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The Society of American Fight Directors

Winter 2005

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The Society of American Fight Directors

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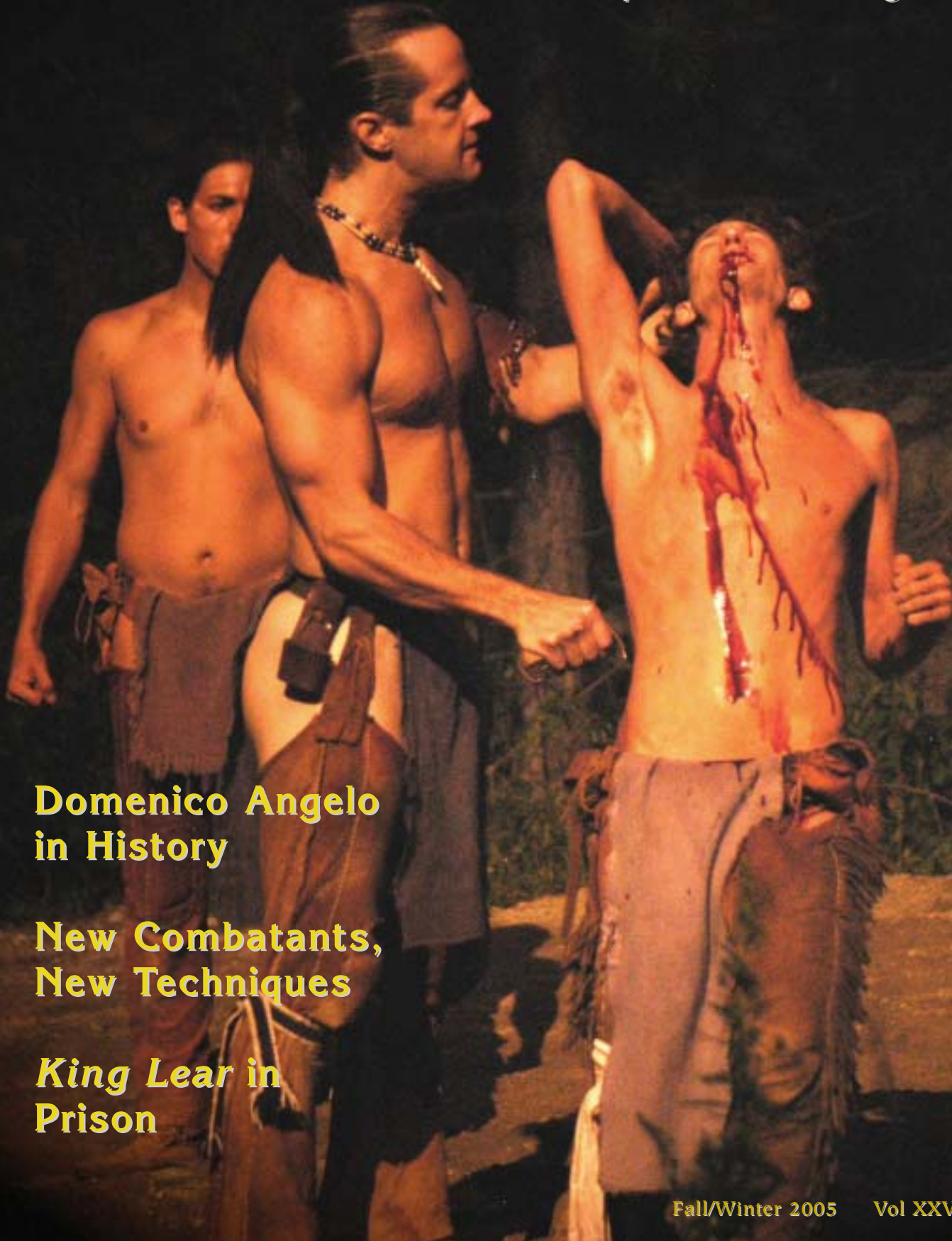


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The FIGHT MASTER

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Journal of the Society of American Fight Directors



**Domenico Angelo
in History**


**New Combatants,
New Techniques**

***King Lear* in
Prison**

Fall/Winter 2005

Vol XXVIII Number 2

STAGE COMBAT: EXTREME ACTING



Sweeney (Joseph Mahowald) is giving *Pirelli* (Michael Brian Dunn) a close shave in Center Stage's production of *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street*. Music & Lyrics by Stephen Sondheim. Book by Hugh Wheeler. Directed by Irene Lewis. Fight Direction by J. Allen Suddeth. Photograph by Richard Anderson.

The Society of American Fight Directors

27th Annual

National Stage Combat Workshops

July 10-28, 2006

SAFD and University of Nevada-Las Vegas
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Checks must be payable to: Action Workshops, Inc.

The Fight Master

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On the Front Cover:

A scene from the outdoor drama, "Blue Jacket." Directed by Mark "Rat" Guinn, Fight Direction by Neil Massey. Photo by Cliff Jenkins. Pictured are Scott Leake, Christopher McIntyre, and Jeremy Dillon.



On the Back Cover:

Cannon Shot from the outdoor drama "Blue Jacket." Directed by Mark "Rat" Guinn, Fight Direction by Neil Massey. Photo by Cliff Jenkins.

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With the recently re-published The School of Fencing, Jeannette Acosta-Martinez examines the life of the author Domenico Angelo.

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In asking how “real” a fight should be, Aaron Anderson looks at the history of theatre.

18 New Combatants, New Techniques

Stephen Weitz explores the use of the Alexander Technique and acting process for teaching fight choreography.

36 King Lear in Prison

Imagine choreographing the violence in King Lear in prison with a cast of inmates. Richard Hedderman shares this experience with our readers.

24 Choreographing The Illusion

Cathy Brookshire shares the experience of choreographing The Illusion at South Carolina and the importance of stage combat training at the nation’s universities.



EDITORIALLY SPEAKING

It used to be that when a production called for a sword fight, the local fencing coach would be brought in to stage the fight. What the audience received was contemporary fencing performed in period costumes. With the advent of the SAFD and other staged-combat organizations, historical accuracy and period movement, as well as safety, began to be emphasized. As historical manuscripts have become more readily available, many surprises about techniques, such as how swords were actually used, have emerged and prompted fight choreographers to incorporate them into their choreography. For example, choreographers have learned that shields were and can be offensive weapons as well as defensive tools. Looking at actual historical duels has revealed how different reality is from what has typically been staged. The Sheridan/Matthews duel, in which the opponents rolled around on the ground frantically stabbing at each other hardly conveyed the swashbuckling image that audiences have come to expect. Many resources have become available for the current choreographer to draw on in helping achieve the director's vision.

Today Dr. Aaron Anderson questions whether staged combat needs to be realistic in modern theatre and film. His thought-provoking article raises some fascinating issues and observations about the realism, or lack thereof, of fights staged throughout history. On the other hand, Stephen Weitz develops an approach to the fight that integrates the acting process into the fight choreography. By understanding the psychological and physical logic behind the choreography, the choreographer can then execute a rich, exciting, and realistic fight.

Also in this issue, two fight directors share their experiences of working under unusual constraints in the real world in real time. The first director took his skills to a prison where he encountered all sorts of restrictions and actors with no theatre experience. The other was called in with only four weeks to stage a fight with students in a university production.

On a historical note, with the reprinting of Domenico Angelo's *The School of Fencing*, Jeannette Acosta-Martinez, who annotated this new edition, shares some background on Angelo and the period he was living in. Angelo's fencing treatise was first published in 1763 and this new edition, published by Stackpole Books, gives insights into Angelo's technique that make it accessible to the modern reader.

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

Jeannette Acosta-Martinez is a founding member of the International Masters of Arms Federation and the business manager for the Martinez Academy of Arms. She is one of the founders and vice president of the Association for Historical Fencing and one of the translators of *Italian Rapier Combat*, the first English translation of Capo Ferro's 1610 work ever to be published.

Aaron Anderson holds both an MFA and PhD in Theatre. He is internationally certified as a teacher of stage combat with the Society of American Fight Directors, the British Academy of Stage and Screen Combat, and Dueling Arts International. In addition to teaching in both Europe and America, he has worked professionally as an actor and stuntman in theatres and on sets from Honolulu to Chicago.

Cathy Brookshire holds an MFA in Renaissance Studies and Shakespeare in Performance from Mary Baldwin College. She is an adjunct instructor in theatre at the University of South Carolina, founder and artistic director of the touring company Organized Chaos, member of Actor's Equity, and an actor/combatant with the SAFD.

Richard Hedderman is an advanced actor/combatant and the Northeast Regional Representative for the SAFD.

Stephen Weitz is an actor, director, and choreographer based in the Boulder/Denver region of Colorado. He is a graduate of the MFA program at the Alabama Shakespeare Festival and is currently pursuing his PhD at the University of Colorado.

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

Submissions should be sent to:

The Fight Master

UNLV Dept. of Theatre 4505 Maryland Parkway Las Vegas, NV 89154-5044

Fax: (702) 895-0833 E-mail: linda.mccollum@unlv.edu

Submitted material will be edited for clarity and length. Articles should be typed, and include a short biography, fifty or fewer words, about the author. Please include the contact's 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 and 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:

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- ◆ Vertical orientation
- ◆ .tif or .jpg file formats

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, January 31. 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:

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

John Tovar

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The Fight Master

Journal of the Society of American Fight Directors

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- taught movement at the Banff Center for the Performing Arts, London's City Literary Institute, & the Denver Center for the Performing Arts

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Domenico Angelo

IN HISTORY

by Jeannette Acosta-Martinez

Domenico Angelo Malevolti Tremonondo my father, designated the elder Angelo, who lived to a patriarchal age, was long universally and deservedly esteemed by his numerous patrons and friends, among whom he could boast some of the most distinguished persons both for rank and talent, in three kingdoms. He was considered the first master of equitation, or riding in the manège,¹ and was no less celebrated as a professor of the art of defence, being acknowledged all over Europe to be one of the most scientific swordsmen of his day. In England he was without a peer, and there raised the reputation of the art to a rivalry with the first schools upon the continent.

This first paragraph from the *Reminiscences*² by Henry Angelo, Domenico's son and heir, clearly indicates the esteem in which Domenico Angelo was held in society and the level to which he rose in the arts of riding and fencing. Although *The Reminiscences* are a series of recollections from Henry's life, many are devoted to various accounts of the life of his father and include remembrances of famous people who would habitually gather at his father's home. Often flawed regarding dates and details, Henry's recollections nevertheless give the reader an extraordinary window into the life and times of Domenico Angelo, fencing and riding master to the nobility in London during the second half of the eighteenth century.

Domenico Angelo lived during the age of the Enlightenment, a philosophical movement that stressed the power of human reason. Paris and London, where Angelo trained and made his living respectively, were centers of the Enlightenment. Literary, scientific, and philosophical associations flourished as places where the intellectuals exercised their reason in an idealistic attempt to improve the world. Free thinkers often gathered in those settings, which provided a social experience separate from court intrigue and the influence of the church. Angelo also lived in a society exceedingly concerned with appearance, genteel behavior, and graceful movement. The upper classes were all taught how to stand, walk, bow, and even properly remove one's hat. Angelo had the great fortune of being born into a prominent merchant family with some pretensions to nobility. He was therefore educated in all the refined arts and accomplishments befitting a gentleman of his time. He traveled extensively in Italy and finally was sent to Paris by his father to study international trade.

In Paris, Angelo sought out the best teachers of the arts that would eventually earn him fame—equitation (horsemanship), dance, and fencing. He studied equitation with François Robichon de Guérinière, the King's ridingmaster, director of the *Manège Royal des Tuileries*, and author of *Ecole de Cavalerie* published in 1731, which is still considered to be the bible of classical dressage. De Guérinière's lessons must have had quite an impact on Angelo, for, according to J. D. Aylward, Angelo had originally decided upon a career as a professor of equitation. He also

studied dance with Gaetan Balthasar Vestris, the first dancer at the Paris Opera and one of the greatest dancers of the eighteenth century. Vestris later became dance master to Louis XVI. Angelo chose to study fencing with maître d'armes Teillagory. While there is little information on Teillagory, we do know that he was a member of the *Compagnie des Maîtres en faits d'armes de Paris*. Antoine La Boëssière tells us that he was a celebrated master, who produced a quantity of strong students. Among them were his two nephews and one M. Donnadieu; all three became fencing masters of the Royal Academy (61).

During a public fencing match, Domenico Angelo attracted the interest of the Irish actress Margaret Woffington. When she returned to England, Angelo was her traveling companion. Angelo and Margaret's romance did not last. However, fate had brought him to England where he fell in love with and married Elizabeth Johnson in 1755. It was through his liaison with Margaret that he met the Sheridan family with whom he became life long friends. The actor and theatrical manager, Thomas Sheridan, was the father of Richard Brinsley Sheridan, best known for his play *The School for Scandal*. He was a major proponent of the elocution movement and author of a dictionary of the English language.

Angelo also met and became close friends with David Garrick, the English actor, dramatist, and theatrical manager of the Drury Lane Theatre for thirty years. Garrick married Eva Maria Veigel in 1749 and, although they never had children, they appear to have been very happy. The level of intimacy between the families is illustrated by Henry Angelo's many recollections of them. Henry tells us that he and his mother sat with Mrs. Garrick to view the last performance given by Garrick on his retirement. It is interesting to note that David Garrick had also been in love with Margaret Woffington and had hoped to marry her when they worked together in Ireland some years prior to her meeting Angelo.

Garrick and his wife visited Paris in 1763, where they made the acquaintance of Denis Diderot. Diderot, of course, is known for



his great *Encyclopédie*, which he compiled and edited with Jean Le Rond d'Alembert. Among the many entries in the *Encyclopédie* is one on fencing by Angelo. Did Garrick influence Diderot's selection of Angelo's treatise? One can only speculate, but the coincidence and timing is interesting nonetheless.

Henry Angelo tells us that his father spent some time in Venice where he met Giovanni Antonio Canale (later known as Canaletto), a famous artist renowned today for his many panoramic paintings of Venice and esteemed in his own day for his theatre scene-painting. While in Venice, Domenico Angelo acquired a knowledge of stage machinery and scene decoration for the theatre. It is clear that Angelo had a keen interest in art and theatre, so his friendship with such notable English artists as Sir Joshua Reynolds, William Hogarth, and Thomas Gainsborough comes as no surprise. Hogarth is famous for his portraits, including one of Mr. and Mrs. Garrick; his scenes of everyday life and Shakespearean plays; and his satirical prints. Thomas Gainsborough is known for both his landscape painting and portraiture; his most well known painting, *The Blue Boy*, is frequently reproduced today. Joshua Reynolds, a highly successful portrait painter and notable member of the London intelligentsia, was elected the first president of the Royal Academy in 1768 and knighted by George III. Among Reynolds' works is a portrait of Mrs. Angelo painted the same year of her marriage. Other friends of Angelo working in England were Italian artists Francesco Bartolozzi, official engraver to King George III, and Giovanni Battista Cipriani, a painter and founding member of the Royal Academy. Angelo's neighbors in London were Karl Able and Johann Christian Bach, the son of Johann Sebastian Bach. J. C. Bach was a composer in his own right and the music master to the Queen. In 1764, he even taught the young Mozart. Karl Able was a virtuoso on the *viol-da-gamba*. As we can see, Angelo's close circle of friends included some of the most gifted artists of the time.

However, Domenico Angelo's social network was not limited to people in the arts. Other friends who frequented Angelo's home were politicians John Wilkes and John Horne Tooke, staunch Republicans working for parliamentary reform. Wilkes, a member of Parliament and Lord Mayor of London, was notorious for having been a member of the Hell Fire Club,³ whose activities he made public after being expelled. Angelo's friendship with these men is curious since he relied so heavily on royal patronage. In fact, Angelo was highly regarded by the English royalty and many were counted among his patrons and friends. Henry Herbert, the Earl of Pembroke, sought out Angelo immediately upon his return from his grand tour of the continent and offered him the position of ridingmaster at his riding school in Wilton. Through Pembroke Angelo was presented to the king. He also drew the attention of the Dowager Princess of Wales, who appointed Angelo to teach fencing and riding to her sons the Prince of Wales (the future King George III) and the Duke of York and later her other two sons, the Dukes of Gloucester and Cumberland.

