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The Society of American Fight Directors

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The Cutting Edge

Celebrating 30 Years with the SAFD



Our logo circa 1987



David Boushey



Rod Corbin



Erik Fredricksen



Joseph Martinez



Our current logo

By Michael J. Mueller

The Society of American Fight Directors (SAFD) is celebrating their 30th anniversary this May and *The Cutting Edge* is paying homage by reflecting on the great accomplishments of this organization. It is hard to imagine a time before the SAFD. It is easy to forget that an organization focusing on collecting, organizing, standardizing, and maintaining the myriad training methods and styles of stage combat didn't exist three decades ago; at least not in the form we have come to know and rely upon. Actors getting placed into dangerous situations either because of an actor's inexperience or the inexperience of a fight director has become less and less common because of organizations like the SAFD. The limits of staged combat are being pushed to extremes, with continuing effort to maintain the safety and integrity of the story being told. While 30 years may seem like a long time to some and a short time to others, the great equalizer is the impressive amount accomplished over the span of three decades.

The following information was edited for this publication from the SAFD website, and was originally compiled by CT/FD Payson Burt and FM Richard Raether.



The original logo of the SAFD was designed by David Boushey.

On May 16, 1977, the SAFD was incorporated, with its stated purpose "to bring together into one organization those individuals who earn a living choreographing fight scenes for stage and film" (Articles of Incorporation). By April of 1978, the SAFD already had three classifications of membership, boasting six "full" members (defined as "professional fight directors"), 23 affiliate members (defined as "fencing masters in drama schools"), and three student members ("students who aspire to become fight directors"). In July of 1978 a fourth classification, "friend," was added. Dues back then were \$15 for full and affiliate members and \$10 for students and friends.

The first issue of *The Fight Master* also appeared in 1978. In the October issue, Fight Master Emeritus (FME) David Boushey proposed testing students as actor/combatants. Fight Master (FM) J.

Allen Suddeth contacted FME David Boushey and the result was the first-ever test of American students under the auspices of SAFD. Twelve of Allen's students tested in New York on July 14, 1979. Erik Fredricksen adjudicated and all twelve passed. Since then, more than 3000 students have been tested.

New York City was the site of the first national meeting of the SAFD on August 15, 1979. One of the lasting decisions that came out of the meeting was adding "actor/combatant" as a membership classification. But it was on April 20, 1980, that the Society of British Fight Directors made the SAFD official, "We fully recognize the authority of the SAFD to conduct tests in their own country. We rule that certificates issued by the SBFD (Society of British Fight Directors) should only be issued for tests conducted in the United Kingdom."

On July 14, 1980, the idea of a national fight school became a reality in the guise of the first National Stage Combat Workshop (NSCW), held at Western Illinois University. Coordinated and hosted by Fight Master Emeritus (FME) Joseph Martinez, there were twenty-nine students and three instructors, FME Joseph Martinez, FM Erik Fredricksen and FME David Boushey.



The pen is mightier
than the sword . . .

Michael Mueller, Editor-in-Chief

On May 16, a day that the Mississippi Steamboat service began (1817), the Republican convention in Chicago selected Abraham Lincoln as their candidate (1860), the first-ever Academy Awards were presented in Hollywood (1929), and first class postage was raised to eight cents (1971), the Society of American Fight Directors was incorporated and came into existence. With 30 years past, nearly 1000 active members, and many more who have gained wisdom from this organization, the SAFD continues to grow and strive for excellence through training and service to the entertainment industry.

Looking back on where this organization has come and how much has been accomplished, I have been impressed by the closeness that the SAFD has fostered. Over the past year of working for *The Cutting Edge*, I have constantly heard members placing emphasis on the community of the SAFD as being one of its biggest draws. Organizations that have these strong bonds of family are bound for success because there is a willingness to work past the difficulties and strive for change where it is needed. This willingness enables the necessary growth all organizations must go through on their paths to lasting institutions.

It is fitting that we talk about growth at the conclusion of spring and as we head into summer. This time of year, where growth is abundant, the SAFD seems to be right in line with the natural order of things. Over the past thirty years this organization has seen tremendous growth, but this is only the end of the beginning. The years ahead are sure to bring more expansion and complexity which will provide the proper heat and volatile forces necessary to forge a stronger, more resilient society that will stand for all time.

Where will this organization be in another 30 years? What new advances will it help to bring about? What resources will be provided to the membership? How much will the SAFD have grown?

In this issue, we cover a brief history of the SAFD as well as continue our focus on reporting the activities of our membership and supplying material to inform your future endeavors.

As the Society of American Fight Directors continues to grow with wisdom and experience, increased membership and industry awareness are proof of the impact this organization has on the larger entertainment community. We are a society of friendship with common goals. We are a society founded on the safety and effectiveness of staging combat. We should all be proud to be a part of the SAFD.

Michael J. Mueller

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Mission Statement of The Cutting Edge:

The *Cutting Edge*, a bimonthly newsletter written exclusively by and for the membership of the Society of American Fight Directors (**SAFD**), provides its readers with resources to stay informed, involved and always on *The Cutting Edge* of stage combat.

Our publication aims to:

- Keep the membership informed about SAFD events, policies, opportunities, membership activities and useful industry information
- Provide the membership with a forum for open discourse
- Welcome new members and engage current members

Cutting Edge Submission Deadlines:

| <u>Issue</u> | <u>Material Due Date</u> |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| January/February 2007: | November 1, 2006 |
| March/April 2007: | January 1, 2007 |
| May/June 2007: | March 1, 2007 |
| July/August 2007: | May 1, 2007 |
| September/October 2007: | July 1, 2007 |
| November/December 2007: | September 1, 2007 |

Regional Report Schedule and Deadlines:

- Jan./Feb., July/Aug.** Editions include Int'l, SE, EC, NE
(deadlines Oct. 15 and Apr. 15 respectively)
- Mar./Apr., Sept./Oct.** Editions include PacWest, NW, SW
(deadlines Dec. 15 and June 15 respectively)
- May/June, Nov./Dec.** Editions include MA, RM, GL
(deadlines Feb. 15 and Aug. 15 respectively)

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Send all submissions, comments and questions to
cuttingedge@safd.org



... From the Governing Body

Mike Mahaffey, Secretary

Call for Nominations:

Who will be our next President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer?

