

Marshall University

Marshall Digital Scholar

Fight Master Magazine

The Society of American Fight Directors

Summer 2006

The Fight Master, Spring/Summer 2006, Vol. 29 Issue 1

The Society of American Fight Directors

Follow this and additional works at: <https://mds.marshall.edu/fight>



Part of the [Acting Commons](#), [Other Theatre and Performance Studies Commons](#), [Performance Studies Commons](#), and the [Theatre History Commons](#)

The FIGHT MASTER

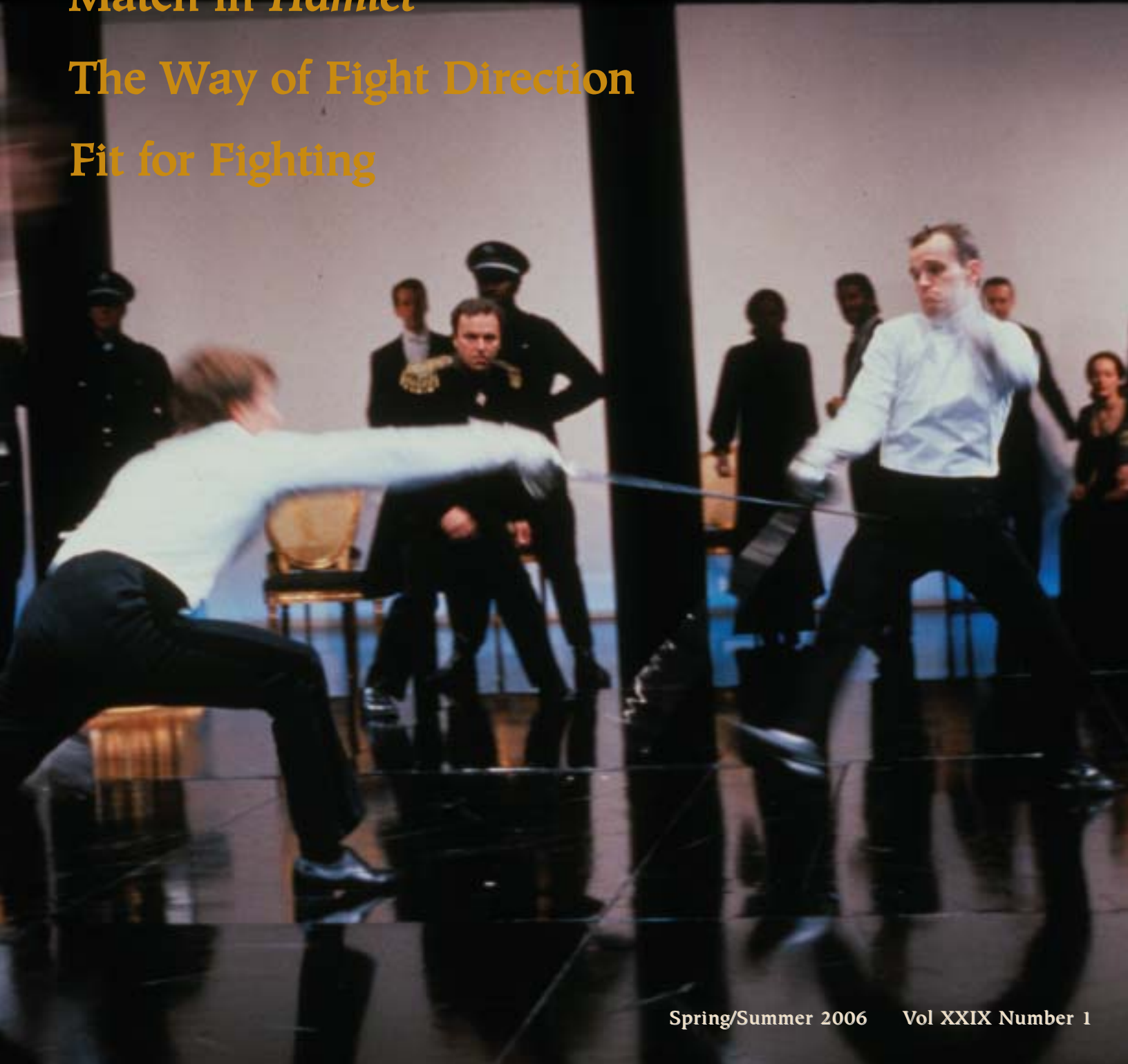
www.safd.org

Journal of the Society of American Fight Directors

Playing at Honor: The Fencing
Match in *Hamlet*

The Way of Fight Direction

Fit for Fighting



Spring/Summer 2006

Vol XXIX Number 1

STAGE COMBAT: EXTREME ACTING



Pollice Verso by Jean-Léon Gérôme, 1872

The Society of American Fight Directors 27th Annual National Stage Combat Workshops July 10-28, 2006

SAFD and University of Nevada-Las Vegas
College of Fine Arts, Department of Theatre

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

Actor/Combatant Workshop (ACW)

Train in the foundation skills of stage combat. World-class industry professionals teach techniques in Rapier and Dagger, Unarmed and Broadsword. Additionally, participants will receive an introduction to Quarterstaff, film fighting, and other weapon styles. Participants may opt to take an adjudicated Skills Proficiency Test at the end of the workshop.

Intermediate Actor/Combatant Workshop (IACW)

This workshop is for professional level practitioners with previous experience. It offers the opportunity to review, challenge and hone existing stage combat skills. Working within a small group, participants will study many weapon styles and techniques, exploring both their technical and practical theatrical use as well as Master Classes in performance application from leading industry professionals.

Upon acceptance the IACW staff will assess the skill level and particular needs of the students and will determine the specific SPT renewals and skills tests to be offered.

North Carolina School of the Arts Summer Stage Combat

Three-Week Intensive: July 10-28, 2006



**Offering high school and college credit courses
that cover eight exciting "fight" disciplines:**

Rapier & Dagger
Broadsword
Single Sword
Unarmed

Smallsword
Quarterstaff
Sword & Shield
Knife

A National Stage Combat Workshop of the Society of American Fight Directors, Summer Stage Combat will physically and mentally challenge an aspiring actor, dancer, director, stage manager, teacher or choreographer, and safely introduce him or her to the exciting and explosive aspect of the actor's craft -- theatrical violence.

For more information: 336-734-2834 or stage_combat@ncarts.edu

To register: 336-770-3290 or admissions@ncarts.edu

Please visit the Summer Stage Combat website at

www.summerstagecombat.com

NCSA Fight Director Workshop 2006

Directors, Actors and Fight Directing students for the August 2006 FDW are now being accepted.

2-Week Workshop Covers:

Acting classes
Fight direction
Contemporary Violence
Battle scenes

Comic Violence
Firearm safety
Swordfights
Safety

Workshop Package Includes:

Furnished apartments with kitchens,
Use of NCSA Armory,
10 Rehearsal Spaces,
Site specific choreography,
Video tape critiques,
Final show in 300 seat thrust theater!



The FDW has 16 years of experience training theater fight directors, directors and actors for stage fights from all styles and periods in history. Brawls, battles, duels, and domestic violence from the world of theatre form our exercises. From Shakespeare to Shepard, we work to feed the artist inside you!

Tuition for 2-Week Production Workshop July 29th to August 11th 2006

Directors	2500.00	(1200.00 deposit / 1300.00 due 7/20/06)
Fight Directors	2500.00	(1200.00 deposit / 1300.00 due 7/20/06)
Actors	2000.00	(1000.00 deposit / 1000.00 due 7/20/06)

Tuition prices include housing costs!

SAFD tuition discounts are detailed on the application form.

Applicants must be at least 20 years old with prior experience in acting, directing and stage combat. Spaces fill quickly! To guarantee your place in the 2006 Fight Director, or Actor Ensemble, send your application and deposit in today. Email us for an **application form**, or more information!

Contact information:

Action Workshops, Inc.
131 Linden Ave.
Glen Ridge, N. J. 07028

Email contact: NYFGTDIRCTR@aol.com
Phone contact: (973) 223 - 5056
Checks must be payable to: Action Workshops, Inc.

Features

The Fight Master

Spring/Summer 2006

Vol XXIX, Number 1

www.safd.org

12 Playing at Honor: The Fencing Match in *Hamlet*

Dr. Aaron Anderson explains Hamlet's inaction within a context based on period information as well as differences between the various editions of the play.

30 Fit for Fighting

Lauren Muney begins a new series of articles that help prepare the actor/combatant.

19 *The Blowin' of Baile Gall: My Adventures Off-Broadway*

In his first fight directing experience in an off-Broadway production, D.C. Wright shows how collaboration with the actors can save a lot of rehearsal time when staging fights.

22 The Way of Fight Direction

After attending the workshop at Lake Tahoe, Neil Flint Worden discovers an organic way of creating fights.

25 Barn Razzing

Ted de Chatelet shares his first hand experiences at the Barn and the things he learned that have made him a better fight director.



Molly (Susan B. McConnell, left) speaks with Stephen (Ciaran Crawford) in Ronan Noone's *The Blowin' of Baile Gall*. Directed by David Sullivan. Presented by Julian Pelenur and Aidan Connolly in association with Gabriel Byrne and the Irish Arts Center. Photograph by Richard Chambers.

19

NCSA Action Film Workshop 2006

Action Directors, Actor Combatants and Stunt Coordinators for the August 2006 AFW are now being accepted.

3-Week Workshop Covers:



Fighting for Single Camera
Fighting For Soaps
Acting For Camera
Fire Stunt Demo
Music Video Production
Chase Scene Production

Jib Camera & Steadycam
Camera Lenses For Action
Group Fights and Mob Scenes
Gun Safety for Film
Movie Trailer Production
SFX Makeup

10 DV Productions representing a Variety of Film Styles:

Film Noir
Gothic Romance
War

Slap Stick Comedy
Teen Slasher
Westerns

Action Adventure,
Sci-Fi
Urban Realism

Instruction provided by working professionals, and all DV Productions have working crews and Professional assistance of Producers, Directors and Stunt Coordinators.

Workshop Package Includes:

Furnished Apartments, Use of NCSA Armory, 10 Rehearsal Spaces, 10 Secured Film Locations including Old Salem, a beautifully restored 17th century village, Movie Theater Showing of Completed Projects & 2006 Workshop DVD.



Tuition for 3-Week Production Workshop July 29th to August 19th 2006

Directors	3850.00	(1200.00 deposit / 2650.00 due 7/20/06)
Stunt Coordinators	3500.00	(1100.00 deposit / 2400.00 due 7/20/06)
Actors	3300.00	(1050.00 deposit / 2250.00 due 7/20/06)

Tuition prices include housing costs!

"The ultimate Action Film training experience for the cost of a vacation!" Alec Baldwin

"... this experience would takes years of professional work" Richard Dean Anderson

"Wonderful learning experience and a heck of a lot of fun to boot!" Dr. Tony Medlin

Applicants must be at least 20 years old with prior experience in acting, directing and stage combat. Spaces fill quickly! To guarantee your place in the 2006 Action Film Workshop, send your application and deposit in today. Email us for an **application form**, or more information!

Contact information:

Action Workshops, Inc.
131 Linden Ave.
Glen Ridge, N. J. 07028

Email contact: NYFGTDIRCTR@aol.com

Phone contact: (973) 223 - 5056

Checks must be payable to: Action Workshops, Inc.



On the Front Cover:

From The Guthrie Theatre's 1989 production of Hamlet, played by Zeljko Ivanek and directed by Garland Wright. Fight Choreography by David S. Leong.



On the Back Cover:

From North Carolina Shakespeare Festival's 2000 production of Hamlet, directed by Imre Goldstein. Troy Rudeseal as Laertes (left). David Furr, as Hamlet (middle). Fight Master J. Allen Suddeth (right) coaching the Act V fight. Photograph by Tom Terrell.

Departments

Editorially Speaking	7
The Pen & the Sword	39
Put to the Test	42

Miscellany

Contributing Writers	7
Graphically Speaking	8
Advertised & Regional Workshops	44
Suppliers & Services	45
Directory	46
Membership Application	50

EDITORIALLY SPEAKING

Staged Combat has been evolving over the years since it first emerged in Great Britain and the United States. The early emphasis on safety and learning techniques to do a fight on stage or in film has given way to a concern for the integration of fight technique with acting intentions. This edition features several articles offering different approaches to choreographing violence.

Dr. Aaron Anderson in his dramaturgical analysis of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* helps the fight choreographer integrate information in the play along with historical information from the period to resolve what is really happening in the fight scene between Laertes and Hamlet. Anderson examines what has been erroneously perceived as Hamlet's inaction and puts this misconception in a new light. D. C. Wright shares with the readers his first experience off-Broadway in staging the violence in Ronan Noone's *The Blowin' of Baile Gall* and his approach to working together with the actors to choreograph the fights in this production. His approach broke down barriers that fight directors sometimes encounter when working under time restraints with inexperienced fighters.

Ted de Chatelet and Neil Flint Worden share their experiences at two fight director workshops: The Fight Director's Workshop, known as the "Barn" which moved to North Carolina in 2005, and the Fight Director's Workshop at Lake Tahoe with Dueling Arts International, Inc. The insightful information in these two articles show how useful such experiences can be for the actor/combatant, teachers and fight director and should encourage others to attend and share information at workshops in the future.

Also included in this issue is a review of the new edition of Domenico Angelo's *The School of Fencing*, originally published in 1763 by one of the most important masters of fencing. With its annotations by Jeannette Acosta-Martinez, Angelo's text has become more accessible to the modern reader. The new eight volume educational video series *And They Fight...*, reviewed by Sean Boyd, provides a similar service to both teachers and students of theatrical combat. Released last fall, the series is the most comprehensive practical examination and educational tool on stage combat currently available.

The Fight Master is beginning a series of fitness articles designed to help the actor/combatant assess and improve his/her fitness and body composition and fuel the body properly for active endeavors, such as preparing for a fight workshop. The articles will serve as introductions to little known techniques as well as reminders of more familiar strategies.

Articles for *The Fight Master* are accepted at any time. The deadline for the Fall/Winter 2006 is June 1, 2006.

Linda Carlyle McCollum

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

Aaron D. 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.

Sean Boyd, an MFA graduate from the University of Nevada Las Vegas, is currently pursuing a career as a professional actor and fight choreographer.

Ted de Chatelet, an Advanced Actor/Combatant with the SAFD, began training in 1987. He currently teaches at Western Oregon University and is Co-Artistic Director of Salem Repertory Theatre (www.salemrep.org) and Co-owner of Revenge Arts Stage Combat (www.revengearts.com).

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

Lauren Muney has been performing in corporate and festival entertainment for over twenty-five years. She trained and toured with Dale Girard in the *On Edge Touring Company* and has been a fight captain, fighter, explosives-and fire-stunt designer. She is also a certified physical fitness trainer (CPFT) and certified health coach (CHC) specializing in behavioral-change methods. Her website is www.physicalmind.com.

Neil Flint Worden is an assistant professor in Drama at Vassar College. He has been a professional actor and teacher for eighteen years and is a Fight Director/Master with Dueling Arts International.

D. C. Wright is head of Movement and Stage Combat at Western Illinois University in Macomb. Wright holds in BA in Theatre from Brigham Young University and an MFA in Theatre Education from Boston University and is a Certified Teacher in both the SAFD and Dueling Arts International.

Articles and letters for *The Fight Master* are accepted at any time. Articles intended for inclusion in the Spring/Summer issue must be received by November 1. Articles intended for the Fall/Winter issue must be received by 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: mccollum@ccmail.nevada.edu

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

Cover Photographs:

- ◆ 1200 dpi (dots per inch)
- ◆ Vertical orientation
- ◆ .tif or .jpg file formats

Interior Photographs:

- ◆ 300 dpi (dots per inch)
- ◆ Any orientation
- ◆ .tif or .jpg file formats

The deadline for graphic material for the Fall/Winter issue is July 31, for the Spring/Summer issue is 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:

John Tovar
124 Lakeside Drive, Apt. 531
St. Charles, IL 60174-7910

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

Workshop Coordinators and Advertisers

The Fight Master advertises non-SAFD workshops and services, including:

- ◆ Any Movement/Acting/Theatre-related Workshops
- ◆ Graduate/Undergraduate Programs
- ◆ Performances
- ◆ Publishers
- ◆ Armorers
- ◆ Period Clothing and Footwear
- ◆ Other Theatre/Combat-related Training Goods or Services.
- ◆ Training Institutions
- ◆ Theatre Companies
- ◆ Books and Scripts
- ◆ Swordcutlers
- ◆ Martial Arts Suppliers
- ◆ Fencing Suppliers

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

Tom Carr
1938 West Cornelia
Chicago, IL 60657
(773) 755-2271
tchjroscoc@aol.com

Notification for advertising in the Spring/Summer issue must be received by December 1; artwork due by January 15. Notification for the Fall/Winter issue must be received by July 1; artwork due by August 15. Please call for rates or other information.

The Fight Master

Journal of the Society of American Fight Directors

The Fight Master is published bi-annually

Copyright ©2006, **SAFD**

EDITORIAL STAFF

Editor	<i>Linda Carlyle McCollum</i>	linda.mccollum@unlv.edu
Associate Editor	<i>Karen Roop</i>	
Art Director	<i>John Tovar</i>	john_tovar@sbcglobal.net
Associate Art Directors	<i>Willie Meybohm</i>	wmeybohm@zoomtown.com
	<i>Elizabeth Ritchie</i>	queenelizabeth@fuse.net
Advertising Director	<i>Tom Carr</i>	tchjroscoe@aol.com
Consultants	<i>Mike Mahaffey: Testing/Dir.</i>	Secretary@safd.org
Advisor	<i>Drew Fracher</i>	FMRep@safd.org

SOCIETY OF AMERICAN FIGHT DIRECTORS

GOVERNING BODY

President	<i>Chuck Coyl</i>	President@safd.org
Vice President	<i>Brian Byrnes</i>	VicePresident@safd.org
Secretary	<i>Mike Mahaffey</i>	Secretary@safd.org
Treasurer	<i>Andrew Hayes</i>	Treasurer@safd.org
AAC/AC/Friend Rep.	<i>Al Foote, III</i>	ACRep@safd.org
Certified Teacher Rep.	<i>Neil Massey</i>	CTRep@safd.org
Fight Director Rep.	<i>Scot Mann</i>	FDRep@safd.org
Fight Master Rep.	<i>Drew Fracher</i>	FMRep@safd.org

ADVISORY BOARD

Chairman	<i>Jeffrey Koep, Ph.D.</i>
Board Members	<i>Dale Girard</i>
	<i>Robert L. Hobbs</i>
	<i>Lisa M.K. Jones</i>
	<i>Kim Zimmer</i>

HONORARY MEMBERS

Rob Colbin
Anthony deLongis
Richard Gradkowski
Dale Kirby

Visit the blazing **SAFD** Website

- ◆ Member Representatives
- ◆ Regional Representatives
- ◆ Certified Teachers
- ◆ Fight Directors
- ◆ Fight Masters
- ◆ Membership Information
- ◆ Regional Workshops
- ◆ Upcoming Events
- ◆ Directory
- ◆ Links

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

To
Advertise
in

THE FIGHT
MASTER

please
contact

Tom Carr

(773) 755-2271

tchjroscoe@aol.com

Theatre VCU MFA in Movement Pedagogy

Want to get a job teaching movement at the university level?
Come to Theatre VCU.

Graduates currently teaching at:

Ball State University
Florida State University
University of Miami
University of Florida
University of Wisconsin Parkside
University of Oklahoma
Webster University

David S. Leong
Fight Master, Movement Coach

Patti D'Beck
Choreographer, Director

Aaron Anderson, PhD.
Fight Director, Movement Teacher

- movement analysis
- mask work ■ physical comedy
- mime ■ weapons
- period & contemporary unarmed
- choreography and directing
- seminars in teaching

Call or write:

David S. Leong, Chairman
804.828.1514 ■ dsleong@vcu.edu

<http://www.pubinfo.vcu.edu/artweb/theatre/>

Virginia Commonwealth University is an equal opportunity/affirmative action institution providing access to education and employment without regard to age, race, color, national origin, gender, religion, sexual orientation, veteran's status, political affiliation or disability.