The course of Angelo's future was set when the leading amateur fencer in Ireland at the time, one Dr. Keyes, challenged him to a public test of skill. This famous assault, held before a large fashionable crowd, earned him a reputation as a swordsman of the highest caliber for the almost effortless manner in which he

defeated Keyes. Shortly thereafter, upon the insistence of his influential friends, he took up the profession of arms in connection with his riding school. Among his new patrons was the Duke of Devonshire, who later became the prime minister. Angelo's academy seems to have been similar to those of France where pupils resided to complete their gentlemanly education. He appears to have had no lack of resident students; among them was the favorite protégé of the Earl of Pembroke.

Angelo also counted among his friends two of the most famous fencers of that period, Chevalier D'Eon de Beaumont and Joseph Boulogne Chevalier de Saint-Georges. D'Eon studied fencing and horsemanship alongside Angelo in Paris. He became a diplomat and spy, was appointed a member of the elite Dragoons, and for some time was a Freemason. As a diplomat in London, he frequently visited Angelo's home and academy. Although D'Eon's gender was a source of speculation until his death, he was considered one of the best swordsmen of France. At the same time, D'Eon's fellow Frenchman Joseph Boulogne Chevalier de Saint-Georges was widely regarded as the finest fencer in Europe, possessing unsurpassed grace, skill, and speed. In 1818, Antoine La Boessière described Saint Georges as "the most extraordinary man that one will ever see in arms and even in all exercises of the body." A composer, violinist and conductor, he was also among the most important musicians of Paris before the revolution. He studied fencing at the Academy of Nicolas Texier de La Bössière and trained in horsemanship at *Tuileries*. He must have been highly regarded by the Angelos, for his portrait hung prominently in the Haymarket School of Henry Angelo. Saint-Georges and Chevalier D'Eon also became friends, giving many public demonstrations together.

Other notable persons are included in Henry's *Reminiscences* but to list them all is not necessary. It is already clear that Angelo was an important and popular member of society. Angelo must have been a faithful friend as is evidenced by the fact that the same people appear in various memories from different periods in his life. The fact that D'Eon began wearing female attire or that Wilkes was in some trouble or other throughout his career apparently did not affect Angelo's friendship with them.

Many masters write books to explicate their systems, and Angelo was no exception, having been convinced to write his treatise on swordsmanship shortly after he began teaching. There was much interest in it, as can be attested to by the fact that Angelo was able to get some 236 gentleman and nobles to guarantee its publication. *L'Ecole des Armes* was an immediate success; it was first printed in French in 1763, then reprinted with an English translation beside the French in 1765, printed again as a third edition in 1767, and reprinted once more in 1787. The text chosen for the fencing section of Diderot's *Encyclopedia*, also appears to have been published sometime between 1766 and 1767.⁴

J. D. Aylward comments that "it may seem strange that Diderot's choice fell upon Angelo, a foreigner who had published a book in England, but the honor must have been due to the fact that in France no outstanding treatise on the art of fence had appeared since Labat wrote his *Art en Fait d'Armes* at Toulouse toward the end of the seventeenth century." In fact, the section on fencing in the *Encyclopedia* is introduced with the following attribution and

note of praise: “This article is entirely taken out of the treatise on the art of fencing, published in London by Mr. Angelo: we are indebted to him both for the discourses and the plates. Had we known of any work more perfect in its kind, we should have made use of it.”⁵ This may appear to support Aylward’s supposition; however, the reasons for Diderot’s choice must have been more complex. Several other useful treatises were published around this time. Aylward seems not to have taken into account that the *Encyclopedia* was a huge undertaking consisting of 28 volumes, 71,818 articles, and 2,885 illustrations; the article on fencing would have had to be an especially clear and concise explanation of the art.

Diderot’s opus—*Encyclopedia, or Reasoned Dictionary of the Sciences, Arts, and Crafts*—was obviously intended to be a compendium of the knowledge of the time. Many of the contributors were prominent figures of the French Enlightenment and the content largely reflects that. Published in volumes from 1751 through 1772, the *Encyclopedia* generated controversy by praising Protestant thinkers and challenging the *ancien régime*. Eventually its government privilege was suspended. However, due to the large number of subscribers, many of whom were highly influential, the last volumes were completed and distributed in 1772.

Given that the Royal Academy of Arms was in Paris, it would not have been difficult to have one of the masters of the Royal Academy write an article. The choice of Angelo largely reflects the vision that Diderot had for the explication of each subject and his disaffection for the old order embodied by the Royal Academy. Aylward tells us that Diderot commissioned Lachaussée in 1765 to re-engage the plates from the *L’Ecole des Armes* on a reduced scale in order to include them with the text in the *Encyclopedia*. By this time Diderot was doing the majority of the work on the *Encyclopedia* by himself, for most of the contributors had left the project. Angelo’s clear and concise text would have been the perfect choice for Diderot, who would not have had to spend any time editing it. In fact, the only changes to the text are the deletion of the dedication and a few sentences referring to England and the replacement of the pronoun “I” with “we,” “one,” or “it.”

Diderot’s suspicions about the Royal Academy seem well founded. In 1766 Guillaume Danet, the director of the Royal Academy, published his book *L’Art des Armes*, in which he criticizes the “*Encyclopedists*”:

The motive for their enterprise would have been more praiseworthy if to render it really useful they had abandoned speculations, as they would have been able to, by consulting only with the most skillful Artists of the diverse classes. They have collected one thousand subjects, and treated a large number very superficially under the pompous title of Encyclopedia that was taken before them by Chambers & Alsteduis. I do not know which of them made the effort to treat the Art of Arms under the old words *Escrime* (Fencing) and *Estocade* (thrust) but exempt me from raising the false principles which the author has just multiplied, and which would be the material for a huge book. I dare say that we

will never have to resort to the Encyclopedia to understand fencing, even less, practice the rules indicated under this word.⁶

This commentary certainly lends some credence to the speculation that the Academy represented the *ancien régime* and resisted the philosophical views of the Enlightenment. Although Danet is referring to information on fencing published prior to the inclusion of Angelo’s text into the *Encyclopedia*, there seems to have been some animosity between Angelo and Danet. According to Danet, Angelo accused him of copying his text and republishing it with a new title. In his second volume Danet responds with disdain:

Indeed I would have to be pitied, if it had been necessary for me to copy figures and principles from his treatise, which, as you were able to note, contains nothing interesting, nothing new than that of Mr. Girard’s, in which he has renewed the same errors, so that it is easy to verify. He is allowed to stand by his work, but we do not owe it support at the expense of the truth. The Public is to judge if Mr. Angelo’s contains only a quarter of my principles, and if it resembles mine in any way.⁷

In truth there is very little difference between the two texts regarding theory. Even though his earliest training was with maestro Andrea Gianfaldoni in Italy, Domenico Angelo adhered to the principles espoused by the masters of the French Academy. The importance of Angelo lies not in his innovation but rather in his orthodoxy. Indeed, the principles set down in his text were already in practice in the beginning of the eighteenth century. What Angelo provides is a concise articulation of the subject. Angelo himself writes, “I should be ungrateful if I was silent on the superior talents of the French fencing masters; and, according to the knowledge which I have acquired, I believe them to be the best in the world, both for their graceful attitudes and profoundness of knowledge (88).

Danet believed that his text would have been chosen for the *Encyclopedia* had it come out at the same time as Angelo’s. This is highly doubtful, for it is filled with commentaries on other masters and proposed changes to the classifications of the hand positions—all information that would have had to be edited out. Angelo’s text is noteworthy for its lack of discussions of other masters so often found in these treatises. In fact, members of the Royal Academy criticized Danet’s text to the point that Danet eventually resigned as director.

By any standard, Domenico Angelo was a celebrity in his time. His popularity among artists, thespians, politicians, and royalty provided the opportunity for him to influence several generations of fencers. He also helped to increase the popularity of the art in England. He and his heirs founded a dynasty that was to last over a hundred years. As a boy, one of the most famous nineteenth-century swordsmen and historians of fence, Alfred Hutton, studied with the last of the Angelos, Henry Charles. Most of all, the popularity of Domenico’s text both in France and in England has guaranteed Domenico Angelo a place in the history of

fencing.

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Notes

1 *Manège* refers to a place or school where the art of riding/horsemanship was taught.

2 *Reminiscences of Henry Angelo* is a two-volume text printed in 1828 in which Henry recounts his memories of the life of his father and friends, giving a clear glimpse into eighteenth-century English society.

3 The Order of the Knights of St. Francis of Wycombe, better know as the Hell Fire Club, was a secret organization that boasted such members as Sir Francis Dashwood, the Earl of Sandwich, Thomas Potter (the son of the Archbishop of Canterbury), William Hogarth, John Wilkes, the Earl of Bute, the Marquis of Granby, the Prince of Wales, Horace Walpole, and occasionally Benjamin Franklin. The members were said to hold mock religious ceremonies using masks and costumes to allow them to indulge in varying degrees of debauchery.

4 Guillaume Danet published his first volume of *L'Art Des Armes* in 1766 in which he mentions Angelo's treatise, but it is in his second volume, published in 1767, that he alludes to the inclusion of Angelo's text in the *Encyclopedia*.

5 This is a translation of the French text that appears in the beginning of the section on *Escrime*.

6 Translated from the French (Danet, 1766, pp. 107-108): Le motif de leur entreprise eût été plus louable, si pour se rendre vraiment utiles, comme ils auroient pu l'être; ils eussent toujours abandonné leurs speculations, pour ne consulter que le plus habiles Artistes des diverses classes; mais ils ont rassemblé mille matières, & en ont traité un grand nombre fort superficiellement; sous le titre pompeux d'Encyclopédie qu'avoient pris avant eux Chambers & Alsteduis. Je ne sais qui d'entre eux a pris la peine de traiter l'Art des Armes sous le vieux mots d'Escrime & d'Estocade; mais pour me dispenser de relever les faux principes que l'Auteur vient de multiplier, & qui seroient la matière d'un gros Livre, j'ose assurer qu'on ne devra jamais recourir au Dictionnaire de l'Encyclopedia pour bien connoître l'Escrime, encore moins pratiquer, les règles désignées sous ce mot.

7 J'aurois été bien à plaindre s'il m'eût fallu copier les figures & le principes de son Traité, qui, comme vous l'avez pu remaquer, ne contient rien de plus intéressant, rien de plus nouveau que celui du sieur Girard, dont il a rajeuni les erreurs, ainsi qu'il est aisé de le vérifier; il est permis de soutenir son ouvrage, mais on ne le doit pas aux dépens de la vérité. Le Public est à portée de juger si celui de M. Angelo renferme seulement le quart de mes principes, & s'il ressemble en quelque chose au mien.



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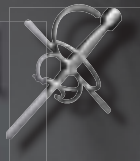
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NEW COMBATANTS, NEW TECHNIQUES

by Stephen Weitz

Among the great challenges for a stage-combat choreographer is being asked to create rich, exciting, and realistic physical sequences with actors who have little or no experience. Most actors are cast for their talent and skill in portraying a particular role, not for the combat experience that might appear in the “Special Skills” portion of their resume. Choreographers are often asked to “play the hand they’re dealt.” And so, for the fight director, the creative process becomes as much a teaching exercise as anything else. But what could seem a burden actually affords all choreographers a wonderful forum in which to hone their pedagogical skills. This is especially true—and necessary—when a great deal of skill and technique must be taught quickly to actors who are only occasionally available for fight call.

Such an opportunity arose when I was asked to choreograph and assistant-direct a recent production of *Life is a Dream* at the University of Colorado. The play, written by the seventeenth-century Spaniard Pedro Calderon de la Barca, presented two key challenges. First, I had never choreographed so much combat for a single production. The show features some type of theatrical violence in almost every scene. Pushes, knock-downs, grappling, hair pulls, high falls, stair falls, a rape sequence, and three combat scenes featuring eight or more actors wielding broadswords and quarterstaves were all part of this endeavor. In addition, the cast consisted of fifteen undergraduate actors, only one of whom had any significant stage fighting experience. The relative inexperience of the cast obviously compounded the difficulty of creating so much choreography. With this double challenge, I debated the best method to create effective choreography and impart new skills to the student actors in the limited amount of rehearsal time available.

I decided to use the six-week rehearsal process as an opportunity to experiment with new methodology for teaching stage fighting to early-stage combatants. Two specific techniques were to be introduced during this training period. First, I wanted to communicate the dynamics of stage combat through a greater use of acting terminology already understood by the group of undergraduate students. This would integrate the combat rehearsals more successfully into the overall acting process. Secondly, I was eager to incorporate the Alexander Technique, a theory of efficient body movement that has many applications for fight work.

Before any of these new techniques could be introduced to the process, the students first needed to learn the foundations of stage combat. The first weeks of the rehearsal process were spent developing the basic skills, such as partnering, distance, targets, and eye contact necessary to create a safe and effective working environment. During this phase, small segments of the show’s choreography were used as training drills. This saved time and effort since the actors were learning basic techniques and actual choreography simultaneously. In the middle and late portions of the process I would be able to introduce the new methodology. One of the principal reasons I decided to introduce new techniques into my combat teaching was to develop a pedagogical process that

included a larger emphasis on acting. Teachers and fight directors often speak of *acting the fight*. This rightly implies that stage combat is as much about performance as it is about technique. Unfortunately, there seems to be no consensus about how to help combatants act the fight more successfully. The logical place to begin was to incorporate more fundamental acting techniques and terminology into the combat process. I chose to use Stanislavsky/Strasberg principles because they are still the predominant schools of acting in this country and all of the actors in the company had been exposed to this type of training. Once the actors felt reasonably comfortable with the fundamental structure and safety measures of the combat sequences, I began to work towards more specific acting in the fights. In many cases, an actor begins to perform a movement largely by rote after he or she has mastered it. This leads to fights which are technically sound but lack the intensity we strive for in our work. I attempted to counter this trend by discussing the fights at length in the following acting terms: *objectives*, *obstacles*, and *tactics*.

In his book *Acting One*, Robert Cohen claims, “There are two fundamental principles in acting. The first is that the actor must always play toward a *victory*. [Cohen’s *victory* is synonymous with what is referred to as an *objective* in this article.] The second is that the actor must always play against an *obstacle*” (11). These concepts, the basic building blocks of all acting performances, obviously apply to fighting, which is as much performance as it is combat. And since I was working in an academic environment with a group of actors who were all in the process of refining their acting fundamentals, I felt that using traditional terms allowed me to communicate with these young actors in a language with which they were already familiar and comfortable.

I began by framing each attack in a given fight as an *objective*. Rather than “A thrusts to B’s right shoulder on an advance,” I would instead describe the attack as “moving forward, A takes advantage of an exposed high line and tries to run B through the right arm, thereby disarming her.” The first is a technical instruction; the second is an objective. I observed a noticeable difference in the energy and commitment of my actor combatants when they understood their attacks in this way. They were now able to view their combat sequences not only as pieces of choreography, but as a part of their overall acting performance. In other words, the fights became *actable*.

This process of making combat more actable can be extended even further. Once the objective of fighter A has been established, actor B must respond with an *obstacle*, i.e., a parry or other defensive maneuver. If actor A attempts the objective described above, actor B might present an obstacle like the following: “In order to prevent being wounded and disarmed, I retreat and parry in 3.” This in turn also serves as an objective for actor B. Going one step further, actor A, having his original objective thwarted, must now find a new *tactic* in order to press the attack. In terms of choreography, this might involve a continuation of the attack through a subsequent action or a disengagement to develop a new plan for achieving the objective.

In addition to giving the actors focus and intention throughout the fights, these acting terms helped them to understand the logic of the fight. All too often, stage combat becomes an exhibition of form. Actors move smoothly through a sequence of moves with no understanding of what motivates these actions. By breaking a fight down into its acting parts, the performers were able to understand the psychological and physical logic behind the choreography and thus fill each move with a stronger intention. This methodology enabled them to learn the techniques as something active and actable rather than merely an external physical framework. Better acting during fights equals better storytelling through the fights and a more effective and exciting display for the audience.

My second goal for this process involved the introduction of the Alexander Technique as a means to improve the physical dynamic of the fights. The Technique is a system of movement/body work that seeks to shed ingrained habits of poor physical use in order to liberate the natural poise, grace, and expressiveness of the body. Cohen describes it as “the best known and most effective alignment system for actors” (127). My own training in the Technique made me aware of its potential significance in the teaching of stage combat. I worked with my instructor on applying it to my choreography and, as we progressed, my movements became more balanced, fluid, and effortless. Fortunately, the cast of *Life is a Dream* had a basic understanding of the goals of and approaches to the Technique. This shared language and knowledge enabled me to incorporate the two concepts of primary control and ease of use into the fighting.

