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The Society of American Fight Directors

Winter 2004

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The Society of American Fight Directors

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Paddy Crean And *The Legend Of Old Man's Cave*

The Fight Master

Journal of the Society of American Fight Directors

**The Fight At The
Sandbar**

**The Sword Master's
Point Of View**

**Stage Combat And
Dance**



STAGE COMBAT: EXTREME ACTING



Coleman (Bill Christ) is biting **Valene** (Mark Rubald) in the 2002 Denver Center Theatre Company's production of Martin McDonough's **Lonesome West**. Directed by Anthony Powell. Fight Direction by Geoffrey Kent. Photograph courtesy of Denver Center Media.

The Society of American Fight Directors

26th Annual

National Stage Combat Workshops

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For more information: Linda McCollum at (702) 895-3662 or www.safd.org

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The AACW staff will assess the skill level and specific needs of the students and will determine the specific SPT renewals and skills tests to be offered.

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EDITORIALLY SPEAKING

In perpetuating the contributions of Paddy Crean to the world of staged combat, J. Allen Suddeth shares some fond memories of his first encounter with the legendary Paddy Crean and how a casual comment over a beer led to a film project at Ohio State University by a group of students.

In Part I of Robert Dillon's *Martial Arts Pet Peeves* some problems in stage combat's historiographic accounting of Japanese martial practices, and some myths and misunderstandings surrounding the terms samurai and bushido were discussed. In Part II, the role (or lack thereof) of Zen Buddhism in martial arts practices, the meaning and limits of self-defense as a martial arts goal, and the legendary Miyamoto Musashi are examined.

Anthony De Longis, who just passed his thirty-year mark as a working show business professional in a career that includes actor, fight director, sword master and action coordinator for film television and stage, shares his point of view on creating fights for film and television. Recently DeLongis was sword master for *Second Hand Lions* and trained the whip fighters for *The Rundown*.

Kriota Willberg shares a reaction to staged violence, one that many readers may not have personally encountered. Having experienced actual violence in her own life, she was extremely uncomfortable watching violent content in media and in film if she was not prepared for it. If something reminded her of her own experiences, she felt victimized by these representations of violence and would feel affected by what she had seen for days afterwards. After studying stage combat for four years, she learned how the illusion of violence is created and could emotionally connect to a performance when watching violent content. Her revelations point out some fascinating connections that readers may not have thought of before.

As more and more historical work is becoming accessible on the internet and in published form, the book review section looks at some exciting new works that have been recently published. Jared Kirby's long awaited project on *Capo Ferro, Italian Rapier Combat*, has finally been produced with the assistance of Ramon and Jeannette Martinez. Dr. Kara Wooten's dissertation on how to develop a course in stage combat, *Acted Agression*, has been published in book form and Guy Windsor's *The Swordsman's Companion* presents a modern system for longsword based on historical techniques.

Articles for consideration in the Fall/Winter 2005 issue must be received by June 1, 2005.

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

Charles Conwell, a Fight Director and Teacher in the SAFD, teaches at the University of the Arts in Philadelphia.

Anthony DeLongis is an actor, fight director and weapons trainer who has been fight director for the Los Angeles Music Center Opera since 1986 and has taught stage combat in the Theatre Arts Department at UCLA from 1974-1993. De Longis' film and television credits include *Masters of the Universe*, *Sinbad*, *Highlander*, the *Series*, *Circle of Iron* and *Jaguar Lives*. His company, *Palpable Hit Productions*, produces instructional videos on the rapier, broadsword, the Spanish Destreza, La Scherma Italiana and the bullwhip.

Robert W. Dillon, Jr., Ph.D. is an associate professor of theatre in the Department of Speech Communication and Theatre at Southwest Missouri State University.

Linda Carlyle McCollum, a member of the Society of American Fight Directors and the International Academy of Arms and is an honorary member of Fight Directors Canada, serves as editor of *The Fight Master* and on-site coordinator for the National Stage Combat Workshops. McCollum is a faculty member in theatre at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

J. Allen Suddeth, past president and Fight Master of the Society of American Fight Directors, is the author of *Fight Directing for the Theatre*. A fight director on Broadway, in regional theatres and on daytime television drama, he teaches at the Lee Strasberg Institute and NYU and has run the Fight Director's Workshop at the Celebration Barn for a number of years.

Kriota Willberg, in addition to working with her own dance company *Dura Mater*, choreographs for commercial, theatrical, and other dance productions. She teaches in the dance departments of Bard and Marymount Colleges. She studies stage combat in New York City with Joe Travers/Swordplay.

Articles and letters for *The Fight Master* are accepted at anytime. Articles intended for inclusion in the Spring/Summer issue must be received by November 1. Articles intended for inclusion in the Fall Winter issue must be received by June 1.

Submissions to *The Fight Master*
should be sent to:
UNLV Dept. of Theatre
4505 Maryland Parkway
Las Vegas, NV 89154-5044
Fax (702) 895-0833
mccollum@ccmail.nevada.edu

Submitted material will be edited for clarity and length. Articles should be typed, and include a short biography, 50 words or less, about the author. Please include the address, phone/fax and e-mail address in the correspondence.

GRAPHICALLY SPEAKING

The Fight Master is currently seeking active photos of stage combat for upcoming issues. Black & white and color prints (no smaller than 4" x 6") and slides will be accepted. All photos should include the performers' names and roles if fewer than five are pictured, photographer, play, playwright, fight director, theatre company and year of performance. Photos should also include return address. Without this information, pictures cannot be used. 8" x 10" prints or color slides with strong vertical orientations are also desired for covers; these should be shot as close up as possible (full bodies need not be visible).

Digital camera photographs must meet the following additional criteria:

Cover Photographs:

- ◆ 1200 dpi (dots per inch)
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Interior Photographs:

- ◆ 300 dpi (dots per inch)
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The deadline for graphic material for the Fall/Winter issue is July 31, for the Spring/Summer issue is January 31. Future submissions are accepted at any time. Send all prints sandwiched between two pieces of cardboard in an envelope clearly labeled "Photos - Do Not Bend" to:

John Tovar
3810 N. Oakley Ave, 2nd Floor
Chicago, IL 60618-3814

If there are any questions, please feel free to call (630) 330-4293 or e-mail JTovarSAFD@aol.com. Again, exciting photos are encouraged from all levels of the SAFD membership.

John Tovar

Workshop Coordinators and Advertisers

As of the Fall/Winter 2001 issue, *The Fight Master* will advertise non-SAFD workshops and services, including:

- ◆ Any Movement/Acting/Theatre-related Workshops
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Workshops that have officially been sanctioned as SAFD workshops as detailed in the Policies & Procedures are entitled to a free 1/4 page ad in *The Fight Master*. Larger ads may be purchased at a discounted rate. Non-SAFD workshop ads may be purchased at full price. Ads can be designed by a graphic designer for a slight fee. For more information please contact:

Tom Carr
1938 West Cornelia
Chicago, IL 60657
(773) 755-2271
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Notification for advertising in the Spring/Summer issue must be received by December 1; artwork due by January 15. Notification for the Fall/Winter issue must be received by July 1; artwork due by August 15. Please call for rates or other information.



On the Front Cover:

A battle scene from a production of King Henry IV Part I. Photo submitted by Payson Burt. All other information unavailable at the time this publication went to print.



On the Back Cover:

A disarm from GreenStage's 2004 Shakespeare in the Park production of Coriolanus. Directed by David Robinson. Fight Choreography by Carol Roscoe. Photograph by Ken Holmes. Copyright © 2004 GreenStage. All rights reserved.



**From Spring/Summer 2004
On the Front Cover:**

A battle scene from the 1999 production of King John at The Shakespeare Theatre in Washington, D.C.. Directed by Michael Kahn. Fight Choreography by David Leong. Photograph by Carol Rosegg. Used under authorization.

The Fight Master

Journal of the Society of American Fight Directors

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Call the **SAFD** Hotline

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For stage combat assistance, workshop information,
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FROM THE PRESIDENT

The Society of American Fight Directors has received big news from the Union Negotiation Committee. After obtaining a favorable ruling from the National Labor Relations Board, the American Guild of Musical Artists negotiators returned to the bargaining table with Lyric Opera of Chicago and won collective bargaining rights for fight directors. The new LOC contract recognizes fight directors along with directors, dance choreographers, stage managers and performers eligible for union protection. Fight directors working under this new contract have guaranteed minimum wage levels, as well as, health and pension benefits. This is a small but important step as it sets the precedent for all future negotiations. The American Guild of Musical Artists continues to champion SAFD's cause and is in the process of organizing fight directors in other venues.

This past summer the SAFD experimented with a sizeable increase in its educational offerings. The Fight Director and Actor's Ensemble and Director's Workshops at the Celebration Barn Theatre in South Paris, Maine, the Teacher Training Workshop and Summer Session in Stage Combat at the North Carolina School of the Arts, and the Actor/Combatant and Intermediate Actor/Combatant Workshops at the University of Nevada Las Vegas. Running such diverse offerings in three such diverse geographical locations provided some daunting challenges, and the SAFD certainly experienced growing pains. However, through the tireless efforts of the workshop coordinators and excellent staffs all of their efforts returned positive results. The governing body has reviewed the results of this past summer with and has voted to continue an expanded schedule of offerings next year. Offerings will include the Fight Director, Actor Ensemble and Director's Workshop, the Summer Session in Stage Combat, and the Actor/Combatant and Advanced Actor/Combatant Workshops. Specific details on these workshops will be found on the web site and in future issues of *The Cutting Edge* and *The Fight Master*.

Finally, congratulations are offered to the graduates of the 2004 Teacher Training Workshop. The SAFD proudly welcomes these new graduates to the ranks of Certified Teachers.

"Fight the Good Fight!"

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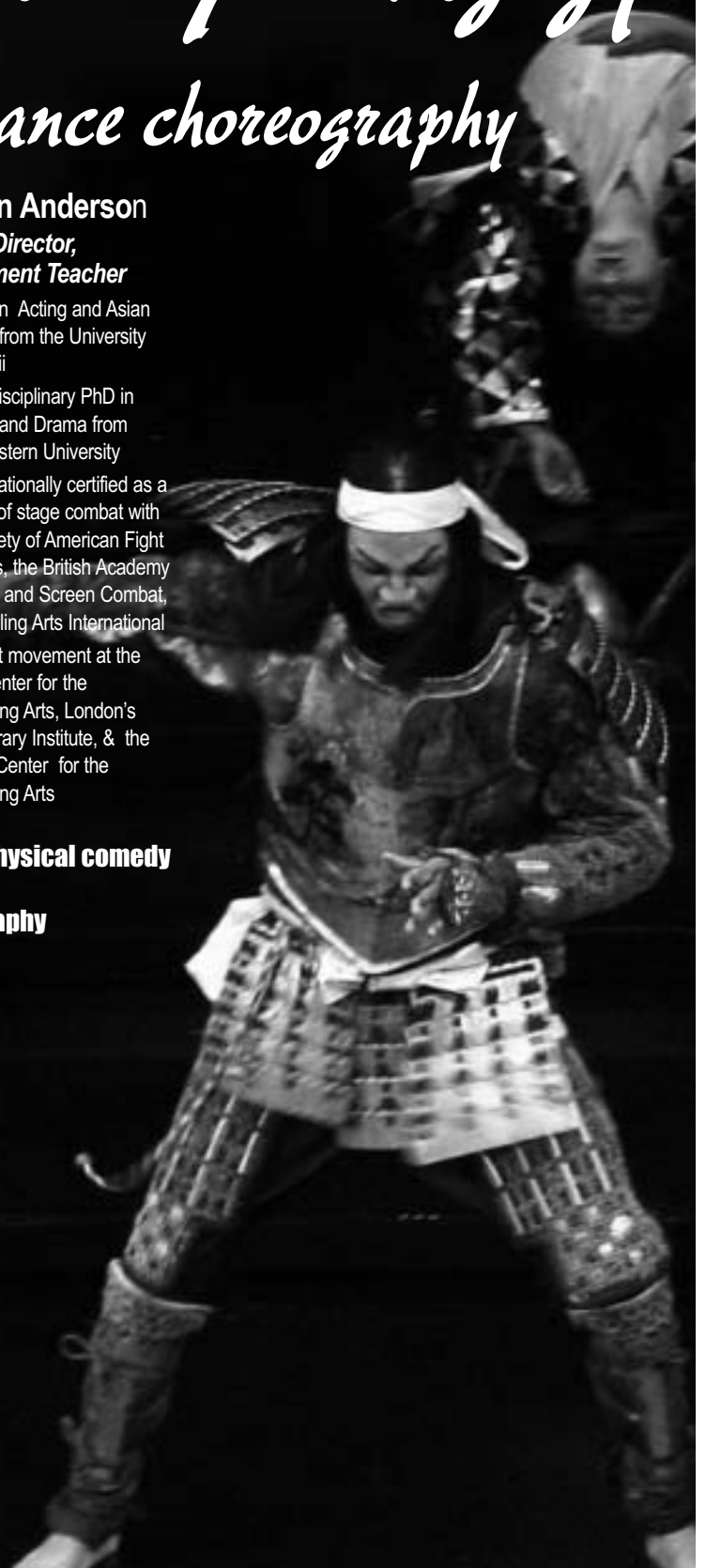
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The Fight at the Sandbar

by Charles Conwell

On September 19, 1827, at noon on a sandbar on the western bank of the Mississippi River upstream from Natchez, Louisiana, Dr. Thomas Maddox and Samuel Wells met to settle their differences with pistols. The duel was referred to as an *interview without the limits of the state*. Dueling was illegal in the county of Rapids Parish, Louisiana. Maddox and Wells were each accompanied by a group of well-armed friends since each duelist feared retaliatory violence should they succeed in killing or injuring their opponent. Only their seconds and their surgeons were allowed on the ground (the actual site of the duel). Their friends were obligated by the terms of the duel to remain a good distance from the ground. The heavily armed contingent increased the possibility of further violence. It never occurred to anyone to limit the weapons that day to four pistols.

Wells and Maddox fought over the honor of Well's sister, Mary. Maddox had repeated some derogatory comments about Mary that had been passed on to Wells by a patient. Wells' older brother Monfret, thinking Maddox's behavior beneath the dignity of a duel, shot at Maddox in the street and missed. Maddox issued a challenge to Monfret Wells. Condescendingly, Monfret refused the challenge declaring that he would duel only with equals. Samuel Wells accepted the challenge in his brother's place and chose pistols at eight paces, left side to left side. This position was more dangerous than the typical right side to right side which protected the heart. Left side to left side forced the shooter to fire across his chest or expose the entire chest turning to bring the pistol forward. Shooting across the chest brought the flash and smoke of the flintlock ignition very close to the face. Maddox chose to fire across his chest rather than expose his chest.

Wells and Maddox exchanged fire twice without an injury. Encouraged by their seconds to make peace, they then shook hands and agreed to share a glass of wine in the nearby woods. The duel at the sandbar was over. The fight had not yet begun. Fifteen minutes later two men were dead and four were wounded, one of them being James Bowie who was not expected to live.

In order to understand what happened it is necessary to look at the cast of characters and the antagonisms they brought to that Mississippi sandbar that day along with their weapons:

Samuel Wells, <i>principal</i>	Dr. Thomas Maddox, <i>principal</i>
Maj. George McWhorter, <i>second</i>	Col. Robert Crain, <i>second</i>
Dr. Richard Cuny, <i>surgeon</i>	Dr. Denny, <i>surgeon</i>

James Bowie, <i>friend</i>	Sheriff Norris Wright, <i>friend</i>
Gen. Thomas Cuny, <i>Richard's brother</i>	Alfred Blancard, <i>friend</i>
Jeff Wells, <i>Samuel's brother</i>	Cary Blanchard, <i>Alfred's brother</i>

The Wells' party were Whigs. The Maddox's party Jacksonian Democrats. The Wells family was one of the oldest and wealthiest families in Rapids Parish. Maddox and his friends represented new money and new politics.

While a lieutenant Thomas Cuny had been appointed in the militia, Colonel Crain felt the promotion should rightly have been his. Crain, an experienced duelist, was in the habit of borrowing money and paying the note with a challenge. General Cuny's father had been forced to sell some slaves to pay a note that he had endorsed for Crain. General Cuny had previously shot Crain in the arm in the street without the formalities of a duel. Before the Wells-Maddox duel, Crain was rumored to have said that he would kill General Cuny on sight. In negotiating the terms of the duel Crain stipulated, *We cannot meet certain persons* (referring to General Cuny and Bowie). Wells replied, *I know to whom you allude; I pledge you my honor they shall not be on the ground*.

To compound all this, Wells had lost to Wright in a recent sheriff's election. In addition, Maddox's friend, Alfred Blancard, while intoxicated during a ballroom dance, had drawn a sword cane and nicked Wells' brother Jeff in the arm.

Bowie and Wright had already engaged in violence. On December 13 and 14, 1826, Bowie returned to Alexandria, Louisiana, from a trip to Arkansas. Upon arrival he learned that Wright had made disparaging remarks about him in his absence. No extant records exist to confirm what Wright said. Bowie was in fact a land grant forger and real estate swindler. The phrase *Bowie Grant* was a term used in Louisiana for fraudulent real estate claims. Bowie bragged about his endeavors. Perhaps Wright had alluded to this activity. Bowie, who resided in the Bailey's Hotel, found Wright there and demanded to know if Wright had slandered him. Wright rose from his chair and replied by drawing a pistol and pointing it at Bowie's chest. Bowie lifted a chair and held it in front of him to protect himself from the impending blast. They held this position for several moments. As Bowie raised the chair to strike Wright, Wright shot Bowie in the chest. Either the pistol's charge was weak or the ball was deflected by coins in Bowie's vest for Bowie was only bruised. Bowie grabbed Wright and threw him to the floor. Kneeling on top of Wright, Bowie punched him several times. Holding Wright down with his knees and one hand, Bowie drew his clasp knife and tried to open the blade with his teeth. Friends of Wright grabbed Bowie who dropped the knife and sank his teeth into one of Wright's hands. As Wright's friends pulled Bowie away one of his teeth was left in Wright's hand. Bowie's friends freed Bowie and took him upstairs to his room leaving a trail of blood on the stairs. Wright's friends started to follow. When they saw the blood they assumed the chest wound was mortal and left the hotel. The blood was from Bowie's mouth. Bowie nursed his bruised chest, a sore jaw, and a grudge. He determined never again to lose precious seconds in a fight trying to open a clasp knife. He had a handsome leather scabbard made for the large hunting knife his brother had given him. He swore he would *wear it as long as he lived*, and he did.

The day of the Wells-Maddox duel was like Act Three of *Romeo*

and Juliet. Two groups of heavily armed antagonists faced each other in the hot sun. The Maddox party arrived by horseback and stood in the willow woods two hundred yards from the sandbar. The Wells party arrived by boat and stood in another part of the willow wood eighty yards from the sandbar. The duelists, their seconds, and their surgeons walked to the water's edge. Crain was *astonished* to see General Cuny and Bowie attending the duel. Maddox asked Wells what they were doing there. Wells replied, *They will approach no further.*

After the duel when Wells and Maddox shook hands, Wells invited everyone to share a glass of wine with his friends. Crain objected. In order to avoid a Crain-Cuny confrontation, Crain invited the dueling party to refresh themselves with his friends. The invitation accepted the dueling party began to walk toward the Maddox-Crain contingent. General Cuny, Thomas Wells, and Bowie walked briskly and intercepted the dueling party as it moved across the sandbar to the cool shade of the willows. Samuel Wells told General Cuny that he and Maddox were now on friendly terms. General Cuny then challenged Crain to return to the water's edge and settle their differences. Samuel Wells and Dr. Cuny stepped in between the new antagonists. Dr. Cuny told his brother, the general, that this was neither the time or place to fight.