Two alumni of Theatre VCU's MFA Pedagogy program: **Tiza Garland**, Assistant Professor, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL and **Jamie Cheatham**, Assistant Professor, University of Wisconsin at Parkside, WI. Battle scene from the video shoot from *The Miracle*, choreographer, **David Leong**.

TheatreVCU
AT VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY
Member of NAST - National Association of Schools of Theatre

922 Park Avenue • P.O. Box 842524 ■ Richmond, Virginia 23284-2524

PLAYING AT HONOR: THE FENCING MATCH IN HAMLET

by Aaron D. Anderson

Students of historical fencing invariably have a rare knowledge that can serve an important role in dramaturgical analysis. The trick is to draw on this expertise to expand rather than limit the theatrical decision-making process. What follows is an example of how combat practitioners might integrate information about a play with that concerning combat to produce a useful analysis. In this case, I examine *The Tragedy of Hamlet* through a dual lens that considers both the theatrical and fencing texts of the period.

The Hamlet Problem

The main dramatic problem often associated with *Hamlet* is that of the central character's apparent inaction. Although the play involves many dynamic events (people killed, conspiracies made, plots hatched), the titular character is often thought of as incapable of decisive action. Thus Hamlet is sometimes portrayed as a mild, contemplative character, not merely reluctant to act, but almost adverse to action itself. Historically this has caused many performance difficulties that have led actors and directors to search for some way to create a dynamic character who struggles to act yet is constrained by monumental obstacles.

The detail of period fencing style and etiquette provide just such an active understanding of the central character. In fact, if Hamlet is regarded as subject to period dueling conventions, then the climactic fight in the work illuminates both the nobility of the young Dane as well as his ultimate ability to act quickly and decisively. Furthermore, an understanding of restrictive dueling conventions, linked as they were to period notions of honor, helps ground the character throughout the entire story by providing a series of playable obstacles. In this sense Hamlet's so-called inaction can be performed not as reluctance, but rather as dynamic movement through an ever-present maze of social restriction.

To understand the final confrontation between Hamlet and Laertes fully requires a consideration of the six basic parts of the duel: the wager offered by Osric, Hamlet's apology to Laertes, the introduction of the weapons and Laertes' switch, the first two bouts of the fight, the exchange of weapons, and the final trade of forgiveness.

The Wager

The wager described by Osric is one of the most complex issues because it is not entirely clear how the contest is supposed to be structured. The currency of the wager is plain enough: six horses against six rapiers and poniards (with the accompanying equipment for carrying them). Although it is not certain which of the two sides has staked the horses and which the rapiers, most commentators believe the king wagers the horses against Laertes' weaponry. Unfortunately, the rules of the contest, consisting of two apparently contradictory parts, are not as simple to decipher.

Os. The King, sir, hath laid, sir, that in a dozen passes between yourself and him he shall not exceed you three hits; he hath laid on twelve to nine (V. ii. 12-5)¹.

The first part seems straightforward: the contest is to be a series of a dozen passes or bouts with weapons. And when Osric states, "He shall not exceed you by three hits," he seems to refer to a type of handicapping system in which Laertes must win by a margin of three or more. The main difficulty (and the focus of much written debate) is in trying to reconcile this with the second part of the passage: "he hath laid on twelve for nine." Harold Jenkins describes the terms of this wager as "an insoluble problem" and quite rightly points out that winning by a margin of three in a dozen passes is not the same thing as winning twelve bouts to nine (561).

One of the first people to wrestle with this problem was John Dover Wilson. In the introduction to a 1933 facsimile publication of George Silver's *Paradoxes of Defence*, he writes:

What of the rest, "he hath laid on twelve for nine"? Here, I think, commentators have all gone astray through failing to see that the "he" in this clause is identical with the "he" in the clause that immediately precedes it, viz., Laertes; and that "laid on" means, not what "laid" means just before, but laid down conditions. In other words, Laertes on his side makes stipulations for a match of twelve passes instead of the usual nine, in order to give himself more elbow room to meet the heavy odds proposed by Claudius (xii).

This analysis influenced many later writers, some of whom argued for this interpretation and some against. Much of this debate is surveyed in Harold Jenkins' long note in the Arden edition of *Hamlet*. Jenkins argues that, while Wilson's description is plausible, it is not completely satisfying because little evidence supports a claim for a "usual nine." Instead he maintains,

the discrepancy reflects a divided intent. A wager is laid on whether Laertes will score three more hits than Hamlet in a match of twelve; but is this to be over twelve passes or while scoring twelve himself? The second idea perhaps forms while the first is

being penned, giving rise to an uncertainty which the text shows unresolved. So Laertes over twelve passes is to win by a margin of three, he is to score twelve against Hamlet's nine: it will not at once strike the audience in the theatre, and may not have struck Shakespeare, that the two things are not the same (563).

However, this assumes that the rules of the contest are somehow an error that the writer failed to recognize. It is something of a stretch to assume that not only did the author fail to understand the exact terms of the wager before committing pen to paper, but also that audiences familiar with fencing contests overlooked a contradictory wager and no one noticed this contradiction over the course of the entire production history of the play prior to its publication. Leaving the interpretation as an "insoluble problem" is therefore even more unsatisfactory than Wilson's description. In 1990 James Jackson offered a slightly more satisfactory possibility:

The usual explanation of the wager rests on the idea that there is to be a match of twelve hits. The Riverside Shakespeare glosses the first part of the above quotation as follows: "Laertes must win by at least eight to four"; it glosses the final clause as: "Laertes has raised the odds against himself by wagering that out of twelve bouts he will win nine."

A second explanation has been suggested that rests on a different understanding of the "dozen passes," this being that the match will continue until one fencer has made a dozen hits. This proposal rests on the statement "he hath laid on twelve for nine." Suggesting that the winner needs a dozen hits and must win by a certain lead (we have similar methods of scoring today in volleyball and tennis).

The second explanation for the wager makes, for me, more sense: that is, by the time Laertes has scored twelve hits, Hamlet will have scored nine or more. The king has laid his wager on Hamlet's side since Laertes is supposedly the better fencer. Hamlet appears to understand the wager and expects to "win at the odds" (292).

Jackson's interpretation seems to reconcile the two apparent contradictory parts of the wager. But given the long history of the

debate, no single interpretation is likely to satisfy everyone for long.

In any event, most important from a dramaturgical point of view is that Hamlet must not only understand the wager, but also the emotional stakes behind the invitation. Even if Hamlet imagines the contest to be a friendly fencing match, Osric's words make it clear that Laertes intends to hit Hamlet at least twelve times in front of the gathered court before Hamlet can land nine. Implicit in such terms is an assault on Hamlet's sense of pride. If, on the other hand, Hamlet recognizes the event as the thinly veiled duel it is, then he is also cognizant of the implicit threat of physical pain and possible danger accompanying the wager. Hamlet's acceptance of "the odds" in this case signifies a deliberate surrender to the conditions and attendant risk to body and spirit, and his banter with Osric during the discussion is not the playful exchange sometimes performed on stage. Instead the scene would be better enacted as an instance of counter aggression. Hamlet's later admission that he has been in "continual practice" then betrays his role as a camouflaged predator closing a trap around those who thought to ensnare him, a development anticipated in his response to an earlier threat: "I will delve one yard below their mines and blow them at the moon" (III, iv 210).

The Apology

Whatever his intentions, Hamlet apologizes to Laertes, a fact that might have its basis in the code of *duello* (the duel) that accompanied the importation of the rapier into England. Joan Ozark Holmer believes Vincentio Saviolo's *Of Honor and honorable Quarrels*,ⁱⁱ the second volume of *Vincentio Saviolo: His Practice in Two Books*, influenced Shakespeare's understanding of the code and led the playwright to adopt Saviolo's insistence that those of "gentlemenlike mindes" admit their own errors and accept apologies from others who have wronged them. Saviolo is especially adamant that an offending party ask for forgiveness when an action has been carried out "vnaduisedly against [one's] will,"—that is, rashly or madly. Subsequent satisfaction should follow, according to Saviolo, even if the victim has been "mightilye outraged" (1993:140). Based as it was on period notions of virtue, Saviolo's *duello* code might well have contributed to Shakespeare's framing the duel between Hamlet and Laertes with verbal apologies, requests for forgiveness, and the granting of pardons after bloodshed.

In fact, the details of the scene seem to conform to many of Saviolo's recommendations. Hamlet's actions, for example, clearly fit the description of an offensive act committed in distraction. And it is indicative of his own "gentlemenlike minde" that he then repents:

Give me your pardon, sir. I have done you wrong;
But pardon't as you are a gentleman.
This presence knows, and you must have heard,
How I am punish'd with a sore distraction
What I have done
That might your nature, honor, and exception
Roughly awake, I here proclaim was madness.
....
Let my disclaiming from a purpos'd evil

Free me so far in your most generous thoughts
That I have shot my arrow o'er the house
And hurt my brother (V.ii 222-39).

According to Saviolo's treatise on honor, this apology should be sufficient for when a confession of an "iniury by deeds" is made humbly, sorrowfully, or "in the presence of honorable persons," "no further quarrel should remaine" (Holmer, 1993: 14). If the confession and forgiveness concludes with the offended party embracing the wrongdoer—as is done in *Hamlet*, at least in words—then "a most honorable act twixt" men will have transpired (Holmer 1993:14). Hamlet's apology is thus conducted by the book of honor and stands in marked contrast to Laertes' later dishonorable actions.

Of course, Laertes responds to Hamlet with words that suggest he, too, is abiding by the code of *duello*: "I do receive your offer'd love like love/And will not wrong it" (V. ii. 247-9). But even a modern audience knows he lies. To a period audience, his deceit may have been even more pronounced. Citing Ruth Kelso, Holmer explains the Renaissance mindset and its implications regarding Laertes:

Out of the idea that a gentleman was a man of faith "grew the fiction that a gentleman could not lie, and the moral offence of even insinuating that he could, which were the basis of the dueling code." Laertes compounds his offense against Hamlet by words and deeds (16)ⁱⁱⁱ.

This deception of one gentleman by another clearly violates the prescripts of honor and seems to define Laertes as either a man who never subscribed to the code or as someone who has become so angered that his desire for revenge supersedes his allegiance to it.

Although modern audiences probably do not need to know the period nuances of the dialogue between Hamlet and Laertes, producers of the play would do well to attend to the history, for it provides important clues about the characters. Read against the backdrop of Saviolo admonitions, Laertes' desire for revenge shows up as distinct from Hamlet's quest on a multitude of levels. In this sense, the dramaturgical analysis suggests a play already at work between two men during the exchange of forgiveness.

The Introduction of the Weapons

Much has been made of another exchange in the scene of the duel, that between Hamlet and Osric at the opening of the discussion of the wager. The dialogue is sparse but telling:

Ham. What's his weapon?
Os. Rapier and dagger.
Ham. That's two of his weapons But well. (V. ii.141-3)

According to the code of *duello*, Hamlet, as the challenged, should have the choice of weapons. That Laertes chooses both the

weapons and the terms of the duel therefore demonstrates Laertes' lack of respect for Hamlet. The choice of rapiers might also be viewed as an indication of the difference between "good" English practice and "false" foreign influence.

This dichotomy parallels that concerning the "original" version of *Hamlet*. In reality no single authorized version exists; modern renderings are the result of editorial collections from a number of extant texts called F1 (for the first folio version) and Q1, Q2 (for the various quarto publications), only some of which are considered reliable. The weaponry and tactics used in the final match between Hamlet and Laertes have been a point of debate among scholars for years because this is the only moment in the play, "except for a 'bad' stage direction in the 'good' Q2," that the weapons for the bout are specifically identified as "rapier and dagger" (Edelman 182). "Rapier" in Shakespeare's plays might mean any fencing weapon, but probably refers to the specific, slender sword imported by the Italian masters and popular with the French. The inclusion of "dagger," although a customary addition in prize fights of the period, has often been thought to cause problems in the exchange of rapiers, leading some commentators to conclude that daggers were not used in the Globe production of *Hamlet*. But such an assumption goes against Osric's description of the use of both "rapier and dagger." The next mention of the weapons, which occurs in the controversial stage direction, is equally problematic. The folio reads

*Enter King, Queen, Laertes, and
Lords, with other Attendants with
Foyles, and Gauntlets, a Table and
flagons of Wine on it (3674-6)^{iv}.*

Q2, however, includes daggers in the list.

*A table prepared, Trumpets, Drums,
and officers with Cushions, King,
Queen, and all the State, Foiles, dag-
gers, and Laertes (3524-5)^v.*

The weapons are referred to as "foils" several times in the next few speeches. Hamlet's question—"These foils have all a length?" (V.ii.262)—is perfectly sensible since rapiers had no standard length. Each fencing master of the time had his own opinion of what was appropriate.^{vi}

The exact nature of the weapons is a matter of some debate, as is the manner of their use. Many commentators have pointed out that the practice of "baiting" foils was different in Shakespeare's day than in modern fencing practice. By at least 1603, some weapons employed a large, tennis-ball sized "button" on the tip to prevent accidental puncture to the body or eye (fencing masks being a much later innovation). However, a button of this size, or rather the lack of a button on Laertes' weapon, would be obvious to anyone in the audience and would have made a clandestine switch of weapons inherently unbelievable even to the point of ludicrousness. It is much more likely that the "baited" weapons described in the play refer to actual swords blunted and dulled. Baiting in this manner was a common practice in fencing schools

of the period and would have made the substitution of a sharp weapon difficult to detect through only cursory inspection.

Osric's involvement in the conspiracy has also been a matter of some speculation. J. Dover Wilson suggests that Osric is a knowing accomplice in the switching of weapons:

It is Osric who beguiles Hamlet to undertake the sword-play; it is Osric who acts as the chief judge; and it is the judges who are responsible, then as now for seeing that all is well and proper with the foils. Osric, therefore, when the court enters in 5.2.2.236, brings in the foils and daggers, and among them Laertes specially prepared weapon....Osric, of course, does not include the unbaited foil in those he brings forward; that would be too dangerous. But while the King and Hamlet are talking, Laertes makes passes with the weapon he has chosen, declares it to be too heavy, and either goes to the table and takes the poisoned rapier or else Osric brings it to him (xv-xvi).

James Jackson, on the other hand, argues that such an assumption is unsupported by the text: "Is Osric an umpire or a co-conspirator? We do not know, but there is no need for him to be any more than a self-appointed or court-appointed assistant to the match"(293). Still, the possibility that Osric participates in the intrigue surely exists, especially when one considers his other marks of difference (i.e. his "French" affectations of the type George Silver railed against in *Paradoxes of Defence*) and Hamlet's general dislike of the character. If Osric is performed according to such a reading of the play, the odds against Hamlet become much more dramatic and Hamlet's final actions much more heroic. But since no definitive answer springs forth from the text, any decision for modern productions must be based solely on artistic choice.

The Duel

The fencing match begins following the deliberations outlined above. Hamlet wins the first bout with "a hit, a very palpable hit" (V.ii.282) and also the second, "confess't" by Laertes (V.ii.287). All versions of the play are in basic agreement up to this point. But after Gertrude's "unfortunate choice of refreshment" (Edelman 183), the texts begin to diverge. Q1 goes directly on to the third pass, in which Hamlet and Laertes exchange rapiers:

Ham. Laertes come, you dally with me,
I pray you pass with your most cunningst play.
Laer. I! Say you so? Have at you,
Ile hit you now my lord:
And yet it goes almost against my conscience.
Ham. Come on sir.
They catch one another's Rapiers, and both are wound-

ed, Laertes falls down, and the Queene fallles downe and dies (cited in Edleman 183)

Q2 and the folio include a third, indecisive pass ending with Osric's declaration, "Nothing, neither way." The folio continues:

Laer. Have at you now.
In scuffling they change Rapiers.
King. Part them, they are incens'd.
Ham. Nay, come againe.
Osr. Looke to the queene there hoa.
Hor. They bleed on both sides. How is't my Lord?
(3775-81).

Only the stage direction is missing in the quarto version. Such discrepancies have generated much discussion about the way in which the weapons are switched. The first commentary appeared in an 1886 *Saturday Review* article, in which an expert on fencing claimed that "there is no doubt...that the actual fencing scene was intended to be carried on after the manner of those "prizes" played in Shakespearean days under the auspices of the Corporation of the Masters of Defence" (Edelman 183-4). Although problems of the order of the text are usually decided against what is commonly termed the "bad quarto" (Q1) and in favor of Q2 and the folio, the exact nature of the exchange of weapons remains a matter of conjecture. Each of the previous bouts begins with some form of verbal invitation from Hamlet. Initially he says, "Come on sir"; then, "Come"; and in the indecisive bout, "Come for the third" (3741-69). Laertes' exclamation—"Have at you now"—is usually interpreted to mean that he strikes at and wounds Hamlet with the envenomed blade before Hamlet can come on guard. The exchange of weapons that follows, then, is a result of Hamlet's sudden awareness of the reality of the danger facing him.

Hamlet's quick and deadly reaction to the knowledge that he faces a live sword blade is entirely in keeping with the lessons of defense taught at the time. Saviolo advises that it is "childish" to believe that friends, regardless of circumstances, can engage in a real duel with naked blades (quoted in Taylor 203). Once a challenge is accepted—or in Hamlet's case, realized—both combatants must fight to win by any means possible; one cannot afford to spare the other even slightly, for the price of mercy might be death. Threatened with a sharp weapon and equipped only with a practice foil, Hamlet's sole option is to attempt to disarm his opponent. The logistics of the disarming maneuver have been debated at length. E. B. Goodacre believes the direction "catch" in Q1 indicates that each combatant actually grasped the other's weapon in his freed hand; for support, Goodacre refers to Saint-Didier's 1573 *Traicté contenant les secrets du premier livre sur l'espée seule*, which illustrates a method of disarming one's opponent by so grasping his sword with the gauntleted left hand and wrenching it from his grip. Since Laertes learned his fencing in France, Goodacre argues, he would probably use the style taught by Saint-Didier (cited in Morseberger 98). However, Saint-Didier's book was not translated into English at the time *Hamlet* was written, and Shakespeare was probably not acquainted with it. On the other hand, English treatises on defense, such as George Silver's *Paradoxes of Defence*, also

included advice for wrenching a sword from an opponent's grasp with the use of a "glove of mail" (Morseberger 99). This presupposes, however, that both contestants engage with single rapiers and mailed gauntlets only (that is, without a dagger in the left hand).

As one might expect, the different texts cause confusion about whether or not Hamlet and Laertes fight with rapier and dagger or with rapier and mail glove. All three versions of the play clearly call for the use of "rapier and dagger." But the stage direction in the folio substitutes "gauntlets" for Q2's "daggers" in the implements brought onstage prior to the match. Several possibilities have been offered for this discrepancy. One of the most credible explanations attributes the difference to a change in the fashion of fencing between the publication of Q2 and the folio. The vogue of fencing with both rapier and dagger was relatively short-lived in England as it became apparent that a shorter, lighter, single weapon (which eventually evolved into the restoration court-sword) could be used more efficiently than heavier long-swords or rapiers. The dates of this transition roughly coincide with the differences in dates of publication between Q2 and the folio (1602-1623); this change in fencing vogue may therefore have influenced a change in the printed stage directions. On the other hand, Evan John, focusing on the "catch" in the stage directions, shows that rapier and daggers of the period had a *pas d'ane* or hook projecting from the hilt parallel to the blade that was designed in part to allow a fencer to catch his opponent's blade within the space between *pas d'ane* and the blade of his own sword; with the twist of the wrist, the fencer could capture his opponent's weapon. John argues that with such a catch, Hamlet could drop his own foil, seize the guard of Laertes weapon, and wrench it away (described in Morseberger 101-2).^{vii} Two problems complicate this solution: such a maneuver is difficult to accomplish consistently (the *pas d'ane* appears to have been developed as a means to take advantage of accidental catches rather than as a usual method of defense), and the trick would require special weapons (not all weapons have a *pas d'ane*).

