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The Society of American Fight Directors

Spring 1992

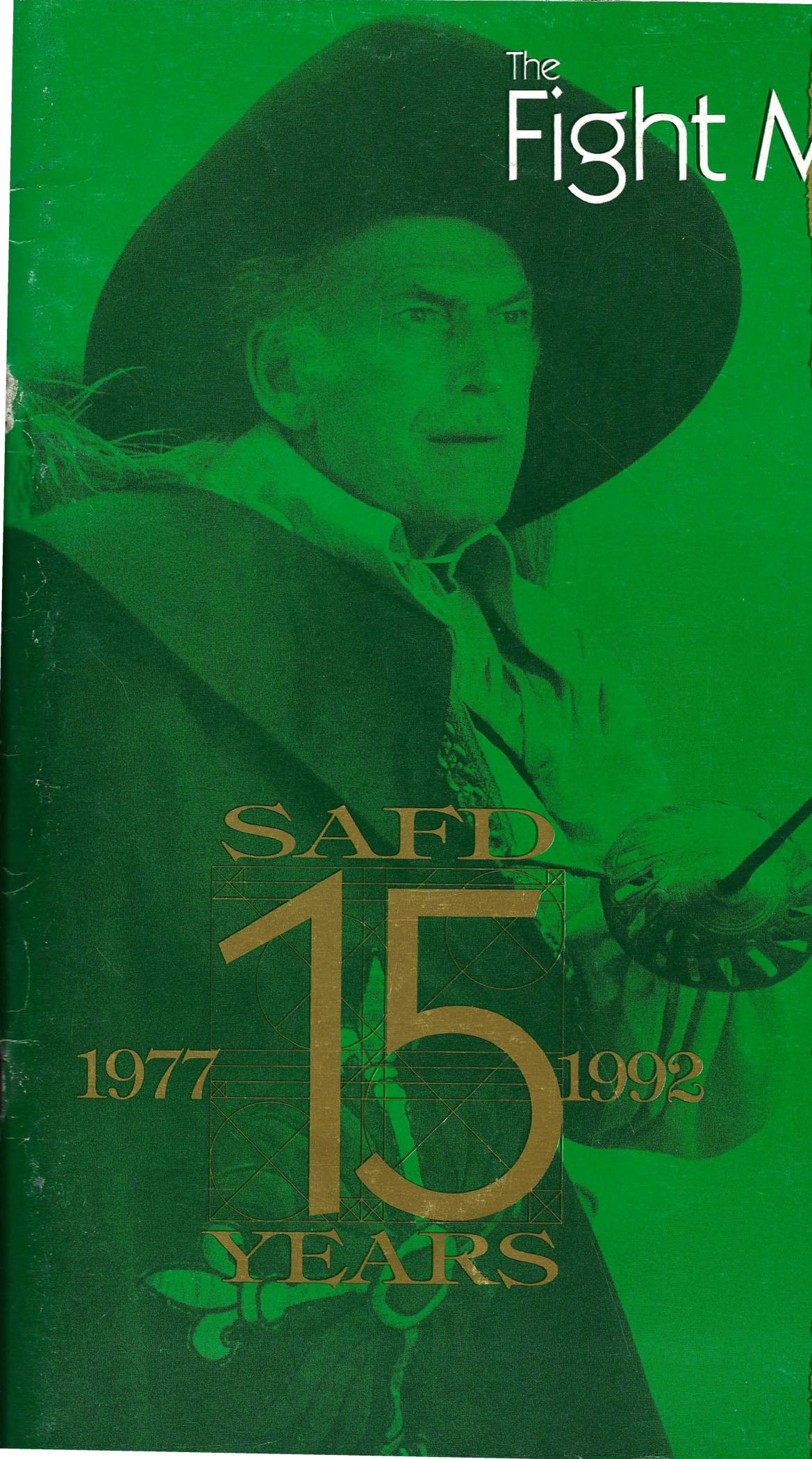
The Fight Master, Spring 1992, Vol. 15 Issue 1

The Society of American Fight Directors

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The Fight Master

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SAFD

15

1977

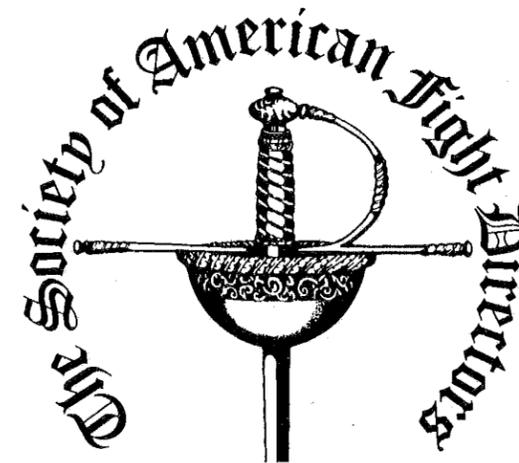
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VOLUME XIV
NUMBER 1

The Fight Master

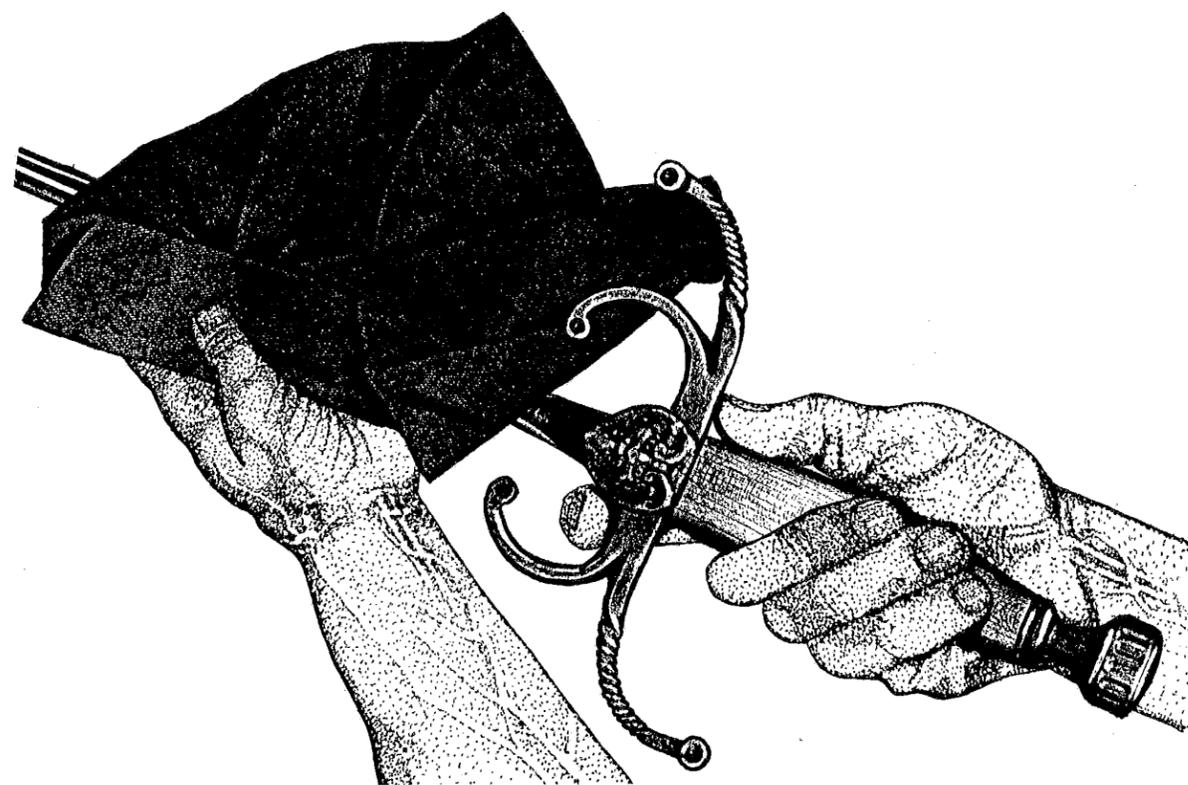
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The Fight Master

15 15 YEARS OF FIGHTING THE GOOD FIGHT

COMPILED AND WRITTEN BY RICHARD RAETHER

Happy birthday to us! The SAFD celebrates its 15th anniversary this year and the *Fight Master* takes a look back at how it all came about. In this issue, a three-parter:

- SBF *our British role model*
- SAFD *the first 15 years*
- NSCW *a brief look at the history of the National Stage Combat Workshops*

23 CLASSICAL JAPANESE MARTIAL ART

BY DR. ROBERT W. DILLON, JR.

Traditional Ko-Ryu (systems of traditional martial arts training) still flourish in Japan, still teaching students the same techniques of classical warfare that were developed and taught in the Middle Ages. "It is as if the Plantagenet knights still trained under the shadow of BOAC departures and arrivals."

26 "BY THE SWORD OF A HERO, LET ME FALL— STEEL IN MY HEART, AND LAUGHTER ON MY LIPS."

BY CHARLES CONWELL

For many people, there was only one Cyrano de Bergerac. His name was José Ferrer. In a final interview, the late actor discusses his most famous role. Despite his Academy Award, Ferrer had bitter memories of his film version of *Cyrano*, "I can't bear to look at it!"

29 MIME TRAINING: THE INVISIBLE EDGE

BY MARK OLSEN

Remember when mime was big? It faded abruptly—in part, because for too long, "anyone with make-up, slippers, and a knack for annoying people could hit the streets and claim to be a mime." Mimes became clowns, storytellers, puppeteers, even stage combatants. A former professional mime discusses the edge that mime training can bring to stage combat.

33 "ROD CASTEEL: AN OLD-FASHIONED CRAFTSMAN"

BY DAVID "POPS" DOERSCH

Weapons manufacturer Rod Casteel is a quiet down-to-earth guy whose work is also his passion—the making of quality theatrical weapons for colleges, universities, professional theatres, opera and ballet companies, and most recently, for Steven Spielberg's *Hook*.

DEPARTMENTS

7 FROM THE PRESIDENT—BY J. ALLEN SUDDETH
The president's "State of the SAFD" report.

11 NSCW—BY DAVID LEONG
A preview of the 1992 National Stage Combat Workshops to be held in Las Vegas.

13 SPOTLIGHT—BY MARGARET RAETHER
A profile of the "Dean" of stage combat, Patrick Crean.

37 NUTS AND BOLTS—BY RICHARD RAETHER
Practical how-to advice on blood—how to make it, buy it, and get it to go where you want it, when you want it.

40 FILM FIGHTS—BY MARGARET RAETHER
Gadzooks! A look at movies about knights in shining armor. And some of the stuntmen inside those tin suits.

43 THE PEN AND THE SWORD—BY DALE GIRARD
Reviews of *The Art and History of Personal Combat*, *Sword Play for Actors* and *The Sword and the Centuries*

49 PUT TO THE TEST
Results of SAFD certification fight tests from around the country. And the winners are . . .

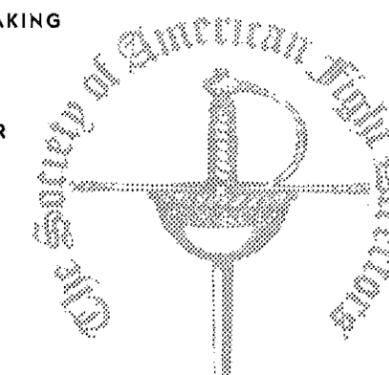
MISCELLANY

4 EDITORIALY SPEAKING

5 LETTERS

6 ABOUT THE COVER

46 DIRECTORY





MARGARET RAETHER
EDITOR
THE FIGHT MASTER

WHERE WERE YOU
IN 1977? THE
SAFD WAS JUST A
GLEAM IN DAVID
BOUSHEY'S EYE THEN.

I was newly arrived in New York City and my total experience with stage combat consisted of taking a contact slap in the face during a play. The slap was off-target enough (okay, I flinched) to catch me full on the ear and knock out my hearing for three days. I fully intended to avoid any further contact with stage violence. So much for good intentions...

In this issue and the upcoming Fall issue, you will be learning a good deal more about the past 15 years and how the SAFD has changed.

To begin, check out the three-part history lesson that leads off this issue: a brief history of the Society of British Fight Directors (They've been in the business of safe and effective stage combat for 22 years!); a chronicle of the SAFD's first 15 years; and a look at the evolution of the summer workshops.

Although I've seen various productions of *Cyrano de Bergerac*, including the Royal Shakespeare Company, I still see José Ferrer's face in my mind when I think of *Cyrano*. So I was delighted with Chuck Conwell's interview with Ferrer, whose recent death saddened his many fans. I commend it to you.

In addition, there are features on Japanese martial arts, swordmaker Rod Casteel, mime training and its benefits to the stage combatant, and a terrific "Nuts and Bolts" on blood effects, contributed by old what's-his-name.

Happy birthday, SAFD. And many happy returns of the day.

Margaret Raether

The Fight Master

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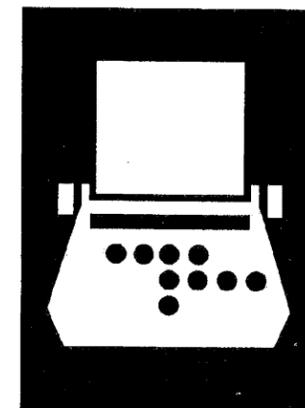
Rod Colbin, Patrick Crean,
Douglas Fairbanks, Jr.,
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should be sent to:
1834 Camp Avenue
Rockford, IL 61103

Submitted material may be edited
for clarity and length.



LETTERS



A DIRECTOR SPEAKS UP

AS A DIRECTOR, I HAVE FOUND my studies with the SAFD to be of enormous benefit. Each play I work on has some element which I can block more easily now. (Time is money in the theater, unfortunately.) I only wish that there were more affordable workshops out there so I could have more trained actors to work with. I recommend your workshops to all my actors and actresses!

Mary McGinley
Somerset, NJ

COMING TO TERMS

I WOULD REALLY LIKE TO SEE a well put together book or pamphlet by someone at SAFD with a full array of techniques and terms. All the books (the few there are) use a variety of terms and parry numbers and names. Sometimes you just can't think of the name for a move. Such a booklet would be very helpful... a set of terms, slang, and other good stuff all in one place.

Tony Rust
Brooklyn, NY

A DANGER EXISTS WHENEVER inaccurate terms are used to describe what is being taught. Students have a right to expect correct information; when they have been misled, they ultimately find it out. What then, do students think of their teacher?

Within the SAFD, students are taught to call an epee a "rapier!" Historically, the epee blade belongs on a smallsword and in the realm of modern fencing. Epees are to rapiers as apples are to melons.

If you (must) use the epee instead of a real rapier, why not call it what it is? Currently, a "rapier" class is not really a class in rapier at all; but more like a class in epee-bladed saber with occasional thrusts added in.

Personally, I feel that the sabre has more validity as a theatrical weapon than is generally recognized—I like it! But, it might be well-advised (not to mention accurate) to call SAFD-style training "theatrical

SOUTHERN EXPOSURE

I JUST COMPLETED MY THIRD consecutive fight workshop for the American College Theatre Festival, Region VI. I was fortunate this year to have Mark Guinn of Louisiana Tech. assist me. What a great guy! His students were well-trained, friendly, and worked well with my students and my assistant, Trampas Thompson, and helped coach the true newcomers in the sessions.

The two-day workshop ended up with a brawl I staged featuring actor Barry Corbin (*Northern Exposure*). It was quite successful and we all had a great time. I videotape the closing session each year and participants are "amazed" at what they can do after only two days of basics. And getting to fight with Barry was a treat for us all!

By the way, I've incorporated the *Fight Master* into my stage combat course here at Texas Tech. Students must read one article each week and respond to it in about one page. I've received astonishing responses from students who are interested in what we do.

So, to all our members who've written articles over the years, your words are being read and critiqued—so watch your grammar, and keep the articles coming!

Steven E. Edwards
Lubbock, TX

The Fight Master welcomes letters. Send them to Editor, the Fight Master, 1834 Camp Avenue, Rockford, IL 61103. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

swordplay" after the style of Errol Flynn. So long as we call it what it is, we don't open the door to criticism.

Rod Casteel
Eugene, OR

YOU LIKE US!
YOU REALLY, REALLY LIKE US!

THE QUALITY OF THE JOURNAL is tremendous... the writing, the research, lots of valuable stuff. The standards for the exams have gotten much higher, which increases the quality of the Society. The organization runs much more smoothly. I'm proud to be part of the group.

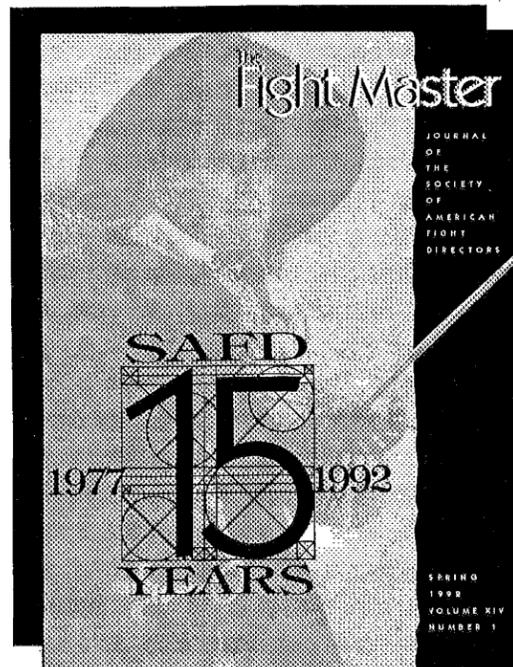
Stephen Gray
Dublin, OH

I HAVE NOTHING BUT PRAISE for the Raethers, the *Cutting Edge*, and the *Fight Master*. I am especially impressed by the variety of subject matter in the two publications, as well as the clean graphic look. Keep up the great work.

Liz Zazzi
Brooklyn, NY



Mark "Rat" Guhn, Barry Corbin, Steven Earl Edwards, and Trampas Thompson at the American College Theatre Festival fight workshop.



about
the cover

Patrick Crean

In celebration of the SAFD's 15-year anniversary, the cover of this issue of the *Fight Master* features a photo of the beloved "Dean" of stage combat, Mr. Patrick Crean, who embodies many of the ideals of an organization dedicated to safe and effective stage combat.

The publicity still of Mr. Crean was taken to mark a production of *Cyrano de Bergerac* at the Shaw Festival in Stratford, 1982.

The SAFD 15-year logo was designed by Margaret Raether.

Dennis L. Graves

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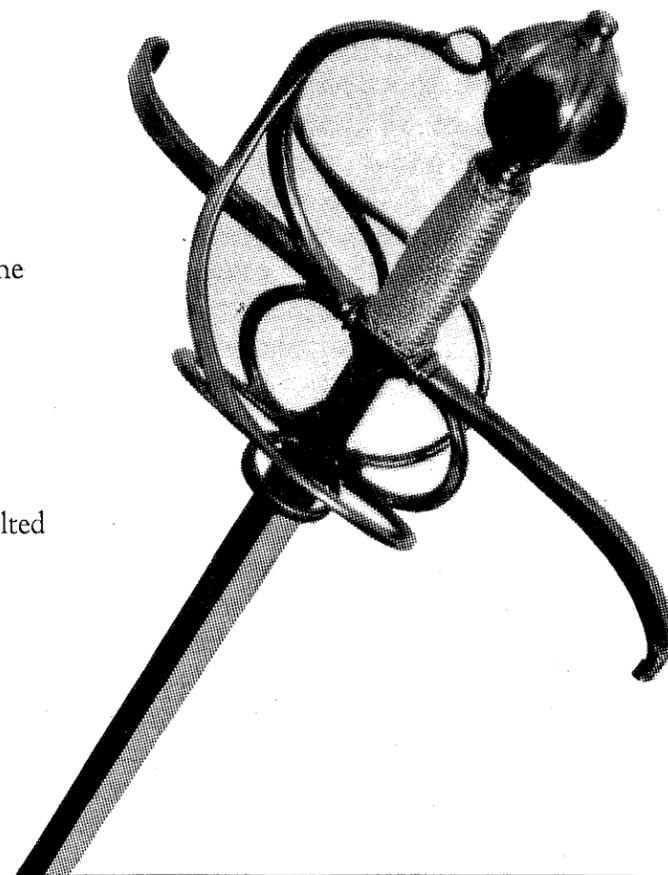
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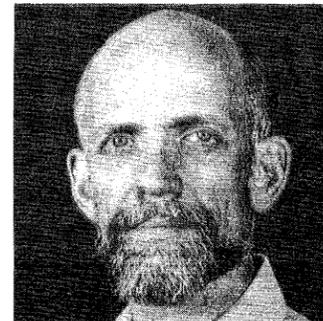
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from the
President



J. ALLEN SUDDETH
SAFD PRESIDENT

FIFTEEN YEARS AGO THE SAFD WAS A DREAM. THERE WAS NO UNITY AMONG THE TEACHERS OF STAGE COMBAT. THERE WAS NO FIGHT TEST.

And the first national workshop was years away. Information about weapons purchase, indeed the availability of weapons themselves, was scant. Training methods varied tremendously, as did the terms, as did the definitions of those terms.

"Fight Guys"

Fifteen years ago, stage combat teachers were variously described as "those fight guys," "the fencing person," or, "Hey, you!" Back then few, if any, women were involved in teaching or choreographing. University drama programs hardly dealt with combat training. And when they did, it was usually for a two-week workshop where the teacher would be squeezed in between a mime person and a tai-chi master. Stage combat was considered a gimmick.

