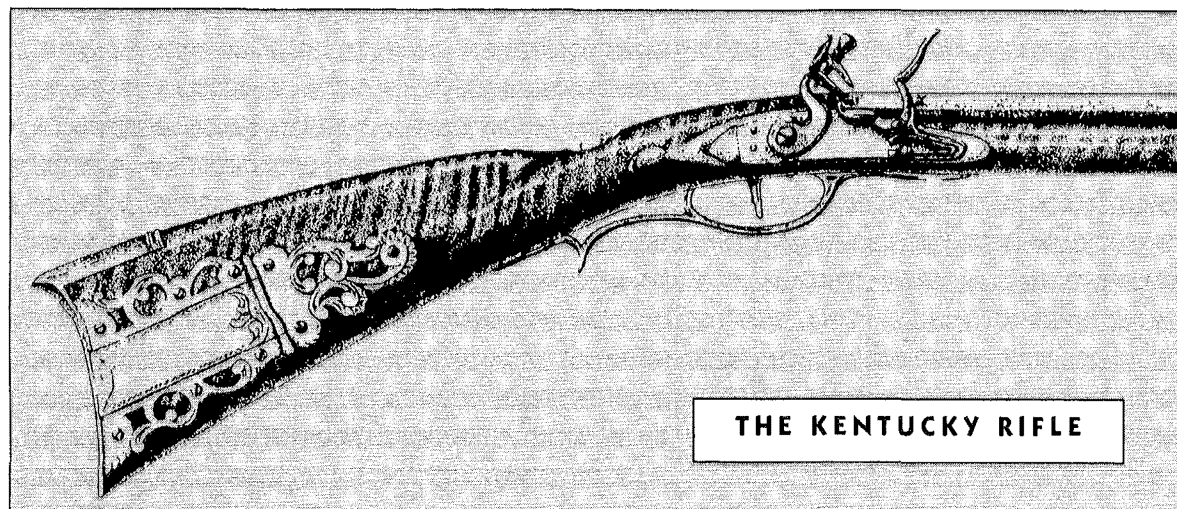
So why didn't England win the war? Fortunately for America, only 200 fergusons were ever made. One reason for this was that Ferguson retained control over the manufacture of the gun. As a man of modest means, he was unable to fund large scale production. But the major reason for this military blunder had more to do with graft, corruption, and the brittle military vanity and traditionalism of the British war office.

Ferguson did produce enough to equip 100 men of the Light Infantry (Rifle) Company of the 71st Highlanders, a company he commanded. Ferguson used his rifles to great effect against the Americans and played a decisive part in the British victory at the battle of Brandywine.

It was at that battle that Ferguson was shot through the right elbow. Months later when he was able to return to duty, his right arm had grown rigid and his rifles were gone. During his absence, the guns had been collected and left to rust in a New York cellar.

Ferguson salvaged about forty and in early 1779 received about 100 more from England. Now a Major, Ferguson earned the nickname "Butcher of the Carolinas" by killing American regulars rather than taking prisoners, and hanging anyone armed but out of uniform as a spy.

On October 6, 1780, while protecting Cornwallis' flank, Ferguson was trapped and surrounded by American riflemen. Within one hour, 225 of Ferguson's men lay dead and another 163 dying. After being shot eight times, Ferguson fell. His rifle, decades ahead of its time, died with him. Today, less than a dozen exist.



THE KENTUCKY RIFLE

Despite the obvious military effectiveness of the rifle in the American war, rifles saw very little use in the Napoleonic Wars (1793-1815). The British did equip a few companies like the 95th Infantry with Baker rifles, but they were the exception, not the rule.

THE PERCUSSION LOCK

Since the 1580s it was known that some chemical substances, like fulminates of silver and mercury, and gunpowder made with potassium chlorate instead of potassium nitrate, could be made to explode if placed on a hard surface and struck with a hammer. No practical application of this phenomenon had been found.

Then, in 1806, the Reverend Alexander Forsyth of Aberdeenshire, Scotland found it—a means of firing guns that would replace sparks and priming powder.

Various percussion lock systems were tried until 1815, when several people simultaneously came up with the percussion cap. The cap was made out of copper and measured about an eighth of an inch deep and an eighth of an inch in diameter. It was partially filled with fulminate of mercury. The cap was placed over a tube that led to the powder charge.

When the trigger was pulled, the hammer struck the cap exploding the fulminate of mercury. The explosion took the path of least resistance down the tube to the powder charge and fired the bullet.

The advantages to this firing system were many. First, it was simple. No longer was skilled hand-crafted fitting and assembly of the lock necessary. Second, it was nearly foolproof, so long as good caps were used. Wind and rain were no longer a factor. Lastly, a percussion lock could be fitted to just about any flintlock with relatively little work. The flash pan was removed and a nipple was added to the touch hole to hold the cap, and the cock with its flint-holding vice was replaced with a simple hammer.

By 1815, a quarter of all good-quality guns made in Europe and America used some form of percussion cap. By 1820, virtually all guns were made with percussion caps except for dueling pistols, where tradition and the flintlock remained popular until the 1840s.

REPEATERS

In October of 1835, Samuel Colt of Hartford Connecticut patented his own design and produced the Paterson revolver. It was a colossal flop and he went bankrupt. However, upon the outbreak of the Mexican War, an undaunted Colt wangled a government contract for a thousand Colt Whitney Walker Repeating Pistols. The modern firearm was born.

Both of Mr. Colt's pistols were single-action percussion revolvers, meaning the hammer had to be cocked manually. This rotated the cylinder exposing the cap, then the

trigger was pulled to drop the hammer on the cap and fire the bullet. The cartridge, chemically treated paper that contained powder charge and bullet, was loaded into the cylinder and the percussion cap was placed on a nipple on the back of the cylinder.

The next step in the evolution of firearms was combining the bullet,

powder charge and percussion cap in one metal cartridge. Experiments toward this end started as early as 1836, but the system wasn't perfected and put into universal use until 1870.

This basic firing system has remained in place for over a hundred years, and seems likely remain in place until someone invents a Flash Gordon ray gun for real. At which time, military strategy and personal combat will be revolutionized . . . again.

The development of firearms saw personal valor made passé, and true heroes replaced by anti-heroes, such as outlaws and gangsters. We now find ourselves living in a world ruled by the philosophy of Al Capone, who once observed, "You can get much further with a kind word and a gun, than you can with a kind word alone."

Richard Raether is a fight master and an adjunct professor of theatre at the University of Wisconsin—Milwaukee.

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BALLET AND SWORDPLAY: CORPS A CORPS DE BALLET

There are ballets of *The Three Musketeers*, *Hamlet*, *Cyrano de Bergerac*, and *Spartacus*. There is also a long list of mishaps that too often accompany these productions. This time, the ballet company brought in Fight Master Chris Villa to stage the swordplay in Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet*.

BY
ELIZABETH SHIPLEY

"Actors aren't the only ones who are dangerous with a sword," remarks Fight Master Christopher Villa.

He smiles, and relaxes into a corner of the couch. Above him hangs a print of a dramatic oil painting of Richard III wooing Anne over Henry's corpse. On the wall opposite a glossy poster shows Conan and Red Sonja camping it up with swords and hair flying. Chris's gift for combining epic grandeur with spontaneous playfulness helped him succeed at one of the most demanding projects of his career to date: choreographing fights in the context of ballet.

Toni Pimble is Artistic Director of Oregon's Eugene Ballet Company, where she first directed Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet* in 1984. She and Chris revived the ballet in 1989, and this fall will mark their third *Romeo and Juliet* together.

In the autumn of 1984, Toni had recently played Juliet in Shakespeare's play. An actor in that production had been stabbed in the eye during a fight, and as soon as he returned from the hospital he'd been stabbed again in the same eye. By the time she began preparing to direct the ballet, Toni was understandably nervous about working with swords. When a member of her dance company who had trained with Chris the previous year suggested she hire a fight director, she was glad to try anything to safeguard her dancers.

"The first time I went up, I started out with just a tape of the music for the fight scenes, and the music broken down for me on a sheet of paper," Chris recalls. Toni's chart showed the music divided into emotionally unified phrases, which were again broken down into sets of eight counts. Chris could see where the music did one thing for sixteen beats, then changed mood for eight beats, then changed again for twenty-four, and so on. The opposite side of the page told him roughly what the action on stage would be during each musical phrase.

WORKING WITH MUSIC

One of the greatest challenges of choreographing ballet fights is learning to work within the constraints of music. In three or four weeks of rehearsal, how do you organize complex fight scenes so that sixteen performers can sword-fight, dance, leap, and fall with such precision that every move happens precisely on the beat, and everyone ends on the same count?

Chris set out to solve this problem by choreographing several brief standard fights, each with a different musical count and emotional quality. Every dancer learned every move, and any combination of dancers could quickly be called on to do any of the standard fights. "If I saw that I needed an eight-count rhythmic exchange at a certain place in the music, I could say, 'Okay, you three do combination number two.'"

EUGENE BALLET'S ROMEO AND JULIET 1991-92 TOUR SCHEDULE

Oct. 5	Harbor, Washington
Feb. 20	Enterprise, Oregon
Feb. 21	Hermanston, Oregon
March 1	Prince Rupert, British Columbia
March 3-4	Kitimat, British Columbia
March 5	Terrace, British Columbia
March 7-8	Kamloops, British Columbia
April 11-12	Oxnard, California
May 3	Durango, Colorado

For additional dates and locations, phone the Eugene Ballet 503-485-3992.

Once all the dancers had learned this basic series of fights, Chris was able to rough-block complex scenes by splitting the dancers into groups, and giving each group various combinations of the basic units.

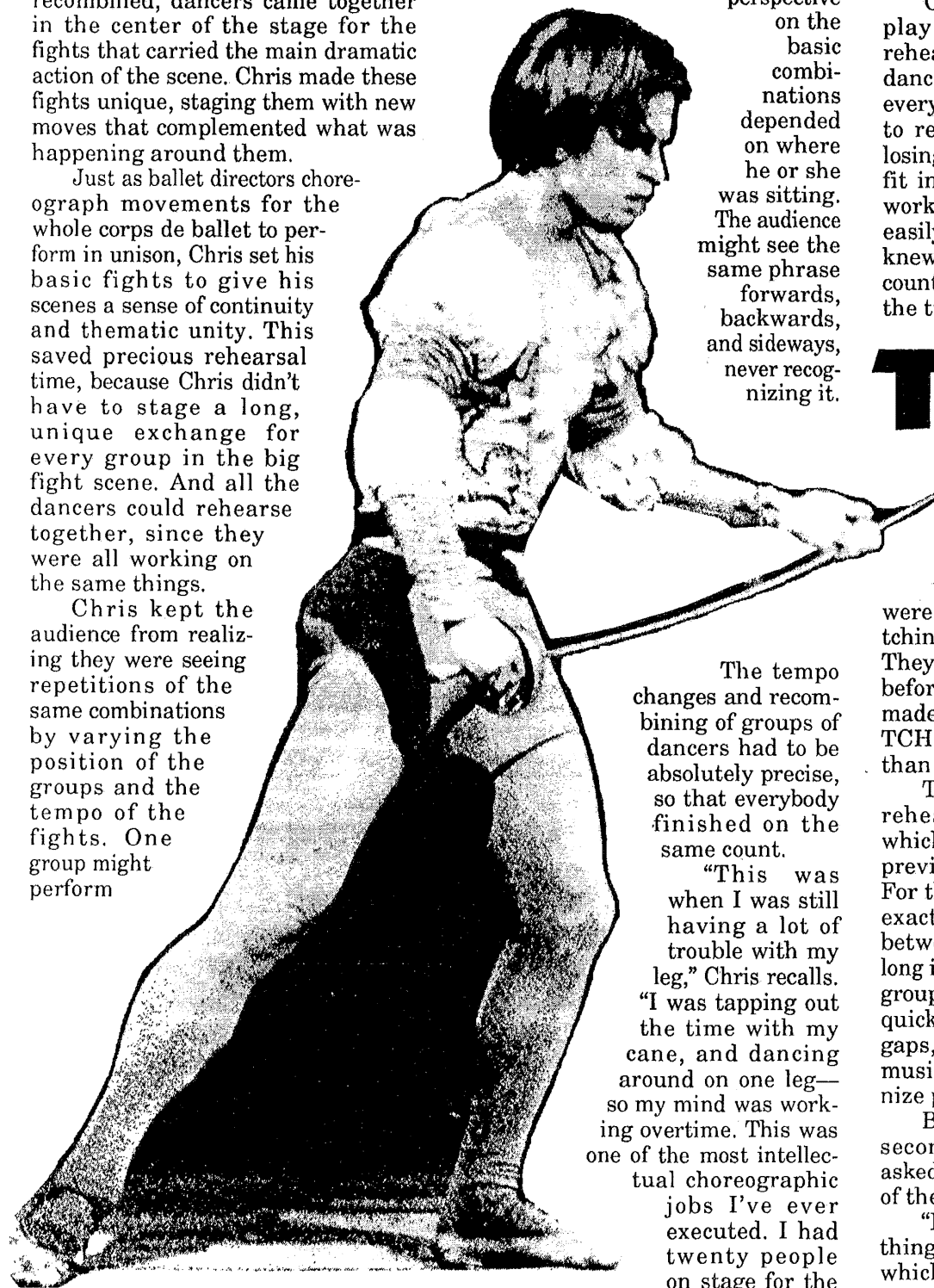
As these groups broke up and recombined, dancers came together in the center of the stage for the fights that carried the main dramatic action of the scene. Chris made these fights unique, staging them with new moves that complemented what was happening around them.