The details of the violence that followed are controversial as eyewitness accounts contradicted each other. Many pistol shots were fired in a short period of time, and the survivors and witnesses were partial to versions of the story that made them and friends appear more noble than their opponents.

Crain maintained that General Cuny drew his pistol. Wells maintained that he did not. Bowie definitely drew his. Crain was holding two loaded pistols which had not been fired in the duel. When Dr. Cuny and Samuel Wells stepped aside, Crain fired at Bowie. Bowie shot back clipping Crain's cravat. Crain maintained that he hit Bowie in the chest with his first shot. Bowie insisted that Crain missed.

Throwing down his first pistol, Crain fired his second pistol at General Cuny hitting him in the thigh. The bullet severed an artery. Crain maintained that he and General Cuny fired simultaneously, the General grazing him in the left arm. Wells maintained that General Cuny drew his pistol as he fell and never fired. Crain may have been grazed by Bowie's first shot. Crain with one empty pistol ran across some small pools in the sandbar. Bowie fired his second pistol and missed, and drew his large knife and began to chase Crain. Bowie called out to Crain either *Crain you have shot at me and I will kill you if I can.* Or *Crain, you have shot me and I will kill you if I can.*

Crain turned to face Bowie. Crain threw an empty pistol, hitting Bowie forcefully on the side of the head. Bowie fell to his knees but got up. Maddox grabbed Bowie but was pushed away. Maddox then ran to the willows to retrieve his shotgun. Wright and the Blancards rushed from the woods to assist Crain. Bowie staggered to a driftwood snag, five-feet long and a foot wide sticking out of the sand. He stood behind it, gripping it for support. When Wright drew a pistol, Bowie yelled, *You damned rascal,*

don't you shoot. McWhorter handed Bowie a pistol and Bowie and Wright fired simultaneously. Bowie hit Wright on the left side. Wright yelled, *The damned rascal has killed me.* Wright drew a second pistol. Bowie said, *Shoot and be damned.* Dr. Denny grabbed Bowie by the coat lapel and said, *This must be stopped, sir, this must be stopped.* Wright fired and the bullet struck Dr. Denny's hand and passed through Bowie's lung. Dr. Denny lost a piece of his middle finger. When Wright turned to flee, Bowie freed himself from Denny and went after Wright. As Bowie got close enough to grab Wright, both Blancard brothers fired at Bowie. One missed. The other shot Bowie through the thigh and Bowie fell to the ground.

Alfred Blancard and Wright drew their blades from their sword canes and stabbed at Bowie repeatedly. Bowie, rolling on his back, deflected thrusts with his knife and his left hand. Bowie was stabbed seven times. One of the blades bent as it hit Bowie's breastbone and slid along one of his ribs. Bowie wounded both his assailants, cutting Wright in the arm twice. Wright stabbed Bowie through the left hand. When Bowie turned to deflect one of Blancard's stabs, Wright's blade tore through the flesh of his hand. With what Samuel Wells called *wonderful exertion* Bowie sat up. Wright lunged low to stab, and Bowie deflected the blade and grabbed Wright's collar. As Wright rose he inadvertently lifted Bowie to his feet. Bowie whispered in Wright's ear, *Now, Major, you die.* Bowie drove the knife into Wright's chest and *twisted it to cut his heart strings.* Wright died instantly, taking Bowie to the ground and falling over him face down. Alfred Blancard continued to stab at Bowie who was trapped under Wright's body. The Wells brothers who had been attending the dying General Cuny came to Bowie's assistance. Thomas Wells shot Alfred Blanchard in the arm, breaking it. Bowie freed himself from under Wright's corpse and cut Alfred Blancard in the stomach. Maddox returned with his shotgun. Samuel Wells said, *Doctor, for God's sake don't do any further damage, for it is all over.* The brawl was over in little more than ninety seconds.

Wright was dead. General Cuny was dying. Alfred Blanchard, Dr. Denny and Crain were wounded. Bowie was in critical condition. He had been shot through the lung, shot through the thigh, bashed in the side of the head, and stabbed seven times. Bowie called out to Crain, *For God sake, Crain, assist me, give me some water, and help me to the shade.* Crain, assisted by McWhorter, carried Bowie to the willows. Bowie said, *Colonel Crain, you ought not to have shot at me.* Crain protested that Bowie had drawn his pistol. Bowie asserted, *I did not draw for you, it was to protect my friend.*

Bowie was laid next to General Cuny who bled to death minutes later. Within fifteen minutes of the first shot, the duelists, the dead, the doctors, the wounded and the witnesses were on their way back across the river to Louisiana.

Rumor quickly spread that Bowie would not live. He survived, but described himself as *damned badly wounded.* Bowie expressed gratitude that his enemies had fully charged their pistols. Had the bullets not passed through his body their removal would have complicated his recovery. Bowie displayed no remorse over the death of Wright, maintaining that he stabbed

with the intent to kill. Bowie spent months recovering. The wound to the lung would trouble him for the rest of his life.

Maddox, Wells, Crain and several witnesses published descriptions of the fight at the sandbar. Crain insisted that he shot Bowie in the chest and called Bowie a liar for denying it. Crain does not mention Wright and Alfred Blencard attacking Bowie while Bowie was on the ground. Samuel Wells accused Crain of pre-meditated murder. Crain denied saying before the duel that he would shoot General Cuny on sight. Crain insisted that he fired in response to Bowie and Cuny drawing their pistols. A grand jury was held in Natchez on January 24. No one was indicted. Bowie either did not testify or his testimony has been lost.

The news of the fight at the sandbar spread from Natchez across the nation. Despite multiple wounds Bowie had fought with incredible determination and resilience against four assailants, killing one with a terrible thrust with his big knife. The fight at the sandbar made Bowie and his knife national legends.

SOURCES

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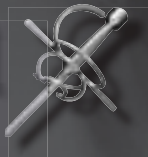


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The Actors Ensemble Workshop -

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July 31 to Aug 12, J. Allen Suddeth, Richard Ryan

July 31 to Aug. 12, k. Jenny Jones, Mark Olsen

August 7 to August 20, A. C. Weary, Dale A. Girard

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Pet Peeves in the Martial Arts, Part II

by Robert W. Dillon, Jr.

The modern martial system, *Bujinkan ninpo taijutsu*, known popularly as *ninjutsu*, offers much of value. Its techniques do what its teachers claim and it unites that pragmatic with a far-reaching wisdom. It offers a comprehensive path towards living a worthwhile life. It also offers a set of practices worth exploration for integration into stage combat study. Unfortunately, the story does not stop there. It is a tale that took up old legends and gave them new life and then revised Japanese history in order to support that life. It is a tale of magic and myth and romance passed around as if it were empirically and historically true. It is a story of pragmatic reality obscured by popular fantasy.

In the early 70s, Stephen K. Hayes returned to America from training with Masaaki Hatsumi (founder of the Bujinkan organization) bringing *ninjutsu* with him. Hatsumi learned his *ninpo taijutsu* from Takamatsu Toshitsugu from whom he claims authority as 34th Grandmaster of *Togakure Ryu Ninjutsu*. Hatsumi took Hayes, as his first Western student, into this lineage.

Hayes' enthusiasm, charisma, and his remarkable abilities at self-promotion, not to mention the quality, freshness, and seeming esoterica of the arts he professed, turned an unknown phenomenon into an overnight craze and lifted Hatsumi out of relative obscurity. Suddenly *ninja* schools began to appear across the US, with or without, the support of Hayes or Hatsumi. Soon, the Hatsumi-Hayes organization had grown into an international phenomenon—in fact, today the schools of Hatsumi, his followers and disciples, and those who have left his affiliation to open their own schools, have become pretty much mainstream martial arts schools in their homeland.

This growth, however, has been accompanied by some questionable historical claims. Chief among them: Hatsumi's status as the 34th Grandmaster of the *Togakure ryu*. Consider that *Katori Shinto Ryu* and *Kashima Shinryu*, two of the oldest *koryu* extant, currently claim only their 20th and 19th generations—all such schools (called classical *ryuha* or *koryu*) date back no earlier than the late fifteenth or mid-sixteenth century. Hatsumi claims other lineages that go back twenty-five generations to the mid-eleventh century—at least four hundred years earlier than any independent historian accepts the existence of any *bugei ryuha*. Therefore, Hatsumi could not have been the 34th Grandmaster.

Other issues abound: no independent expert has authenticated extant *ninjutsu ryuha* documentation (including documents possessed by Hatsumi) as dating from any time prior to the nineteenth century. In the third edition of *Bugei Ryuha Daijiten*, Watanabe Kiyoshi wrote that Takamatsu, who was a personal friend of his, created his *ninpo ryuha* and teachings from *ninja gokko* or childhood *ninja* games. It is also of interest to note that Hatsumi's first public notice came from a book on *jojutsu* (stick fighting) without any *ninja* or *ninjutsu* trappings at all.

Independent, contextual, critical, and objective evaluation of the

actual evidence suggests much that is contrary to the account given by *ninja* proponents. For instance, what really went on in Koga and Iga—provinces upheld by believers as the seat of the secret *ninja* clans—proves to be far more mundane than *ninja* tales suggest. Certainly geography isolated these areas; Koga and Iga were rugged, mountainous areas, somewhat remote from mainstream society. It is unlikely that any large-scale *secret clans* could have long functioned even in these remote areas. From the time of the first *Shogun*, the work of the censor, spy, police, and watchers (*metsuke* = gaze = government censors and watchdogs and internal spies) kept secret activities subdued (with extreme prejudice). Records show that until the end of the sixteenth century, lower ranked members of the *buke* class held Koga and Iga, not secret enclaves of *ninja* clans.

Of course Japanese fighting men (like fighting men all over the globe) sometimes used guerilla tactics, assassination, and espionage—they could be said to be *doing ninjutsu*, they could be spoken of as *ninja-ing*. Certainly the *metsuke* officers practiced stealth tactics themselves, and no military leader could have long survived without his contingent of clandestine warfare specialists. Certain fighting men did indeed practice techniques of clandestine warfare, espionage, assassination, terrorism and counter-terrorism. Even specialists in concealment, assassination, and espionage still considered themselves *bushi*. They used lots of different terms to describe and catalog the teachings and techniques of the specializations they practiced. These efforts never seem to have resulted in schools of *ninjutsu*, unified clans or enclaves or secret societies of *ninja*, nor cells of *ninja* rebels fighting *samurai* oppression. The warrior class was never that unified or oppressive, neither were any of the other classes all that unified or oppressed. Again, the historical record simply does not demonstrate that the popular picture of the *ninja* has much more than tenuous connection to historical realities.

The term *ninja* itself is rarely used until the nineteenth century. Sometimes soldiers left behind to harass an encroaching enemy were called *kusa* (grass) since they hid in the grass. Sometimes, *ninja* is pronounced *shinobi-ka* connoting a *stealing-in* sort of activity. Usually no special name is attached to those who practice *shadow* tactics and, again, they certainly were never considered a specialized class.

A host of arguments have been marshaled against the historical evidence. First among them is the argument that secrecy obscures *ninjutsu* history. All dressed up with nowhere to go, it uses the old *argument from ignorance* tactic—in this case: *them* means old pedants do not know what *really* went on because it was kept secret; it follows that modern *ninja* *really* know what is going on. It then ladles in a generous portion of *circular reasoning* along with a dusting of the much-beloved *begging the question* ploy. It attempts to present belief system in the guise of empirical mapping; it assumes what it sets out to prove. Simple truth is that Hatsumi's evidence has not been kept secret at all; it just has not

managed to make a case for his claims.

Another argument that history obscures *ninjutsu* history because history is written by the winners, relies on a problematic view of history itself. It might help to realize, first of all, that history is not written by winners (or losers) but by historians; it is being written, in fact, at this very moment. True, some historians—especially the official kind—may ride the currents of politics, but sooner or later these kinds of *histories* get rewritten by less politically motivated historians—or at least of another political stripe. True, a dispassionate observer, actually present at events, can be hard to find. This does not mean that *only* passionate observations survive or that all passionate observation is useless to historians. Historians do history based upon all sorts of records—some of which are the work of official chroniclers and some of which are not. An official chronicler is not a historiographer. History, as a form of empirical study and interpretation requires *both* the collection of documentation and the careful and critical *interpretation* of those documents. Careful research and deepening understanding of *ninja* and *ninjutsu* demand sources from outside the tradition of Hatsumi and his followers.

Specious argument from prior causes relying solely upon interior sources; i.e. political pressure to spin history in favor of *winners* coupled with documents only from within *ninjutsu* tradition; assumes that *ninja* were in fact real, that they were subjugated and defeated by vengeful and oppressive *samurai*, who then went on to re-write accounts hiding *ninja* realities from the world. It actually assumes—a *priori*—the existence of a *ninja* history that could then be muddled by anti-*ninja* historians. The argument is circular and based upon an obvious non-sequitur and all sorts of causal fallacies. Whether history is tampered with, it does not follow that *ninja*, as pictured by proponents, ever existed. No one has shown compelling evidence that anti-*ninja* factions ever tampered with historical accounts—and even if they did, such chronicles, again, are sources for historiography not history itself. No one has shown that the tales of actual secret *ninja* clans—as described in popular accounts—have any factual basis. No one has shown that their enemies hid accounts of their exploits.

History (or, more properly, historiography) unfolds only in the face of constant research into the evidence. As new evidence unfolds the historical accounting that is labeled *history* itself unfolds. An anti-historical argument simply circles back onto itself in ignorance of the actual functions and methodologies of historiography. It wants to use *history* to deny the validity of particular histories, a performative contradiction nicely dressed up and pleading a special case. Again, belief system (drawn mostly from authority; in this case Hatsumi, Hayes, and their senior disciples) appears in disguise as history. Critical thinking, it seems, is to be discouraged.

Neither of these two quasi-historical arguments has stood up to *any* scrutiny, either of the secret, revelatory evidence of *ninjutsu* proponents themselves nor independent, more-or-less objective study by outside or neutral experts. Now, while an absence of evidence *per se* shows only an absence of evidence, while negative evidence alone proves nothing, the burden of proof in these matters rests with the claimants and not the independent expert

who examines the claims. Claims demand proof and extraordinary claims demand extraordinary proof. Accounts of *ninja* culture simply remain unproved by either of these arguments. *Ninjutsu* believers have constructed a Romantic myth happily opposed to historical scrutiny. *Ninja* have everything demanded by such legendry, including, in some accounts, occult powers. *Ninja* legends combine the historical truth of the specialist warriors, who practiced various clandestine forms of warfare with Romantic stories of darkness and light. The supermen-*ninja* in these tales come to the rescue of the poor and oppressed or they, in their other role as super-villains, do the dirty work for whoever pays the most.

Intentionally or not Hatsumi gave new vigor to a mythic-magic structure that was well-established before he came along. He seems to have used the *ninja* legends to promote a certain vision of martial art: when attacked one uses all his skills to simply not exist—to vanish, in other words. Since the legends of the *ninja* abounded in accounts of occult ability to vanish at will, Hatsumi merely used those accounts as metaphor for his own synthesis of martial techniques with what might be called *life skills*.

Hayes carried on the tradition until the sheer weight of the *ninja* legendary started to be counterproductive. In fact Hayes has recently said that the image of the *ninja* has completely obscured what he wishes to teach. In fact Hayes has begun to call his martial teachings by other, less myth-obscured names. In recent articles Hatsumi wishes for a more general acceptance of the merits of what he actually teaches as he pointedly devalues the *ninja*'s mythic reputation. Both men are moving past the *ninja* mythology they both have helped to promote.

Well meaning and often well written or presented, the whole *ninja* phenomena suffers from a sort of blind and uncritical enthusiasm of the sort that scoffs at being seriously questioned while taking itself very seriously indeed. From what this author has seen of the authentic and bona fide practices of Hatsumi, Hayes, and their many colleagues—aside from the extravagant claims upon Japanese history made by them and in their names: modern, cognate *ninjutsu* cast as ancient, unbroken, historical—their technical repertoire, philosophy of practice, and pedagogy indeed warrant much enthusiasm. The blindness and lack of willingness to be self-interrogating in any meaningful way, however, does get in the way. Both Hatsumi and Hayes struggle under the yoke of their own historiography. Wishing to be judged on their own merits after creating a very questionable history upon which to rest those merits, they complain about being under-appreciated and misunderstood by all the wicked *samurai* lovers. This all seems rather disingenuous and has led, for *ninja* believer-folks, to an endless series of name changes and shifts in pedagogy and philosophy. New (and often good) organizations, not meeting the challenges of transformation from ancient ways into post-modern ones, but organizations still forming and developing through their relative infancy—cognate or leap *whole-cloth* from the minds of their founders or somewhere between those two developmental strains.

In fact, upon moral and ethical questions, upon tactical and technical matters, and upon the merits of their practices alone,

Hatsumi and Hayes are found to be admirable men in the extreme, as are their students. Admiration wanes though with the understanding that the martial history they profess comes directly *and only* from within that very enthusiasm. The story they tell to *themselves and to others* comes only from within the body of true believers. It is strange that these good people, in a vaguely fundamentalist sort of way, demand that everyone else buy into this history. They have the truth and everyone else is ignorant, invidious, or stupid. Funny that they answer their critics by accusing others of doing the very same thing. It is hoped that neither Hatsumi nor Hayes have ever knowingly lied about their heritage. Why, given the quality of the arts they actually practice, would they need to?

The idea is endemic in martial arts. No few high-ranking teachers of less controversial arts take their visions of history only from within their own traditions. Belief by authority easily evolves from story to legend to unquestioned fact in martial traditions. Also, it is thought that martial arts will be judged, not on their own merits but *in contrast* with others. This need to promote and spin leads directly to distinction without difference fallacies, belief through authority arguments, and all sorts of quasi- and pseudo-histories.

All claims, records, and documentation from *within* specific Japanese martial disciplines (especially those prior to 1600) must be taken with a grain of salt. All primary historical accounts demand outside and independent verification before they can be taken as fact. That the Japanese are famous for their understanding of history as culturally malleable goes without saying. They like to make distinctions between several types and kinds of historical accounting - all of distinct cultural value. This fact confounds western style historiography to an extent and especially for the more credulous. The Japanese themselves simply take this for granted. Thus *ninja* schools in Japan have become pretty much mainstream.

In general though, lineage claims among Japanese classical *ryu*—within which cultural phenomena *ninjutsu* adherents would like to be counted—may be easily verified nowadays and the different sorts of cultural accounting sorted out to a degree of sense. Even a government office keeps track of all such claims. Historical lineage claims aside, the *Bujinkan* organization would easily stand on its own merits, once people from other arts and systems have actually seen what they do. However, many have created for themselves a mythology, a religion, and in unnecessarily defensive and reflexive ways tried to make it stand as history *on its own merits as history*. To clarify, *Bujinkan Ninpo Taijutsu* seems as excellent a martial art as any of the many other Japanese arts—better than many and certainly more comprehensive in scope. However, the merits of the case for ancient *ninjutsu* do not hold up when examined from outside and in an independent forum; the evidence presented comes only from within the *ninjutsu* circle with, to date, little or no outside and independent verification.