Our current Executive Committee will conclude their terms in office on December 31, 2007. This means that nominations for potential candidates to fill these positions are needed no later than 12:00 a.m. (Eastern Standard Time) on August 1, 2007. Elections for these positions will be held this fall, with the newly elected Committee taking office January 1, 2008.

Those elected will serve on the Executive Committee, the Governing Body and its various committees, and will help to shape the growth of the SAFD over the next three years. Nominees will be notified of their nominations no later than August 7, 2007. All nominees must accept or decline their nomination by August 15, 2007 in order to be eligible for the fall elections.

If you are interested in nominating an individual, please contact Dale Girard, the Chairman of the Nominating Committee, at dgirard@NCARTS.edu or (336) 403-6434.

2007 National Meeting Scheduled

The SAFD National Meeting will be held at 7:00 p.m. on Sunday, July 8, 2007 at the University of Nevada-Las Vegas. This meeting will be open to all members. The room location will be listed on the website, once it has been determined, along with more information. If you have any questions, contact the secretary at secretary@safd.org.

2007 Restricted Dates for SPTs: Attention all teachers!

If you are planning a Skills Proficiency Test (SPT) between June 11, and August 24, 2007, please contact the Governing Body (GB) as soon as possible. As per the Policies & Procedures (section 2.01), these dates are under restriction as they fall within 4 weeks of the NSCW-ACW. SPTs are not permitted without the GB's consent. Please let us know ASAP!

2007 NSCW Scholarships

After a very close race this year, Sarah Pitárd is the winner of our Douglas Fairbanks Scholarship, Kirstin Hendrix is our recipient of the Ian McKay Scholarship and Sara Hodges has won our Patrick "Paddy" Crean Scholarship. Congratulations to our winners and thank you to all those who applied.

For those who don't know Sarah, Kirstin or Sara, here is a little information about each of this year's winners:

Sarah Pitárd will complete her BFA in acting from DePaul University this June. She is recognized in seven of the eight weapons in the SAFD. This past year, she has been apprenticing FD Nick Sandys and choreographing combat for several DePaul workshop and studio productions. She is currently playing Lisabette in *Anton In Show Business* and is writing a play with small sword fights galore. She can't wait for Vegas!

Kirstin Hendrix is a graduating senior at Saint Michael's College in Vermont. She got into stage combat about two years ago and has been in love with it ever since. She is moving to Chicago, and hopes to make a career in stage combat and eventually become a stunt person.

Sara Hodges is a resident of Harrisonburg, VA, and has been a member of the SAFD since her introduction to stage combat at the SSC last year. Since then, she has performed her own fight choreography in *Arsenic & Old Lace*, and more recently, fight directed her first show, Michael John LaChiusa's musical, *See What I Wanna See*. She is looking forward to attending the ACW and achieving AC status this summer.

Attention all members:

Don't forget the National Stage Combat Workshops this summer!

Please remind your students, friends, fellow actors and combatants that the National Stage Combat Workshops (NSCW) are now accepting applications for all workshops. We're looking for students for the Actor/Combatant Workshop and Introduction to Stage Combat Workshops at North Carolina School of the Arts, as well as the Intermediate and Advanced Actor/Combatant Workshops at the University of Nevada-Las Vegas. Please look at our website at http://www.safd.org/NSCW/NSCW_Main.html for more information. Also, if you'd like to be on the list for receiving the NSCW poster each year, or were supposed to this year and did not, please contact the Secretary at secretary@safd.org. He will be happy to put you on our mailing list as well as send one out to you post-haste!

The 2007 Teacher Training Workshop

The following members have been selected to participate in the 2007 Teacher Training Workshop at North Carolina School of the Arts:

- Lacy Altwine
- Russ Brown
- Jonathan Cole
- Lee Crouse
- Ted deChatelet
- Matthew E. Ellis
- Robert Hamilton
- Gregg Lloyd
- Jill Matarelli Carlson
- Robert Najarian
- Martin Noyes
- Darrell Rushton
- Lee Soroko
- Katharine Cuyler Stage
- Christi Waldon
- Michael Yahn

Please congratulate these individuals when you have a chance!

Celebrating 30 Years with the SAFD *continued*



Advertisement brochure for the 1981 NSCW.

In 1980, the SAFD also marked an increased focus on actor/combatant training through proficiency tests in colleges and universities across the country in addition to the annual NSCW. There were additionally more efforts to formulate a more stringent application procedure for prospective affiliate members. In 1983, the SAFD responded to concerns voiced by actor/combatant members who felt that their designation didn't imply membership as much as success at proficiency testing. Membership categories were changed in January 1983 to: Full members, Associate members (formerly affiliate members), and Affiliate members (formerly actor/combatants). The SAFD had 102 members: ten full members, 40 associate members, 41 affiliate members, six students, four friends, and one honorary member at this time.



Cover of *The Fight Master* circa 1982.

Also in 1983, *The Fight Master* moved from the typewriter to typesetting; however, due to increased production

costs and scarcity of submissions, the publication was cut back from four issues a year to three.

The designation "full member" (not very dashing) was changed to "fight master" in September of 1984; and actor/combatant skills tests had become so numerous that, for the first time, adjudicators were paid a fee. Specific procedures were also set up for upgrading member status to the associate and fight master levels.

More changes came in 1987, with a major restructuring of membership classifications. Affiliates were once more designated as actor/combatants and were required to renew their status periodically. Certified teachers became the next rung in the ladder. For the first time, a standard of knowledge and teaching ability was formulated and a testing procedure devised. Like actor/combatants, teachers must renew their status every three years. FME Joseph Martinez created the first teacher training workshop and teacher certification test at the 1987 NSCW. Associate members could grandfather in as certified teachers, provided they took the teacher certification test. The student classification was dropped, but the general category "friend" remained. (The SAFD now had a simple, self-explanatory hierarchy. Membership was open to anyone with an interest in stage combat, and three status levels existed: Actor/Combatant, Certified Teacher and Fight Director. Fight Master had become an honorary classification.)