John Dover Wilson offers another method in which Hamlet could close with Laertes and strike the sword from his hand to the ground: "Laertes replies by seizing Hamlet's sword with is empty right hand and wrestling it from him, while parrying his dagger thrust with dagger in his left hand" (xx). Likewise Robert Morseberger proposes a method of disarm based on George Silver's *Paradoxes of Defence* in which Hamlet would leverage Laertes' weapon free by coupling a beating action with fulcrum from his own sword and dagger (101). James Jackson, however, notes that such disarms are not only difficult to execute, but would also result in Laertes' sword landing inconsistently outside of Hamlet's grasp and possibly even flying into the audience.

Instead, somewhat like the anonymous writer of the 1886 *Saturday Review* article, Jackson theorizes that as soon as Hamlet realizes his danger, his first response would be to come to a close of "gryps" with Laertes by stepping inside the measure of his weapons to counter the threat of a second immediate attack (293). Coming to gryps, a method of disarm recommended in most English fencing manuals of the time, is usually accomplished by

engaging the opponent's sword with a dagger while threatening him with the point of a sword so as to make the opponent draw his own dagger. With all four weapons occupied in this manner, the next movement is to step inside of measure, drop one's dagger and grasp the hilt of the opponent's sword with the left hand. A twist of the wrist then forces the opponent to either release the grip on his own weapon or have his fingers broke in the guard. To defend himself against this maneuver, the opponent must drop his dagger and disarm in a similar fashion. Both combatants are then free to move back into fencing distance and switch the new weapon to their right hand. This technique has a number of both martial and theatrical benefits: it is based on the common fencing practice of the day as described in the printed manuals of the period, does not require special weaponry, is relatively easy to execute consistently, and does not result in accidents.

In any event one thing is clear: the most significant moment in the fight is when Hamlet becomes aware that he is facing a live blade. This changes the nature of the fight both martially and dramatically. From a martial perspective, Hamlet can no longer "play" at fencing: he is now engaged in a "fight." Even more important, this realization signals the moment when Hamlet is finally freed from all social restrictions. With Laertes' sharp weapon in his hand, Hamlet can "touch" Laertes as he had done in the previous three bouts, only this time—in keeping with all tactical advice—the intent is to disable or kill. It is also possible that at this point Hamlet now realizes the depth of the conspiracy. (After all, his uncle arranged the match.) Thus, when Gertrude calls out that she has been poisoned, Hamlet's attack against Claudius is not so much a rash act of desperation, but rather a finally unleashed fury—a justified vengeance—that has been boiling since the play's beginning.

Forgiveness

Despite the violence that unfolds, the scene, to adhere to the system of honor described by Saviolo, must include a final request for forgiveness. It is therefore no surprise that Laertes and Hamlet, even as they lie dying, reconcile their differences:

Laer. I am justly kill'd with mine own treachery
....
Exchange forgiveness with me, noble Hamlet
Mine and my father's death come not upon thee,
Nor thine on me. *Dies*
Ham, Heaven make thee free of it. I follow thee
(V. II. 313-37).

The two duelists genuinely and honorably express their forgiveness of one another and thus abide by Saviolo's instruction that "if vpon anye wordes, two should fight, and one of them should be hurte, it were not to be doubted that without further adoe they might be made friends, for that blood doth wash awaye all blot, of which seuer of them it was..." (quoted in Holmer 1993: 16). As Holmer notes:

Saviolo would praise both Hamlet and
Laertes for their confessions of fault
and mutual forgiveness. These two

who “play” a “brother’s wager” (5.2.53) achieve a figurative fraternal bond of mutual forgiveness than counterbalances the lack of any such confession, forgiveness, or reconciliation in this tragedy between the two literal brothers, Hamlet and Claudius. (1993: 16-17)

Hamlet can thus be seen to act nobly to the very end, and even Laertes’ treachery is washed away by his ultimate deference to the code of honorable *duello*.

Attention to the fencing ethics and tactics of renaissance England can thus illuminate nuances of *Hamlet*’s characters not otherwise readily apparent. Laertes’ actions seem at odds with Hamlet’s adherence to the honorable code of *duello* throughout the play, while the final exchange of forgiveness transforms Laertes back into a “most noble youth.” In addition, Hamlet’s quick and decisive action immediately upon realizing Laertes’ true threat counters criticism that fear makes Shakespeare’s main character unable to act. Rather, Hamlet’s deadly response is in keeping with his clear mind, rational judgment, and capacity for swift action. Such a reading of the duel between Hamlet and Laertes allows for a production in which Hamlet’s heroism and nobility are magnified throughout the play until the tragic end.

Other Interpretations

Dramaturgy is best defined in terms of relationships. In this sense, there is no such thing as dramaturgy per se, but only dramaturges, with each individual adding to the collaborative creative process in her or his own way. This has been but one interpretation, based on my knowledge of certain texts. Other stage-combat practitioners have something different to contribute, some particular knowledge or specific approach that could inform the overall creative process. None of the above analyses should be thought of as a “correct” interpretation. Nor should facts about martial forms be used to prescribe what is or is not possible for theatrical presentation. After all, ultimately theatre is always about the imaginative or poetic possibilities of characters rather than the mundane realities of weaponry, the emotional truth rather than historical fact.

Works Consulted

- Edelman, Charles. *Brawl Ridiculous: Swordfighting in Shakespeare’s Plays*. New York: Manchester University Press, 1992.
- Graves, Thornton S. “The Stage Sword and Dagger.” *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 20 (1921): 201-12.
- Holmer, Joan Ozark. “‘Draw if You be Men’: Saviolo’s Significance for *Romeo and Juliet*.” *Shakespeare Quarterly* 45.2 (1994): 163-89.
- . “Shakespeare’s Duello Rhetoric and Ethic: Saviolo Versus Segar.” *English Language Notes* 31.2 (1993): 10-22.

Hume, Robert D., ed. *The London Theatre World, 1660-1800*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois Press, 1980.

Jackson, James L. “They Catch One Another’s Rapiers: The Exchange of Weapons in *Hamlet*.” *Shakespeare Quarterly* 41.3 (1990): 281-98.

Jenkins, Harold. ed. *Hamlet*. Walton-on-Thames Surrey: Thomas Nelson & Sons Ltd, 1997.

Mitchell, Lee. “Stage Fencing.” *Theatre Arts Monthly* (Jan. 1935): 71-6.

Morseberger, Robert E. *Swordplay and the Elizabethan and Jacobean Stage*. Ed. James Hogg. Salzburg Studies in English Literature Series 37. Salzburg: Institut für Englische Sprache und Literatur, 1974.

Shakespeare, William. *The First Folio of Shakespeare 1623 / Prepared and Introduced by Doug Moston*. New York: Applause Books, 1995.

———. *The Tragicall Historie of Hamlet Prince of Denmarke (1604 Quarto) [Q2]*. Electronic Version: University of Virginia Library. <<http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/cgi-bin/browse-mixed?id=ShHaQ2&tag=public&images=images/modeng&ata=/lv1/Archive/eng-parsed>>. Accessed 17 March 1998.

Taylor, James. “The Influence of Rapier Fencing on *Hamlet*.” *Forum for Modern Language Studies* 29.3 (1993): 203-15.

Turner, Craig and Tony Soper. *Methods and Practice of Elizabethan Swordplay*. Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1990.

Wilson, J. Dover. Introduction. *Paradoxes of Defence*. By G. Silver. 1599. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1933.

Wise, Arthur. *Weapons in the Theatre*. New York: Barnes and Noble, 1968.

Wright, Louis B. “Stage Duelling in the Elizabethan Theatre.” *The Modern Language Review* 22 (1927): 265-75.

Endnotes

- ⁱ All references to *Hamlet* are taken from the Arden edition edited by Harold Jenkins, and will henceforth be referred to simply by act, scene, and line notation.
- ⁱⁱ In both Holmer 1993 and 1994.
- ⁱⁱⁱ In reference to Kelso’s *The Doctrine of the English Gentleman in the Sixteenth Century*, (1929, rpt. Gloucester, MA, 1964), pp. 78
- ^{iv} Line notations are from the Applause Facsimile edition
- ^v All references to Q2 are from the online edition
- ^{vi} Very long rapiers required the use of a dagger for support in preparation for a thrust.
- ^{vii} In reference to John’s “The Duel in *Hamlet*,” *Times Literary Supplement* (Jan. 25, 1934), 60.



THE UNITED STUNTMEN'S ASSOCIATION

IN CONJUNCTION WITH ON EDGE PRODUCTIONS

PRESENTS ITS 2006

INTERNATIONAL STUNT SCHOOL

JUNE 5-JUNE 24, 2006

AUGUST 21-SEPTEMBER 9, 2006

The **UNITED STUNTMEN'S ASSOCIATION** will conduct two three week intensive training sessions with emphasis on the most basic stunts found in film production including

- | | | |
|---------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|
| • PRECISION DRIVING | • FIRE WORK | • WIRE WORK/RAPELLING |
| • WEAPONRY | • MINI TRAMP/AIR RAM | • MARTIAL ARTS |
| • UNARMED COMBAT | • HIGH FALLS | • JERK HARNESS (RATCHET) |
| • HORSE WORK | • STAIR FALLS | • SPECIAL EFFECTS |

LIMITED ENROLLMENT

- 150 Hours of Instruction (6 day weeks)
- Instruction from 11 stunt specialists
- All cars and equipment included
- Video-taped critiques
- Acting action for the camera
- Seminars on networking the stunt business
- Guest stunt legend seminar
- Certificate upon completion
- Affordable housing (Motor Inn: \$27.00/night)

TUITION.....\$3000.00

DEPOSIT.....\$800.00

Deposit Deadline.....April 15, 2005

Balance Due.....June 4/August 20, 2006

*Cashiers checks, money orders & credit cards accepted
(Master Card and Visa, please)*

REGISTRATION

To register for the workshop, call or e-mail
UNITED STUNTMEN'S ASSOCIATION
2723 Saratoga Lane • Everett, WA 98203
(425) 290-9957
BUSHMAN4@prodigy.net



NOTICE TO APPLICANTS

With your deposit, submit a **Full Body Picture** and **Resumé** including height, weight, acting training, and any special skills you may have.

The United Stuntmen's Association reserves the right to refund any deposits and exclude any applicant who the Association feels is not suitable for such a physically demanding profession.

The International Stunt School is now an accredited vocational school in the state of Washington

SEE OUR WEB SITE: **www.stuntschool.com**
Download our application form or call/e-mail and request one.

THE BLOWIN OF BAILE GALL: MY ADVENTURES OFF-BROADWAY

by D.C. Wright

The invitation was as unexpected as it was exciting. While I was busy working as the fight director for the Illinois Shakespeare Festival, I received an emailed message from David Sullivan, who had once shared a graduate office with me during my time at Boston University. We had been out of touch for some time, so I was naturally delighted to hear from him. The contents of his email transformed delight into ecstasy.

Hey D.C.:

It's David from BU grad school. How are you? I'm working on a project in NYC...a small Off Broadway production of Ronan Noone's play *The Blowin of Baile Gall*. Ronan was at BU at the same time we were. I'm in need of a fight director during mid- to late-August for rehearsals. I know it's a bit far from IL but I thought I'd send a note to you...in case you'd be interested and available. I look forward to hearing from you.

Best,

David.

Short but definitely sweet, David's note was offering me a shot at an Off-Broadway show. Of course, I had long fantasized about working in New York, but had never seriously entertained such a possibility, if for no other reason than the geographic obstacles it presented. I live far from the theatre Mecca. Like Aladdin's genie, David was about to grant me my wish.

That he was capable of such feats was not surprising. I met David while he was working on his MFA in Directing at Boston University (BU) and in residence at the Huntington Theatre Company under artistic director Nicholas Martin. During our time at BU, we had collaborated on several shows, including a production at the Boston Playwrights' Theatre and another at Providence College. Since then David had added several New York credits to his name, among which were two plays by Ronan Noone, *The Stage is Bare* and *The Lepers of Baile Baiste*. David was a natural choice for the production of *The Blowin of Baile Gall*.

I, on the other hand, would be working on a relatively new play, with which I was unfamiliar. The advantage to this was that I had no preconceived notions about what it should look like and could be open to what would unfold in the creative process in which Ronan Noone would also participate. At Brigham Young University I had acted in several new plays and appreciated the energy that developed when the playwrights were present at the rehearsals. As fight director of *The Blowin of Baile Gall*, I would

be able to experience this spirit of collaboration again, only in a professional setting and as part of the production team.

To do so with Ronan Noone was an added perk. Before I traveled to New York, David briefed me on the many achievements of the playwright. An immigrant to the United States from Ireland in the mid-nineties, Noone began writing his first play, *The Lepers of Baile Baiste*, while painting houses at Martha's Vineyard. His talent caught the attention of Nobel Laureate Derek Walcott, head of Boston University's MFA playwriting program, and Noone was soon enrolled. *The Lepers of Baile Baiste* won the National Playwriting Award at the American College Theatre Festival at the Kennedy Center and it received rave reviews when it was performed in professional venues in Boston, Los Angeles, and New York City. *The Blowin of Baile Gall*, Noone's second play, won the prestigious Elliot Norton Award for Outstanding New Script in 2002. *The Boston Magazine* chose Noone as the Best Young Playwright for 2003, and in July of 2003, he was commissioned under the Sanford Calderwood Fund for New American Plays as a playwriting fellow for Boston's Huntington Theatre Company.

Everything about the proposed production of *The Blowin of Baile Gall* seemed a dream come true, and I relished the opportunity to participate in such a project while my professional career was still in its early stages.

I read *The Blowin of Baile Gall* for the first time from a copy of the script David emailed me. Set in the decrepit kitchen of an old house being renovated by a construction crew in a small Irish village, the play tells the story of four workers struggling to build futures for themselves. Eamon, Molly, and Stephen have all been hired by the general contractor. But when the contractor adds the African refugee ("blowin") Laurence instead of a local Irishman, generations of grudges boil to the surface. As the workers fight to hold onto what they feel they own—their history, their dignity and the soil beneath them—they are torn apart by their need for money, acceptance, and ultimately revenge. It is a powerful and moving play dealing with the suffering caused by human weakness and cruelty, the malignancy of grudges, and the demand for justice.

The show includes two fights, one in which Stephen beats up Eamon and the other in which Laurence kills Stephen by cutting his throat. But many other violent moments punctuate the play: a slap, pushes and shoves, crate kicking, doll smashing and much brandishing of and threatening with varied make-shift weapons. The whole play is threatening and David knew he needed to create an atmosphere that corresponded to the characters' desperation and animal energy waiting to explode with little provocation. Consequently, all of the characters were to be comfortable with weapons, including hammers and trowels. This

was my first show in which a plaster trowel functioned as a central weapon. Fighting was to be a common pastime, just another way that things get done by the Irish. The Irish in the play know when the violence has made its point. Then into this highly emotional and tense situation comes Laurence, the “blowin” who finds the violence all too real but responds to it differently from the locals.

It was fitting that my introduction to the other members of *The Blowin of Baile Gall* team should take place in an Irish pub. On the day I arrived in New York, David took me there, where we were soon joined by Ronan Noone and one of the producers from the show, Aidan Connolly. Being in the pub with natives of Ireland, an experience that occurred several times, gave me a rare real-world glimpse into the culture I would help replicate on the stage. As I listened to my Irish comrades talk, I became more and more excited about being a part of the upcoming work.

The following morning David, Ronan, and I drove down to the theatre, where the show was rehearsing. The Donaghy Theatre at the Irish Arts Center seats approximately a hundred people; its stage, which has no wings or fly space, perfectly suits a play set in one cramped kitchen. There I met the cast, Ciaran Crawford (Stephen); Ato Essandoh (Laurence); Colin Hamell (Eamon); George Hesline (the General Contractor); and Susan McConnell (Molly). They proved to be an incredibly talented pool of actors, eager and willing to get to work. Since I was also teaching in Illinois while I was working on *The Blowin of Baile Gall*, I could only meet with them on week-ends. David readily accommodated my complicated schedule. Understanding the time required to develop fight scenes, he reserved all day Friday and Saturday for me to create the violence and Sunday to refine it with the actors before I went home on Monday.

Working with Paul Dennhardt at the Illinois Shakespeare Festival over the last few years has changed how I approach fights in a show. When I first meet the actors, I like to get their input about the story they wish to tell with the fight. The actors talk me through the acting beats they want to incorporate. I introduce the ideas and images the director and I have envisioned and ask the actors questions. “The script says that you start the fight like ‘A’ and end like ‘B.’ So what do you need as an actor to get from point A to point B?” We do not talk about choreography or moves, just motivations. What we end up with is a coherent story that the actors want to tell. My job then becomes easy—I simply translate their story into action and give them moves that allow them the acting beats they want. Since I have adopted their method of working, I feel the quality of my fights has improved tremendously, not because my moves are better (often they are more elementary) but because the actors know what the fight is supposed to say and what has to happen to get that story told. Since we are using their ideas, they understand and are more willing to commit to the action right away. The fights become something that further the story and do not appear out of place.

The first fight we worked on in *The Blowin of Baile Gall* involved Eamon and Stephen. To get Stephen to surrender his reformed teetotaler self and become “Wild Stevie” again, the persona

Eamon needs as an ally, Eamon goads Stephen until Stephen finally snaps and begins beating Eamon. Eamon continues taunting him and endures a prolonged beating to make sure the transition is fully complete. The fight then consists of a series of individual moves. The actors Ciaran and Collin wanted the character of Stephen to think that each move that landed was the last he would need to make Eamon leave him alone, but each time Eamon prods and pokes at him, asking for more. Collin did not think his Eamon would even attempt to defend himself, but wanted to just leave himself open to be beaten, to get what he wanted.

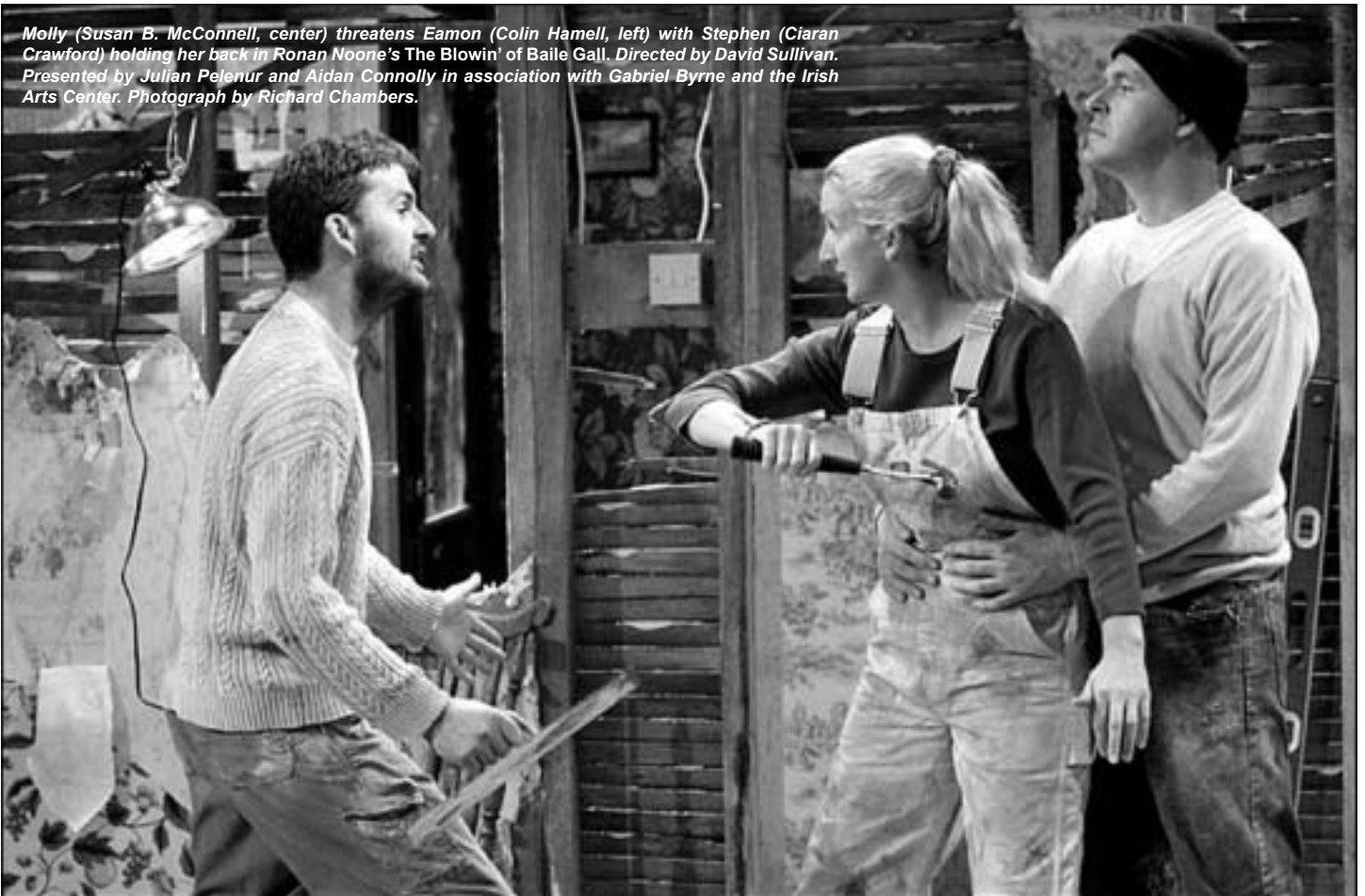
Working on this scene reminded me of why I like to go into a fight without pre-choreographing it (unless it is absolutely necessary). Since this was an intimate little proscenium theatre, I had imagined the fight to be rather visceral with mostly contact blows. After discussing the story with the actors, I proposed some choreography ideas and demonstrated a contact stomach punch. Then I saw the wide-eyed gaze of terror in Collins eyes. He was not comfortable with the idea of contact moves at all. So I adapted the fight to fit the actors. After all, it is more important that the cast feel comfortable with the choreography than that the choreography be the “best” moves. By changing angles a bit, making the moves non-contact, and adding some additional proscenium techniques, I was still able to generate the gist of what I wanted. Most important, Colin seemed to trust me much more when he saw how willingly I surrendered my original idea. Now confident he would not be injured, he committed himself to the actions he was given and did an excellent job of selling the fight.