Just as ballet directors choreograph movements for the whole corps de ballet to perform in unison, Chris set his basic fights to give his scenes a sense of continuity and thematic unity. This saved precious rehearsal time, because Chris didn't have to stage a long, unique exchange for every group in the big fight scene. And all the dancers could rehearse together, since they were all working on the same things.

Chris kept the audience from realizing they were seeing repetitions of the same combinations by varying the position of the groups and the tempo of the fights. One group might perform

a phrase from the beginning, while another started the same phrase four beats in, so that the two groups finished at different times. The tempo of individual moves in relation to the whole fight could also be varied. And, of course, an audience member's

perspective on the basic combinations depended on where he or she was sitting. The audience might see the same phrase forwards, backwards, and sideways, never recognizing it.



The tempo changes and recombining of groups of dancers had to be absolutely precise, so that everybody finished on the same count.

"This was when I was still having a lot of trouble with my leg," Chris recalls. "I was tapping out the time with my cane, and dancing around on one leg—so my mind was working overtime. This was one of the most intellectual choreographic jobs I've ever executed. I had twenty people on stage for the

opening fight, and they all had to be somewhere at exactly the right time. And I had to keep track of them all in my head, as well as where we were in the music. It was incredibly difficult working like that, and incredibly gratifying."

Of course, there was no way to play the score in slow motion for rehearsals. But since Chris and the dancers knew the musical counts of every fight sequence, they were able to rehearse at half speed without losing track of how their movements fit into the music. Once the sword work was up to speed, the dancers easily incorporated the music. They knew the counts of the fights and the counts of the music, and they meshed the two with almost no trouble.

The sound of the swords themselves became part of the music. Actors counting out fights tend to start each move on a count, but dancers who do this often find themselves fractionally behind the music. "We needed them to anticipate the impulse. Some of them were really good at it. They were listening to the swords' tching-tching, and they did it on the beat. They were able to start each move before the count, so that the blades made contact on the beat and we had TCHING-TCHING-TCHING rather than tching-beat, tching-beat."

The final week before opening, rehearsals moved onto the stage, which was slightly larger than the previous rehearsal space had been. For the first time, Chris could gauge exactly how much space there was between groups, and precisely how long it took a dancer to move from one group to another. He could then add quick skirmishes and chases in the gaps, timing everything to allow the music, dance, and fights to synchronize perfectly.

Before rehearsals began for the second production in 1989, Chris asked Toni to send him an audio tape of the entire ballet.

"It's important to hear the whole thing because the fighting sections, which I'd had the first time, are a

little different from other parts of the ballet. It helped me in my own mental preparation to hear the way Prokofiev used the music in other parts. Plus there's a strong thematic element that runs through the whole ballet, with Capulet theme music, Montague theme music, and so on."

Knowing that he didn't have the skills necessary to break the music down technically, Chris set out to rediscover the spirit of the piece. "I listened to the music, and I went into a kind of a trance state. I listened, and I let myself picture forms, colors, flows of energy, swordfighting clichés—whatever. I'd just free-associate during the music. Sometimes I'd see what I'd done before, and sometimes I'd see new things. I tried to absorb it emotionally, on an intuitive level, as opposed to listening and figuring out, 'Oh right, there's the third eight-count.'"

Chris approached the project far more confidently than he had the first time. Trusting himself to absorb the music in his own way, he found subtleties in it he'd missed earlier. He and Toni watched videotapes of the first production, and were able to pinpoint sections where dancers didn't seem to be in harmony with the music.

"There was one move we had in the Mercutio/Tybalt fight. We'd ended up just doing some mindless type of diagonal fight, just parry-riposte, parry-riposte, and it didn't really fit the music. The more I looked at it [on tape] and listened to the music, the more I realized how it didn't fit what the music was saying about movement at that moment.

So Toni and I decided to restructure the middle of the fight. Mercutio would start out dancing, then he'd spin into the air and land, and spin into the air and land. And as he was doing that, Tybalt would launch these giant spinning-thrusting attacks, so he would spin and *thrust*, and spin and *thrust*. Each time he did that, we timed it so that Mercutio did a spinning leap away from Tybalt's thrust. It was the signature move that we needed to make that whole fight. It brought in all the elements of Tybalt's dangerousness, Mercutio's cavalier

attitude about the whole thing, and the sheer technical prowess that those two dancers had."

WORKING WITH A BALLET DIRECTOR

Another challenge of staging fights for ballet is finding a way to work with the ballet director. Unlike fights in drama, dance fights combine dance and fight choreography into a single unit, so a fight choreographer cannot work independently of the dance director. But how can they work simultaneously on the same movement phrase, without confusion?

Toni Pimble had never worked with a fight director before she met Chris, and she was fearful of accidents with the swords. Chris won her trust in the first week of rehearsals, as he trained the dancers in basic technique and safety awareness. "She realized that I had complete control over what I was doing. I ran a very tight rehearsal and didn't allow any mistakes." Once Toni understood that Chris's technique was geared toward safety, she lost a lot of her fear and became intensely interested in his work.

But there were still communication problems. "For the first week, it was like we were both trying to learn a new language. We went through one complete rehearsal just trying to figure out how to count. She counted by eights, but I counted by steps until there was a significant break in the flow of the action. So I'd go on to nine, ten, eleven—and she's yelling, 'Wait! Wait!'"

By the end of the first week, Chris and Toni had generated a common language. "I finally understood her, and she understood what I was trying to do, and then all of a sudden it just started snowballing. Everything started to flow, and it turned out that Toni and I had established some kind of psychic, artistic bond with each other."

How did Chris learn to give Toni what she wanted, even when she couldn't articulate her thoughts?

"I don't know, because it's not something I rationally understand. When I'm starting out to work with a director, I confer with her, I do all my research, I prepare as thoroughly as possible. Then I just relax, kind of

shake it off, and I walk onto the stage and order people around. I try, consciously, to put myself in a receptive state—almost a trance. I do things physically to put myself in that state—repetitive movements, or talking to myself, or swirling the sword. Whatever

it is I'm doing will generate a certain type of energy, because I feel that a lot of my abilities are not self-generated. A lot of my abilities come from tuning into some 'cosmic force of the universe.' It's that part of the creative process that most fascinates me. I do my preparation, and then I go out with a complete tabula rasa, and I just work with the energies of the people who are in the room."

Once Chris and Toni tuned into each other, they worked almost as one. Toni saw that Chris had a strong sense of the flow of movement in space, and she had him choreograph some of the dancing as well as the fights in his scenes. Toni pushed each scene toward ballet technique, and Chris pushed it toward artful swordplay. Chris climbed onstage with his cane and demonstrated what he wanted Tybalt to do, and Toni danced with him as Mercutio as they worked out their ideas in rehearsal. The trust between them was complete. "We worked more closely than any other choreographer and director I've ever heard of."

WORKING WITH DANCERS

Another challenge Chris faced was working with dancers, whose skills and training were necessarily different from those of actors.

"For the first week, it was like we were both trying to learn a new language. We went through one complete rehearsal just trying to figure out how to count."

"Dancers in general have no more of a gift for stage combat than actors do. They just bring different skills to it. It's not a question of a particular physical training being superior. It's a question of superior mental training. Your awareness of other people is the key. That's influenced by your physical training, but if you're not mentally aware first, it doesn't matter how much dance training you've had. You can be a completely dangerous, wonderful dancer. It's awareness of others in relationship to yourself that makes a safe fight."

Dancers are often stereotyped as bad actors, but Chris was impressed with the company's skill at acting the fights. They had a large, expressive physical vocabulary and a strong sense of where they were in space: "Though when you stick three feet of steel on the end of their arms, they have to expand that awareness."

"I think the single hardest thing for dancers is that all the fights have to be at a certain speed. Actors can fudge a lot, be off on the timing, miss a move and back up and go over it again—they have a lot of leeway, so they're not always as clean. They rush the fight sometimes, and they slow the fight down sometimes—they've had too much to drink at dinner, or they're tired that day—whatever it is. Dancers don't have that luxury at all. They have to hit it on the beat every single time. One false move is not only sloppy, it's dangerous."

Chris found that the vocabulary of dancers is less intellectual than that of actors. Even when working on something as physical as a sword-fight, actors like to be directed in terms of inner motivation. "Dancers want to know, 'How do I look?'" Chris explained his ideas to the dancers through images of sustained movement, percussive movement, elongation, and so forth.

In both the 1984 and '89 productions, Chris started rehearsals with a few performers who were terrified of swords. One Romeo had just come from another production of the same ballet in which the dancer playing

Tybalt had been stabbed in the chest. The stabbing plate in his costume had slipped during a fight, and the sword had punctured a lung. Other dancers had witnessed similar accidents.

By drilling the performers thoroughly in the basics, and showing them that their safety was his primary concern, Chris built their confidence in him and in themselves. Once they saw how he worked, they realized that they had far more control over the fights than dancers usually feel they have. Gentle support and encouragement proved to be the best mode of communication. When Chris came back for the second production, dancers who'd been there for the first one could hardly wait to start working with him again.

Like actors, the dancers had trouble learning pre-set fights. During the first production, Mercutio and Romeo didn't arrive until two weeks into the rehearsal period, so Chris was forced to choreograph their fights on understudies who moved very differently from the principal dancers.

"My problem became figuring out how to teach them the fights I'd already choreographed, and make them work. When you give somebody a pre-set fight, if their body or mind doesn't work with that fight, you end up having to re-choreograph it or else force them to learn it. It can take longer to force them to learn it than it would to re-choreograph."

WHAT NEXT?

After all this experiment and discovery, *Romeo and Juliet* was a great success. Chris was pleased with most of his work on the first production, but when he went back the second time, he altered some of his choreography to reflect more specifically the emotional nuances of each musical phrase.

When he returns to Eugene this fall, Chris hopes to discover even more acting clues in the music. "Now I want to see if there's more emotional depth I can reach with the fights."

What makes a good ballet fight director? "If I were choosing one, the first thing I'd look for would be

someone who wasn't a male chauvinist. When you're working on a ballet, you're often working with women. You have to like them and respect them, and they have to know that. I wouldn't hire anyone who couldn't work in an ensemble, no matter how good they were. Then I'd look for someone with a strong visual sense, because in ballet the vision of it all is extremely important. And I'd want someone with a broad range of movement experience, including a lot of dance, because I don't believe you can choreograph a dance fight without knowing something about dance.

You don't have to be an expert in ballet, but you have to know what bodies can do in space, and what you can expect from the dancers. And you have to have an affinity for music. A lot of my fights have musical rhythms in them that are not always found in other people's work.

What is it about Chris that made his work with the Eugene Ballet such a success? "I love ballet. I love that grand, epic style of music. I've always been drawn by the epic quality of Shakespeare, and ballet, and movies. They're bigger and grander than life, and far removed from the pettiness of most people's existence."