The evidence suggests that *Bujinkan Ninpo Taijutsu* and the *Bujinkan* organization represent a modern synthesis of cognate disciplines brought together by Hatsumi and brought back to the West by Hayes. In this sense *ninjutsu* exists and is alive and well.

However, and again, the evidence of *ninjutsu* as a cultural and social phenomenon discovered or revealed by Hatsumi after centuries of shrouded and hidden history remains shaky at the least. Hatsumi's version (or vision) of Japanese history does not fit the evidence. Just as no historical monad known as *bushido* and none known as *samurai* exists, no historical monad known as *ninjutsu* or *ninja* that actual historiography has been verified. The historical record simply does not support the popular idea of *ninja*. Stage combat students might welcome the technical repertoire taught by Hatsumi, Hayes, and their followers. One might also welcome any opportunity to stage the exploits of fun-but-fictional *ninja* as fictional characters in works of fiction. Yet one will surely wish to temper his enthusiasm by recognition of the highly controversial nature of the historical claims behind the ongoing *ninjutsu* story.

Zen and Now

The Japanese cultural and social phenomenon known as *budo* developed within the secular side of Japanese life. Martial arts at large may become quasi-religious for many reasons. The fact that they demand *religious* attention from their practitioners—and while individuals among their teachers and students may bring religious ideas to them on occasion, they remain primarily secular.

Yet the popular consciousness imbues *ninja* with extraordinary powers rooted in a mystical or occult spiritualism. Not only do *ninja* possess remarkable physical skills, say the stories; but their mental and spiritual powers make them supermen. Similar claims are made about the *samurai*. The story does not stop there: all Asian martial arts possess, always and everywhere, not only supreme effectiveness, but meditative, spiritual, ethical, and moral components much superior to anything the West has to offer. Thus, Asian martial artists, the popular story says, embody wondrous powers of both mind and body. After all, Asian martial arts are what one means when he says *martial arts*.

None of this vision of Asian martial superiority holds much water. The facts do not suggest any special moral or ethical superiority on the part of Asian fighting people or martial artists. The facts do not support the notion of some special form or forms of Asian spirituality potentiating martial practices. The idea that Japanese swordplay is in some unexplained way somehow highly philosophical in nature is at worst nonsense or at best a result of too much credulity and too little research. Herein, the fallacy of over-generalization has again morphed into an urban legend and that has taken on the weight of Truth. Like all martial generalizations, though, these spiritual or wisdom generalizations cannot be universalized in any meaningful way. Martial teachers are not all *sword saints* or *sages of the fist*. The kind of character to be developed through practice varies wildly from teacher to teacher, school to school, and style to style. Deconstruction of these spiritual-seeker-sage-*ninja-samurai* legends requires a balancing of simple truths with the true facts.

One common version of this elevated and naïve view of martial arts as spiritual traditions makes all Asian martial practices—even non-Japanese ones—and Zen (a Japanese form of Mahayana Buddhism) one. It seems likely that the work of D. T. Suzuki

started the Zen ball rolling. In his pioneering efforts to explicate Zen for Westerners, Suzuki used *references to Japanese swordsmanship* in his discussions of Zen. These interpretive notions then encompassed *karatedo, judo*, and Chinese forms like *tai chi* in the everyman consciousness.

Few martial practices actually involve *Zen* to any degree—as in the *bona fide* practice of Chinese *Ch'an*, Korean *Son*, or the *Rinzai* or *Soto* forms of Zen from Japan; *Zen*, strictly speaking is *Japanese*. It is true that *Zen* has influenced the culture and society of Japan (and originated in China) but so has Shinto, Confucianism, Taoism, and Christianity, as well as many other forms of Mahayana Buddhism.

As seems little understood in much of the discourse that perpetuates this mythology, the *Rinzai* and *Soto* schools of *Zen* (*Soto* emphasizes serene contemplation and *Rinzai* is famous for its emphasis upon the practice of the *koan* or teaching riddle; both anchor their practices in particular and rigorous forms of meditation = Chinese *ch'an*) are simply particular sects within *Mahayana* Buddhism. This means that any martial practice (a secular practice) using *Zen* (a religious practice), linking itself to *Zen*, or attempting to *do Zen* through its practice must itself be in substantial agreement with the precepts of *Mahayana*. This is most emphatically not a simple matter since virtually all varieties of Buddhist thought and practice have strict ideas about violence and killing.

Meditation *per se*, no matter how well meant (or religiously practiced), is not the same as *Zen*. Christian forms of meditation and Jewish, yogic forms from India, tantric forms from Tibet, post-modern forms linked to no particular religious practice used for relaxation and stress relief - all exist. *Zen* meditation represents one small family group of styles and kinds of specific meditation exercises. *Zen* is not a generic practice.

Teachers of highly Americanized forms of unarmed martial art end a lesson involving supposedly lethal techniques with a short session of *Zen* meditation that demonstrated no clear evidence as to how or why *Zen* meditation is actually practiced (much less a *Mahayana* Buddhist grasp of non-violence.) It is suspected that all this originates in the fact that traditional *karate-do* classes pause for *mokuso*, a moment of quiet and courteous reflection, at closing and Westerners over the years have misunderstood the purposes of that practice. Another reason may be the weight of the legends themselves; martial arts are supposed to be spiritual. A few teachers doing this sort of thing may actually have a real background in *Zen* practice. Fewer still may actually be under the tutelage of a *bona fide Zen roshi* or teacher. While such efforts attempt to make something more of martial practice than mere violence, much of this spirituality is shallow.

Weak or absent understandings, or meaningful discourse about spirituality itself, contributes to this mythology. Books and articles with titles like *The Spirit of Martial Arts* seldom spend much time or energy defining the term spirit. Spirit, soul, energy, among other ideas, get similar levels of attention by theatre folks. When one talks of spirit he often seems unwilling or unable to tell what he means and how he knew it.

Paul Tillich, the great theologian, suggested a moratorium on the use of the word God. He said that spirit might be defined as ultimate concern. Thus every level of existence, say, from matter to body to mind to soul to (ultimate) spirit, possesses spirit. That is *every point along the way* possesses its own ultimate concern.

Confusing things somewhat unnecessarily, martial arts do all contain the germ of moral and ethical concerns. Martial arts do all place some emphasis upon the molding of character through and in the inculcation of certain types and kinds of behavior in their exponents. Martial arts do all possess a cultural component—that is, they possess intra-subjective, shared agreement about what is, in Plato's terms, the good; they possess an ethic, a morality, a culture. Conflict, the resolution of conflict, violence and the end of violence, are part of this martial spirit. But the active pursuit of that spirit is hardly limited to *Zen* practices, authentic or not. Particular forms of martial arts do indeed place a high degree of concern upon transpersonal development (self-realization). Yet, few martial systems put religion as such or the pursuit of wisdom for its own sake—whether couched in the language or practices of *Zen* (or, for that matter, any other form of Buddhism) or Christianity or Zoroastrianism—at the top of their lists of ultimate concerns.

Fact is, one becomes what he practices. One's practiced concerns move towards becoming Ultimate. To become, then, a warrior in this elevated sense of the word, means to become (to invoke Plato again) good, true, and beautiful. *Zen* certainly shares some of this motivation towards improving the human character but that does not make it one with all martial arts nor all meditative practices the same as *Zen*. Besides, martial law or principle is also and emphatically *everyday* law or principle. It comes down to simple hard work—blood, sweat, and tears. Nothing, except in the sense of direct experience, is mystical about it at all.

Confucian and Taoist principles—often nowadays mixed with New Age thought—form some of the background for *tai chi*. *Aikido*, itself a kind of religion in a few of its many sects, is most closely associated with *Shinto* and with several little-known, modern Japanese religious movements. The current headmaster of the Tenshin Shoden Katori Shinto Ryu of swordsmanship, Otake Risuke, participates in *Shinto* ceremony (the word *Shinto* in the official name of his martial form is taken seriously). This is hardly unusual in Japan. Otake-sensei himself practices the *Shingon* (true speech) form of Mahayana Buddhism. Practitioners spend no time doing *Shingon* in association with training. Most *koryu* disciplines with religious leanings have veered away from *Zen* since, in effect, it involves sitting in front of a blank wall for a period of many years. In other words, the slow progress of enlightenment characteristic of *Zen* does not suit the active demands of the working warrior. Esoteric Buddhism, *Shingon* for instance, with its emphasis upon immediate enlightenment, met the religious needs of the average fighting man quite nicely.

A law of evolution (some call it development) states that the higher, the greater the depth, of a certain level of development the fewer entities at that level. For example, more atoms exist than molecules and more molecules than cells. Greater depth (or height) means narrower span. Very few martial disciplines have

evolved to the point that spiritual matters get much attention, they are too busy dealing with their pragmatics, or they take for granted that the rigors of training *themselves* will promote the needed personal development.

Just what is personal development? Stage combat itself possesses some inherent moral and ethical dimensions, even sports claim elements of character building in their ethos, and any art of self-defense might, in the right place and time, become an art of self-realization. However these things unfold in idiosyncratic ways, and no unified martial philosophy, ontology, or teleology exists—not *Zen* or any other. Japanese swordsmanship is not highly philosophical in nature after all.

(Self-) Defense Mechanisms

Strangely enough, the idea that martial arts are all about self-defense or fighting is just as flawed as the suggestion that they are all about the spiritualism of the Mystical East. In fact, many of the most martial of martial arts—Japan’s classical *koryu bujutsu* would make very poor self-protection systems in the contemporary world. Even though martial artists often stress combative effect in their technical, tactical, and strategic repertoire. Many of the *koryu* are alive and well with little overt attention paid to the idea of self-protection and no direct cultural mandate or social need for the antique fighting forms they guard and teach. Instead, they stress character building and conservation of culture in their practices.

A far more important question is inherent in ideas of martial arts for self-defense: If martial arts practices hold self-defense as their ultimate goal how will the success of that goal be measured? The only way will be by having students get into dangerous situations and fight their way out of them. It does not take much to see the problem with that. What happens when the teachings of a system fail to stand up to that test? What happens when martial arts do not prove to make people into deadly weapons with hands and feet registered with the law? It does not take much to see this very issue as the root cause for a general disdain of Asian martial arts now apparent in popular culture—fun to watch but not taken all that seriously by adults.

Given the suspect, specious, or at least questionable notion of martial arts as self-defense or combat-oriented where does this popular idea come from? American culture may have single-handedly created the notion of self-defense that inflates this urban mythology. Canadians own as many guns as Americans and watch many of the same violent movies and television programs, yet they keep their homes unlocked and their murder rate well below the US. It seems that something in America’s national identity—a sort of ancestral fear of savages and outlaws based in history as colonists and settlers, fugitives and refugees, explorers and exploiters—drives Americans to imagine they need to be prepared to defend their homes, and themselves

Beyond the American ethos of *walking tall and carrying a big stick* lies another territory which contributes to martial arts as practical and useful. Americans in particular—and the West in general—reject complex and intangible goals in favor of the practical, tangible, and pragmatic. One even justifies and validates

what he does through practical *reasoning* and deem romantic felt goals and intuitive processes—extrinsic goals are easiest to justify in this model; they are simple and clear and practical. Americans have added this tradition of self-defense pragmatics to imported martial culture as a natural part of adaptation. Certainly, the Japanese and Chinese have no such cultural formations and seem never to have reduced any martial art to methods of self-protection.

They have, however, *sold* particular *brands* of martial practice on the basis of their claimed effectiveness as self-protection. Martial art as an independent set of practices, carried out in some sort of special training hall, taught by a specialist-teacher who takes money for his teachings, and thus more or less moves away from its military roots, arises always in a civilian social and cultural context and a peacetime economy. Combative effectiveness becomes one possible plank in an ad campaign aimed at bringing in students and generating prestige in a highly status-conscious world space. Claims of effectiveness, though, may or may not hold up under scrutiny and the testing of such claims remains problematic at best. Claims of combative effectiveness cannot be substantiated. Does one really want the middle classes getting into lots of street fights and claiming championships. Many techniques drawn from classical and modern martial arts really do work, but soldiers and street fighters do not train in the manner of martial artists. Learning to fight and learning a martial art are emphatically different and distinct things.

Training in a martial practice might indeed save a wayfarer’s life on some rural road or city street. On the other hand, it can make an attempted robbery or assassination a success. At least in theory, this seems to hold up. However, in actual practice it does not seem that simple. Even the shallowest forms of martial art require years of study to even deal with the biophysical difficulties involved. The techniques are often just plain hard, even applying these basics under the worst sort of duress. In taking a weekend self-defense seminar one will find the techniques are simple and may even have some chance of helping one defend oneself. The demands of time and money and energy associated with traditional martial arts have never had much direct or practical return in the form of an oversimplified notion of self-defense.

Furthermore, if all the self-defense hype surrounding many martial practices was true then the Marine Corps would surely require proficiency in some form of martial art. This simply is not so. That certain principles of striking, kicking, throwing, subduing, and holding an adversary appear both in the teachings of the world’s armed and police forces and in the teachings of some forms of martial art does not mean that the two things are the same thing. It means instead that certain universal bio-mechanical principles live and work in all these practices.

In any case, the final goals of each are going to be very different. While one might be in trouble trying to sort out any useful generalities about martial arts’ goals, one will have little such difficulty in dealing with military and police objectives. One must stop the enemy, one must not get killed, and one must protect the bystanders might be a pretty good summation of these military and police goals. The wide span of martial art goals and objectives stalls any such attempt at a summation of goals.

Even when a martial system organizes and promotes itself around the idea of self-defense, one ought to be cautious in his understanding of it. Truth is that much of what is learned in a given style or kind of martial arts will probably be more useful in developing character. Martial techniques often turn out to be vehicles useful in getting to other destinations than technique itself. Just what the destination might be or just what that character will be like is anyone's guess. But, again, one does become what he practices, and the practice of competition and violence and mayhem are never too far from *any* martial arts.

In the final analysis then, certain martial teachers, schools, or styles *may* practice self-realization or self-protection or both, while some may practice competition or confrontation or fear and suggest aggression or violence as useful life tools. Between the poles of self-realization-development and self-defense-protection lurk many varieties and sub-varieties of principle and practice, many cultural and social manifestations, and a wide world of worldviews themselves moving in and out and up and down and around on the continuum between peace and violence. Thus, broad notions of power—inner, personal, transpersonal, spiritual, intentional, behavioral, cultural, social, Japanese, Korean, Chinese, American—glibly associated with all the other vague notions of generalized *martial arts* collapse under the weight of their own shallowness.

Musashi Who?

So much hagiography goes along with the name Musashi Miyamoto that it is virtually impossible to separate out an actual historical figure from the legends. He may have also been a uniquely talented sword virtuoso; according to some accounts he killed around sixty people. He may have attempted to forge *Zen* and his particular brand of swordsmanship into an integrated and emergent new practice; that would make him one of the few historical or contemporary sword theorists who integrated *Zen* and martial arts. He may have been an accomplished artist working in several traditional Japanese media. It is more likely that at least some of the works associated with him, as is not uncommon in Japanese art, simply bear his signature. Clearly, any final verdict depends completely upon how the historian sorts out the *real* Musashi from the *legend*.

Reputable historians have to date confirmed only some of the many stories about Musashi. It turns out that several people by that name existed and that some of the stories associated with one get mixed up with the others. Much of what Americans and most contemporary Japanese *know* about Musashi has its origin in the famous novel by Yoshikawa Eiji and many films. The book, attributed to *the* Musashi, *Go Rin no Sho* (usually translated as *The Book of Five Rings*), now appearing in several popular editions and translations, contributes to the myth more than it illuminates the historical truth behind the legends. It does not help that the book was promoted in the 1980s as a guide to doing business in something called *the Japanese way*. While in a general sort of way useful in promoting clarity of thought and boldness of action, the book was meant as little more than an outline for Musashi's sword students. Musashi wrote it to provide good spin for his particular brand of swordsmanship. He had recently hung out his shingle and was actively competing for the attention of prospective students. He may also have hoped to create a record of his

martial theory. Nothing in the book can be practiced without instruction from *him* or his followers. In other words, the book is partly designed as advertising, partly designed as a training manual for students studying with the author, and partly designed to record a particular martial theory—whether the author was in fact the actual and *bona fide* Musashi Miyamoto or not. Therefore, the partly real and partly mythic conception of Musashi is best used sparingly in a serious discourse; unqualified references to the man ought to be avoided.

The *Ki* to Health, Wealth, and Happiness

The problem with *ki* (Chinese=*chi*) is that its contemporary exponents have not brought their discourse out of the magic and mythic past and into the rational present except in a halting and fragmented sort of way. What contemporary exponents claim about *ki* often does not honor clear and precise thought. It too often makes unqualified claims of power and unexplained references to esoterica. It too seldom asks, What is meant (by *ki*) and how it is known (*ki* does and is what, and functions as claimed)?

Exponents make of *ki/chi* a sacred heuristic, unproven and unexplained but often invoked as a source of quasi-magical powers. Unfortunately this combination—heuristics offered as explanation for extra-natural powers, such as tossing people around without touching them—has destroyed confidence in the very thing it means to promote. As the post war era shifted into the 1960s and on into the 1990s, after experiencing *ki/chi* first hand and seeing no evidence of anything miraculous at all, a world full of skeptics emerged. Many have gone on to leave martial arts to their children's after-school activities calendar. Others used exotic exercises and miraculous demonstrations to promote *ki*—some because they genuinely believed. At least one group, Ki Society *Aikido*, made of *ki* a specialized, even non-martial study and practice.

Meanwhile, skeptics counter-claimed that *Ki*-societiesque exercises were simply exercises in concentration, breath control, and coordination. Some skeptics labeled the demonstrations *parlor tricks*. Some—on both sides—came to see the whole thing as charlatanry and the public infatuation with Asian martial practices quickly slipped into a general devaluing. *Ki/chi*—and the whole dilemma of martial mythology—has, in some cases, done disservice to the actual worth of some of those practices. Understanding of *ki/chi*, east and west, must evolve or extinction will follow; the laws of development do not bend.

Speaking in evolutionary terms about *ki* makes sense then. As magic (that is as part of the cultural phase associated with horticultural societies), *ki* denotes an *energy* that one possesses and that one may invoke through secret and personal formulae. As the concepts are raised into the mythic stage (the cultural phase associated with agrarian societies developing tribal structures and early stage empire building), the exponent invokes *ki* energy through sacred practices guarded by a select group of practitioners. With the passage of the culture of magic and myth into a rational-stage culture the old worldviews begin to make little sense. A rational overview demands understanding supported by reason. Ego-magic and authority-myth are not enough.