A humorous moment occurred while staging this fight. None of the cast had had any formal combat training, although they had been in fights in previous shows. Ciaran had even played Stephen in the Boston production and so he had performed a version of this fight. When I showed him a diagonal proscenium jab with a body knap, he looked at it and me with obvious disbelief about the viability of the move. From where he was standing, it seemed to be missing badly. Although he said nothing, his concern was plainly written on his face. He did, however, move out into the house, expecting to see that the jab still did not work and to tell me so. So I showed it to him again. From the new perspective, he was able to see the action as the audience would experience it. The moment earned me his trust in the process and from then on he committed himself to the moves I assigned him.

The fight that ends in Stephen’s death is brief. For me, the most challenging feature to include in the choreography was the blood streaming from Stephen’s slit throat. A knife with a squeeze handle had been ordered, but it had not arrived for the first weekend I was in New York. I was not convinced that the knife would be our best option, so we made contingency plans in which a palmed blood bag replaced the knife.

It was a productive weekend. The fights and all the violent moments were choreographed and flowing fairly well. I loved being in rehearsals with David and Noone, and seeing how they work together, the air electric with the creative process as they crafted how the play would look and sound. I feel fortunate to have been included in that process.

Molly (Susan B. McConnell, center) threatens Eamon (Colin Hamell, left) with Stephen (Ciaran Crawford) holding her back in Ronan Noone's The Blowin' of Baile Gall. Directed by David Sullivan. Presented by Julian Pelenur and Aidan Connolly in association with Gabriel Byrne and the Irish Arts Center. Photograph by Richard Chambers.



When I returned from Illinois the next weekend, I was anxious to see what had transpired during my absence. The actors had been working on the fights every day, and their effort paid off. I only needed to make some minor adjustments when we transferred the scene onto the set. We were able to use the more stable points for Stephen to slam and shake Eamon against. I believe in incorporating the set into the choreography whenever possible. The scene is more realistic when the fight interacts with the environment, rather than just being situated in the middle of it.

The major remaining task was to add the blood with the squirting knife. I have never liked squirting blood knives, primarily because I have never found a good one. This knife had its problems too. If it was held with the blade down, the blood leaked out of it. Arriving at the right amount of pressure was also a problem. Squeezing too hard resulted in the blood shooting past the victim's body, but too little pressure produced blood that was inadequate for dramatic visual impact. After determining the right mixture of chocolate and strawberry syrup for the blood, we dressed Ciaran up in a t-shirt and took him outside to get sticky. Alto Essandoh and I explored several options before we discovered a way to achieve the desired effect. As it turned out, the cast used blood in an infant's aspirator, which Stephen palmed during the first break in the fight with Laurence. While Laurence turned Stephen around upstage, Stephen released the blood through his finger and onto his shirt.

I was able to watch several runs of the show and produce notes for

the actors. An entire afternoon was devoted to polishing the fights; now that the combat scenes were more engrained into the actors' bodies, I could offer more specific feedback. I was pleased with the results. However hard the fight director might work, stage fights can only be as good as the actors performing them.

A drawback to directing fights from out of state while working as a professor is that you cannot stay and work with the cast through opening night. But I had no need to worry. The opening went splendidly, with the majority of the reviews being positive about the play, the cast, the director, and the fights.

Anytime I get to work in theatre, I always feel blessed to be able to do something I love so much. I had a challenging and rewarding collaboration with the actors, director, and playwright on this production and look forward to the future when our paths might cross again, whether in New York or elsewhere.



THE WAY OF FIGHT DIRECTION

by Neil Flint Worden

In the summer of 2004, I flew into Reno, Nevada for the weekend Master Intensive and the 7th Annual Fight Director's Workshop with Gregory Hoffman and Dueling Arts International. Touted as the California equivalent to boot camp for fight enthusiasts, the workshop made me more than a bit anxious, but arriving at the Reno/Tahoe International Airport proved an amusing distraction. Reno is only forty-five minutes from the Sierra Nevada and Tahoe, California. The crystal blue shores of Lake Tahoe sit squarely over the border of two states that could not be more literally and figuratively separated; flying into Reno always seems like a guilty pleasure. Even at noon, the airport has the ambiance of dusk in the casino and as you stroll down the walkways the whir of buzzers and twirling lights entice you to "loose" slot machines while baggage claim screens advertise the best in "exotic" Irish Step Dancers. It's all a bit heady for a 25-cent gambler such as myself. If Las Vegas is the legal equivalent of Babylon in America, Reno must be the suburbs.

The sense of entering another world was only intensified by a quick introduction to two female cohorts in the workshop, a stunt coordinator from Las Vegas and a theatre director from Japan. Compared to these two women with their intense knowledge of weaponry and love of the fight, I was the Yankee in Greg Hoffman's Court. During our quick ride to South Lake Tahoe with Karl Ramsey, Hoffman's partner in crime, we chatted about great workshops of the past (with master teachers I had never met) amidst the rarefied air of the Sierra Nevada. At Lake Tahoe, we were shown the community college where the work would begin the following day and then deposited at the lodge, our "boot camp base" for the next sixteen days, with strolling proximity to Lake Tahoe, beachside running paths, and an all-female-managed vegetarian deli and tea shop that sports a mean bowl of organic oatmeal.

I soon discovered I would need such refuge, for within hours into the Saturday morning fight workouts, the Master Intensive pushed every button in my inferiority complex and the fun component had diminished considerably. I was no master by any stretch of the imagination. When I contacted Gregory Hoffman about entering the course as a fight director, I had been honest about the fact that I had not recertified with the Society of American Fight Directors (SAFD) for over ten years. David Boushey, known to many for his excellent work and infamous teaching style, had been my master in graduate school, and I had not taken a workshop since. Although I had been asked to choreograph over thirty major fights within those ten years with no more credentials than an MFA and an expired actor/combatant certification, the jobs had clearly come to me because I was cheap, available, and blessed with a creative eye for visual staging, movement, and acting. Most of all I openly advertised that I loved authentic violence, so opportunities presented themselves, particularly when the production could get a package deal of either actor/fight director or director/fight director. I felt like a lucky fraud.

I suspected my skills were weak in every area outside of rapier and

dagger, unarmed combat and quarterstaff, but the weekend crystallized that fact. The workshop was populated by actors whose primary interest in performance was fight choreography. They had specialized in various weapons and styles of combat, had been to multiple SAFD and Dueling Arts workshops, and seemed to know the correct placement of the reinforced parry in every position. It was disarming. Nonetheless, I was instantly fond of a rebel actor name Orion, who chuckled good-naturedly at my fumbles; an elegant fighter named Gwen, who displayed consummate poise; and the Japanese director Noreko, who politely corrected my technique by moving the weapon to the right position without a word. I dreaded the showing of each of our partnered weapon sequences to the attendant master but managed to pick up the pace by Sunday morning. The two days flashed by with fast, intense technique work in rapier and dagger, smallsword, *kitana*, Talhoffer broadsword, warrior-spirit *katas*. A high point was a visit from my old master, David Boushey, who promptly tore up the room with his unarmed combat and colorful language. Who cannot appreciate a man like that? I was exhausted and humiliated, but had survived.

The next two weeks were astonishing. They remain the formative moments of my training as a fight director. The Dueling Arts International Fight Director's Workshop provided me with an epiphany that had little to do with those first two days of technique intensives. A year of stage combat in graduate school and thirty choreographed fights ranging from simple events involving two people to a war waged by twenty-five had not prepared me for the change. Gregory Hoffman was a revelation. For the first time in my fight directing career, I began to understand what had disturbed me about the false mystique of stage violence and the nature of so many fight personalities across America. I also realized why I had never attended any of those workshops even though I loved staging combat. And I began to see what truly engaged my creative flair.

The problem with so many advertised workshops lay in their emphasis on technical execution and accuracy of style to the exclusion of all else. In many cases I had spent ten years writing out my creative ideas for a requested fight on paper and choreographing the actors in my head before I had even met them. I had developed fight notation for the steps and moves and double-checked my vocabulary before imposing the piece on the wary actors. And I had tried to be as exact as possible when assigning an original fight technique to an actor during rehearsal.

But in every fight, an inevitable moment came when the actor balked at a proposed move and felt compelled to change the choreography or argue over its "innate flaw." And interestingly enough, the actor rarely disagreed with the simple moves but rather the sexiest of bits that promised to make him or her look like a master fighters in the sequence. I inevitably won him or her over in the end, but the suspect moment drove a small wedge between the disgruntled fighter and me several times over the years, and I suspected that I had consistently done something wrong. Conversely, the best moments in my fights had been related to spontaneous move-

ment inspired by the Suzuki training method and my own creative collaboration with the fighters themselves.

What I learned in those two weeks cannot be quantified or put in simple terms. Much like his Taoist persona, Hoffman taught the art of spontaneous, organic fight creation. I know no other way to describe it. His legacy is really a method and style of collaboration. I could mention the excellence of his smallsword technique (he may be the best in America today) or talk about the incredible opportunity to work with such accomplished fighters for each day's scene. We covered every weapon from knife to blank guns and looked at every scene style from physical comedy to domestic violence in the course of those two weeks. Or I could even discuss the freedom for exploration in the workshop. Occasionally we were given more than a day to build a complex fight scene with the actors, and I experimented with period settings, choreography, movement work, and fascinating pictures. But the real and undeniable artistry of the workshop lay in Gregory Hoffman's subtle mentoring.

Every day, while Karl Ramsey was off with the actors, Gregory Hoffman met with us and before we began working a few sequences with the chosen weapon of the day, commented on the nature of direction, the progression of our scene work, and our personal fight-directing challenges. During the rehearsal he would stop by my work with the actors and whisper something pertinent about my style, and slowly I began to evolve. The change was almost imperceptible at first, but could be traced through conversations I had each evening. Having befriended the two actors Orion and Cory, with their bachelor-pad tent across the road in the South Tahoe campground, I would usually sit with them and chat about the day's events over beers around a campfire. Often I would note thoughts and ideas for the next day's work between sips and anecdotes. One night it occurred to me that I was writing less and less on the notepad. The last three fights I created for the workshop involved no preconceived moments or techniques, but instead relied on spontaneous collaboration with the actors in rehearsal.

Since that summer I have choreographed nine major fights, none of which I developed before I had met the actors. I simply taught the technique of certain weapons when a natural target and moment arose in our work together. As a result, I have cut my rehearsal time in half while instructing actors from ages nine to twenty-five without a moment of friction. And my fights have been universally praised for their realistic and comic edge, passion and creative styling. Each time I have been able to attribute some of the best work to the fighters themselves. And all I have ever prepared was an arsenal of moves related to the style of fight work needed for the production. I showed them the organic targets, and they did the rest. Nothing could be more simple or sublime.

I had watched Hoffman's fights for years throughout the Bay Area and been fascinated by the precision and unique styling of the moves for each piece. I mused over how he had achieved such an organic look. I had even been perplexed when I witnessed his work in rehearsal. But now I am certain Gregory Hoffman gave me the answer. It was in the gentle suggestion, the wink of his eye, and the well-placed remark. He taught me something other than technique: he taught me the Way of Fight Direction.



A horse! A horse!



My Cheesesteak for a horse!



The 7th Annual Philadelphia Stage Combat Workshop

Fall 2006

sponsored by

SAFD and

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE ARTS

PAST FACULTY

Chuck Coyl, SAFD Fight Master; John V. Bellomo, Payson Burt, Charles Conwell, Jeff A.R. Jones, John McFarland, SAFD Fight Directors; Ian Rose, John Paul Scheidler, Robert Westley, SAFD Certified Teachers; Anthony Matteo, CWC Professional Wrestler; Samantha Bellomo, Arthur Murray Dance Instructor

PAST CLASSES

Professional Wrestling, Bullwhip, Running with Sharp Objects, Cratehook & Knife, Sword & Axe, Kali Stick, Katana, Multiple Attackers, Gratuitous Spins, Full Contact Smallsword, Mambo Italiano, Skills Proficiency Renewal Class (additional \$75.00)

WORKSHOP FEE: \$235

Fee includes continental breakfast & Philly cheesesteaks for lunch (veggie cheesesteaks available).

\$210: SAFD members, union affiliates or early registration (paid in full by 9/1/03).

\$185: SAFD members, union affiliates with early registration (paid in full by 9/1/03).

Call 215-888-4172 or email

philascw@yahoo.com for more details



FIGHTS⁴ | NYC



*When summer is almost over...
it's time for one last Sling!*

Summer Sling X

sponsored by

FIGHTS4

Hosted by

City College of New York

The Tenth Annual SAFD-Sanctioned
New York Regional Stage Combat Workshop

Thursday, August 17 through Sunday, August 20, 2006

← Up to eight hours of instruction daily →

← Classes offered on all levels, from beginning to advanced →

← Instruction by SAFD Fight Directors and Certified Teachers →

← All weapons provided →

FEES

\$275 for all four days

\$85 per day for individual days

10% discount for all college students with valid ID

10% discount: SAFD Regional Workshop attendance in the past year

15% discount for SAFD members in good standing

Discount for Early Registration

For more information: www.Fights4.com/summer_sling.html

Workshop coordinator Robert Tuftee at (718) 788-4957

Tink@Fights4.com

BARN RAZZING: A Review of the Fight Director's Workshop

by Ted de Chatelet

For the first time in its fifteen-year history, the Fight Director's Workshop was not held at the Celebration Barn in Maine. Instead it moved to the campus of the North Carolina School of the Arts in my hometown of Winston-Salem, North Carolina. Partly because it was a good excuse to take my family across the country to visit relatives and partly because I wanted to get more involved with the SAFD, I applied to the workshop. This was not a simple process. Slots in the Fight Director Workshop fill up fast, sometimes a year in advance, and when I contacted Allen Suddeth in March, no space was available. Suddeth signed me on for the actor workshop and agreed to put me on a waiting list for a fight directors spot. Lucky for me, someone got a film and I was bumped up.

Everyone talks reverentially about the "Barn." When I saw certified teacher Angela Bonacasa at the Seattle Sockeye and told her that I was going, her advice was simple: "Do your homework! Whatever you do, do your homework." I had also been told that Suddeth, who created the Barn as "the workshop I wanted to go to when I was starting out," is a taskmaster who takes a sadistic pleasure in ripping his students apart. I awaited the homework assignments with a mixture of excitement and trepidation. The email that came surprised me with its length and complexity. We were assigned our first four fights (all from Shakespeare) and told to edit the scenes and prepare some starting-point choreography. The scenes were the same for everyone but some were to be developed according to different styles. The following were my instructions for preparing the Macbeth fight:

Ted- Cowboy - Think John Ford version, starring John Wayne, and James Stewart. Setting can be outside or inside, with traditional brutal 1940s' Hollywood punch up. Weapons possible, too.

The email also outlined the requirements of what is called "Battle Day":

On this day, you each have a collaboration partner to work with you. You will both be responsible for staging the entire battle from your designated piece within *four* hours start to finish. All battles take place in the theater, and you are responsible for creating your settings. There is a two-hour break between battles, so that the actors can rest, and the new set be installed. *Bring music!* THINK EPIC! You will have the entire company of 10 actors for each battle, and you may recycle them. Lights and sound

help, so *plan ahead*. You must contact your co-choreographer before arriving in North Carolina, to begin the collaboration.

Jason Walsh and I were assigned the opening brawl from *Romeo and Juliet*. The instructions also included a long list of materials we should bring: an abbreviated "stunt bag"; personal weapons; research books on fighting, acting, or comedy; videotapes of inspirational movies; three rolls of black gaffer's tape; generic costume pieces; stage blood; special props to share (trick knives, capes, chain flails, antiques to show, etc.); music tapes and CDs; notebooks, pens and pencils galore; aspirin; fighting gloves; a sharp working knife; a lightweight complete works of Shakespeare; and extra cash to buy set and prop items to enhance scenes.

Suddeth's last words of advice to us read

It is important that you treat all these assignments as jobs, not as casual homework, and **do your best** to prepare for them.

I will be honest—I did not do my homework. Since I was directing a show that opened four days before the workshop, I only had time to watch a few westerns, possible sources of material for my John Ford style *Macbeth* fight. I showed up at the Barn with nothing on the list, not even a pen. My lackadaisical attitude would soon change as I began to appreciate the opportunity before me. At the first morning table session, Suddeth and Dale Girard drilled into us that the main purpose of the workshop was to make us





better fight directors. This would not be a competition and the entire staff would do all they could to help us improve. The challenges of the workshop would be to benefit us, not to indulge anyone's sense of superiority. I was inspired and determined to redeem myself for arriving unprepared. In fact, all five of us in the fight directors' workshop put our egos aside to become a supportive and tightly knit group. My experience at the Barn would not have been half as rewarding without the camaraderie and support of Lee Soroko, Paul Molnar, Roger Bartlett, and Jason Walsh.

The first two days were mostly a "getting to know you dance" during which we evaluated each other as fighters and actors. In the mornings we split up and the fight directors had table sessions with Suddeth and Girard, while the actors worked with the mild-mannered Mark Olsen on acting, mask work, and other subjects. In the afternoons, we all met for master classes led by Suddeth and Girard. This was a time for us to gauge who could fight, who could act, who could do both, and who could not. One of our first assignments was to write a brief psychological profile of each actor based on our first impressions. We were encouraged to be judgmental, but to modify each profile as we learned more about the actors. The five fight directors were remarkably similar—and mistaken—in their evaluations. Some actors, identified as easy to work with, were not. The affability, ability, and range of others were underestimated. Few of the evaluations remained unchanged. In the evenings, we worked on exercises designed to get us thinking as "directors of scenes of physical dialogue" (Girard's phrase) rather than as someone who simply demonstrates the fight moves.