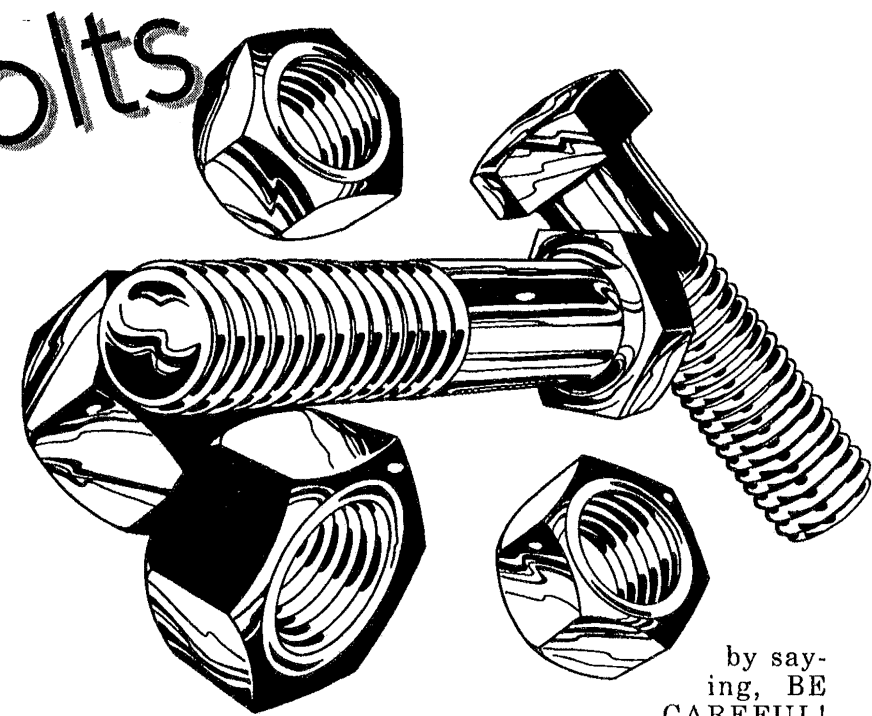
I think that's one of the attractions ballet has for people. It's grand, and it's eloquent, and it's expressive, and it's emotional, and it's passionate. And at the same time it has incredible finesse and clarity and precision. I think my love for those things distinguishes me as a fight director. I love to create marvelous pictures and vistas with passion with people in motion." Chris smiles happily. "I did it in that show. That show convinced me I could do anything."

Elizabeth Shipley is a certified actor/combatant and a member of the SAFF.

Nuts & Bolts

Black Powder Basics
by Drew Fracher

The Nuts & Bolts department of the Fight Master focuses on practical how-to considerations of stage combat.



by saying, BE CAREFUL!

THOUGHT IT WAS AWFULLY IRONIC THAT I WAS ASKED TO WRITE AN ARTICLE DEALING WITH BLACK POWDER FIREARMS AND SAFETY FOR THE STAGE.

Having just finished staging fights for a new adaptation of *The Three Musketeers* I learned, once again, that—when you least expect it—expect black powder to hurt you. In this case more damage was done to pride than to person. This time...

Picture, if you will, a most conscientious fight director giving a weapons demonstration to his cast before staging the first scene involving firearms and live fire. The head pyrotechnician and said fight director, having readied several percussion cap pistols with black powder, were demonstrating the steps in safely loading and firing to the cast.

After several shots were fired into a white target at fairly close range, the fight director, lecturing on just how dangerous and nasty an accident can be, instructs the head pyro to fire the last loaded pistol. He raises and fires, as instructed, whereupon the fight director, who was standing well behind the muzzle about four feet to the left, feels a faint prick on his cheek.

The fight director feels his cheek with fingers and finds the exploded percussion cap (a tiny copper cup that fits onto the pistol's nipple and is responsible for the initial spark that fires the powder) embedded in his cheek. Upon removal of the schrapnel the blood begins flowing down the fight director's cheek and the point, "When you least expect it, expect it (black powder) to hurt you," is graphically made (not in the way that the fight director intended) and well taken by the assembled cast.

When You Least Expect It...

Thankfully, the wound was slight. A few inches higher and an eye could have easily been gone. The stories are endless; the consequences, at times, far more serious. Anyone who has dealt with black powder and firearms for any length of time will have lots of horror stories to relate. Believe them—it is *all* true.

Rather than spend an entire article recounting graphic accidents, let me just preface the whole discussion

DON'T TRUST IT EVER! IF YOU DON'T ABSOLUTELY HAVE TO USE IT, DON'T! IF YOU DO—GET SOME EXPERT HELP!

That being stated, let us take a look at some basics, starting with supplies and powder. From a purely practical point of view you will need to check carefully with the local law enforcement and fire marshall types to see what regulations apply to the use of black powder and firearms in your local theatre. Laws are usually many and strict. Pay attention to them and be very specific and courteous when dealing with the powers that be.

Laws Regarding Class A Explosives

In many places, black powder is considered a Class A Explosive (which it is!) and you cannot use it indoors or within the city limits. If this is the case, you will have to use some other type of powder. One of these is Pyrodex, a synthetic substitute for black powder that is less volatile and burns much cleaner. Most commercial smokeless powders may also be allowed, but are not really practical for use in period weapons.

As the quality of gunpowder improved over the ages, it became capable of burning more cleanly and quickly. And, as the manufacture of firearms improved, allowing more serious levels of combustion, the

Nuts & Bolts

powders became less volatile. Thus, the need for greater compaction increased in order to achieve any blast. The problems this presents in the theatre will be discussed later.

In any case, you will probably need to use black powder or at the very least Pyrodex unless your period guns have been reworked to

hold modern shells and fool the audience. Be sure to check regulations carefully and to abide by the rules. Don't risk having your production shut down on a technicality. Fines for this sort of thing are stiff.

Black Powder is Volatile

Understand that black powder

is highly volatile, which makes it burn easily and explode without much packing. It is also crude, dirty and highly corrosive, making it bad for the guns and making thorough cleaning an absolute necessity after just two or three shots.

While Pyrodex is cleaner and not nearly so hard on the weapons over the long term, it is not as sure to produce the desired effect of smoke and concussion. There will be little smoke and, unless tightly packed, only a fizzle. The retort of gunfire is caused by the powder exploding while compacted into a small space. In modern firearms this is achieved inside a shell casing. In period guns it's achieved within the barrel; you "build" the shell as you load the weapon.

Potential Problems with Wadding

Because black powder is so easily exploded, material used as wadding should be small in volume and flammable in nature. The result is nothing but smoke and some minute debris coming out of the barrel. No projectile equals greater safety. Pyrodex, on the other hand, must be more tightly packed with a wad of more volume in order to get the desired effect. This often results in a wad that does not burn up completely. The remaining wad becomes a projectile ("bullet") upon firing. Needless to say, this increases the potential for accident.

Another problem might occur if whatever you use for wadding comes out of the barrel still burning. I used Pyrodex in a show recently and used styrofoam peanuts as wadding, just as I've done hundreds of times with straight black powder. The Pyrodex didn't burn efficiently enough to "blow up" the peanuts and the result was smoldering styro coming out of the muzzle producing Lord-knows-what sort of noxious gasses. Thankfully, there was a fine technician on hand to point this out and describe the effects of said gas in graphic detail.

Do not for an instant think that just because the wad burns up that

the shot can't hurt you. Burning powder and minute debris can just as easily put an eye out or burn you very seriously. Remember... when you least expect it... Whenever possible, I recommend using real black powder. In my opinion, the smoke, the smell, and concussion are all better.

Preparing to Load

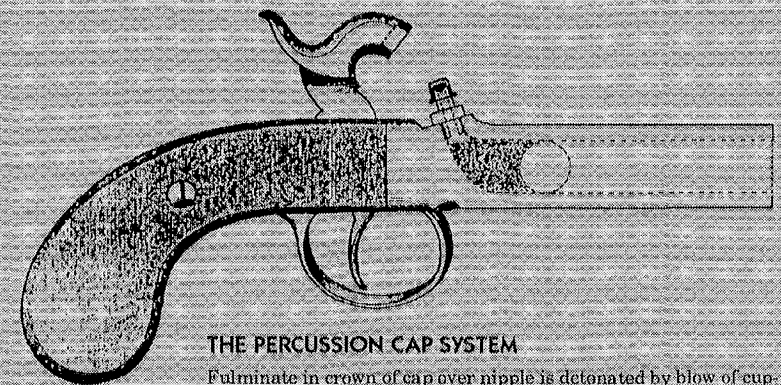
I recommend using FFF grade black powder and either tissue paper, dried grass or flash paper as wadding. Flash paper will burn up completely upon firing and also produces a nice flame in addition to the smoke from the powder. Dried grass—very dry—clippings from the lawn mower will also burn pretty thoroughly and leave little or no debris, but is hard to come by in some cities and/or during winter.

Tissue paper also works pretty well as wadding, but many times will not burn all the way and can leave tiny firebombs around the stage. Styro peanuts also work, but I don't recommend them for indoor use due to the gasses described previously. Flash paper, although expensive, is a good bet for complete burn and a good effect.

You must experiment with varying amounts of powder and wad depending upon the concussion you are looking for. A powder measure should be used (purchased where you get the rest of your supplies; the local gun shop). Start with a load measuring somewhere around five or ten grains of powder. Fifteen to twenty grains will produce a pretty serious bang.

The gun must be clean and dry. If recently cleaned, you should swab the barrel out and fire a few caps by themselves to ensure a dry chamber. (Note: Never fire the gun without at least a cap on the nipple. This is called "dry firing" and is very bad for the mechanism.)

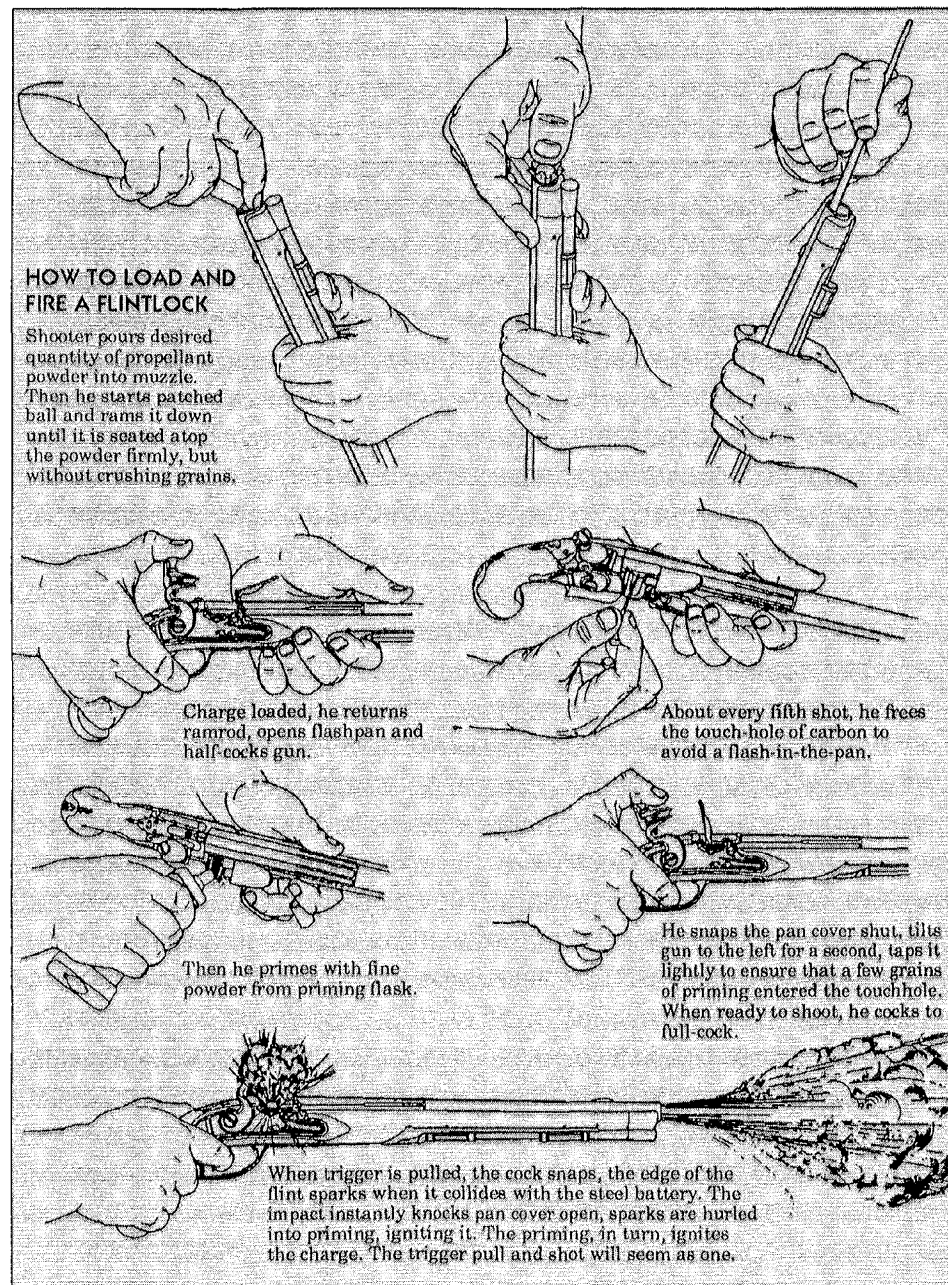
The hammer should be pulled back to its first click position or half-cock. This is the safety position



THE PERCUSSION CAP SYSTEM

Fulminate in crown of cap over nipple is detonated by blow of cup-nosed hammer; small but powerful jet of fire flashes through nipple directly into powder charge.