After two-and-a-half years and three petitions for non-profit status, FME David Boushey and FM Erik Fredricksen flew to Los Angeles and, with the aid of an attorney, pleaded the SAFD's case. Through their selfless actions, the SAFD was finally awarded Federal non-profit tax-exempt status in 1987.

January 1990 brought with it the first issue of the SAFD newsletter, *The Cutting Edge*, as well as the induction of film legends Douglas Fairbanks, Jr. and Stuart Granger as honorary SAFD



First edition of *The Cutting Edge*, Jan. 1990.

members. The first Advanced Actor Combatant Workshop (AACW), designed and taught by FM J. Allen Suddeth and FM Erik Fredricksen, took place during the NSCW of that year and established a focus on teaching advanced techniques. *The Fight Master* moved to a biannual schedule since *The Cutting Edge* was now being published six times a year. This year also saw the first attempts to represent the SAFD on a local level. Eight regional representatives were selected to help distribute information to the membership.

In January of 1993, Susan Eviston was elected as vice president of the SAFD. She was the first certified teacher, and first female, elected to be an officer. Another innovation in 1993 was that of membership representatives. FM Geoffrey Alm was selected by his peers to represent the Certified Teachers and Certified Teacher/Fight Director (CT/FD) Ricki G. Ravitts was elected to represent the general membership. Both were new voices in the annual officer's meeting, which was held prior to the summer workshop. They became the voice of the membership, lobbying for change within the new corporate structure. There are now membership representatives for the following categories: Fight Master, Fight Director, Certified Teacher, and Advanced Actor Combatant/Actor Combatant/Friend. They are elected by the membership at large and serve for two years.

The SAFD also made strides with Actors' Equity Association on issues including the wording of contracts regarding fight directors, fight captains, and fight calls.

Celebrating 30 Years with the SAFD *continued*

Shakespeare's Globe Theater, gone from the banks of the Thames for 350 years, was rebuilt and reopened in the summer of 1995. The SAFD was well represented at this historic event with FME Joseph Martinez, CT/FD Ricki G. Ravitts, CT Lewis Shaw, CT Brad Waller, and Tim Klotz presenting a lecture, demonstration, and performance on the swords of Shakespeare. The same year also saw the first International Stage Combat Workshop take place in London, with members of the Society of British Fight Directors, Fight Directors Canada and the SAFD participating in two weeks of intense workshops that offered participants the historic opportunity to certify with all three organizations.

The summer of 1996 inaugurated the Fight Directors Workshop and Conference (FDWC), which convened four days before the NSCW and in concurrence with the officer meetings. The event consisted of classes taught by CTs, FDs and FMs to CTs, FDs and FMs, as well as officer and committee meetings, vital to the smooth operation and growth of the SAFD. This allowed individuals, who could only communicate from a distance during the year, to discuss important issues face to face. The FDWC has since become a regular and anticipated event.

SAFD's 20th anniversary was marked in 1997. With membership hovering just above 400, the SAFD entered into its third generation healthy and vigorous. They also entered the Internet age with their first website. Though modest, it represented a new way to connect people to this growing organization.



David Boushey teaching Chuck Coyl and Jim Robinson at the first National Stage Combat Workshop

In 1998, with paid membership hitting an all time high of 700 members, the SAFD also became active in soliciting money for Broadway Cares - Equity Fights Aids. To date, the SAFD has raised over \$10,000 for this noble cause. They were also present in New York for talks with the Actors' Equity Association concerning actor safety in the workplace. There was also the addition of a new category of membership during this year. Advanced Actor Combatants were honored with special certificates when they were able to pass, and maintain current status in, six of the eight weapons styles recognized by the SAFD. The administration also saw fit to add two new weapon styles to the list that had stood for many years, Knife and Single Sword.

Internal changes within the SAFD included the new Executive Committee, which hammered through a long agenda of finances, policies and procedures during 1998's summer workshops. As President FM Dale Girard stated at the time, "Much of what they accomplished will not be readily visible to the membership. In time, however, everyone will notice a greater efficiency of operation, better communication with the overall membership, and a higher profile in the professional and academic communities."

In 1999, the website grew even faster with a new design by CT Al Foote III. By expanding the website, adding interactive elements, the site received 10,000 hits within the first few months. The SAFD also continued to negotiate with Actors' Equity Association, and the Society of Stage Directors and Choreographers (SSD&C) about actor safety, contracts, and the future of stage combat. They continued to raise money for the Equity Fights Aids fund through donations, and percentages of profits from workshops across the nation. A tradition has emerged at the NSCW, and other workshops entitled "The Dagger for Life" raffle. This is where a donated dagger is raffled off with the proceeds going to Broadway Cares - Equity Fights Aids.



1979- J. Allen Sudeth teaches students for the first SAFD approved "Fight Test", now called the Skills Proficiency Test.

This year also marked the 20th anniversary of the National Stage Combat Workshop, and Founder FME David Boushey announced the addition of a film fighting class in the AACW. The first Intermediate Actor Combatant Workshop (IACW), designed to be a bridge between basic training and the AACW, was held concurrently with the other NSCW workshops at University of Nevada Las Vegas. Also, in the summer of 1995, the highly acclaimed National Fight Director Training Program (NFDTP) was inaugurated at the Celebration Barn Theater. It was recognized as the only other official SAFD training program in the country.

As we forge ahead in the new millennium, the SAFD is leading the way on many levels. Skills Proficiency Tests (SPT) are being taught in more academic circles than ever before. Many drama departments at the university and college level have committed themselves not only to following the SAFD guidelines, but to buying expensive (and safe) prop weapons and mats, and also to hiring our Certified Teachers. As our officers continue to work on policies, we have to better reflect the changing needs of this organization. Maintaining high levels of communication has been a top priority from the website, to the publications, to the increased numbers of sanctioned workshops throughout the country. For the first time in history there are over 900 members and this summer we will experience the NSCW happening in two locations. This is a society on the move, with great achievements still ahead. Thank you for 30 wonderful years.