Rational understanding demands definition, delineation, interrogation, and interpretation of ideas. Key to definition, etymology and symbology help one get at the ideas behind the words. The Sino-Japanese character for *ki* represents a rice pot boiling with steam rising above it. One may suppose that to the magic-stage mind, it seemed reasonable to assume that the same mysterious energy that caused the lid to rattle and move when rice boiled caused *oneself* to move and rattle. The body heat suggests something like steam or fire within. In a mythic-stage worldspace, a set of practices which seem to result in better *moving and rattling* become the property of one's school—a select group of initiates into a mystery. Finally, social function and cultural milieu come to govern a mythology (belonging to a nation, a state, a tribe, a clan, a group) which claims to *explain nature*. Certainly, this process has contributed to discourse on *ki* that styles it as esoterica, and describes it as a mysterious *life-force* or energy that can be made to *flow*.

Historically, Ueshiba Morihei, father of modern *aikido*, founded his art upon the *aiki-jujutsu* of the Daito Ryu. That school borrowed the concept of *aiki*, as well as the term itself, from *aiki in yo ho*, a Confucian-based idea suggesting unification of effort with thought through the integration and coordination of *yin (in)* and *yang (yo)*. *Aiki* suggests, then, a sort of harmony between body and mind to be attained by disciplined practice. The term also appears, as a sort of inverse construction, in the word *ki-ai*. *Kiai*, familiar as a shout accompanying attacks and defenses in *karatedo*, more correctly means a coordination and integration (*ai*) of intention-behavior/thought-action. Although at beginning levels of training the *kiai* shout does promote integration and coordination of thought and action, at higher levels the external shout becomes a by-product of such unity.

Modern *aikido* students and some teachers like to express the idea of *ki* in more obscure terms. Shirata Rinjiro (a famous student of Ueshiba Morihei) defines *ki* in his book *Aikido: the Way of Harmony* (in translation by John Stevens), as *the life-stuff of the universe*. The word has no English equivalent. An essential element of all aspects of oriental culture—philosophy, medicine, art, physical training—the full significance of *ki* only becomes clear through firsthand experience. Such definitions, with their rarified and blatantly anti-rational tone peppered with tell-tale invocation of the dreaded *no English equivalent*, and *only becomes clear through firsthand experience* covertly demand that one, (1) accept *ki* as a heuristic and leave it at that. From there, such obtuse explanation, refusing to go beyond heuristics, relies upon oneself, (2) granting assertions a degree of validity *because* they come in another language while one, (3) places all aspects of Asian culture upon a pedestal and one, (4) accepts muddy understanding as the fault of one's lack of direct experience. Finally, (5) an individual promotes simple belief from authoritorial claims—*Shirata-sensei* is an accomplished man.

Offered as heuristic, the concept of *ki/chi*, makes a useful starting place in trying to comprehend matters of body and mind coordination, integration and situation. As long as one does not leave it there. Heuristics offer a way into deeper thought, heightened experience, broader discussion; they ought not to replace them. Likewise, exotic Asian words presented as esoteric incantations

cannot adequately replace a good heuristic. Heuristics lead to something higher and deeper; esoteric or exotic jargon often just confuses things more.

It turns out that *ki* is not that confusing and, not surprisingly some *ki/chi* exponents try to keep it simple. Quite a few highly ranked and highly respected *aikido* teachers hold a much more pragmatic and intellectually satisfying view. Their approaches do not appeal to popular mythology, to esoterica or to exotic terms. They appeal instead to common sense and clarity of thought. Although such views might not fill classes with Asia-infatuated *gaijin*, they do put the lie to all the exotic claptrap and esoteric mumbo-jumbo that sometimes attempts to stand in for them. Craig Turner, a western exponent of *aikido* training for student actors, defines *ki* as *the feeling of mind and body in harmony*. *It is not mystical*. *Aikido* luminary Shioda Gozo calls *ki* simply “the mastery of balance.” (*Total Aikido*, 17) Saotome Mitsugi declares that “many aikido students search for a special kind of magical energy streaming from the end of their extended hands, believing that their progress depends on its mystical development. The term represents something that extends into the most ordinary aspects of daily life.” (*Aikido and the Harmony of Nature*, 149) *Ki* also shows up in less-than-esoteric Japanese conversations about the weather (*tenki*), craziness or insanity (*kichigai*), and the carburetor of your Toyota (*kikaki*).

These more down-to-earth ideas bring some balance into *ki* discourse. Furthermore, claims of miraculous powers associated with *ki* have little foundation in fact. No one has yet been able to produce convincing physical evidence that *ki* can act on external bodies without the exponent making physical contact with said body. No one has been able to deliver solid evidence of levitation either. Extraordinary claims require, says the modern mind, extraordinary proof. And no such proof is forthcoming.

Since modern medicine has detected no mysterious energy flowing through one's limbs and centered literally in one's abdomen, since one has witnessed first or second or third hand, no extraordinary proofs of the extraordinary claims made by some exponents of *ki* and since one has experienced first hand demonstrations of *ki* that did not actually do what the exponents claimed to be doing, one would suggest that something else is at work: *ki* is simply the inherent ability one has to focus his efforts. That effort, suggests the tradition of *ki/chi*, becomes more efficient when one is under duress or through disciplined practice. Nothing about it is supernatural or mysterious.

Thus, the old idea of *ki* is kept alive in a new understanding of *ki*. This need not reduce *ki* to the flat or mundane or merely pragmatic. It honors instead the sort of pragmatic upheld by the top Japanese martial exponents. Just as the teacher of young actors might use the word *energy* as a heuristic to suggest a much deeper, higher, and broader concept that transcends but includes physics and biology, martial exponents can use *ki/chi*. Such use precludes the romantic and the esoteric in favor of something people can actually do and actually understand. It makes, in other words, nominal sense of *ki*. In still other words it brings an old concept into a new worldspace, and lets it roam free.

A Strategy for Avoiding Annoying Asian Martial Arts Pedants and Their ilk

First, it is suggested that one avoids all overt efforts to make of Asian martial arts a mysterium and to watch out for covert efforts to do so. One should be particularly careful to deal with practical matters of staging and practice in practical ways being particularly careful to deal with theoretical or pedagogical matters from as straight forward and unencumbered a manner as possible. Gaps should be filled in with understanding without clogging understanding. The hoplology of Asian martial systems offers no more complexity than those of European origins. One should keep striving for depth of understanding and height of apprehension but beware of ranging too far out—for the greatest depth or for the greatest span.

Second, one should *avoid reductionism in reasoning*. The martial arts of Asia or Europe must not be raised onto pedestals or shoved into holes or flattened out into puddles of cultural mess. Every individual martial practice possesses more or less distinct social and cultural lives. Even as one strives to keep things simple in teaching and practice and theory, one must honor the depth of complexity in every combat discipline one wishes to integrate into stage combat. Again, depth without height, or height without depth, is just shallowness in disguise.

Third, one should *avoid unnecessary jargon, the unqualified polyglot, the unwarranted argot*. Honoring complexity, but keeping it simple wherever possible, means translating terms into English. If one uses *ki* when *energy* or *focu* is difficult enough to explain? One must just say Japanese warrior rather than misuse *samurai*. Martial jargon is often poorly understood by non-speakers of whatever language it appears in. Also, the Japanese terms themselves possess no special power of communication or anything else. Responsible teachers and writers keep that firmly in mind, and they model simplicity, all things being equal, through plain speaking.

Fourth, one should *avoid romanticism and exoticism*. Plain speaking dictates that one carefully monitors his use of pet Asianesque martial jargon. One begins to break free of an over-eulogized past in some over-jingoized geography which—by their very natures—always interfere with one's clear assessment and accounting of martial culture. Actors and students benefit from every effort to keep out of the territory of the sage and saint, the mythic *samurai*, the legendary *ninja*, the Taoist master of the Dim Mak Death Touch. These things are true fun but they are not factual truth. *Katana for the Stage* is no more exotic a title or practice than *Rapier for the Stage*. In fact the two are equivalent terms except for the geographic distinction between the two weapon families used in them. Both *katana* and rapier denote families of swords, one European in provenance, the other Japanese. Exoticism does nothing to help one bring either *katana* or rapier onto stages. Intellectually responsible historiography, clear thought, gentle translation, and simple openness check and balance romance and exoticism. A fertile imagination may flow best out of mundane, ordered thinking; empirical mapping of the factual world; and even post-modern pluralism in all its seedy glory; but a freed imagination must be founded upon something *real*. Creativity without rules goes exactly nowhere. Ideas that are not

open to disproof merely become dogma in disguise. The exotic past, the distant shore, and the secret word incantations must have their phantastic power, but fighting, when it comes right down to it, and *staging* for that matter, are pragmatic matters of blood, sweat, and tears. No romance or exoticism will ever change that.

Finally, one should *take nothing as final, avoid belief from authority, and do as much research as one can*. Becoming an *information literate* combat researcher demands that one always includes *general* works from *outside* specific martial traditions as well as primary sources for specific information within those systems. Furthermore, managing information demands critical evaluation of information and sources both general and specific *before* the researcher incorporates critically *selected* information into his knowledge base and value system. In developing more thorough research methodologies fight directors might also make more use of the science of *hoplology*. Hoplology examines *combat* from three angles or contexts: technological, functional, and behavioral (a sort of *what, how, and why?*) approach which results in a fairly complete picture of a martial art, a weapon, the people who used them, or all three.

Japanese warriorship is no more exotic or romantic than, say, Spanish. Still, the Japanese culture may not be as familiar as one would like. One should go to a wide array of sources internal and sources independent. One should build his teachings and stagings upon that and not upon authorities, however, convincing. One should get the job done, but not settle for anything but the height of imagination and the depth of verified truth. On the other hand, if one needs to *just slap some karadee into the scene*, go ahead but be clear and precise about what is being done.

* * * * *

Compared to issues of safety and stage worthiness, these concerns of this author have little overarching importance to the disciplines of stage combat. So why should one care? Well, the concept of stage combat broadens daily bringing with it heightened levels of instrumental and inherent valuing for stage combat and deepening interest in non-Western combatives as sources of stage combat theory and practice for stages and screens in the West. The expansion includes much new territory—new for some, old for others, but always open to further exploration. In that territory, all stage combat fools, old pedants or not, will need not only to match fast thoughts with slow blades, but to balance healthy skepticism with passion for discovery, ego-magic and authority-myth with rational-reason, and rights with responsibilities. Stage artists and martial staggers not only have the agent's right to express beauty but the communal responsibility to promote the true and the good. Getting the job done, expressions of beauty aside, will always be important but getting the job of stage combat done *right*, will always include getting the social and cultural *martial* foundations of one's *theatrical* expressions *right to some degree*.



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The Sword Master's Point of View

by Anthony De Longis

(All Photos submitted by Anthony DeLongis)

Action should be approached as dialogue with movement instead of words. Action is one of the most powerful story telling devices available to a performer and filmmaker. It can affect and involve the audience viscerally and emotionally, not just intellectually. Every actor and director will eventually face the unique demands of an action scene, often one that includes weaponry. Such occasions can dramatically define character and drive the story in a dynamic new direction, providing the actor commands the skills to deliver a safe, exciting performance; and the director knows how to take full advantage of the story-telling possibilities inherent in these opportunities.

Sword Fighting As An Anachronism

The history of the sword is the history of mankind. The sword has existed in a wide variety of forms and shapes in every culture throughout the ancient and modern world—as both a symbol of power and a dispenser of justice. At its best the sword stands for honor, integrity and responsibility; at its worst, it stands for brutality and chaos.

Most folks in the sword mastering profession have a passion for the history of the sword and the science of swordplay. It is a rich and fascinating path to knowledge and self-awareness as a performer, martial artist and human being. However, most of the audience only knows what they have seen in the movies, and that is often a contradictory and confusing conglomerate of misinformation. As a sword master, one must educate while entertaining, and it must be done without losing the momentum of the story being told.

Choreography is a cause-and-effect conversation between characters in conflict. When choreographing and performing, one must discover, then believably execute the most effective, dynamic and exciting story ideas that can be imagined. An audience forms instant judgments and feelings about each character based on what they see. The master's artistry finds voice in the specifics of the choices made and his ability to execute them clearly, dramatically and when appropriate with a little style.

The Search for Inspiration

As sword master, one should always discuss story and character concerns with both the director and the actors. Action that does not progress the story and say something unique about each character is indulgent, lazy and a disservice to both the project and the audience.

Part of the job as sword master is to play detective in search of clues. One should begin with the text or script: *the author's vision*. One should then talk to the director to find out what he wants the action to accomplish and what the scene is to say to the audience: *the director's vision*. When possible, the sword master should also discuss the action with the actor performing the role on his or her interpretation of how the character should be played: *the artist's*

vision. With these elements of input, one must then rely upon personal and professional experience, as well as, imagination to meld all of these ideas into an exciting tapestry of action—by choosing physical elements and combinations that best tell the desired story

The Choice of Weapons

All swords are not created equal. Is the character's weapon of choice designed to hack and cleave, stab and skewer or both? Is it straight or curved, long or short, single or double-edged? Does it have a guard to protect the hand? The sabre, the *katana*, the broadsword, the rapier, the small sword—each has unique strengths, as well as, weaknesses and vulnerabilities. The choice of weapon and the manner with which the character wields it can offer a strong visual metaphor for *who he is* and how the audience will perceive him.

On *Highlander: the Series*, this author guest-starred in the 5th-season episode *Duende*. Originally titled *The Mysterious Circle*, and based on a story idea he submitted to the show's producers, it incorporated an interpretation of the unique Spanish system of rapier fighting. It was the first time the Spanish style had ever been filmed.



From *The Highlander: The Series* episode "Duende" featuring Anthony (left) and Adrian Paul (right) in the final Rapier & Dagger fight.

As a movement choice for the character of the immortal fencing master Ottavio Consone, the author wanted to combine the upright defiant postures of the matador with the staccato footwork and rapid weight changes of a flamenco dancer—coupled with the application of superior leverage through footwork and angulation. He and series Sword Master F. Braun McAsh, worked together to co-choreograph three rapier-and-dagger encounters, including what many consider to be the finest and most complex fight in the show's six-year run, the climactic duel in the rain.

As a weapon choice for the swaggeringly confident Consone, McAsh chose a *flamberge* style rapier. The wavy double-edged design of the blade maximizes blade contact and insures cutting

power throughout the length of every stroke. It is a beautiful yet brutal weapon; instead of a neat surgical slice, the blade chews the flesh, leaving ugly wounds that are hard to repair. The psychological impact to one's opponent is almost as effective a distraction as the blade he has to face. This choice of weapon reveals arrogant confidence, a grim determination to win and no small sense of theatricality. McAsh's weapon choice and along with the author's movement choices dove-tailed perfectly to reveal to the audience the psychology of the character.

Preparation and Training

Staged combat is the attempt to create the illusion of reality, while maintaining safety for the actors and crew as the character's story unfolds. The actor must react and respond organically to his partner's energy. Obviously, an actor cannot give his best performance if he does not speak the language. That is what training and rehearsals are for—to acquaint the actor with a new vocabulary of expression.



From the *Magnificent Seven* episode "For Love and Honor". Featuring Anthony working on the set with actor Anthony Starke. Anthony is dressed to double the character "Buck", played by Dale Midkiff, in the master shot and in sections of the duel.

The sword master's imagination has two constant qualifiers. The first involves *safety*—always a prime consideration. The second is *time*. Beginning with safety, the sword master must analyze the skill level of each performer and balance it with the amount of time he has to teach the choreography. If his choices are beyond the ability of the actor to execute safely and at a reasonable level of performance, then he must find simple choices which still tell the desired story.

It is important that the instructor tells the actor he only has the skills he shows up with on the day. He must assume responsibility for his own training. The actor can only wing it successfully if he has the skills to fly. This includes studying and training to increase the actor's abilities before the job—the set is not the place to learn one's craft. That goes for both the choreographer and the performer.

Good choreography is a conversation between characters, offering unique opportunities to create tension and to heighten the story. It also can give the camera a reason to follow the action to a close-up of the actor's face. The ability to manipulate distance is not only key to articulating character but also to maintaining safety—

whether the combat be long-, medium-, or close-range. Sometimes, the hardest thing to teach a beginning sword fighter is footwork, but good footwork is essential to be able to instantly respond to one's partner's every movement.

After proper training, the actor is encouraged to perform as much of his own action as possible. This excludes extreme-risk stunts like high falls, fire and car work that require a team of stunt performer specialists, who have devoted years to lowering their risks to an acceptable level. Most artists realize the benefits of performing their own sword action. It gives their characterization tremendous credibility when the audience can see it is really them performing the action. For that moment, the artist really *is* that character.

Evolution of the Fight Story

Ideally, a hero fights for something larger than himself and should overcome tremendous adversity before ultimately triumphing. A good fight scene is a microcosm of that entire drama—with the same three-act structure: the setup, the complications and the resolution or payoff.

Every action beat has four story-telling opportunities: the moment before, the action, the reaction, and the moment after. Each moment is vital to the illusion of combat that the performers are trying to create. It is very important to realize the power and story potential each element has to offer and to take full advantage of the opportunities each can provide to clarify and justify the action choices.

It is always important to plant the seed of combative truth into the work. A favorite way to choreograph is to evolve the story with a partner. He or she initiates an attack. A series of defensive options and offensive responses are offered, then the choices are made that flow as a logical and dynamic reaction to the created jeopardy. The partner responds to the new peril with an answer of his own, until the crafted phrase tells the story that is wanted. Then tempo and speed are played to clarify and accent the character elements for camera.

Time As The Enemy – Part One

The first consideration is how much rehearsal time one has. It is a lot easier to get rehearsal time on a feature film than episodic television, but no guarantees exist. The production manager will still resist, but compare the tally. Pay three people to rehearse and the actors can progress beyond mechanical moves to a dynamic performance level that grabs the audience's imagination, or save that small investment and keep a crew of thirty to fifty people standing around, on salary, while struggling to get something up to the level of mediocre so that it can be put on film.

Prior to filming *Batman Returns*, Michelle Pfeiffer trained with the author for six weeks for her role as the bullwhip-wielding Catwoman. This author was also present as her coach during all her principal photography to maintain her training and to help turn logistical problems of difficult locations like rooftops and the water-soaked Penguin's Lair into character opportunities. As a result, Pfeiffer was able to do all her own whip work without any doubles or CGI (Computer Generated Images) - including a neck

wrap around Christopher Walken's throat on her first day of shooting. This gave director Tim Burton shooting options that would have been impossible with a double. It also made Pfeiffer's portrayal of Catwoman even more credible, dangerous and sexy.



From the film *Batman Returns*. Anthony helps Michelle Pfeiffer (right) in a scene. The whipcracking made her character completely unforgettable. Photograph property of Warner Bros.

Time As The Enemy— Part Two

The second time consideration, especially in television, is how long one gets to shoot the action scene. It is a waste of time and energy to dream up action when time, budget or personnel will not allow it to be performed and recorded. An episodic television show gets seven days or less to film the entire program. Every day is overbooked, and unforeseen problems often steal what little time has been promised. Often last-minute adjustments have to be made to shorten the fight, one hopes without sacrificing any essential story elements. Making tough choices and getting the actors through the changes safely and effectively is an important part of the sword master's job.