Diagram (opposite) of loading a flintlock pistol applies to the percussion cap weapon as well. Loading process is exactly the same up to priming the pan. At that point, the shooter simply caps the nipple and proceeds.



HOW TO LOAD AND FIRE A FLINTLOCK

Shooter pours desired quantity of propellant powder into muzzle. Then he starts patched ball and rams it down until it is seated atop the powder firmly, but without crushing grains.

Charge loaded, he returns ramrod, opens flashpan and half-cocks gun.

About every fifth shot, he frees the touch-hole of carbon to avoid a flash-in-the-pan.

Then he primes with fine powder from priming flask.

He snaps the pan cover shut, tilts gun to the left for a second, taps it lightly to ensure that a few grains of priming entered the touchhole. When ready to shoot, he cocks to full-cock.

When trigger is pulled, the cock snaps, the edge of the flint sparks when it collides with the steel battery. The impact instantly knocks pan cover open, sparks are hurled into priming, igniting it. The priming, in turn, ignites the charge. The trigger pull and shot will seem as one.

on a black powder weapon. In this position the trigger will not work and the hammer cannot fall. If this is not the case, see your local gunsmith before proceeding.

Making sure the gun is clean, clear and unloaded, put the hammer at half-cock and blow down the barrel. Obviously this should never be done until you are **ABSOLUTELY** sure the gun is not loaded. Remember, it is the "unloaded" gun that goes off and kills you dead. Check by putting the ram rod down the barrel and listening for, and feeling, metal at the base of the inside of the barrel.

It is the "unloaded" gun
that goes off
and kills you dead...

Once done, blow down the barrel to ensure that your flash hole (the little pathway between the nipple and the inside of the barrel) is clear. A pin or paper clip may be used to clear this out if you find it obstructed.

Loading Your Weapon

Now you are ready to load. Holding the gun in one hand with the muzzle pointing away from the face, pour the measured load into the barrel and shake it down by tapping the barrel with the free hand. Then place your slightly balled-up wad into the muzzle and slowly, easily push it down with the ram rod.

The ram rod should always be held lightly with the thumb and first couple of fingers. Never put the palm of your hand over it and force the wad down. If, for some freak reason, the powder should ignite—better to end up with stinging fingers than a hole through your palm.

Seat the wad with some serious tamping and put the ram rod back in place. Remember that the wad must seat properly and seal the powder in the bottom of the chamber in order to get a bang. Otherwise you end up with a fizzle of flaming powder which is no good to anyone.

Now, pointing the muzzle of the gun safely away from yourself and anyone else, put the percussion cap on the nipple under the hammer and seat it there. I recommend using needle nose pliers to slightly squeeze

Nuts & Bolts

the cap so that it will hang onto the nipple and never fall off. This should be done to avoid having to put the hammer all the way down on the cap for storage. In that position, the gun can easily go off if dropped onto its hammer.

Now you are ready to fire and your gun should and *must* be treated like the deadly weapon that it is. Fire when ready.

Firing Your Weapon

As far as firing goes, remember some basics *never* to be forgotten:

1. Never point a gun at anyone, even if it is "not" loaded. Never, *Never, NEVER* point a gun at anyone. Period.
2. When staging shots and setting up lines of fire, I believe it's best to aim low (toward the floor of the base of a set piece) and *ALWAYS* upstage and away from the audience. Don't take a chance for some realistic effect that the audience forgets within minutes anyway.
3. If, for some reason, the gun doesn't fire on the first try, cock the hammer back and try it a second time. If it still doesn't go, go to plan B (which your terrific fight director has already worked out for you). Put the gun down somewhere facing safely away from anyone and get it off stage at the first possible moment. Remember that it is still loaded and must be dealt with by the pyrotechnician accordingly.

Tricks of the Trade

One trick of the trade that I've used many times very effectively is to forgo the use of powder altogether. Simply load the gun using a slightly crumpled piece of flash paper gently tamped down into the barrel. Do not ram it home or this will not work. Now cap the nipple as normal and—treating it like the loaded gun that it is—fire when ready.

What you will get is the small

cap-like crack of the percussion cap going off and a nice little flame out the muzzle. If this is combined with a well-timed shot from a regular blank gun offstage the effect is very believable and, most of all, very safe. As I stated earlier, if you don't have to use it, don't. Most audiences will buy what you give them, provided it is done with commitment. Better safe than sorry.

Clean-Up

Finally to cleaning. Rather than spend lots of money on expensive solvent and cleaning supplies, I like to use very hot soapy water. Tide or some other laundry detergent works just fine. Using a commercial rod and brass wire brush of the proper diameter, fill the barrel with soapy water and brush the heck out of it.

As you force the brush down the barrel, you will expel water out through the nipple hole. If this does not occur, you will need to pick out the nipple with a pin or the like. Brush the barrel out several times with several changes of water. Then, using clean, hot rinse water, pour water down the muzzle until it runs out the nipple hole clean.

Stand the gun on its muzzle for a few minutes to drain and then run a few dry patches down it to dry and swab it out. There may be some black debris at the bottom of the barrel; you have to make certain that all of this gets swabbed out.

Once the patches are coming out clean, spray the whole thing down liberally with WD-40, inside and out. If you have an air compressor handy, take the time to blow all of the water out of the nooks and crannies before applying the WD. Now you should be ready to store your gun until next time.

Percussion Cap vs. Flintlock

A final point of clarification. All of this discussion has been based on the use of percussion cap firearms.

There are several other types of black powder firearms. In fact, the flintlock is probably the most popular and widely used. However, the percussion cap, being the final stage of development before the advent of the self-contained cartridge is the most dependable and easiest to deal with.

I recommend cheating on period accuracy and using the percussion cap whenever possible.

Since starting this article, I have received word from home that adds another twist of irony to this discussion. A dear friend who is a very fine pyrotechnician at one of the country's outdoor dramas was just finishing up the end-of-season cleanup of his workspace. He was evidently sweeping up the pyro shed and had a nice little pile of powder and debris from the summer in the middle of the floor. He thinks there must have been a scrap of flint (from one of the flintlock rifles) on the floor and, as he swept, the flint struck a spark from the concrete floor. Completely without warning, that little pile of powder went up in his face. His beard was burned off his face and he has second-degree burns on lips, nose and forehead.

Damned lucky is what I'd call him . . . damned lucky. Be careful folks, you just never know.

■ Drew Fracher is a fight master and is in his second term serving the SAFD as vice president. He choreographs at regional theatres around the U.S. and accepts private students at his home on Abiding Grace farm in Kentucky.

the Pen & the Sword

Next issue, "The Pen and the Sword" will look at the following three books:

The History and Art of Personal Combat

Arthur Wise
London: Hugh Evelyn Limited, 1971
(Greenwich, CT: Arma Press, 1972)

The Sword and the Centuries: or Old Sword Days & Old Sword Ways

Captain Alfred Hutton
London: Grant Richards, 1901
[reprinted, Rutland, VT:
Charles E. Tuttle Company, 1980.]

Sword Play For Actors: A Manual of Stage Fencing

Fred Gilbert
New York: M.N. Hazen Co., 1905.

Reviews should be completed by February 1, 1992 and forwarded to:

Dale Anthony Girard
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The opinions expressed in this column are those of the reviewer(s) and may not reflect the opinion of the Society of American Fight Directors. "The Pen and the Sword" is an open review column expressly designed to allow members of the SAFD to voice their opinions. All members are encouraged to share their insights and time-earned discoveries concerning written material on (or related to) the art of stage combat.

Each issue will list three books to be reviewed, along with a deadline. All opinions are welcome and will be considered for publication in this column. Contributing writers will be credited in each review. It is hoped that "The Pen and the Sword" will serve as a valuable companion to independent study and an open invitation for all SAFD members to participate in the SAFD's growth and development.

BY DALE
ANTHONY GIRARD

THIS ISSUE: A LOOK AT ARTHUR WISE'S *WEAPONS IN THE THEATRE*, SIR RICHARD BURTON'S *THE BOOK OF THE SWORD*, AND ALBERT KATZ'S *STAGE VIOLENCE, TECHNIQUES OF OFFENSE, DEFENSE AND SAFETY*.

WEAPONS IN THE THEATRE

by Arthur Wise

New York: Barnes and Noble, 1968.
Hardcover, with 16 illustrations (B&W photos)
with accompanying line drawings
(pp. 139 with bibliography and index)

Arthur Wise was born in York, England in 1923. After serving as a fighter pilot with the RAF, he studied drama in London. He trained in stage combat as part of his theatrical education. His skills were first applied as an actor, then later as a fight arranger. Mr. Wise has written over eight books of fiction, nine works of non-fiction and countless articles. Among his works are *The History and Art of Personal Combat* (1971) and *Stunting in the Cinema* with Derek Ware (1973).

Weapons in the Theatre is "concerned with the use of weapons in the theatre, in film and in television," says Mr. Wise. "It is an attempt to answer two essential questions: 1) What is it that makes dramatists, particularly of the Elizabethan period, so preoccupied with scenes of physical violence, and 2) How are the director and actor to handle such scenes?" [Acknowledgements pp. ix]

Mr. Wise's book is not a "how to" manual for stage combat techniques. The text is concerned more with theatrical effectiveness through knowledgeable information than pure historical and technical accuracy. It does not teach the

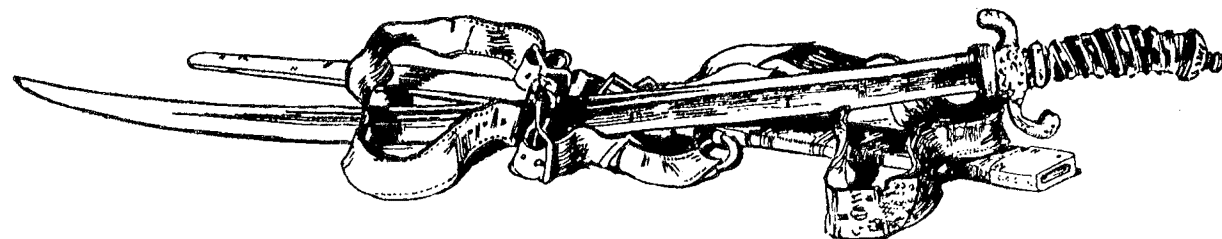


reader "how to" fight, it gives the reader a better idea of who, what, when, where and why. The book is a bite-sized history lesson. It helps the actor and director to visualize more clearly what is involved in physical dramatic conflict with various weapons in different periods. Mr. Wise tries to make the reader aware of the dramatic and historical importance of the differences in the styles and weapons in the theatre.

THE ARM AND THE MAN

In chapter one, Mr. Wise offers a section entitled "The Arm and the Man." This is, in essence, what the book is about. "If it is our intention in the theatre to project a consistent and coherent image of a character," says Mr. Wise, "then we must choose a weapon that is in keeping with such a character, since that weapon is essentially part of the character." [pp. 5] Much of the information presented in the book is in keeping with this ideal.

Chapters five through ten sketch a particular period such as "Greece and Rome" and the "Age of Elizabeth." Each chapter offers an example of what a



historically accurate fight might have been like and suggests how this may be translated to the stage. Mr. Wise uses examples from plays set in the various periods, exploring the characters within the fight. Mr. Wise offers the actor and director a look at how dramatically weapons and styles of combat differ.

Each chapter is broken into small sections that make reference and review quite simple. Mr. Wise is very good about defining terms. He takes time in the text to allow the reader to develop a fundamental understanding of the period and weapons being discussed. The book is easy to read and the author's line of thought is quite simple to trace. The chapters follow a natural progression, introducing the reader to the purpose of the text and then taking them step-by-step through supporting information and examples.