East Meets West By Alaric Toy

No, we're not talking about the latest Kung-Fu flick—we're talking about traditional Chinese medicine. This is the final installment with Actor/Combatant and traditional Chinese medicine intern Alaric Toy, who will share tips on combining this ancient healing art into your work as a stage combatant.

Chinese Herbal Medicine

*Oh, mickle is the powerful grace that lies
In herbs, plants, stones, and their true qualities.
For naught so vile that on the earth doth live
But to the earth some special good doth give.
Nor aught so good but, strained from that fair use
Revolts from true birth, stumbling on abuse.
Virtue itself turns vice, being misapplied,
And vice sometime by action dignified.*
- Romeo & Juliet, II.iii.

In the past two issues we've explored the benefits and ease of integrating traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) in healing injuries and maintaining excellent health through acupuncture and bodywork. The third modality, Chinese herbal medicine, examined in this publication trilogy completes a circle of health. But the one question I always field remains:

Is it safe?

Yes! Chinese herbal medicine can be very safe and effective at the right time, in the right dosage. The origins of Chinese herbal medicine date back at least 2,000 years, and during that time Chinese physicians have systematically observed and classified more than 5,000 plant, animal, insect, and mineral substances according to their medicinal effect. It's an old system with incredibly powerful effects that can treat even today's "modern diseases."

Many of these substances may be familiar to you (honey, beeswax) and some may be new (cuttlefish bone for acid reflux and powdered pearl for skin problems). Combinations of these substances are designed to treat specific conditions. Generally, they can help enhance immune function, but they can also treat pain, respiratory and throat problems, digestive, gynecological and genitourinary disorders,

emotional imbalances, skin problems and many other conditions.

Traditional herbal formulas are often an important adjunct to acupuncture treatments. In some instances, herbal formulas can be more effective than acupuncture treatments alone; however, best results can be seen when both modalities are utilized. Acupuncturists (AKA TCM practitioners) modify these formulas to meet the unique needs of the individual client.

This modality best applies to the actor combatant in treating trauma (*qi* and *blood stagnations*). Despite our best efforts to avoid them, most of us sustain injuries and treat them with the common Western non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs like ibuprofen. While great for short-term usage, prolonged use will damage your cartilage and possibly your liver function.

TCM can treat pain without compromising internal health. In fact, it can build and strengthen internal health and ease away pain at the same time. To treat an injury, the TCM method is to:

- Calm a person's emotions down from having experienced that injury (*Calm shen* [神])
- Increase blood flow to the area to repair the old damaged tissue (*Invigorate qi and blood*)
- Allow for fresh, new tissue to develop (*Nourish qi and blood*)

Using these principles, a TCM practitioner derives his/her treatment plan including acupuncture and/or Chinese herbal medicine. These non-Western alternatives can even reduce heal time in half (when compared to no TCM treatment).

Even if you do not have the option of seeing an acupuncturist in your state, there are still some things you can do at home for yourself for your minor injuries. Provided your injury has not broken the skin, bone or tendon, you may choose an external liniment, salve, ointment or patch. Numerous external liniments, ointments and salves are available at

any Asian grocer or market for at home use.

But which one should you pick? I prefer to use products that do not contain petroleum, paraffin or turpentine (which can clog pores and have difficulty breaking down in the liver). Consider the following:

- Zheng Gu Shui "Correct Bone Water" (正骨水)
- Die Da Tian Qi Yao Jiu "Pseudoginseng Alcohol Extract for Traumatic Injury" (跌打田七药酒)
- Die Da Jiu "Specially Effective Trauma Liniment" (跌打酒)
- Spring Wind Amber Salve
- Hua Tuo patches

General indication for the above products, except for the patches, is to rub them onto the sore area, as well as above and below, until you feel a warm sensation. The idea is to increase circulation to all over, as in the case of a limb injury (shin or forearm). As with over-the-counter pain relievers, some work better for some people. The same applies for these products—you just need to find one that works for you.

And as with taking over-the-counter medications without the supervision of a physician, extra care and caution must be exercised when taking *internal* Chinese herbal medicine without the guidance of a licensed TCM practitioner. If you are ever in doubt, just contact an acupuncturist.

That said, the best brand I have found to treat any kind of injury is Yunnan Paiyao "Yun Nan Bai Yao" (云南白药), and it's available in capsule or loose powder forms. **Take as directed on the box. Do not take this in addition to any aspirin regime or heart related drugs as this can amplify the effects of those drugs. Women must never take this when they are pregnant**, as the herbs will treat the fetus as a *qi* and *blood stagnation*.

Women are cautioned *never* to apply any trauma formula externally near the abdomen or low back in cases of

East Meets West *By Alaric Toy*

pregnancy or to take trauma formulas internally. (On a side note: many of the traumatology formulas used in TCM are also the same ones used in gynecology.) Gentlemen, don't freak out if you get a "woman's formula" for your injury; you need to rebuild your blood. Ladies, great news for you: TCM can treat your injury and your cycle, too.

Chinese herbal medicine is a great treatment modality. However, caution and contraindication must always be noted in the cases of severe injury requiring immediate medical attention, children, the elderly, and for pregnancy. At the right time, in the right dosage, Chinese herbal medicine can really help you. Choose wisely and stay healthy!

with *Gia Mora*

A note on endangered species...

Although the ancient materia medica texts list now extinct and endangered species for medicinal use, their use today is completely unnecessary. Tiger bone is **absolutely unnecessary**. Not only is it difficult to find, but there is no way to be sure you are getting the genuine item.

Traditionally, leopard bone was the substitution of choice, and today you would probably get dog bone if you tried to catch the proverbial tiger. There are much better and more readily available herbs within the TCM materia medica to treat trauma.