The Struggle for Recognition

I am happy to say that those days are gone! Thanks largely to the efforts of fight masters and past and present officers, I am very proud to say that the Society of American Fight Directors is stronger and more vital than ever before.

It is easy to forget that, through the unpaid efforts of many people over the years, the SAFD is now known throughout the educational and professional arenas. None of this was achieved overnight, or without lots of hard work.

Lectures, Demos, Articles, Phone Calls

No one has ever kept track of the numberless lectures, demonstrations, workshops, classes, certification fight tests passed and failed, meetings, papers written, letters mailed, phone calls, and articles published that help push the SAFD agenda into the public eye.

However, in our rush to celebrate and pat ourselves deservedly on the back, we should not forget those who have paved the way to bring us where we are, and set the standard for what we are to become. They are:

Mr. David Boushey
Mr. Erik Fredricksen
Mr. Joseph Martinez

And, lest we forget, a person who has been an inspiration to us all, Mr. Patrick Crean.

Looking Backward

While I am very excited to look forward, I am also proud to look backward with respect.

We plan to celebrate the SAFD's birthday properly this summer in Las Vegas during the National Stage Combat Workshop. I hope that some of you can join us there, and you are all invited!

Looking Forward

In closing, I wish you all great good luck in your spring and summer projects. I look forward to the next 15 years!

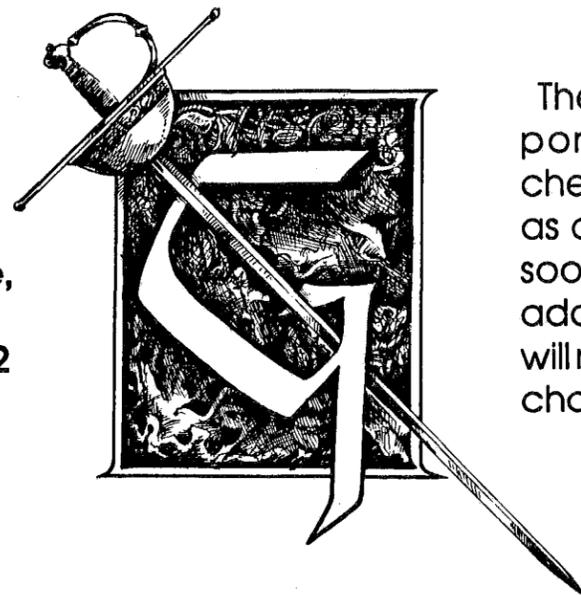
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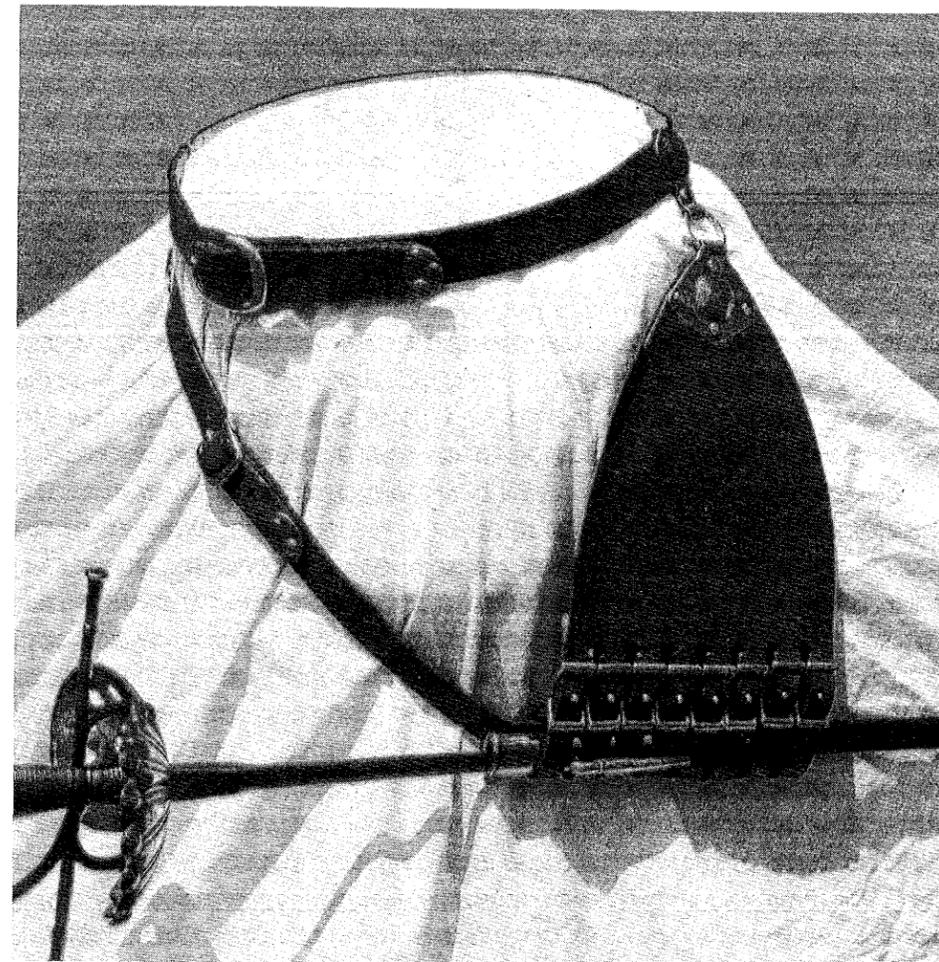


The new address is temporary, and will be checked on for one year as of March 1, 1992; As soon as a permanent address is available we will notify everyone of the changes. Thank you.



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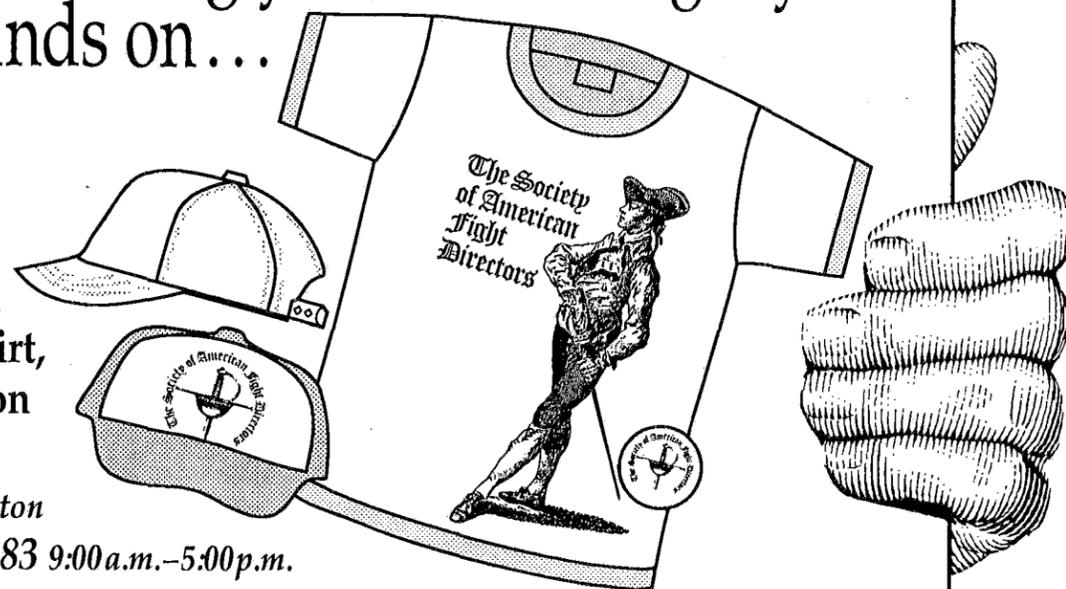
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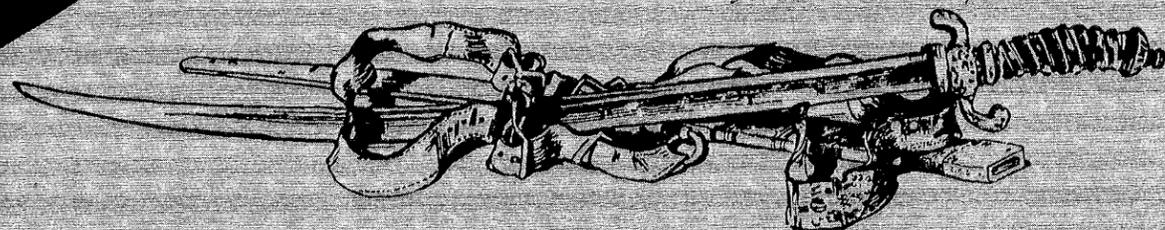
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JULY 13-31, 1992

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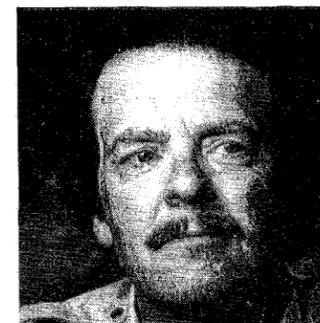
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Society of American Fight Directors in association with University of Nevada, Las Vegas—An Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action University

the NSCW report



JOHN ROBERT BEARDSLEY
QUARTERSTAFF



DAVID L. BOUSHEY
RAPIER AND DAGGER



DREW FRACHER
TEACHER TRAINING WORKSHOP



ERIK FREDRICKSEN
BROADSWORD

ONCE AGAIN, TEACHERS AND STUDENTS FROM ACROSS THE COUNTRY WILL GATHER FOR THE THIRTEENTH ANNUAL NATIONAL STAGE COMBAT WORKSHOP.

Hosted by the University of Nevada-Las Vegas, this year the NSCW will include both an Actor/Combatant Workshop and a Teacher Training Workshop.

Jeff Koep, who is chairman of the UNLV theater department and also the chairman of the SAFD board of directors, has been working hard with on-site coordinator Linda McCollum to ensure our visit will be happy and productive.

Seven fight masters will be teaching classes at this year's workshop. Although all seven will spend time with the Teacher Training students, the TTW will be spearheaded by J. Allen Suddeth and Drew Fracher.

Over \$43,000

That's what the NSCW costs. And that doesn't count the enormous amount of volunteer help contributed from assistants, journeymen, and the SAFD officers. It is a huge undertaking, but it is also the heart of the SAFD's purpose: to promote the art of fight choreography through the training of actor/combatants, teachers and choreographers.

An opportunity for study

It's little wonder that so much energy and attention is directed toward the NSCW. For many people, this is the only opportunity they have to study stage combat. And it is certainly the most information offered in the least amount of time anywhere in the world. For that reason, despite the cost, for many it is the most economical method of study.

10% SAFD discount

Don't forget that SAFD members in good standing (dues paid) for three or more years are eligible for a 10% discount on either the actor/combatant or teacher training workshops.

David S. Leag

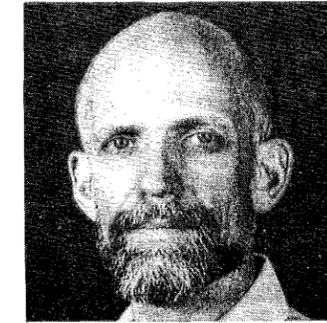
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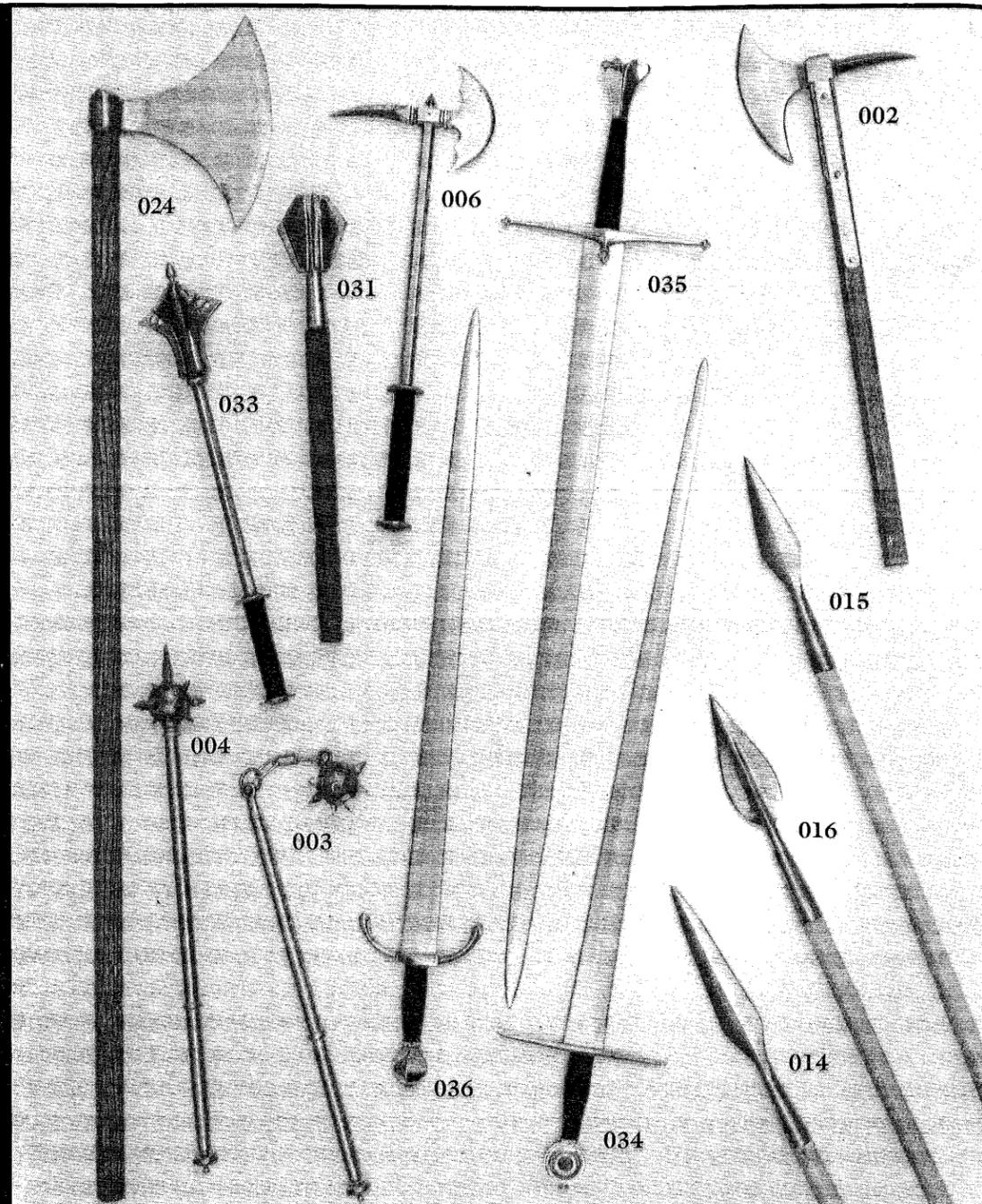
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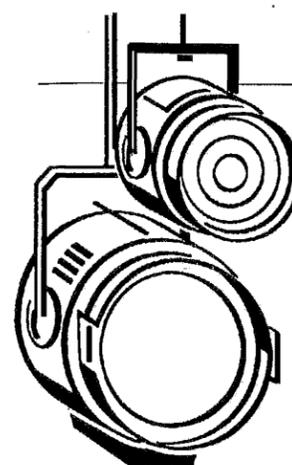
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Spotlight

on honorary member
Patrick Crean

Patrick Crean was the subject of the Spotlight in the very first issue of the Fight Master in April, 1978. In this SAFD anniversary year, it seemed only fitting that we return for another look at the beloved "Dean" of stage combat.

IN JULY 1930, 19-YEAR-
OLD PATRICK CREAN
WAS SHIPPED OFF TO
CEYLON BY HIS FAMILY.

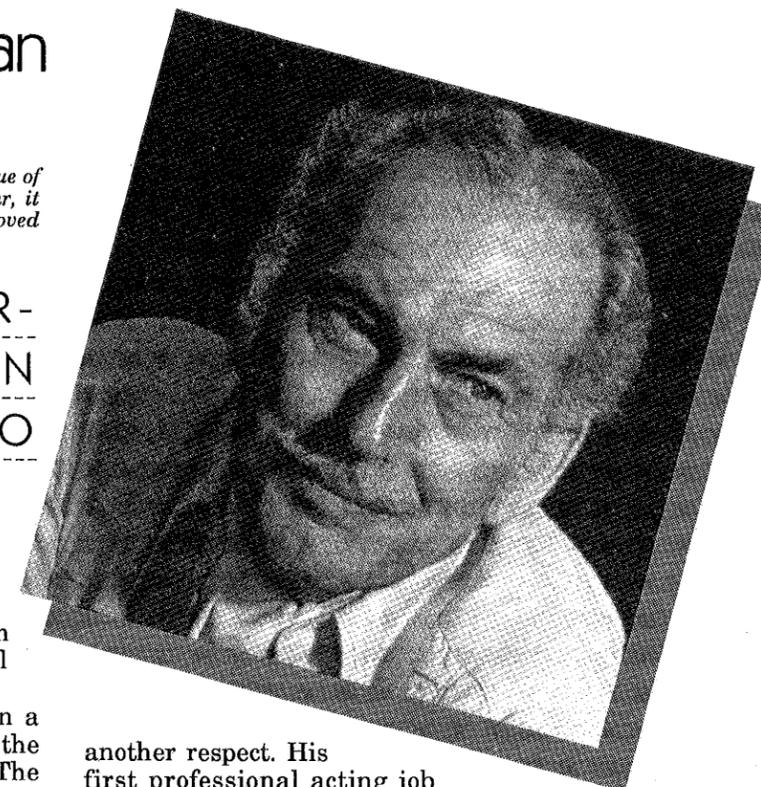
It was intended that young Patrick learn the tea trade, thus he was apprenticed to a tea planter. Although he had theatrical aspirations, his relatives wanted him to settle into something steady. So with a classic British stiff upper lip he obediently set sail on the *Esperance Bay*.

Fate took a hand, when Paddy embarked on a shipboard romance with a young lady fencer and, at the same time, began a life-long affair with the sword. The object of his affections, Mary, had studied foil intensively with Leon Bertrand, known to everyone as "Punch," a brilliant and famous fencing master in London. Paddy's infatuation, coupled with his acting ambitions, made him an eager student. In his autobiography, *More Champagne Darling*, he reminisced "Thus all unconsciously did she mold me for the 'greats'—Madame Bertrand, with whom I took foil. Professor Parkins (epée), Professor McNeil, former fencing master at Eton (sabre), and Ugo Piniotti, Olympic coach... with whom I studied Italian foil in Rome."

The future mapped out for Crean in Ceylon evaporated with the onset of the Great Depression. The planter he was apprenticed to advised him to return home to England. Paddy did so, with great alacrity, and set about pursuing his dreams of becoming an actor.

His real beginning, professionally, came in an extravagant production at the London Coliseum entitled *Casanova*. In it, playing the Gondolier in Scene 1, tenth Austrian Officer in Scene 4, tenth Russian Officer in Scene 5, and one of a hundred Masqueraders in Scene 7, was the newest member of the newly-formed union, Actors Equity Association, Patrick Crean.

Casanova was the beginning of Paddy's career in



another respect. His first professional acting job also marked his first engagement as a fight director. Immediately upon being hired, he was casually asked if he could do anything else. He bravely offered, "I can fence!" and found himself, masked, jacketed, sabre in hand, auditioning as fencing instructor for the production. He landed that job as well, and staged a fencing lesson between Casanova and the Empress Catherine of Russia.

Two years later, when Crean joined the Northampton Repertory Company, he was told that his predecessor's contract hadn't been renewed because, "although he is extremely popular in the town, his talent is minimal." Jack Warner disagreed and signed that young man to a contract. His name was Errol Flynn. It would be twenty years before their paths crossed again, when Crean became Flynn's double and fight choreographer.

In the interval, Patrick Crean had acted with and arranged fights for such theatrical luminaries as Trevor Howard, Donald Wolfitt, John Gielgud, Paul Scofield, Laurence Olivier, Michael Redgrave, Ralph Richardson and Alec Guinness, made his film debut in *Pygmalion* with Leslie Howard and Wendy Hiller (alas, Paddy's role ended up on the cutting-room floor), and opened his own fencing school in London. It was amidst a rash of



Spotlight

on Patrick Crean



Patrick Crean in costume as Rudyard Kipling in his one-man-show, *The Sun Never Sets*.

jobs choreographing various *Macbeths* and *Hamlets* that Paddy received a phone call from a Warner Brothers representative. They needed a fight director; big job; locations all over England and in Sicily. The next day Crean met with the picture's director, William Keighley, and was hired. The film was *The Master of Ballantrae*. The star was Errol Flynn.

Of Flynn, Paddy has said, "Errol Flynn will always remain, for me, the classic definitive film star of the Golden Years of Hollywood. If anyone had panache, he did—and to spare." The two hit it off and did three films together. Two of Crean's prized possessions are a sword Flynn had engraved and presented to Paddy, and a photo of Flynn inscribed "Hello, Pat! Thanks a helluva lot, pal, for making me look good. Errol Flynn."

In 1962, Patrick went to the Stratford Festival in

Canada to stage the fights for Christopher Plummer in *Macbeth*. "I didn't even know where it was," he recalls. "When I first arrived, the city impressed me not at all. I missed England so much I didn't even set my watch to Canadian time. He returned, however, season after season. Today, he is a Canadian citizen and makes his home in Stratford."