NOT MEANT FOR A TRAINING MANUAL

Anyone trying to glean even basic stage combat techniques will find little helpful information. Mr. Wise's intent is not for the actor to learn stage combat; rather he explains terminology used in the application of weapons. He does this not to "train" the actor, but to provide a foundation in vocabulary used throughout the rest of the text. Scant attention is given to mechanics. A thrusting attack is vaguely described as "an attack made with the point of the blade... made against any part of the opponent." [pp.30] Targets are, at best, vague. There's no real mention of distance, communication or partnering. There is no mention of the proper handling of a weapon.

"Wise's practical descriptions, while for the most part not blatantly unsafe, are neither clear nor concise," says Dane Torbenson. "The descriptions seem to have a 'just do it' flavor, allowing the reader to experiment and find what is best for him/her. This is fine for combat professionals who have a solid basis, and need to experiment with new techniques.

Novices, however, could do with a bit more structure and detail." This dangerous ambiguity and lack of information that leaves far too many things to chance for the text to be used as a manual for stage combat.

MOUNTING A STAGE FIGHT

Information that might confuse the reader into believing that Mr. Wise's text is a stage combat manual are his sections on choreographing and mounting a stage fight. This, however, is just an overview of the process of staging a fight. Here the author furnishes a brief sketch of a complex and specialized field. "Most directors will find it necessary to employ a fight arranger," says Mr. Wise, "a specialist who will be responsible for mounting the fights." [pp. 43]

The choreographic notation system offered by Mr. Wise is used to help illustrate fight sequences put forth in the text. In the text, it helps the reader follow the progression within the fight, but in rehearsal and on stage not enough information is presented. The notes suggest a parry, but do not specify what type, or even what hand. Aside from being incomplete in this and other areas, the system also is impractical for actual use. To write out this notation takes the same amount of time, if not more, than jotting down the fight in long hand.

INADEQUATE ILLUSTRATIONS

The book is inadequately illustrated. The line drawings (seven) appear only in the section covering basic techniques. There is no indication given whether drawings depict "actual" or "theatrical" combat. Because of this, these illustrations are quite misleading and potentially dangerous. There is seldom an "opponent" offered making it difficult to discern where exactly the combatant is facing. The remaining illustrations are photographs of stage weapons manufactured by a company owned by Mr. Wise. There are only sixteen photographs and weapons depicted

are of low quality compared with today's standards.

In all, Mr. Wise's text serves its intended purpose. He addresses and effectively answers questions about scenes of physical violence. He also offers the reader good solid information on how one can address such scenes. As a tool for the actor and director, this information is not as readily available in any other form. The book shows that there is no one way of sword fighting and that each period, style and person affects the weapon and the way it is handled on stage.

Despite many shortcomings, I recommend this text as a "quick reference" book for period styles. For the actor, director and stage combatant looking for stage combat techniques, however, I would suggest you look elsewhere.

David Boushey adds, "I think it should be in every fight library. Anything by Arthur Wise regarding weaponry is worth reading."

1. Mr. Wise's interest in stage combat led him to create Sword of York, Ltd. Founded in 1956, this company was one of the foremost manufacturers and suppliers of theatrical weapons.

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THE BOOK OF THE SWORD

by Sir Richard F. Burton

London: Chatto & Windus, 1884. ISBN 0-486-25434-8
98 illustrations (line drawings). pp. 280
(pp. 299 w/index)

[reprinted New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1987.]
Paperback, includes index, pp. 299.

Captain Sir Richard Francis Burton was one of the nineteenth century's leading scholars, explorers and Orientalists. Deemed a genius by some, he was fluent in French, Italian, and Bearnais and Neapolitan dialects, as well as Greek and Latin, before the age of twenty.¹ He published 43 books on his travels,² over 100 articles, and almost 30 volumes of trans-

lations, including an unexpurgated translation of *The Arabian Nights*.³

A master swordsman, Burton's skill was celebrated in both England and France. More than once he maintained his life and honor. Through his travels Burton collected a great deal of information about the origins of the sword and its application.

THE BOOK-BURNING WIDOW

When originally published, *The Book of the Sword* was intended to be the first volume of a comprehensive three-volume publication on the evolution and development of the sword. Unfortunately, Parts II and III, often referred to in the book, were incomplete at Burton's death. Burton's wife then wrote a biography of her husband, fashioning him into a good Catholic, a faithful husband, and a refined and modest man. Upon completion of this biography, she destroyed any evidence to contradict the picture she'd painted. His notes on Parts II and III, along with his forty-year collection of diaries and journals, were burned.

ORDERLY PATH THROUGH HISTORY

The first seven chapters follow an orderly path through history. Each chapter deals with a particular aspect or advance in the evolution of the sword. The next five chapters are topical, covering ancient Egypt, Syria, Palestine, Greece, Rome, etc. The final chapter is "a sketch of the sword among the contemporary Barbarians of the Roman Empire." [Introduction pp.xxv] An 18-page index is useful for reference and research.

The text is by no means light and easy reading. Paragraphs are long-winded and verbose. Burton himself states that "the subject does not readily lend itself to lively description; but, if I have been compelled to be dull, I have done my best to avoid being tedious." [Introduction pp.xxiv] However, much of the text is tedious, needing to be reread for meaning.

Michael Kirkland points out that, "Mr. Burton is admirably, if at times somewhat laboriously, thorough in his

research and discussions of various metals employed, the smithing and construction practices utilized, and the physics involved in each weapon's use in cut or thrust." Lawrence Woodhouse adds, "Burton's level of research and attention to detail are incredible. It is a history lesson, a language lesson, and a metallurgical lesson all in one." The text is so thick with "knowledgeable information" that the author's through-line is often lost and his arguments ramble.

The illustrations, in comparison to the depth of Burton's text, are disappointing. Michael Kirkland notes that "One can only wish that the same sort of painstaking attention to detail that Mr. Burton lavished on his subject in the text had been applied to its illustrations." Burton himself adds that, "the illustrations have not always, as they ought, been drawn to scale, they were borrowed from a number of volumes which paid scant attention to this requisite." [Introduction, Postscript pp. xxvi.]

Although Mr. Burton's material is dated, he offers his reader information unavailable elsewhere. Works cited are difficult, often impossible, to acquire for research. *The Book of the Sword* is one of the only sources on Hopology available today.

For research on Hopology, however, more recent works are best. So much has been discovered about our ancestors that most of Burton's text is now obsolete. Much of Burton's book is true and sound scholarship, but to follow his text word-for-word, is to use an outdated map as a guide.

For a student of the theatre, or aspiring combat instructor/choreographer, the information presented in this text is highly specialized and of little immediate use. Mr. Kirkland feels that "Choreographers will have to scrutinize quite carefully, and even then will, in all likelihood, find very little to aid them in their endeavors."

The book is meant more for the historian. "For a student of the sword, this is excellent reading," says David Boushey, adding, "although at times

[the book is] a little tedious with facts and figures that would only interest the most ardent exponent of the origins of the sword."

Mr. Woodhouse, on the other hand, thoroughly enjoyed the book. His comments were full of praise; no mention of laborious reading or difficulty with the text. "I could continue to describe how much I enjoyed each and every chapter of this book," he says, "but I think it would be better... to simply say 'I like it!' and move on." Mr. Woodhouse is not alone; I've heard Maestros recommend the text, and it has appeared on several suggested reading lists.

Michael Kirkland sums up, "If you want to familiarize yourself with hundreds of names of various civilization's swords, knives, daggers, spears, axes, etc., and attain a cursory understanding of the basic appearance, shape, and use of those weapons, and a detailed understanding of the various materials used in their construction—you will have come to the right source."

1. Captain Sir Richard Burton is reputed to have spoken over twenty-nine languages by the time of his death in 1890.
2. Sir Richard Burton lead an extraordinary life. He was an intelligence officer in the English infantry, trained Turkish irregulars for the Crimean War, traveled into the forbidden cities of Mecca and Harar. Accounts of his life and travels are available in abundance; some sources are as follows:
Burton, Isabel. *The Life of Captain Sir Richard F. Burton*. (2 vol.) 1893.
Wright, Thomas. *The Life of Sir Richard Burton*. (2 vol.) 1906 [reprinted 1968].
Brodie, Fawm M. *The Devil Drives: A Life of Sir Richard Burton*. 1967.
3. Burton took it upon himself to introduce to the West the sexual wisdom of the ancient Eastern manuals on the art of love. He risked prosecution and imprisonment to translate and print secretly the *Kama Sutra of Vatsyayana* (1883), *Ananga Ranga* (1885), and *The Perfumed Garden of Cheikh Nefzaoui* (1886).

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THE THEATRE STUDENT: STAGE VIOLENCE, TECHNIQUES OF OFFENSE, DEFENSE AND SAFETY.

by Albert M. Katz

New York: Richard Rosen Press, Inc.
ISBN 0-8239-0336-2, 1976.

Hardcover, 160 pp. 63 illustrations
(29 B&W photographs and 34 line drawings), \$14.95

Albert Katz, Director of Theatre at University of Wisconsin at Superior and past SAFF member, has written his book for "all the amateurs in the best (and original) sense of the word... lovers of the theatre, who have not yet had the benefit of formal training in stage violence." [Foreword pp.17]

Katz's book is designed to teach techniques of stage combat, addressing itself to falls, slaps, hits, unarmed combat, wrestling and martial arts, the use of knives, swords (one-hand, two-hand, foil, rapier, sword and shield, etc.), shields and armor, spears and polearms, firearms, as well as choreographic technique and notation.

In his attempt to cover so much ground, a good amount of detail and information, essential to an inexperienced combatant, was neglected. In under 160 pages, it is little wonder that Katz's book falls short of its goal.

FROM THE STREETS TO THE STAGE

Dr. Katz earned his BA at Union College and his Masters and Doctor's degrees at the University of Michigan. There's no indication of any formal training in stage combat, martial arts or competitive fencing. Instead, "Many of the violent techniques he describes in this book, he learned growing up in the streets of New York. When he first encountered violence on stage, he began employing his street knowledge to keep from getting hurt, and quickly found that these techniques translated easily to the stage." [About the Author pp.7]

Dr. Katz's *Stage Violence* is yet another attempt to put the complete foundations and principles of stage combat into one simple book. "This book," says Dane Torbenson, "like so many other texts on stage combat, endeavors to achieve more than is possible in one book."

In his preface, and throughout each chapter Dr. Katz offers a good many safety tips and practical advice. Much of this information is of interest to the beginning and proficient stage combatant, however, information is omitted and provided to suit the author's specific purpose.

THE CONTROVERSIAL "SLAP"

A good example is Katz's "slap." Dr. Katz advocates a slap directed at the victim's neck. "The neck muscles are specifically designed by nature to be the 'shock absorbers' for the head to cushion impact," he says [pp.41] But in his chapter on wrestling and martial arts Katz states, "stay away from the neck and throat... A blow delivered to the base of the neck will result in a nerve-pinch and a blackout... [if a strike comes across] the Adam's apple, that cartilage will be crushed and the victim will suffocate." [pp.66]

This slap technique is controversial; Joseph Martinez addressed the matter in the July '78 *Fight Master*. "In my opinion," says Martinez, "a dangerous example of misinformation has come out in print concerning the contact slap... Mr. Katz instructs the novice to strike the victim with a cupped palm on the side of the neck below the jawline... I believe this to be very dangerous and completely in error from the standpoint of safety—not to mention that his version looks like a neck slap, not a face slap."

DANGEROUS OMISSIONS

While the text reads well, basic principles of stage combat: eye contact, cueing, safe distance, balance, and knaps are omitted. Punches, slaps, kicks, and blade-play advocated don't include essential safety precautions; some are blatantly dangerous.

"Frankly, I find a good deal of Dr. Katz's techniques to be impractical, and in several instances, downright unsafe," says Lawrence Woodhouse. "The first action he talks about, a side fall, seems to be totally incorrect. I attempted this fall, following his instructions to the letter, and thought I was going to break my ankle!"

Dr. Katz admits that "I have had

no formal training [as a fencer] and have never held a sword outside the theatre or a theatre classroom." [pp.89] Where then, does he get his information? His introduction speaks of adapting "street fight" techniques to the stage, but as Mr. Woodhouse observes, "when does a boy growing up in Manhattan have the opportunity to learn quarterstaff, or rapier and dagger?" The armed techniques in the book exemplify Dr. Katz's lack of training and practical experience. Techniques are generally based on competitive sabre fencing coupled with an odd mixture of fact and fancy.