Central to the goal of liberating the body from incorrect, limiting, or dangerous use, is the dynamic relationship of the head, neck, and spine, referred to as primary control (Gelb 12). Creator F. M. Alexander demonstrated that by directing these areas to work together in greater ease and harmony, individuals could change the organization of the body and use it manner more effectively. But this improved relationship within the primary control must arise freely rather than be forced, or fixed. Alexander was firm in his belief that the only way to achieve better use was by “giving direction,” i.e., simply allowing it to happen. If one notices tension in the neck or lower back, one must resist the urge to “correct” the problem. Instead one gives direction or focuses the attention and the will toward a more balanced and easy physical quality. Above all else, Alexander stressed the head/neck relationship. Books on and teachers of the Technique often use the image of very young children and animals to demonstrate the natural poise of the head atop the spine that creates a length and expansiveness throughout the body. Observing a cat stalking a bird or a human child learning to walk, one can easily see how the head dictates movement. In short, the head leads and the body follows.

We know this to be true in stage combat as well. Many martial arts stress that gaining control of an opponent’s head gives one power over the whole body. And one best controls one’s own body when the head rests relaxed above an unclenched neck. When such primary control is activated, a theatrical combatant can reap many benefits. The stability and position of the head affects many crucial aspects of a fighter’s physical performance, including balance and visual targeting. With the head/neck relationship in good working order, the fighter’s movements will be simultaneously more grounded and fluid. In contrast, unnecessary tension in the

head/neck leads to unwanted tension throughout the body that results in ungainly movement and possibly dangerous mistakes.

The second important principle of the Alexander Technique is ease of use. When observing outstanding athletes, dancers, or musicians, one is often amazed by how they “make it look easy.” Michael Gelb, an expert in the Technique, comments, “Alexander discovered that this quality of relaxation in action is not only the result of natural talent but can also be learned”(3). In the practice of the Alexander Technique, the student is always reminded to “do less” so the body can operate as efficiently as possible. With the body in suitable alignment, movement becomes a natural extension of one’s innate poise and requires a minimum of effort. This results in a gracefulness often lacking in everyday movement. Such ease of use has relevance for stage combat, much of which is performed by actors playing “professional fighters,” i.e., expert combatants. When the actors exercise their moves smoothly, they create the illusion of skill and confidence the audience expects to see.

Of course, we are all familiar with the novice stage combatant who, while mastering the basics of a thrust, mashes his or her chin against a shoulder, every muscle in the arm fully engaged and the rest of the body rigid as a board. By applying the Alexander Technique concept of ease of use the actor can discover what muscles are being strained at any given moment and sometimes what muscles do not need to be used at all. At the same time, engaging the primary control and doing less throughout the whole body creates ease of use and allows the muscles of the body to achieve a relaxed state in which they are poised to react in any direction at any moment. The actor thus enters the ideal state for physical performance and projects the image most desired by theatre combatants.

These concepts of the Alexander Technique were incorporated into the combat training for *Life is a Dream* very subtly. Although many of the students had a basic understanding of them, figuring out how to integrate them into the choreography remained a challenge. Like the acting work described above, this was best done in the intermediate stages of rehearsal, after the initial skills had been learned and the choreography established. Then the Technique could be used as a polishing tool to craft a more effective physical dynamic.

According to Robert Cohen, the Alexander Technique revolves upon the following alignment of the body:

- 1) The head “floating” easily atop the spine
- 2) The neck free and released
- 3) The shoulders spread out (not back)
- 4) The torso lengthened and widened, the rib cage expanded, the vertebrae separated, not crunched together, the pelvis freely rotating, the hip joints free and rolling (127).

These basic directions seemed the perfect tool to produce the physical energy I was seeking. Once I established the choreography I explained the directions and used them, and similar phrases, to remind the actors to apply the technique during the fights. Freezing the actors during their combat phrases and gesturing to indicate where I could observe unnecessary tension allowed the actors to hone in on what I was after and fight more

easily and expressively. Directions, such as the ones above, were much more effective than traditional instructions, such as “keep your back straight” or “use your legs more,” which tend to create unwanted strain and eliminate ease of use. The Alexander lexicon enabled us to discuss the combat in terms of its dynamic potential. As a result, the polishing of the established choreography came not as an exterior layer, added on late in the process, but as an extension of the actors’ physical awareness and understanding.

As you can see, the Alexander Technique principles of Primary Control and ease of use are closely linked to the execution of compelling combat. By incorporating these ideas, actors are able to fight more expressively and thus look more at ease as soldiers or professional fighters. I have also concluded that the Technique, because it requires less effort on the part of the combatant, minimizes the soreness and fatigue associated with extended periods of combat training. This is certainly a useful by-product, especially for actors whose muscles are not accustomed to the rigors of stage combat and who must work for long periods of time.

By combining these two supplemental teaching methods with traditional introductory stage combat techniques, I was able to create a more holistic learning experience. Too often in the theatre, we work in a disjointed fashion, failing to integrate the many facets of the creative process. In this case, these new combat skills became something that was not only an addition to the actors’ toolbox, but also an extension of their ongoing training in movement, acting, and even voice. As a result, the learning environment was more accessible for the student actors and allowed their combat training to dovetail nicely with their other training

objectives.

I was fortunate in this production of *Life is a Dream* to have a group of eager and committed actors already familiar with some ideas behind the methodology and thus able to pick up more technique and perform at a higher level of precision and ability than any other group of beginning combatants I have worked with. The actors’ success was due in part to the alternate methodology, which I plan to incorporate to a greater extent in my future work. Of course, not all choreographers work in an academic environment and some may be uncomfortable talking about fights in specific acting terms. Many more may be unfamiliar with the Alexander Technique and thus unprepared to introduce it into their work. However, as choreographers, we are all asked to be teachers as well. Developing the ability to impart skills beyond those strictly related to stage combat can only enhance our overall work, with the ultimate goal of producing more powerful and scintillating fights at every level.

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CHOREOGRAPHING

The Illusion

by Cathy Brookshire

Prince Florilame (Tom Angland) threatens Hyppolyta (E. G. Heard) in the University of South Carolina production of Tony Kushner's adaptation of Pierre Corneille's "The Illusion." Directed by Tyler Marchant. Fight Direction by Cathy Brookshire. Photo by Jason Ayers, DEIS, USC.



Despite the growth of interest in theatrical combat training in colleges in the past ten years, combat choreographers at universities must often cope with actors with little experience in stage combat. While a day may come when a nationwide stage-combat curriculum is in place at all universities, the reality is that college-level choreographers must often use individual productions as their primary opportunities to train faculty, staff, and students in the key components of the fight: safety, historical accuracy, and incorporation of the fight into the given circumstances of the production.

A case in point is my recent experience with the University of South Carolina MFA Theatre Program. In January 2005, I was hired, one week into the four-week rehearsal period, to choreograph a rapier fight for Theatre South Carolina's period production of Tony Kushner's *The Illusion*. This gave me the chance to promote a greater understanding of why stage-combat training can and should be incorporated into the university's theatrical program. In the end, the production team and I were able to provide USC with a safe and visually exciting rapier fight.

A loose adaptation of Pierre Corneille's 1636 classic *L'Illusion Comique*, *The Illusion* presents the story of an elderly father, Pridamant, in search of his long-lost son. His quest leads him to the cave of the

magician Alcandre, who shows him three visions of the son: first, the son is a naïve youth wooing a wealthy young lady; then, older and quite sophisticated, he wins his lady and kills his rival in a swordfight; and finally he is murdered by a jealous husband. But a surprise ending reveals that Pridameant's son is actually an actor living in Paris, and the romantic and violent adventures his father has witnessed were merely scenes from the company's repertoire of plays.

The play was staged at Drayton Hall, a theatre with a proscenium stage thirty-six feet wide, seventeen feet tall, and twenty feet deep to the back wall. For most of the production a bounce upstage cut the stage depth to fourteen feet. At the end of the show, the bounce was flown out to reveal the theatre's back wall. Downstage of the proscenium arch the apron was divided into three areas. Two platforms, each twelve feet wide and twelve feet deep, were set fourteen inches below stage level. These flanked a twelve-foot-wide and twelve-foot-deep center platform at stage level. Only Pridamant and the magician began and ended upstage of the proscenium arch, with the raising, lowering, or opening of scrimms at various depths of the stage. Once into the vision, the director often moved the action onto the downstage center platform.

Theatre South Carolina set designer Nic

Ularu took a minimalist approach to the multiple settings of the play. The various locations were defined by one or two large movable set pieces, such as a garden wall, or by fly-ins. Columns were hung in mid-air to suggest a palace scene, gates at various heights to indicate a prison. A full moon appeared for the final scene. The rapier fight took place on a bare stage in a garden represented by a single large, white, vine-covered arch upstage right.

Before the first meeting with the guest director, Tyler Marchant, I read the script of *The Illusion* through twice. Initially, I paid close attention to the plot, the theme, and the scripted moments of violence. I then concentrated on where and why violence occurred and how each character reacted to it, both in the moment and in later scenes, and noted how those moments might be staged to advance the plot and reinforce characterization. At our meeting Marchant allotted eleven hours of rehearsal time for staging the fights; this was to be spread out over thirteen days. Since the actors were full-time graduate students, rehearsals were held in the evening and on weekends. Some rehearsals lasted as long as two hours while others were only thirty or even fifteen minutes.

That same evening at a blocking rehearsal, thirty minutes were spent working movement with the actor/combatants. The actors were taken through an assortment of

movements so I could observe and later address in the choreography differences in their length of strike, arm reach, agility, and flexibility. They quickly learned to advance, retreat, pass forward, and pass back working parallel to each other. Next they were partnered and worked for a few minutes performing the same movements, with each actor placing a hand on the other's right shoulder. They realized at once that their strides did not match and set to work to resolve that issue. The rehearsal ended with a discussion of the purpose of the fight and the setting of the scene. The director and the actors were quite clear in communicating the given circumstances of the fight.

The rapier scene primarily involves the two characters Clindor, a young commoner and Pridamont's son, and Aldraste, an old aristocrat. The two characters, as well as Matamore, a rich and cowardly fop, are pursuing Isabelle, the daughter of a nobleman. Although her father has just sold her to Aldraste, Isabelle loves Clindor and the two plan to elope. When Matamore discovers them, he is threatened by Clindor and thus agrees to assist them in their escape. But Aldraste, warned of this by the maid Lyse, enters and challenges Clindor.

Demetrios Troy (Clindor) and Tom England (Aldraste) gave snapshot bios of their characters and explained how they

envisioned their characters interacting with each other in a violent situation. Troy saw his character as fearless, passionate, a real risk-taker. On the other hand, England perceived his character as pragmatic, crafty, and easily aroused to rage when his honor was touched. The two actors agreed that, if driven to it, their characters would cheat in order to win a fight. Although neither actor had any rapier experience, both had studied stage movement with Sarah Barker, USC's movement professor, and had recently taken an unarmed workshop. They were in good physical condition, eager to learn, and relished physical and mental challenges.

Nonetheless, I left that rehearsal knowing that intense preparation and flexibility would be necessary to make the fight an integral part of the production. The fight rehearsals were scheduled to begin in two days.

During the interval I met with the props, costumes, and set designers and worked up the outline of the fight. Andy Mills, the USC props master, found in stock a sturdy, rather fancy swept-hilt rapier for the wealthy, aristocratic Aldraste and a simple Renaissance rapier for the poor but scrappy Clindor. Both were badly in need of cleaning. But after he learned how to take the weapons apart and what to use to clean them, Mills was able to have the rapiers ready to use by the first rehearsal

and maintained them beautifully throughout the run. We also researched and purchased a period dagger for another scene in the play. A similar dagger from Theatre South Carolina's stock was used for rehearsal until the new one arrived.

Movement and padding concerns were discussed with the department's costumer, Kelly Fitzpatrick, who assured me that the costumes would provide the actors with sufficient flexibility for the fight. Kneepads were provided for rehearsals and fitted into the costumes, and although the actors initially protested, after they spent a two-hour rehearsal falling on their knees, they were grateful for the added padding. Fortunately, the actors were to wear flexible, low-heeled boots which Fitzpatrick made sure they had to rehearse in by the second fight rehearsal. They were also assigned long wigs and hats, but these were not available until dress-tech rehearsal week. As it happened, the actors were able to work well in the beautifully fitted and styled wigs. However, the hats ended up causing enormous problems during the fight. Aldraste addressed the issue by handing his hat off with a grand gesture just before the fight began. Clindor's hat was ultimately removed from the entire show.

Part of the first rehearsal was spent working out a warm-up routine for the actors to use prior to each rehearsal and



Theognes (Demetrios Troy) strikes a pose in the University of South Carolina production of Tony Kushner's adaptation of Pierre Corneille's "The Illusion." Directed by Tyler Merchant. Fight Direction by Cathy Brookshire. Photo by Jason Ayers, DEIS, USC.

Theognes (Demetrios Troy) strikes a pose in the University of South Carolina production of Tony Kushner's adaptation of Pierre Corneille's "The Illusion." Directed by Tyler Merchant. Fight Direction by Cathy Brookshire. Photo by Jason Ayers, DEIS, USC.



fight call. The one in his mid-forties required a significantly different warm-up from the other who was in his early twenties. The more mature actor's warm-up routine was designed to focus on his joints, particularly his wrists and shoulders. He began his warm-ups with neck stretching and head-rotation exercises to relieve tension, then moved on to shoulder and arm rotations as he worked to build a greater range of motion. Chest isolation exercises were used to encourage freer upper-torso movement. He was also advised to run a series of wrist rotations. The warm-ups concluded with gradually deepening, sustained lunges in which the actor concentrated on balance and correct positioning of the knee over the foot. The

other actor had some martial arts training which he incorporated into his warm-ups. He began with short sets of head rotations, neck stretches (such as draping one arm over the head while dropping the other shoulder) and shoulder and arm rotations. These were usually followed by several sun salutations and a series of balance exercises of the actor's own devising (modified handstands) aimed at improving his upper body strength. Like the older actor, he ended his warm-up with lunges. Both actors were diligent in maintaining their warm-up regimens and consequently lessened enormously the possibility of stress-related injury.

Since the actor/combatants were

inexperienced, it was important to aid them in their memorization process by a) providing them with as much of a routine as possible and b) giving them the *story* of each phrase as they learned it. Every rehearsal after the first one consisted of five sections. First, the actors practiced with extended arms and "sticky hands," then with rapiers. Next, as the actors walked through the phrases learned at the previous rehearsal, they vocalized the story line of each move. For example, as Aldraste, England would say:

I beat off his [Clindor's] attack to my low outside line. I am momentarily surprised at his speed and skill and hesitate briefly, then, enraged that he is making me look a fool in front of Isabelle, I thrust at his high inside line.

The actors would subsequently run the fight multiple times to address specific problems of form, cueing, and targeting. During the fourth part of the rehearsals, a phrase was taught which was then added to the other phrases learned on preceding days. Finally, work was done to clarify the tempos of each phrase, relating them to the characters' changing objectives.

As the rehearsals progressed, the actors became familiar with the choreography and were able to spend more time on characterization. England's Aldraste, in keeping with his more mature and sturdier physique, delivered his thrusts and cuts heavily while the younger and more dexterous Clindor wriggled and darted away. Towards the end of the fight Aldraste's technique began to suffer noticeably as his age and uncontrollable rage took over. His thrusts became heftier and his cuts appeared wilder as his civilized veneer crumbled. Simultaneously, Troy's Clindor struggled to keep clear of Aldraste's wild attacks. Clindor was also unintentionally handicapped when, three-quarters of the way through rehearsals, his blade began to deteriorate. The solution was simple: the director decided that Clindor should not own a sword. Instead, Clindor would grab Matamore's rapier to use in the fight. Since the department lacked a combat-ready rapier fancy enough for a pretentious

fop and the tight production schedule left no time to order a replacement, we ended up using one of my own swept-hilt rapiers. But this rapier was a half inch longer and weighted differently from the one Troy had been working with. When we expressed concern about switching to a substantially different blade so late in the rehearsal period, the director arranged extra rehearsals so Troy would have sufficient time to get used to his new weapon.