Patrick Crean on Various Topics:

Regrets: "I would like to have gone much further in the sport... perhaps the Olympics. I would very much have liked that." He still coaches competitive fencers as well as stage combatants. Countless SAFD members and most of the SAFD fight masters have studied with Paddy.

Advice to Actors: "Safety, always. I tell them not to rush. Respect for actors and the work they are doing is key. There are always a few madman around who want to make the fight real. A fight is not made real by the use of force; it's made real by the acting."

Favorite Productions: "*The Three Musketeers* at Stratford in 1968. *Henry VI*, also at Stratford in the '60s, which Paddy calls his favorite Shakespeare in terms of the fighting.

Favorite Play: *Cyrano de Bergerac*. "Chris Plummer's *Cyrano* is definitive."

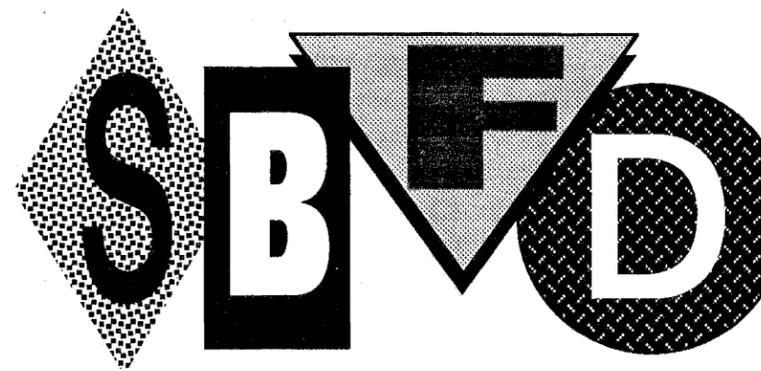
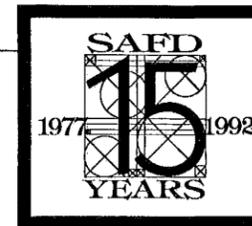
Worst Fight Experience: "I did a film in Greece that I thought was a disaster. We were fighting on ships and they'd arranged for catapults to hurl flaming missiles onto the ships while we battled. Without telling us!"

Some Favorite Film Fights: "The climactic duel in *Robin and Marion*... *Scaramouche*... *Master of Ballantrae*."

More on Flynn: "He had tremendous flair." Paddy lists *Gentleman Jim*, Flynn's boxing film from his Warner days as his favorite Flynn movie. "He was a frustrated writer and a tremendously under-rated actor."

On Stewart Granger: "He was a very funny man and very good with the sword. Very well-trained."

Called "the Dean" by his colleagues, Paddy is a fight master in the British Society of Fight Directors and an honorary member of the SAFD from its inception. His enthusiasm for stage combat is enduring and inspiring. "I love meeting and talking with students as much as I can." A salute to Patrick Crean, honorary member of the SAFD, whose presence honors us.



The Society of British Fight Directors . . .

AS WE CELEBRATE THE SAFD'S 15TH anniversary, it is only fitting that we pay homage to the the Society of British Fight Directors, the inspiration for our society.

In February of 1969, Henry Marshall and William Hobbs held a meeting of fight arrangers to exchange views and experiences and possibly form a group within British Equity or the Academy of Fencing. That idea was discarded in favor of a new and independent organization. Thus, the Society of British Fight Directors was formed. The first organization of its kind.

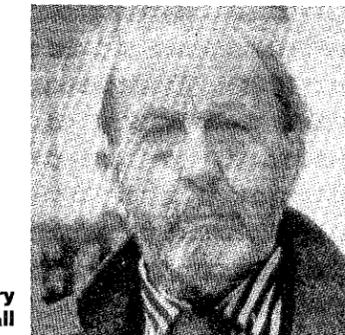
The founding members of the SBFDF were: Henry Marshall, William Hobbs, Charles Alexis, B.H. Barry, John Barton, Roy Goodall, John Greenwood, Ian McKay, Bryan Mosley, Derek Ware, and Arthur Wise.

Mr. Marshall recalls "Looking round at those assembled it was difficult to believe that anything short of the formation of a new and eccentric political party could have brought them all together."

The SBFDF was formed to raise the standard of stage fighting and the status of the fight director in Great Britain. It has since gone on to act as a clearing house for information on fight

directing in all its aspects, and to train young actors and actresses, offering actor combatant certification.

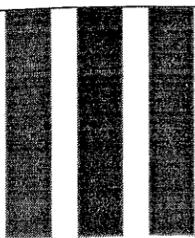
It is a measure of the SBFDF's effectiveness that British Actors Equity now, after twenty years, has not only a Fight Directors' committee but the Fight Director's Register. The Register negotiated a contract for fight directors with the Theatre's National Committee, which sets



Henry Marshall

"Looking round at those assembled it was difficult to believe that anything short of the formation of a new and eccentric political party could have brought them all together."

out safety requirements and conditions of rehearsal and performance. As a result, the SBFDF has relinquished its role as the only professional association for fight



directors and has become largely an advisory and training adjunct to the Equity Register.

Anyone in need a fight director need only call British Equity. To become a fight director and be accepted on the Register it is now necessary to successfully undertake a training program run by the SBFD.

Although they've made great progress in the theatre, the SBFD is still battling to get recognition from the stunt registry which strictly limits the people who can work in the film and television industry.

With its change in focus the SBFD has recently opened its membership to stage combat teachers, actor combatants, and friends.

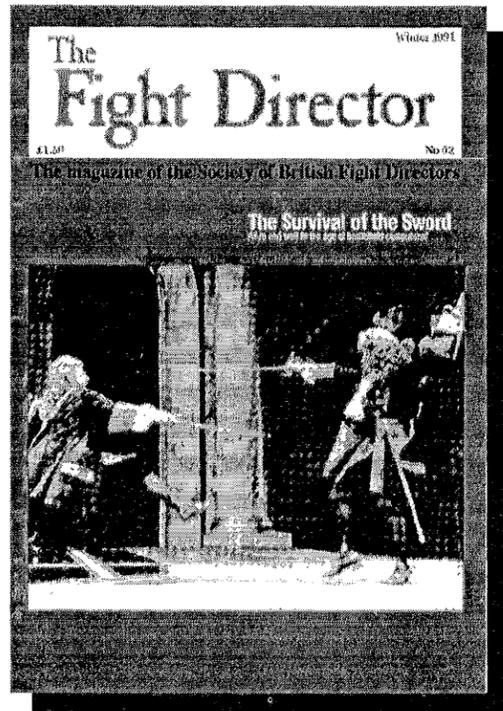
Current SBFD Officers

- Patron Douglas Fairbanks, Jr.
- Founder Henry Marshall
- President William Hobbs
- Chairman Jonathan Howell
- Secretary Penelope Lemont
- Treasurer Ian McKay
- Magazine Editor Nicholas Hall
- Test Secretary Steve Wilsher

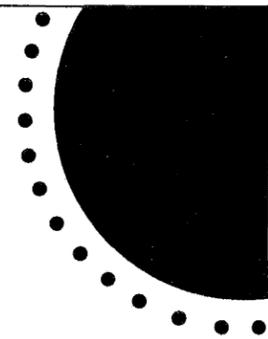
The SBFD truly led the way to a new awareness in the theatre that recognizes the importance of safe, well-executed stage fighting. They laid the foundation that the SAFD is built upon.

For further information on the SBFD, write to the Secretary, Society of British Fight Directors, 87 Redington Road, London NW3 7RR.

Anyone in need of a fight director need only call British Equity. To become a fight director . . . it is necessary to undertake a training program run by the SBFD.



The Winter 1991 issue of the *Fight Director*, magazine of the Society of British Fight Directors.



HAPPY 15TH BIRTHDAY SAFD

How we got here from there . . .

THE SOCIETY OF AMERICAN FIGHT DIRECTORS celebrates 15 years of fighting the good fight this year. So from those who were around when it got started to those who are carrying the torch into the future, here's a short history of how we got here from there.

In the beginning . . .

When David Boushey returned to the U.S. after studying stage combat in England, he approached the Seattle Repertory Theatre and offered his services. "What's a fight director?" asked the artistic director.

"I knew I had my work cut out," recalls the SAFD founder. "As a member of the Society of British Fight Directors (the first American to be inducted into the SBFD) I knew how their organization was structured. And I knew how valuable an asset to the

fight community their society was. It was obvious to me that a professional organization would have to be in place if Americans were going to get the respect the British had earned in England."

On May 16, 1977, the SAFD was incorporated. Any organization is only as strong as its members, so David's first act was to get on the phone and start making calls. He convinced actor Byron Jennings, with whom he had gone to school in England; Erik Fredricksen with whom he'd worked at the Seattle Rep.; Joseph Martinez, who had also studied

*"What's a fight director?"
asked the artistic director.*

in England and whom David met at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, and finally Rod Colbin, one of America's

SAFD Timeline

- **May 16, 1977**
SAFD Articles of Incorporation filed with the state of Oregon by David Boushey
- **1978**
- **April**
First issue of the *Fight Director* published. Mike McGraw editor.
- **1979**
- **July 14**
New York. First certification fight test is held. J. Allen Suddeth, instructor. Erik Fredricksen, adjudicator.
- **August 15**
First national meeting of the SAFD in New York City.
- **1980**
- **July**
J. Allen Suddeth elevated to full member.
- **July 14-Aug. 8**
First National Stage Combat Workshop at Western Illinois University
- **August 13**
Erik Fredricksen becomes president. Rod Colbin, VP and David Boushey becomes secretary/treasurer



most respected fight directors, to join him in launching the fledgling group. "Now it begins!" Joe recalls thinking.

From its inception, U.S. citizenship has been a requirement for SAFD fight masters. British Fight Master Patrick Crean, based in Canada, came on board as an honorary member late in 1977.

Getting organized . . .

SAFD membership sprawled across the country right from the beginning. Officers were President David Boushey in Seattle; Vice President Byron Jennings in San Francisco; and Secretary/Treasurer Erik Fredricksen in New York City.

The SAFD was, at its inception, just what the name implies: an organization for fight directors. Its stated purpose was "to bring together into one organization those individuals who earn a living choreographing fight scenes for stage and film" (*Articles of Incorporation*).

By April 1978 the SAFD had three classifications of membership and boasted six "full" members (defined as "professional fight directors") 23 affiliate members ("fencing masters in drama schools") and three student members ("students who aspire to become fight directors"). In July of '78 a fourth classification, "friend," was added. Dues were \$15 for full and affiliate members and \$10 for students and friends.

Getting the word out . . .

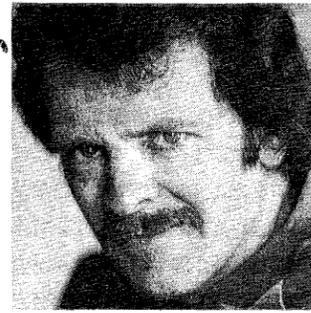
"It was a matter of public relations and focusing attention on a central organization which could bring all known fight arrangers into a common group with a common philosophy—that of safe and well-conceived fight choreography," recalls David Boushey.

David asked Mike McGraw to work with him as editor for a new magazine, the *Fight Master*. As his model, David again looked to the SBF and their magazine *Fight Director*, edited by Henry Marshall. In fact much of the content of the early

Fight Masters came courtesy of the *Fight Director*. The first *Fight Master* appeared in April 1978, and thereafter was published four times a year. Word also spread quickly through the ATA conventions. The SAFD began to grow.

Certification . . .

In an open letter to the membership printed in the October 1978 *Fight Master*, David Boushey proposed adopting another SBF practice—that of certifying students as actor/ combatants. At that same time, in New York, J. Allen Suddeth was busy rehearsing for his own SBF certification test.



"It was a matter of . . . a central organization which could bring fight arrangers into a common group with a common philosophy — that of safe, well-conceived fight choreography."

— David Boushey

"The British society had been testing students in England for many years and had begun testing in America at places like Carnegie-Mellon and Julliard. After taking my test, I discovered that the newly-formed SAFD was *not* testing in our own country." Allen applied to David Boushey to hold the first-ever test of American students under the auspices of SAFD. Twelve of Allen's students tested in New York on July 14, 1979. Erik Fredricksen adjudicated and all twelve passed with two students recommended. Since then, more than 2000 students have tested. [Read *Allen's reminiscence on the history of certification in the Fall '92 Fight Master. Ed.*]



Expansion . . .

The first national meeting of the SAFD took place in New York City on August 15, 1979. Twenty members attended. It was formally decided to add actor/ combatant as a membership classification.

Also discussed at that meeting was a national school of stage fighting. The October '79 *Fight Master* announced that "We as a Society intend to open three national fight schools in the near future, in New York, Illinois, and Seattle. These schools will allow students and teachers to further their skills in armed and unarmed combat." This was the seed that ultimately grew into the National Stage Combat Workshop [See the *NSCW history in this issue. Ed.*]

A one-of-a-kind fight test took place at Carnegie-Mellon on February 2, 1980. Fourteen students were simultaneously certified by the SAFD and the SBF. British Fight Master B.H. Barry began training students in unarmed combat and initially arranged for an SBF certification fight test to be adjudicated by Patrick Crean. When Mr. Barry had to leave unexpectedly, SAFD Fight Master Erik Fredricksen was hired to complete the students' training in rapier/dagger and quarterstaff. Since Mr. Crean was both a fight master in the SBF and an honorary SAFD member, these students were granted the one and only dual certification.

On April 20, 1980, the Society of British Fight Directors made it official, "We fully recognize the authority of the SAFD to conduct tests in their own country. We rule that certificates issued by the SBF should only be issued for tests conducted in the United Kingdom."

A National Workshop . . .

On July 14, 1980, the national fight school became a reality in the guise of the first National Stage Combat Workshop at Western Illinois University.

Also in July, Byron Jennings resigned as vice president and as a full member in order to pursue his acting career full-time. And David Boushey announced that he was stepping down as president; "I feel that a shift of power and locale must take place with the society to keep it a truly national organization representing all its members." On

August 13, Erik Fredricksen became president and Rod Colbin vice president. David Boushey became secretary/treasurer.

Within Erik's term as president, the SAFD began to concentrate on actor/combatant training and certification in colleges and universities across the country as well as at the annual NSCW. Erik also began formulating more stringent application procedures for prospective affiliate members.

Years of change . . .

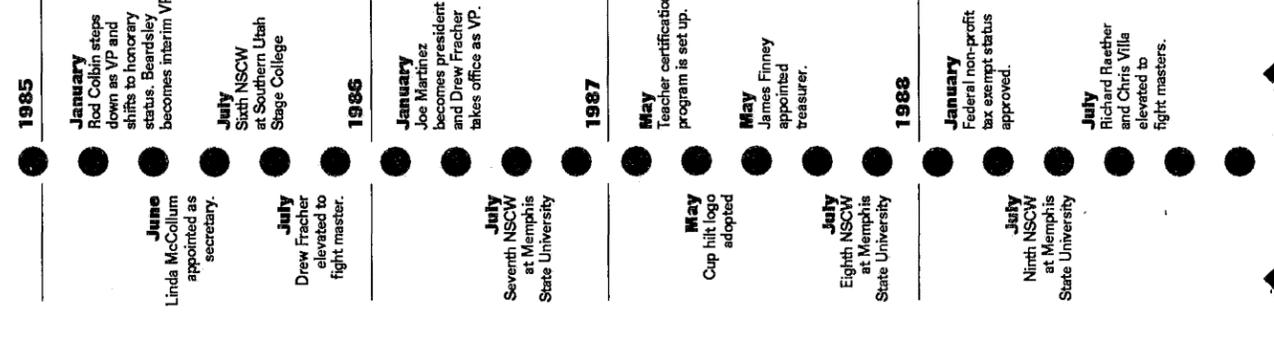
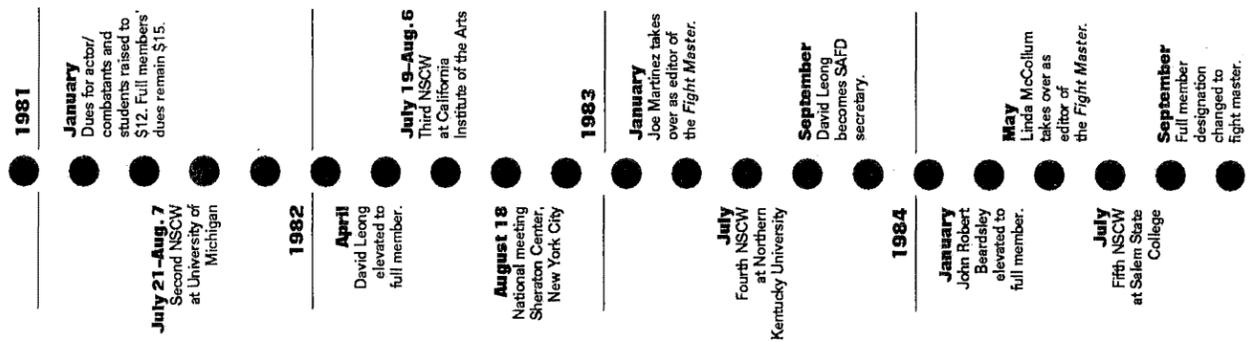
In 1983, the SAFD responded to concerns voiced by actor/combatant members who felt that their designation didn't imply membership as much as success at certification. Membership categories were changed in January 1983 to: 1) full members 2) associate members (formerly affiliate members) and 3) affiliate members (formerly actor/combatants). The SAFD now had 102 members: ten full members, 40 associates, 41 affiliates, six students, four friends, and one honorary member.

Also in '83, Joseph Martinez became editor of the *Fight Master* and moved the magazine from typewriter to typesetting. However, due to increased production costs and scarcity of submissions, the *Fight Master* cut back to three issues a year.

Rocky financial times hit in '83, when the SAFD bank balance was a resounding \$9.25. Not surprisingly, it was time to raise the dues. Annual dues for full members, associates, affiliates, and friends were raised to \$25 and student dues were raised to \$15. Also at this time, David Leong took over the office of secretary.

Linda McCollum took over as *Fight Master* editor with the May 1984 issue. The designation "full member" (not very dashing) changed to "fight master" in September '84. Certification tests had gotten so numerous that, for the first time, fight test adjudicators were paid a fee. Also in 1984, specific procedures were set up for upgrading member status to the associate and fight master levels.

In September 1985, new SAFD officers were elected, but before leaving office Erik Fredricksen made a stern plea, "It has been in the fight masters that I have seen the greatest disparity in interest, willingness, and focus. Perhaps that is to





some degree inevitable. Fight masters are, after all, practicing professionals and it may only be natural that their personal and professional goals will dictate the quality of their contribution. I must state . . . that fight masters who, for whatever reason, feel they no longer see value and the ability to actualize their interest to the active advancement of the Society should officially withdraw."

Restructuring the SAFD . . .

On January 1, 1986, Joseph D. Martinez took office as president and Drew Fracher became the new vice-president of the SAFD.

In 1987, the SAFD celebrated ten years. The circular cup hilt design was officially adopted as the SAFD logo. David Boushey stepped down as treasurer in January 1987, and certified actor/combatant James Finney was appointed to replace him.

As early as 1980, members had voiced concerns regarding requirements and procedure for moving up to associate status. Technically, that classification was for stage combat teachers at the university level and part-time fight choreographers. Initially, two letters of recommendation and a resumé were required, but cases of padded resúmes surfaced. Another problem that resurfaced dealt with the terms "associate" and "affiliate"—non-descriptive and confusing, even to SAFD members, and a total mystery to those outside the group.

The solution to both problems came in 1987, with a major restructuring of membership classifications. Affiliates were once more designated as certified actor/combatants and were required to renew their certification periodically. Certified teachers became the next rung in the ladder. For the first time, a standard of knowledge and teaching ability was formulated and a testing procedure devised. Like actor/combatants, teachers must renew their certification every three years. Joseph Martinez created the first teacher training workshop and certification test at the 1987 NSCW. Associate members were permitted to grandfather in as certified teachers, provided they took the teacher certification test.

The student classification was dropped, but the general category "friend" remained.

The SAFD now has a simple, self-explanatory hierarchy. Membership is open to anyone with an interest in stage combat, and three certification levels exist: actor/combatant, teacher, fight master.

After two-and-a-half years and three petitions for non-profit status, David Boushey and Erik Fredricksen flew to Los Angeles and, with the aid of an attorney, pleaded the SAFD's case. Through their selfless actions, the SAFD was finally awarded Federal not-for-profit tax-exempt status.

July 1988 saw Richard Raether and Christopher Villa certified as fight masters, and in April 1989 Richard Raether took over as secretary/treasurer.

Onward and upward . . .

J. Allen Suddeth took office as SAFD president in January 1990, which was duly reported in the first issue of the SAFD newsletter, the *Cutting Edge*, edited by Margaret and Richard Raether.

Also in January 1990, due in large part to the efforts of long-time member Rod Casteel, film legends Douglas Fairbanks, Jr. and Stuart Granger were inducted as honorary SAFD members.