SECONDHAND LIONS – A Case Study

Recently, this author was sword master for the film *Secondhand Lions* with Robert Duvall, Michael Caine and Haley Joel Osment. This author was hired by stunt coordinator Walter Scott to stage all the flashback sword action with sabres, scimitars and fighting knives. Scott was familiar with the sword master's skills, having previously worked with him on the films *Masters of The Universe* and *Bad Girls*, as well as bringing him in to stage the sword duels for the television series *The Magnificent Seven*. Scott stated what the director wanted for *Secondhand Lions*, and this sword master went to work.

The film's writer Tim McCanlies was also the director. His vision of his characters was so strong that he waited ten years to helm this special project himself just to be certain the story was told to his satisfaction. The flashback action sequences are vital to the heart of the movie and the stories, as related by Michael Caine. They are given life in the mind of his young nephew Walter, played by Osment. For these fights of imagination, McCanlies and the Director of Photography Jack Green, wanted to recreate the excitement of the swashbuckling technicolor classics like the



From the film *Masters of the Universe*, where Anthony portrayed the character Blade.

Adventures of Robin Hood, the *Mark of Zorro* and the *Prisoner of Zenda*.

Scott gave the sword master two weeks prior to filming to work with Christian Kane, the actor who would play Duvall's Hub character in his youthful prime. The script and storyboard said that Hub had to *fight like twenty men*. All of young Hub's adventures as a young man were to be narrated by Michael Caine; with no dialogue, Kane had to make every moment on screen count with his action. Although he had no sword experience, Kane's strong athletic abilities, broad sports background, eagerness to train and strong work ethic allowed him to cultivate a solid and varied sword vocabulary prior to filming.

The final duel between Hub and the evil sheik, for the love of his life Princess Jasmine, pulled out all the stops. Both characters needed to be exceptional swordsmen for the dramatic payoff. The sheik fought with two curved scimitars versus Hub's single, straight-bladed Foreign Legion cavalry sabre—an unfair advantage for the bad guy and lots of perilous complications for the hero. The sheik was mysterious, unpredictable and slightly exotic. The fighting style developed for him gave him an elusive, fluid, circular movement to match the flowing curves of his twin blades. Hub was straightforward and no-nonsense—the all-American hero. The fighting style developed for him was a more linear, counter-punch style. This combination of two visually con-

trasting styles gave one the opportunity to create an effective and dynamic battle between good and evil.

One of the most challenging scenes in *Secondhand Lions* called for Kane to charge into the Oasis set at the head of his band of horsemen, jump from his mount, cut the chains binding the captive slave girls tied to a convenient palm tree and fight ten guys simultaneously. This would be the first time the audience would see his character in action. It was vital to introduce the young Hub with a lot of flair and style.

The morning of filming the charge and dismount were shot then reset to cover the fight. It was on a very tight combined day-into-night schedule and the director and director of photography wanted to cover the fight quickly with four cameras, then move the company to the next location. This was the first rehearsal on the



The sword fighting team from the film Secondhand Lions. It featured Anthony (lower right corner) and Christian Kane, the actor playing young Hub.

actual location and suddenly tents and camels and campfires and cooking pots and dozens of extras, who had never been mentioned, were crammed into the performance area. It was apparent to this author that a quick adjustment of the action would be necessary.

Nothing looks worse than a bunch of guys circling the hero and politely *waiting their turn* to attack. The key to dealing with multiple opponents is to never allow the action to stay in one place too long. Kane taught Chris that the best way to remember choreography is to remember the story the moves are crafted to tell. Kane also kept track of his action by the direction he moved to encounter each successive group of new fighters. But now the location demands required Kane to stay-put and his adversaries to come at him. The individual fight phrases were still effective, but the order needed to be changed and the angles adjusted to better suit the placement of the multiple cameras. However, out of this necessity grew the opportunity to work out a more exciting climax.

Entrances from the tents and over the campfire and from off camera—from all directions—were added. The order of the combinations were changed and the new angles to provide maximum

effectiveness to all four cameras were quickly blocked. A disarm was added in the final three-against-one combination, so Kane would have a second sword for the new ending. Kane had been taught chambered-hand double-sword techniques in LA and this change gave resulted in the ideal opportunity to take advantage of his training. Since Kane was used to this sword master's energy and trusted him at any speed, this sword master jumped in to perform a double scimitar versus sabre and scimitar four sword combination. The new climax accelerated in tempo and in both medium and close up camera angles, Kane was surrounded by a web of flashing steel—flair and style.

The staging all took about ten minutes to accomplish. The adjustments were rehearsed once and the film rolled. Two full master-takes with four cameras were shot and when they were done and the cast and crew were ready to move to the new location. The director was delighted. This author learned this lesson a long time ago: One has to be well prepared but also ready and able to change at a moment's notice so one can turn the inevitable unforeseen complications into character and story opportunities.

The Dreaded Close-Up and The Modern Film Fight

The sword master has an obligation to the audience, the unsung and often forgotten crucial partner to every story. Without the audience no one can understand and appreciate the character's dilemma. Fred Astaire had the right idea. His contract stated that when dancing, he would always be shot head to toe, full figure. He wanted his whole body to tell his story.

The current mania for constant, extremely-close coverage robs both the performer and the audience of the actor's full power. The story must be told from the ground up, each action motivated by the feet and the hips and supported by the power of the entire body. The intelligence and dexterity, both mental and physical, of the characters are lost when all that can be seen are the straining faces. Often an important story beat, such as a clever disarm, goes unnoticed. It just looks like magic or bad continuity when the hero or villain is suddenly unarmed. The hero is lessened because an audience cannot appreciate what it cannot see.

The prevailing wisdom holds that close-up contortions of an actor's face will draw the viewer deeper into the story of the action. Close-ups are a good way to hide the physical shortcomings of the actor; however, it confuses and distances the audience. Many directors believe that bombarding the audience with strobe-quick flashes and partial images will dazzle the viewer into believing they have seen a good fight. In actuality, it accomplishes precisely the opposite. If one cannot follow the story that the action is supposed to tell, ultimately no comprehension exists. And if an audience does not understand, how can it care about the characters or what happens to them?

At times this assault-to-the-senses technique is appropriate, effective and even necessary. It is pretty tough to do a long shot master when multiple characters are fighting a fantasy that only exists in the computer. The battle with the Cave Troll from *The Fellowship of the Ring* is an example. The director, fight choreographer and cinematographer had to shoot short, quick pieces of individual actors and then reassemble the action into a final con-



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vincing tapestry through editing—a tough way to tell the story, but masterfully executed by a very talented team. Perhaps the director wants to show that the heroes are helpless in the tide of battle. All is carnage and confusion as wave after wave of the enemy washes over like a tide of human flesh, and one can only see what is right in front at that instant. Ridley Scott and his team used their artistry to good effect in the forest battle sequence of *Gladiator*—Hell was indeed unleashed.

Shaky-vision, wobble scope and faster-than-you-can-blink quick cuts should not be the only tool one has in his arsenal to tell a compelling action story. All that confusion is a fine condiment, but as a steady diet, it removes the thought process and strategy of the encounter. To be involved, one must understand and appreciate who is in danger and how they can avoid the peril. Is it through

skill or luck, or the over-confidence of the villain? These are all possible choices with strong character elements to be mined. It remains that the audience must be able to follow the narrative story of the action in order to appreciate each individual's jeopardy so they can identify with them as real people in extraordinary situations.

Never Stop Trying to Make It Better

Nothing makes this author angrier than the attitude of *OK* is good enough. One must never stop trying to make it better until nothing more can be done. That is this author's idea of a professional work ethic. That is how this author has always tried to conduct himself, especially on the set. *Do the very best with what one has to work with. Anything less, is not worth watching.*



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Stage Combat and Dance

by Kriota Willberg

Action and violence are theatrical and film techniques, which immediately communicate to an audience when things have gotten serious. These representations give the viewer a safe and thrilling way to experience a situation they would never want to experience themselves. Action movies with their dynamic chases, explosions, and fights that are so exaggerated that, to a dance/choreographer, manifests a kinetic dance within the story of the movie that always holds an attraction. The *Matrixes* and *Terminators*, or anything with Basil Rathbone and a sword have always included violence. However, if one has actually experienced violence in one's life, one will always be careful about selecting the kind of violence watched. Frequently a person will be extremely uncomfortable watching violent content in media and film if he is not prepared for it. If something reminds him of his own experience, he feels victimized by what he has seen for days afterwards.

After studying stage combat, one learns how the illusion of violence is created and can stay emotionally connected to a performance when watching violent content. As a dance choreographer stage combat has turned this author's attention to the context and uses of violence in performance. By using strong stage combat techniques in the dance choreography, the choreographer can explore what violence is and what violence is not. Responding to an individual's reactions to violence the choreographer can experiment with ways to present dances that make an audience think about violence without actually experiencing it.

One avenue of investigation is to find ways in which a choreographer can use stage combat to fight actual violence. Two dances by the Dura Mater Company, *Housewife* and *Civil War*, use fight techniques to comment upon and portray violence in very different ways. The goal of these works is to communicate ideas about the actual act and use of violence, examine the perception of violence in the individual's culture, stimulate discussion, and heighten awareness.

In 2001, in partnership with two New York City theatres, the Brooklyn Arts Exchange (BAX) and Dixon Place, Dura Mater invited a multi-generational, multi-ethnic chorus of women dancers and non-dancers to participate in a developmental workshop and performance of *Housewife*, a dance about domestic violence. The workshop was free of charge and performers were not asked to reveal their personal experiences with violence.

In *Housewife* dancers portray different aspects of an abused woman's personality, embodiment at different ages, representation of conflicting desires, precarious hold on a normal lifestyle, and her search for a feeling of safety away from the abuser. The goal of this workshop was to create a dance examining a terrible life situation. During the workshop the participants worked with gesture, improvisation, stage combat techniques, and set dance sequences to create dance about the unrelenting tension and strain that haunt women involved in these dangerous relationships.

The fourteen dancers onstage represented *Everywoman*. Ranging in age from twenty to seventy, some of the women were professional dancers and some were not. As they danced, they represented different aspects of an archetypal personality. The women received slaps and punches during the piece, but always by an outside unseen abuser. Some sections were very dance specific, meaning that the fight choreography was softened and abstracted into movements performed as dance sequences in unison or in canon. One section was more literal and dancers were thrown around the stage by an invisible attacker as partnering dancers tried to help and protect them. The gentleness of the musical accompaniment by Mozart abstracted the action onstage further, and contributed to the dance's poignancy.

The other dance, *Civil War*, was completely different in style and tone; however, the choreographic process was surprisingly similar to that of *Housewife*. *Civil War* is an entertainment, toe-tapping dances, propaganda, and a somewhat tasteless pro- and anti-war square dance. During the months that led up to the United States war on Iraq, concern that the country's recent experience of terrorism was being exploited by the media and certain politicians, for the purpose of agitating people and exciting them about the impending war, existed. Inspired by propagandistic posters, cartoons (particularly WWII Bugs Bunny), and films from previous United States wars, it was decided to use humor, violence, and a catchy tune to comment on what the media seemed to be doing.

Most northerners thought that the war with the south would be a *Cake Walk* ending in a few short weeks. However, the war did not go according to plan and dragged on and on. Families fought on opposite sides, while advances in military technology decimated both armies, and hundreds of thousands of men were killed or maimed. How did people keep morale up or convince themselves they were on the side of good? How did they voice their feelings, or blow off some steam? In a world without television and radio, how did they dramatize the war?

Using texts about square dancing and cotillion figures, diary accounts of soldiers in the war, and descriptions of battles, the choreographer worked with composer Brian Dewan, who created a square dance accompaniment containing both regular calls and singing calls that used dancing terms, military maneuvers, and battle descriptions. To this music was added stage combat techniques blended with a combination of square dancing figures and steps. Certain terms such as *bivouac*, *reconnoiter*, or *thirty-two pounder* were assigned specific steps or figures. Other singing calls *...make your foe eat humble pie, listen to him squeal like a hog in a sty... or ...slit his belly open wide, reach your hand 'way up inside...* were used for chaotic fights, where the dancers would throw punches, strangle, and kick each other until the next figure was called.

The dancers in both *Housewife* and *Civil War* had never worked with stage combat techniques, therefore, the basic concepts had to

be explained before choreographing the dancers. It seemed to be a surprise to many of the performers that stage combat is all about *not* hurting anyone. When dancers dance, they are usually performing a movement that is exactly what it appears to be doing. The dancer turns to be turning, extends her leg to get it up in the air, or makes a simple gesture for the audience to appreciate as a simple gesture. Although dance can be difficult and look deceptively easy, deception is not usually what the dancer is thinking about.

The dancers were taught some basic fight techniques: slaps, punches, hair pulling, arm twists, and so on. Although the *Housewife* dancers never played the attacker, it was important to their understanding of timing and context of the choreography. For *Civil War* these were some of the *steps* that would be used in rehearsals.

Because the final visual result of a choreographed fight can look so brutal, the basics of setting physical boundaries, running sequences in slow motion, putting the victim in control of the action, and paying attention to the needs of one's partner were startling ideas when first starting to study stage combat. An individual could see the same surprise in some of the dancers as they rehearsed. A lot of laughing over mistimed knaps and cues, and then gasping when a pair of performers would execute a really convincing punch or slap occurred.

Once everyone had the basics, little solo fight skits were presented for each other. Dancers would be kicked, shoved, or attacked by an invisible person. The rest of the participants would guess what the attack was, where on the body it happened, and how much force the assailant used. This game led to performance feedback and discussion about how to act a fight. The exercise was particularly important for *Housewife*, because there is no visible attackers in the dance.

The basic techniques were used as part of the dance material. Fight sequences were choreographed into phrases and manipulated to build the dances. In the *Civil War* square dance the dancers' fight distances were kept wider than necessary on occasion, and the choreographer did not worry about positioning dancers to sell a fight, because it would have interfered with the spatial relationships of the dance squares and figures. Obviously, realism is lost when phrases are repeated, performed by a group in unison, or done with rhythmic regularity. But the artifice of repetition helps one make one's point in these dances, adding humor or poignancy without having to replicate the type of theatrical violence that used to affect one so negatively.

As someone who has been making dance and movement pieces for over a decade, learning fight skills has affected this author's perception of dance and movement greatly. It is bizarrely invigorating to discover that one can convincingly produce and reproduce a horrible looking event without harming anyone. One's comfort with theatrical violence has even allowed this author to make a few graphic fights on occasion. Until learning fight skills one never thought that one could successfully make dances that have something significant to say about these political and social issues.



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Paddy Crean and The Legend of Old Man's Cave

by J. Allen Suddeth (Photos By J. Allen Suddeth)

It is difficult to imagine a time in the US when stage combat was hardly known, and rarely taught. It is harder to believe that the most basic equipment was impossible to acquire, as no suppliers of stage worthy weapons existed. The year was 1973. The place, Athens, Ohio, site of Ohio University, a small town in southeastern Ohio nestled in the foothills of Appalachia and site of a vigorous acting program headed by Robert Hobbs.

Hobbs had asked his graduating alumni to recommend any stellar master teachers he might hire for the benefit of the school of acting. By chance, alumni Erik Fredricksen had recently worked with Patrick Crean up in Stratford, Canada, and took the opportunity to write back with glowing reports of his talents, charm, and depth as a teacher. At the time, this author was twenty year old junior BFA acting student who had also been (very happily) saddled with teaching two sections of stage combat per week, five days a week, and who, by today's standards, was massively under-qualified. At that time teacher training had consisted of working with two enthusiastic graduate students for a year, taking every class one could, and practicing with anyone who was willing to cross swords. Picture then, a nervous lad, driving east from Athens, toward Wheeling, West Virginia (the nearest airport) in a 1967 Pontiac Catalina to collect a world renowned stranger named Patrick Crean one Sunday afternoon, and who was about to be smacked in the head with forty years of professional experience.

To say that "Paddy" (as he insisted on being called) was gracious, polite, and radiated old-world charm that afternoon is an understatement. He put one at ease right away. But one was still on edge, squiring this gentleman back to campus, and installing him in his guest quarters for the duration of his appointment. On the way out the door when he asked, "Where can we get a beer?" On a Sunday night in Athens, the bars were closed, but over the county line was a disreputable roadhouse called Club 33 where the conversation, food and beer flowed for a couple of hours.



Lunch on set.

It was here, a conversational gambit was committed that was to follow this author for years afterward. Trying to keep the talk flowing, and engaging a local Ohio park was bragged about, stating it to be not unlike a Hollywood set, the perfect place to make a film. It was perfect for a Robin Hood adventure, with trails, gorges, a lake, and huge trees fallen across pristine brooks. Before one could thing about it, Paddy's hand reached across the table and grabbed this author's hand, and he said, "Let's do it!"

The next morning, Monday, Paddy began what was to become the daily ritual. The team taught three classes a day, five days a week. However, before he could be shown around the campus, and introduced to one and all, he handed this author a piece of paper. "Here's our story!" said he, "I stayed up last night working it out!" And indeed he had. He had worked out what is called a one-page story outline, that came to be known as *The Legend Of Old Man's Cave* a nod to the Old Man's Cave State Park that had been mentioned only twelve hours before.

By Tuesday, this student knew he was in trouble. How could an undergraduate acting student make good his promise to film something with Paddy? Now burdened with his belief that his original script starring him as the Old Man, as well as various bad guys, sword fights, stunts, and dialogue was a reality. Where was one to acquire the equipment for such a project, not to mention a crew, or a budget? On the other hand, how could one let him down, as he was so full of enthusiasm?



A fellow undergraduate was approached, the only person known on campus that had made a film (on Super 8, if anyone remembered that format), and Paddy and the project were pitched and he was asked to direct and act as cinematographer. His name was Allen C. Weary, known to one and all as AC. The pieces were brought together quickly, as Paddy was only in town for five weeks. Within two weeks, armed with his script, and a bold front, help was solicited from the ranks of the Radio and Television Department at Ohio University and most of all, for its equipment. The project was pitched to the chairman who said "None of my students are doing this type of work. We'll give you everything you need." What he offered was the use of the department's brand new half-inch black and white, reel to reel, portable Sony Rover. The Rover was the first portable, small format, hand held video tape recorder, and he had just taken delivery of two of them, along with two extra batteries.

On the strength of having the equipment, the film was quickly cast, Paddy alerted, and the location schedule planned. Still no budget existed, but the equipment was in place, cars available, a script and a star, and the project was off in a whirlwind of enthusiasm.

For the next three weekends, the project was shot with Paddy in Old Man's Cave State Park, about forty minutes from the campus. It was a low budget film. Craft services were supplied from whatever was in the refrigerator. Canteens of water, candy bars, and Coke got the crew through the day. Sometimes a bottle of wine, in the European manner, was supplied for lunches, as well as, a folding chair for Paddy, so that he could be at his ease between takes. He relished the attention. It was quickly decided to shoot Paddy's sequences first, out of order, while he was still in town. The location at the park was beautiful, however it was also remote, steep, hot, and sans bathrooms or electricity. The team had to carefully weather out the usage of the Rover, as the batteries only lasted a half an hour each, with no way to recharge. It meant no, or few, retakes, and long

rehearsals to get things right.

Off set, Paddy kept things light and was in his heyday, cracking jokes, reminiscing about Flynn, and generally relishing being outdoors. If he had any qualms about putting himself into the care of a handful of callow, undergraduate film neophytes, or wearing cheap, *found* costumes, he never once let on, but treated everyone like Hollywood royalty. Indeed, by the final weekend, a series of teachers and theatre students were visiting the set, and sitting around Paddy off camera listening to his tales of swashbuckling romance.