Of course, we encountered some surprises. During the morning session of the first day, we were informed that we would be presenting an hour-long lecture on the history of weapons to the acting company that evening, followed by a critique. Each of us was assigned a period, such as Greco-Roman, Medieval, or Renaissance, and told to prepare ten minutes of material. I knew next to nothing about Greco-Roman weapons (my assigned topic) or for that matter, those of any other period. So I received my first lesson from the workshop: review the history of weapons.

Unfortunately, that was not immediately possible. To compensate, I tried to remember everything I could from *Gladiator* and *Spartacus* and then did my best eight-minute song-and-dance routine. At the first critique, we learned that honesty would be the letter of the law. I may have baffled some of the actors, but Suddeth and Girard saw right through me. "You've got great energy, but you need to calm your inner ferret and stand still! And you gave all kinds of misinformation. The short sword was made of copper, it's a cutting and thrusting weapon, and that wasn't a short sword you were holding!"

On the third day we directed our first fight. Three hours were allotted for rehearsal in the afternoon; we then broke for dinner and had one last hour of rehearsal before the scenes were presented for taping and critique. We were restricted to a two-phrase fight that was not to exceed fifteen moves and needed to include a "surprise kill." This is a pattern that would be repeated for the next three days, with a new scene being substituted each day.

The results were far from impressive. Most of us tried to put in all the fancy moves we knew and ignored ideas of character and story. That evening's critique was lengthy and abrasive. As a group we failed to include the passion and intensity of the fight, the story being told, and the previous action in the play. A popular phrase heard again and again was that our work was "too much like a certification test." The majority of our collective experience had been in the classroom, either as instructors, assistants, or students. In class countless hours are spent practicing skills and fancy moves that are then performed as the required moves for the Skills Proficiency Test (SPT). Not surprising, the fights looked like SPT fights—too many moves, set starts, and pointless circling to set up the next phrase. In my own fight, Romeo screamed at Tybalt then stopped the scene to run back and pick up his weapons. I also well exceeded the fifteen-move limit. Still, the fight had a feeling of desperation and some impressive floor work. That night I went home feeling good about myself and my fight.

Such was not the case on the next day. The assigned fight was that between Joan and the Dauphin from *Henry VI Part I*, for which we would again rehearse four hours and then preset, tape, and critique in the evening. The actor for my scene was less skilled than the one I had worked with previously, and once again I over choreographed the fight. Although I had some good ideas, they did not translate very well. In fact, I was surprised by how much of my scene did not play. Suddeth and Girard had much more criticism for me that night, so much I wondered if I had simply been lucky the day before.

I thought that day five would be easy for me. We were working on the Viola/Aguecheek fight from *Twelfth Night*, which I knew well since I had acted in three productions of the play and directed it the previous January. The night before the fight, the actors and I filled a duffle bag with props to use in the scene—props that ultimately proved to consist of too much junk and not enough substance. During the dinner break I developed an elaborate scene involving a toy airplane, some light sabers, a game of "quarters,"

and a stuffed dog named “Grey Capilet.” I even managed to work myself into the scene, though I could not tell you why or even which character I was supposed to be.

The actors realized the scene would never work. When we returned from dinner, they revolted and said they could not play the scene as it had been rehearsed because there was no relationship between the characters. Of course, they were right, but the last thing I wanted to do an hour before the taping was to redo the scene. I fought them for about five minutes, conceded, and we started from scratch. In an hour we had a completely different scene, this time between two characters; we cut most of the added props and my pointless cameo. I would love to say this was my “best scene” or even a “pretty good” scene, but I would be lying. Although decidedly better, it was still rough and woefully under-rehearsed, and, of course, gave Suddeth and Girard much to scrutinize. Sometimes they would simply freeze the picture on a particularly awkward moment and look at me in silence. But it was the first time I had not over-choreographed the fight. Maybe I was learning something.

Critique sessions with Suddeth and Girard were as much about the play as the fight. They studied the script for every clue about the characters and how they fight, as well as offered opinions on the choreography. I learned that I focused too much on the fight moves as if they existed in a vacuum. Although I *thought* I always considered character and the script, I was wrong. Going to the Barn showed me just how mistaken I was about my own work.

The Macbeth/Macduff fight was scheduled for the sixth day and we had the entire afternoon and evening sessions to rehearse for our presentation the following day. Each fight director had been assigned a different production style (Kurosawa, Punk, Feminist, and Traditional as well as my Cowboy) and told to scour the campus for the best location. I had a couple of great actors for *Cowboy Macbeth*. One was big and brawny; the other came with his own bullwhip. Despite my initial reservations, the fight for *Cowboy Macbeth* turned out to be my favorite. I had never done much “punch-em-up stuff,” but my actors were both very adept. The scene played well on the film school’s street-front location; the set even included a cheap wooden rain-barrel in which to sink Macbeth’s bloody head. But my favorite part of the fight followed Macbeth’s line “But get thee back!”; with a bullwhip, he then snapped a gun out of Macduff’s hand. For the first time at feedback session Girard suggested *adding* a couple of moves to one of my fights.

Other fight directors were not so lucky. The Macbeth conflict was one of the most stressful experiences of the entire workshop. I started smoking again that day, something I had not done in more than two years. The pressure-cooker atmosphere at the Barn can be overwhelming at times, and one actor, in the middle of the evening rehearsal, hit the wall figuratively and literally. She stomped up and down in the middle of the rehearsal hall, screaming that she

could not do it, then stormed out of the scene and workshop, only to return somewhat sheepishly the next day to finish her assignments. But the fight director was still short an actor with very little time to finish his scene. Fortunately intern Alex Cordaro filled in and the *Kurosawa Macbeth*, set in and around an Asian-style fountain, was as beautiful as it was haunting.

The eighth day was a much-needed day off. The fight directors could use this time to plan for battle day, the actors could work on lines, and everyone could do some laundry. I had planned on having folks over to eat some North Carolina BBQ and to share in some R&R, but Suddeth and Girard changed those plans. They arrived at the apartments around mid-day to leave more homework for us that included the casting for our last two rounds of scenes. I cancelled the barbeque and spent the rest of the day re-reading my newly assigned plays, *Orphans* and *The Taming of the Shrew*.

The second week began with one of the most intense experiences of my theatrical career: —Battle Day. The fight directors were paired and the day was split in half. Jason Walsh and I had sixteen actors and four hours to stage the opening brawl from *Romeo and Juliet*. While we worked onstage in a three-quarter thrust theatre, the three other fight directors—Soroko, Molnar and Bartlett—were busy in the back of the house making the final preparations for their own battle that afternoon. They would have the same sixteen actors and four hours to stage the rumble from *West Side Story*. Usually at the Barn, you are hidden away in the safety and relative obscurity of the rehearsal room; only occasionally will someone drop in to check on your progress. Battle Day, however, was like working in a fish-bowl with Suddeth, Girard, Olson, Cordero, and new arrivals A.C. Weary, Michelle Ladd, and Jacob Snodgrass all sitting in the house, taking notes, chatting among themselves, and (I suspect by their laughter) mocking our mistakes. Despite our angst, Battle Day went well. Walsh and I sketched in rough blocking for the entire scene then split it into featured and background fights. We divided up choreography duties and worked the fights individually before putting it all together. We were even able to run the entire fight a few times before final taping at the four-hour deadline.

Still, however good our scene was during the taping, Suddeth and Girard’s critique made me realize it could still be better. Walsh and I had overlooked many opportunities to reemphasize the personal-





ities of the characters and their relationships to each other. For example, something as simple as a choice of weapon could have driven home the substantial difference in status between Tybalt or Benvolio and the rest of the “heartless hinds”—give the fellow with the most money the flashiest sword. Our scene looked as if all of Verona had shopped at the same Wal-Mart for their weapons.

Benvolio’s first entrance was another missed opportunity. His elevated status gives him power over the four servants, and we could and should have exploited that power to put an end to the skirmish. Instead, Walsh and I looked at that moment as a chance to do some one-on-four choreography in which we reduced Benvolio to the same level as Sampson and Gregory. We had worked in some clever moves but in the process had weakened the characters and failed to serve the story. *The Romeo and Juliet* brawl, more than any other, stands out as the one fight I would really like a second chance at.

The rest of the second week went by in a blur. My next assignment was a cross-gender cast scene from *Orphans*. I was the only fight director with this particular scene. My actresses were willing but not able because they both had suffered some serious injuries by this time. Knees were especially problematic. We covered the entire floor with gymnastics mats and pared down the physical action to the barest essentials. The rehearsal time was spent primarily on developing the characters and relationship. The end result exceeded all expectations. The actresses were so comfortable with the scene, the violence, and the relationships that they were really able to invest their all during the final showing. *Orphans* was a prime example of how reducing the violence to only the most essential moves can sometimes yield the most impressive results.

The final major lesson I learned concerned the pecking order in a production. I was disappointed that my last scene would be from what I consider a misogynistic play, *The Taming of the Shrew*. I originally wanted to stage the scene in a darkly Tarantino way and make Petruchio a true sadist. However, my actors were baffled by that idea and I quickly dropped it. Instead we worked up a farcical 1950s’ patriarch meets 1960s’ free spirit approach that was over-the-top with foleyed crotch kicks and tic-tac-tooth spit takes. We had the scene close to where we wanted it, when the lovely

and talented Michelle Ladd checked in to watch a run through, after which she encouraged us to treat the scene more realistically to emphasize the attraction between Kate and Petruchio. Although I appreciated her input, it did not really fit in the “Bugs Bunny” world of my choreography.

I was at a crossroads. I could fight for the scene I had been directing or defer to the new voice in the room. Of course, my first instinct was to argue in defense of my scene—but then I thought about the real world. Eventually in my fight-directing career, I would undoubtedly choreograph a fight with which I was particularly pleased, only to have the director change it. So rather than challenge the director and risk never working at that particular theatre again, I decided to be a collaborator and incorporate Ladd’s feedback. In the end everyone benefited from the compromise: I kept my tic-tacs and the actors were able to develop a complex stage relationship.

The final day of the workshop was devoted to staging a Night at the Fights, consisting of the best fights from the workshop. Olson compiled a list of approximately twelve fights (some of which we had not thought about in more than a week), which we had one day to combine into a show. Suddeth and Girard made it clear that the fight night would showcase the actors: the fight directors’ job was to be the crew and make sure the performances ran smoothly. Paul Molnar stepped up as the stage manager and the rest of us put together costumes, weapons, props, music, and furniture. Every minute of the day, including meal breaks, was used to work the fights, incorporate feedback from critique sessions, and adjust the staging to the new space. At times I wondered if the Fight Night was going to come together, but in the end, it put the exclamation point on the workshop. We all left the theatre that evening exhausted and exhilarated, but not too tired to enjoy the wrap party that went on into the next morning.

The workshop was well worth the time and energy it consumed. Suddeth and Girard changed the way I look at choreography. Before going to the Barn, I would walk into a job mostly worried about the fight moves without considering how the combat fit into the scene as a whole. Now I concern myself with the relationships between characters, immerse myself in the given circumstances, and serve the story. The fight might have two or twenty moves. If I direct the fight and tell the story through physical action, then the choreography will take care of itself.

Perhaps you are wondering if *you* should go to the Barn—either as a fight director or an actor. If so, ask yourself a few simple questions. Do you want to be a better fighter? Do you want to learn to *direct* the fight instead of just *choreographing* it? Do you want to spend two weeks being challenged and inspired by some of the best teachers and practitioners in the business? If you do, then I suggest you get your application in early. Heck, I even managed to quit smoking, again. And remember: barn razzing is not for the faint of heart.

Many thanks to Allen, Dale, Mark, Michelle, A.C., Alex, Jacob, and Ben for an experience that changed the way I look at the fights.



PALPABLE HIT PRODUCTIONS presents



La Scherma Italiana

✧ Basics of Italian Rapier Fencing ✧



Palpable Hit Production's latest addition for your fencing library presents the fundamentals of 17th Century Italian Rapier Fencing, designed to give you a comprehensive working vocabulary of the theory and practice. (DVD only, \$64.95/set)

OTHER MARTIAL TECHNIQUES

La Verdadera Destreza: The True Art and Skill of Spanish Swordsmanship (DVD & VHS \$64.95)

"...the most civilized and intellectually demanding system the inventiveness of European swordsmen has dreamed up." -- **Chris Amberger**, Special History Editor, *Fencers Quarterly Magazine*

NEW - FIGHTING WITH THE SABER & CUTLASS (DVD only, \$130/set limited offer)

In partnership with Cold Steel (www.coldsteel.com), this DVD is a serious, straightforward and focused course dealing with the combative use of the saber and cutlass in personal defense.



THEATRICAL TECHNIQUES

Rapier for the Stage and Screen: The De Longis Method (DVD \$42.95, VHS \$34.95)

"...the ideal for all levels of aspiring swashbucklers." -- **Nick Evangelista**, Fencing Maestro and Author

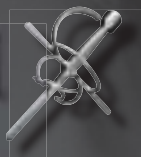
Broadsword for the Stage and Screen: The De Longis Method (DVD \$42.95, VHS \$34.95)

"I highly recommend the purchase of this video as a valuable reference video and contribution to one's fencing library." -- **Bob Anderson**, Swordmaster (*Star Wars*, *The Princess Bride*, *Lord of the Rings*)

Palpable Hit Productions, P.O. Box 2445, Canyon Country, CA 91386

Please add \$5/video or video set for shipping & handling

Rogue Steel



Superior Stage Combat Weapons

Neil Massey – Sword Cutler

3738 Blanchan Avenue
Brookfield, IL 60513
708 485 2089

www.roguesteel.com



FIT FOR FIGHTING: An Introduction to Preparing the Body for Combat Stunts

by Lauren Muney

Stage combat is one of the most grueling physical tasks in theatre or film. While the combatant must exert him- or herself physically and maintain balance and control, he or she must also act through each attack, defense, and parry. Finesse and grace need to be equal partners with endurance and stamina.

Unfortunately, we live in a technological age in which our bodies have been subordinated to computers and academia. We spend more time catching-up our paperwork than we do playing catch. The result is that our neglected bodies suffer from injuries, lack of stamina, and even decreased fitness. This is a problem for the average office worker, but for the stage combatant it can be deadly.

Four Weeks to a Better Workshop and Fighter

Theatrical fights and stunts are grueling enough on the actual performance days. Workshops stress the muscles, ligaments, joints, and stamina to the limit. More specifically, the fighter's body needs to be able to withstand.

- Muscle/joint and aches
- Extremes in weather (if performing and/or training outdoors)
- Windy, dusty, or wet conditions
- Muddy, slippery, unsteady, slick, uneven, or unforgiving surfaces
- The moves of the fights/stunts.

Only by attending to these issues can the actor meet what can be the most demanding part of the job: meeting the audience's expectations. The fitness recommendations in this article are for preparing four weeks before a workshop and/or starting a basic program to get in better fighting shape. Most important is to master the beginning concepts of self-assessment, exercise, and cleaner, healthier eating. Should you achieve this, you will be well on your way to a better fighting body

To Thine Own Self Be True

As in many aspects of life, fitness begins with self-assessment. To begin the program ask yourself:

- Silently and with no one else around, can you take off your shirt with comfort and look (and *be*) fit, and full of stamina and muscular strength?
- Do you feel embarrassed taking off your shirt?
- Has anyone you respect ever commented that you look a little "out of shape"? Did the person say it to you out of malicious intent or out of care and concern for your health?
- Do you have gastro or intestinal problems? Gas? Acid-reflux?
- Do you have sleep apnea, the condition that causes you to stop breathing while sleeping? Has anyone ever told

you that you snore and/or stop breathing while you sleep?

- Can you exert yourself for at least 20 minutes without feeling physically stressed?
- When you exert yourself, does your face get red and/or do others ask whether you feel all right? Do you have pains?
- Does it take a while to "wind down" from exercise and/or fights?
- Do your muscles ache after a four-minute fight?
- Do you feel extra tired hours after fight rehearsals?
- Are you exhausted the day (or days) afterwards?
- Do you feel winded and/or light-headed after fights, rehearsals, or an entire performance?
- Do you ever feel "old," regardless of your age?

What were your answers? Were there many yeses?

Becoming healthy may mean losing weight, increasing your muscle tone for your body, and/or increasing cardiovascular endurance. None of these improvements are isolated solely for your fight season: these are improvements that can save your life. Think about getting fit now. You can begin healthy habits that can improve your fights, improve your stamina, make you look healthy, and best of all, launch you on your way to being healthy.

General Guidelines for Healthy Weight Loss

If you are concerned about your fitness level or weight, the pre-season is the time to attend to it. You can safely lose two pounds per week. If you abide by the following guidelines, you can lose eight pounds by the end of the four-week preparation period and simultaneously increase your stamina, endurance, and body image.

- **Nutrition is eighty percent of fitness.** If you have your nutrition on track, it is much easier to get fit (and stay fit) than if you pretend exercise can take care of your bad food habit. The truth is that you have to eat right and exercise to be fit.
- **Ration out your food for all meals.** No portion should be bigger than your closed fist. If you reduce the amount of food on your plate, you reduce the temptation to put more food into your stomach.
- **Eat fresh food.** Reduce or eliminate processed foods, that is, most foods with a label. This is the easiest guideline of all. Rather than learn how to read labels on foods, look for foods without any labels.
- **Eat five to six small meals per day.** Eating small meals facilitates better digestion while the process of eating stokes the "engine" of your body. Thus you lose more fat while eating more frequently. Never skip a meal. If you do, your body will conserve fat because it thinks it may not ever eat again.

- **Increase your exercise every day.** The body needs exercise to keep muscles, joints, bones, and blood vessels healthy and to burn extra calories efficiently. This article includes some basic no-gym required options.
- **Water:** Drink at least ten cups per day and up to a gallon a day on outdoor rehearsal days in warm or hot climates or on heavy exercise days. Water flushes the body of wastes, both through the pores as well as urine.

Basic Education

You need to educate yourself to strengthen your system rather than deplete it. Below are some important details to consider while you are working on building a fit and energized body.

- **Be ready for weather conditions, like the heat and sun.** The body needs ten days to acclimatize to extensive outdoor heat and humidity. To prepare for hot weather, try building up to driving in your car without air conditioning for a few days, but do this cautiously to avoid heat exhaustion and stroke. If you start to feel ill, tell someone and move into the shade fast. Press a compress of cold water to your forehead, neck, and hands. Wear sunscreen and hat for protection during those long rehearsal hours. A trick from Texas: in hot weather, run ice cubes across your wrists and the back of your neck. Women, consider putting an ice cube inside your bra or bodice; men, put one in your hat.
- **Drink water, water, and even more water.** Your body is over seventy percent water, and you need it to process every function of every cell in every ounce of tissue in your body. When you sweat, that precious water is leaking from your body. When your sweat production increases, your body begins to overheat from the effort of trying to cool you down. Without replacing the water you have lost, you can become dehydrated and your body's major functions and organs will begin to shut down. You will run out of energy and can get very ill. Although you can survive without food for a while, you cannot without water. Start training yourself to have water on hand at all times. Carry a water bottle or two everywhere: in your car, at work, rehearsals. Sip it frequently, deliberately. Do not rely on others for water. Make sure you always have some with you. Most of all, do not wait to feel thirsty before you drink some water if you are thirsty, you are already dehydrated.
- **Eat breakfast.** Your body needs to refuel in the mornings to renew itself from the stresses the day before. Eating breakfast will safeguard you from that mid-morning drop of energy and sleepiness. Aim for several foods that contain protein (e.g., eggs); light carbohydrates (e.g., whole grains); and even some fats (e.g., dairy products).
- **Eat protein throughout the day.** Protein is one of the best fuels for breakfast. Think eggs, meats, protein shakes. Protein contains amino acids, which are the building blocks of your entire body. From neurotransmitters (your brain) to muscles,

your body craves protein in order to run well, maintain energy, balance moods, prepare muscles, and renew and repair from activity.