In July 1990 the first SAFD Advanced Actor Combatant Workshop took place. The AACW was designed and taught by J. Allen Suddeth and Erik

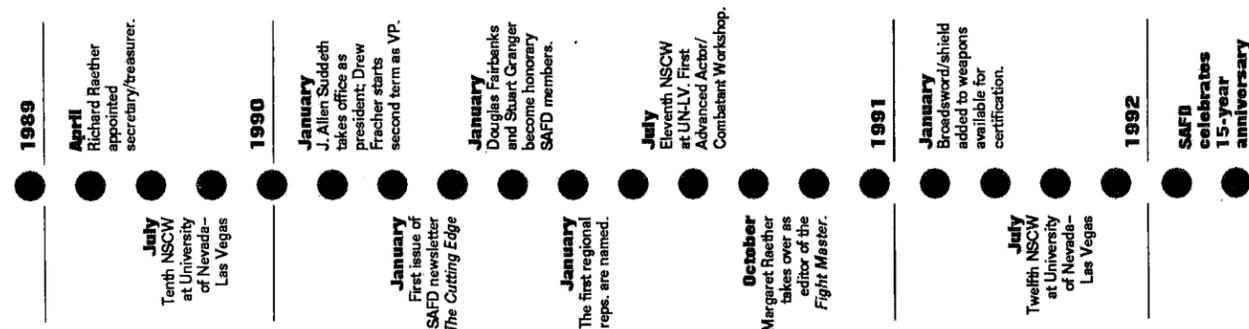
"The SAFD is moving ahead."

— J. Allen Suddeth

Fredricksen, and focused on advanced techniques.

"The SAFD is moving ahead," reported new president in the Fall '90 *Fight Master*, the first issue under new editor Margaret Raether. The *Fight Master* moved to a twice-yearly schedule, with the *Cutting Edge* published six times per year.

With a membership hovering around 350, the SAFD is thriving and David Boushey's dream of 15 years ago is now a driving force for safe and effective stage combat.



1 1980
Western Ill. University
Macomb, IL
Coordinator: Joseph D. Martinez
Teachers: David L. Boushey, Erik Fredricksen, Joseph D. Martinez
29 students in attendance

2 1981
University of Michigan
Ann Arbor, MI
Coordinator: Erik Fredricksen
Teachers: David Boushey, Patrick Crean, Erik Fredricksen, Joseph Martinez
Guest Instructors: Martin Katz, Pensak Silat
23 students in attendance

3 1982
Cal. Institute of the Arts
Valencia, CA
Coordinator: David Boushey
Teachers: David Boushey, Erik Fredricksen, Joseph Martinez
Guests: Rod Colbin, Libby Appel
14 students in attendance

4 1983
No. Kentucky University
Covington, KY
Coordinator: David Leong
Teachers: David Boushey, Joe Martinez, Richard Gradkowski
Guest Instructors: Patrick Crean, Richard Huggins, Lars Lundgren
46 students in attendance

5 1984
Salem State College—Salem, MA
Coordinator: Joseph Martinez
Teachers: David Boushey, Normand Beauregard, Joseph Martinez, David Leong
Guest Instructors: Patrick Crean, Richard Huggins, Lars Lundgren
38 students in attendance

6 1985
South Utah State College
Cedar City, UT
Coordinator: David Leong
Teachers: John Robert Beardsley, David Boushey, Erik Fredricksen, David Leong
Guest Instructor: Bob Miles
27 students in attendance



The National Stage Combat Workshops . . .

IN AUGUST 1979, ACTOR COMBATANT certification was still in its infancy; the primary objective of the SAFD was the promotion and development of the art of fight direction.

Nonetheless, at a national SAFD meeting in New York during August of 1979, plans were discussed for opening a "national fight school." The most manageable and practical plan was to sponsor an annual workshop that would travel around the country.

The following year, during July of 1980, 29 participants trekked from as far away as Hawaii and Canada to attend the first annual National Stage Combat Workshop at Western Illinois University.

Fight Master Joseph D. Martinez coordinated that very first workshop which featured a black powder demonstration with matchlock and flintlock rifles, along with classes in rapier and dagger, broadsword, quarterstaff, smallsword, unarmed combat and akido.

David L. Boushey, Erik Fredricksen, and Joseph Martinez taught all the classes. The weapons were

crude by today's standards and the whole thing was run on a shoestring. Yet that first workshop marked a turning point for the SAFD. It was a new idea and one that worked; an



At the first NSCW, Fight Master David Boushey coaches Jim Robinson (still an active member) while student (now a fight master) Chris Villa, kneels at right.

7

1986
Memphis State
University
Memphis, TN
Coordinator: D. Leong
Teachers: J.R. Beardsley,
D. Boushey, D. Fracher, J. Allen Suddeth
Guests: Bob Miles, Patrick Crean
48 students in attendance

8

1987
Memphis State
University
Coordinator: D. Leong
Teachers: D. Boushey,
D. Fracher, D. Leong,
J. Martinez, J. Allen Suddeth
Guests: Patrick Crean, Dale Kirby
1st Teacher Training Workshop: 12
Actor Combatant Workshop: 51

9

1988
Memphis State
University
Coordinator: D. Leong
Teachers: D. Boushey,
D. Fracher, E. Fredricksen,
D. Leong, J. Martinez, J. A. Suddeth
Guests: Bonnie Raphael, Dale Kirby
Teacher Training Workshop: 14
Actor Combatant Workshop: 48

10

1989
University of
Nevada-Las Vegas
Coordinator: D. Leong
Teachers: J.R. Beardsley,
D. Boushey, D. Fracher,
D. Fredricksen, D. Leong, J. Martinez,
J. A. Suddeth, Christopher Villa
Teacher Training Workshop: 8
Actor Combatant Workshop: 58

11

1990
UN-LV
Las Vegas, NV
Coordinator: D. Leong
Teachers: D. Boushey,
E. Fredricksen, D. Fracher,
D. Leong, J. Martinez, J.A. Suddeth
1st Advanced Actor Combatant
Workshop: 12
Actor Combatant Workshop: 35

12

1991
UN-LV
Las Vegas, NV
Coordinator: D. Leong
Teachers: J.R. Beardsley,
D. Boushey, E. Fredricksen,
D. Fracher, D. Leong, R. Raether, J.A. Suddeth
Guest Instructor: Denise Gabriel
Advanced ACW: 12 ACW: 36



annual national workshop devoted solely to stage combat. The SAFD acquired a new mission: training actors in the techniques of stage combat.

Among the stage combat students in that first workshop were three future fight masters: Drew Fracher, Christopher Villa, and John Robert Beardsley. "My most vivid memory is a really hot gymnasium—no air conditioning!" laughs Drew. And, proving that fight masters were all once beginners too, Drew adds, "I was really frustrated in smallsword class!"

As the NSCW began to grow in size and complexity, so did the cost and difficulty of moving each year. It became increasingly difficult to find and rent a facility that had enough space and was willing to co-produce the workshop.

In 1986, the NSCW set up shop at Memphis State University and stayed for three years.

The first TTW . . .

The SAFD celebrated its tenth anniversary in 1987 by adding a plural "s" to the NSCW. The National Stage Combat Workshops now included the Teacher Training Workshop. The creation of the TTW moved the SAFD into a new realm: the training and certification of stage combat teachers as well as combatants.

The TTW, the brainchild of Joseph Martinez, established training with high standards and a certification procedure for teachers who are endorsed by the SAFD.

The TTW's integrity and success has been proved many times over. Since that first TTW, 28 teachers have been certified by the SAFD; and 25 top university theatre programs have employed them. Other organizations (VASTA, the Society of Theatre Movement Specialists, and the Movement Committee of SETC) have studied the SAFD teacher certification program as a model.

In 1989 the NSCW moved to the University of Nevada Las Vegas for a record attendance of 66 students. Imagine 66 people who all need room to swing a quarterstaff and you get an idea of the NSCW's space requirements.

"My most vivid memory is a REALLY hot gymnasium — no air conditioning!"

The first AACW . . .

The NSCW expanded a third time in 1990 to answer an increasing demand for advanced training. Many students, eager to continue training, had little recourse except to seek out private instruction.

The Advanced Actor/Combatant Workshop was created by J. Allen Suddeth to provide additional training for actor/combatants, and also for fight captains, teachers and choreographers who want to brush up. It also frequently acts as a bridge to teacher training.

As student, assistant, and as a fight master, Drew Fracher has been at ten of the past twelve NSCWs. "The workshop is much smoother, much more organized now," he comments. "There was a certain panic in the air in 1987 about where the classes were headed and how we were going to get there. A lot more gets covered now; the standards and requirements are much higher. But the fun quotient is better, too. Through experience, the fight masters have learned to take a lot of the heat out of that pressure-cooker situation. It's a saner place."

All in all, the 20 members at that 1979 national SAFD meeting who kicked around the idea of a national school have good reason to feel proud today.

CLASSICAL JAPANESE MARTIAL ART

Ko-ryu (systems of traditional martial arts training) still flourish in modern Japan, still teaching the classical skills of warfare taught to warriors during the middle ages.

BY
DR. ROBERT
W. DILLON,
JR.

The Japanese martial systems have been little understood in this country. It is not even widely realized among SAFD members, that extant systems exist in which the methods and content of training have not changed since the middle of the fourteenth century.

These training systems are known as the *ko-ryu* ("ancient streams" or "traditions") and have preserved a

true martial (that is *military*) form of combative discipline designed, practiced, perfected, and maintained by professional soldiers.

The *Tenshin Shoden Katori Shinto Ryu*, the oldest of the extant *ko-ryu*, operates within earshot of the new Tokyo airport, offering training in classical armed combative technique and theory to anyone willing to make the firm commitment. It is as if the Plantagenet knights still trained under the shadow of BOAC departures and arrivals.

For true seekers after real knowledge of human combative behavior, especially those seeking for insight into the methods of armor-clad soldiers of the Western middle ages, a study of classical Japanese *bugei* ("martial art") seems demanded.

There are, in fact, live persons practicing as their spiritual and physical progenitors did when their practice was a necessary skill for survival on a battlefield.

A living and accessible source of real value exists for teachers of broadsword and medieval combat methods and those staging fights in this milieu.



Twelfth-century warrior Kajiwara Genta Kagesue, draws his sword and raises it above his head in a posture (*kamae*) showing his determination to fight to the death.

Tenshin Shoden Katori Shinto Ryu, founded in 1350 by professional soldier Iizasa Choisai, and located ever since in Chiba prefecture, stands as the oldest of the four primal *ryu*. Along with *Shinto* style, *Nen*, *Chujo*, and *Kage ryu* begat all organized martial systems in Japan.

Only the *Shinto* tradition has remained largely unchanged since its founding. The other extant *ko-ryu* have tended to be lineal descendants of one or more of the primal *ryu*.

AGE OF THE COUNTRY AT WAR

Japan's period of sweeping inter-ecine clan warfare, the *Sengoku-jidai*, or "Age of the Country at War," was the context and birthplace of the *ko-ryu* tradition.

Roughly centered between the fourteenth and seventeenth centuries, it was an era of continuous, bloody, and workman-like warfare seeing sweeping developments in the deployment, equipment, and techniques of the *buke* or warrior class and those who worked with and for them. It was an age of armored cavalry charges, vicious (and hugely effective) massed musketry, and the maneuvering of large masses of infantry.

The swashbuckling, swaggering, Byronic lone wolf of the *chambara* (the Japanese rendering of the sound made by swords) film, is a product of our very human leaning toward the romantic. Based on the Japanese swordsmen of the later seventeenth century into the nineteenth century, mixed with a bit of turn-of-the-century myth-making and Imperialistic politics, these images are not a valid picture of the classical Japanese fighting man.

Perhaps the most authentic cinematic vision of the world that gave birth to the classical *ryu* explodes onto the screen in Akira Kurosawa's vision of Shakespeare's *King Lear*, *Ran* ("Chaos").

In *Shinto Ryu*, study includes all weapons and weapons-systems that a professional fighting man (or common soldier, the *ryu* has always maintained a very egalitarian attitude toward enrollments) might

encounter in a lifetime in service on the battlefield, the garrison, the picket line, the scouting party, or the home front.

Swordsmanship or *kenjutsu* remains at the hub of study. With his *o-dachi* or longsword replicated in wooden form as an *o-dachi bokken*, a trainee faces another trainee in *kata*.

KATA . . . THE ESSENCE OF THE ART

The concept of *kata*, a set of formal exercises containing the essence of the art being taught, is the basic method of teaching used in all Japanese

arts, including acting. The *bujutsu kata* not only contain the essence of the martial specialties being explored, they serve to maintain the original essence of the style, provide a margin of safety in training, and hide the essence of

the technical repertoire from the casual or uninitiated observer.

This is the only safe method of training in techniques that are designed (I am not

sensationalizing in the least) to kill in a most efficient manner. No pulling of blows or counting of points can "stand in" for the actual conditions and dynamics of real combat. No contests are allowed then, since, as current headmaster Otake Risuke-sensei punningly puts it, "*Shi-ai, shi-ni-ai*," ("Contest [in combat is the equivalent of] a matter of life or death").

This rule against artificial "contests" reflects the fact that in a true battlefield encounter

the combatant possesses only a 33.3% chance of survival. Either the swordsman kills his enemy, the enemy kills the swordsman, or they kill *each other*. No other outcome is probable. Training in classical *kata* is very serious.

The *kata* hide the essence (and secrets) of the style from casual or uninitiated observers. What appears to be a sword-to-sword blocking or parrying movement actually covers a moment, in the words of Otake-

sensei "of sure kill." The *kata* practice thus allows for

the performance of the essence of an actual technique while protecting the trainee and hiding that essence. Trainees must,

fairly late in a lifetime's work in the style, have the *kuzushi* ("breakdown") or "real" meaning of the techniques explained before those meanings become clear. This is part of a tradition of secrecy which has only recently been broken.

SWORDSMANSHIP IS AT THE CENTER

Swordsmanship with the *o-dachi* is the center of all subsequent study and the longsword stands as the symbolic and actual supreme weapon in the philosophy and practice of *Shinto Ryu* (and most *ko-ryu*.)

Swordsmanship with the short sword (*ko-dachijutsu*), swordsmanship with "both" swords (*ryo-tojutsu*), and solo practice with the *shinken* or real, live, and sharp longsword (*iai-jutsu* and *tachi-ai battojutsu*) also receive long and arduous attention by the trainee.

Except for the so-called fast draw techniques of *iai-jutsu* ("whole-person-unification technique"), and *tachi-ai battojutsu* ("standing, striking harshly and quickly with the sword technique"), all swordsmanship *kata* are two-man affairs. In other specialties embraced by the style (*bo-jutsu* ["wooden staff technique"], *naginata-jutsu* ["glaive technique"], *so-yari-jutsu* ["plain-bladed spear technique"], to name only a part of the repertoire), all

kata present the swordsman armed with his longsword an opportunity to learn techniques designed to overcome an enemy armed with the "other" weapons of practical tradition while presenting the other trainee with opportunities to confront techniques of use with the subordinate weapons in opposition to the longsword. Since all trainees attempt to master both halves of each *kata*, the training is a well-rounded preparation for the "life of the warrior."

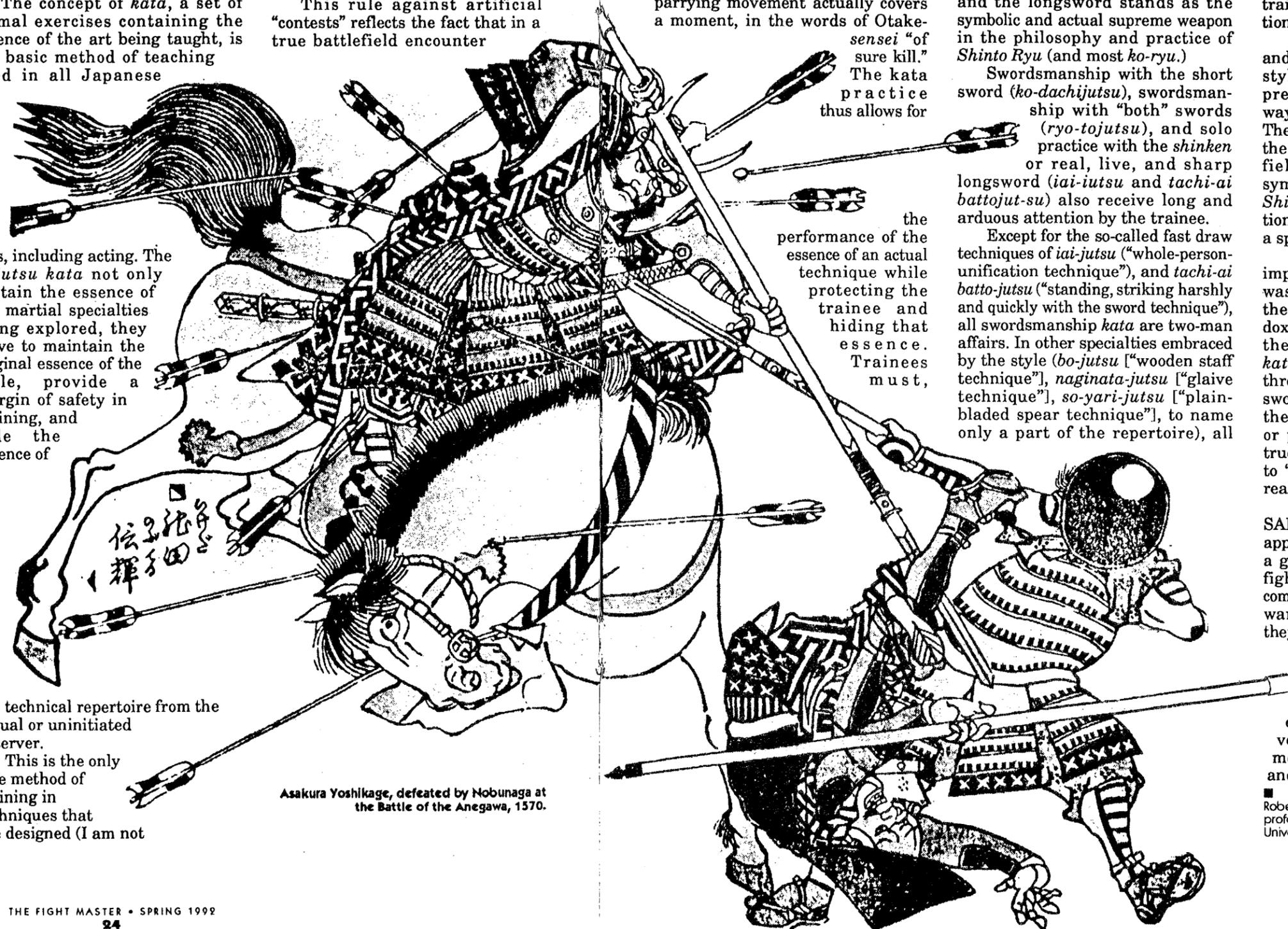
The spear play of *Shinto Ryu*, and the short swordsmanship of the style (though longsword remains preeminent in real and symbolic ways) form "specialties" of the *ryu*. The spear has special significance in the *ryu* as a highly effective battlefield weapon and as a religious symbol of great importance to the *Shinto* beliefs. According to tradition, the creator gods of Japan used a spear to create the island empire.

Short swordsmanship is of special importance in the style because it was the favored weapons-system of the founder, Iizasa Choisai. Paradoxically (intentionally so, in fact), there are only three shortsword *kata* in the style. However, these three forms represent the essence of swordsmanship with the *ko-dachi* in the myriad permutations possible or plausible. Incidentally, this is true of all the *kata* as they attempt to "crystallize" combative potential realities into rarefied distillations.

This is, perhaps, the direction SAFD practice is taking in its own approach to stage combat. Certainly a great deal can be learned about fighting in armor, the realities of combat, and the place of the individual warrior in the scheme of "things as they are" from these ancient systems.

From the spiritual/ philosophical/ religious underpinnings of these truly martial arts and the rational, moral, and ethical systems woven into their very fabric we stand to learn even more of value to theatre and art and humanity.

Robert Dillon is an SAFD member and assistant professor of theater at Southeast Missouri State University.



Asakura Yoshikage, defeated by Nobunaga at the Battle of the Anegawa, 1570.



Cyrano de Bergerac and José Ferrer were synonymous in the minds of many people. Here is an account of how they got together; a final and fitting tribute to one of America's great actors.

BY
CHARLES CONWELL

José Ferrer died on Jan. 26, 1992. The previous August he had agreed to an interview with SAFD member Chuck Conwell. The following article recalls their meeting.

“By the sword of a hero,
Let me fall—
Steel in my heart,
And laughter on my lips.”

Cyrano de Bergerac, Act Five

In 1951, when I was five years old, I saw Jose Ferrer in the movie version of *Cyrano de Bergerac*. I came home, put on one of my grandmother's large-brimmed hats, and attempted to recreate the adventure I had seen. Forty years later I had lunch with Mr. Ferrer in Manhattan and learned the story behind the movie which had captivated me and the duelling which certainly influenced my stage combat career.

A 25¢ BOOK ON FENCING

At the age of ten, Ferrer bought a 25¢ book on fencing by Andre Senac. Soon he began taking fencing lessons in Manhattan. During his freshman year at Princeton, he lettered in fencing.

Originally hoping to be an architect, he decided that he didn't have the talent; perhaps he might be a professor. While earning his master's degree at Columbia, he became involved in the theater through a friendship with Joshua Logan and other theatrically-inclined classmates. He discovered he had charisma. “When I walked on the stage, people looked at me. That cannot be learned.”