On set, Paddy was a wonder. In his first scenes, establishing his character walking through *Sherwood Forest*, he had to share the screen with a seven-week old puppy that



Paddy Crean with puppy.

had been pressed into service. He easily handled the pup, working out personal moments with it, and strode through the woods armed with a staff like a latter day character in *Lord of the Rings*. When it came time for the climactic fight with his character, the Old Man and Robin, he reached into his bag of tricks and came up with a classic single sword fight in a matter of moments.

Paddy's sense of humor followed him around, too. An incident occurred when he was almost lost for good. He had put his chair on a ridge under a tree to relax after

lunch. This ridge was about thirty feet from the edge and about a hundred fifty feet straight down. After lunch, while telling stories and enjoying a cigar, Paddy suddenly leaned back in the chair, which pitched over, carrying him head over heels backward downhill toward the cliff's edge. Paddy, however, bounced up on his feet, coolly eyed the precipice, then looked straight at the crew and said, "Did anyone get that on film?"

Paddy left after three weeks of filming and countless classes at the University. He had managed to charm everyone in the department. He was convinced that a strong base in foil, or sabre fencing adapted for the stage would look great and be safe for actors at the same time. He taught what he termed a *fight kit* using epee bladed sabres in a style now termed single sword. The fondest classroom memory of him is that after teaching for hours, and ushering the last student out of class, he would turn and say, "Now it's our turn". He would then proceed to chase this author around the room, swordfighting at lightning speed, give a couple of notes, and then do it again. From there he would descend into the street, make a hard right turn into a tavern, where he would buy a pitcher of beer, and while consuming it, regale his audience with stories of Flynn, Olivier, his ex-wives, and gossip from Stratford. Heady stuff for a twenty-year old.

The Legend Of Old Man's Cave continued to shoot footage all that spring, without Paddy, then was put to bed for months. The next spring, upon Paddy's return to

Athens in 1974 for another five weeks, the project was dusted off and a tag sequence of Paddy teaching the final fight in the video was to be filmed with grandiose thoughts of marketing the tape. This never transpired, though several valuable minutes of footage of Paddy speaking and fighting on stage was recorded. The project was taken back to the Radio and Television Department, and the chief editor edited footage, and twenty-two hours was spent in a sound studio creating original music and sound effects. A copy was presented to Paddy, who showed it around the country for several years, and who



Paddy (left) rehearsing the final fight with J. Allen Suddeth on location in Old Man's Cave State Park. Photograph supplied by J. Allen Suddeth.

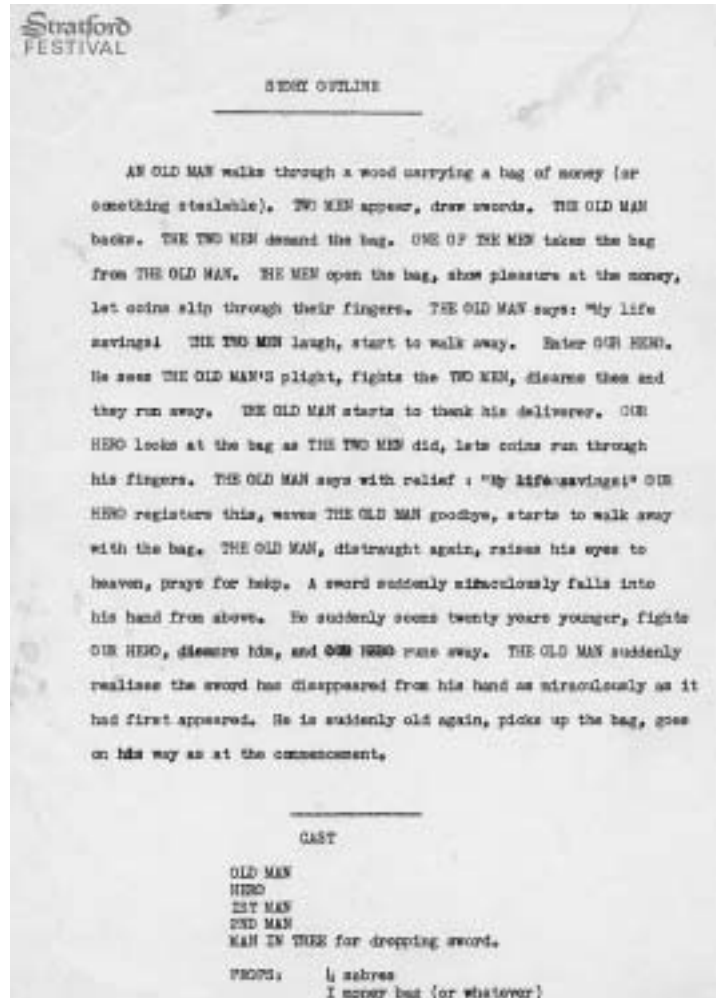
never forgot his adventures in Ohio. Though the film was flawed, and clearly a student effort, Paddy's influence shines through, and the film often rose above its humble trappings. Paddy looks great on tape. It is so pleasing to have this record of Paddy, and his work from those days.

One of the out takes from filming was Paddy singing the theme song from the old TV version of Robin Hood. Messing up the lyrics, he charmingly sang:

“Robin Hood, Robin Hood,
Riding through the glen.
Robin Hood, Robin Hood,
With his band of men.
Loved by the ...bad!
Feared by the ...good!
Robin Hood, Robin Hood, Robin Hood....”

Paddy's legacy was his unending stock of choreography, his clarity of blade, his patience with students, his ability to find joy in life in the classroom and his romantic air. His voice saying, “Allen, it's all in the wrist!” or encouraging a student, “Wonderful, wonderful!” His influence has been life long. Rarely a day goes by without thinking of him. He was not only a part of the glory days of Hollywood, not only a direct link to the blade of Flynn, but a spiritual oasis wherein one found someone who had truly mastered his *métier*, and this author enjoyed it enormously.

To think that a passing comment by a young theatre student given lightly to a person of his renown, could set into motion the events leading to this short film. Paddy inspired students to create beyond their ability, and see beyond the confines of Ohio. Paddy Crean had a generosity of spirit that defied all expectations.



Paddy's original "one page" treatment that became The Legend of Old Man's Cave. This was handed to the author the morning after the two met, and became the blueprint for the film.

The Legend Of Old Man's Cave

Directed and filmed by:	A. C. Weary
Fight direction:	Patrick Crean, J. Allen Suddeth
Musical score:	Larry Siegel
Cast:	Patrick Crean J. Allen Suddeth Allen Schoer Jeffrey Van Thompson



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The Pen and The Sword

by Linda Carlyle McCollum



ITALIAN RAPIER COMBAT

The sixteenth century Italian master, Ridolfo Capo Ferro's *Gran Simulacro dell' Arte é dell' Uso della Scherma* (Great Simulacrum of the Use of the Sword) has finally been translated into English as *Italian Rapier Combat*. Capo Ferro's work, which was originally published in 1610, has been considered to be one of the most comprehensive and concise books on the art and science of fencing ever written. Egerton Castle has said that of the Italian works on fencing Capo Ferro's fixed the principles of the science and the theories he had enunciated had hardly been improved by anyone. Arthur Wise claimed that the peak achievement of the Italian tradition was reached with the work of Capo Ferro who had permanently fixed the principles on which all later swordplay was to be based. Recently Sidney Anglo claimed that the work in terms of combat technique was the most influential in the history of swordsmanship.

It is surprising that this work on which all modern day swordplay is based should take so long to be translated. Eight years ago Jared Kirby began the project to raise the funds to translate this seminal work. The manuscript is now available in English. A professional Italian translator of sixteenth century manuscripts worked on the project for two years and the finished result was full of errors and even missing passages. With the help of Ramon Martinez and his wife Jeannette Acesta-Martinez, the work has finally come to press.

Capo Ferro is said to have invented the lunge, while in actuality an Italian contemporary, Nicoletto Giganti, was the first to clearly explain the techniques of the lunge in his *Teatro* in 1606. A few years later Giganti seems to have abandoned the lunge and to have reverted to having the left foot forward. This makes Capo Ferro the first to have carefully explained the mechanism of the lunge that resulted in a direct linear style rather than the predominance of the point.

The treatise covers the use of the single rapier, rapier/dagger, rapier/cloak and rapier/shield. The work is divided into introductory chapters full of clear definitions and conclusions followed by a collection of practical examples with illustrations. Capo Ferro's work went through numerous editions. The 1652 edition used artwork from the Old Testament as background for the plates and some of these are used in forty-three plates in this translation.

Because of the technical nature of the treatise, fencing terms have been kept in the sixteenth century Italian. A glossary has been compiled to enable the reader to understand the terminology used without equating the sixteenth century terms to modern fencing terms which might be an erroneous interpretation. This is a literal translation to keep the integrity and flavor of the original text. Punctuation has been updated to a point, but it still needs some fine tuning. This makes the work difficult to read for the lay person, but once the reader understands the terms, it is easy enough to follow Capo Ferro's approach. Few footnotes exist and no explanation is given concerning any terms or references. This is a literal translation of Capo Ferro's text.

Just who was Capo Ferro? In the introduction Capo Ferro introduced the work to the Sixth Duke of Urbino Francesco Maria Feltrio della Rovere. Urbino, which had been ruled by the Montefeltro family as a papal fief since the thirteenth century and was not only a small fortress town of strategic importance in the mountains of central Italy, but also a major center of Renaissance culture at the beginning of the sixteenth century. The ruling families were famous as soldiers earning a living as *condottieri*. Baldesar Castiglione, who lived in Urbino from 1504 to 1524, based *The Courtier* on the polite behavior of the court at Urbino.

At the time that Capo Ferro's work was published in Sienna, Urbino had lost most of its power. It seems logical that Capo Ferro, who was from Cagli which was part of the Duchy of Urbino, would submit the work to the Duke of Urbino and its famous library. The work is actually dedicated to the Duke's son, Prince Don Federigo (Ubaldo), who was only a baby at the time of the publication. With the Prince's assassination in 1624, the ducal line would cease with the death of the Duke in 1631. Urbino was made a Papal state and the library was moved to Rome in 1657 and became part of the Vatican library.

Italian Rapier Combat was published by Greenhill Books in London and Stackpole Books in Pennsylvania, \$39.95



ACTED AGGRESSION Developing a Course in Stage Combat

Kara Wooten's recently published *Acted Aggression: Developing a Course In Stage Combat* provides the framework on which to build a curriculum for developing a course in staged combat that is organized as a certification course in unarmed, quarterstaff and rapier and dagger techniques.

Wooten, who is a member of the Society of American Fight Directors (SAFD) and a certified fight instructor/director with Fight Directors Canada (FDC) for which she serves as the vice president of training, is the first female to publish a book on the techniques of staged combat. The book is basically a revision of Wooten's dissertation for her doctorate in Fight Direction for the Theatre from Texas Tech University

The course requires two semesters to allow time to focus on the acting and motivation behind each technique so the actor is able to translate the technique into characterization. By beginning with unarmed techniques, the student trains his body to tell a story by teaching how the body and the weapons (hands, knees, feet, elbows and so forth) work together. Later when the quarterstaff and swords are introduced, these weapons become an extension of the body.

While the author's stated objective is movement training and the exploration of various acting choices that can be incorporated into fight choreography, these appear minimally. The hundred-fifty pages basically provides the terminology and basic skills required to perform a stage fight convincingly in order to pass the skills test in two organizations. Each section ends with a detailed description of the required techniques necessary to achieve the basic certification, as well as, a choreographed fight.

Wooten begins by giving a basic overview of the common unarmed techniques beginning with stances and basic footwork. She continues to involve distance, targeting, fight speed, knaps, attacks and reactions, punches, kicks, hair pulls, strangles/choke holds, crotch hits, slaps, blocks, falls and rolls (the latter with illustrations) and throws and flips.

Quarterstaff is basically the same approach beginning with handling and warm-up drills, footwork and stances. She then explains the short-form and long-form guards and parry patterns with illustrations. Techniques and terminology are then covered such as lines of engagement, beat attack, binds, moulinet, feints, hanging parries, contact and non-contact strikes, slashing techniques, disarms and reactions. Drills are given that incorporated the certification move requirements.

Rapier and Dagger begins with a brief history and illustration of the sword parts with a description of the various parts of the blade and hilt. Wooten then informs the reader with stances, lunges, holding the rapier, lines of engagement, an illustration of the various guards and basic sword, as well as, dagger parry patterns. Attacks and targeting are presented along with sword techniques and fencing terminology. Again a series of drills are given for both rapier and dagger and single sword along with choreography for both.

The text began with a basic overview of the evolution of staged violence in the theatre and concludes with weapon care, which might have benefited with illustrations, showing the techniques described. Also included are illustrations of left-hand dominant short -form and long- form quarterstaff parries, as well as, left-handed sword and dagger parries. Contact information for various stage combat organizations around the world are also listed. While the text gives general information on the sources for stage combat weapons, no resource list is presented.

While Wooten cites a who's who in today's world of stage combat in her acknowledgements, her cited sources in the text are predominately William Hobbs and J. Allen Suddeth.

The book, was published by Millennia Publishing, Inc. in 2003, \$40 Canadian.



THE SWORDSMAN'S COMPANION A Modern Training Manual for Medieval Longsword

Guy Windsor presents a modern system for the longsword based on historical techniques, predominately by the Italians, Fiore dei Liberi and Filippo Vadi, which combines fighting with sword, wrestling and footwork. The

title of the work is basically a homage to Donald McBane's smallsword treatise of 1728, *The Expert Swordsman's Companion*. This is the first volume of a proposed series that covers basic and advanced long sword use.

Windsor, with Paul Macdonald, was a founder of Dawn Duellists Society (DDS) in Edinburgh in 1994. After moving to Finland in 2001, he opened the School of European Swordsmanship, Helsinki (SESH) where he teaches historical fencing full-time.

The *Swordsman's Companion* is a training manual containing basic theory and technical exercises necessary for a solid grounding in the use of the longsword. The book presents a history of the weapon, an overview of historical sources and how to maximize practice. Windsor assumes the reader has no training in any martial art and lays the groundwork for good, safe and historically accurate longsword free fencing.

Windsor provides well documented information on the longsword, the Italian masters, fencing principles and the necessary equipment before getting into the training. He begins with unarmed practice and then goes into armed practice with solo drills and then pair drills leading up to free play. His appendix includes warm-ups and a training schedule. The numerous photographs clearly clarify the techniques discussed in the text

The book, with its numerous footnotes, gives the reader a breadth of newly discovered contemporary information on historical facts which makes it a valuable resource. One of Windsor's reasons for writing the book was to counter some of the misinterpretations on historical swordplay that have been generated over the years.

Published by Chivalry Bookshelf
(<http://www.chivalrybookshelf.com>), \$21.95.



Advertised and Regional Workshops

Philadelphia Stage Combat Workshop

November 6 & 7, 2004

SAFD & The University of the Arts, Philadelphia, PA
(215) 888-4172 www.philascw.org

The Tenth Annual Winter Wonderland Workshop

February 4 - 6, 2005

Presented at Columbia College, Chicago, IL
(708) 466-7055 www.winterwonderlandworkshop.com

International Stunt School

June 6 - 25, 2005

August 22 - September 10, 2005

United Stuntmen's Association, Everett, WA
(425) 290-9957 www.stuntschool.com

Summer Session in Stage Combat

June 20 - July 8, 2005

SAFD & North Carolina School of the Arts, Winston-Salem, NC
(336) 734-2834 www.safd.org/NSCW/NCSA/NSCW_NCSA.html

National Stage Combat Workshop Advanced Actor Combatant Workshop

July 11 - 29, 2005

SAFD & University of Nevada, Las Vegas, NV
(702) 895-3662 www.safd.org

National Fight Directors Workshop Actor Ensemble Workshop Action Film Workshop

July 31 - August 20, 2005

SAFD & North Carolina School of the Arts, Winston-Salem, NC
www.safd.org

For more information, e-mail: NYFGTDIRCTR@aol.com

Summer Sling IX

August 18 - 21, 2005

Fights4, New York, NY
(718) 788-4957 www.safd.org

PUT TO THE TEST

Results of the SAFD's Skills Proficiency Tests

Date	Location
Instructor	Adjudicator
Person Tested	Weapons Proficiency
RD Rapier & Dagger	UA Unarmed
QS Quarterstaff	SS Smallsword
BS Broadsword	S&S Sword & Shield
KN Knife	SiS Single Sword
Renewal	Renewal of Actor/Combatant Status
EAE	Examiner's Award for Excellence

January 2004

January 24 **DePauw University**
Andrew Hayes **Brian Byrnes**
 Jim Stark SiS SS BS QS S&S KN

January 30 **Atlanta Stage Combat Studio**
Scot Mann **Chuck Coyl**
 Christopher Ensweiler R&D UA QS
 Marcus Durham R&D UA QS

February 2004

February 8 **Bard Alley Studio**
K Jenny Jones **Drew Fracher**
 Henry Layton KN
 K.C. Stage KN

February 19 **Los Angeles, CA**
Payson Burt **Drew Fracher**
 Robert Hamilton R&D(EAE) KN (EAE)

February 26 **Carnegie Mellon University**
Richard Raether **Drew Fracher**
 Claudia Duran UA
 Gaius Charles UA
 Andrew Russell UA
 Ashley Sherman UA
 Nick Guidry UA
 Kylee Rousselot UA
 Michael Dunay UA
 Chris Henry UA
 Aimee DeShaynes UA
 Adrienne Wells UA
 Kat Mandeville UA
 Susan Heyward UA
 Jenny Gamell UA (EAE)
 Kate Marilley UA (EAE)
 Erin Bridges SiS
 Alex Cendese SiS
 Ian Christiansen SiS
 Seth Fisher SiS
 Tessa Klein SiS
 Jyoti Mittal SiS
 Tyler Poelle SiS
 Aaron Staton SiS
 Ryan Young SiS
 Van Hansis SiS
 Casey Spindler SiS
 Polly Harrison SiS
 Mark Silverberg SiS

February 28 **Denver Center Theatre Academy**
Geoffrey Kent **Chuck Coyl**
 Amanda Ennis UA
 Ambrose Ferber SiS
 Andrea Robertson SiS KN
 Benaiah Anderson KN
 Chris Reid R&D UA
 Dane Torbenson R&D UA
 Dave Blumenstock SiS
 David Pesta SiS (EAE)
 Erin Ramsey SiS BS S&S

Jason McPherson SiS
 Jason Short SiS (EAE)
 Jennifer Zukowski UA
 Kat Michels SiS S&S
 Leigh Selting R&D UA
 Melissa Ruchong SiS BS
 T. David Rutherford SiS
 Terry Kroenung SiS
 Brett Wilmott SiS