The illustrations proved quite useful in clarifying technique. The photographs also illustrate important points in technique. The drawings that were most unclear were those showing sequential movement. The transition from point A to point B at times seemed a marvel of physics. Some illustrations contradict the text. Some show attacks to the neck, sporadic distance, weapons directly in front of the face, and several attacks that appear to be straight to the eyes.

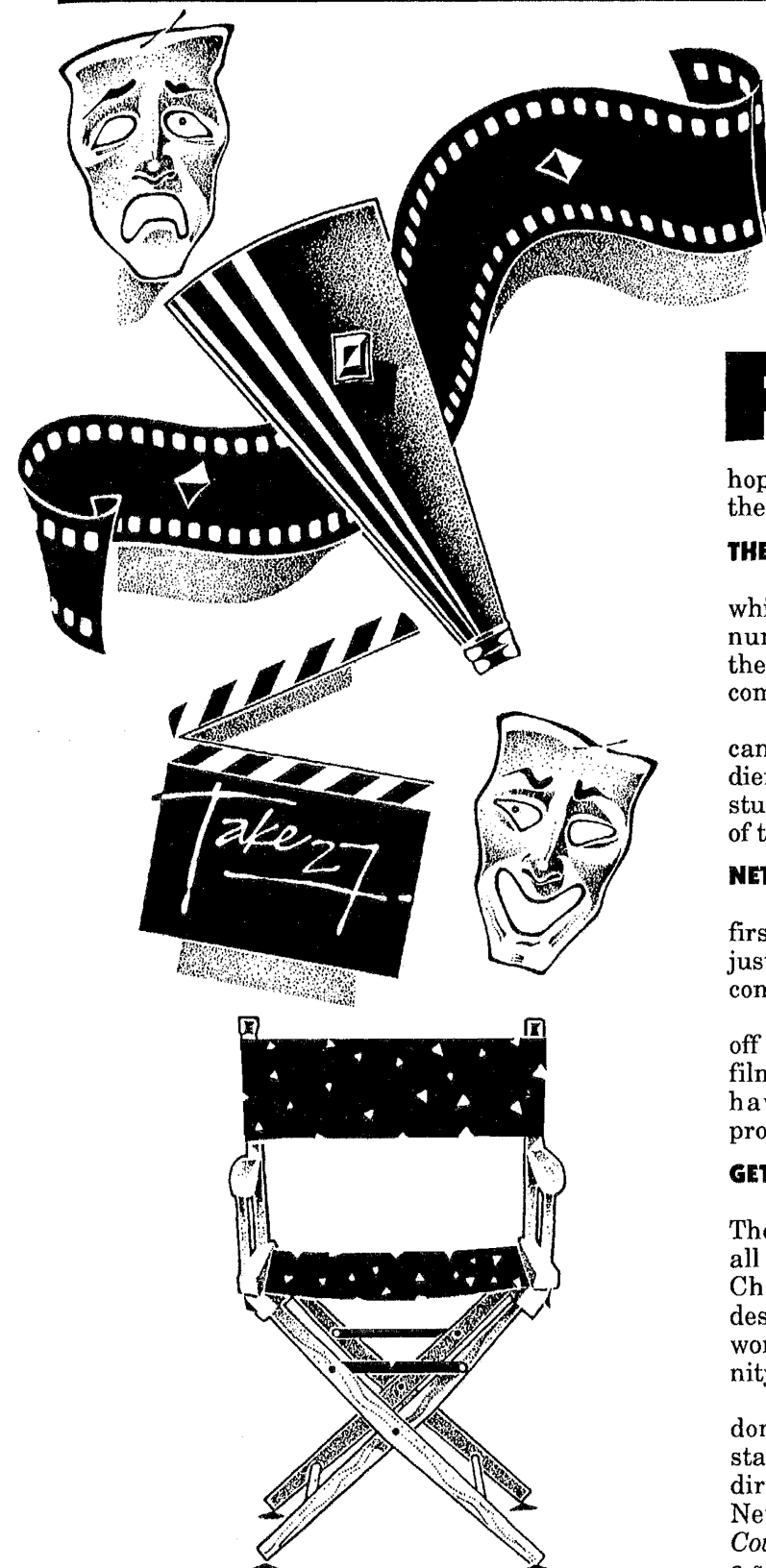
Stage Violence, while offering some wonderful safety tips and practical illustrations for the necessity of safe, effective stage violence, is not a book I would recommend to amateurs. Dane Torbenson adds that "Dr. Katz's book makes for interesting reading, and can provide some useful techniques and ideas, but certainly is not the comprehensive guide to teaching stage combat that it aims to be."

Lawrence Woodhouse says, "I would only recommend this book to someone as an example of what not to do," he says. "Dr. Katz insists on doing things safely, more power to him, but his techniques do not always demonstrate this philosophy."

1. "To Slap or Not to Slap—That Isn't Always the Question," Joseph Martinez, *The Fight Master* No. 2 July, 1978. Pp.12-14.

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Dane Torbenson is a graduate student in theatre at the University of Colorado, and an SAFF member. Lawrence Woodhouse is a certified actor/combatant with the SAFF and a member of the United States Fencing Association.



Wrap Time

BY
DAVID BOUSHEY

Film and television work is the wave of the future. Either we "catch" that wave or we will find ourselves relegated strictly to theatre and outdoor drama. This column will be devoted to practical advice that I hope will encourage you to pursue film work; not only are the jobs there, the money is there.

THE LOCAL FILM COMMISSION

Approach the film commission in your area. Find out which productions are coming to your area. Get a contact number—hopefully the production manager. If you need the phone number and contact person for your nearest film commission, call me. I will give you the information.

Runaway production costs are a fact of life. If producers can eliminate costs for housing, transportation, and per diems, they will gladly lend an ear to local stunt people. My stunt organization, United Stuntmen's Association, is proof of that in the northwest states.

NETWORKING

Networking with film people in your area is a crucial first step. Getting known in film circles helps to land jobs just as it does in theatrical circles. Chances of a production company looking you up are between slim and nil!

The sooner you can accumulate film credits, the better off you are. Unfortunately, there is still a heavy bias in the film industry against theatre. Production managers often have difficulty conceiving of anyone who might be proficient at both.

GETTING THAT FIRST JOB

How do you land that first job as stunt coordinator? There are non-SAG (Screen Actors' Guild) films produced all the time. Visit your local university's film department. Chances are that you'll locate a graduate student who desperately needs someone with your skills. There probably won't be much (or any) money, but it is an excellent opportunity for you to learn the technical aspects of film production.

It may be that you can hook up with a small film being done by a director trying to make a name. Don't take a stance of "Paramount or nothing!" I did a film with a young director named Gus Van Sant. His little project won the New York Critics' Award for Best Film of 1989—*Drugstore Cowboy*. What was a very low budget film turned out to be a solid credit on my film resumé.

Wrap Time

KNOW THE LANGUAGE

Getting to know the language is half the battle. The vocabulary aspect of the business starts the day you call the production office and ask to speak to the production manager. If you sound green, he'll add that to the fact that you aren't from L.A. and assume you haven't a clue as to what film making is all about.

There are a couple of good books that can help in learning the ins and outs of the business. A good resource for vocabulary is *Cut! Print!* by Tony Miller and Patricia George, F.I.W. Press.

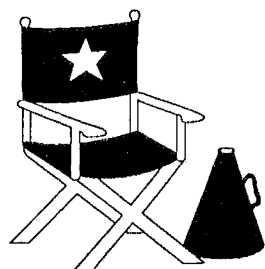
A good resource on directing for film (which applies substantially to a stunt coordinator's work as well) is *Directing Television and Film* by Alan A. Armer, Wadsworth Publishing.

COMING ATTRACTIONS

Future columns in the *Fight Master* will delve into the art of stunt coordination in more detail. I'll also address the question of when and how to say "No" to a director who wants you to trash yourself or your stuntmen for the sake of a few feet of celluloid! If you have any questions about the film business, feel free to call me. Until next time, it's a wrap!

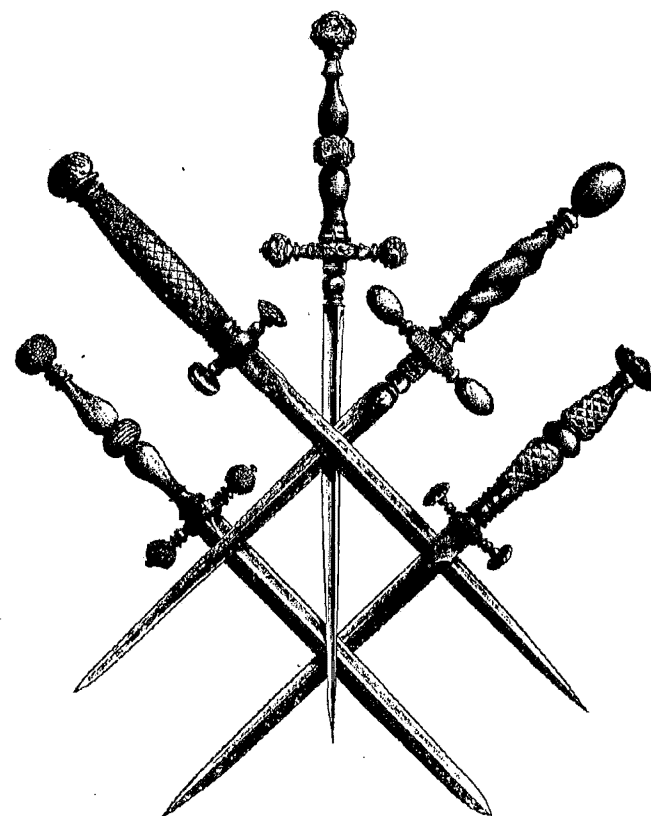
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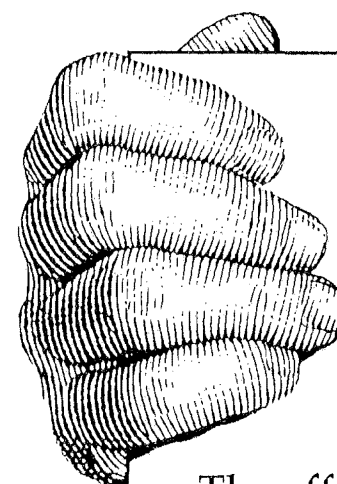
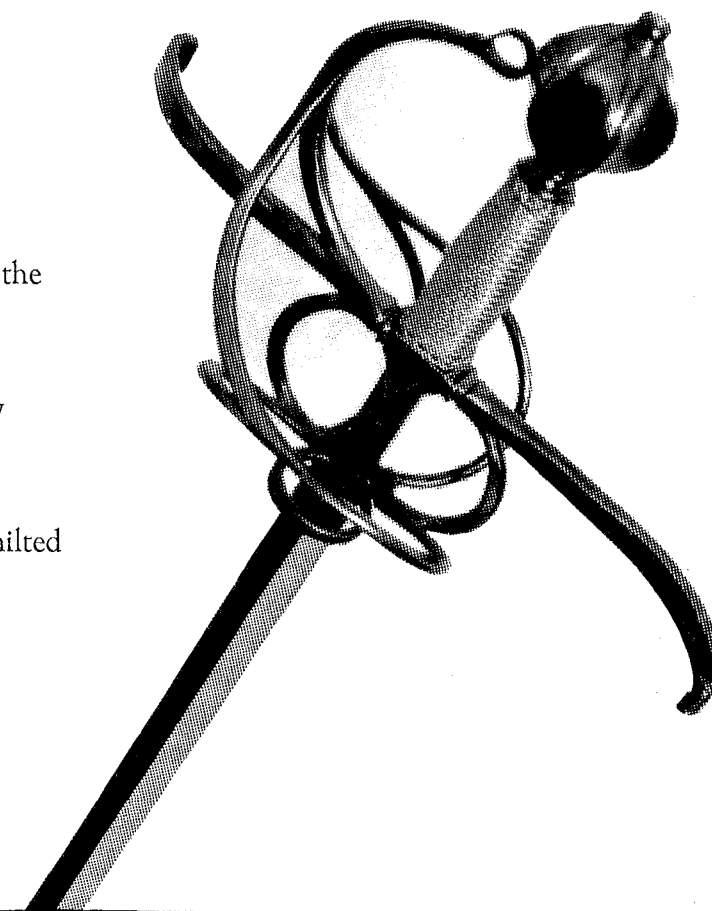
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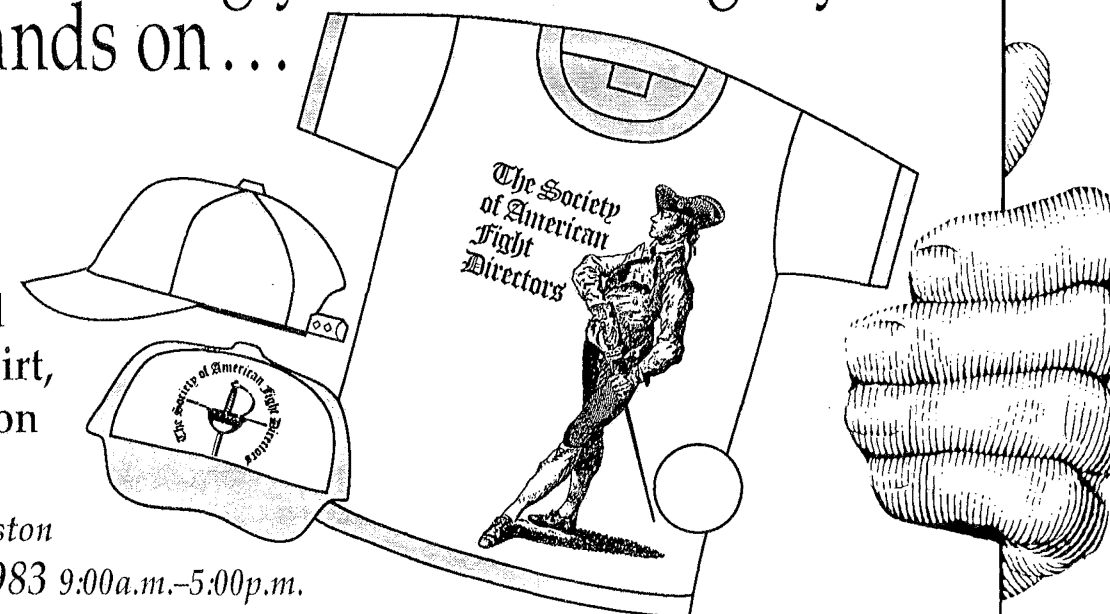
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*Complete line of swords and daggers.
Also carries Oscar Kolombatovich
weapons. Catalog \$3.00*