While playing the lead in *Charley's Aunt* on Broadway in 1941 (Ferrer had scored a major hit in this revival directed by friend Josh Logan), Ferrer was visited backstage by some high school jour-

nalists who asked him if there was a role that he'd always wanted to play. Ferrer wanted to play Hamlet, but thought that answer too conventional.

“With so many actors and so much competition,” he wanted to tell them, “you are lucky to get a job, let alone a job that you want.” But he was reluctant to sound too cynical; he didn't want to disillusion them. On impulse, he said he wanted to play Cyrano. Later this struck him as a very good idea.

In 1946, Ferrer decided to produce and star in his own production of *Cyrano de Bergerac*. He bought the rights to the Brian Hooker translation from Walter Hampden (famous American *Cyrano* of the '20s and '30s) and invested \$100,000 of his own money. “I knew exactly what I wanted to do with the play: classic 17th century characters, a romantic 19th century play, in a nervous, erotic, edgy, 20th century production.”

The production ran three hours with one intermission. Sometimes during the final scene, Ferrer would see the stage manager pointing to his watch. If the production went one minute over three hours, the stage hands received overtime. The production toured the United States and played on Broadway between May 5, 1946, and May 5, 1947. Ferrer won a Tony award for

his performance in 1947, the first year the Tonys were awarded.

A MEETING WITH SANTELLI

Ferrer had never done a stage fight before but he knew how to fence. During college fencing meets,

“When I walked on the stage,
people looked at me . . .
That cannot be learned.”

he met Giorgio Santelli, a famous New York fencing maestro, theatrical fight director, and Olympic coach.

“Santelli was the real Cyrano. He was 6' 1" and had a very large, down-turned nose and protruding eyes. He was quite ugly but enormously attractive; his sense of humor was excellent.”

Santelli recommended Dean Centrulo for the role of Valvert. Centrulo (who characterized Santelli as “flamboyant and debonair”) was a national fencing champion; came from a fencing family; and represented the United States in the 1948 Olympics. He staged theatrical duels with his brother in high school and college. After his work in *Cyrano*, Centrulo doubled Cornel Wilde in *At Sword's Point* and *The Bandit of Sherwood Forest*.

THE CYRANO-VALVERT DUEL

Ferrer and Centrulo rehearsed three times a week for a month before rehearsals began. Together they created the Cyrano-Valvert duel. Ferrer insisted that the duel look like a real fight between two adversaries trying to kill each other. "Silly turns" which Ferrer considered a "bad theatrical tradition" were avoided.

Using cuphilt rapiers made by Santelli, Ferrer and Centrulo created a duel of cuts, thrusts, passata sotto, in quartata, and disarm. As Ferrer disarmed Centrulo with an envelopement of tierce, Centrulo carefully threw his sword in the air. Ferrer caught it every performance for a year without dropping it!

"MARVELOUS CONTROL"

Another remarkable section of the duel had Cyrano evading thrusts directed at his long nose! "Centrulo has marvelous control," remarked Ferrer. Cyrano killed Valvert with a double disengage.

Centrulo and Ferrer carefully rehearsed their fight one-inch out of distance. Often during rehearsals one of them would put down his sword and let the other practice the choreography, pulling the cuts and thrusts one inch from the target. The routine included cheek cuts!

At last, they showed the duel to Santelli for his suggestions. Once the show opened, they did not have a regular pre-performance fight rehearsal. Although they warmed their blades behind the theater's radiator in cold weather, two blades broke in performance. Still, the duel was performed without injury eight performances a week for one year.

"I CAN'T BEAR TO LOOK AT IT!"

Even though he won an Academy Award for best actor in 1951, Ferrer was tremendously disappointed in the movie, which had "no courage and no panache. The producer and director were timid, afraid to let the picture take off and soar." Ferrer was constantly admonished to be less theatrical. "Cyrano, a big man, emotionally, spiritually, and morally" had been diminished. "I can't bear to look at it!"

The film was shot in four six-day weeks and Ferrer felt rushed. During filming of the bakery scene, Stanley Kramer, the producer, stood on a chair in front of over 200 cast

A SPARK TO THE IMAGINATION

Performed with panache and precision, the Cyrano-Valvert duel is one of the finest in Hollywood history. It certainly sparked my

The producer stood on a chair in front of over 200 cast and crew and threatened to cancel the picture...

"This is a play nobody ever heard of, with a star nobody ever heard of, and nobody can pronounce either of their names."

and crew, threatening to cancel the picture because it was behind schedule. He added, "This is a play nobody ever heard of, with a star nobody ever heard of, and nobody can pronounce either of their names." He then left the set, leaving Ferrer and the cast to continue their work!

The fencing was directed by Fred Cavens. Cavens had doubled and choreographed for Douglas Fairbanks, Sr. (Ferrer's boyhood hero). Cavens was "built like a fireplug," but knew his business (see box).

Ferrer showed his theatrical routine to Cavens who incorporated many of the moves. Cavens worked out the choreography with his son Albert before filming began. Albert played Valvert in the film.

A THIRTEEN-HOUR DUEL

The lengthy duel was filmed in thirteen punishing hours, ten of them on the studio's concrete floor. Starting at 8:00 a.m., Ferrer did his own fencing. As the day wore on, he felt his arches flatten painfully. Finally, at 6:00 p.m., they began filming on the set's wooden stage and some of the resiliency in his feet returned. The duel finished at 9:30 p.m. Next morning Ferrer awoke in pain and feared he'd be unable to move, but after a hot shower and breakfast, he reported for another day's filming.

In the later fight against the 100 assassins at the Porte de Nesle, Ferrer was doubled by Cavens. If you watch this sequence carefully, Cyrano suddenly appears stout.

five-year-old imagination. Today at 45 and earning my living with a sword in my hand five days a week, I still return to it for inspiration.

Ferrer had been inspired by the movies of Douglas Fairbanks, Sr., but only saw him in person twice: once at a Broadway opening and again on a Chicago railroad platform waiting to board the Twentieth Century. Ferrer never spoke to his boyhood hero. I had lunch with mine.

Interview, August, 1991

Charles Conwell is a certified teacher in the SAFD and an assistant professor of theater at the University of the Arts in Philadelphia.

CAVENS ON FILM FENCING

All movements—instead of being as small as possible, as in competitive fencing—must be large, but nevertheless correct. Magnified is the word. The routine should contain the most spectacular attacks and parries it is possible to execute while remaining logical to the situation.

In other words, the duel should be a fight, not a fencing exhibition, and should disregard, at times, classically correct guards and lunges. The attitudes arising naturally out of fighting instinct should predominate. When this occurs the whole performance will leave the impression of strength, skill, and manly grace.

The Swordsmen of the Silver Screen, p. 44

MIME TRAINING: THE INVISIBLE EDGE

The art of mime has fallen from favor of late. For too long, "anyone with make-up, slippers, and a knack for annoying people could hit the streets and claim to be a mime." Professional mimes became clowns, dancers, storytellers, puppeteers—even stage combatants!

BY
MARK OLSEN

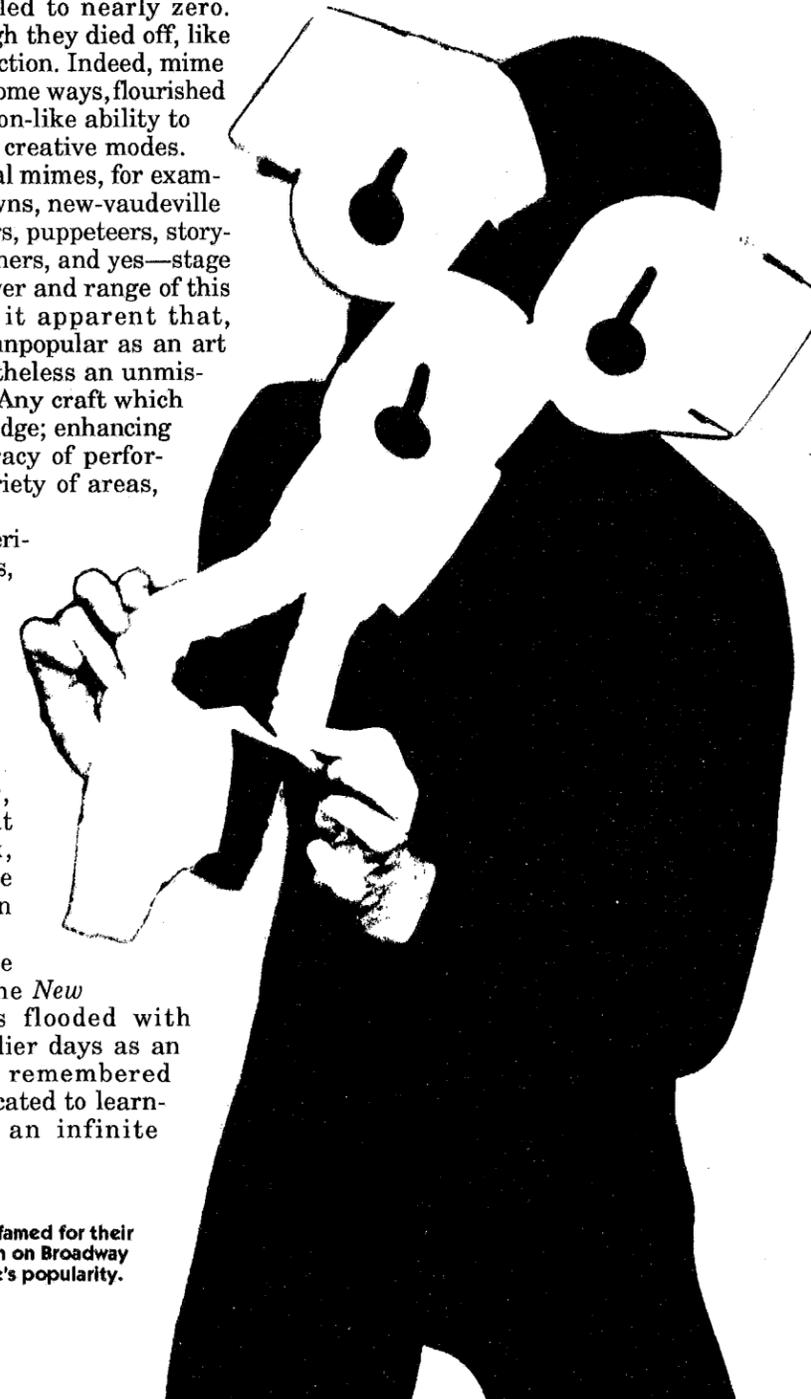
Today, mime bashing is in! Consequently, except for the occasional joke in film or television or on a cartoonist's panel, the art of mime seems to have all but disappeared. There are very few mime shows and the once plentiful population of street mimes has (some would say "mercifully") dwindled to nearly zero. But it is not as though they died off, like a species facing extinction. Indeed, mime has survived and, in some ways, flourished by using its chameleon-like ability to assimilate into other creative modes.

Many professional mimes, for example, have become clowns, new-vaudeville artists, actors, dancers, puppeteers, storytellers, writers, designers, and yes—stage combatants! The power and range of this adaptation makes it apparent that, although currently unpopular as an art form, mime is nevertheless an unmistakably useful skill. Any craft which gives performers an edge; enhancing the depth and accuracy of performance in a wide variety of areas, can't be all bad.

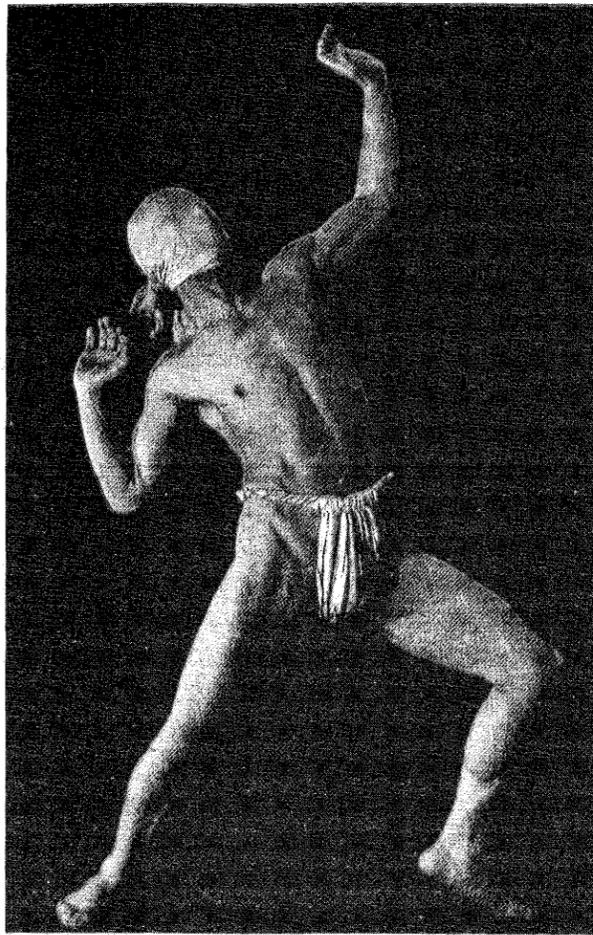
My personal experience with mime (yes, I dare admit my tainted past) has become so integrated into my other skills that for many years I have taken it for granted. That is until last summer, when I learned that Etienne Decroux, sometimes called the father of modern mime, had died.

Upon reading the announcement in the *New York Times*, I was flooded with memories of my earlier days as an aspiring mime. I remembered countless hours dedicated to learning what seemed an infinite

language of movement. I recalled the great debates among my colleagues regarding Decroux and his work, versus the work of Montanaro, Kipnis, Avital or Lecoq. The debates were always heated and often confusing. But regardless of one's point of view, one thing was



Mummenschanz, the mime troupe famed for their mask work, had a two-year run on Broadway during the zenith of mime's popularity.



Etienne Decroux, often called the father of modern mime.

is that the art of mime had unwittingly created an archetype that became an object of public derision. Unlike the romantic ballet dancer or the loveable circus clown or the heroic martial artists, the skinny, white-faced, striped-shirted, bell-bottomed, pixie-like creature that began appearing in parks, malls, and on street corners, was not an archetype destined to stand the test of time.

INITIAL NOVELTY

At first, the public was impressed with the novelty of people who did robotic movement, imitated walks, or created some basic illusions. Shields and Yarnell launched their own television show. Marcel Marceau was touring (as always). David Bowie incorporated mime into his act. And there was indeed, a small flock of mime artists who

genuinely matured the form and content of their performances. But it wasn't long before the novelty wore off and the public began rejecting the entire archetype of the mime.

Purists, usually spawned from Decroux's school, bravely reacted against the developing archetype. They eschewed traditional white-face and exaggerated anecdotal elements of early mime and formulated something entirely different: Corporeal Mime. This new thrust, although interesting, never quite evolved beyond esoteric abstractions; reaching very small audiences, and in some cases, confirming criticism of the art as cold and elitist.

Most damaging, of course, was the fact that anyone with make-up, slippers, and a knack for annoying people could hit the streets and claim

to be a mime. Once this began, the art form was spurned and dismissed with startling swiftness.

THE BABY WITH THE BATH WATER

While accepting, even supporting this collective rejection of the mime archetype, we must be careful not to throw out the baby with the bath water. Perhaps, as Decroux often intimated, mime is an art of research and training that is too pure and personal for public consumption.

At any rate, stirred by Decroux's passing and my convictions regarding the precious gifts mime has to offer, I hope, in some small way, to revitalize interest in the art (reclaim the baby, so to speak) by providing insight into how learning the fundamentals of mime can, according to my experience, be superb preparation for the mastery of stage combat.

Although I could write a detailed description of how a "triple design" of the bust is useful in executing a high-line broadsword parry, how an intercorporeal rotation can enhance a blade kill reaction, or how fixed points can improve safety during a corps-a-corps, I don't think that kind of formal encoded description would be appropriate.

Both mime and stage combat are essentially wordless traditions, passed on from teacher to student through a wide variety of visual, tactile, and kinetic means. Anyone wishing to decode a written description would need advanced training in both areas.

Therefore, I will try to present my descriptions in a manner which avoids, as much as possible, specific jargons and clinical demands of both crafts. Instead, I'll concentrate on terminology which is generic enough to exist within both worlds.

ISOLATION

The first such term is *isolation*: the ability to isolate one single muscle, or group of muscles, and move it without engaging other muscle groups. Mime training concentrates a great deal on this ability to isolate specific areas of the body. Once isolated, the area is subject to a wide variety of movement commands.

Generally speaking, isolation work involves the head, neck, shoulders, chest, pelvis, and a variety of arm and leg separations. Combinations of these isolations provide further challenges as the student works to isolate the chest with the waist or the head and arms with the pelvis and so forth. At the advanced level, more demanding isolations are taught which may include, but are not limited to: eyes, ears, the fingers and hands, elbows, facial expressions, the stomach, and even the toes.

Isolations are especially valuable in executing clean, distinct stage combat reactions. The ability to precisely localize an injury, deliver a perfect strike, or to play a clean readable reaction that directs the attention of the audience, is due largely to the art of isolation.

WORKING WITH SPACE

Since mime works with space as an integral part of the discipline, students are taught to be extremely sensitive to the emotional, psychological, and theatrical uses of space. They are taught ways of compressing space, cutting space, creating or shattering atmospheres, expanding, exploding and composing all manner of visceral relationships to space.

The student of stage combat must also be extremely sensitive to various qualities of space. Distance is a continual factor in both safety and dramatic concerns. It is equally important to be able to create, sense, and maintain a specific theatrical atmosphere with regard to a particular fight. It is important to be able to "see" with the inner eye how the body is cutting space and how certain stage pictures look in terms of masking and theatrical effectiveness. Mime training is ideal for acquiring all these attributes.

RHYTHMIC COMMUNICATION

Mime training also incorporates direct, rhythmic communication,

whether in solo, team, or group situations. In a very short time, even beginning mime students develop the ability to synchronize their kinetic systems with others, playing in harmony or in counterpoint to them. Because this is done without words,

rhythm takes on the semiotic duty of communicating emotions, thoughts, and intentions. This kinetic sensibility is a fundamental part of mime training.

Stage combat is a rhythm-based art form as well. Combatants must often perform complex rhythmic phrases demanding the execution of several rhythms simultaneously. Rhythms must link up perfectly between partners or series of partners. Leg work must be in concert with the rhythms of the blade work. And ultimately, all the rhythms must blend into selling the various blows, near misses, rests, avoidances, and mood factors called for by the production—not to mention the rhythm of the dialogue.

Mime training, with all of its emphasis on rhythm, would provide a definite edge in stage combat.

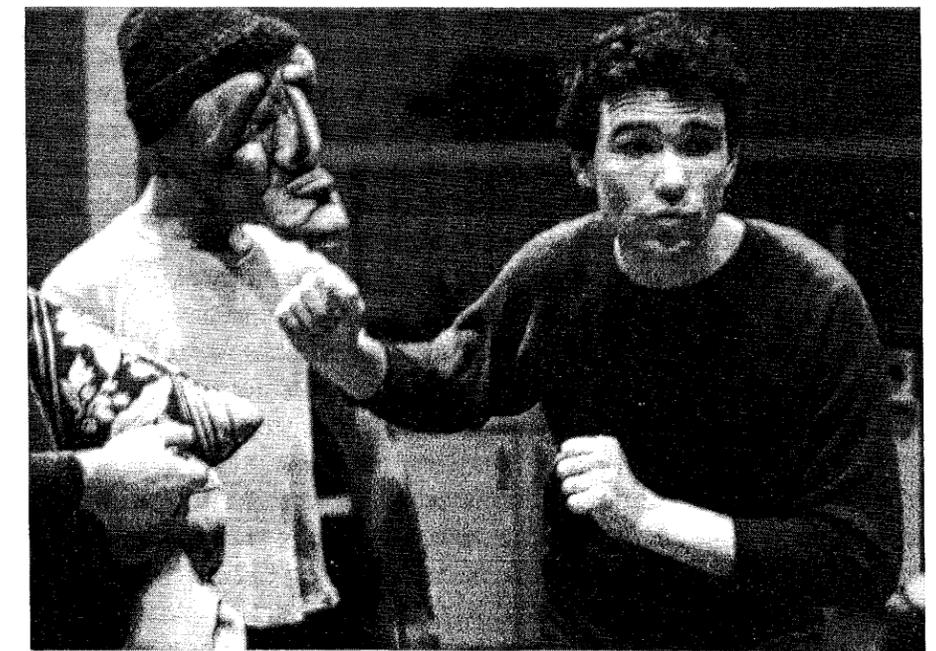
COMIC TIMING

Additionally, mime training emphasizes good comic timing. The comic use of takes, walks, falls, and the comic musicality of movement provides a very strong background for anyone interested in getting laughs from combat performances. Many mimes study and apply the three, five, and seven-beat rhythms which Charlie Chaplin and other great silent screen stars used to get their laughs. Both comic and serious theatrical exaggeration is often employed by mimes; a quality that is undeniably one of the hallmarks of Fight Master Patrick Crean's excellent work.

ILLUSION

Both art forms are also concerned with the magic of creating illusions. The combatant, like the mime artist, is hoping to direct the audience's attention away from the mechanics of the craft and into the reality of the scene. Both performers must act an illusion, must execute the movements with enough energy to carry the house, and must them-

Both art forms
[mime and stage combat]
are concerned with the
magic of creating illusions.