March 2004

March 8 **North Carolina School of the Arts**
Dale Girard **Chuck Coyl**
 Zoe Grobart UA KN
 Sarah Viccellio UA KN
 Karri Krause UA KN
 Devin Preston UA KN
 William Connell UA KN
 Diana Perez UA KN
 Ian Merrigan KN
 Neal Bledsoe UA KN
 Thomas Miller UA KN
 Austin Herzing UA KN
 Demetri Saites UA KN
 Sarah Haught UA KN
 Jesse Patch UA KN
 Trevor Vaughn UA (EAE) KN (EAE)
 Nick Dothee UA KN
 Quincy Dunn-Baker UA (EAE) KN (EAE)
 Lance Kramer UA KN
 Jordan Miller UA (EAE) BS (EAE) QS (EAE)
 Andrew Honeycutt QS (EAE)
 Evan Lubeck BS (EAE) QS (EAE)
 Gaye Taylor Upchurch UA KN
 Dale Girard UA (EAE) BS (EAE)

March 16 **Theatre School at DePaul University**
Nicholas Sandys **Chuck Coyl**
 Yasmin Abidi R&D UA QS
 Jessica Campbell R&D UA QS
 Jason Fleitz R&D UA QS
 Jonathan Beran R&D UA QS
 Cobey Mandarino R&D UA QS
 Dan Muck R&D UA QS
 Seth Unger R&D UA QS

March 20 **Seattle, WA**
Geoffrey Alm **Chuck Coyl**
 Danielle Reierson SS
 Alyssa Tomoff SS
 Amber Rack SS
 Susan Alotrico SS
 Gordon Carpenter SS

March 20 **Seattle, WA**
Chuck Coyl **Dale Girard**
 Geoffrey Alm KN
 Deb Fialkow KN

March 21 **Seattle, WA**
Robert Macdougall **Chuck Coyl**
 Rob Jones KN
 Danielle Reierson KN
 Adam Larmer KN
 Heidi Wolf KN
 Robert Borwick KN (EAE)
 Evan Whitfield KN (EAE)
 Paul Ray KN

March 28 **Woman's Club of Hollywood**
Mike Mahaffey **David Woolley**
 Jill Matarelli R&D SiS SS UA BS QS S&S KN

SiS Lacy Altwine R&D SiS SS UA BS QS S&S KN

April 2004

April 1 **Brandeis University**
Robert Walsh **David Leong**
 Robert Antonelli UA (EAE)
 Timothy Espinoza SiS UA QS (EAE)
 Cameron Gordon UA (EAE)
 Jessica Hansen SiS UA QS
 Angie Jepson SiS UA (EAE) QS (EAE)
 Abigail Killeen SiS UA QS
 Diomedes Koufteros SiS UA QS
 Kevin Landis SiS UA QS
 Cristina Miles SiS UA QS
 Samuel Smith SiS UA (EAE) QS (EAE)
 Shanessa Sweeney SiS UA QS (EAE)
 Willie Teacher SiS UA (EAE) QS

April 2 **American Reperatory Theatre**
Robert Walsh **David Leong**
 Kaolan Bass UA
 Eliza Bell UA
 Jonathan Broke UA
 Francesca Carlin UA
 John "Tug" Coker UA
 Jodi Dick UA
 Alexandra Fulton UA
 Tor Hillhouse UA
 David Mawhinney UA
 Patrick McCaffrey UA
 Amelia Nickles UA
 Laura Nordin UA
 William Peebles UA
 Adam Pena UA
 Theresa Plecton UA
 Nicole Shalhoub UA
 Molly Ward UA
 Kathryn Weil UA

April 4 **The Actor's Gymnasium**
Angela Bonacasa **Richard Ryan**
 Tom Carr R&D UA
 Eric Frederickson R&D UA QS
 Andrew Scott R&D
 Peter Talbot SS QS
 MattHawkins R&D QS
 Sara Hoyer R&D QS
 David Kelch R&D
 Brenda Kelly R&D SS UA
 Gregory Larson R&D SS UA
 Anne Foldeak R&D UA KN
 Jessica Hester QS KN
 Mara Wolverton R&D
 Kyle Jones R&D UA
 Andey Merrill R&D SS QS
 Brigitte Lehmkuhl R&D
 Noah Wasserman R&D
 Robert Gerovski R&D
 Kenneth Nichols R&D
 Katie Carey Govier R&D
 Bernadine Ann Tippit R&D
 Amy Harmon R&D
 Rachel Stubbs R&D UA
 Dan Marco UA
 Derek Jarvis UA
 Nicholas Ward UA
 Sean Ryan UA
 Anne Korajczyk UA
 Chris Julun UA

Continued on next page

April 10 The Stage Combat Workshop at LA Tech

Mike Mahaffey Drew Fracher
Gary Minyard R&D

April 13 Marymount-Fordham

London Dramatic Academy
Chuck Coyl Richard Ryan

Megan McCarthy SS
Amanda Michaels SS
Taryn Flanagan SS
Paola Grande SS
Chrysandra Halstead SS
Rachel Heffner SS
Elizabeth Klausner SS
Michelle Marucci SS
Laura-Lynn Rotatori SS
David Weinheimer SS
Elizabeth Wilson SS (EAE)
Molly Coogan SS
Patrick Curran SS
Nicole Bobely SS
Alix Liiv SS
Patrick McAndrew SS
Jonathan Mills SS
Brienne Moncrief SS (EAE)
Rebecca Overholt SS
Charlene Smith SS
Rosemary Szczesniak SS
Renae Toney SS
Stephanie King SS

April 16 The Shakespeare Theatre

Brad Waller Erik Fredricksen

Susan Angelo R&D SiS UA QS KN
James Beaman R&D SiS UA BS QS KN (EAE-All)
Kent Burnham R&D SiS UA BS QS KN
Teresa Castracane R&D SiS UA BS QS KN
Susan Felder R&D SiS UA QS KN
Dan Harray R&D SiS UA BS QS KN (EAE-All)
Robert Leembruggen R&D SiS UA QS KN
Ian Lockhart R&D SiS UA BS QS KN
Kip Pierson R&D SiS UA BS QS KN
Audra Polk R&D SiS UA BS QS KN
Kate Riley R&D SiS UA QS KN
Caroline Strong R&D SiS UA BS QS KN (EAE-All)
Gregory Stuart R&D SiS UA BS QS KN
Jjana Valentiner R&D SiS UA BS QS KN
Gail Winar R&D SiS UA QS KN

April 16 Arcadia University

Ian Rose J. Allen Suddeth

Matt Mainhart KN (EAE)
Brett Cassidy KN (EAE)
Kathryn Downey SiS UA
Bridgit Nemeth UA
Summer Steele UA
Karl Babij R&D UA
Marguerita Ruiz UA QS
Mark Binder R&D SS BS (EAE) KN
Ross Dillman UA QS
Owen Timony R&D (EAE) SS (EAE) BS (EAE) KN

April 24 The American Musical

and Dramatic Academy-LA

Payson Burt Brian Byrnes

Brad "Squeaks" Bashford UA
Africa Boyd R&D
Elizabeth Clarke R&D UA
Jakub Barberg R&D UA
Jeff Lewis R&D (EAE) UA
Torie Gregor UA
Maria Moniz R&D UA
Hope Wells UA
Megan Wingert R&D UA
Sundeep Mangat R&D UA

April 24 University of Arizona

Brent Gibbs Drew Fracher

David Olsen R&D UA QS
Noah Todd R&D UA QS
Mike Pauley R&D UA QS

Nat Cassidy R&D UA QS
Diana Miranda R&D (EAE) UA (EAE) QS
Katherine Mann R&D (EAE) UA (EAE) QS
Luke Bishop R&D UA QS
Christine Woods R&D UA QS
Lezlee Benninger R&D UA QS
Marisa Kennedy R&D UA
Alec Fairy R&D QS
Ben Crawford QS
Gabe Fonseca R&D (EAE) QS
Jonathan Furedy R&D (EAE) QS
Brian McGrath R&D UA
Matthew Bernstein R&D UA
Matt Walley UA (EAE)
James Hesla UA (EAE)

April 26 The Lee Strasberg Institute/NY

J. Allen Suddeth Chuck Coyl

Megan Glemboski UA
Kelli Miro UA
Lauren Anastasi UA
Neimah Djourarabchi UA
Vincenzo Sidoti UA
Heather Thompson UA
Randi Oerlemans UA
Monica Bojko UA
Toni Attardo UA
Vanessa Wiater UA
Shannon Murphy UA
Edwin Hansen-Nelson UA

May 2004**May 1 Cornish College of the Arts**

Geoffrey Alm, Robert Macdougall David Boushey

Andrew Hock R&D UA BS
Chris Maslen R&D UA BS
Caitlin Gilman R&D UA BS
Hilary Lynn R&D UA BS
Ryan Mitchell R&D UA BS
Diane Ozanich R&D UA BS
Jewel Tweten R&D UA BS
Dorothy Lemoult R&D UA BS
Hugh Berry R&D UA BS
Opal Peachey R&D UA BS
Elizabeth Tanner R&D UA BS
Terri Weagant R&D UA BS
William Williams R&D UA BS
Joy Medieros R&D UA BS
John Sessler BS
Danielle Suder BS
Cassandra Sanders R&D
Lanise Shelley R&D

May 1 Western Illinois University

DC Wright Brian Byrnes

Russ Brown BS (EAE)
Clarissa Yearman UA BS
Mike Speck UA
Justin McCombs UA BS
Michael Flood BS
Nathanael Lock UA BS
Tony Walker BS
Benjamin Haile UA
Donna McNider UA
Sara Goff UA BS
Jeff Sanders UA BS
Chris Rohde BS

May 2 University of Miami, FL

Bruce Lecure Richard Raether

Chris Harbur R&D UA
Korken Iskenderian R&D UA
Doug Ghizzoni R&D UA
Lindsey Gentile R&D UA
Ryan Powers R&D UA
Jessica Nash R&D UA
Michael Howard R&D UA
Christy Sabina R&D UA
Nickalaus Koziura R&D UA
Anton Briones R&D UA

May 2 Ithaca College, London Centre

Bret Yount Richard Ryan

Danny Gardner UA
Joseph Reid UA
Alex Boras UA
Brent Mark UA
Georgie Smith UA
Alison Bacewicz UA
Daniel Petrotta UA
Sara DeLaney UA
Michael Jacobs UA
Jeremy Pickard UA
Andrew Grosshandler UA

May 3 Illinois State University

Paul Dennhardt Richard Raether

Christine Cummings SS
Victoria Martini SS
Yetide Badaki SS
Corrie Danieleley SS
Courtney Rioux SS
Sara Smith SS
Greg McGrath SS
Andrew Hanback SS
Steve Scalabrino SS
Tom Quinn SS

May 4 Philadelphia, PA

Robert Westley Brian Byrnes

Kate Mangan R&D
Shannon Quinones R&D

May 5 University of Illinois at Champaign/Urbana

Robin McFarquhar David Woolley

Michael Brusasco R&D SS UA (EAE)
Victoria Cacciopoli R&D SS UA
Cristina Dideriksen R&D SS UA
Holly Fain R&D SS UA
Leslie Handleman R&D SS UA
Jason Maddy R&D SS UA (EAE-All)
Eric Parks R&D SS UA (EAE)
Jesse Raynes R&D SS UA (EAE-All)
Marie Walker R&D SS UA

May 5 University of the Arts

Charles Conwell David Boushey

Danielle Adams UA KN
Brandon d'Augustine R&D UA BS
Kyle Fennie R&D UA BS
Kara Gavigan R&D UA KN
Emily Gibson R&D UA BS KN
Chris Latzke R&D UA BS
Bryan Mergenthaler R&D SS UA BS
Seth Schwartz R&D UA BS
Hollis Sherman-Pepe R&D UA KN
Marcus Stewart R&D UA BS
Ashley Strand R&D UA BS
Jeffrey Ziegler R&D UA BS
Daniel Mellitz SiS SS QS S&S
Corey Phillips SiS SS QS S&S
Stephanie Okupniak R&D SS UA BS

May 5 Temple University

John Bellomo Brian Byrnes

Sara Radcliffe UA
David Demato UA
Cosino De Rita UA
Sangeeta Koets UA
Shannon Quinones UA
Kate Mangan UA
Matthew Lorenz UA
Samantha Waronker UA
Dave Stahl UA
Jenny Dempster UA
Michael Miller UA
Chancellor Dean UA (EAE)
Corey Sorenson UA (EAE)
Morgan Cox UA
Arnica Skulstad-Brown UA
Jame Ijames UA
Kunal Nayyer UA

May 6	University of Alabama	Brad King	R&D	May 11	Northern Kentucky University
Tiza Garland	Chuck Coyl	Matthew Rini	QS (EAE)	Regina Cerimele-Mechley	Drew Fracher
Kristen Anderson	R&D UA	Jak Peters	R&D	Melissa Bennett	R&D KN
Thomas Azar	R&D UA	Campbell Bridges	QS	Jonathan Baca	UA
Taylor Curtis	R&D UA	Michael Rudez	UA	Maria Henriksen	R&D UA BS KN
Alicia Grubb	R&D UA	Craig Jorczak	UA	Alison McGuken	R&D UA (EAE)
Lauren Hauser	R&D UA	Brian Patrick Leahy	R&D	Josh Pikar	R&D UA KN
Jessica Hodgens	R&D UA	Justin Fair	R&D	Phillip Webster II	UA
Sonequa Martin	R&D UA			Karl Bolinger	UA
Blake McCorvey	R&D UA	May 10	Niagara University	Carly Fry	R&D UA KN
Sara Catherine Thomason	R&D UA	Steven Vaughan	J. Allen Suddeth	Mike Kasten	UA KN
Rachel Wesley	R&D UA	Heather Adair	R&D UA (EAE) QS	Karie Miller	R&D UA
Robbie Gay	SiS SS UA	Adam Bruno	R&D UA QS	Jeremy Sartin	R&D UA
Cliff Williams	SiS SS UA	Dan Coyle	R&D UA QS	Mike Bodkin	UA
		Dan Del Gaudio	R&D (EAE) UA (EAE) QS	Robert DeHoff	BS
		Adriano Gatto	UA		
May 7	Roosevelt University	Rebecca Houlihan	R&D UA QS	May 16	Noble Blades/Washington D.C.
Angela Bonacasa, Chuck Coyl	Richard Ryan	Kahil Jackson	R&D UA QS	Michael Johnson	Richard Raether
Tony Lewis	SiS UA	Amanda Kandefer	R&D UA QS	Kevin Robertson	R&D UA BS KN
Chip Davis	SiS UA	Liz Lesinski	R&D UA QS	Adam Konowe	R&D UA BS
Robert Oakes	SiS	Emily Miaczynski	R&D UA QS	Joyce Peifer	R&D UA BS
Adam Grant	SiS	Mikhael Pilato	R&D (EAE) UA QS (EAE)	Al Myska	R&D UA BS
Keith Compton	SiS	Greg Prigel	R&D UA (EAE) QS (EAE)	Stefan Sittig	UA
Robert Colpitts	SiS	Danni Quider	R&D UA QS		
Jessica Dunne	SiS	Nick Santasier	R&D UA QS		
Kelly McLaughlin	SiS UA	Brandon Sierra	R&D UA QS	May 17	North Carolina School of the Arts
Zachary Ford	SiS UA (EAE)	Zak Ward	R&D (EAE) UA QS	Dale Girard	Chuck Coyl
Dave Wendelberger	SiS	Joe Wiens	R&D UA QS	Freddie Bennett	UA BS KN
Leslie de la O	SiS	Laura Zachary	R&D UA QS	Chance Carroll	UA QS (EAE) KN
Clayton Stamper	SiS			Joseph Isenberg	UA KN
Matt Foss	UA	May 10	SUNY-Fredonia	Alana Williams	UA BS KN
Charles McGrath	UA	Edward Sharon	J. Allen Suddeth	Jefferson Isleib	UA KN
Andrew Park	UA	Brett Vanderbrook	R&D	Timothy Keifer	UA BS QS KN
Emily O'Neill	UA	Mark Swiech	R&D	Jon Manzke	UA KN
Robert Hankins	UA	Pamela Carden	R&D	Cedric Mays	UA QS (EAE) KN
Stephanie Felmly	UA	Adam Owens	R&D UA	Linda McBride	UA KN
Richard Bryant	UA	Charlotte Dunn	R&D UA	Andrew Pastides	UA KN
Jeffrey Diebold	UA	Derek Wong	R&D UA	Adrian Wyatt	UA KN
Jed Alexander	UA	Katie Ponsiek	UA	Karen Young	UA KN
Gay Glenn	UA	B.J. Erdmann	UA		
Benjamin Dicke	UA	Anne McAlexander	UA	May 17	University of Washington
Jesse Grotholson	UA	Katherine Varno	UA	Geoffrey Alm	David Boushey
Christopher Lamberth	UA	Joshua Gregory	UA	April Wolfe	R&D UA BS
Christopher LaBove	UA	Marc de la Concha	UA	Lee Fitzpatrick	R&D UA BS
Scott Stangland	UA	Lauren Basler	UA	Brandon Petty	R&D UA BS
Morgan Manasa	UA	Brendon Schaefer	UA	Sam Tsubota	R&D UA BS
Kathryn Herrera	UA			Chance Mullen	R&D UA BS
Leah Urzendowski	UA	May 10	Virginia Commonwealth University	Connell Brown Jr.	R&D UA BS (EAE-All)
Phil Higgins	UA	Aaron Anderson	David Leong	Georgia Southern	R&D UA BS
Scot Carlson	UA	Stacey Jowett	R&D SiS	Brian Gillespie	R&D UA BS
Michele Klein	UA (EAE)	Michael Persinger	SiS	Samantha Rund	R&D UA BS
Devon Fanning	UA	Francesca Delutis	SiS	Lada Vishtak	R&D UA BS
Bianca Baylor	UA (EAE)	Eric Driggers	R&D SiS UA		
		Jeannie Giannone	SiS UA	May 17	Cornish College of the Arts
May 8	Kutztown University	Michael Blovin	R&D	Robert Macdougall	David Boushey
James Brown	Richard Raether	Brad Beaton	SiS	Emily Chisholm	R&D UA BS
Adam Kissinger	R&D UA QS	Clifton Duncan	SiS	Aaron Kidenour	R&D UA BS
Michael Kneeream	R&D UA QS				
Jared Stern	R&D UA QS	May 11	University of Houston	May 18	North Carolina School of the Arts
Jennifer Kurtz	UA	Brian Byrnes	Richard Ryan	Dale Girard	Chuck Coyl
Jennifer Newby	UA	Ann Harlan	SiS UA QS	Eryn Cooper-Smith	UA KN
Patrick O'Neil	R&D	Keith Caldwell	SiS UA QS	Michael Anderson	UA BS KN
Tom Birch	R&D	Shaka Smith	SiS UA QS	Shanna Beauchamp	UA BS KN
		Eric Willbourn	SiS UA QS	Noah Silverstein	UA KN
May 9	New York University	Kate Semmelrogge	SiS UA QS	Paul Riley	UA BS KN (EAE)
J. David Brimmer	Richard Ryan	Lourdes Tapia	SiS UA QS	Jeff Burroughs	UA BS KN (EAE)
Vanessa Villegas	UA	Lien Huang	SiS UA	Issac Klein	UA BS QS
Jennifer Weingarten	UA	John Smetak	SiS UA QS	Kirstin Elrod	KN
Melissa Meli	R&D QS	Pablo Bracho	SiS UA QS	Cooper D'Ambrose	UA BS KN (EAE)
Lelia Shearer	R&D QS	Michael Steinbach	UA	Andy Strong	UA KN (EAE)
Derya Derman	R&D QS	Will Burgin	UA	Holly Pierson	UA KN (EAE)
Elizabeth Gutman	UA	Brian Hamlin	SiS QS (EAE)	Renaldy Smith	UA KN (EAE)
Andrew Sobey	UA	Audra Resendez	SiS UA QS (EAE)	Liz Wirth	UA KN (EAE)
Pearce Larson	R&D	Martin Estridge	SiS UA QS	Abraham Cruz	UA KN (EAE)
Corey Robert Brandeis Pierno	R&D QS (EAE)	Kelly Harkins	SiS UA QS		
Paul Lange	R&D QS	Alex Cisne	SiS UA QS (EAE)	May 21	Video
Ryan Bartruff	R&D QS	P.Kalob Martinez	SiS UA QS (EAE)	Paul Steger	Brian Byrnes
Daniel Franks	UA	Jess Akin IV	SiS UA	Edelyn Parker	SiS QS
Andrew Elliott	UA	Benjamin Caldwell	SiS UA QS	Tamara Stender	SiS QS
Dana Schechtman	R&D QS	Leraldo Anzaldua	SiS	Cameron Diskin	SiS QS
Adam Souza	R&D			Ian Borden	SiS QS
Alexandra Henrikson	UA			Jennifer Slechta	SiS QS
Teresa Reilly	UA				