Another misnomer about Chinese herbal medicine comes from the idea that rhino horn was used as an aphrodisiac when in truth it was used as an emergency anti-convulsant. It also treated conditions of severe fever, convulsion, and heat-type coma. Again, it is completely unnecessary today as the TCM materia medica has other herbs more suited for those conditions.

A note for the starving artist...

One of the scariest things for many performers is living without some sort of health insurance. However, I want to at least allay these fears and suggest some options. For any profession that requires licensure, there has to be a period of training, and training requires a teaching clinic.

My advice is to find a local school for whatever health service you need. This applies to TCM, dentistry massage, and other Western forms of health care as well. These centers should have a community clinic for teaching and training purposes.

These centers generally tend to have a reduced rate and/or sliding scale (remember to ask for it) because the interns, supervised under working professionals, treat patients. Because they are interns, they may not be very polished with their skills yet and turnover can be high. However, teaching community clinics are great because you get treatments at reduced rates, can choose from a pool of interns, and still get quality care under working professionals!

Medical doctors, chiropractors, naturopaths, osteopaths, homeopaths, massage therapists, dentists, opticians, therapists and, of course, acupuncturists all have had training from some kind of teaching community clinic. You can get all of your health service needs tended to at an affordable rate.

But this also applies to other professions! Have you ever considered going to a training salon for your hair and makeup or a massage school for bodywork? Theoretically, if you can plan it right, you can get a massage, hair, makeup, and headshots all done within a week! All at an affordable price! Now isn't that a nice thought?

If you have any questions about the topics discussed in this article, or those printed in the last two issues, please feel free to contact Alaric Toy at whitetigermountain@gmail.com. He will be happy to answer your questions to the best of his knowledge and expertise. If he can not answer your question, he will guide you to someone who can.

Sources of more information . . .

Acupuncture

<http://www.acufinder.com>

Student-Run Clinics of America

<http://www.student-clinics.org>

Chiropractic

[http://www.chiro.org/LINKS/college.shtml#Chiropractic Colleges](http://www.chiro.org/LINKS/college.shtml#Chiropractic_Colleges)

Dentistry

www.nidcr.nih.gov/HealthInformation/FindingDentalCare/DentalSchools.htm

Hair/Makeup/Nail Care

www.beautyschoolsdirectory.com

Natural Health Schools Directory

<http://www.naturalhealers.com>

The 2007 National Stage Combat Workshops

presented by

The Society of American Fight Directors



photo by Mark Pashayan



photo by Mark Pashayan



photo by Mark Pashayan

July 8 - July 27, 2007

SAFD and North Carolina School of the Arts

Summer Stage Combat (SSC)

The SSC offers introductory courses in the eight basic disciplines recognized by the Society of American Fight Directors. This unique theatre arts program is for professionals, college, and high school students who are over 15, and have completed 9th grade. College and high school credit is available to all attending students.

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. Participants will also be offered introductory classes in additional weapon styles. At the conclusion of the workshop, students will have the opportunity to take Skills Proficiency Tests toward official SAFD recognition in stage combat skills. College credit is available to all attending students.

July 9 - 27, 2007

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

Intermediate Actor/Combatant Workshop (IACW)

Take the next step. This workshop is designed for performers who wish to build on their existing knowledge. Students will strengthen their skills by focusing on performance and execution of technique, receive introductory training in weapon styles not offered at the beginner level and the opportunity to take Skills Proficiency Tests toward official SAFD recognition in stage combat skills.

Advanced Actor/Combatant Workshop (AACW)

Open to qualified actors who are well versed in a wide variety of weapons styles, this intense workshop offers the opportunity to be challenged at a highly sophisticated level. Participants will study technical and theatrical applications of advanced weapon styles. Scene work will be an integral part of the training. Students will be afforded the opportunity to take Skills Proficiency Tests toward official SAFD recognition in stage combat skills.



photo by Al Foote III



photo by Al Foote III



photo by Al Foote III



July 29 - August 11, 2007

SAFD and North Carolina School of the Arts

Fight Directors Workshop (FDW)

This unique, world-class workshop allows you to study the art of fight direction under the award winning staff. Classes in choreography, research, rehearsal, collaboration, battle scenes, gun safety, and the business end of show business will stretch you to do your best. Participants choreograph scenes from tragedy and comedy, modern and classical. This workshop is geared to those with several years of training and experience working in many styles.

Actors Ensemble Workshop (AEW)

Enhance your performance skills with classes focusing on physical theater, combat techniques, and the process of blending character with performance. Students work on a different scene each day, that are video taped and critiqued every night. This workshop answers the question, "Can you work a fight from a Sam Shepard play in the morning, and a Shakespeare play that night." Physical performers of all types are encouraged to apply! Special discounts to actors attending the 2007 ACW/TTW!



For more information, go to:

www.safd.org





Broadsword Resources

By Michael Mueller

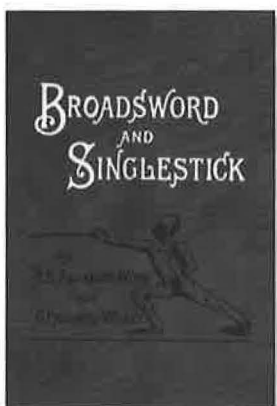
The Cutting Edge is proud to present the next section in our reference material series. This section is the fourth of a growing list of reference material we hope to provide you with in each issue.*

We are structuring the information so that it is categorized into the various disciplines the SAFD recognizes. Each discipline will be researched; and once we have gone through all the disciplines we will begin again, adding all the material we will have gathered between printings. These lists will consist of books that have been found to be extremely helpful, films that give examples of well choreographed/acted fights and serve as positive instruction, and any other material that instructors deem crucial to those who are interested in either increasing their skill level or merely their library of reference material.

Please let us know your thoughts on these lists. What should be added? Why? What should not be on the list and why? Please email comments, suggestions and thoughts to Michael Mueller at cuttingedge@safd.org.

*Special thanks to FD/CT Jamie Cheatham, FD/CT Dexter Fidler, and CT Denise Hurd for their input on this section.