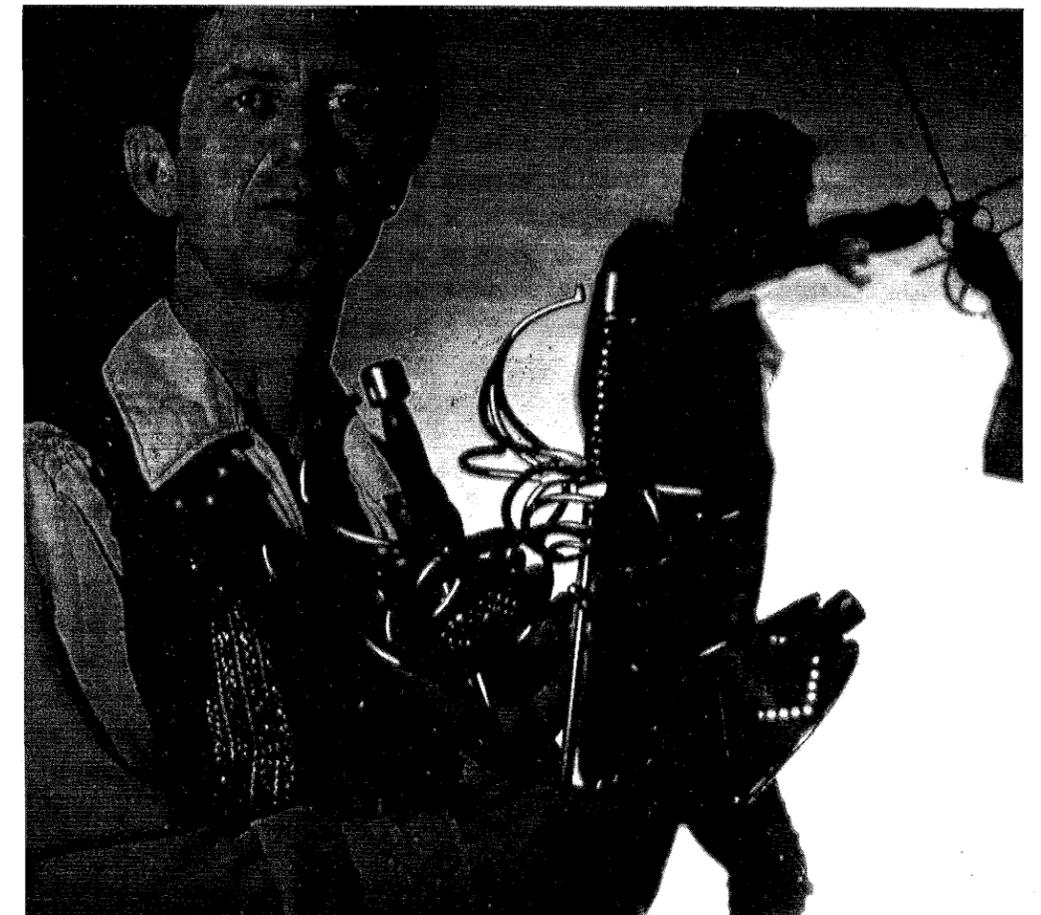


Mark Olsen works with a student in a class dealing with mask technique.

ROD CASTEEL: AN OLD-FASHIONED CRAFTSMAN

Swordmaker Rod Casteel's work is also his passion. Long-time SAFD member and supporter, he's a quiet down-to-earth man who pursues a most unusual profession with a single-minded dedication and zeal.

BY
DAVID "POPS"
DOERSCH



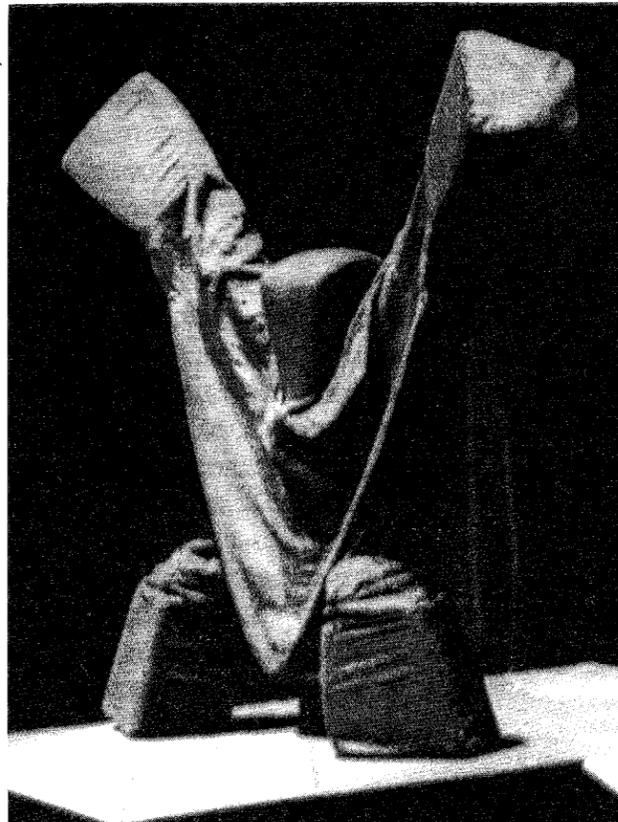
In 1988 I attended my first National Stage Combat Workshop in Memphis. Sometime during the first week, some weapons manufacturers were showing and demonstrating their wares.

Now, amidst the maelstrom of activity and information that surrounds and infuses the National Stage Combat Workshop, there exists a certain manic energy among the students. So, when the weapons that were for sale were unveiled, there ensued a feeding frenzy. Students, myself included, were pulling out checkbooks, wallets, credit cards, marbles, pieces of string, etc.

As I anxiously stood in line waiting

to purchase a sword, the weaponsmaker was speaking to the woman in front of me. She loved the weapon she was handling but was not quite sure if it was right for her. She worried that if she didn't buy it "right then" it would be gone tomorrow. I then heard the swordcutler say to her "I am going to put this weapon on hold until tomorrow night, I want you to go back to your room and sleep on it. Don't rush into a purchase just because other people are."

The woman looked noticeably relieved. The swordcutler continued by saying something that has stayed with me to this day. He put his hand on her



Mark Olsen, on tour with Mummenschanz, performs the famous (and exhausting) "Transfiguration" piece. The audience is left guessing when the mime was standing on his hands or upon his feet.

which can readily cross over to stage combat. Mimes come to appreciate clean lines of movement onstage and develop highly sophisticated sensitivity to stage composition. Fussy, muddy movements are antithetical to mime, as is the composition of stage pictures which don't communicate essential relationships of people, time, place, and mood.

SWEAT

Mimes value sweat and hard work. They thrive on physical challenge and aren't afraid to repeat something a thousand times until they get it right. It is not unusual to see mime students going over a routine or a new move well past the end of class; a quality of dedication

shared by many combatants.

SOUND

Because of the silence associated with the art, mimes become very appreciative and attentive to incidental sounds such as breath, foot sounds, and the inner music which signifies character. People with mime training are sensitive to the sound qualities of stage combat. They will want to orchestrate blade sounds, breathing, knaps, stomps—all manner of sounds to achieve variety and effectiveness.

FULL BODY ACTING

Ultimately, both stage combatants and mimes are actors and must have the ability to be convincing, authentic, and powerful. Good mime training results in full body acting, crisp attention, and the ability to fill moments onstage with choices that are engaging and strong. In good mime training, acting values are constantly integrated into the

technique.

Considering all it has to offer, mime is undeniably a good, if not one of the best, preparation for stage combat. Sharing in this, of course, are all manner of martial arts, some sports, some dance, and obviously fencing. But none of those forms employ the powers of imagination, characterization, and illusion that mime does. And none of them speaks as directly to the actor.

I've been lucky enough to study with no less than five of the great mime teachers in the world. I have worked with or studied with first generation instructors from at least four other master mime teachers. All of these teachers are unique and have their individual tastes and perspectives. All are honorable, dedicated, and inspired artists who have admirable courage and vision. None of them, however, fit the image of the typical mime that has become the unfortunate modern archetype.

Good mime teachers today are closer to the archetype of ancient tribal keepers of the flame. Decroux, who remained unmoved by the whims of fashion, worked steadily throughout his life, passing his flame to several generations of artists, who in turn nurtured it and now continue to pass it on to others. And his is only one light among many that still illuminate the art.

FROM THE ASHES, THE PHOENIX

The glow of the art is occluded at present, hidden in the shadow of fashion. Yet, as these things go, it will no doubt resurface. Until then, it can serve to enhance related fields as they evolve and grow. From the ashes of the fallen archetype, mime emerges like an invisible Phoenix that embraces all movement arts.

I hope this article can serve to encourage anyone who wishes to prepare for, improve, or extend the range of possibilities in the realm of stage combat, to seek out a good mime teacher and acquire the edge which can lead to greater and greater levels of excellence.

Mark Olsen is a certified teacher of stage combat, associate professor of acting at Wright State

selves believe in the action.

Very often the combatant must give the illusion that a weapon is heavier or lighter than it really is. And all combatants must give the illusion that their weapons are sharper and more deadly than they really are. A combatant must also give the illusion of strength, weakness or injury where none exists.

SLOW MOTION

Illusions of weight, energy, character, and state of being are staples of mime training; as is the perfection of slow motion, an effect that is often employed in stylized fights. The latter is especially important in synchronizing the speed of slow motion between partners. The inability to synchronize and stabilize slow motion often signals poor partnering in stage combat.

STAGECRAFT

Mime training instills a student with important stagecraft values

shoulder and, in his fatherly way, said, "A sword will never sing in your hand, unless it first sings in your heart."

These words were so unexpected to both the woman and me that we each promptly reexamined our purchases. I found that I, too, could afford to wait. But what I also found was the dawning of a deep respect for a businessman who wasn't interested in making a fast buck, but instead wanted, and obviously insisted on, his clients being happy with their purchases.

As I put the sword back to think on it, I introduced myself to Rod Casteel. That moment marked the beginning of what has become a lasting and close friendship.

Over the years, I have found Rod to be a gentleman of sterling character, wonderful stories and wit, great respect for those with artistic vision and integrity, and most of all, an all-consuming passion for his art... the making of quality theatrical weaponry. So, it is not hard to

imagine that, when asked to write a story on my friend and his art, I jumped at the chance.

Where do I begin? There are so many aspects of this straight-shooting, down-to-earth man. Do I start in Phoenix, Arizona in 1984 when Rod began to make swords? How many swords per year does he manufacture; how many individuals work in his shop? How does he balance a rapier? What metals does he use? Perhaps a more timely topic is Rod's involvement in the film *Hook*, directed by Steven Spielberg.

A PHONE CALL ON A RAINY DAY

About a year ago, during the cold, wet rains that January brings to Oregon, Rod Casteel was busy in his workshop overseeing production of a new line of cutlasses. This new

line would be sturdier than anything like it on the market today, look



authentic enough to please the collectors and historical purists out there, and could be manufactured at a relatively inexpensive rate.

Although Rod hadn't yet thought of any specific uses or clients that would need the cutlass immediately, he was still quite excited at the potential that this as yet unfinished sword would have.

The phone rang. It was Lucas Law Fontaine, a friend of Rod's and a fine fight director. He had gotten involved in Steven Spielberg's *Hook*, and the production company was having some difficulty with the swords they'd purchased. It seemed that almost everything that looked right kept breaking. Could Rod help them out?

Smiling quietly at the providence of the moment, Rod assured Luke that he could meet their needs. When were the weapons needed? How many? They'll be there by the deadline.

KEEPING PACE WITH AMBLIN

Amblin Productions wanted to rent 12 specially designed cutlasses. Their needs would require a certain degree of modification to the design Rod had already been working on, but nothing major.

Rod's shop promptly went from its state of perpetual high gear to overdrive. The weapons were made and shipped on schedule arriving in Los Angeles in early February.

Within ten days another phone call came. Once again, it was Luke. "They love the swords, and want to rent an additional 18 as soon as you can get them here!" Luckily, Rod had anticipated that there just might be an additional demand from a picture of such large proportions, so he had already made a few extras, and the others came quickly enough. He sent them all on schedule.

Before long, word was coming in from all sides: Luke was praising the balance, heft and durability; the art director was praising the look; the actors (including Dustin Hoffman and Robin Williams) were asking who made these "great

weapons;" word came from Matt Gratzner in Florida (who had a friend on the production staff of *Hook*) that everyone on the set loved the "Casteel Cutlasses."

The finest moment came, ironically, when one of the swords finally broke. The actors and fight-team had been through a particularly grueling day of shooting (several weeks into the film), when one of the original cutlasses finally broke and fell apart. There was a moment of silence on the set, while everybody looked in surprise at the broken workhorse which had endured far more than any sword should have to. The silence was broken by Steven Spielberg who said: "Ahhh, I liked that one... do we have another?"

As Rod continued creating and shipping merchandise to and from Los Angeles for perusal and selection, rental and return, the months stretched on. As his involvement in the production continued, so too did his collection of anecdotes (see box).

Various television newscasts and radio broadcasts did features on the Colonial Armoury around the time of the *Hook* premiere, escalating the already dizzying pace that existed. When asked about all of this media attention, Rod quietly comments, "To tell you the truth, I was kinda glad when it was over, so I could get back to work."

A LIFETIME DREAM

Rod's "work" is also his passion; the ongoing realization of a lifetime dream. Being one of the three foremost weaponsmakers in the country, employing six people in his shop, manufacturing between 500 and 1000 swords per year for colleges, universities, professional theatres, opera and ballet companies, and now film, he still surprises me with his folksy, one-of-the-guys manner.

"I love the stage. I have always

loved the stage. But, I don't need or particularly want to be out there taking the bows. It's okay to be in the wings. I just want to be part of it, and know that I can take pride

in the projects I'm involved in."

Rod's future is looking like he will have a great many things in which to take pride.

Besides ongoing projects and contracts, Rod's work is currently being considered for two more major motion pictures; he is continuing to expand and upgrade the quality of his stock; and he has a Germanic bastard sword with a swept hilt fresh off the line. As if that isn't enough, he has set for himself a lifetime goal to manufacture "literally every style of European hilt from 1530 to 1700."

His work in the past has earned recognition from virtually all quarters of our industry, including Rod's favorite commentary on his quality,

"Ahhh, I liked that one... do we have another?"

craftsmanship, and congeniality which came from William Hobbs: "You have restored my faith in American Foreign Policy."

BECOMING A HAPPY GUY...

Finally, I leave you with another thought of Rod's that will linger in my mind. As any good interviewer would, I mentioned to Rod: "I know that you first came to a National Stage Combat Workshop in 1985; you've been donating a sword to be presented as the Patrick Crean Award annually since 1987, but I don't know how long you've been making swords."

Rod's answer was typically laconic. "David, I've been making swords since 1984, but in all truth, I don't remember a time when I didn't know how to do this. We all have hidden abilities and talents. When you discover that and pursue it, you become a happy guy."

Here's hoping that more of us find that kind of happiness.

David "Pops" Doersch is a certified teacher of stage combat based in Minneapolis.

THREE TALES FROM HOOK

Jim Hart, the screenwriter for *Hook*, fell in love with the work coming out of Rod's shop, and made sure to pass this along to the folks in Eugene. Rod reciprocated by sending Jim a child's-size cutlass as a memento. When the December 23rd issue of *People* magazine came out, there was a photo of Jim's son, Jake (10), who is credited with having come up with the premise for the movie eight years earlier, holding the cutlass that Rod had sent.

Three personalized cutlasses were manufactured for Dustin Hoffman, Robin Williams and Steven Spielberg. These were presented at the wrap party (which coincidentally was Dustin Hoffman's birthday). Big smiles and thank-you's were sent to Eugene, Oregon.

Also at the wrap party, two cutlasses were sent to be signed by Spielberg, Hoffman and Williams and later to have those signatures engraved into the blades. These weapons now decorate the homes of Rod Casteel and his co-worker Alan Knott who worked long and hard on the *Hook* cutlasses.

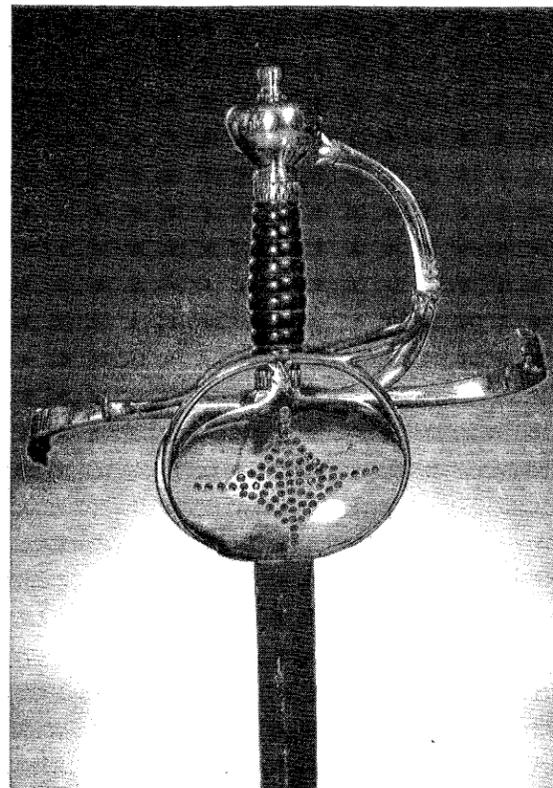
Rod Cassteel's Colonial Armoury

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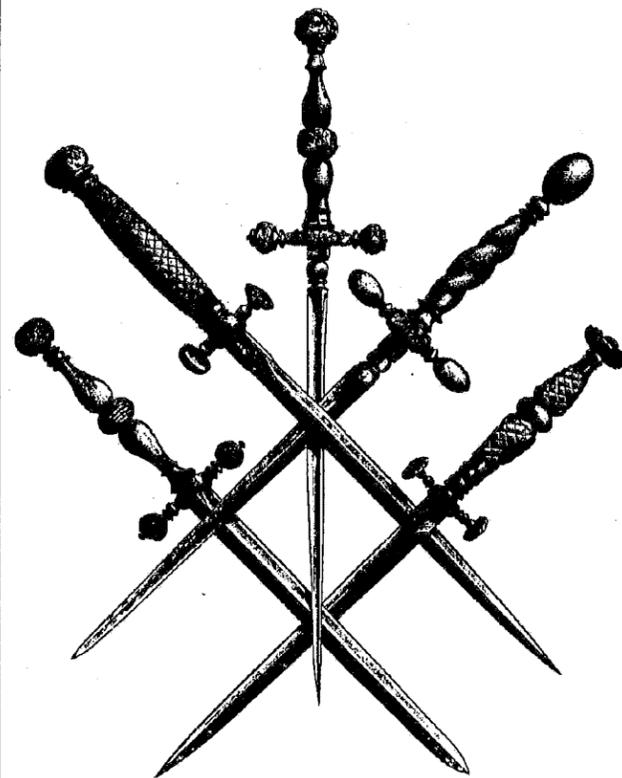


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Nuts & Bolts

BLOOD EFFECTS

by Richard Raether

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

“Yet who would have thought the old man
to have had so much blood in him?”

Macbeth, Act V, Scene 1

MANY OF THE BLOOD EFFECTS IN
USE TODAY HAVE A VERY LONG
HERITAGE. SOME, LIKE THE BLOOD BAG,
DATE BACK TO THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

But it was the famed theatre of
terror, Le Theatre de Grand Guignol
de Paris (1900–1962) that really
perfected the art of realistic gore.
The Grand Guignol's secret blood
recipe was mixed daily by director
Charles Nonon. It changed colors as
it cooled, actually coagulated and
made scabs and came in nine
shades.

Unfortunately, that recipe has
been lost, but you can whip up some
pretty realistic blood right at home.

This recipe appeared in the first
edition of the *Fight Master* back in
April 1978 and was given to the
SAFD by Dana Nye, son of famed
Hollywood make-up man Ben Nye.

- 1 pint Karo syrup
- 1 smidgen red food coloring
- 2 T. corn starch
- 1 heaping T. peanut butter.

Karo syrup is the principle base,
the food coloring gives the syrup the
desired hue, the corn starch dilutes
the opaqueness and the peanut
butter gives it a tacky base, thus

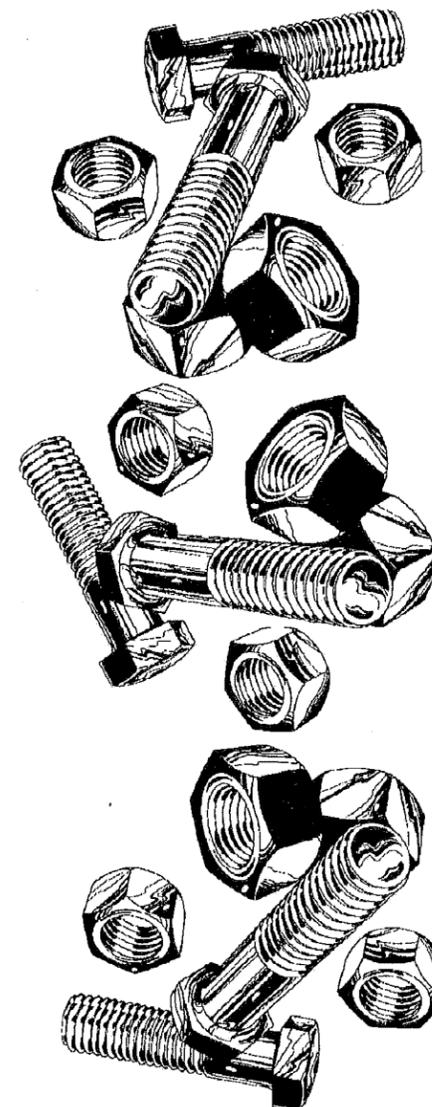
eliminating the problem of running.