- **Cut back on sugar.** Sugar is a killer that steals your energy, alters your mood and ruins your body's functioning. It provides a quick, "high" rather than the sustenance a theatre season demands of you. Even though your body will feel activated very quickly from the rise in blood sugar, your energy will soon plummet. Think of sugar as a rocket fuel that burns out the rocket after the fuel is used up.
- **Consume the right fats for sustained energy.** The right fat—such as that found in butter, cheese, avocados, nuts, almond butter, fish—fuel the brain and body in the absence of sugars. Just remember that a little will go a long way. So you do not need a large portion.
- **Practice moderation when consuming carbohydrates.** The body needs carbohydrates, a macronutrient like protein and fat, for proper energy and functions. They provide the stored fuel (glycogen) needed for stamina. When you "hit the wall" in exercise, you probably have run out of glycogen. But a sedentary body cannot use an overabundance of carbohydrates. People lose weight on low-carb diets because healthy carbohydrate use requires water stored in the body. Decreased carbs = decreased water = weight loss. Most people consuming few carbohydrates have flat muscles and no stamina. But one advantage to the low-carbohydrate lifestyle is that it encourages the portion-control required in every facet of healthy eating.
- **Eat simply.** Whole grains in moderation combined with vegetables and legumes constitute a balanced meal.

The Fighters' Plan

Any person with heart, muscle/nerve, or hormonal issues should consult a physician before beginning this program.

- **Start making your body and your health a priority.** Reread the guidelines. Being healthy, eating, and note where your own habits are different from healthy habits. Understand that health and fitness are a commitment that does not require hours a day: the only hard part is beginning!
- **Add good habits to the bad ones.** You will soon drop the bad ones. It is easier to add good habits, like exercising and making healthier food choices, than to eliminate bad habits. As you begin to see the positive changes in your health, you will be able to wean yourself from drinking, smoking, and other destructive practices.
- **Fit this program into your daily schedule.** Although you would prefer not to add another task to your to-do list, your health, your work, and your life depend on it. Examine your priorities. What activities can you rearrange to accommodate exercise and

cooking healthy food? Can you reduce television time? Go to bed earlier so you awaken to exercise in the morning? Write “exercise” into your day planner as if it were a rehearsal.

- **Start raising your stamina.**

Being unfit during a rehearsal, performance, or a grueling twelve-to fourteen-hour day can deplete your reserves rapidly. Begin your reform by pledging to add a cardiovascular activity to each day. If you are currently sedentary, begin by doing the activity for only ten minutes per day; if you are moderately active, start with twenty to thirty minutes of exercise per day. The goal is to work to thirty to sixty minutes of brisk active exercise per day. Some options are walking briskly outside in the morning, noon, or evening; riding a bike outdoors or in a gym; swimming (wonderful all-over exercise); climbing stairs in your house for ten to fifteen minutes.

Although you can do cardiovascular activities indoors, you should try to move them outdoors to acclimatize yourself to elements you will encounter in outdoor performances.

- **Improve the muscle in your arms, legs, chest, abdomen, shoulders and back.** By doing the exercises that follow, you will improve your muscle tone and stamina. As a result, your muscles and joints will experience less stress in fight performance and rehearsals.
- **Start slowly and then increase your time and effort.** Fitness cannot be rushed. If you begin slowly, your body will adapt to the stress. By increasing the duration of difficulty of an exercise, the body is forced to adapt and becomes still more fit.

CONDITIONING

The best way to prepare yourself for the grueling use of your muscles is to train them in a process that begins before rather than during workshops and rehearsals. Increased muscle tone has the added advantage of raising the metabolism to burn excess fat. Fat is inactive tissue. Muscle, on the other hand, is active tissue with a rich blood supply. As a muscle is flexed and contracted, it grows and generates heat (metabolism). Although cardiovascular exercise is excellent for heart-pumping and overall conditioning, it is less efficient for fat loss and improved musculature for activities like stage combat. The best exercise prescription is a combination of increased cardio as well as weighted exercise.

Below are some exercises that anyone can do at home. They will use your own body weight. Of course, a real weight-loss/conditioning program would be more extensive than this, but I am taking into account your limited time and possibly limited resources. (I highly recommend joining a health club or creating a home gym so you can use weights or machines, but the following are efficient conditioning exercises that have worked for hundreds of years.).

The General Process

- **Warm up** your muscles, your hormones (like the energy-producing adrenal glands), your blood-flow, and your heart by doing five to ten minutes of light cardio activity before doing any exercise or stretching. Cardio can be any sort of active movement that elevates your heart rate: light jogging, brisk walking, light jumping jacks, even dancing. Warming up is critical because your body essentially will be going from 0-60 mph when you begin to fight.
- **Stretch.** After you have gotten the blood and hormones flowing and your muscles are feeling better, you should stretch the muscles you will be working. Stretching brings blood flow to all parts of the muscles and prevents cramps by keeping blood and lactic acid from pooling.
- **Do a light warm-up set** of exercises before performing the more intense set.
- **Accept that change takes time.** Fast and easy results are a myth. Advertisements that promise this are simply designed to sell you something and bring the companies money. To be fit, you must regularly exercise and eat well. If you do what I outline, you will acquire a fitter body, more stamina, more energy, and more success in your fights.

The Exercises

Each of these exercises require that you stand up straight, pull your shoulders back (as if you were thrusting out a surgically-enhanced chest), and draw your stomach muscles towards your spine. Toned abdominal muscles protect and strengthen your back by supporting it. Actors and performers especially need strong transverse abdominals, the girdle of muscle that runs around your body like a corset. The better the muscle, the tighter the corset—and the better you look and feel.

Legs and Gluteus

Squats. Strong legs are necessary for lunges and other bent-knee movements. Prepare your quadriceps (the front of the thigh), hamstrings (back of the thigh), and gluteus (the buttocks) for these movements. Squats build great looking legs and increase muscle tone that in turn raises the metabolism to burn more fat.

- Stand with your legs shoulder width apart.
- Squeeze your abdominal muscles tightly to support your spine. Hold your hands straight in front of you, clasping your hands together.
- Now squat as if you are about to sit in a low chair. With your back straight (it will be if you maintain the state of your stomach and hands), lower yourself and then rise up, pushing through your heels.
- Vary your leg width from wide to narrow so you condition all parts of your legs. Do three sets of ten repetitions for each variation and build from there. If you do this exercise slowly, you will increase muscle tone. Carefully increasing the speed improves stamina.

Stair Exercise. If you have access to stairs in an air-conditioned

SAMPLE FOOD COOLER for a 12-hr active day, like a fight-workshop weekend:

- 2-3 pre-cooked cold chicken breasts or chicken or turkey sausages, sliced for easy eating (protein)
- 2-3 hard-boiled eggs (protein and nutrients)
- Chunks of low-fat cheese or soy cheese (protein)
- 2 slices of multi-grain bread (NOT white bread) or other high-quality, fibrous carbohydrate to eat with cheese
- 1 apple (fiber and fibrous carbs)
- 2 carrots (vitamins and carbs)
- Baggie of almonds, cashews, or pecans (fats and carbs) ... with raisins and coconut (carbs and fats)
- A few black olives (fats)
- Water!

(Of course, if you are a tiny woman you will be eating less than a great strapping man. Adjust the food to your size so you are eating every 2-3 hours *without fail*).

Hint: Cook all food at once, on one night: say 6 chicken breasts and 6 eggs. (this will take only 30 minutes). Then, separate the food into plastic baggies. Make a day bag—one for each day—and place it in the fridge to pack before leaving the house in the morning. (This will take 5 more minutes). In *35 minutes* you will have your food for both workshop days: – 2 lunches and 4 snacks and tons of energy, all ready to go!

house, office building, or apartment, you have a perfect way of training yourself to use your muscles and burn fat without being in the hot outdoors. Walking for ten minutes up and down stairs conditions the muscles in your legs and gluteus. Do this three to four times a week. This is easy enough because you need no equipment and can even do the exercise while having a conversation with another person or solving a work problem in your head. If you break up your stair exercise into two sessions twice a day, you will get more blood flowing when you get the afternoon droop.

Calves

You need strong calves and shins to withstand the pressure of fancy fight footwork. These exercises will help you gain balance and prepare the calves directly with these calf raises.

- Stand at the edge of a stair, facing up the staircase, with your heels slightly off the edge of one of the steps.
- Hold onto the railing or the wall.
- Lift your heels so you are standing on your toes, and then lower yourself down.

Do this slowly, starting with three sets of ten repetitions and work up to three sets of twenty. This exercise prepares your calves for the vast amount of walking on site.

CHEST:

Your chest is the area between your arms and has some overlapping muscles in your front shoulders. The chest (or pectorals) are used in any movement where you push away from your body. They are much needed if ever you fall, move heavy objects, and so on.

Pushups are one of the best exercises to increase chest muscles.

- Keep your legs straight (or bent), hold your abs and gluts tight. Look at the floor.
- Place your arms in push-up position underneath your armpits, shoulder-width apart
- Bend your elbows, lower yourself to the floor using your chest muscles rather than your arms to keep your body from hitting the

floor

- Stop when your chest is one fist-width from the floor, and push back up again using your chest rather than your arms.

If push-ups are difficult for you, start with one on the first day, two on the second day, three on the third day, and so on. As you will get stronger, try different widths: shoulder-width apart, wide-apart, or forming a diamond with your hands. Try for ten pushups, then ten more, then ten more. By varying widths and reps, you will increase the stress on your muscles and force them to get stronger.

A great pushup game: take a deck of cards and shuffle it. Turn a card over and do the number of pushups on the card. All face-cards count for ten pushups.

SHOULDERS

Anyone with a sword, quarterstaff, knife, or other weapon needs strong shoulders to help hold the en guard poses and weapons. Weak shoulders can cause (or make worse) major problems with the rotator muscle.

- Hold arms out to the sides, palms up.
- Lift arms with the shoulders, arms straight, until they are overhead. Lower back to starting point.
- Repeat ten times, then turn hands over and repeat ten times.
- Make circles with your arms extended out to the sides. Allow the circles to become smaller and smaller and then larger and larger.
- Repeat the exercise ten times.
- With your arms bent, hold an object that weighs about ten to twenty pounds in front of your face. Press (lift up) this object using the muscles in your shoulders (not pushing with your arms). You will feel a distinct difference between using your shoulders and using your arms.
- Lower the object, once again using your shoulders. Repeat ten to twenty times.

ARMS

Strong arms are needed to be able to hold

a broadsword for long periods of time, catch yourself when falling, or lift any equipment. Tricep dips are featured here because they will work the entire arm and shoulder girdle as you lower yourself.

Dips: Sit on the edge of a hard chair and put your hands on the chair seat behind you, lifting yourself off the seat by your arms and forward past the chair edge. Your feet are in front of you, heels down.

- Slowly bend your elbows; you will be lowering your buttocks past the chair edge.
- Using the back of your arms (the triceps), push yourself back to a straight arm position
- Work up to one set of ten dips, then two sets, then three sets.

ABS/"Core"

A strong midsection prevents you from slouching and is essential for both movement and standing.

Crunches

- Lie on back with knees bent.
- Place hands across chest or, with fingers interlaced behind head, flare elbows out.
- Pull your abs tight to create a strong core,
- Crunch to try to make your ribs touch your hips (they will not, but that is the action).

Oblique side bends:

You have muscles at the sides of your waist. Working this muscle also protects your back from strain as well as pulls in any extra girth. Stand with hands at side; slowly bend sideways while keeping your abs pulled in. You are actually pulling with muscle the side you are bending towards. Bend back. Do three sets of twenty.

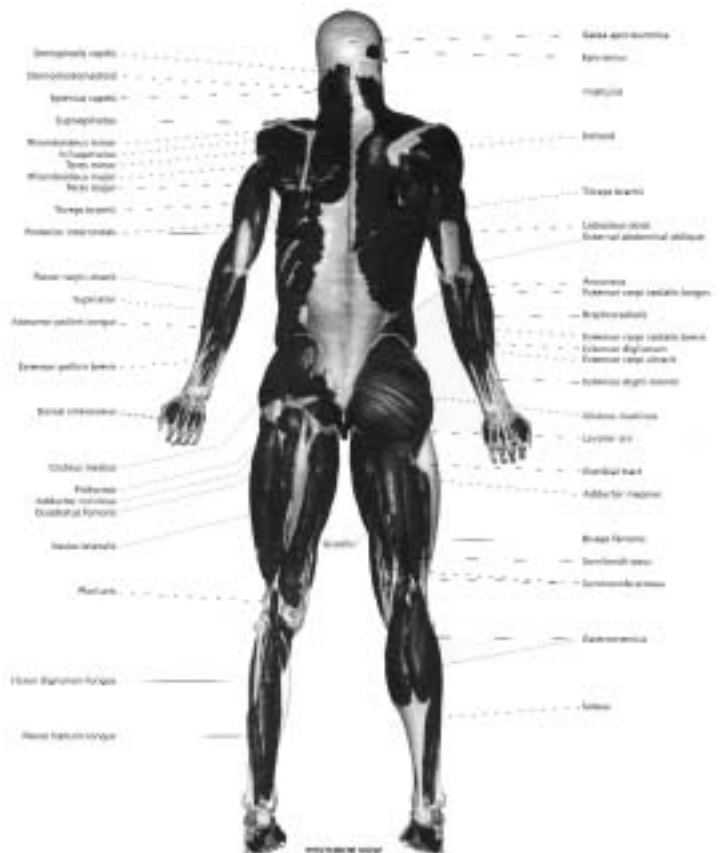
BACK

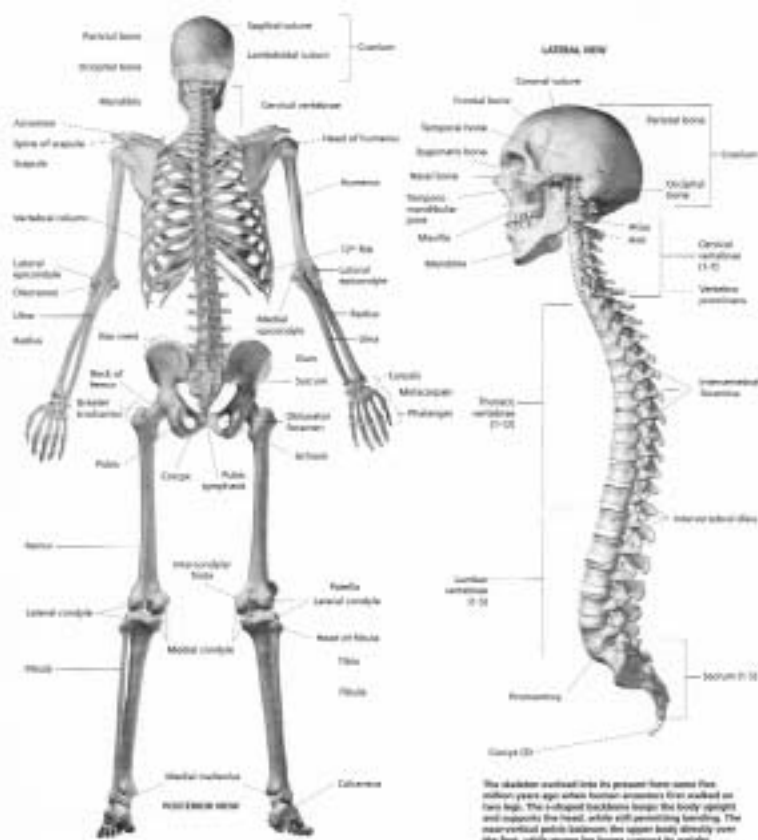
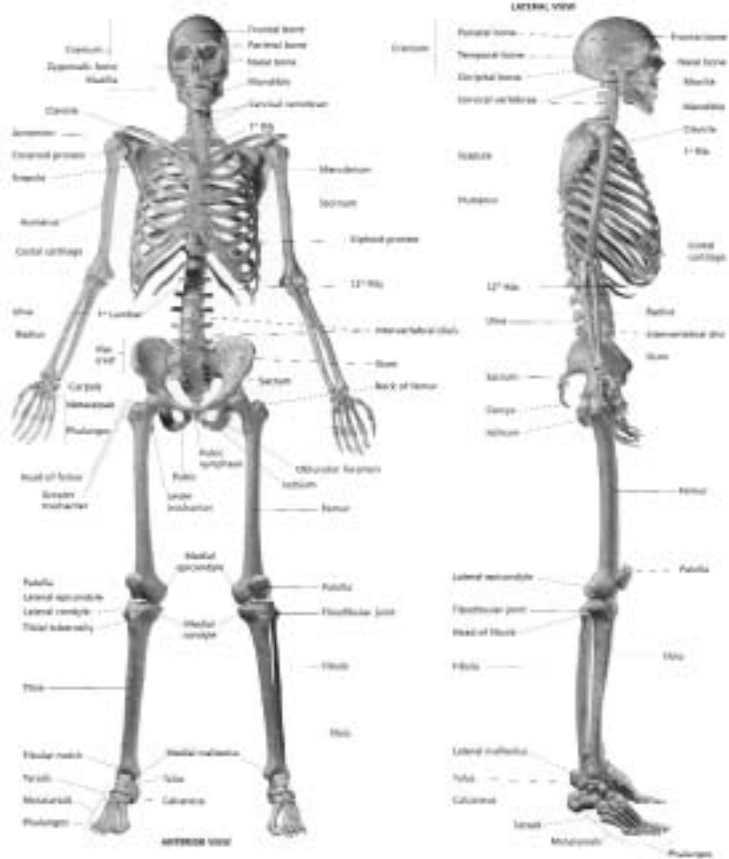
A strong back is needed for so many things. Here is a great way to work on the muscles which run along your back, your glutes, and even your legs

"Superman"

- Lie on stomach, lift legs and arms up until you look like Superman just barely soaring. This means you will be tightly contracting all these muscles.
- Repeat ten times, resting thirty seconds between reps. This works your back, shoulders, and glutes.

This has been a primer about how to stay healthy and energized during workshops, rehearsals, and stunt season.






Protein drink at home: 5 minutes preparation, incredible nutrition!

If you have problems making time for food, hate cooking, or just want good nutrition, this can't be beat. It has all the macronutrients (protein, fat, carbohydrates) in an efficiently digestible format. You can make this shake as a breakfast or an anytime meal.

Combine these ingredients in a blender (or hand-shaker) and drink.

- 8-12 oz **water or milk**
- 1-2 scoops of **protein powder** (20-40 g of protein)
- 1 Tsp of **Flax Seed Oil** (keep refrigerated)
- 1 few shakes of **frozen fruit** (you can purchase blueberries, strawberries, cherries, raspberries, blackberries, or a mixture, sold in bags in the frozen-food section of any grocery store)
- A couple of spoonfuls of **nuts and seeds**: Sunflower seeds and flax seeds are particularly good.
- 1/3 cup **raw oatmeal** (not "quick oats")
- 3-4 **ice cubes**

(approximate calories, depending on your protein powder: 450 cals)



*Don't let this
happen to you!*

Fight Directors Canada is Canada's premier national organization for training in the art of dramatic combat.

We offer training and certification workshops in stage and screen combat that range from novice up to the most experienced. FDC's curriculum incorporates fighting skills from both western and eastern martial arts traditions.

Our focus on acting and the performance of staged violence is second to none. Look for our 2006 national training and certification workshop, as well as our various regional and affiliated events on our website: www.fdc.ca or email us at: info@fdc.ca



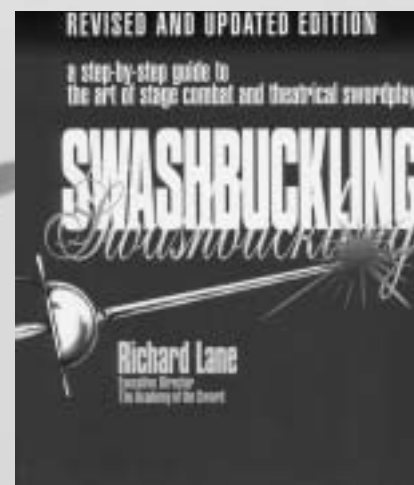
Swashbuckling

A Step-by-Step Guide to the Art of Stage Combat & Theatrical Swordplay

by **Richard Lane**

**Executive Director
Academy of the Sword**

It takes more skill than daring to appear a genuine swordsman on the stage or screen...