Books



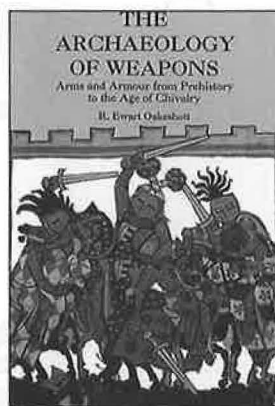
Broadsword and Singlestick
by
R.G. Allanson-Winn &
C. Phillipps-Wolley



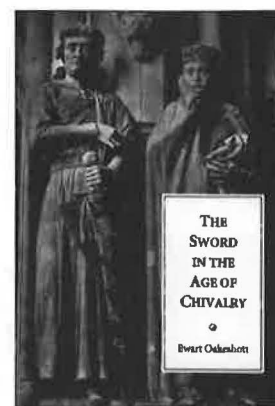
Medieval Combat
by Hans Tolhoffer
Translated & Edited
by Mark Rector



The Swordsman's Companion
by Guy Winsdor



The Archaeology of Weapons
by R. Ewart Oakeshott

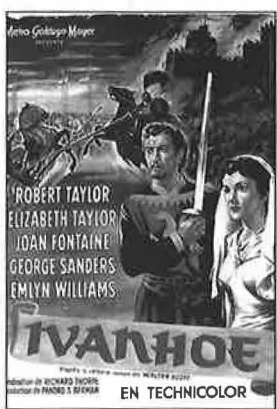


The Sword in the Age of Chivalry
by Ewart Oakeshott

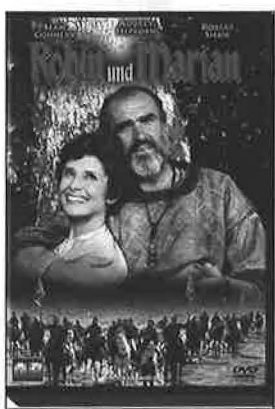
Film/TV



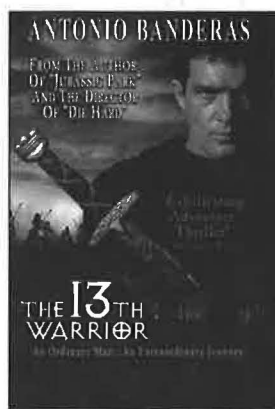
Braveheart



Ivanhoe



Robin and Marian



The 13th Warrior



Tristan & Isolde

Certified Teacher Mike Mahaffey ...In the Footlight



If you're interested in being featured or nominating another member, please contact Editor-in-Chief Michael Mueller (cuttingedge@safd.org).

CE: *How did you first hear about the Society of American Fight Directors?*

MAHAFFEY: I'm afraid I was hooked EARLY-like 1984. I was at a high school drama conference in Bellingham, Washington and two guys (I can't remember their names, sorry) were teaching stage combat during the workshop classes. I had such a good time that I ended up staying in the class all morning long. They mentioned the SAFD as an organization they were affiliated with and gave me a contact number that I promptly lost-being a 14-year-old kid and all. I would get my next taste of stage combat, and the SAFD, in my first year at Whitman College. On the callboard was the SAFD's National Stage Combat Workshop flier, quietly mocking me. On top of that, the first show I did in college was *The Fair Maid of the West* choreographed by a guest artist: Maestro David Boushey.

MAHAFFEY: Smallsword and Knife (sorry that's two). In college, I took foil fencing, loved it, and I've also had the great luck to have some outstanding Smallsword teachers in the SAFD. I also really enjoy the acting and technical challenges it provides. I love Knife because it challenges the student and teacher to explore some VERY visceral impulses in one's acting and physical choices.

CE: *Using what you have learned so far on your journey, what advice would you give to someone just becoming interested in the SAFD?*

MAHAFFEY: Enjoy stage combat. It's fun, it's physical, and it can open doors, both as an actor's tool and in the outside world. Train hard as an actor and artist, and keep training throughout your life. In this industry, whether it is film or

The SAFD is where my inspirations, respected colleagues, lasting friendships, and the love of my life all thrive. I can't think of another group of people in my life that does that.

CE: *How did you first get involved with the SAFD?*

MAHAFFEY: I joined the SAFD in 1990 at the National Stage Combat Workshop. I was in the Actor/Combatant Workshop, and would have failed my Actor/Combatant test if not for two individuals, then-CT J. David Brimmer and then-intern Paul Denhardt. My partner and I were left-handed and had been left to our devices in regards to translating the fight. We were doing it poorly at best: David and Paul took the time in the evenings of week three to re-teach us the fights, as lefties, and we were able to pull ourselves together to pass. It was a gift from them that I'm still paying back to the SAFD.

CE: *Why did you become a member?*

MAHAFFEY: In a word: community. The stage combat world is small enough and can be downright fractured in many cases. The SAFD is where my inspirations, respected colleagues, lasting friendships, and the love of my life all thrive. I can't think of another group of people in my life that does that.

CE: *What is your favorite weapon and why?*

theatre, teaching or directing, or even stunt work, stage combat folks are ALWAYS working with actors and fellow artists. If you don't know their processes, and understand them, the work will always fall short of the mark.

CE: *What is your favorite restaurant in your city? Why?*

MAHAFFEY: Vitello's, a family-style Italian restaurant in beautiful downtown North Hollywood. The house Chianti is excellent and they have "Opera karaoke" in the back room. It's actually pretty good. No, I haven't sung yet.

CE: *What is in your pockets right now?*

MAHAFFEY: My cellphone, with the ringer off, a wallet with two debit cards, three credit cards, no money, and a bunch of receipts.

CE: *If you were a fruit/animal/vegetable/inanimate object, what would you be and why?*

MAHAFFEY: I would be a ninja because ninjas are totally sweet.

Regional Reports

Great Lakes Region

Illinois, Indiana,
Michigan, Ohio,
Wisconsin



By Jim
Stark
GLRegRep@safd.org

Please Note: Jim is using a new email address for SAFD business: safdglnews@gmail.com. Please add this address to your list of acceptable senders and please update your contact information through the website!