Six moves, as well as the arc of the fight, were dictated by the text. During the duel, Pridamont, an observer invisible to the combatants (and in this production located on a platform downstage of the proscenium arch), describes a number of Clindor's moves. He also has several strong vocal responses that had to be taken into consideration as the choreography was mapped out. The first priority was to get the combatants to use moves that corresponded to Pridamont's descriptions. The director also asked that Matamore, Lyse, Pridamont, and Isabelle be involved in the fight. One final given circumstance demanded that the end of the fight occur upstage. A descending scrim meant that all the actors above the proscenium arch had to be upstage of the scrimline by the end of the fight. This worked out for the descending scrim, once rendered opaque, neatly solved the problem of removing Aldraste's body from the stage before the next scene.

The opening phrase of the fight began upstage center where Clindor, Isabelle, and Matamore were blocked pre-fight. Matamore (played by Paul Kaufmann), who is a bit of a coward, was to faint when trapped between the drawn swords of the enraged Aldraste and determined Clindor. Since Clindor had grabbed Matamore's sword, Matamore was free to collapse without having to avoid his sword on the way down. Matamore's faint also gave the two other characters onstage, the maid Lyse and the heroine Isabelle, something concrete to deal with during the first section of the fight. The two revived Matamore and ushered him out of the way for the rest of the fight.

Since the director wanted Aldraste to begin the fight entering from stage right with his sword drawn, a strong visual character statement was made by having Angland whip his rapier over his head into a high

prime en garde. He gradually lowered his blade to midline *prime* as he crossed to center taunting Clindor. He then casually stepped over Matamore's body and advanced on Clindor, forcing him to retreat stage left where an outside feint attack was used to shift Clindor downstage. With Aldraste now upstage left and parallel to Clindor, the fight moved downstage to include Pridamont, who stood on a platform set downstage of the proscenium arch and fourteen inches below stage level. As Aldraste advanced encircling Clindor's blade, Clindor suddenly beat off Aldraste's sword to the inside line and thrust to Aldraste's. Aldraste used a half-circle parry to deflect Clindor's blade and start things off with a bang with a nice flash of the blade.

Clindor retreated further downstage and reached a position just upstage of and parallel to Pridamont, who at this point turned his back on the combatants and asked, "This isn't dangerous, is it?" As he spoke, Aldraste brought his blade around for a horizontal sweep to five, which Clindor ducked. The blade passed over both Clindor's and Pridamont's head, seemingly by mere inches, with Pridamont sublimely unaware of the danger. The action then moved briefly to downstage center as Aldraste followed a retreating Clindor onto a platform jutting out into the audience. Here, Clindor and Aldraste exchanged a series of cuts and thrusts until Aldraste, with a shove to the shoulder, forced Clindor upstage.

The next phrase had to include four rapid-fire attacks described in the text as "Thrust! Thrust! Thrust! Thrust!" immediately followed by "Parry, hah!" These were used to speed up the tempo of the fight and move the action off the thrust platform to up center, so the next textually required move, a disarm, could occur out of audience range.

At this point in the fight, Pridamont exclaimed: "Oh, he's dropped his sword, how clumsy, he was always so easily distracted." Based on earlier textual clues, it was clear that Pridamont considered Clindor incompetent, but was he? Nothing in his earlier actions led one to believe that he was clumsy or stupid, so we decided to use the comment to show the audience how mistaken Pridamont is in his assessment of Clindor. The aristocratic

Aldraste, outraged at finding himself evenly matched by an upstart nobody, used a dirty trick in an attempt to defeat Clindor. At the peak of an *envelopment*, Aldraste moved in on Clindor and punched him in the face, forcing Clindor to drop his rapier, stagger back, and fall to his knees. The juxtaposition of Pridamont's unsympathetic description of a move he views as the result of incompetence and the reality of what the audience sees shows the audience how blind Pridamont is to his son's abilities and how brutal Aldraste can be. The intention was to have the audience solidly on Clindor's side by this point.

Again, the text assisted in setting the choreography. As Pridamont said, "Careful, fool, careful," Clindor rolled away from Aldraste's thrusts. Rising to his feet, the unarmed Clindor raced to stage right out of range of Aldraste's blade while Pridamont admonished, "For the love of God you can do better than that." Then Clindor avoided a vicious downstage diagonal sweep as Pridamont said, "Stop slouching around after him, after him." Here again, the conflict between the text and the action on stage was used to enhance the audience's understanding of these characters: Aldraste pursues a defenseless man, Pridamont makes light of Clindor's danger and abilities, and Clindor surprises them both.

Pridamont's final line—"Do something right for once, you Oh!"—brings the fight to an end. The stage directions simply read, "*Clindor stabs Aldraste.*" Although, the text called for this to be a rapier and dagger fight, the director eliminated the dagger. We therefore had to devise a way for Clindor to retrieve his rapier for the kill. In looking through the text again, we discovered that in a later scene, Isabelle's father accuses her of being an accomplice in Aldraste's death. Clindor's dilemma was solved by having Isabelle cross stage left to pick up Clindor's sword as he evaded Aldraste stage right. After Aldraste missed with the downstage diagonal sweep, Clindor crossed upstage left to Isabelle, who handed him his rapier. Aldraste followed quickly and attacked Clindor with a horizontal midline sweep, which Clindor avoided. With a deep lunge, the young combatant then thrust his rapier into Aldraste's heart.

Of course, in theatre one must always be

Prince Florilame (Tom Angland) is killed by Theognes (Demetrios Troy) in the University of South Carolina production of Tony Kushner's adaptation of Pierre Corneille's "The Illusion." Directed by Tyler Merchant. Fight Direction by Cathy Brookshire. Photo by Jason Ayers, DEIS, USC.



prepared for changes. Two days before opening night, the blocking leading into the fight was altered. The actors were now positioned far downstage center, quite close to the proscenium arch. Although they had attempted to incorporate the new moves by themselves, the opening of the fight now made no sense with the new blocking. I reassured the actors that the new blocking was not a problem and arranged with the stage manager for a short rehearsal. Aldraste's cross was revised to include a series of outside, downstage feint attacks that forced Clindor upstage left. An inside thrust and advance upstage for Aldraste were added and a downstage avoid for Clindor, and—*voilà!*—the fight choreography was back on track. The new

choreography worked beautifully as it gave a bit more leadtime into the fight and helped to heighten the tension.

Despite the short rehearsal time, the problems with wigs and hats, and the last-minute weapon and blocking change, this experience proved to be good for all involved. The faculty and staff consistently strove to provide a professional atmosphere. The actors were hard working, intelligent, and enthusiastic collaborators. Together we devised a fight that maximized the actors' strengths, minimized their weaknesses, fit the style of the production, and strengthened the audience's understanding of the characters' personalities.

A FINAL WORD

The University of South Carolina's interest in offering their students opportunities to learn how to be safe and effective actor/combatants is heartening and indicative of a similar attitude in the academic world at large. Hopefully, USC, along with other universities, will extend this interest to departmental curriculum in the near future. Positive experiences like this one demonstrate to all concerned that such a collaboration is in everyone's best interest.



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AN ARGUMENT AGAINST REALISM

by Aaron D. Anderson

Many people who write about stage combat preach the gospel of doing it “right,” and for most this means adhering as closely as possible to martial forms. This same preconception also underlies much of what has been written about the history of combat in theatre, especially in reference to the way that Shakespearean plays were originally staged. In fact, it would be difficult to count the number of times that various authors have described the prevalence of fencing in Elizabethan and Jacobean England as evidence that the sword fights on Shakespeare’s stages must have been spectacularly real. The main problem with all arguments of this type is that they overlook the fact that martial and performance forms, although they can at times be related, are not actually the same thing.

Many people have noted the prevalence of swordplay in Renaissance English society as evidence that the audiences of the day would have been in a position to judge the verisimilitude of the stage fights. That swordplay was prevalent even in theatrical circles during this period can be demonstrated in any number of ways. Gladiatorial fencing exhibits were sometimes given on the very same stages as the theatrical entertainments. The Blackfriars performance space housed a fencing school before it was converted into a theatre. At least four playwrights were involved in duels or brawls (John Day and Henry Porter fought each other, Ben Jonson killed one of his own actors in a duel, and Christopher Marlowe was killed in a tavern brawl). The leading comic actor of the day, Richard Tarleton, was an expert fencer (having played for and received his Master of Defense). And the stage directions in any number of plays include specific fencing terminology (e.g., Hamlet and Laertes “play” at fencing but Romeo and Tybalt “fight” when trying to kill each other, Sampson asks Gregory to remember his “washing blow,” and Mercutio satirizes the “immortal *passado*” and mocks Tybalt as “the very butcher of a silk button”).

Yet ultimately even these details tell little about the way that sword fights were performed on stage. The problem is that it is difficult to discern how much or in what way the martial form influenced the performance form and, by extension, what an Elizabethan or Jacobean audience would have considered a good stage fight. Did Renaissance audiences enjoy theatricality in stage performances (as many audience members do today) or did they demand a type of verisimilitude that reflected only the martial form? After all, if Renaissance English audiences wanted to see real fights, they could always go to the gladiatorial exhibitions or the bear-baitings or any one of a number of other blood sports for which the Elizabethans and Jacobeans were famous. Stage fights would have a hard time competing with these real martial exhibitions. It is therefore possible—and some have argued even likely—that the stage fights were not merely recreations of martial reality.

An analogous example might make this clearer. Suppose someone discovered a theatrical form that developed in almost exactly the same time as the Elizabethan and Jacobean theatre, in which the stories were derived from sources similar to those Shakespeare

used, sources borrowed from historical, literary, and popular literature and written in a similarly poetical style. Suppose further that this art form could be even more closely linked to the martial forms of the culture than could Renaissance English theatre. Suppose that almost all of the stories included some kind of sword fight, rape, or murder and that these martial actions were described in the scripts according to specific martial terms (i.e., jargon about cuts, thrusts, parries, and so on). Suppose that not only was almost every member of the audience highly trained in swordplay, but many audience members were actively employed as warriors of some type and that, in fact, many audience members were even armed with the exact types of weapons being used on stage. Suppose that a number of playwrights, actors, and audience members fought and sometimes died in duels before, after, or even during play performances. And, going still further, suppose that almost everyone in the world recognized that swordplay and the martial ethos that goes along with it were unequivocally a central and even spiritual part of the culture of the time, indeed, that martial aesthetics were key components of the very identity of the people performing in the plays and watching from the audience. This analogy posits a much stronger argument about the connection between martial forms and stage performance than does anything written about the Elizabethan and Jacobean theatre. Given this scenario, one might naturally assume that any stage combat would be closely related to the martial forms of real combat.

However, the analogy actually applies to the *kabuki* stage of seventeenth-century Japan, where combat is highly stylized and thus far from realistic. Those unfamiliar with *kabuki* conventions might assume that stage fights are simply real martial movements only choreographed so the performers move more slowly, broadly, and farther apart from one another than they would in normal fights. This is both a naive and highly inaccurate view, not only of Japanese culture, but also of the way that all stage conventions work in performance.

Kabuki fights are called *tachimawari*, which literally means “standing and turning about.” The fight movements are thus closer to a dance form than to the martial form. The weapons are wielded in the correct martial manner only insofar as the way they are swung or thrust conforms to the mechanics and philosophy of the weapon. Even this is done not so much out of a desire for verisimilitude as for a love of the aesthetics of the movement itself. Japanese aesthetics recognize beauty in martial forms; therefore, undeniable similarities exist between martial movements with weapons and stage movement with these same weapons. But the martial form is also clearly distinguished from the stage form. In some instances, different names are given for identical movements in each form. For instance, over two hundred specific movement patterns are catalogued for *tachimawari* that are distinct from martial *kata* (movement *kata* in fight scenes are generically termed *tate*). One might say that Japanese aesthetic tradition recognizes a different essence in each movement form (one designed to kill, the other to tell an aesthetically pleasing story). Even today, *tateshi*, choreographers

of *tachimawari* movements, are often much more concerned with demonstrating the inner essence of martial movement than with conforming to its outward expression.

Two general types of *tachimawari* exist. One type involves combat between opponents of roughly equal dramaturgical importance. The *tate* used in these confrontations dramatize the emotional—not chronological or real—length or weight of the encounter. One of the most famous examples of this type of combat takes place in the play *Natsu Matsuri (Summer Festival)* when the lead character, Danshichi, murders his father-in-law, Geiheji. Although Danshichi fights armed with a *katana* and Geiheji is both unarmed and essentially caught unaware, the murder itself can take well over ten minutes (sometimes up to twenty minutes) to perform. Although some of the movements in this fight outwardly look like real combat moves, this outer display is largely just a circumstance of the physics of the weaponry. The true quality of the *tate* in this scene is not the correct martial use of the weapon but the emotional weight of the murder. In contrast, the other type of *tachimawari* pits a single hero against a group of opponents and the essence of these movements is the ease with which the hero deals with the group. In scenes of this type, almost no similarity exists between real combat movements and the choreographed *tate*. As one of the leading Asian theatre scholars puts it, “The essence of [this] *tate* movement is effortlessness: a deft movement, a sharp lunge, a quick evasion, a stylized flick of the hand to send an opponent flying” (Brandon et al 93). Thus it is nearly impossible to analyze these types of fights by referencing only the martial quality of the movement. In fact, the underlying essence in both types of *tachimawari* is actually conveyed more through the stylized *mie* poses that follow the *tate* than through any of the combat movements themselves.

Movement in *tachimawari* is not the same as real combat in part because the aesthetics of the *kabuki* theatre were influenced by more than just martial culture (pervasive and central though it was). In particular, *kabuki* drew upon features of the *noh* theatre, including those passed down from the *bunraku* puppet theatre, and a number of artistic elements embedded within the warrior philosophy of *bushido* itself. Thus some of the central elements of *kabuki* fighting are *jo-ha-kyu* (an emotionally rhythmic build), *ma* (a sense of time expanding or filling with energy beyond chronological limits), and *mie* (stylized tableaux), none of which have anything to do with the outward reality of martial combat.

This, of course, does not suggest that combat on Renaissance English stages was even remotely as stylized as that in *kabuki*. However, the analogy does point to the possibility that Elizabethan and Jacobean stage conventions were also influenced by more than just martial culture. English Renaissance drama shared much in common with medieval drama, which was almost entirely allegorical in nature. In fact, no clear boundary separates the two periods. What we now call the Renaissance evolved slowly as economic, political, and social forces that changed the medieval *zeitgeist*. Thus much Renaissance English drama retained a number of medieval influences (a medieval style “Hell mouth” was even included in a list of props used by the Admiral’s Men as late as 1598).

To be sure, some of the cultural influences on stage performance were martial in nature, yet the impact of these is not necessarily as simple as some stage-combat fans would like to believe. While the medieval entertainments that preceded and in many ways shaped English Renaissance drama were highly influenced by military chivalric tradition, nearly everything known about these earlier entertainments suggests that even real combat was sometimes conducted as allegory. For instance, knights in a 1214 *pas d’armes* (passage of arms) *Castello d’amore* besieged maidens within a mock castle with fruits, flowers, and spices rather than realistic weapons (Pederson 14). There is also strong evidence to suggest that similar allegorical staging was used in the famous medieval tournament play *The Castle of Perseverance*. While it is difficult to imagine the combat between the Archangel Gabriel and the Anti-Christ in the York cycle play *The Coming of Anti-Christ* staged as anything as mundane as a real sword-fight between equally matched opponents, it is easy to envision this same fight performed with grandiose sweeping and possibly even flaming broadsword props wielded by actors with a vastly overblown acting style. (Hamlet’s description of an actor who “out Herod’s Herod” describes the popularity of this acting style even in Shakespeare’s day). One of the reasons medieval entertainments were not simply real is that, like *kabuki*, they borrowed from many sources besides military ones, such as visual art of the day and, especially, the allegorical biblical interpretations of the period.

Ultimately then the real question is not whether or not Renaissance English plays borrowed performance *tropes* from sources beyond martial ones, but rather why so many stage-combat fans refuse to even consider the possibility. In other words, since audiences in almost every historical period and country in the world at least occasionally accepted that stage fights are sometimes staged differently than real fights, why must one assume that Renaissance English audiences were somehow incapable of appreciating the difference? Perhaps the answer is simply that since stage-combat aficionados, by definition, love stage fights, they naturally assume that the accuracy of the fights was also important to period audiences.