"[This book] is more than a manual...A necessity! Richard Lane's concepts are vital...I raise my sword on high and salute you, Richard...Well Done!"

-Oscar F. Kolombatovich, Fencing Master Emeritus

Revised & Updated!

Swaggering swordsmen leap beyond the page in *Swashbuckling*, in words and over 400 pictures that guide the beginning swordsman through warm-up exercises—including stretching, Chairman Mao's in their entirety, and many more—to actual stage combat: footwork, body movement, fighting styles, hand-to-hand and broadsword combat. The invaluable appendices contain a glossary of terms, bibliography, further reading, instructional & educational videos, lists of stage combat training providers, and of weapons, prop, and costume suppliers.

Swashbuckling is written with wit and patience by SAFD Fight Director/Certified Teacher, Richard Lane, and although he is the first to admit that a book is no substitute for instruction, "a book like this can go a long way toward

preparing you for such instruction, then help you remember and perfect the techniques you've learned, even if they differ slightly from those presented here." With those honest words and many more, Richard Lane has created the most comprehensive manual of its kind available today.



329 Pages

8 x 9 1/2

\$32.50 Paperback

ISBN 0-87910-091-5



For more information:
LIMELIGHT EDITIONS

118 East 30th Street
New York, NY 10016

Phone: (212) 532-5525

Fax: (212) 532-5526

www.limelighteditions.com

info@limelighteditions.com



**\$17,000+
RAISED SO FAR!**

Fighting for Life!

Dedicated to preventing the spread of HIV/AIDS
and the subsequent loss of precious lives, we strive to:

- Increase AIDS awareness and education;
- Promote compassion for AIDS victims and their families;
- Encourage financial support of the vital programs funded by

Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS

165 West 46th St., #1300 (212) 840-0770 (fax 0551)

New York, NY 10036

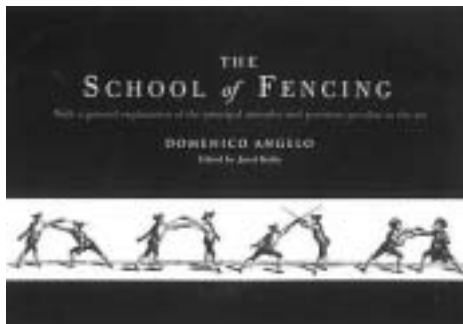
www.bcefa.org

*a community outreach program of **The Society of American Fight Directors***

**CONTACT YOUR
REGIONAL REP.
FOR MORE INFO!**

*Contributions to Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.
A copy of the latest Financial Report and Registration for Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS may be obtained
by contacting us at 165 West 46th St. - #1300, New York, NY 10036, (212) 840-0770 or by contacting your
appropriate state agency. State registration does not imply endorsement.*

The Pen and the Sword



**DOMENICO ANGELO'S THE
SCHOOL OF FENCING**
by Linda Carlyle McCollum

Domenico Angelo's *The School of Fencing* has just come out in new edition with annotations by Jeannette Acosta-Martinez and a short history on Angelo by editor Jared Kirby. This book by one of the most important masters of fencing is essential reading for historical fencers and students of martial arts, military history, and staged combat.

Originally published in French in 1763, *L'Ecole des Armes (The School of Fencing)* was the most popular book on fencing for over fifty years. Two years after it was published, a second edition was released that paired an English translation with the French text. Other publications came out in 1765 and 1767. Angelo's work was so influential that it was included in Diderot's *Encyclopédie* with only minor changes. His son Henry wrote a new preface for the 1787 edition and incorporated engravings that were very close replicas of the original illustrations.

Angelo's text, subtitled *With a General Explanation of the Principal Attitudes and Positions Peculiar to the Art*, covers how to choose a blade and mount it, but the whole system of fencing, from drawing the sword to attacking. Angelo covers smallsword, smallsword and dagger, smallsword and smallsword and dagger, smallsword and lantern, smallsword and

broad-sword as well as how to fence against German, Italian, and Spanish guards.

This new edition is distinguished by the insights into technique provided by Acosta-Martinez's notes on the text and the

two appendices that help to clarify Angelo's work. Although Angelo's book will always be an invaluable resource on the history of fencing, these added elements make the volume more accessible to the modern reader.

This new edition in the 8.5 x 6 format with 192 pages and a hundred lined drawings is published by Greenhill Books for \$29.95.



AND THEY FIGHT...
by Sean Boyd

And They Fight... an instructional video collection, is the brainchild of Dueling Arts International founder Gregory Hoffman. With the Dueling Arts crew, Hoffman demonstrates and explains the wealth of information on stage combat in a useful and understandable way. This production is only one of Hoffman's many achievements that have earned him his reputation as a teacher and fight director.

Consolidating the vast array of information on theatrical combat into a usable, instructional video collection is a daunting task at best. Hoffman brings all of his talent and knowledge to bear here, guiding the viewer through a maze of techniques, terms and history found in the art of theatrical combat; the result is a collection of six DVDs surveying theatrical combat and swordplay and its history.

Each disc is dedicated to a single topic or weapon discipline. An introductory video is a mandatory purchase before any other weapon discs may be bought. Four discs are dedicated to medieval broadsword, single rapier, rapier and dagger, and smallsword. Anyone who purchases the complete set also receives a bonus disc addressing less familiar and highly specialized weapon disciplines (e.g., sword and shield, sword and buckler, sword and cloak, and a case of rapiers).

Sensitive to the inherent danger in stage combat, Hoffman takes care to ensure the safety of the viewer of his collection. At the beginning of each disc, he explains how the viewer should approach the information and training techniques. This information has the usual buzzwords—"doctor's permission" and the like—but its thorough and unambiguous manner is typical of the comprehensive approach Hoffman applies to all of the information in the set.

Hoffman's amiable demeanor further enhances the discs. His quiet and confident resolve reassures the viewer and makes the twenty-three hours of information accessible. Hoffman also surrounds himself with great talent. SAFD luminaries Ted Sharon, Michele Ladd, and D.C. Wright do the lion's share of physical demonstration. The presence of the talented trio adds physical cohesiveness to the verbal descriptions and lessons. Their natural abilities as combatants and teachers create a much needed consistency in the demonstration of the techniques.

There is a lot to like about *And They Fight...* The camera, editing and sound, which includes excellent use of vocal overdubbing, are good. The well organized and produced discs include full explanation and demonstrations of the technique for the weapons. But the collection is not a dry compilation of lecture and exercise. Among the nuts and bolts of stage combat are interspersed some wonderful Chaplinesque bits, with Wright as the comic foil to Sharon and Ladd. Such moments of humor reinforce the lesson at hand and provide a break in the information stream, which could otherwise be overwhelming.

One of the most striking characteristics about the collection is the modesty that obviously informed its production. We never get the sense that the DVDs are intended as a substitute for live one-on-one instruction. In fact, at the beginning of each disc, Hoffman includes disclaimers stating that the discs are not a replacement for classes and workshops. Neither do we get the impression that Hoffman is portraying his collection as the definitive methodology. By using the word “a” rather than “the” in the subtitle of his work—*A Comprehensive Collection*—Hoffman veers away from the more self-aggrandizing titles of other instructional videos such as *Winsor Pilates* or *Denise Austin's Yoga*.

But overall, it is Hoffman's deft and carefully developed instructions that make *And They Fight...* work and keep it from simply becoming an encyclopedia. Hoffman lays out a foundation for each technique (footwork, grip, targets, and so on) then slowly and steadily introduces more complicated techniques and variations for each weapon discipline. The strength of the instruction and consistent references to previous examples and materials allow the viewer to link all of the lessons together and make the whole collection more valuable.

To be sure, Hoffman sometimes overloads the discs with information on technique and terminology. And although the fight demonstrations are thorough and exciting, the transition from the lessons to the fights is not as smooth as it could be. The fights

might have worked better in a separate Fight Director's collection. Most striking is the absence of a disc on unarmed technique. This seems short-sided, as unarmed combat is used almost universally as a launching point for instruction and is financially the easiest for universities to teach.


Ultimately, the collection is best suited for fighters with a basic knowledge of stage combat techniques. Such performers will find the discs essential for review and the exploration of new techniques, while those with vast experience can use it as a reference on new ways to use or teach techniques. Still, even with all the collection has to offer, the thousand-dollar price tag might be too expensive for some individuals. But the set is perfect for universities. The poor technical director, costume designer, or generalist teacher sent by his or her institution to a workshop with the expectation that he or she would come back and teach combat would find *And They Fight...* an invaluable tool.

Hoffman has created a practical work appropriate for mass audiences and has not tried to filter the information through an impossible array of outside personal tastes and agendas. Debates might arise concerning his approach, what he decided to include and exclude, the ratio of technique versus that of history, the “9” as opposed to “5a” argument, and so forth. But what cannot be ignored is the strength of the instruction and absolute ease of use of these videos. He delivers the facts, does it well, and has produced a video collection

that will leave an indelible mark on the teaching of theatrical combat.

Further information is available at www.duelingarts.com







Anthony De Longis

Swordmaster - Whipmaster - Fight Director

- ◆ 30 years professional experience in film, television & stage
- ◆ Bladed weapons training (including saber, broadsword, rapier) in the Spanish, Italian, French and Filipino schools.
- ◆ Bullwhip training, including basic to advanced figures, targeting and body wraps
- ◆ Mounted weapons training with saber, light lance and whip

Located 45 minutes from Hollywood, CA. in Canyon Country. Hourly and daily rates available.
Housing and board available for on-site intensive training.
Call (818) 422-8664. Resume and training videos available at www.delongis.com.

*If you wondered how a real sword looked and performed,
you can find a nice, low mileage time machine,
rob a museum, or buy one of these.*



Zen Warrior Armory (formerly Triplette Competition Arms) manufactures beautiful and durable fighting equipment at the best prices in the industry. For over twenty-five years, our swords have provided fight directors with outstanding performance in theatre, television, and motion picture productions. Please call us for a free catalog or visit our website to see our extensive line of combat-tested products.

331 Standard Street
Elkin, NC 28621
www.zenwarriorarmory.com
336-835-1205



SAFD

merchandise
is available for
purchase!

Contact Brian LeTraunik at
letraunik@sbcglobal.net
for availability and pricing!

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

May 2004

May 5	University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Robin McFarquhar	David Woolley
Michael Brusasco	R&D UA (EAE) SS
Victoria Cacciopoli	R&D UA SS
Cristina Dideriksen	R&D UA SS
Holly Fain	R&D UA SS
Leslie Handleman	R&D UA SS
Jason Maddy	R&D UA SS (EAE All)
Eric Parks	R&D UA (EAE) SS
Jesse Raynes	R&D UA SS (EAE All)
Marie Walker	R&D UA SS

December 2004

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

January 2005

January 8	Swash and Buckle Club
Michael Chin	Richard Ryan
Benet Brandreth	UA
Sally-Ann Burgess	UA KN
Gordon Kemp	UA
Rob Leonard	UA (EAE)
Steve Starr	UA

January 9	UNLV Winter Workshop
David Boushey	Gregory Hoffman
Scott Ticen	R&D UA
Chrstian Bell	R&D UA BS
Robert Behrens	R&D UA BS

February 2005

February 21	Theatre Puget Sound
Robert Borwick	Richard Raether
Ilene Fins	SS
Kevin Inouye	SS

March 2005

March 10	University of California - Santa Cruz
Christina Traister	J. Allen Suddeth
Michael Beatty	UA
Samuel Collier	UA
Carol Crittenden	UA
Bruce Glaseroff	UA
Tyler Hackworth	UA
Alan Heiple	UA
David Kohnen-Barberan	UA
Jeff Reed	UA



ACW students working on a leg wound in their Broadsword SPT at the 2005 NSCW in Las Vegas. Photo by Al Foote III.

Rodney Ridgel	UA
Elise Youssef	UA

May 2005

May 6	Roosevelt University
Chuck Coyl	Dale Girard
Jed Alexander	SiS
Benjamin Dicke	SiS
Jeffrey Diebold	SiS
Stephanie Felmlly	SiS
Matt Foss	SiS
Jesse Grotholson	SiS
Robert Hankins	SiS
Christopher LaBove	SiS
Christopher Lamberth	SiS
Charles McGrath	SiS
Kelly McLaughlin	SiS
Martin Squier	SiS UA
Scott Stangland	SiS
John Tomlinson	SiS UA

5/17/2005	Elgin Community College
Stephen Gray, Neil Massey	David Woolley
Angela Bend	R&D UA QS
Scott Bradley	R&D
Steven Brown	UA
Jason Dinkens	UA
Catherine Early	UA
Matthew Fox	R&D QS
Andrew Koski	R&D
Veronica Krystal	R&D UA
Justin Legel	R&D UA QS
Jose Lopez, Jr.	UA QS
Andrew Luckenbill	R&D QS
Jeannette Marquis	UA QS
Jason Neal	R&D UA
Mark Stangle	UA
Nicholas Umbdenstock	R&D UA QS
Amanda Waltman	R&D QS
Jenna Wrublik	R&D UA QS
J. Michael Zaragoza	QS

May 20	Denver Center Theatre Academy
Geoffrey Kent	Chuck Coyl
Benaiah Anderson	QS
Jeff Bull	QS
Jillian Lietzau	QS
Kat Michels	QS
Brian Murray	UA QS
Erin Ramsey	UA QS

Melissa Ruchong	QS
Stephen Weitz	R&D UA QS
Brett Wilmott	UA QS

June 2005

June 30	Mary Baldwin College
Joseph Martinez	Drew Fracher
Rick Blunt	BS
Francis Boyle	BS
Chelsea Collier	BS
Evan Crump	BS
Jennifer Hall	BS
Noah Jones	BS
Brandon Ketchum	BS
Mark Mannette	BS
Margaret Southerington	BS

July 2005

July 2	Brazosport College
Edward Sharon	Brian Byrnes
Dana Andersen-Wyman	R&D UA
July 3	Swordlady-Cincinnati
Regina Cerimele-Mechley	Chuck Coyl
Jonathan Baca	R&D SiS (EAE) SS S&S
Ruth Baca	R&D
Melissa Bennett	SiS S&S
Melanie Braxton	R&D SiS (EAE) UA
Kevin Breslin	R&D S&S
Erin Carr	R&D SiS UA S&S
Michael Carr	R&D
Robert DeHoff	R&D SiS SS UA BS QS S&S KN
Justen Dennis	R&D
Rob Doyle	R&D SiS UA
Aaron Einhorn	SiS S&S
Dan Finnen	R&D SiS UA S&S
Alana Ghent	R&D SiS UA
Jonathan Helvey	R&D
Maria Henriksen	R&D SiS SS UA BS QS S&S KN
Katherine Horwitz	R&D UA S&S
Benjamin James	R&D UA
Annie King	R&D
Rachel Mock	SiS (EAE) S&S
Josh Pikar	R&D SiS (EAE) SS S&S
Bryan Schmidt	SiS S&S
Tom Shelley	SiS S&S
Jason Speicher	SiS UA S&S
Leah Strasser	R&D SiS UA S&S
Anne Valauri	R&D UA
Nathan Van Dam	R&D SiS UA
Chad Weddle	R&D SiS UA S&S
Darren Wessel	R&D

July 5	Private Lessons
John Tovar	Chuck Coyl
Jessica Dunne	BS
Rachel Stubbs	BS

July 9	North Carolina School of the Arts/SSISC
Robert Westley, Angela Bonacasa,	Dale Girard
Dale Girard	
Angela Bonacasa	BS
Tim Eulich	SiS UA BS QS KN
Robert Westley	BS

July 10	"Blue Jacket"-Xenia, Ohio
Mark Guinn	Brian Byrnes
Rob Anderson	R&D UA QS
Jarred Baugh	R&D UA QS
Graham Birce	R&D UA QS
Carl Calabrese	R&D UA QS
Eric Curtis	R&D UA QS (EAE) S&S (EAE)

McKenna Dabbs	UA QS
Michael Davis	R&D UA QS
Jeremy Dillon	R&D UA QS (EAE)
Luke Eddy	R&D UA (EAE) QS (EAE)
Tyler Etheridge	R&D UA QS
Morgan Grahame	R&D UA QS (EAE)
Andrea Graves	SiS (EAE) BS KN
Nicholas Griffith	SS S&S (EAE) KN
Jake Guinn	R&D UA BS (EAE) QS S&S
Benjamin Haile	SS S&S (EAE) KN
Ashley Hammond	R&D UA QS
Nicholas Harrison	R&D UA BS QS S&S
Jonathan Jolly	R&D SiS UA QS
Rachel Levine	R&D QS
Sonequa Martin	SiS (EAE) UA QS KN
Ben McClung	R&D UA QS
Chris McIntyre	R&D UA QS (EAE) S&S (EAE)
Erin Morgan	R&D UA QS
Shannon Murphy	R&D UA QS
Daniel Nation	SiS SS S&S
Paul Pharris	SiS SS BS
Jason Tate	SiS QS S&S (EAE)
Sebastien Trossbach	R&D UA QS
Ryan Zarecki	R&D UA (EAE) QS (EAE)

August 2005

August 5	University of Southern Mississippi
Scot Mann	Chuck Coyle
Douglas Cockle	KN
Ian Fowler	KN
Luisa Guerreiro	KN
Gordon Kemp	KN

August 19	Arcadia University
Ian Rose	Brian Byrnes
Jeff Beers	R&D UA BS
JaQuinley Kerr	UA QS
Kerri Kohut	UA
Gigi Mitchell-Velasco	UA QS
Toby Mulford	SiS UA QS
Doug Thomas	R&D BS
Ryan Travis	UA QS

October 2005

October 8	Swordplay Stage Combat
Joseph Travers	Michael Chin
Barbara Brandt	SiS
Michael McGuire	SiS

October 25	Southern Methodist University
Richard Raether	Brian Byrnes
Clay Bunker	UA
Mychael Chinn	UA
Christina Coll	UA
Jessica DiSalvo	UA
Giselle Gant	UA



Angela Bonacasa (right) is put up against a wall by Andrea Robertson (left) in Angela's Advanced Swashbuckling class at the 2006 Winter Wonderland Workshop in Chicago. Photo by Jill Matarelli-Carlson.

Ashley Grombol	UA
Jonathan Grunert	UA
Austin Herbert	UA
Chad Huggins	UA
Kevin Kiler	UA
Chloe Lackie	UA
Emily Loeb	UA
Lydia Mackay	UA
Jeremiah Musgrove	UA
Candice Patton	UA
Joshua Peterson	UA
Gwen Templeton	UA
Ginneth Thomas	UA
Ariel Woodiwiss	UA

October 28

Gregory Ramsey
David Catanese
Rob Coccaana
Adam Danoff
Shannon Jones
David Mason
Ryan McVeigh
Katy O'Leary
Lauren Parkinson
Mark Schwentker
Tim Shelton
Catherine Simmons
Kim Slagle
Amanda Wagner
Justus White
Stephen Williams
Ann Winnard

November 2005

November 12

Payson Burt
Max Barrows
Megan Evans
Jessica Smart
Stephanie TeBeau
David Thomas
Kat Trincerri

November 12

Mike Mahaffey
Cameron Britton
Yuliana Carranza
Connie Geml
Luke Griffis
Kristi Miller
Tricia Scott
Tommy Weaver

November 12

Al Foote III
Deb Fialkow
Rob Jones

November 20
Robert Borwick

Jonathan Cole
Ted deChatelet
Deb Fialkow

November 21

Neil Massey
Kevin Anderson
Nick Arapoglou
John Armstrong
Vanessa Ballam
Tom Connor
Amada Cotti-Lowell
Kiera Davenport
Jonathan Davidson
Derek Dion
Erik Friedman
Codey Girten

Private Lessons

I. Allen Suddeth

BS QS KN (EAE-All)
BS QS KN (EAE-All)
BS QS KN (EAE-All)
BS QS KN
BS QS KN
BS QS KN (EAE-All)
BS QS KN
BS QS KN
BS QS KN
BS QS KN
BS QS KN (EAE-All)
BS QS
BS
BS QS KN
BS QS KN (EAE-All)
BS (EAE)

**American Musical and
Dramatic Academy**

Brian Byrnes
R&D UA
R&D UA BS
R&D UA BS
R&D (EAE) UA BS
R&D UA BS
R&D (EAE) UA BS

**American Musical and
Dramatic Academy**

Brian Byrnes
R&D UA BS
R&D UA (EAE) BS
R&D UA BS
R&D UA BS
R&D UA (EAE) BS
R&D UA BS
R&D UA BS

Private Lessons

J. Allen Suddeth
QS
QS

Private Lessons

Richard Raether
SiS KN
SiS KN
SiS

Indiana University

Chuck Coyle
R&D UA
R&D UA
R&D UA (EAE) BS
R&D UA
R&D UA BS
R&D UA
R&D UA
R&D UA
BS (EAE)
R&D UA BS
R&D UA BS (EAE)



AACW students Jessica Dunne (facing) and Christi Waldon working on mass battle choreography at the 2005 NSCW in Las Vegas. Photo by Al Foote III.