Zach Santoro	SIS QS	Noah Wasserman	KN	Benjamin Haile	R&D BS QS (EAE)
Stephanie Boyle	SiS QS	Andrew Scott	KN	Nicholas Harrison	SS KN
Lauren Birriel	SIS QS	Wesley Clark	KN	Brett Ihler	R&D (EAE) UA QS (EAE)
David Mayernik	SiS QS	Kyle Jones	KN	Jonathan Jolly	SiS KN
Ryland Blackinton	SIS QS	Robert Gerovski	KN	Cindy Kawasaki	R&D UA QS
Maritte Go	SiS	David Kelch	KN	Bret Koppin	R&D SiS UA BS QS S&S
Tiffany Baker	SiS			Timothy Makin	SiS UA
Ricardo Terrell	SiS QS			Colin McCann	R&D UA QS
		June 16	[they fight]	Brandon McConnell	R&D (EAE) UA QS
May 21	Louisiana Tech University	Donald Preston	Chuck Coyl	Christina Northrup	R&D UA QS KN
Mark Guinn	Brian Byrnes	Peter Buckholtz	R&D UA BS QS	Ryan Pennington	BS QS S&S
Caleb Baumgardner	UA	Mary Karcz	R&D BS	Paul Pharris	QS KN
Richard Bennet	UA BS QS	Greg Marchano	R&D UA BS	David Reed	R&D QS S&S
Cathy Brehaut	R&D UA	Chris Olsen	R&D UA BS	Reece Roark	R&D (EAE) UA QS (EAE)
Giselle Chatelain	SiS UA	Tracy Roorda	R&D UA BS QS	K.C. Stage	SiS SS UA QS S&S
Andrei Constantinescu	SiS UA BS	David Schneider	R&D UA BS	Lucas Walker	R&D UA QS
Adrien Dion	SiS UA	Derek "Duck" Washington	R&D UA BS	Cliff Williams	QS KN
Allison Gilbert	R&D SiS UA BS QS	Terry Wessling	R&D BS	Ashley Wright	SiS SS QS S&S
Nicholas Harrison	QS	Zach Held	UA QS S&S	Stephen Williams	R&D UA QS
Jonathan Jolly	R&D UA QS	Luis Rosa	R&D UA S&S		
Mary Leviner	SiS UA			July 17	Sacramento Shakespeare Festival
Emily Loeffler	R&D UA BS QS S&S	June 20	Freehold Theatre Lab	Dexter Fidler	Richard Raether
Timothy Makin	R&D	Geoffrey Alm	David Boushey	Jes Gonzales	R&D
Elisabeth Page	SiS UA	Alyssa Tomoff	R&D UA BS	Ed Gyles	R&D
Jessica Phillips	SiS UA BS	Dean Wilson	R&D UA BS	David Harris	R&D
Joshua Phillips	SiS UA BS	Danielle Reierson	R&D UA BS	Orlana Klip	R&D
David Reed	SiS UA BS	Casey Brown	R&D UA BS	Trina Palmer	R&D
Roark Reece	SiS UA BS	Kirsten Helseth	R&D UA BS		
Rachael Shaw	R&D UA BS QS S&S	Rebecca Foster	R&D UA BS	July 23	National Stage Combat Workshops-NCSA
Paul Pharris	R&D UA	Wolfgang LaGrange	R&D UA BS	Angela Bonacasa,	J. Allen Suddeth
Casey Franklin	QS	David Jon Wilson	R&D UA BS	Michael Johnson,	Dale Girard
		Ann Van Alt	R&D UA BS	Ted Sharon,	Richard Raether
		Brooks Farr	R&D UA BS	Robert Westley	
May 22	Denver Center Theatre Academy	June 23	Celebration Barn Theater	Mike Brafford	SiS BS
Geoffrey Kent	Dale Girard	Mark Olsen	J. Allen Suddeth	Justine Turner	R&D (EAE) SS (EAE) BS KN
Amanda Ennis	KN	Jessica Morgan	UA	Cara Rawlings	SiS QS KN
Ambrose Ferber	UA S&S KN	T. Fulton Burns	UA	Tim Eulich	R&D SiS (EAE-All)
Jeff Bull	UA KN	Rachel Stubbs	UA	Lee Soroko	SS QS
Pat Casey	KN			Angela Bonacasa	SiS (EAE)
Tomoko Komura	KN	June 29	Highland Heights, KY		
Matt Korda	KN	Regina Cerimele-Mechley	Chuck Coyl	July 24	Alabama Shakespeare Festival
Gia Mora	KN	Jason Speicher	R&D	Tiza Garland	David Leong
Melissa Ruchong	S&S KN	Shelley Little	R&D SS UA	James Denvil	R&D UA BS
Erin Ramsey	KN	Robert Dreyer II	SS	Larnelle Foster	BS
Jason McPherson	KN	Peter Moore	UA BS	Jonathan Gibson	R&D UA BS
T. David Rutherford	KN	Aaron Einhorn	KN	Lauren Hender	R&D
Brett Wilmott	KN	Chad Weddle	SS BS KN	Chris Qualls	R&D BS
		Joe Sofranko	SS BS	Christian Rummel	R&D UA BS
May 27	Columbia College-Chicago	David Jenike	SS BS QS	Shannon Warrick	R&D UA
David Woolley	Chuck Coyl	Josh Pikar	SS BS QS		
Christine Cascino	R&D UA BS	Robert DeHoff	SS	July 30	National Stage Combat Workshops-UNLV
Adam Key	R&D UA BS	Maria Henriksen	SS QS	Brian Byrnes,	David Boushey
Marc Tizura	UA BS	Jane Cheng	R&D UA BS	Chuck Coyl,	Brian Byrnes
Tracy Collett	SiS UA BS QS	Kevin Macku	R&D UA QS	Erik Fredricksen	Chuck Coyl
Matthew Scaro	R&D UA BS	Tom Shelley	R&D UA BS QS KN	Renewals: J. Cheatham,	Erik Fredricksen
Evan Sierminski	R&D UA BS	Ali McGucken	SS BS KN	J. Bellomo, R. Macdougall,	Richard Ryan
Katherine "Kat" Spaulding	UA BS	Jonathan Baca	R&D SS BS QS KN	D. Preston, M. Mahaffey	David Woolley
Bethany Williams	R&D SiS SS UA BS QS	Rachel Mock	UA QS	Ryan Bechard	R&D UA BS (EAE-All)
Meghan Principe	R&D UA BS	Melissa Bennett	SS UA BS QS	Stephen Carignan	R&D UA BS
Travis Sims	R&D UA BS	Emily Franklin	UA BS QS KN	Pat Casey	UA BS
Kinsey Klug	R&D SS UA BS	Bryan Schmidt	R&D UA	Tom Conroy	R&D UA BS
Christopher Sanderson	R&D SS UA BS	Karen Vanover	R&D UA QS	Kevin Desrosiers	UA BS
Shaun Harris	R&D BS	Wilfreid Meybohm	SS BS KN	Kathleen Donahoe	R&D UA BS
Emily Carvey	SiS SS UA BS QS	Elizabeth Ritchie	SS BS KN	Carlos Duarte	R&D UA BS
Christian Litke	SiS UA (EAE) QS (EAE)	Mike Kasten	R&D SS BS QS KN	Jeremy Earl	R&D UA BS
Loren Walton	SiS QS	Sarah Moravec	R&D UA BS QS	Brian Evans	R&D UA BS
Margaret McGee	SiS (EAE) QS			Nick Fondulis	UA BS
Octavio Lara	SiS (EAE) QS	July 2004		Paul Fox	R&D UA BS
Justine Turner	SiS (EAE) QS	July 16	Blue Jacket-Xenia, OH	Adam Fristoe	R&D UA (EAE) BS
Peter Talbot	SiS QS	Mark Guinn	Richard Ryan	Kelvin Hamilton	R&D UA BS
David Yondorf	SiS UA QS (EAE-All)	Brandon Ashcraft	R&D SiS UA QS KN	Kate Hibbard	R&D UA BS
		Joe Baker	SS (EAE) QS (EAE) KN	Taylor Hohman	R&D UA BS
June 2004		Jesse Coleman	R&D UA QS	Chase Kimball	R&D UA BS
June 13	The Actor's Gymnasium	Andrei Constantinescu	SiS QS	Miranda Knutson	UA BS
Angela Bonacasa	Chuck Coyl	Josiah Correll	R&D SiS SS	Greg LoProto	R&D UA BS
Jessica Dunne	KN (EAE)	James Cronin	R&D UA QS	Tonya Lynn	R&D UA BS (EAE)
Gregory Larson	KN (EAE)	Rainbow Dickerson	R&D (EAE) UA QS	Ryan McIntire	UA BS
Rachel Stubbs	KN	Casey Franklin	SiS KN	Kelly Mizell	R&D UA BS (EAE-All)
Derek Jarvis	KN	Andrea Graves	R&D UA QS	Hunter Moyer	R&D UA BS
Bill Benton	QS KN	Nicholas Griffith	SiS QS	Brian Ogden	R&D UA BS
Mara Wolverton	QS KN	Jake Guinn	SiS SS (EAE) KN (EAE)	Stefano Paparo	R&D UA (EAE) BS
Andy Merrill	KN			Matthew Pearsall	R&D UA BS

Will Perkins R&D UA BS
 Kirk Pierron R&D UA (EAE) BS
 Brian Plocharczyk R&D UA BS (EAE-All)
 Kenneth Richstad R&D UA BS
 Michael Ringler R&D UA (EAE) BS
 Heather Robb R&D UA BS
 Kate Rogal R&D UA BS
 Adam Rutledge R&D UA BS
 Barbara Seifert R&D UA BS
 Monique Stines UA
 Miguel Suarez UA
 Chad Sullivan R&D UA BS
 Jakob Tice R&D UA BS
 Tori Tschopp R&D UA BS
 Bryant Turnage R&D UA BS
 Alexis Wolfe R&D UA BS
 Monalisa Arias R&D SiS (EAE) SS UA QS S&S
 Colby Baker R&D SiS (EAE) SS (EAE) BS S&S
 John Coleman R&D SiS SS UA BS QS S&S KN
 Adam Critchlow SiS (EAE) SS UA BS S&S (EAE)
 Sean Levine R&D SiS SS UA BS QS S&S KN
 Gregg Lloyd R&D SiS SS UA BS S&S
 Maggie Macdonald R&D SiS (EAE) SS UA BS S&S (EAE)
 Wilfried Meybohm R&D SiS SS UA BS QS S&S KN
 Shannon Quinones R&D SiS SS UA BS QS S&S KN
 Jarrod Quon SiS SS S&S
 Elizabeth Ritchie R&D SiS SS UA BS QS S&S KN
 Rachel Stubbs R&D SiS (EAE) SS UA BS S&S KN
 Jason Tipsworth R&D SiS SS UA BS S&S
 Lacy Altwine R&D SiS (EAE) SS BS S&S
 T. Fulton Burns R&D SiS (EAE) SS BS S&S
 John Lynch R&D SS (EAE) UA BS QS S&S
 Jordan Miller R&D SiS SS UA BS S&S KN
 Christi Waldon R&D SiS SS UA BS S&S
 Heidi Wolf R&D SS BS S&S

Noah Jones
 Rick Blunt
 Dennis Henry
 Margaret Southerington
 Jennifer Hall
 Mark Manette
 Paul Southerington
 Brandon Ketchum

August 2004

August 21
Ian Rose
 Rachel Williams
 Jill Lawrence

SiS Ross Dillman
 SiS Sarah Fornace
 SiS Karl Babij
 SiS Marguerita Ruiz
 SiS
 SiS
 SiS
 SiS

August 24
Angela Bonacasa, Mike Mahaffey, Robert Westley

Lacy Altwine
 Angela Bonacasa
 Mike Mahaffey
 Robert Westley

R&D
 SiS UA QS
 QS
 R&D

Chicago, IL
Chuck Coyl

UA
 R&D UA KN
 R&D SiS UA KN
 R&D SiS UA

Arcadia University
J. Allen Suddeth

QS
 QS



Certified Teacher Angela Bonacasa demonstrates a knife disarm on Jessica Dunne for a class at Roosevelt University in Chicago. Photograph by Elizabeth Styles.

July 31
Drew Fracher
 Laura Pyle
 Lesley Larsen

Mary Baldwin College
Joseph Martinez
 SiS
 SiS

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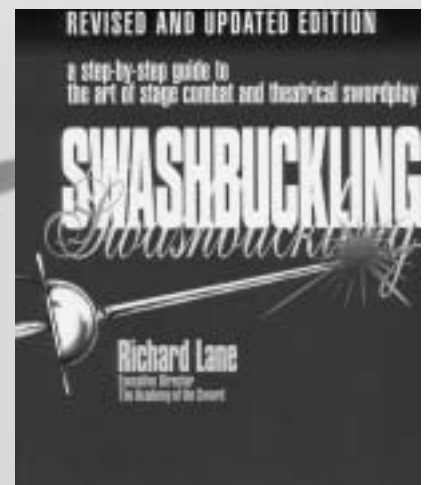
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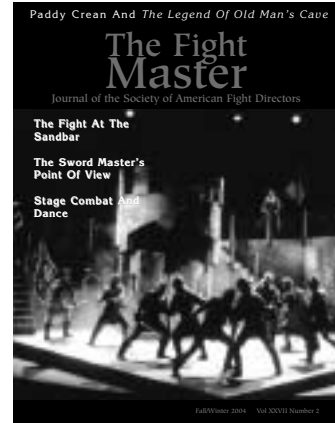
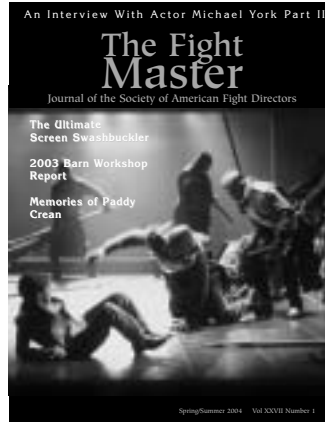
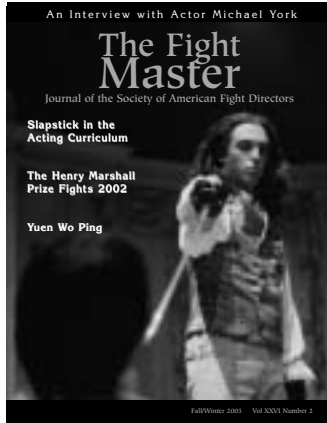
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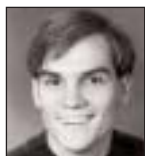
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The Fight Master

is a publication of

The Society of American Fight Directors



The Society of American Fight Directors is a not for profit organization dedicated to promoting safety and fostering excellence in the art of directing stage combat/theatrical violence. The SAFD is committed to providing the highest level of service to the field through initiating and maintaining guidelines for standards of quality, providing education and training, promoting scholarly research and encouraging communication and collaboration throughout the entertainment industry.

The SAFD recognizes members at a variety of levels, including Fight Master, Fight Director, Certified Teacher, Advanced Actor/Combatant, Actor/Combatant and Friend. SAFD members have staged or acted in countless numbers of fight scenes for live theatre, film and television.

Through its training programs across the United States, the SAFD has schooled thousands of individuals in the necessary skills to perform or choreograph safe and effective stage combat.

Friend

One need not be a stage fighter, teacher or choreographer to join and be active in the SAFD. Any individual who has an interest in the stage combative arts who wants to keep abreast of the field and receive all the benefits of memberships may join as a friend.

Actor/Combatant

Any individual who has passed an SAFD Skills Proficiency Test and is current in Unarmed, Rapier & Dagger (or Single Sword) and another discipline. The SAFD considers Actor/Combatants to be proficient in performing staged combat safely and effectively.

Advanced Actor/Combatant

Any individual who is current in six of eight SAFD disciplines, has had three years transpire since their first SPT test and has been a dues paying member in good standing for two years. The SAFD acknowledges Advanced Actor/Combatants as highly skilled performers of staged fighting.

Certified Teacher

Any individual who has successfully completed the SAFD Teacher Training Workshop. These individuals are endorsed by the Society to teach staged combat and may teach the SAFD Skills Proficiency Test.

Fight Director

Any individual who has held the status of Certified Teacher of the SAFD for a minimum of three years and has demonstrated through work in the professional arena a high level of expertise as a teacher and choreographer of staged combat. These individuals are endorsed by the Society to direct and/or choreograph incidents of physical violence.

Fight Master

Individuals who are senior members of the SAFD who have through service to the organization and the art form been granted this honorary title. These individuals serve in an advisory capacity as the College of Fight Masters, as master teachers at the National Stage Combat Workshops and as adjudicators of the Skills Proficiency Tests.

Visit the blazing **SAFD**
Website

- ◆ Member Representatives
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www.safd.org

Call the **SAFD** Hotline

1-800-659-6579

For stage combat assistance, workshop information, and general questions.

Call 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Eastern Standard Time

Society of American Fight Directors

DEDICATED TO IMPROVING THE QUALITY AND SAFETY OF STAGE COMBAT



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

Actor/Combatant ♦ Teacher ♦ Fight Director

However, one need not take any sort of test to become a member of the SAFD. Anyone interested in the art of fight choreography and stage fighting can join. SAFD members receive a 10% discount on SAFD workshops; *The Fight Master*, a journal published twice yearly; and *The Cutting Edge*, a newsletter published six times yearly with news updates on SAFD activities, policies and members.

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

The Society of American Fight Directors

1350 East Flamingo Road, #25
Las Vegas, Nevada 89119

Dues are \$35 annually. (For members outside the U.S., annual dues are \$40)

Your enclosed check will cover dues for the current year.

Please make checks payable to **Society of American Fight Directors**

Membership Application **Society of American Fight Directors**

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If you have passed the SAFD Skills Proficiency Test, please fill out:

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