Friend Mary Shen Barnidge wrote that the next *Moulinet* is due out soon. Interviews with Asselin and with J. Steven White, fight director for *The Pirate Queen*, going up in New York this spring, will be included. She stated that she "had to arm-wrestle TWO publicists to get the latter interview."

CT/FD Jamie Cheatham, newly elected Fight Director representative, recently made his directing debut with *Romeo and Juliet* at UW-Parkside where he is head of the acting program. He also provided the fights for this production, set in a 1960s. It was a Renaissance blend, complete with a female Tybalt and a veteran one-armed Mercutio. **AAC Russ Brown** responded on behalf of the ACTF. Jamie also taught an unarmed class at UW-Milwaukee this fall and has begun a new single rapier class at Parkside. He added, "I was very pleased to be elected FD Representative this December!"

CT Bruce Cromer completed a run of the one-person show *I Am My Own Wife* at the Human Race Theatre in January/February. Donning Charlotte's dress came hot on the heels of finishing his second Scrooge in the Cincinnati Playhouse's *A Christmas Carol*. He will miss teaching in this year's March Madness Combat Workshop, but he will be in rehearsals as Prospero for the Cincinnati Shakespeare Company's production of *The Tempest*. Bruce was

also recently named a Full Professor at Wright State University, where stage combat is just a small part of his teaching duties.

CT/FD Paul Dennhardt recently directed the fights for *The Beaux Stratagem* at The Shakespeare Theatre Company in Washington, DC. In January, he was assistant fight choreographer for *Richard III* at the Shakespeare Theatre Company, working with **FM David Leong**. Upcoming productions include fight direction for *Henry IV, Part I* for Milwaukee Shakespeare, and assistant fight director for *Hamlet* at the Shakespeare Theatre Company in DC. At ISU this fall, he staged fights for *Romeo and Juliet*, *Hopeless Spinning* (an original script), *Ring Around the Moon*, and assisted Shozo Sato on the fight sequences for *Othello's Passion - A Kabuki Play*. This spring he will direct the fights for *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*, *West Side Story*, and *Vinegar Tom*.

AAC Amy Harmon is appearing in Babes With Blades' *The Girl in the Iron Mask*, a new adaptation of Dumas' classic, by R. L. Nesvet. There will be swashbuckling galore! The show runs from March 12 to April 15, 2007 at the Raven Theatre. Lots of great swordswomen are involved. For more information call 773-348-8160 or check online at www.BabesWithBlades.org.

FD Nick Sandys recently designed fights and movement for Lyric Opera of Chicago's productions of *Turandot*, *Salome*, and *Il Trovatore*; for The Goodman Theatre's production of Noah Haidle's *Vigils*; Silk Road Theatre Company's *Caravaggio*; Vittum Theatre's *The Shakespeare Stealer*; and most recently for the world premier of Craig Wright's *Lady* at Northlight Theatre. He also performed in *The Real Thing* for Remy Bumpo Theatre Company, and will be appearing in Frank Galati's *Oedipus Complex* at The Goodman.

AC Jason Speicher has had a very busy 2006-2007 so far. During the fall of '06 Jason was very active in Columbus' theater performing in *Move Over Mrs. Markham*, *Macbeth*, and *The Canterville*

Ghost. This was in addition to teaching stage combat at Columbus Academy, fight directing their production of *Peter Pan*, as well as fight directing a production of *Puss in Boots* for Groveport-Madison High School. As 2007 opened Jason was interning at The Winter Wonderland Workshop, and will be interning at March Madness later in the year. He was also tapped by Ohio State University to fight direct *Antioch: A Western Play* for their winter season. Finally Jason, along with Aaron Einhorn, has Co-coordinated the St. Valentines Day Massacre in Columbus.

CT Jim Stark provided comic violence this winter for *The Government Inspector* at Hanover College, where he is Chair of Theatre. He directed *A Rough Guide to the Underworld* for the Riverrun Theatre Company, and completed runs of the one-man show *A Night in November*, by Marie Jones, for Riverrun and for the South Carolina Repertory Company.

FD Robert Westley has moved from the Midwest to New York City but **continues** as the head of movement at Hofstra University. He recently taught stage combat to students at the Asolo Conservatory in Florida, and continues his professional work in New York City and beyond. This included finishing up a movie starring Hugo Weaving and Brian Cox. Choreographic endeavors have included two Off-Broadway productions: New York City premiere of *The Screams of Kitty Genovese* and the Keen Company's *Tea and Sympathy*.

Rocky Mountain Region

Colorado, Idaho,
Montana, Utah,
Wyoming



By Jeff
Bull
RMRegRep@safd.org

AC Benaiah Anderson recently choreographed the violence in *The Fantastiks* for a high school in Colorado Springs, and continues to do stage

Regional Reports (continued)

combat workshops for high school theater classes, which includes a blood effects seminar based around the blinding of Gloucester in *King Lear*. He is currently performing with the El Paso Murder Mystery Troop as a cowboy who cracks whips expertly, but can't win a gun-fight to save his life.

AC Jeff Bull produced and directed his own short film this past December and is currently in the editing process. There were, alas, no fights, unless you count the destruction of a toaster with a wooden sword. He is currently assistant teaching Geoffrey Kent's Unarmed SPT class and has recently started studying karate.

AC Ambrose Ferber will be a full member of the faculty at the Santa Fe Professional Theatre Institute's summer theatre camp, teaching a variety of ways to fall down. He is also in negotiations with the City of Santa Fe to produce some short street brawls to be performed during the Fiesta de Santa Fe celebration, which takes place every autumn. Finally, he will be fight directing *Les Miserables* for Santa Fe High this spring.

AC Anne Foldeak interned at the Winter Wonderland in Chicago in January, and will be fight directing *Romeo and Juliet* in April and May for the Upstart Crow theater company.

AC Jayme Green recently finished a successful run as Benjamin Braddock in *The Graduate*. He is looking forward to traveling to area schools speaking about theatre and stage combat prior to choreographing a production of *Romeo and Juliet*. June marks his return to the directing world with *The Odd Couple* rounding out the season at Billings Studio Theatre. Auditions are the first weekend of April, for anyone interested in visiting Montana for a bit.