Brenden Hill	R&D UA
Kara Keck	R&D UA BS
Anne Kerkian	R&D UA
John Maness	R&D UA BS
Brendan Pentzell	R&D UA
Scot Purkeypile	R&D UA (EAE) BS
Renee Racan	R&D UA BS
Kim Rosen	UA
Jessica Rothert	R&D UA
Rosalind Rubin	R&D UA
David Sheehan	R&D BS
Stephanie Sobic	UA
Zachary Spicer	R&D UA
Claire Tuft	R&D UA
Eric Van Tienen	R&D
Jenna Weinberg	R&D UA BS
Ryan Wells	R&D BS

December 2005

December 16	Roosevelt University
Angela Bonacasa	Dale Girard
Kristin Backstrand	BS
Matthew Callahan	BS
Nick Christensen	BS
Kristian Colvey	BS
Ashley Curry	BS
Cailin Ebersole	BS
Jessica Fernandez	BS
Samantha Grisafe	BS
Stephen Grush	BS
Molly Layton	BS
Seth Leiber	BS
Jacob Lorenz	BS
Kristin Lutzeier	BS
Mark Minton	BS
Michelle Mueller	BS
Danielle O'Farrell	BS
Daniel Roberts	BS
Mallory Schuh	BS
Andrew Sheagren	BS
Lauren White	BS
Christopher Willumsen	BS



Advertised and Regional Workshops

International Stunt School

June 5 - 24, 2006
August 21 - September 9, 2006
United Stuntmen's Association, Everett, WA
(425) 290-9957 www.stuntschool.com

Summer Stage Combat

July 10 - July 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 Workshop Intermediate Actor Combatant Workshop

July 10 - 28, 2006
SAFD & University of Nevada, Las Vegas, NV
(702) 895-3662 www.safd.org

BNSCW 2006 - British National Stage Combat Workshop

July 25 - August 5, 2006
Islington Arts and Media Centre, Turle Road, LONDON N4 3LS
00 44 7981 806 265 or Email: Secretary@bassc.org
www.bassc.org

National Fight Directors Workshop Actor Ensemble Workshop

July 29 - August 11, 2006
SAFD & North Carolina School of the Arts, Winston-Salem, NC
www.safd.org
For more information, e-mail: NYFGTDIRCTR@aol.com

Action Film Workshop

July 29 - August 19, 2006
SAFD & North Carolina School of the Arts, Winston-Salem, NC
www.safd.org
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 Twelfth Annual Winter Wonderland Workshop

January - February 2007
(708) 466-7055 www.winterwonderlandworkshop.com

Regent University proudly presents the third annual
VIRGINIA BEACH BASH

Regent University, Virginia Beach, Virg.

April 1--2, 2006

Coordinator:

Michael Kirkland, Ph.D. Chair, Department of Theatre Arts

Past Staff:

FMs - Michael Chinn, Dale Girard, Richard Ryan,

CTs - Michael Johnson, John McFarland, k. Jenny Jones,

Scot Mann, James Brown, Michael Kirkland and

Pyrotechnics Expert - John Wynne

Price: \$235.00 for two solid days of instruction (t-Shirt included)

Various union and professional society discounts available

For complete information and intern opportunities, see our website at

www.regent.edu/beachbash

Or call 757-226-4730

Suppliers & Services

Inclusion in this listing is provided as a paid service and does not represent endorsement by the SAFD.



Atlanta Stage Combat Studio

73 Summertree Place
Hattiesburg, MS 39402
(601) 466-2352

Weapons rental, instruction, choreography,
adjudication, workshops
www.stagecombat.com

Rogue Steel

Neil Massey

3738 Blanchan Avenue
Brookfield, IL 60513
(708) 485-2089
neil@roguesteel.com
www.roguesteel.com

Virginia Commonwealth University

School of the Arts
Department of Theatre

922 Park Avenue
P.O. Box 842524
Richmond, VA 23284-2524
(804) 828-1514
www.vcu.edu/artweb/Theatre

To Advertise in *The Fight Master*, please contact:

Tom Carr
(773) 755-2271
tchjroscoe@aol.com

DIRECTORY



THE SOCIETY OF AMERICAN FIGHT DIRECTORS

1350 E Flamingo Rd #25
Las Vegas, NV 89119
SAFD Hotline (800) 659-6579
www.safd.org

GOVERNING BODY



President
CHUCK COYL
Chicago, IL
(773) 764-3825
chuckcoyl@prodigy.net



Fight Master Representative
DREW FRACHER
Highland Heights, KY
(859) 441-9433
vern10th@fuse.net



Vice President
BRIAN BYRNES
Houston, TX
H: (713) 528-3413
W: (713) 743-2915
Bbyrnes@UH.edu



Fight Director Representative
SCOT MANN
Hattiesburg, MS
(601) 579-7765
scotmann@stagecombat.com



Secretary
MIKE MAHAFFEY
North Hollywood, CA
H: (818) 982-3713
C: (818) 749-8393
mike_mahaffey@hotmail.com



Certified Teacher Representative
NEIL MASSEY
Brookfield, IL
(708) 485-2089
neil@roquesteel.com



Treasurer
ANDREW HAYES
Greencastle, IN
(765) 653-0676
AMHayes@depauw.edu



Actor Combatant/Friend Representative
AL FOOTE III
New York, NY
(212) 717-8117
nyfeman@hotmail.com

REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

New England
RICHARD HEDDERMAN
Wauwatosa, WI
(414) 476-0421
NERegRep@safd.org

Great Lakes
JIM STARK
Hanover, IN
(812) 866-9344
GLRegRep@safd.org

Rocky Mountain
SANDY VAN BREMEN COHEN
Ogden, UT
(801) 627-6903
RMRegRep@safd.org

Foreign
BRET YOUNT
London UK
44-020-8881-1536
internationalregrep@safd.org

East Central
DAN O'DRISCOLL
New York, NY
(646) 228-6878
ECRegRep@safd.org

Southwest
ANN CANDLER HARLAN
Houston, TX
(713) 952-4867
SWRegRep@safd.org

Northwest
JONATHAN COLE
Salem, OR
(503) 999-4709
NWRRegRep@safd.org

Southeast
JOHN CASHMAN
Clermont, FL
H: (352) 394-8522
W: (407) 560-1083
SERegRep@safd.org

Mid America
DON PRESTON
St. Paul, MN
(651) 645-2093
MARegRep@safd.org

Pacific Western
RICHARD LANE
San Francisco, CA
(415) 957-3622
PWRegRep@safd.org

COLLEGE OF FIGHT MASTERS

Fight Master Emeritus
DAVID BOUSHEY
Everett, WA
(425) 290-9973
BUSHMAN4@prodigy.net

Fight Master Emeritus
J.D. MARTINEZ
Lexington, VA
H: (540) 463-3756
W: (540) 463-8005
martinezjd@wlu.edu

GEOFFREY ALM
Kenmore, WA
(425) 483-1351
gbald@juno.com

BRIAN BYRNES
Houston, TX
H: (713) 528-3413
W: (713) 743-2915
Bbyrnes@UH.edu

MICHAEL G. CHIN
New York, NY
(212) 807-1004
nscwboss@aol.com

CHUCK COYL
Chicago, IL
(773) 764-3825
chuckcoyl@prodigy.net

DREW FRACHER
Highland Heights, KY
(859) 441-9433
vern10th@fuse.net

ERIK FREDRICKSEN
Ann Arbor, MI
H: (313) 944-0116
W: (313) 747-2296
Hannis@Umich.edu

DALE ANTHONY GIRARD
Kernersville, NC
(336) 993-3255
FightGuy@earthlink.net
dgirard@NCARTS.edu

DAVID LEONG
Richmond, VA
W: (804) 828-1514
Service: (212) 382-3535
dsleong@vcu.edu

RICHARD RAETHER
Rockford, IL
(815) 962-6579
rraether@mac.com

RICHARD RYAN
C: 07973-195887 UK
C: (310) 980-4049 US
richard@stagefight.com
www.stagefight.com

J. ALLEN SUDDETH
Glenridge, NJ
(973) 748-5697
NYFGTDIRECTR@aol.com

DAVID WOOLLEY
Chicago, IL
H: (773) 267-8513
W: (312) 344-6123
smen@interaccess.com
dwoolley@popmail.colum.edu
www.theswordsmen.com

FIGHT DIRECTORS

JOHN BELLOMO
Philadelphia, PA
H: (215) 334-1814
C: (215) 262-1591
jvbellomo@verizon.net

J. DAVID BRIMMER
Yardley, PA
(215) 493-1313
jdavidbrimmer@aol.com

PAYSON BURT
Sherman Oaks, CA
H: (818) 997-3356
C: (818) 694-5550
Payson@4lafa.org
www.4lafa.org

DAN CARTER
State College, PA
H: (814) 867-1803
W: (814) 865-7586
dch4@email.PSU.edu

JAMIE CHEATHAM
Pewaukee, WI
(262) 595-2522
swordman@ww.rr.com
jamie.cheatham@uwp.edu

CHARLES CONWELL
Chester Springs, PA
H: (610) 827-7707
W: (215) 717-6454
CharlesConwell@aol.com

PAUL DENNHARDT
Stanford, IL
(309) 392-2300
chefprd@aol.com
prdennh@ilstu.edu

DEXTER FIDLER
San Francisco, CA
(415) 564-6040
fidhauer@yahoo.com

BRENT GIBBS
Tucson, AZ
H: (520) 622-2143
W: (520) 621-9402
BrentG@U.Arizona.edu

GREGORY HOFFMAN
Incline Village, NV
(415) 606-3835
gehoffman@att.net
gregory@duelingarts.com

MICHAEL JOHNSON
Washington, DC
(202) 543-2571
mj2rd@yahoo.com

JEFF A.R. JONES
Raleigh, NC
H: (919) 325-2842
W: (919) 719-0800
M: (919) 539-7476
jarjones@nc.rr.com

k. JENNY JONES
Cincinnati, OH
kj_jones@msn.com

COLLEEN KELLY
San Diego, CA
(619) 260-7954
colleenkelly@mindspring.com
colleenk@sandiego.edu

GEOFFREY KENT
Denver, CO
(303) 877-2670
geoffrey@thefightguy.com

RICHARD LANE
San Francisco, CA
(415) 957-3622
ricl@pacbell.com

BRUCE LECURE
Miami, FL
H: (305) 234-7897
W: (305) 284-4474
Blecur@aol.com

ROBERT MACDOUGALL
Seattle, WA
(206) 522-2201
clanrdmacd@aol.com

SCOT MANN
Hattiesburg, MS
(601) 579-7765
scotmann@stagecombat.com
www.stagecombat.com

JOHN MCFARLAND
Brookfield, IL
(708) 955-8767
1stimpulse@earthlink.net

DR. ROBIN MCFARQUHAR
Urbana, IL
H: (217) 337-0099
W: (217) 333-1659
rmcfarqu@uiuc.edu

TIM PINNOW
Las Cruces, NM
H: (505) 647-2667
W: (217) 333-1659
Tpinnow@NMSU.edu

RON PIRETTI
New York, NY
(212) 675-4688
rlp@yahoo.com

RICKI G. RAVITTS
New York, NY
(212) 874-7408
SAFD Hotline (800) 659-6579
mllemaupin@yahoo.com
RickiFights@yahoo.com

IAN ROSE
Philadelphia, PA
(215) 468-8008
Rosei@arcadia.edu

NICHOLAS SANDYS
Chicago, IL
(773) 274-0581
Voice: (773) 398-3034
Npullin@depaul.edu

ROBERT "TINK" TUFTEE
Brooklyn, NY
(718) 788-4957
Service: (212) 869-3050
rtuftee@ix.netcom.com

STEVEN VAUGHAN
Alexander, NY
(716) 474-1160
svsv55@yahoo.com

JACK YOUNG
Allentown, PA
(610) 336-4805
jackyoung59@hotmail.com

CERTIFIED TEACHERS

AARON ANDERSON

Richmond, VA
(804) 683-3483
adanderson@vcu.edu

LERALDO ANZALDUA

Pasadena, TX
H: (281) 280-8147
C: (281) 732-4708
leraldo_a@hotmail.com
Leraldo36@aol.com

TIM BELL

Orlando, FL
(954) 401-3445
stuntbell@earthlink.net

JACKI BLAKENEY

Atlanta, GA
H: (404) 843-1356
C: (404) 408-2221
Jacki@stagecombat.com

ANGELA BONACASA

Chicago, IL
(773) 485-3098
goodhouse@hotmail.com

IAN BORDEN

Tallahassee, FL
(850) 575-0757
arrowfsu@yahoo.ca
imb7065@garnet.acns.fsu.edu

BOB BORWICK

Seattle, WA
(206) 683-2267
bobbyborwick@yahoo.com

JAMES BROWN

Shillington, PA
H: (610) 796-0288
C: (267) 258-2341
JNBrown12153@aol.com

NICOLE CALLENDAR

West Orange, NJ
(973) 731-6343
calendorn@earthlink.net

JOHN CASHMAN

Clermont, FL
H: (352) 394-8522
W: (407) 560-1083
johncashman@cfl.rr.com

GINA CERIMELE-MECHLEY

Cincinnati, OH
(513) 200-5866
swordlady@sprintmail.com

BRUCE CROMER

Yellow Springs, OH
(937) 767-8510
bruce.cromer@wright.edu

ROBERT RADKOFF EK

Aiken, SC
radkoff@yahoo.com

AL FOOTE III

New York, NY
(917) 710-1226
nyfeman@hotmail.com

TIZA GARLAND

Gainesville, FL
(407) 256-9215
TizaG1@aol.com

STEPHEN GRAY

Chicago, IL
(773) 818-7972
Sgray@Elgin.edu

MARK "RAT" GUINN

Ruston, LA
W: (318) 257-4693
C: (318) 614-1629
mguinn@latech.edu

ANDREW HAYES

Greencastle, IN
(765) 653-0676
AMHayes@depauw.edu

MICHAEL HOOD

Indiana, PA
H: (724) 463-9192
W: (724) 357-2397
mhood@iup.edu

SPENCER HUMM

Burke, VA
(703) 626-8572
slashm@aol.com

ROBB HUNTER

Vienna, VA
(917) 604-3008
robhunter@preferredarms.com

DENISE ALESSANDRIA HURD

New York, NY
H: (212) 243-4867
C: (917) 334-6295
DAHurd2000@aol.com

DR. MICHAEL KIRKLAND

Chesapeake, VA
H: (757) 410-0690
W: (757) 226-4730
C: (757) 617-7174
michhil@regent.edu
mhill255@aol.com

MICHELLE LADD

El Segundo, CA
(561) 642-0329
HRHMLadd@aol.com

HENRY LAYTON

Lexington, KY
(859) 420-4265
hotpockets1@hotmail.com

BILL LENGFELDER

Dallas, TX
(214) 340-6306
SMUProf@yahoo.com
lengfeld@mail.smu.edu

BRIAN LETRAUNIK

Chicago, IL
H: (773) 529-8210
C: (773) 805-0926
letraunik@sbcglobal.net

TODD LOWETH

Studio City, CA
(818) 760-4712
toddloweth@mac.com

MIKE MAHAFFEY

North Hollywood, CA
H: (818) 982-3713
C: (818) 749-8393
mike_mahaffey@hotmail.com

NEIL MASSEY

Brookfield, IL
(708) 485-2089
neil@roguesteel.com
swordcutler@earthlink.net

ADAM MCLEAN

Richmond, VA
(804) 938-2222
mcleanab@hotmail.com
mcleanab@vcu.edu

DOUGLAS MUMAW

Harrisonburg, VA
(888) 930-6672
drumumaw@eudoramail.com

DAN O'DRISCOLL

New York, NY
(646) 228-6878
Dan35051@aol.com

MARK OLSEN

State College, PA
(814) 867-8119
meo2@psu.edu

DONALD PRESTON

St. Paul, MN
(651) 645-2093
theyfight@yahoo.com

GREG RAMSEY

Lebanon, PA
H: (717) 272-7265
W: (717) 665-7021 ext.139
Sabre@desupernet.net

RAY A. RODRIGUEZ

Far Rockaway, NY
H: (718) 471-9108
C: (646) 373-8106
ranthrod66@yahoo.com
ranthrod66@hotmail.com

JOHN PAUL SCHEIDLER

Staunton, VA
H: (540) 887-0021
C: (646) 337-7124
jpdoe@earthlink.net

EDWARD "TED" SHARON

Fredonia, NY
(716) 673-3597
tlsharon@hotmail.com

LEWIS SHAW

Baltimore, MD
(410) 321-6519
LonnieSC@aol.com

HARRIS SMITH

Lincoln, NE
(402) 489-6977
hsmith2@unl.edu

PAUL STEGER

Tallahassee, FL
(405) 250-1578
psteiger@mailier.fsu.edu

JEFF "ISHMAEL" THOMASON

Kennewick, WA
(509) 539-0905
stuntjeff@charter.net

JOHN TOVAR

St. Charles, IL
(630) 330-4293
john_tovar@sbcglobal.net

CHRISTINA TRAISTER

Pittsburg, CA
(310) 213-2558
traimez@aol.com

JOSEPH TRAVERS

New York, NY
(212) 726 2400
swordplay98@hotmail.com

BRAD WALLER

Springfield, VA
H: (703) 323-7233
W: (703) 861-3307
GlobeFG@aol.com

ROBERT WALSH

West Newton, MA
H: (617) 244-9656
W: (617) 494-3078
robertwalsh@rcn.com

ROBERT WESTLEY

New York, NY
(212) 613-5457
dpwestley@yahoo.com

D.C. WRIGHT

Macomb, IL
H: (309) 836-6359
W: (309) 298-1926
dchedu97@hotmail.com
DC-Wright@wiu.edu

BRET YOUNT

London UK
44-020-8881-1536
swordsman@compuserve.com

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 through service to the organization and the art form have 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
- ◆ Regional Representatives
- ◆ Certified Teachers
- ◆ Fight Directors
- ◆ Fight Masters
- ◆ Membership Information
- ◆ Regional Workshops
- ◆ Upcoming Events
- ◆ Directory
- ◆ Links

www.safd.org

Call the **SAFD** Hotline

1-800-659-6579

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

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

Society of American Fight Directors

DEDICATED TO IMPROVING THE QUALITY AND SAFETY OF STAGE COMBAT



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

Actor/Combatant ♦ Teacher ♦ Fight Director

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

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

The Society of American Fight Directors

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

Dues are \$35 annually. (For members outside the U.S., annual dues are \$40)
Your enclosed check will cover dues for the current year.

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

Membership Application **Society of American Fight Directors**

(Please Print)

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

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

Date Tested: _____

Instructor: _____

Weapons: _____

Adjudicator: _____



The staff at the Winter Wonderland Workshop would like to say
Thank You
for making 2006 another memorable year.

Keep checking out www.winterwonderlandworkshop.com
for updates and information about our upcoming
12th Workshop!

**The Society of American
Fight Directors**

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

PRSRT STD
US Postage
PAID
Bartlett, IL
Permit No. 51

FORWARDING & RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