The evidence actually suggests that Renaissance stage fights were not considered as noteworthy as other martial entertainments, such as the gladiatorial bouts, explicit descriptions of which do survive (see Anderson [2004]). One possible explanation is that the aesthetics of the stage combat blended with the overall performance aesthetic based in the mathematics of poetic meter. Although this does not mean that Elizabethan stage fights were performed in a highly stylized manner, no records exist to show that they were enacted only as real bouts. In fact, later eighteenth and nineteenth-century stage fights were often conducted according to pre-determined theatrical, not martial, patterns such as the “eights.” (For an extended analysis of a similar possibility in Elizabethan times see Dessen). Some Renaissance comedic fights might have been performed in a manner reminiscent of the earlier liturgical dramas. The juxtaposition of styles would have been funny, but not martially accurate.

The failure to distinguish the stage combat of comedy from that of tragedy has skewed discussion of martial realism. One fact often

cited to prove that Shakespearean stage fights were performed realistically is that the great comic actor Richard Tarleton was an expert fencer (having been awarded his Master of Defense). However, few period comic fights require real fencing skill. If such skill was necessary to perform Shakespeare's plays according to audience demands, it would make more sense for the star tragedian of the day, Richard Burbage (who performed leading combat roles in many of Shakespeare's histories and tragedies), to have trained as a master fencer. Yet there is no evidence to suggest he or any other period actor did so. The fact that a leading comic was an expert fencer might simply reflect more about the general martial culture of the time than it does about the specific aesthetics of stage fighting.

Some of the only written evidence about the way that fights were conducted in Elizabethan and Jacobean England comes from the 1616 revision to Ben Jonson's *Every Man in His Humor*. In the prologue of this play, Jonson criticizes the usual fighting methods of period actors who

with three rusty swords,
And help of some few foot and half-foot words,
Fight over York and Lancaster's long jars,
And in the tiring-house bring wounds to scars (9-11).

Admittedly, Jonson is arguing for something of the same type of realism many modern stage-combat aficionados suggest was present on Renaissance stages. But in doing so he highlights the fact that such realism was not always there.

Years earlier Shakespeare responded to similar criticism concerning his history plays, but came down on the other side of the realism-versus-theatricality coin. In his prologue to *Henry V*, Shakespeare asked audiences to pay more attention to the imaginative world created by the poetry than to the paucity of any stage imagery:

But pardon, gentles all,
The flat unraised spirits that hath dar'd
On this unworthy scaffold to bring forth
So great an object. Can this cockpit hold
The vasty fields of France? Or may we cram
Within this wooden O the very casques
That did affright the air at Agincourt?
Oh pardon! since a crooked figure may
Attest in little place a million,
And let us, ciphers to this great accompt,
On your imaginary forces work (8-17).

Piece out our imperfections with your thoughts;
Into a thousand parts divide one man,
And make imaginary puissance;
Think, when we talk of horses, that you see them
Printing their proud hoofs I' th' receiving earth;
For 'tis your thoughts that now must deck our kings,
(23-28).

Significantly, the Chorus goes on to implore audiences to gently hear, not see, the play. Although the passage says nothing specific about the way that fights were performed, it and others like it suggest that the primary element in Shakespeare's plays in performance was auditory rather than visual. Neither should one

forget that that the very language of the plays was poetic rather than realistic.

Allowing for cultural and theatrical, as well as martial, influences on the way plays were performed can also broaden our understanding of a number of other issues regarding combat in Shakespeare's works. For instance, in *Brawl Ridiculous* Charles Edelman argues convincingly that the use of armor in Shakespeare's history plays would enable actors to improvise in the stage fights with relative safety. Yet Edelman fails to address the purely theatrical potential of this. A real combatant fighting against armor would aim for the weak points (face, joints, and so on) of his or her enemy. However, these tactics undermine one of the best theatrical reasons to have armor on stage, i.e. to elicit the sound of swords and other weapons crashing onto or scraping across the back, breastplate, greaves, shield, or other flat surfaces. These dramatic possibilities may very well have altered the way that the stage fights were conducted. Even if we assume that some degree of reality was required for stage fights of the period, these fights might still have been orchestrated more for theatrical effect than for martial accuracy. Thus, although the martial tradition of the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods favored the thrust over the cut, the theatrical—auditory/crashing/scraping—use of armor would have been much better served with a cut as the principal movement. Likewise, although *Romeo and Juliet's* Tybalt is “the very butcher of a silk button” and thus presumably given to thrusting according to the martial use of the weapon, the implicit stage directions for Tybalt's entrance have him cutting about wildly, for per Benvolio, “He swung about his head and cut the winds, who nothing hurt withal, hiss'd him in scorn.” The ostensibly expert rapier-man even fails to kill or significantly wound any of the clown characters on stage. While it is possible to analyze Tybalt's entrance simply as an example of inaccurate or poorly executed rapier work (the martial explanation), it is even more likely that Tybalt's wild swings simply made a better stage picture (the theatrical explanation).

Fights are always spectacle, and Elizabethan and Jacobean plays competed with a number of other entertainment options in which real fights were the entire spectacle. It is unlikely that period plays could have competed on the same terms as those other entertainments. However, although theatrical fights have little possibility of real blood being spilled, a theatrical fight can be big, noisy, and fun in a way that is something other than a gladiatorial match, a bearbaiting, or an equestrian joust. To compete with real fighting forms, theatrical spectacle almost always demands something other than simple truth. Indeed, stage combat is always and necessarily known to be a lie and thus depends upon emotion, size, panache, and usually even a hint of the unusual for its power.

This is also true of stage and film fights today, yet many scholars apparently fail to recognize this. For instance, Robert Dillon's latest articles “Accounts of Martial Arts in Actor Training: an Enthusiast's Critique” and “Pet Peeves in the Martial Arts” mention only combative principals as necessary for “getting it right.” (In fact, so complete is Dillon's apparent allegiance to realism and accurate martial elements in performance that his dissertation, *Towards a theatrical hoplology*, glosses over an example of a *kabuki* play [*Kabuki Macbeth*] without a single reference to *tachimawari* or any non-realistic staging

conventions.) Likewise, in “Reality Check” Terry Brown argues that historical accuracy is the single most important part of any correct stage or film fight. Accordingly both maintain that the core of any truly good stage or film combat scene consists only of “accurate” (Brown) or “hoplological” (Dillon) martial arts training and research. Yet the modern marketplace for stage and screen fights suggests that such reality is actually far from the only concern.

It is telling that even someone as influential in the martial arts community as Jet Li (a former *wushu* champion and currently one of the most popular martial-arts film stars in the world) draws very clear distinctions between real martial arts and their cinematic representation. In “Inside the Action: a Conversation with Quentin Tarantino and Jet Li,” Lee discusses the difference between “movie martial arts” and “real” martial arts:

The most important [component] is the choreographer; like Wu-Ping or Corey Yuen. They teach us some special moves for a movie. You know, I know martial arts by heart, but they’re just athletic . . . but when you are working on a movie . . . you use [a] different kind of martial arts to help the character. [For] each character we design a quite special signature move . . . I try to tell Chinese people, martial arts are good, but [in] some ways they have a weakness, [a] problem; you know, because with martial arts [you] just stand there; but we [Chinese] like the Bruce Lee way to tell about it [the story]. . . . So that way we can show [a] different culture, different moves, *better* than “martial arts.” . . . A lot of people can do martial arts, but for the actor doing martial arts it’s different because they have emotion. They put [in] something from their heart.

Although he goes on to note that his preference for cinematic conventions over martial reality is at odds with his famed background in pure marital arts, Li, unlike Dillon or Brown suggests that one should acknowledge a difference between theatricalized fighting and real martial arts.

A quick look at almost any modern martial-arts film shows that pure or accurate martial arts are far from the only choreographic influence. For instance, the fights in the recent *Matrix* trilogy have been praised by both stage-combat practitioners and others in many forums. Yet the fight choreography in these films owes as much to numerous other influences as it does to any of the martial realities of *kung fu*. These include comic books, cyberpunk novels, anime, video games, Hong Kong cinema wire-work, post-modern theory, Buddhist and Christian religious iconography, and even fetish clothing. This same type of multi-source borrowing is also true of almost every other modern action film. Among the many films that share some of the *Matrix*’s choreographic inspirations are *The Musketeer*, *The Brotherhood of the Wolf*, *Underworld*, *Charlie’s Angels*, *Charlie’s Angels: Full Throttle*, *Exit Wounds*, *Blade*, *Blade II*.

In fact, the signature fights in most modern films have only a

limited basis in any real martial art and can thus be fully understood only in reference to the theatrical conventions they reflect. The sword fighting in *The Princess Bride* owes much more to the performance traditions of early swashbuckler films than to any real combat texts. Likewise, the combat form “Emotional Kung Fu” from 1979’s *Fearless Hyena* was invented precisely because Hong Kong film audiences of the time were tired of seeing the same type of fight choreography. In this instance, the audience’s dissatisfaction had nothing to do with how real or unreal film fights had become; they were just tired of seeing the same old thing. The combat move that finally kills Bill in Quentin Tarantino’s *Kill Bill*, “the five-point palm exploding heart technique,” has no true martial referent; rather the name itself is designed to parody the cinematic conventions of elaborate secret techniques. So too, the signature “musician” fight and the “toad” technique and even the penultimate “Buddhist palm” technique from the recent *Kung Fu Hustle* lack any reference to real fighting. These and many similar techniques can be understood only within the context of a wide range of cinematic traditions. And despite the claim that only real fights will do, all of these films enjoyed tremendous box office and critical success. Although almost no real fighting occurs anywhere in the film, *Kung Fu Hustle* won nearly every available award at the 2004 Hong Kong film festival.

Still, many stage-combat aficionados continue to insist that precise and accurate martial technique is the only acceptable method of choreography. This is especially puzzling in light of the fact that realism is not even the dominant theatrical trope any more (if indeed it ever truly was). The majority of plays currently running on Broadway or in the West End or even regionally are musicals. A realistic fight (especially a historically accurate one) would be wildly out of place in epic musical battles, such as those in *Les Miserables*, *The Civil War*, or *Napoleon*. In musicals, the primary concern of the choreography almost always has more to do with fitting the overall rhythm and flow of the fight to the musical score than with anything having to do with the realities of combat.

Besides musicals, a vast majority of other plays are designed according to what are sometimes called Brechtian-influenced staging aesthetic. It is important to note that Brecht was violently opposed to realism. Though few modern playwrights or directors share Brecht’s specific politics, the visual and presentation aesthetics that flow from this theatrical tradition are nevertheless far from realistic. In fact, almost every theatre historian notes that most of the aesthetics of modernism and post-modernism oppose both naturalism and realism to one degree or another. Hence a number of performance styles, such as those popularized by *The Blue Man Group*, *De La Guardia*, *Urinetown*, *Avenue Q* and Julie Taymor’s *The Lion King* and *Titus*, celebrate the theatricality rather than reality of performance.

What then is to be made of the numerous arguments by stage-combat practitioners that realism is the only way to go? There is undoubtedly value in the sort of detailed martial, historical, and cultural analyses done by Dillon, Brown, and others. Yet just as clearly this value does not lie in choreographic prescription, for the marketplace alone shows otherwise. The best scholarship then seems that which balances martial realities with theatrical

possibilities. In some ways all stage-combat scholars exist in the nexus between two worlds: between the theatrical and the martial, between artistic license and historical re-creation, between those unaware of martial reality and those who insist upon it. Perhaps the most useful thing to do is simply to carry knowledge from one side to the other.

Maybe we might then envision a new job-description—call it combat dramaturgy or something similar—for those inclined towards both scholarly and practical study of the martial arts. The “theatrical hopology” described by Dillon or the careful historical analysis offered by Edelman and some others come very close to this. What keeps many of these martial analyses from becoming fully dramaturgical is simply an unquestioned insistence on the primacy of realism and subsequent failure to take into account the inherent theatricality of performance. Ultimately, the theatrical medium is always larger than the limits of the real; and, although martial knowledge is certainly an important part of many stage fights, martial-arts scholars are the only people in the world whose major concern is that fights are done right. Everyone else just wants theatrical fights to be good; and at no time or place in the history of the world has good theatre been limited to what is accurate or real.

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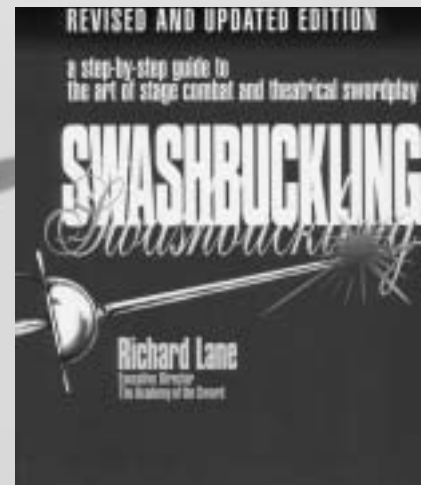
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KING LEAR in Prison

by Richard Hedderman

Editor's Note: While attending a production of The Miracle Worker at the University of Wisconsin-Parkside in Kenosha in the early spring of 2004, Richard Hedderman ran into Dr. Jonathan Shailor who chairs the Communication Arts Department at Parkside and had taught Drama and Communications at the Racine Correctional Facility. Shailor, who had worked with Hedderman at a Boston area theatre, invited Hedderman to serve as fight director on a production of King Lear at the prison.

I met with Dr. Jonathan Shailor in August to discuss concepts for *Lear*, review the cast, and assemble production-fight profiles. Strict criteria also governed the selection of weapons. Steel swords, daggers, and knives were naturally forbidden. Even wooden practice implements or replicas were prohibited because, at a glance, a guard might construe them as actual weapons. We finally decided upon *escrima* sticks, practice weapons that are roughly three-foot lengths of plastic covered in a foam-rubber sleeve. These were not likely to cause harm or concern no matter how cruelly or injudiciously applied. The sticks were acceptable to the facility's security staff and served the needs of the production. In the long process of bringing the fights of *Lear* up to speed, this stood as a considerable success.

The question then surfaced as to how the sticks were to be used. Deciding that the audience would accept any reality the actors assigned to the sticks, no matter how general, we agreed to coach the actors to bludgeon, beat, slice, and stab as various scenes dictated. Ultimately, the actors wielded the sticks with commitment and vigor, and invested them with considerable intention while still leaving the guards with a palpable sense of ease.

The one abiding concern of the warden and the facility's chief of security was the confinement of Kent to the stocks. Under prison code, no prisoner is to be restrained in any manner except within the context of a security emergency. To the prison officials, performing *King Lear* did not qualify as a security crisis. As with the weaponry, we once again improvised, this time to create the illusion of confining Kent. Most theatre professionals would agree that on stage subtlety can often get you far. We decided to keep the scene simple, seating Kent in a chair with a two-by-four resting on his shoulders. His wrists would then hang loosely over

the board as if actually tied to it. In the end, the suggestion proved as powerful as actual stocks might have been. Everyone wound up happy—at least as happy as one gets in prison.

That fall, the production was underway. The prison library served as the production rehearsal hall, and the men began each session by clearing tables to make a stage-sized space among the bookcases. At the first fight rehearsal, Shailor assembled the men and introduced me, explaining that my job was to choreograph the staged violence for the production and make sure that no one got hurt. I detected an air of chagrin among some of the men, although I could not tell if this was because the violence would only be staged (and no one was slated to get his head split) or because they would not stage the action themselves. Between fight rehearsals, they took matters into their own hands anyway. I can conclude that in prison, real or staged violence has a distinct tendency to degenerate. Nonetheless, we discussed the dynamics of stage-combat basics and safety issues (follow directions and do not actually hurt the other actor), who I was, and where I had trained. One inmate said he was quite familiar with the SAFD but could not remember where and with whom he had first certified. The men dressed in dark green surgical scrubs were uniformly patient, deferential, and eager to please.

In fact, the actors and their individual characteristics and personalities were in many ways remarkable and well suited for their roles. The inmate who was to play Gloucester had a red





Rehearsals and training continued for several months. Working closely with the cast, I watched them develop as actors and individuals, beginning to grasp the demands of Shakespearean performance and diction. Some nights they studied with Shailor, concentrating on acting, voice, Shakespearean drama and scene analysis. Their education occasionally generated surprising results. At one point during a run-through, the inmate who was the assistant director and production stage manager, leaned over to me and said, "That scene is still problematic. Transitions between beats are getting static. They're neglecting discovery for anticipation, and sacrificing narrative clarity. I think some of the guys still aren't yielding freely to a subjective dialectic." I took a good long look at him.

birthmark splashed across his nose and right cheek below the eye, somehow anticipating Gloucester's later optic gore. The actor playing Kent had been incarcerated for seventeen years and had many more to look forward to, so I suspect he had killed someone. The themes of murder, deceit, depravity and revenge in *King Lear* were a natural fit for a prison production.