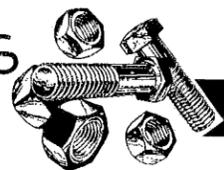
Be sure when adding peanut
butter that you stir it into the batch
thoroughly, allowing it to dissolve. If
you just plop it into the mixture, your
actor may end up with an unsightly
carbuncle on the side of his neck or
wherever the blood is applied.

After the peanut butter has
dissolved, again stir all ingredients
thoroughly. Mr. Nye further recom-
mended crunchy peanut butter for
clotted blood. Not only is it visually
effective, but the leftovers are rather
tasty! Note: the color of your blood
will depend on the color of the lights
and the color of the fabric it is on.

There are many variations on
this basic recipe, to darken or enrich
the color. Drew Fracher likes a tinge
of blue food coloring and I've found
chocolate syrup also does the trick.

If a thinner consistency is needed,
cut down or eliminate the peanut
butter. Joe Martinez recommends a
mixture of Glycerin or digestible
mineral oil and red food coloring for
use with blood capsules.





The PH factor in peanut butter actually inhibits the food coloring from staining costumes, but for extra care you can use liquid Woolite or Ivory Snow liquid laundry detergent as a base instead of Karo.

Commercial Blood

There are also many commercial brands of stage blood on the market. Ben Nye sells *Thick Blood*, a gel that can be molded for three-dimensional wounds and *Fresh Scab*, a gel which creates a dark dried-blood scab.

Kryolan makes several bloods. *Special Filmblood* comes in two shades, light and dark. *Fixblood* comes in a tube and dries quickly to look like dried blood. It is water-proof and won't rub off.

Magic Blood is a two-step procedure. Component A is applied to an area of skin and allowed to dry. At the right moment (at the climax of your fight scene) apply component B liquid to the treated area. The combination turns the previously clear component B to a blood red.

Eye Blood can be applied to the eye by eye dropper and remains visible for 10-20 minutes. Paramount also sells *Blood* which is digestible and will wash out of most fabrics.

The next problem is getting the blood where you want it, when you want it. Many creative minds have come up with some ingenious and complicated mechanisms for applying blood "magically," and these are great for film. But in the theatre, where consistency is of great importance, my advice is to keep it simple.

I have to share a Drew Fracher blood anecdote here. The play was *Richard III* and the corpse of King Henry VI is said to bleed when his murderer (Richard) touches his body. The props people devised ingenious electronic devices concealed on the actor playing the corpse (Who said there are no small parts?). On cue, the stage manager had but to flip a switch and the onstage corpse would mysteriously ooze blood.

The cue came and the corpse spouted vertible geysers of blood, drenching the actors, who played the rest of the scene slipping wildly in pools of blood on the floor.

Some of the less exotic devices for producing on stage blood are:

The Blood Bag

The easiest, cheapest blood bag is made with a plastic baggie. Put the desired amount of blood in the corner of the baggie. Then either knot the baggie closed and trim the excess, or trim and place the edges between a folded strip of aluminum foil and seal with a hot iron. Make sure that the bag is packed tightly. If the bag contains air or the bag is soft, it will be difficult to break. Paramount sells a commercial blood bag if this seems like too much work.

Beware of taping bags to skin; actors sweat. I've found that a small pocket sewn into an undergarment of the costume holds the bag securely in the same place, night after night, so that the actor can find it easily.

Once the blood bag is securely in position, the actor merely needs to grab it and squeeze, forcing the blood through the fabric of his costume. Obviously, light-colored fabric (i.e. a white shirt) will show the blood best. Beware of heavy or lined fabrics.

Blood Capsules

Blood capsules are another

common blood device, and can be used effectively for the ever-popular bloody lip. For safety reasons, the capsule should be inserted late in the fight; fighting with a capsule in the mouth can be dangerous as they are easily inhaled and can block the wind pipe.

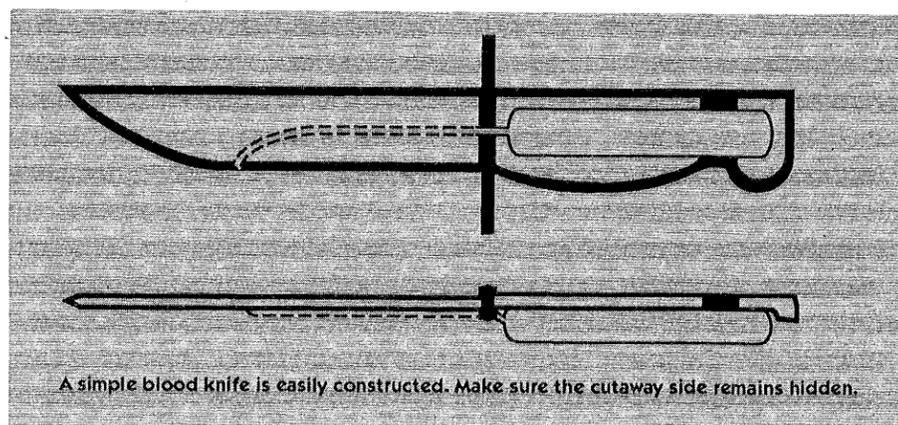
Kryolan sells blood capsules filled with powder colored with food coloring which, theoretically, mixes with the actor's saliva when bitten to create blood. The problem with this is that by the end of a fight, an actor often doesn't have much saliva left.

Paramount sells empty gelatin capsules which can be filled with their *Blood*, but large empty gelatin capsules can also be purchased from most drug stores. Note: Fill capsules for each performance at half-hour, otherwise capsules will get soggy and be difficult to break.

Blood Delivered by Hand

There are several ways to use blood that involve the "injured" actor applying the blood himself or another actor applying the blood on stage.

When using a thick blood solution, an actor can simply apply blood to his fingertips before entering and "palm" it until the injury occurs. Then as his hands naturally go to his wound, he can smear on the blood. Another variation is to conceal a container (i.e. a jar lid) somewhere onstage so that the actor can unobtrusively dip his fingers.



A simple blood knife is easily constructed. Make sure the cutaway side remains hidden.

The Blood Sponge

If thinner blood is needed, a sponge will work. Wet an ordinary household sponge, wring it out, then soak up blood. The bigger the sponge, the more blood it holds. The blood sponge can be strategically hidden onstage or in a lined pocket to be squeezed by the actor when needed.

Blood Bottles

Blood can also be applied with a squeeze bottle. A small Elmer's Glue container or eye drop bottle both work well, although the opening may need to be enlarged. An infant nasal aspirator can be used to place a larger amount of blood accurately.

Blood Knives

A hybrid of the blood bottle is the blood knife. The handle of the knife is cut away on one side. The squeeze bottle is inserted into the hollow handle and a length of surgical hose (any small plastic tube) is attached to the opening of the bottle and run to the edge of the blade. The hose can be disguised with silver tape, but it's best to not to let the audience get a close look at the upstage side.

The best illusions are achieved with identical knives, one real, and its twin converted as a blood knife. Give the audience a good look at the real knife, then switch at the last moment. Obviously, make sure the edge of the blood knife is dulled. As you draw the knife across the skin, squeeze the bottle hidden within the handle and blood appears on the skin. This gimmick was used to great effect in *Sweeney Todd*.

Blood is an illusion; its effectiveness depends on preventing anyone spotting the trick. Simple mechanics, along with the misdirection of focus, yield the best results. Still, the most critical factor is the acting. Devices can produce flowing blood, but the actor must make the audience believe that he is bleeding.

Richard Raether is a fight master and serves the SAFD as secretary, treasurer and associate editor.

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BY
MARGARET
RAETHER

Film Fights

Knights in Shining Armor

Apox on thee for a lowly varlet, if you're not up on these action films celebrating the age of chivalry. Fair damsels and stalwart knights, not to mention the stunt men who brought it all to rousing life...

Ivanhoe

1952 MGM
Director: Richard Thorpe
Academy Award Nomination: Best Picture, Best Cinematography

Lavish costume adventure based on Sir Walter Scott's tale. Robert Taylor plays the all-American hero who—sorry, I mean to say *Saxon* hero, the accent confused me—gallops off on daring quests, and romances Elizabeth Taylor and Joan Fontaine (nice work if you can get it). Liz Taylor, just turned 20, is so eerily beautiful she makes Fontaine, ordinarily a great beauty in her own right, look pallid and matronly. But enough about romance, on to the action.

Legendary Hollywood stuntman Yakima Canutt went to England to stage the action sequences. There had been, up to that time, very little film work for English stuntmen and most had drifted out of the business. Faced with a severe shortage of trained stuntmen, Yak lined up all the extras and singled out sixteen with strong athletic backgrounds. He put them through a crash training course and a number of them went on to major careers as stuntmen, including Bob Simmons, who worked on the James Bond films. *Ivanhoe's* brutal joust with villainous George Sanders is a standout. And, of course, one nice thing about armor is that it makes doubling the principles a piece of cake.

106 minutes. Color. Available on video

The Black Shield of Falworth

1954 Universal
Director: Rudolph Maté

For its first CinemaScope venture, Paramount teamed real-life-husband-and-wife Tony Curtis and Janet Leigh in *The Black Shield of Falworth*, based on Howard Pyle's classic novel, *Men of Iron*. Curtis was regularly targeted by critics who derided his Bronx accent in previous swashbuckling entries such as *The Prince Who Was a Thief* and *The Son of Ali Baba*. This time around, they complained, "In a tin suit, he looks like a youngster in an oversized football uniform." Devoted Curtis fans made the picture a hit anyway.

To his credit, Curtis studied diligently with Hollywood fencing master, Ralph Faulkner, who commented, "His sense of timing is remarkable and his muscular coordination perfect. His eagerness to learn was beyond restraint and on one or two occasions carried him beyond the point of safety."

Studio publicity touted the fact that Curtis refused a double and did all his own stunt work, but actually renowned stuntman David Sharpe, a former U.S. champion gymnast, doubled Curtis in this film and many others.

99 minutes. Color. Not available on video

The Warriors

1955 Allied Artists

Errol Flynn's last swashbuckler had him donning armor as Black Prince Edward. After the Hundred Years War, Edward remains in France to watch



over the lands conquered by his father, Edward III. Shot in England, the climactic attack on the castle was filmed on leftover sets from *Ivanhoe*. Rather a decent entry in Flynn's shot-to-hell later years. Watch for the scene in which Errol duels with a very young Christopher Lee.

Camelot

1967 Warner Brothers
Director: Joshua Logan
Academy Award Nomination: Best Cinematography

Yes, it's bloated and none of the stars can really do justice to the lovely score. But this overstuffed and over-long musical contains some excellent action scenes. The joust, in particular, is really very good. The action was arranged and performed by Joe and Tap Canutt (Yak's sons). There is a dandy joust between Lancelot and three other knights (all doubled, of course). The Canutt boys do some nifty stunt riding and fighting atop the round table itself, which cracks and breaks (It's like, a symbol—get it?)

150 minutes. Color. Available on video

Robin and Marion

1976 Warner Brothers
Director: Richard Lester

Okay, I kind of snuck this movie into this category. The "shining armor" here is generally chain mail and it's usually covered with mud and sweat. But I just had to salute one of the best, most realistic cinematic broadsword battles ever, choreographed by William Hobbs.

I am talking, of course, about the final showdown between Robin (Sean Connery) and the evil Sheriff (Robert Shaw). In this fight, you believe those swords weigh fifty pounds and the sheer physical exhaustion of the combatants is a very real factor in the battle.

106 minutes. Color. Available on video

Excalibur

1981 Columbia
Director: John Boorman

Mystical and moody, this is a worthy retelling of the Arthurian legend. Hobbs again staged the fights, principally a battle between Arthur and Lancelot (before they become best friends). Boorman's camera is in so tight that you occasionally can't follow the fight (which suit of armor is which and who's winning, for Pete's sake).

Okay, one personal note on *Excalibur*. I saw it first in a packed and rowdy Times Square movie theatre. I've never since been able to watch the scene in which Uther Pendragon ravishes Igraine of Cornwall—she is naked and he is in *full plate armor* (ouch!)—without recalling the irrepressible audience chanting in unison as the onscreen lovers go at it, "Clank-Clank! Clank-Clank!"

140 minutes. Color. Available on video

Monty Python and the Holy Grail

1974 Columbia
Directors: Terry Gilliam and Terry Jones

We're Knights of the Round Table
We impersonate Clark Gable
We dine well here in Camelot
We eat ham and jam and Spam a lot

If you see all the rather solemn films listed above, you'll be ripe for this brilliantly silly send-up of the genre. The first of the Python films, it has Graham Chapman as Arthur and everyone else as everyone else. Terry Gilliam also directed last year's wonderful *The Fisher King*, also about a quest for the Grail. "I get all the Grail pictures," he observed. Note: Python fans, see following page.

90 minutes. Color. Available on video

Margaret Raether is Editor of the *Fight Master* and a long-time film buff.



And now, for something completely different...

A classic fight scene from *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*—

ARTHUR and PATSY watch, very impressed, as the BLACK KNIGHT dispatches the GREEN KNIGHT.

ARTHUR looks at PATSY, nods and moves forward.

ARTHUR: You fight with the strength of many men, Sir Knight.

The BLACK KNIGHT says nothing.

ARTHUR: I am Arthur, King of the Britons. (silence) . . . I seek the finest and bravest knights in all the world to join me at Camelot. (silence) You have proved yourself worthy. Will you join me? (silence) You make me sad. So be it. Come Patsy.

As he moves, the BLACK KNIGHT bars the way.

KNIGHT: None shall pass.

ARTHUR: What?

KNIGHT: None shall pass.

ARTHUR: I have no quarrel with you, good Sir Knight, but I must cross this bridge.

KNIGHT: Then you shall die.

ARTHUR: I command you, as King of the Britons, to stand aside.

KNIGHT: I move for no man.

ARTHUR: So be it.

A furious fight ensues until ARTHUR completely severs BLACK KNIGHT's left arm at the shoulder.

ARTHUR: Now stand aside worthy adversary.

KNIGHT: (glancing at shoulder) 'Tis but a scratch.

ARTHUR: A scratch? Your arm's off!

KNIGHT: No it isn't.

ARTHUR: (pointing to the arm) What's that then?

KNIGHT: I've had worse.

ARTHUR: You liar!

KNIGHT: Come on, you pansy! (They fight—)

ARTHUR chops off BLACK KNIGHT's other arm.

ARTHUR: Victory is mine! (kneels) We thank thee, O Lord, that in thy mercy—

KNIGHT: Come on then!

ARTHUR: What?

BLACK KNIGHT kicks ARTHUR hard on side of helmet. ARTHUR rises.

ARTHUR: You are indeed brave, Sir Knight, but the fight is mine.

KNIGHT: Had enough? (He kicks ARTHUR again.)

ARTHUR: Look, you stupid bastard. You've got no arms left!

KNIGHT: Yes, I have.

ARTHUR: Look!!

KNIGHT: Just a flesh wound. (He kicks ARTHUR.)

ARTHUR: Stop that!

KNIGHT: (kicking ARTHUR.) Had enough? Chicken! Chicken!

ARTHUR: Look, I'll have your leg. (He is kicked.) Right. (He is kicked again.)

ARTHUR chops BLACK KNIGHT's leg off. The BLACK KNIGHT keeps his balance with difficulty.

KNIGHT: Right, I'll do you for that.

ARTHUR: You'll what?

KNIGHT: Come here.

ARTHUR: What are you going to do? Bleed on me?

KNIGHT: I am invincible!

ARTHUR: You're a looney!

KNIGHT: The Black Knight always triumphs. Have at you! . . . Come on then!

ARTHUR takes BLACK KNIGHT's last leg off.

ARTHUR: All right, we'll call it a draw. Come, Patsy.

ARTHUR and PATSY cross bridge.

KNIGHT: Oh, I see. Running away, eh? You yellow bastard, come back here and take what's coming to you. I'll bite your legs off!

the Pen & the Sword

In the Fall 1992 *Fight Master*, "The Pen and the Sword" will look at the following three books:

The English Masters of Arms
J.D. Aylward
London: Batchworth Press, 1945

The Duel in European History
Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988

Swordsmen of the Silver Screen
Jeffrey Richards
London: 1977

Reviews should be completed by August 15, 1992 and forwarded to:

Dale Anthony Girard
P.O. Box 18954
Denver, CO 80218

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

MEMBERS VOICE THEIR VIEWS ON ARTHUR WISE'S *THE ART AND HISTORY OF PERSONAL COMBAT*, FRED GILBERT BLAKESLEE'S *SWORDPLAY FOR ACTORS*, AND CAPTAIN ALFRED HUTTON'S *THE SWORD AND THE CENTURIES*.

THE ART AND HISTORY OF PERSONAL COMBAT

by Arthur Wise

London: Hugh Evelyn Limited, 1971.
[reprinted Greenwich, CT: Arma Press, 1972].
Hardcover, Pp. 256 Bibliography and index.

The Art and History of Personal Combat, by Arthur Wise, is "an attempt to trace the development of one aspect of that thought [the most efficient ways of inflicting physical damage], and practice that has arisen from it—the aspect of personal combat." [p.7]

In his attempt, Mr. Wise created a text that spans personal combat from Cain and Abel to the present. Wise's work moves chronologically, following a neat and orderly path through history. He covers each particular style and period through natural historical progression.

Each chapter (there are ten) deals with a particular aspect or development in personal combat. The chapters flow successfully from one into the next, concluding with a thorough index and bibliography, making the book of particular interest for reference and research.

Mr. Wise is very good about defining the terms used in his text. He takes the time to allow the reader to develop a fundamental understanding of the period and weapons being discussed. "It is much more detailed and specific than 'Weapons,'



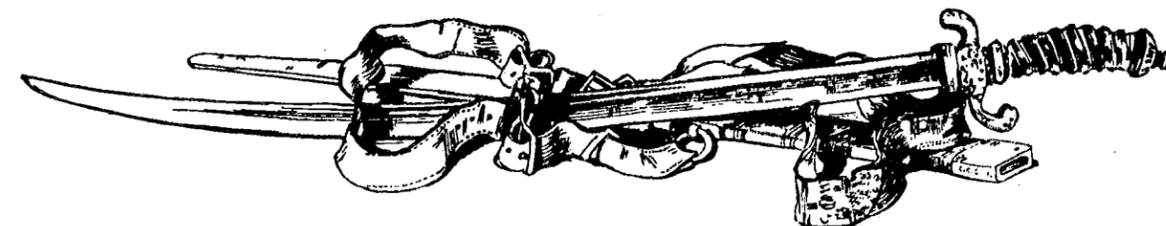
the prelude to 'Personal Combat,'"

says Fight Master David Boushey.²

Compared to Castle's text, however, the book is easy to read and the author's line of thought is quite simple to trace.³ Many books of this kind are ponderous reading, weighed down with academic "textbook" style. Mr. Wise, on the other hand, has made reading history fascinating and intriguing. He quotes from Castle and from many historical texts. He summarizes style and form, and tries to explain not only style and form, but philosophy as well.

One drawback of Mr. Wise's work, although easy to read, is that he seems to cite Mr. Castle as a primary source. This also was noted by Linda McCollum who points out that he "uses Castle's *Schools and Masters of Fence* as a primary source of textual information."

The vast number of illustrations offered in the text are from a variety of manuscripts. Mr. Wise has selected impressive illustrations from various historical publications and used them to support his text. These woodcuts,



engravings, plates and pictures offer the reader an excellent look at how historical weapons were held and used. None of the illustrations employed by the author seem out of place or incongruous to the information offered in the text, although their placement is sometimes confusing. "I sometimes have a problem with the placement of the illustrations in relationship to the text," says Linda McCollum. "This causes some flipping back and forth through the text. If one is not paying close attention one might refer to the illustrations immediately adjacent to the text instead of the correct ones."

A TEXT OF GREAT VALUE

The illustrations alone make this text of great value to the stage combatant. To the historian and the research student, however, it is best to seek out the originals. Although the reprints are helpful, a good deal of the detail from the originals is lost in reduction and reproduction. As an aid to the stage combatant and choreographer, this text offers illustrations that are for the most part difficult, if not impossible, to gain access to.

Mr. Wise's index is a great help to readers trying to relocate specific information, and his bibliography is a great key for further research. Mr. Wise inspires his readers to seek out further information. Linda McCollum adds that "Wise gives you a good basic understanding but makes you thirsty for more, to see the original, to confirm his ideas."

Although not everything offered by Mr. Wise is historically accurate, and, in his attempt to cover so much, some things are left out or skimmed over, his text is of great importance to the understanding of the history of the science upon which we found our art.

"THE BIBLE OF FIGHT LITERATURE"

David Boushey refers to the text as "the bible of fight literature," and Linda McCollum emphatically lists

it as a "must have!"

Arthur Wise's *Art and History of Personal Combat* is a well written, well illustrated tour through our violent past and an excellent tool for understanding in the present. I would heartily recommend this text to any student of stage combat, whether actor, teacher or choreographer.

¹ A short biography of Mr. Wise is offered as part of the introduction to the review of *Weapons in the Theatre*, in *The Fight Master*, "The Pen and the Sword," Fall 1991 Vol. XIV #9, pp. 43-44.