Arms and Armor
1101 Stinson Blvd. NE
Minneapolis, MN 55413
(612) 331-6473
*Custom swords, daggers, pole arms
and armor. Catalog available.*

Art of the Sword
761 Calusa
El Cerrito, CA 94530
(415) 526-3755
*Armory and Oscar Kolombatovich
weapons. No catalog.*

**Rod Casteel
Colonial Armory**
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Eugene, OR 97404
(503) 688-0607
*Custom swords and daggers.
All periods. Sales and rental.
Catalog \$1.00.*

Center Firearms Co.
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New York, NY 10018
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*Firearms. All types, all periods. Sales
and rental. No catalog.*

Eiler Robert Cook
P.O. Box 188
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(704) 692-0323
*Complete line of edged weapons,
decorative and theatrical. Importer of
Oscar Kolombatovich weapons.
Catalog available.*

**Gratzner Period
Accoutrements**
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Miami, FL 33186
(305) 382-2757
*Sword belts and hangers of all periods.
Catalog \$1.00.*

**Dennis L. Graves
Swordcutler**
255 S. 41st St.
Boulder, CO 80303
(303) 494-4685
*Custom swords & daggers, all periods.
Sales and rental. Catalog available.*

Mark Haney
6000 J Street
Sacramento, CA 95819
(916) 944-0252
Handmade broadswords. No catalog.

Museum Replicas Limited
2143 Gees Mill Road
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Conyers, GA 30207
(800) 241-3664
*Decorative and combat weapons.
Oscar Kolombatovich. Catalog \$2.00.*

Lundegaard Armoury
P.O. Box 287
Crompond, NY 10517
*Custom fantasy swords and daggers.
Catalog \$1.50.*

Steve Vaughan
800 Vernal Road
Attica, NY 14011
(716) 591-3673
*Custom made swords, daggers,
shields, spears, etc. No Catalog.*

Put to the Test

FOLLOWING ARE THE RESULTS OF SAFD CERTIFICATION TESTING.

CERTIFIED TEACHERS

SAFD Certification must be renewed every three years to ensure that skills are kept to a high standard. Following are the people who renewed teacher certification in 1991.

Payson Burt	Steve Vaughan
Brian Byrnes	Brad Waller
Charles Conwell	Jack Young

The following people are new SAFD certified teachers.

David Doersch	Michael Hood
---------------	--------------

ACTOR/COMBATANTS

SAFD Certification must be renewed every three years. Following are actor/combatants who renewed their certification in 1991.

Tim Carryer	9/91
Michael G. Chin	8/91
Joe Dempsey	5/91
Tod Loweth	9/91
Martino Pistone	8/91
Nicholas Sandys	8/91
Lawrence Woodhouse	5/91

Following are actor/combatants who were put to the test and earned SAFD actor/combatant certification.

DECEMBER

Temple University

Date: December 12, 1990
Instructor: Payson Burt
Adjudicator: Chris Villa

Eric Tieze	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Eric Parham	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd

MARCH

Ohio University

Date: March 14, 1991
Instructor: D. Mumaw
Adjudicator: D. Fracher

Greg Paul

APRIL

Webster University—St. Louis

Date: April 13, 1991
Instructor: Ken Smith
Adjudicator: Richard Raether

Jeff Craven	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Christopher Geiger	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Lantz Harshbarger	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Stephanie McCain	R & D, Unarmed, QS

Denver Center Conservatory

Date: April 15, 1991
Instructor: Dale Girard
Adjudicator: David Boushey

It was my pleasure to pass all 20 of Dale's students, with five earning recommendation. It has been some time since I've passed all students testing and this shows the quality of Dale's instruction. Safety was first rate and many of the scenes very clever in nature.

Don Williams	R & D, Unarmed, Broadsword
Lisa Weaver	R & D, Unarmed, Broadsword
Gabriella Cavallero	R & D, Unarmed, Broadsword
Leigh Armor	R & D, Unarmed, Broadsword
Michael Allen	R & D, Unarmed, Broadsword
Brad Kindall	R & D, Unarmed, Broadsword
Paul Mockovak	R & D, Unarmed, Broadsword
Marc Bryman	R & D, Unarmed, Broadsword
John (Jes) Sauer	R & D, Unarmed, Broadsword
Jodi Baker	R & D, Unarmed, Broadsword
Madeline Pollak	R & D, Unarmed, Broadsword
Amy Harris	R & D, Unarmed, Broadsword
Zina Armstrong	R & D, Unarmed, Broadsword
Will Obering	Passed R & D, BS Rec., Unarmed
El Armstrong	Passed R & D, BS Rec., Unarmed
Katrina Majors Hays	Recommended
Darren Davis	R & D, Unarmed, Broadsword
Danny Swartz	Recommended
Dane Torbenson	R & D, Unarmed, Broadsword
Timothy Tait	Recommended
	R & D, Unarmed, Broadsword, SS

University of Alaska—Anchorage

Date: April 18, 1991
Instructor: Michael Hood
Adjudicator: David Boushey

This was the strongest group of combatants that I've ever tested in Alaska. They were disciplined and eager to excell. I was most pleased to see that instructor Michael Hood's time spent at the 1990 Advanced Actor/Combatant Workshop paid off in spades, as his skills showed marked improvement, which in turn showed in his students.

Lainie Dreas	R & D, Unarmed, Quarterstaff
Leif Sawyer	R & D, Unarmed, Quarterstaff
Brian Mead	R & D, Unarmed, Quarterstaff
Scott Axtell	R & D, Unarmed, Quarterstaff
Frank Mengell	R & D, Unarmed, Quarterstaff
Scott Tengelin	R & D, Unarmed, Quarterstaff
Dominique Goldbar	R & D, Unarmed, Quarterstaff
Hal Schneider	R & D, Unarmed, Quarterstaff
Harold Phillips	R & D, Unarmed, Quarterstaff
Alex Van Amburg	R & D, Unarmed, Quarterstaff
Brian Christopher	Passed, R & D Rec., QS, Unarmed
Jeff Seastone	Passed, R & D Rec., QS, Unarmed
Kit Davlin	Recommended
Jeff McCamish	R & D, Unarmed, Quarterstaff
	Recommended
	R & D, Unarmed, Quarterstaff

University of Wisconsin—Milwaukee

Date: April 20, 1991
Instructor: Richard Raether
Adjudicator: J. Allen Suddeth

Steven Folstein	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
William Finn	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Mark Knodle	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Scott Brown	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Kevin Miller	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Steven Price	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Thomas Elliott	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Timothy Thilleman	Recommended
	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Jason Crane	Recommended
	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Steven Koehler	Recommended
	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd

California Institute of the Arts

Date: April 20, 1991
Instructor: A.C. Weary
Adjudicator: Erik Fredricksen

Joni Allen	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Michelle Worley	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Bridget Georgeson	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Christina Morales	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Brian Joseph	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Sean Morgan	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Nathan Palmer	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Jenny Schwartz	R & D, Unarmed, QS
John Williams	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Sean Nottingham	R & D, Unarmed, QS
John Heffron	R & D, Unarmed, QS

University of Illinois

Date: April 26, 1991
Instructor: Robin McFarquhar
Adjudicator: Richard Raether

Vince Gatton	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Jeffrey Lieber	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Tom Carr	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Monte Black	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Jim Stark	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Rafer Wiegel	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Julie Greenberg	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Bridgette Brand	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Lindley Curry	R & D, Unarmed, QS

MAY

Cornish College of the Arts

Date: May 3, 1991
Instructor: Robert MacDougal
Adjudicator: John Robert Beardsley

James Helsa	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Craig Olsen	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
John Shores	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Tristan Sutherland	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Laurel Johns	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Marla Beth Clem	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Retha Tinker	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Shannon Morris	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Rob James	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Mandy Johnson	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Tom Huyler	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Jay Mastrude	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Kelly Boulware	Recommended
	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Tom Riehuss	Recommended
	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd

Academy of the Sword—San Francisco

Date: May 4, 1991
Instructor: Richard Lane
Adjudicator: Richard Raether

Mary Jackman	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Miguel Najera	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Michael Briganti	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Jerry Hamlet	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Colleen Amiot	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Scott Crandall	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Ron Talbot	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Robin Armstrong	Recommended
	R & D, Unarmed, BS, QS, SS
Andrew Hurteau	Recommended
	R & D, Unarmed, BS, QS, SS

University of Virginia

Date: May 6, 1991
Instructor: Colleen Kelly
Adjudicator: Joseph D. Martinez

Pam Meyers-Morgan	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Jennifer Bennett	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Lou Bird	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Kathy Pottle	R & D, Unarmed, QS
C.J. Buot	R & D, Unarmed, BS, QS
Andrew Richards	R & D, Unarmed, BS, QS
Mark Boynton	Recommended
	R & D, Unarmed, BS, QS

Northern Kentucky University

Date: May 7, 1991
Instructor: Susan Eviston
Adjudicator: Drew Fracher

Thomas C. Turner	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
David L. Godbey	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Regan Forman	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Jennifer J. Margrave	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Kimberly Wade	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Neil David Seibel	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Dwayne Rider	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Tonya Twaddell	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Carey Copelyn Staples Embry	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Scott Thrasher	R & D, Unarmed, BS, SS
Whitney Wilcoxson	R & D, Unarmed, BS, SS
Regina B. Cerimele	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Todd R. Norris	R & D, Unarmed, QS

University of the Arts—Philadelphia

Date: May 7, 1991
Instructor: Charles Conwell
Adjudicator: J. Allen Suddeth

Jesse Lenat	R & D, Unarmed, BS, SS
Eric Giancoli	R & D, Unarmed, BS, SS
Lisa Zacharie	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Ke Sneller	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Christopher Roberts	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Michael Turner	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Daniel Burke	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Tracy Clark	R & D, Unarmed, SS
Scott Hiltz	R & D, Unarmed, SS

Indiana University of Pennsylvania

Date: May 9, 1991
Instructor: Brian Byrnes
Adjudicator: J. Allen Suddeth

Bob DelPizzo	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Tracy Christer	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Lonnie Gaetano	R & D, Unarmed, QS