As we began to talk about the production and the fights that had been planned, Shailor likewise speculated that some of the men may very well have had personal experience with actual violence. He then asked, with astounding casualness, if anyone was in for assault. The inmates suddenly fell silent and to a man, began to look at the ceiling or examine their shoes that is, all but one young fellow, whose hand shot up exuberantly. The man brightened like a kid at an ice cream stand. "I am," he announced proudly, "I'm in for assault!" He seemed happy to be of assistance. Eventually we calmed him down with the promise that his expertise in this arena was both valued and respected.

In choreographing the violence, I set out from the start to keep it simple and found that the cast, inexperienced as they were, absorbed the choreography well and handled the *escrima* sticks safely and effectively. The value of the sticks was adjusted according to the needs for a particular scene, and the actors accommodated these vagaries with aplomb. When a heavy cutting and thrusting dynamic was wanted, such as in the climactic Edgar/Edmund fight, the actors adapted to the broadsword fighting style that supported that approach. In the engagements with Oswald and Kent, the sticks were treated as blunt objects, used largely for beating and pounding attacks as with clubs, short quarterstaves, and maces. The moves were kept big, consisting mostly of expansive swipes and avoids. Of course, I omitted such techniques as exceptions, detailed point work, or similar moves that might have been inconsistent with the weapons or unlikely to read well. Generally, the actors seemed to like head cuts, stomach swipes, and the occasionally ferocious *corp-a-corps*, so these moves were liberally added as the aesthetics of the choreography allowed. The cast proved capable and energetic and were thorough and responsible in their regard for the rigors and disciplines of stage combat.

But a few days later the stage manager was not around. When I asked about him, Shailor replied, "He took the night off." In fact, many of the initial cast were not around. The good-natured assailant from a former meeting was recuperating after having a bullet surgically removed from his leg. The original Kent had been remanded to solitary confinement for offenses unspecified, and the original Lear had won early release for good behavior.

By a general vote of the remaining cast, Shailor was elected to assume the role of Lear, which, considering Shailor's ample qualities as an actor, surprised no one, and he took over without hesitation. Much less expected was the dedication exhibited by one of the inmates. Toward the end of the rehearsal period, the actor playing Oswald received a reduction in sentence and was





The eye-gouging scene was horrifying in its own way as Gloucester shrieked piteously and Cornwall dug in and tossed an eye aside. Actually the audience watched delightedly as the “eye” bounced and rolled to the edge of the stage. The actor had insisted on palming a small rubber ball painted like an eye to enhance the effect. When told that a torn-out eye would more likely splat sickeningly than roll, he remained enthusiastic about the rubber ball trick. We finally decided that watching Gloucester’s eyes bouncing merrily to the edge of the stage was really a lot of fun.

Less charming was the fact that on a few occasions some of the fighters invented moves on the spot despite repeated

remanded to a minimum security facility—a break he had long been hoping for. But he refused to leave until after the play closed, an option one would not anticipate a prison extending or a prisoner desiring. The actor subsequently said that the prison officials had let him stay because of his involvement with the show.

In April of 2005, the facility hosted performances of *King Lear* in the prison gym that culminated in a series of public showings of the play. Shailor and some of the men had fashioned a small stage at one end of the space and added large screens along the upstage perimeter to provide backstage space. The final show was attended by several members of the Milwaukee-area theatre community, including Jamie Cheatham and the Milwaukee Repertory Theatre education director, Jacque Troy. The fights went uniformly quite well and the actors turned in a compelling if somewhat unusual performance.

For example, the actor playing Cordelia, serving five to seven for possession with intent, was a stocky fellow in a lady’s frock. In fact, he stood about six foot two and weighed in at about two hundred seventy-five pounds. His tattoos were resplendent in their variety and iridescence. Given the actor’s size, Shailor, as Lear, was unable to actually carry him onstage dead at the end and had to tow him in on a flat-bed hand truck.

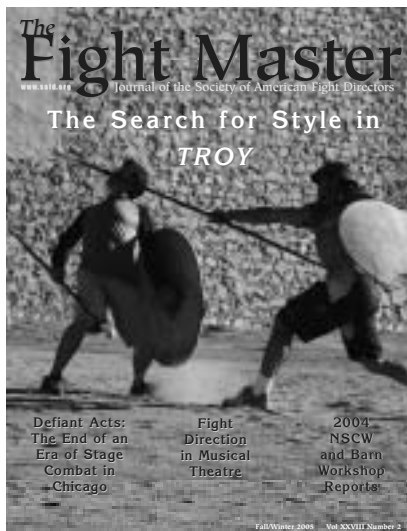
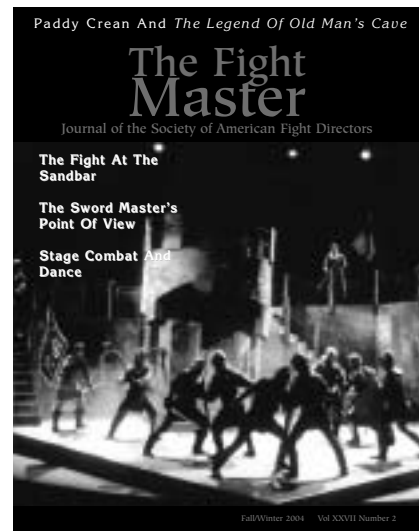
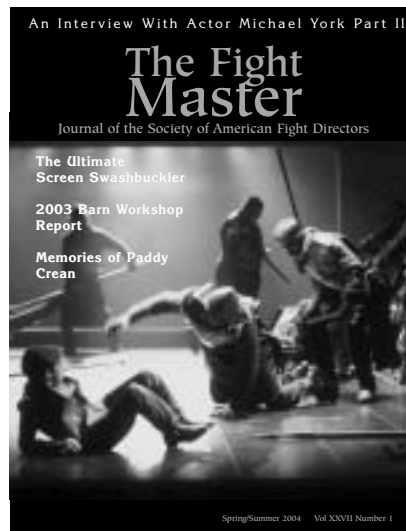
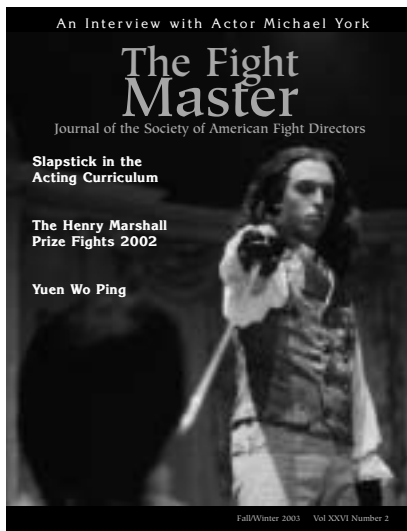
admonitions to avoid improvisational choreography. After one sequence that otherwise went well, I explained to Jacque Troy that some of the choreography might have looked mushy because the actors had suddenly made it up. She replied pleasantly, “Of course they did.”

Still, as the cast took final bows on the last night, each grinning broadly, I detected a distinct note of melancholy, a sense that something irretrievable had passed through each one of them. As I stood applauding among the other audience members, it seemed to me that these men had been marked with some new and nearly indelible passion. Perhaps it was simply what comes with telling a story of nearly insufferable loss, grief, and despair in a strange yet somehow familiar language written four hundred years ago.

In that moment, they suddenly were no longer offenders or prisoners. Whatever they had done to wind up behind bars, whatever offense, transgression, perfidy, or betrayal, whatever crime they had perpetrated, for a brief time none of it seemed to matter. In that time and place they were actors performing Shakespeare’s *King Lear*. Under the makeshift costumes and prison scrubs, ultimately these were just men trying to save their lives.



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July 10 - 28, 2006

SAFD & North Carolina School of the Arts, Winston-Salem, NC

(336) 734-2834 www.safd.org/NSCW/NCSA/NSCW_NCSA.html

National Stage Combat Workshops

Actor/Combatant Workshop

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www.safd.org

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July 29 - August 19, 2006

SAFD & North Carolina School of the Arts, Winston-Salem, NC

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

Summer Sling X

August 17 - 20, 2006

Fights4, New York, NY

(718) 788-4957 www.safd.org

Philadelphia Stage Combat Workshop

Fall 2006

SAFD & The University of the Arts, Philadelphia, PA

(215) 888-4172 www.philascw.org

The Eleventh Annual Winter Wonderland Workshop

January - February 2006

(708) 466-7055 www.winterwonderlandworkshop.com

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

August 2004

August 31	The Swash and Buckle Club
Bret Yount/John McFarland	Richard Ryan
Baron Vaughn	R&D
Ronan Traynor	QS
Megan Squire	R&D
Georgie Smith	R&D
James Rushbrooke	R&D
Robert Paul	R&D
Carla Pantoja	R&D
Stanhope Owen	R&D
Julie O'Hare	QS
Lucy Nevitt	QS (EAE)
Simon Mirza	R&D
Francesc Martinell	R&D (EAE)
Gordon Kemp	QS (EAE)
Sam Kahn	R&D (EAE)
Clive Hobson	R&D
David Hammerton	QS
Luisa Guerreiro	QS
Natacha Gangler	R&D
Ian Fowler	QS
Anne Foldeak	QS
Simone Ellul	QS
Helen Corbett	R&D
Sally-Ann Burgess	QS (EAE)
Leigh Acton	R&D

December 2004

December 15	University of Florida
Tiza Garland	David Leong
Ben Whitmore	UA
Matt Wharton	UA
Ed Unger	UA
Jonathan Stewart	UA
Nishant Gogna	UA (EAE)
Lauren Frazer	UA
David Carter	UA (EAE)
Juan Cardenas	UA
Raymond Caldwell	UA
Garrett Bantom	UA

January 2005

January 31	Theatre Puget Sound
Robert Borwick	Richard Raether
Ilene Fins	BS
Deb Fialkow	BS

February 2005

February 2	Goodfoot Productions
Robert Westley	Dale Girard
Christi Waldon	SS QS
Mark Mienart	BS (EAE)
Geoffrey Kent	R&D SiS UA (EAE-All)
Tim Ullich	SS (EAE) BS (EAE) QS

February 5	Carnegie Mellon University
Richard Raether	J. Allen Suddeth
Alexis Wolfe	SiS
Adrienne Wells	SiS

Kate Rogal	SiS
Michelle Mulitz	UA
Paloma Guzman	UA
Demetrius Grosse	SiS
Whitton Frank	UA
Claudia Duran	SiS
Michael Dunay	SiS
Greg Coughlin	UA
Gaius Charles	SiS
Anthony Carrigan	UA
Kersti Bryan	UA
Ryan Bechard	SiS
Raffi Barsoumian	UA
Asher Arnold	UA
Khaliah Adams	UA

February 7	Theatre Puget Sound
Robert Borwick	Richard Raether
Ryan Spickard	UA
Brynna Jourden	UA
Rob Jones	UA
Angela Johnson	UA
Kevin Inouye	UA
Ilene Fins	UA
Anna-Marie Devine	UA

February 10	University of Denver
Geoffrey Kent	Dale Girard
Jonathan Webb	UA
Michelle Waterson	UA (EAE)
Kevin St. John	UA
Syreetta Spears	UA
Stefanie Rowland	UA
Josh Peraltra	UA
Amy Osatinski	UA
Paul Ketchum	UA
Jennifer Jaynes	UA
Tara Holmes	UA
Angela Durlin	UA
Kari Delany	UA
Colin Day	UA
Matthew Cornish	UA
Lyndsay Corbett	UA
Vanessa Brenengan	UA
Chad Bianchi	UA
Carissa Baker	UA
Devon Adams	UA

February 15	North Carolina School of the Arts
Dale Girard	J. Allen Suddeth
Adrian Wyatt	R&D (EAE) SiS
Liz Wirth	R&D SiS
Andy Strong	R&D SiS
Renaldy Smith	R&D (EAE) SiS
Noah Silverstein	R&D SiS
Paul Riley	R&D
Holly Pierson	R&D
Andrew Pastides	R&D SiS
Linda McBride	R&D SiS
Cedric Mays	R&D SiS
Jon Manzke	R&D SiS
Issac Klein	R&D SiS
Timothy Keifer	R&D SiS (EAE-All)
Jefferson Isleib	R&D SiS
Joseph Isenberg	R&D SiS
Cooper D'Ambrose	R&D SiS
Abraham Cruz	R&D SiS
Eryn Cooper-Harris	R&D
Chance Carroll	R&D SiS
Jeff Burroughs	R&D SiS
Freddie Bennett	R&D SiS
Shanna Beauchamp	R&D (EAE) SiS
Michael Anderson	R&D SiS

February 17	Theatre Puget Sound
Robert Borwick	Richard Raether
Ryan Spickard	KN
Angela Johnson	KN
Kevin Inouye	KN
Anna-Marie Devine	KN
Kevin Inouye	SS
Ilene Fins	SS

February 21	Rumble in the Rockies
Geoffrey Kent	Dale Girard
Darrell Rushton	UA KN
Melissa Ruchong	UA
Carol Roscoe	SiS UA
Ambrose Ferber	UA KN
Kate Dillingham	UA KN
Shanna Beauchamp	UA KN

February 21	Rumble in the Rockies
Geoffrey Kent/Robert Westley	Dale Girard
Carol Roscoe	R&D
Kate Dillingham	R&D

February 21	Rumble in the Rockies
Robert Westley	Dale Girard
Ambrose Ferber	BS
Carol Roscoe	BS
Shanna Beauchamp	BS
Benaiah Anderson	BS

February 27	The Actor's Gymnasium
Chuck Coyl/John Tovar	Michael Chin
Elizabeth Styles	UA (EAE) KN
Rachel Stubbs	R&D UA KN
Jordan Smith	R&D UA KN
Charlie Olson	R&D UA KN
Derek Jarvis	R&D UA (EAE) KN
Jessica Dunne	R&D UA KN

March 2005

March 5	New York City
Ricki Ravitts	Michael Chin
Matt Worley	R&D UA BS
David Tyson	R&D UA BS
Rachel Scott	R&D UA BS
Ed Ruggenkamp	R&D
Chris Leidenfrost	R&D
Tony Javed	R&D UA BS
Neimah Djourabchi	R&D
Matthew Bernstein	R&D

March 6	Arcadia University
Ian Rose	J. Allen Suddeth
Owen Timony	SiS UA
Doug Thomas	SiS UA BS
Margarita Ruiz	SiS
Matt Mainhart	R&D UA BS
Christopher LeShock	SiS UA BS
J. Alex Cordaro	SiS UA BS
Brett Cassidy	R&D UA BS
Karl Babij	SiS BS

March 7	Theatre Puget Sound
Robert Borwick	Richard Raether
Evan Whitfield	R&D BS
Ryan Spickard	SiS BS
Adam Larmer	R&D BS
Brynna Jourden	R&D BS
Rob Jones	R&D BS
Angela Johnson	SiS BS
Kevin Inouye	R&D BS
Ilene Fins	R&D BS