² Wise, Arthur. *Weapons in the Theatre*. Reviewed in *The Fight Master*, "The Pen and the Sword," Fall 1991 Vol. XIV #9, p. 43-44.

³ Castle, Egerton. *Schools and Masters of Fence*. Reviewed in *The Fight Master*, "The Pen and the Sword," Fall 1990 Vol. XIII #3, pp. 40-41.

CONTRIBUTING REVIEWERS

David L. Boushey is a fight master and founder of the SAFD.

Linda McCollum has been a member of the SAFD for ten years and served as editor of *The Fight Master* for six years, on-site coordinator of the National Stage Combat Workshop for four years and as Secretary/Treasurer. Linda is also a member of the United States Fencing Coaches Association, having received her certification in 1991.

SWORD PLAY FOR ACTORS: A MANUAL OF STAGE FENCING

by Fred Gilbert Blakeslee

New York: The M.W.S. Hazen Company, 1905. Hardcover, Pp. 189, w/22 B & W photographic plates

Fred Gilbert Blakeslee was born in Hartford, Connecticut in 1868 and was a military instructor in the West Middle School District in Hartford from 1904-1919 and swordmaster of the 1st Regiment of the Connecticut National Guard.

In his introduction, Blakeslee tells the reader that "Many actors are already experts with the foils, but know little of the ancient methods of fence; to such this book is presented as a means of readily acquiring a knowledge of the schools of the past." [pg. 9]

In 1905, I'm sure *Sword Play for the Actor* met a "long-felt want," but by today's standards the text is of little more than nostalgic value.

The text offers a brief, simple history of the sword and of the art

of fencing. Most of this is a light summation of Castle and Burton, painting a vague picture of the evolution of the sword and its science.¹

KEEPING TO THE LOW LINES

Safety is a primary concern in this text, but instead of altering mechanics to make moves safer, unsafe moves and techniques are omitted completely. Blakeslee goes to a lot of trouble to avoid injury to the face by limiting attacks to the low lines and removing the riposte. Joined with his other techniques, however, this only limits the moves available to combatants and makes the fights awkward and ineffective by today's standards.

Attacks are directed at the body, but actors are instructed to "arrest" the cut before impact. Mr. Blakeslee writes that he has seen an expert swordsman slice a potato in two, placed upon the bared head of a kneeling woman, and stop the cut in time to avoid injury. This is "arresting" a cut. Thus, the basic principle is "I cut, you better parry."

The historical techniques in the text are merely turn of the century fencing techniques haphazardly adapted to period styles. Blakeslee recommends readers practice with jacket and mask until comfortable with a routine.

"His technique reminds me of the technique used when I first took theatrical fencing under Julius Alpar at Berkeley," says Linda McCollum. "We learned the routine with all the equipment on and then, once the routine was firmly set, we took off the safety equipment. There was no specific mention of changing the fencing technique for reasons of safety, such as avoiding the face, being out of line or off target."

The theatricality of the text is very weak. Blakeslee, who worked for the Aetna Insurance Company, had little, if any, theatrical background. Linda recognized this also, mentioning she found it "almost

humorous to hear his repeated concern about placement of the star in each fight so that he is opened to the audience."

The few illustrations do give the reader a good impression of what the author intended, but many techniques are left to the reader's imagination and those that are illustrated are quite dangerous.

Mr. Blakeslee's text is a window to the foundations of our art rather than a practical manual. "Blakeslee's book," Linda adds, "becomes a historical curiosity for those researching stage combat."

A DATED PERIOD PIECE

Sword Play for the Actor is a dated period piece of literature on the art of stage combat as it was practiced at the turn of the century. It is of little use to the actor combatant today, unless they are interested in the evolution of our profession. Blakeslee was not an actor nor a fight arranger. His work, however, is one of the few examples of stage combat from the 1900s and is an excellent example of how far the art has come.

¹ Castle, Egerton. *Schools and Masters of Fence*. Reviewed in *The Fight Master*, "The Pen and the Sword," Fall 1990 Vol. XIII #3, pp. 40-41.

Burton, Richard F. *The Book of the Sword*. Reviewed in *The Fight Master*, "The Pen and the Sword," Fall 1991 Vol. XII #2, pp. 44-45

CONTRIBUTING REVIEWER

Linda McCollum has been a member of the SAFD for ten years and served as editor of *The Fight Master* for six years, on-site coordinator of the National Stage Combat Workshop for four years and as Secretary/Treasurer. Linda is also a member of the United States Fencing Coaches Association, having received her certification in 1991.

THE SWORD AND THE CENTURIES: OR OLD SWORD DAYS AND OLD SWORD WAYS

by Captain Alfred Hutton

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

Captain Alfred Hutton is one of the key figures responsible for reviving interest in sport fencing at the turn

of the century. Organizing displays, lectures and demonstrations throughout England, Capt. Hutton rallied sportsmen to form a Fencing Branch of the Amateur Gymnastic Association in 1895, and the Amateur Fencing Association in 1902. He was elected F.S.A. and an honorary member of the Cercle d'Escrime de Bruxelles and was nominated first president of the Amateur Fencing Association.

Alfred's father, Henry William Hutton, had studied fencing with the prominent English master Henry Angelo, and at the age of twelve, Alfred took his first lesson with Henry Angelo the younger.

In 1859 Alfred joined the 79th Cameron highlanders. While he was stationed in India, his commanding officer requested he organize the Cameron Fencing Club. His first book, *Swordsmanship*, was written there in 1862. Upon leaving the military, he devoted himself to the practice of the fencing foil, sabre and bayonet and to the study and revival of the methods and practices of ancient swordplay. Capt. Hutton continued both to wield the pen and the sword, writing over fourteen books on swords, swordplay fencing and techniques of personal combat.

The Sword and the Centuries is a collected description of swords, their use, and tales of personal combat that took place from the fifteenth to the nineteenth century.

EASY TO READ

The work is written in a casual narrative form, which is easy to read but sometimes hard to follow. Hutton randomly cites sources or completely leaves out from where he is quoting. "Because of the lack of chronological order and on casual references to various monarchs to set the time and location," adds Linda McCollum, "one has to know one's history to pin-point time and locality of each story he tells."

To follow the author's through line, the reader needs a general knowledge of the art and practice of

fencing and historical swordplay.

Sword and the Centuries is a nice introductory text to the history of swordplay. Its sources and information, however, cannot always be trusted. Linda McCollum supports this with her observation that "The description of the two Sheridan-Mathews duels are considerably different from other sources. He has either simplified the two duels for clarity or, like Brantome, made judicious alterations in order to make the material his own."

The illustrations provided by Capt. Hutton don't help the reader. Few and far between, the simple line drawings are labeled by name but give no indication to period or country of origin. Illustrations are not to scale and give little information to actual construction and materials.

A MINE OF FOOL'S GOLD

As a reference, *The Sword and the Centuries* first appears a gold mine of information. However, Capt. Hutton has, by accident or intention, offered material that varies from, or contradicts, other primary sources.

There is plenty of good information in this text, but sorting historical truth from conjecture and error makes trusting the text difficult.

Still, the text is a pleasure to read. The format and stories in the text are intriguing and sometimes downright funny. As a tool to the stage combatant, Capt. Hutton's work is a collection of information that would be hard to find without doing extensive research. For the historical researcher, there are too many holes and assumptions to make this text of any great value.

I would recommend *The Sword and the Centuries* to anyone interested in touching the tip of the iceberg, but if actual facts and figures are your goal, try the primary sources.

CONTRIBUTING REVIEWERS

Linda McCollum is a member of both the SAFD and the United States Fencing Coaches Association

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Spring 1991	"Of Fights and Film" (<i>William Hobbs interview</i>) "Working with Amateurs" (<i>safety for untrained fighters</i>)	Sept. 1986	"To Cut or Thrust" "A Modern Swordsmith of Toledo"
Fall 1990	"A Tale of Jealousy, Swordplay and a Certain Italian" (<i>Vincente Saviolo</i>) "Then, as I end the refrain, thrust home" (<i>Walter Hampden's Cyrano</i>)	Jan. 1986	"Staging Realistic Violence" "Soap Fights"
Winter 1990	"Apache: The Original Dangerous Game" "A Guide to the Recently Certified"	Sept. 1983	"Building a Better Blank" "Choreography Contracts"
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		January 1983	"Some Methods of Weaponless Stage Combat, Part III" "The Fabulous Samurai Swordfight"

Put to the Test

FOLLOWING ARE THE RESULTS OF
SAFD CERTIFICATION TESTING.

RECERTIFICATION

SAFD Certification must be renewed every three years. Following are actor/combatants who renewed their certification thus far in 1992.

Christina Cowin	2/92
Troy Rowland	2/92
Charles Currier	2/92
Mark Hatfield	2/92

ACTOR/COMBATANTS

OCTOBER

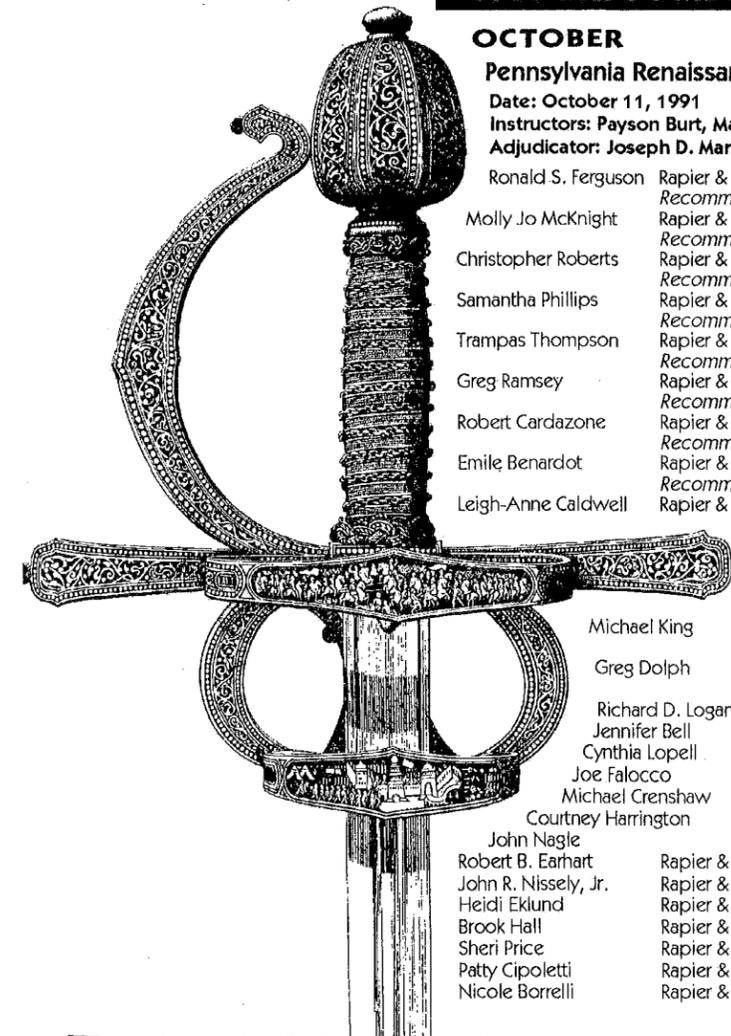
Pennsylvania Renaissance Faire

Date: October 11, 1991

Instructors: Payson Burt, Mark Hatfield

Adjudicator: Joseph D. Martinez

Ronald S. Ferguson	Rapier & Dagger, Unarmed, QS <i>Recommended</i>
Molly Jo McKnight	Rapier & Dagger, Unarmed, QS <i>Recommended</i>
Christopher Roberts	Rapier & Dagger, Unarmed, QS <i>Recommended</i>
Samantha Phillips	Rapier & Dagger, Unarmed, QS <i>Recommended</i>
Trampas Thompson	Rapier & Dagger, Unarmed, QS <i>Recommended</i>
Greg Ramsey	Rapier & Dagger, Unarmed, QS <i>Recommended</i>
Robert Cardazone	Rapier & Dagger, Unarmed, QS <i>Recommended</i>
Emile Benardot	Rapier & Dagger, Unarmed, QS <i>Recommended</i>
Leigh-Anne Caldwell	Rapier & Dagger, Unarmed, QS <i>Recommended</i>
Michael King	R & D, Unarmed, QS <i>Recommended</i>
Greg Dolph	R & D, Unarmed, QS <i>Recommended</i>
Richard D. Logan	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Jennifer Bell	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Cynthia Lopell	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Joe Falocco	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Michael Crenshaw	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Courtney Harrington	R & D, Unarmed, QS
John Nagle	R & D, Unarmed, QS
Robert B. Earhart	Rapier & Dagger, Unarmed, QS
John R. Nissely, Jr.	Rapier & Dagger, Unarmed, QS
Heidi Eklund	Rapier & Dagger, Unarmed, QS
Brook Hall	Rapier & Dagger, Unarmed, QS
Sheri Price	Rapier & Dagger, Unarmed, QS
Patty Cipoletti	Rapier & Dagger, Unarmed, QS
Nicole Borrelli	Rapier & Dagger, Unarmed, QS



DECEMBER

Temple University

Date: December 5, 1991

Instructor: Payson Burt

Adjudicator: David S. Leong

The students taking the test performed a clever scene based on *Casablanca*, with a cartoon flair. Humorous dialogue, clear story and well-established characters. The choreography was somewhat complex. There were occasional problems with distance, tension and footwork.

Anthony Lawton Rapier & Dagger, Unarmed, Broadsword
Jonathan Higgins Rapier & Dagger, Unarmed, Broadsword

Brandeis University

Date: December 12, 1991

Instructor: Robert Walsh

Adjudicator: David S. Leong

Overall technique was executed with good flow and clarity. Some of the choreography in the unarmed fight allowed too many chances for error—also was a bit "knappy" (too many knaps needed in back to back moments). The fight also required many weight changes in illogical places during the unarmed section. The quarterstaff fight combined nice use of style and flash, but could have been simplified.

Paul Tavianini and Mark Ellmore performed an excellent original scene entitled, "How to Behave in a Museum." Excellent combination of contemporary and Shakespearian dialogue. Overall, fights lived on the edge of danger and recklessness, but were very controlled and well acted.

Paul Tavianini	Rapier & Dagger, Unarmed, QS <i>Recommended</i>
Mark Ellmore	Rapier & Dagger, Unarmed, QS <i>Recommended</i>
Greg Morvillo	Rapier & Dagger, Unarmed, QS
Paul Groen	Rapier & Dagger, Unarmed, QS
Kate Myre	Rapier & Dagger, Unarmed, QS
Catherine Palfenier	Rapier & Dagger, Unarmed, QS
Steve Longmuir	Rapier & Dagger, Unarmed, QS
Jeff Watson	Rapier & Dagger, Unarmed, QS
Holly Cate	Rapier & Dagger, Unarmed, QS
Karen White	Rapier & Dagger, Unarmed, QS

M.A.S.C.—Minneapolis

Date: December 14, 1991

Instructor: David "Pops" Doersch

Adjudicator: John Robert Beardsley

Kennedy Brown	Rapier & Dagger, Unarmed, QS
Eric Greiling	Rapier & Dagger, Unarmed, QS
Melissa Vickery-Bareford	Rapier & Dagger, Unarmed, QS
Paul Reyburn	Rapier & Dagger, Unarmed, QS
Reid A. Hegland	Rapier & Dagger, Unarmed, QS
Paul J. Reyburn	Rapier & Dagger, Unarmed, QS
David Gregory	Rapier & Dagger, Unarmed, QS
Peter Farley	Rapier & Dagger, Unarmed, QS
Joshua Peterson	R & D, Unarmed, QS, Smallswd
James Chlebeczek	R & D, Unarmed, QS, Smallswd

ACTOR/COMBATANTS

JANUARY

Folger Theatre, Washington, D.C.

Date: January 8, 1992

Instructor: Brad Waller

Adjudicator: J.D. Martinez

Larry Redmond	R & D, Unarmed, Broadsword
Dave Curran	R & D, Unarmed, Broadsword
Paul Gallagher	R & D, Unarmed, Broadsword
Lars Ullberg	R & D, Unarmed, Broadsword

Columbia University, Chicago

Date: January 16, 1992

Instructor: David Woolley

Adjudicator: Drew Fracher

Rachel Rasinski	R & D, Unarmed, BS, Smallsword
Daniel Robles	R & D, Unarmed, BS, Smallsword

Phillip J. Lee	R & D, Unarmed, BS, Smallsword
Nick Siapkari	R & D, Unarmed, BS, Smallsword
Ajay Naidu	R & D, Unarmed, Broadsword
Greg Webster	R & D, Unarmed, Broadsword
Corinna Bryan	R & D, Unarmed, Smallsword
Brian Kolb	R & D, Unarmed, Smallsword

FEBRUARY

Brandeis University

Date: February 22, 1992

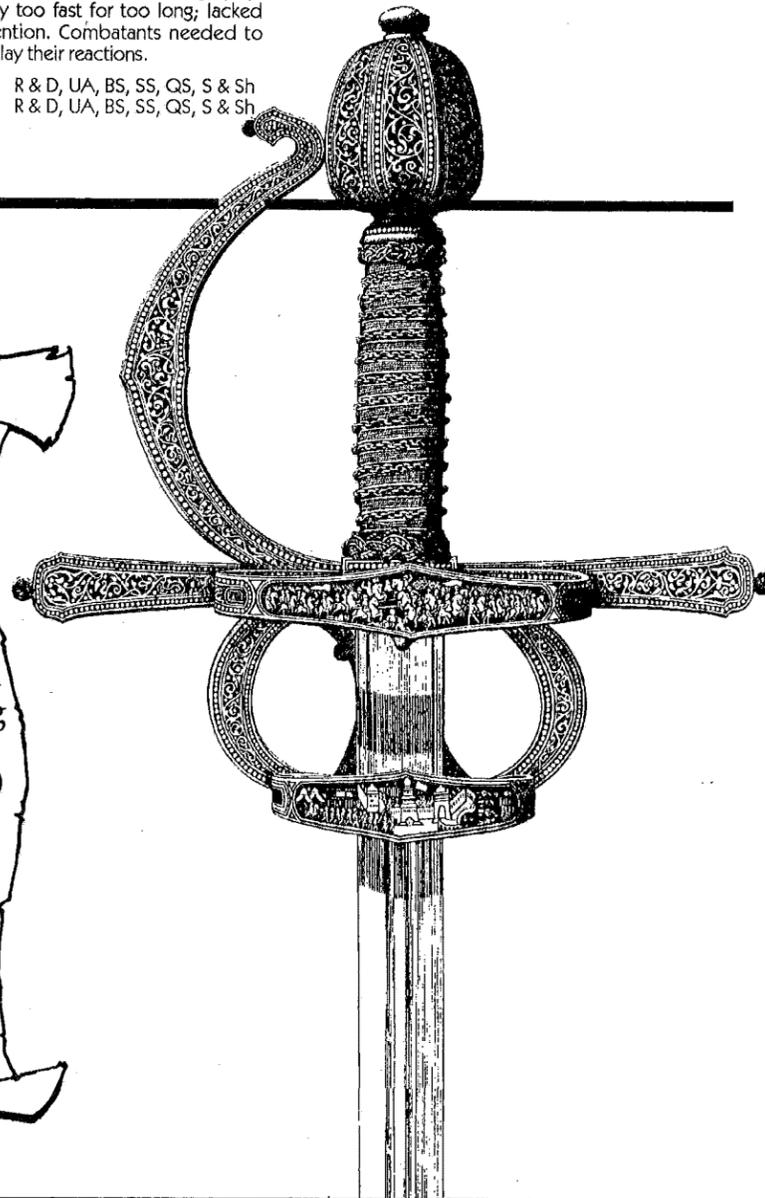
Instructor: Robert Walsh

Adjudicator: David Leong

Both combatants were impressive with their speed, agility and endurance. Excellent choreography. Fights were actually too fast for too long; lacked dynamics and intention. Combatants needed to take more time to play their reactions.

John McFarlane	R & D, UA, BS, SS, QS, S & Sh
Jonathan Brownley	R & D, UA, BS, SS, QS, S & Sh

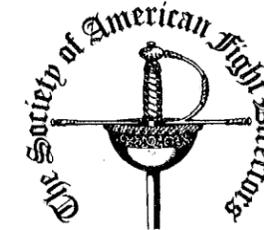
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However, one need not be certified in order to be a member of SAFD. Anyone interested in the art of fight choreography and stage fighting can join as a Friend. Members of SAFD receive: a 10% discount on all SAFD workshops; *The Fight Master*, a journal 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.

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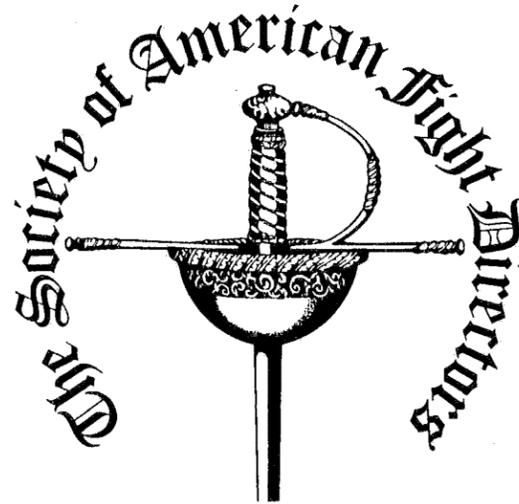
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Adjudicator _____

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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.

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