Nate Patrus	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Eric Baratta	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Chris Howard	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Peter Miltz	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Troy Jones	R & D, Unarmed, QS
T.J. Jones	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Shaun Rolly	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Bill Yanity	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Kim Ders	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Chris Allen	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Tony Allen	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Fred Gavitt	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Ben White	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Karl McCall	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Greg Rapp	R & D, Unarmed, QS

New York University

Date: May 11, 1991
Instructor: David Brimmer
Adjudicator: J. Allen Suddeth

Ian Marshall	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Shawn Powell	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Vien Hong	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Edward Eleferion	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Mather Zickel	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd

University of Missouri—Kansas City

Date: May 11, 1991
Instructor: Martin English
Adjudicator: Richard Raether

Dan Ruch	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Joe Golden	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Brenda Mason	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Carla Noack	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Chris Clarke	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Ward Wright	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Richard Quesnel	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Brent Puglisi	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd

University of Washington

Date: May 11, 1991
Instructor: David Boushey
Adjudicator: John Robert Beardsley

Daniel Tierney	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Bill O'Connor	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Gina Panzera	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Laura Downing	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Scott Webster	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Mark Williams	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Alba Dennis	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Shelley Reynolds	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd

Wright State University

Date: May 23, 1991
Instructor: Mark Olsen
Adjudicator: Richard Raether

Terek Puckett	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Roxanne Wellington	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Dayve Gabbard	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Lance Hammond	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Lisa Walls	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Susan Blackwell	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Dana Pressede	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Amy Yates	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Jake Lockwood	Recommended
	R & D, Unarmed, QS
James Riemer	Recommended
	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Anthony McKinney	Recommended
	R & D, Unarmed, QS

Put to the Test

Columbia College—Chicago

Date: May 30, 1991
Instructor: David Woolley
Adjudicator: Richard Raether

Kimb Shiver	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Elisa Suehs	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Kelly Carter	R & D, Unarmed, BS, BS/Shld
Crislyn Vsoke	R & D, Unarmed, BS, BS/Shld
Danny Robles	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Nick Siapkari	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Brian Shaw	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Erin Philyaw	Recommended
	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Michael Andrews	Recommended
	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Stevie Lee Richardson	Recommended
	R & D, Unarmed, QS

Duke University

Date: May 30, 1991
Instructor: Jack Young
Adjudicator: Drew Fracher

Kevin Isola	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Andy Rein	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Wendy Smith	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd

JUNE

M.A.S.C.—Minneapolis

Date: June 1, 1991
Instructor: David Doersch
Adjudicator: Richard Raether

Erin P. Kenny	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Joshua Peterson	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Matthew Nielsen	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Markus J. Volimas	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Ryan Thiel	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Paul J. Keyburn	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
James R. Hoyer	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Kristine A. Wendland	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Mark DeKovic	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Joseph V. Manussier III	Recommended
	R & D, Unarmed, BS, SS
Jim Chlebeczek	Recommended
	R & D, Unarmed, BS

Shakespeare Theatre at the Folger

Date: June 17, 1991
Instructor: Brad Waller
Adjudicator: Joseph D. Martinez

Lewis Shaw	R & D, Unarmed
James Brown-Orleans	R & D, Unarmed
Christopher Cherry	R & D, Unarmed
Robert Dull	R & D, Unarmed
Dan Awkward	R & D, Unarmed
Craig Gault	R & D, Unarmed
Dan Baum	R & D, Unarmed
Tim Frank	R & D, Unarmed

Catholic University—Maryland

Date: June 24, 1991
Instructor: Brad Waller
Adjudicator: Joseph D. Martinez

Joseph Cronin	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Carter Cochran	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Sean Fri	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Jeff Plitt	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Kristina Smith	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Ruth Cataldo	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Jorge V. Ledesma	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Louis Shaw	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
James Brown Orleans	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd

AUGUST

National Stage Combat Workshop University of Nevada—Las Vegas

Date: August 2, 1991
Instructors: J.R. Beardsley, David Boushey,
Drew Fracher, David Leong, Richard Raether
Adjudicators: Beardsley, Fracher, Fredricksen,
Leong, Raether, Suddeth

William Neenan	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Jeff Sudakov	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Morris Everett	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
William Warriner	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Arthur Jolly	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Attis Kleinbergs	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Andy Holbrook	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Matt Janicki	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Qarie Hussain	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Leanne Beauregard	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Randy Roberts	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Michael Winkelman	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Scott Mann	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Shelley Russell Parks	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Erin Kenny	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Isaih Washington	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Jim Brown	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Bobby King	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Robin Rawcett	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Tom Laitenan	Recommended
	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Thaddeus Smith	Recommended
	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Ax Norman	Recommended
	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Steven Levine	Recommended
	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Victoria Anzaldua	Recommended
	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
John Scheidler	Recommended
	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Regan Foman	Recommended
	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd

Advanced Actor/Combatant Workshop University of Nevada—Las Vegas

Date: August 2, 1991
Instructors: J. Allen Suddeth, Erik Fredricksen
Adjudicators: Beardsley, Fracher, Fredricksen,
Leong, Raether, Suddeth

Michael Anderson	R & D, Unarmed, SS
Randy L. Bailly	R & D, Unarmed, QS, BS/Shld
Charles Conwell	R & D, Unarmed, QS, BS/Shld
Kit Davlin	R & D, Unarmed, QS, BS/Shld
Stephen "Popeye" Eliasson	R & D, Unarmed, QS, BS/Shld
Jean-Francois Gagnon	R & D, Unarmed, SS
Edward Hamilton-Clark	R & D, Unarmed, SS
Gregory Hoffman	R & D, Unarmed, QS, BS/Shld
Michael Kirkland	R & D, Unarmed, QS, BS/Shld
David McClutchey	R & D, Unarmed, QS, BS/Shld
Willis Middleton	R & D, Unarmed, QS, BS/Shld
M.A. Richard	R & D, Unarmed, QS, BS/Shld
Jane Ridley	R & D, Unarmed, QS, BS/Shld
John Cashman	Recommended
	R & D, Unarmed, QS, BS/Shld
Larry Henderson	Recommended
	R & D, Unarmed, QS, BS, SS
Jonathon Howell	Recommended
	R & D, Unarmed, QS, BS/Shld
Mike Mahaffey	Recommended
	R & D, Unarmed, QS, BS, SS

Olsen Summer Workshop

Date: August 12, 1991
Instructor: Mark Olsen
Adjudicator: Drew Fracher

Paul Bowen	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Melissa King	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Jason Hays	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Leah Rader	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Chris Entsweller	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Brian Fagan	R & D, Unarmed, QS

The Legend of Daniel Boone

Date: August 20, 1991
Instructor: Mark Boynton
Adjudicator: Drew Fracher

Kevin W. Creel	R & D, Unarmed, QS
William S. Webb	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Damian Laymon	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Johnny O. Pickett	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Kristin Olsen	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Michael Tarris	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Eric Sandeen	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Jimmi Beneducci	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Lesley Mentzer	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Jeremy Bagan	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Thaddeus Wade West	R & D, Unarmed, QS
John Clemo	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Barbara Brandt	Recommended
	R & D, Unarmed, QS

Theatre West Virginia

Date: August 25, 1991
Instructor: Joel Mason
Adjudicator: J.D. Martinez

Scott Eads	R & D, Unarmed, BS & Shld
Gregory Mock	R & D, Unarmed, BS & Shld
Melanie Rey	R & D, Unarmed, BS & Shld
Patrick Michael Dukeman	R & D, Unarmed, BS & Shld
Rae Leonard	R & D, Unarmed, BS & Shld
Carrie Houchins	R & D, Unarmed, BS & Shld
Mary Kathryn Caplin	R & D, Unarmed, BS & Shld
Joel Scott	R & D, Unarmed, BS & Shld
Jamie Forehand	Recommended
	R & D, Unarmed, BS & Shld
Joel Mason	Recommended
	R & D, Unarmed, BS & Shld

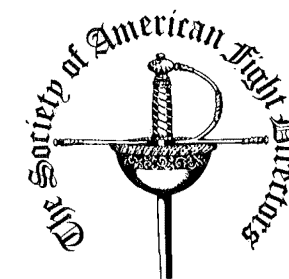
Georgia Shakespeare Festival

Date: August 28, 1991
Instructors: Gordon Carpenter/Jamie Cheatham
Adjudicator: Drew Fracher

Anthony Rodriguez	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd
Lee Look	R & D, Unarmed, Brdswd

CONGRATULATIONS
TO ALL
WHO SUCCEEDED
WHEN
PUT TO THE TEST!

Membership Application



The Society of American Fight Directors (SAFD) is a non-profit organization devoted to training, and improving the quality of stage combat. We are committed to the highest standards of safety in the theatrical, film and television industries. The SAFD offers educational opportunities across the country at universities, privately, and at the annual National Stage Combat Workshop expressly to disseminate this information. In addition the SAFD certifies individuals in three categories:

Actor/Combatant
Teacher
Fight Master

However, one need not be certified in order to be a member of SAFD. Anyone interested in the art of fight choreography and stage fighting can join as a Friend. Members of SAFD receive: a 10% discount on all SAFD workshops; *The Fight Master*, a journal which is published twice yearly and contains in-depth articles on the history and practice of stage combat, the latest equipment, staging practices; and *The Cutting Edge*, a newsletter updating SAFD activities, policies and member news.

To apply for membership in the SAFD fill out the form below and send to:

Richard Raether, SAFD Secretary-Treasurer
1834 Camp Avenue, Rockford, IL 61103

Dues are \$25.00 annually. You must enclose a \$25.00 check covering dues for the current year.
Checks should be made payable to Society of American Fight Directors.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION SOCIETY OF AMERICAN FIGHT DIRECTORS

PLEASE PRINT

Membership Classification: ☐ Friend

☐ Certified Actor/Combatant

Name _____

The following is for Certified Actor/Combatants only:

Address _____

Date Tested _____

Instructor _____

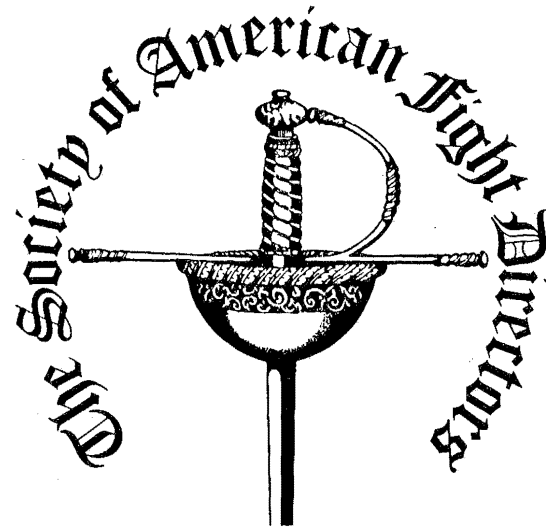
Weapons _____

Phone No. _____

Adjudicator _____

The Society of American Fight Directors

DEDICATED TO IMPROVING THE QUALITY AND SAFETY OF STAGE COMBAT



Founded in 1977, the SAFD is a non-profit organization with a membership comprised of over 300 professionals, academicians, friends and supporters, all dedicated to the art of stage violence.

Led by the country's top fight choreographers, the SAFD stands for the very highest standard in effective and safe theatrical fighting.

The SAFD has developed recognized standards for levels of skill in the stage combat arts. The SAFD certifies individuals at three levels.

CERTIFIED ACTOR/COMBATANT

The actor/combatant is an individual who has received basic training in three to six weapon forms and passed a performance test which includes a number of required moves. The actor/combatant certificate expires three years from the date of issue, but is renewable through a re-testing process. The actor/combatant certificate does not qualify an individual to teach stage combat or to arrange fight scenes. But it does signify SAFD recognition of this individual as a safe, competent performer.

CERTIFIED TEACHER

A certified teacher of stage combat is an individual who has first passed the actor/combatant certification fight test and then, in addition, had extensive educational training and passed SAFD tests in the following areas: teaching techniques, historical styles, weapons theory and practice, and theatrical choreography. The SAFD endorses this individual to teach stage combat.

CERTIFIED FIGHT MASTER

A fight master is an individual who has completed all requirements of the actor/combatant and the certified teacher. Beyond this, he or she must have a strong professional background, have choreographed a minimum of twenty union productions and passed an extensive oral, written and practical examination. Fight masters are endorsed by the SAFD to teach, coach, and choreograph in professional theatre, film and television, and in the academic arena.



1834 Camp Avenue
Rockford, Illinois 61103

Bulk Rate
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