Anna-Marie Devine	R&D SiS BS	Philip Gorbachov	R&D	Sally-Ann Burgess	SS
Gordon Carpenter	BS	Malcolm Caluori	R&D	Ariel Burdick	SS
March 10	University of California-Santa Cruz	March 25	University of Southern Mississippi	Megan Barham	SS
Christina Traister	J. Allen Suddeth	Scot Mann	Michael Chin	Jessica Ball	SS
Elise Youssef	UA	Myra Schodlbauer	UA QS	April 15	Academy for Classic Acting
Kristina Slayter	UA	Kelly Martin	UA (EAE) QS	The Shakespeare Theatre	Erik Fredricksen
Matt Seeberger	UA	Daniel Dauphin	SiS SS UA (EAE) QS	Brad Waller	R&D SiS UA QS S&S KN
Rodney Ridgel	UA	Lee Crouse	SS UA QS	Esther Williamson	R&D SiS UA QS S&S KN
Jeff Reed	UA	April 2005		Yaegel Welch	R&D SiS UA QS S&S KN
Kerstin Porter	UA	April 3		Elizabeth Webster	R&D SiS UA QS S&S KN
Tyler Parks	UA	April 3	The Noble Blades	Gabriel Sigal	R&D SiS UA QS S&S KN
Donald Nurge	UA	Robb Hunter	J. Allen Suddeth	Mark Ross	R&D SiS UA (EAE) QS S&S KN
Megan Murphy	UA	Karen Schlumpf	SiS	James RicksUA BS KN (EAE-ALL)	R&D SiS QS S&S
Daniel Miller-Schroeder	UA	Arthur Rowan	SiS	Amy Quiggins	R&D SiS UA QS S&S KN
Aileen Menkin	UA	Kevin Robertson	SiS	William Peden	R&D SiS UA KN (EAE-All) QS S&S
David Kohnen-Barberan	UA	Scott Kerns	SiS	Lynn McNuttUA BS (EAE-All)	R&D SiS QS S&S KN
Kevin Johnston	UA	Brian Farrell	SiS	Susanna Harris	R&D SiS UA (EAE) QS S&S KN
Alan Heiple	UA	Julianna Allen	SiS	Babs George	R&D SiS UA QS S&S KN
Erin Hampson	UA	April 7	Bay State Fencers	Richard Frederick	R&D SiS UA QS S&S KN
Tyler Hackworth	UA	Robert Walsh	J. Allen Suddeth	John Flaherty	R&D SiS UA QS S&S KN
Bruce Glaseroff	UA	Alisia Waller	UA	Nathalie Cunningham	R&D SiS UA QS S&S KN
Nikolai de Malvinsky	UA	Serahrose Roth	R&D UA	April 16 American Musical and Dramatic Academy	
Kelsey Custard	UA	Rob Najarian	R&D UA QS	Payson Burt	Chuck Coyl
Carol Crittenden	UA	Jeffrey Knoedler	UA	Zach Wiedenhoeft	R&D UA
Samuel Collier	UA	Ted Hewlett	R&D UA QS	Mel Rolando	R&D UA
Mary Close	UA	L. Eddy	R&D UA	Jade Pothier	R&D UA
Michael Beatty	UA	Stephanie Cavagnaro-Wong	UA	Tiffany Howa	R&D UA
March 10	DePaul University	Shelley Bolman	UA	Robert Goodwin	R&D (EAE) UA (EAE)
Nicholas Sandys	Chuck Coyl	April 8	American Reperatory Theatre	Erin Campbell	R&D UA
Josh Sumner	R&D UA (EAE) KN	Robert Walsh	J. Allen Suddeth	April 23	Florida State University
Matthew Pierce	R&D UA (EAE) KN	Marion Wood	UA	Paul Steger/Ian Borden	Richard Ryan
Calvin Marty	R&D UA KN (EAE)	Frances Uku	UA	Johnny Vieira	R&D BS
Laura Mahler	R&D UA KN	Zuzanna Szadkowski	UA	Adam Thompson	R&D BS
John Lewis	R&D UA KN (EAE)	Mickey Solis	UA	Ricardo Terrell	R&D BS
Keith Gallagher	R&D UA KN	Jorge Rubio	UA	Jason Tate	R&D BS
Desmin Borges	R&D UA KN	Peter Richards	UA	Matt Quinones	R&D
Michael Blum	R&D UA (EAE) KN	Jake Manabat	UA	Edelyn Parker	R&D BS
Andrew Block	R&D UA KN	Deborah Knox	UA	Michael Niedzwiecki	R&D BS
Jonathan Beran	R&D UA (EAE) KN	Clark Huggins	UA	John Moreno	R&D BS
March 11	Denver Center Theatre Academy	Signe Harriday	UA	Josh Kirby	R&D
Geoffrey Kent	Dale Girard	Murisa Harba	UA	Danielle Jackson	R&D BS
Robert Westley	QS	Katori Hall	UA	Christine Holmes	R&D
Jason Short	SS	Katierose Donohue	UA	Natalie Fairchild	R&D
T. David Rutherford	R&D	Pamela Diem	UA	Cameron Diskin	R&D (EAE) BS (EAE)
Melissa Ruchong	R&D	Sam Chase	UA	Holly Butler	R&D BS
John Routzahn	R&D	Peter Cambor	UA	Megan Boone	R&D BS
Erin Ramsey	SS S&S	Jason Brown	UA	Frankie Alvarez	R&D BS
Gia Mora	R&D SS	Shawtane Bowen	UA	Aaron Abelman	R&D BS
Kat Michels	R&D SS	Julia Benn	UA	April 25	Virginia Commonwealth University
Mike Mcneil	R&D	Sarah Abrams	UA	Adam McLean	David Leong
Jillian Lietzau	R&D	April 9	Case Western Reserve University	David White	UA BS
Terry Kroenung	SS	Drew Fracher	David Woolley	Julie Philips	UA
Anne Foldeak	R&D SS	Kimberly Weston	R&D	Jeffrey Cole	UA
Ambrose Ferber	R&D SS (EAE)	Lelund Thompson	R&D	Jonathan Becker	BS
Pat Casey	R&D SS	Jason Miller	R&D	Timothy Bambara	UA
Jeff Bull	R&D SS	Joshua McKay	R&D	April 25	The Lee Strasberg Institute / N.Y.U.
Benaiah Anderson	SS	Samuel Holloway	R&D	J. Allen Suddeth	Richard Ryan
March 20	The Swash and Buckle Club	Elizabeth Davis	R&D	Victoria Schwarz	UA
Richard Ryan	Michael Chin	April 12	Marymount-Fordham London	Leigh Poulos	UA
Fliss Walton	SS (EAE)	Richard Ryan	Dramatic Academy	Diana Parent	UA
Salvatore Stella	SS	Kate Williams	Michael Chin	Lee Lytle	UA
Steve Starr	SS	Kelly Tighe	SS	Shira Kobren	UA
Rob Leonard	SS	Matthew Schleigh	SS	Kara Hamilton	UA
Gordon Kemp	SS (EAE)	Sara Salvatore	SS	Amy Dellagiarino	UA
March 21	Georgia Shakespeare Festival	Kathryn Rheault	SS	Elise de Roulet	UA
Jacki Blakeney	Richard Ryan	Emily McDonald	SS	Nell Casey	UA
Jason Watkins	R&D	David Klimkowski	SS	D. Casciari	UA
Kristen Walker	R&D	Katherine Horlitz	SS	April 27	Rutgers University
Don Stallings	R&D	Megan Haran	SS	J. Allen Suddeth	Mason Gross School of the Arts
Charity Pirkle	R&D	Margaret Grunewald	SS	Beth Whittig	Michael Chin
Ray Paolino	R&D	Ashley Gregoras	SS	Teresa Stephenson	UA
Jen MacQueen	R&D	Natalie Finn	SS	Ron Rosina	UA
Jonathan MacQueen	R&D	Jennifer Fersch	SS	Rico Rosetti	UA
J.C. Long	R&D	Lisa Ferris	SS	Josh Pfefferkorn	UA
Asa Jean	R&D	Melissa Diaz	SS		
Boone Hopkins	R&D				

June Patterson	UA	Darin Cabot	R&D UA QS	Robert "Tink" Tuftee	Michael Chin
Jae Murphy	UA			J. David Brimmer	
Raymond McAnally	UA (EAE)	May 2005		Al Foote III	
Jonathan Karp	UA (EAE)	May 4 University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign		Michael Yahn	UA (EAE) S&S
Jarde Jacobs	UA (EAE)	Robin McFarquhar	David Woolley	Matthew Wilson	SiS UA (EAE) QS S&S
Christopher Halladay	UA (EAE)	Joshua Willis	R&D SS UA	Adam Souza	SiS S&S
Julie Cotton	UA	Marie Walker	R&D SS	Lelia Shearer	SiS UA S&S
Mike Cinquino	UA (EAE)	Nick Thornycroft	R&D SS UA	Stephanie Rosenberg	SiS S&S
Tai Bosmond	UA	Meaghan Sullivan	R&D SS UA	Matthew Rini	SiS UA (EAE) QS S&S
Carlos Acuna	UA (EAE)	Paul Richau	R&D SS UA	Corey Robert Brandeis Pierno	SiS S&S
		Cristina Panfilio	R&D SS UA	Melissa Meli	SiS
April 29	University of Florida	Maria Pallas	R&D SS UA	Marca Leigh	SiS S&S
Tiza Garland	David Leong	Morgan Malone	R&D SS UA (EAE)	Samuel Joseph	S&S
Ben Whitmore	R&D BS	Hayley Jannesen	R&D SS UA (EAE)	Ethan Frisch	SiS QS S&S
Matt Wharton	R&D BS	Samuel Gaines	SS UA	Meghan Dickerson	S&S
Ed Unger	R&D BS	Alison Fyhrie	R&D SS UA (EAE)	Ryan Bartruff	SiS S&S
Kate Patterson	R&D BS	Matthew-Lee Erlbach	R&D UA	Lauren Ahrold	QS
Paul McClain	R&D BS	Jason Dirden	R&D SS UA		
Le-Anne Garland	R&D BS	Nathan Davis	SS UA	May 7	University of the Arts
Nolan Carey	R&D BS	Ameena Chapman	R&D SS UA	Charles Conwell	J. Allen Suddeth
Juan Cardenas	R&D BS	Brent Barnes	R&D SS UA	Jeffrey Ziegler	SiS (EAE) SS QS S&S
		Josh Andrews	R&D SS UA	Matthew Watkins	R&D UA BS KN
		Shaki Alliu	R&D UA	Nathan Unsworth	R&D UA BS KN
				Brandon Smith	R&D UA BS (EAE) KN
April 29	Ithaca College, London Centre	May 6	The Strasberg Institute	Kenneth Roehr	R&D UA BS KN
Bret Yount	Richard Ryan	J. Allen Suddeth	Michael Chin	Bryan Mergenthaler	SiS (EAE) SS QS S&S
Brett Travis	UA (EAE)	Alan Keane	UA	Daniel Mellitz	R&D BS KN
Patricia Tanguy	UA	James Birch	UA	Matthew McKenna	R&D UA BS (EAE) KN
Hollie Nadel	UA			Kevin McGuire	R&D UA BS KN (EAE-All)
Jason McAllister	UA	May 6	Roosevelt University	Kara Gavigan	SiS QS
Auri Marcus	UA	Chuck Coyl	Dale Girard	Kyle Fennie	SiS SS QS S&S
Lara Ianni	UA	Christopher Willumsen	UA	Brian Cowden	R&D UA BS (EAE) KN (EAE)
Alyson Friedman	UA	John Tomlinson	SiS UA	Nicole Carlson	KN BS
Austin Farwell	UA (EAE)	Scott Stangland	SiS	Kenrick Burkholder	R&D UA BS KN
Kimberly Andrus	UA	Martin Squier	SiS UA	James Burchill	R&D UA BS KN
		Matthew Shimhus	UA	Ben Stanley	R&D UA BS (EAE) KN (EAE)
April 29	Illinois Wesleyan University	Mallory Schuh	UA		
Paul Dennhardt	David Boushey	Sean Okerberg	UA	May 7	University of Miami, FL
Jessica Pink	R&D	Danielle O'Farrell	UA	Bruce Lecure	Michael Chin
Sean Olumstad	R&D	Michelle Mueller	UA	Jon White	R&D UA
Elizabeth Olson	R&D	Akili Moore	UA	Courtney Smith	R&D UA
Emily Montegudo	R&D	Mark Minton	UA	Candace Newton	R&D UA
Earl Kim	R&D	Brandon Miller	UA	Jonathan Miotis	R&D UA
Jean Kerr	SiS	Kelly McLaughlin	SiS	Jose Luaces	R&D UA
Nolan Kennedy	R&D	Charles McGrath	SiS	Matthew Leddy	R&D UA (EAE)
Megan Keach	R&D	DeAwna McGinley	UA	Autumn Horne	R&D UA (EAE)
Lisa Karlin	R&D	Alyssa Larson	UA	Javi Harnly	R&D UA (EAE)
Rian Jairell	SiS	Christopher Lamberth	SiS	Ross Evans	R&D UA
Vaughn Irving	R&D	Christopher LaBove	SiS	Lauren Connolly	R&D UA (EAE)
Peter Durkin	R&D	Lawrence Kern	UA	Erin Austin	R&D UA
Patrick Dunham	R&D	Kenneth Kendall	UA	Sara Andreas	R&D UA
Donald Denton	R&D	Don Jenkins	UA		
Zach Bosteel	R&D	Robert Hankins	SiS	May 7	University of Arizona
Stephanie Bliese	R&D	Jesse Grotholson	SiS	Brent Gibbs	Brian Byrnes
Michael Black	R&D	John Frazier	UA	Anna Yosin	R&D UA QS
		Matt Foss	SiS	Joyce Wong	R&D UA QS
April 30	Western Illinois University	Jessica Fernandez	UA	J. Trautmann	R&D UA QS
DC Wright	David Boushey	Stephanie Felmlly	SiS	Maggie Robbins	R&D UA QS
Shawn Wilson	SiS	JR Drew	UA	Christine Nelson	R&D UA QS
Daniel Tieken	SiS	Jeffrey Diebold	SiS	Cara Manuele	R&D UA QS
Mike Speck	SiS S&S	Benjamin Dicke	SiS	Sarah Hayes	R&D UA QS
Chelsey Sanderson	SiS S&S	Ashley Curry	UA	Andrew Goldwasser	R&D UA QS
John Payne	SiS	Rani Blair-O'Brien	UA	Clay Froning	R&D UA QS
Donna McNider	SiS S&S	Kristin Backstrand	UA	Spencer Dooley	R&D UA QS
Peter Johnson	SiS	Jed Alexander	SiS	Ian Delaney	R&D UA QS
Louis Hare	SiS	May 6	New York University	Dane Corrigan	R&D UA QS
Benjamin Haile	SiS	J. David Brimmer	Michael Chin		
Jessica Griffith	S&S	Miro Terrell	UA	May 7	Roosevelt University
Michael Flood	SiS UA S&S	Patrick Taylor	R&D	Angela Bonacasa	Dale Girard
Sheridan Essman	SiS	Steven Smith	UA (EAE)	Sarah Weis	UA
T. Fulton Burns	SiS S&S KN	Molly Schreiber	UA	Mark Wax	SiS UA
Russ Brown	SiS UA S&S KN	Michael Rudez	R&D	Cody Wass	SiS
		Miriam Mintz	UA	Leah Urzendowski	SiS
April 30	New Mexico State University	Amos Margulies	UA	Jenn Spain	SiS
Timothy Pinnow	Chuck Coyl	Justin Lauro	R&D (EAE) UA (EAE)	Samantha Scanlan	UA
Jesus Villanueva	R&D UA QS	Eero Laine	R&D (EAE)	Daniel Sanders-Joyce	UA
Michael Phillips	R&D UA QS	Brian Johnson	UA (EAE)	Laura Rook	UA
Cristina Martin	R&D UA QS	Kathleen Johnson	R&D	Daniel Roberts	UA
Richard Maclean	R&D UA QS	Alexandra Henrikson	R&D	Lauren Peterson	UA
Rachel Huehner	R&D UA QS	Carter Farmer	UA	Megan Payne	SiS
Jiji Hise	R&D UA QS			Kyle More	UA
Jeremy Gwin	R&D UA QS	May 6	Fights4/New York University	Morgan Manasa	SiS

Jacob Lorenz	UA	Danielle Mebane	UA KN	Natasha Galano	UA
Michele Kline	SiS	Brian Horwath	UA KN	Shane Ferreira	UA BS KN
Bethany Kinsler	UA	Peter Gaughan	UA KN	Justin Eure	UA KN
David Kelch	SiS UA	Vincent Fantini	UA KN	Kimberly Connelly	UA KN
Lauren Jennings	UA	Jenny Dempster	R&D SiS	John Clavier	UA (EAE) KN
Justin Issa	SiS	Morgan Cox	SiS	Jeff Burroughs	QS S&S
Joshua Holden	SiS UA	Michael Cosenza	UA KN	Jordan Brown	UA KN (EAE)
Katherine Herrera	SiS	Connor Carew	UA KN	Erich Bergen	UA (EAE) KN
Stephen Grush	UA			Freddie Bennett	S&S
Devon Fanning	SiS KN	May 11	Arcadia University	Shanna Beauchamp	QS (EAE) S&S (EAE)
Jeffrey Fahey	UA	Ian Rose	Drew Fracher		
Jessica Dunne	SiS UA	Jon Rachlin	UA	May 13	Niagara University
Arielle Augustyn	SiS	Bridgit Nemeth	R&D SiS UA QS	Steven Vaughan	J. Allen Suddeth
Bianca Atalya	SiS KN	Kerri Kohut	R&D SiS UA QS	Ian Tweedie	R&D UA QS
		Charles Illingworth	UA QS	Jason Tamborini	R&D (EAE) UA QS
May 7	Cornish College of the Arts	Amanda Damron	R&D SiS UA QS	Bill Patti	R&D UA QS
Robert Macdougall	David Boushey	Christian Aragon	R&D SiS UA QS	Sarah Neffke	R&D UA QS
Jeffrey Willey	R&D UA			Tracy Murawski	R&D UA QS (EAE)
Katherine Turner	R&D UA BS	May 12	North Carolina School of the Arts	Jerry McGrier	R&D (EAE) UA (EAE) QS
Asa Taccone	R&D UA BS	Dale Girard	Chuck Coyl	Andrew Liegl	R&D (EAE) UA QS
Julia Sirna-Frest	UA	Nicolas Townsend	UA QS (EAE) KN (EAE)	Andrew Lange	R&D UA QS
Kathryn Ryan	R&D	Emily Simones	UA KN	Jacqueline La Nasa	R&D UA (EAE) QS
David Rollison	R&D UA BS	Andy Robinson	UA KN (EAE)	Adriano Gatto	QS
Lisa Reynolds	R&D UA BS	Sarah Murray	UA KN	Adrian Borden	R&D UA QS (EAE)
Venessa Ortega	R&D	Nathaniel Mendez	UA (EAE) KN (EAE)	Sara Bentley	R&D UA QS
Lila Hughes	R&D UA	Matt Lauria	UA KN		
Gregory Guyles	R&D UA BS	Mark Karafin	UA KN (EAE)	May 13	DePauw University
Sharon Dumar	UA	Marcyanna Johnson	UA (EAE) KN (EAE)	Andrew Hayes	Drew Fracher
Mandy Delashmitt	R&D UA BS	Dylan Hoefler	UA KN	Rachel Wolff	BS
Colleen Creegan	R&D UA BS	Aaron Gonzalez	UA KN (EAE)	Dawn Wilfong	BS
William Brattain	R&D	Nicholas Galbraith	UA (EAE) KN (EAE)	Carrie Walker	BS
Todd Bjurstrom	R&D UA BS	Michael Dozier	UA KN	Shea Johnson	BS
Kjerstine Andersen	R&D UA BS	Ryan Carr	UA KN (EAE)	Bryan Dobrik	BS
		Blythe Auffarth	UA (EAE) KN (EAE)	Luis Davila	BS
		Shane Andries	UA KN (EAE)	Andrew Cole	BS
May 9	Indiana University of Pennsylvania			Linda Bradford	BS
Michael Hood	Chuck Coyl			Matt Barwise	BS
Bradley Waslenko	R&D UA BS	May 13	University of Puget Sound	Lindsay Bartlett	BS
Tiffany Trapani	R&D UA BS	Geoffrey Alm	David Boushey		
Christopher Steele	R&D UA BS	Mary Valentine	UA	May 14	University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point
Brandon Snyder	R&D UA BS	Timothy Strauhal	UA	Robert Ek	Chuck Coyl
Caitlin Simkovich	R&D UA BS	Nell Shamrell	UA	Mike Wiskow	R&D UA
Julie Settle	R&D UA BS	Jenifer Ross	UA	Greta Weibel	UA
Helena Sadvary	R&D UA BS	Frank Reed	UA	Charles Thao	R&D UA (EAE)
Robert Rozycki	R&D UA BS	Lauren Oxford	UA	Megan Simmons	R&D UA
Taren Robinson	R&D UA BS	Meredith Ott	UA	Dave Schoonover	R&D UA
Deborah Pollak	R&D UA BS	Annie McCullough	UA	Ashley Schmitt	R&D UA
Lucas Nguyen	R&D UA BS	Erin Layon	UA	Brenna Padesky	R&D UA (EAE) QS
Juliane Maximio	R&D UA BS	Phoebe Keleman	UA	Katie Merriman	UA
Brett Mack	R&D UA BS	Thomas Dewey	UA	Jonathan Marx	R&D UA (EAE)
Artemis Hough	R&D UA BS	Adam Davis	UA	John Keating	R&D UA (EAE)
Samantha Franco	R&D UA BS	Amy Corcoran	UA	Michael Kaup	R&D UA
Emily Ehlinger	R&D UA BS	Katie Condit	UA	Aaron Hurst	R&D UA
Zac Campbell	R&D UA BS	Katelyn Bruhn	UA	Darrel Hager	R&D UA (EAE) QS
Chuck Beikert	R&D UA BS	LaChrista Borgers	UA	Ann Hackbarth	R&D UA
		Alicia Blasingame	UA	Ben Griesse	R&D UA
		Haviva Avirom	UA	Meagan Gilliland	R&D UA
May 10	University of Houston			Amanda Ellis	R&D UA (EAE) QS
Brian Byrnes	Michael Chin	May 13	SUNY-Fredonia	Genorie Church	R&D UA
Lourdes Tapia	UA KN (EAE)	Edward "Ted" Sharon	J. Allen Suddeth	Christopher Bongen	R&D UA
Kiza Moore	UA KN	Katherine Varno	R&D		
Mike Heathcote	UA KN (EAE)	Mark Swiech	SiS	May 16	University of Washington
Kelly Harkins	UA KN (EAE)	Anna Stone	R&D	Geoffrey Alm	David Boushey
Brian Hamlin	UA KN (EAE)	Brendon Schaefer	R&D	Elena Wright	R&D UA BS
Reesa Graham	UA KN	Anne McAlexander	R&D	Maytinee Washington	R&D UA
Martin Estridge	UA KN	Chris Handley	R&D	Luke Stanhope	R&D UA BS
Benjamin Caldwell	UA KN	Joshua Gregory	R&D	Beverly Sotelo	R&D UA BS
Jessica Boone	UA KN (EAE)	Caitlin Genereux	R&D	Chris McKeon	R&D UA BS
Jess Akin IV	UA KN (EAE)	B.J. Erdmann	R&D SS UA	Lenne Klingaman	R&D UA BS
		Charlotte Dunn	SiS SS UA	Alex Fox	R&D UA BS
May 10	Private Lessons	Erin Dove	UA	Macah Coates	R&D UA BS
Leraldo Anzaldua	Michael Chin	Sara Churchill	R&D	Barzen Akhavan	UA BS
Audra Resendez	R&D SS	Lauren Basler	R&D		
Ryan Heitzman	SS			May 16	Louisiana Tech University
Brian Hamlin	R&D			Mark Guinn	Brian Byrnes
		May 13	North Carolina School of the Arts	David Reed	R&D SS QS (EAE) S&S KN
May 11	Temple University	Dale Girard	Chuck Coyl	Jessica Phillips	R&D QS (EAE) S&S KN
John Bellomo	Drew Fracher	Renaldy Smith	S&S (EAE)	Joshua Phillips	R&D QS S&S
Luigi Sottile	UA KN	Amanda McCallum	UA	Christina Linza	QS
Corey Sorenson	R&D SiS	Billy Magnussen	UA (EAE) BS KN (EAE)	Mary Leviner	QS S&S
Arnica Skulstad-Brown	R&D SiS	Rachael Kruk	UA	Ashley Larsen	R&D UA QS
Erin Salm	UA KN	Nicole Hodges	UA BS QS KN (EAE)	Jonathan Jolly	SS
Kunal Nayyar	R&D SiS	Adam Guerra	UA (EAE) BS KN (EAE)		
Michael Miller	R&D SiS	Blake Griffin	UA (EAE) KN		

Ya Yun Hseih	R&D UA QS	Matthew Davis	UA BS	Andrea Robertson	R&D SiS SS UA (EAE) BS QS
Justin Howard	R&D UA QS	William Crespo	UA BS		S&S KN (EAE)
David Gourley	R&D QS	Sarah Constein	R&D BS	Jonathan Baca	R&D SiS SS UA BS QS S&S KN
Casey Franklin	SS	Christine Cascino	SiS QS	Colby Baker	R&D SiS SS UA BS S&S (EAE)
Adrien Dion	R&D BS QS	Stephanie Berliant	UA BS	Zachery Dorsey	R&D (EAE) SiS SS UA BS QS
Andrei Constantinescu	R&D UA QS			Jessica Dunne	R&D SiS SS UA (EAE) BS QS
Giselle Chatelain	R&D BS QS	June 3	Eureka College Workshop		S&S (EAE) KN
Anita Brehaut	R&D QS	Paul Dennhardt	Richard Raether	Matthew E. Ellis	R&D SiS SS UA BS QS KN
Helen Armstrong	R&D UA QS	Patrick Williams	UA	David Kelch	R&D SiS SS UA BS QS S&S (EAE) KN
May 23	Georgia Shakespeare Festival	Diego Villada	SiS UA	Greg C. Lloyd	R&D SiS SS UA BS QS S&S
Jacki Blakeney	Chuck Coyl	Bradley Smoak	SiS UA	Willie Meybohm	R&D SiS SS UA BS QS
Sarah Trammell	UA	Christopher Smith	UA		S&S (EAE) KN
Don Stallings	UA	Elizabeth Olsen	SiS UA	Elizabeth Ritchie	R&D SiS SS UA BS QS S&S KN
Christopher Ryan	UA	Brittany Morgan	SiS UA	Jason Schumacher	R&D SiS SS UA BS (EAE)
Asa Jean	UA	Earl Kim	SiS UA		S&S KN
Jessyca Holland	UA	Loren Jones	SiS UA	K.C. Stage	R&D SiS SS UA BS QS S&S KN
Sarah Falls	UA	Julie Hurt	UA	Rachel Stubbs	R&D SiS SS UA BS QS S&S KN
Claire Christie	UA	Alex Hover	SiS UA	Jason Tipsword	R&D SiS SS UA BS QS S&S
		Rich Funk	SiS UA	Christi Waldon	R&D SiS SS UA BS (EAE) QS S&S
		Josh Doetsch	SiS UA	Matthew R. Wilson	R&D (EAE) SiS SS UA QS
May 25	[TheyFight]	Nick Doetsch	SiS UA		S&S KN
Donald Preston	Chuck Coyl	Diana Christopher	UA	Heidi Wolf	R&D SiS SS UA BS S&S KN
David Schneider	SiS S&S KN	Jason Cavallone	UA		
Jonathan Schleifer	SiS UA S&S KN			July 29 National Stage Combat Workshop ACW and AACW Skills Tests - UINLV	
Luis Rosa	SiS KN	June 5	University of San Diego	Drew Fracher	Drew Fracher
Tracy Roorda	QS KN	Colleen Kelly	Brian Byrnes	Richard Raether	Chuck Coyl
Michelle Penna	SiS UA QS KN	George Ye	R&D UA QS	David Woolley	Richard Raether
Brooke Martino	SiS UA KN	Camelia Poespowidjojo	R&D UA QS	Chuck Coyl	David Woolley
Christopher Marchand	SiS UA S&S KN	Lutherson Louis	R&D UA QS	Robb Hunter	David Boushey
Mary Karcz	SiS S&S KN	Bayardo De Murguia	R&D (EAE) UA QS (EAE)	John McFarland	Michael Chin
Melissa Iverson	SiS UA KN			Adam McLean	
Leanna Hieber	SiS UA KN	June 10	Private Lessons	Kathryn E. Adkins	Certificate of Completion
Maya Hamdan	UA QS KN	Paul Dennhardt	Richard Raether	Alec Barbour	Certificate of Completion
Louis Abela	SiS UA QS KN	Bradley Smoak	QS	Cathy A. Brookshire	Certificate of Completion
		Alex Hover	QS	Nancee Farrer	Certificate of Completion
May 27	Wright State University	Rich Funk	QS	John Gallinat	Certificate of Completion
Bruce Cromer	Drew Fracher	Diana Christopher	QS	Libbi Heap	Certificate of Completion
Tony Weaver	R&D UA BS	Jason Cavallone	QS	Kim Kelly	Certificate of Completion
Stephanie Thompson	R&D UA			Robert Kwalick	Certificate of Completion
Alanna Romansky	R&D UA BS	June 12	The Actors Gymnasium	Krista Layfield	Certificate of Completion
Alicia Rodis	R&D UA BS	Angela Bonacasa	Dale Girard	Eric Van Baars	Certificate of Completion
Adam Rihacek	R&D UA	Elizabeth Styles	SiS S&S	Karen Vanover	Certificate of Completion
Mark Mazingo	R&D UA	Toby Minor	SiS S&S	Nigel Delahoy	R&D UA BS
Chris Lingo	R&D UA	David Kelch	S&S	Matthew DeMeritt	R&D UA BS
Jared Lefevre	R&D UA BS	Chris Julun	SiS S&S	Evelynn Harmer	R&D UA BS
Kelly Anneken	R&D UA	Amy Harmon	SiS S&S	Paul Hester	R&D UA BS
		Eric Frederickson	S&S	Brandon Ketchum	R&D UA BS
May 28	Freehold Theatre Lab	Jessica Dunne	S&S	Joe Laney	R&D UA BS
Geoffrey Alm	Dale Girard	Andy Collins	S&S	Matthew McKay	R&D UA BS
Danielle Reiersen	QS			Catherine Moore	R&D UA BS
Amber Rack	QS KN	June 19	Freehold Theatre Lab	Adam Pearson	R&D UA BS
Aaron Orensky	KN	Geoffrey Alm	Drew Fracher	Andrew Reeves	R&D UA BS
John Lynch	KN	Paul Thorpe	R&D UA BS	Robert Smith	R&D UA BS
Rich Lewis	KN (EAE)	Emil Moehring	R&D UA BS	Joshua Tessier	R&D UA BS
Brynna Jourden	KN (EAE)	Pamela Mijatov	R&D UA BS	Kyle A. Wasserman	R&D UA BS
Lee Ann Hittenberger	QS KN	Richard Lewis	R&D UA BS	Julianna Allen	R&D UA
Gordon Carpenter	KN	Sally Klein	R&D UA BS	Colby Baker	QS KN
Sarah Cabatit	QS	Natural Israel	R&D UA BS	Charlton Gavitt	UA BS
Christina Buchen	KN	Lee Ann Hittenberger	R&D UA BS	Chance Hartman	UA BS
Barzen Akhavan	R&D	Amira Fahoum	R&D UA BS	Silas B. Holtz	UA BS
		Alicia Delmore	R&D UA (EAE) BS	Kathryn Mangan	R&D UA
June 2005		Andy Clauson	R&D UA BS	Adam Miller-Batteau	UA BS
June 2	Columbia College-Chicago	Daniel Christenson	R&D UA BS	Michael Schneider	R&D UA
David Woolley	Drew Fracher	Britt Boyd	R&D UA BS	Sterling Swann	R&D UA
Kera Yates	SiS			Rusty Tennant	R&D UA
Evan Wilson	QS	July 2005	National Stage Combat Workshop AACW and Intern Skills Renewals	Jason Tipsword	QS KN
Sylvia Wiczorkiewicz	QS	July 16	Neil Massey	Zachery Dorsey	KN
Larry Towers	UA BS	July 16	Leraldo Anzaldua	Dan Granke	SiS
Travis Sims	SiS QS		Chuck Coyl	Christopher Kettrey	UA
Evan Siermanski	SiS QS		Robb Hunter	Greg C. Lloyd	KN
Christopher Sanderson	SiS QS		Adam McLean	Matthew Martino	UA
Robert Richnavsky	R&D UA BS		Michael Chin	Jason Schumacher	QS
Jeffrey Phillips	SiS QS		John McFarland	Mia Self	UA
Michael Peters	R&D UA BS		Lacy Altwine	Christi Waldon	KN
Jamie Orr	SiS QS		Lacy Altwine	John Warren	R&D
Ajay Milan	BS		Melissa Bennett	Dusten Welch	R&D
Kinsey Klug	R&D UA		Dan Granke	Matthew R. Wilson	BS
Gillian Humiston	SiS BS QS (EAE)		Jill Materelli-Carlson		
Amanda Hosking	UA		Robert Najarian		
Alexander Hashioka-Oatfield	SiS QS				
Jonathan Harlow	R&D UA				
Jessica Flook	UA				



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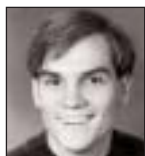
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The Fight Master

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 not-for-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

(Please Print)

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

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

Date Tested: _____

Instructor: _____

Weapons: _____

Adjudicator: _____

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