CT/FD Geoffrey Kent appeared as Lockstock in the award winning regional premiere of *Urinetown: the Musical* in December, 2006. 2007 started with fight direction for *King Lear*, the regional premiere of *The Pillowman*, and the world premiere of *1001*, all for the Denver Center Theatre Company. After three weeks as a guest artist at the North Carolina School of the Arts, Geoffrey will return to Denver to play Leslie in Edward Albee's *Seascape* as well as teach classes at the National Theatre Conservatory and an Unarmed SPT for the Denver Center Theatre Academy. In May, Geoff travels to the Shakespeare Festival of St. Louis to stage fights for a western *Much Ado About Nothing* and just signed on to choreograph the gunplay for the regional premiere of *The Lieutenant of Inishmore* with Curious Theatre Company.

AC Terry Kroenung will be playing William Shakespeare at the Colorado Renaissance Festival this summer. His fight group, Pointed Remarques Classical Theatre Company, will present its first annual Fields of Honor Original One-Act Festival in late May in Longmont. A national call for scripts has netted them a couple dozen plays that are prequels or sequels to Shakespeare plays, all with at least one fight scene.

Friend Michael Mueller has been working hard as the Editor-in-Chief of *The Cutting Edge* along with directing a production of *Julius Caesar* for the Idaho Shakespeare Festival's Drama School. He continues to work at Boise State University and on May 20, will celebrate as he marries the woman of his dreams. Upon his return from a short, much deserved vacation, he and his new bride will be moving to Seattle, WA.

Upcoming SPTs/SPRs

When: Late April/Early May, 2007
Where: University of Houston
Houston, TX
What: SPTs & SPRs - TBA
Inst: Brian Byrnes, Jack Young, Leraldo Anzaldua
Adj: TBA
Contact: Brian Byrnes - bbyrnes123@yahoo.com

When: May, 2007
Where: Adelphi University
Garden City, NY
What: SPT - R&D and TBA
Inst: Ray Rodriguez
Adj: Michael Chin
Contact: Ray Rodriguez - ranthrod66@yahoo.com;
(646) 373-8106

When: May, 2007
Where: University of Miami
Miami, FL
What: SPT - UA and R&D
Inst: Bruce Lecure
Adj: TBA
Contact: Bruce Lecure - blecure@aol.com

When: May 3, 2007 @ 10:00am
Where: University of Florida
Gainesville, FL
What: SPT - SIS and QS
SPR - UA, RD, and BS
Inst: Tiza Garland
Adj: Brian Byrnes
Contact: Tiza Garland - TizaG1@aol.com;
(352) 273-0518

When: May 4, 2007
Where: Roosevelt University
Chicago, IL
What: SPT - SS and UA
Inst: Angela Bonacasa, Chuck Coyl
Adj: TBA
Contact: Angela Bonacasa - abonaca@roosevelt.edu

When: May 6, 2007
Where: Indiana University of PA
Indiana, PA
What: SPT - UA, R&D and BS
Inst: Michael Hood
Adj: Michael Chin
Contact: Michael Hood - mhood@iup.edu

When: May 12, 2007 @ 12:00 noon
Where: University of the Arts
Philadelphia, PA
What: SPT - TBA
Inst: Charles Conwell
Adj: TBA
Contact: Charles Conwell - charlesconwell@verizon.net

Upcoming Workshops

ATTENTION WORKSHOP COORDINATORS:

Please look these specifications over to make sure that you are sending us exactly what we need so we do not have to contact you and ask for corrections.

What you put in the ad is up to you; however, the following criteria must be met:

- The workshop must be **sanctioned by the SAFD**
- The ad must be **7.75" wide by 4.5" high**
- The ad must be in **black and white**
- The ad must be submitted in either **.tif, .jpg, .eps, or .pdf** format
- When sending us a file, you **must include the fonts** you use

If your ad does not meet the following criteria, your ad will NOT be placed in the publication. We will accept ads up to six months before the date of your workshop, and we are more than happy to answer questions as well as help you through the process. If you have further questions, contact us at:

cuttingedge@safd.org



The Third Annual Eureka College SAFD REGIONAL STAGE COMBAT WORKSHOP May 14 – June 1, 2007

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KNIFE AND SWORD & SHIELD

*All skill levels welcome

*\$1330 per person

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FD/CT John McFarland

CT Neil Massey

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www.eureka.edu/summer/

The Society of American Fight Directors



Eureka College 300 East College Avenue Eureka, Illinois, 61530-1500 www.eureka.edu 888.4.EUREKA

SAFD Membership Application/Annual Dues Form

Please complete the entire form. In order for the SAFD to maintain accurate records, it is important that all of your information in our database be current. You can either send in your payment with this form, or you may pay online with a credit card at www.safd.org.

Reasons to join the SAFD:

- Subscription to *The Fight Master*, a journal published twice yearly
- Subscription to *The Cutting Edge*, our bimonthly newsletter
- Access to back issues of both publications and online discussions in the members only section at www.safd.org
- Discounts to national and regional stage combat workshops
- The right to vote for members of the Executive Committee and Governing Body
- And much, much more...

Status (Circle one): New Member Current Renewing Member Lapsed Renewing Member Gift*

*If giving a membership as a gift, please print your name here _____

Please fill in the information for the gift receiver below.

Amount Enclosed (\$35.00/year USA, \$40.00/year Outside USA) \$.00 Check #

General Information

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|-------------------------------|---|

Address (Permanent):

| | |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| Home Phone: | Cell Phone: |
|--------------------|--------------------|

| | |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| Work Phone: | Fax Number: |
|--------------------|--------------------|

| | |
|-------------------|---------------|
| Voicemail: | Pager: |
|-------------------|---------------|

E-mail Address(es):

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| Website: | Union Affiliations (SAG, AEA, etc.): |
|-----------------|---|

University (name/address):

Employer (name/address):

Publications should be mailed to (please circle one): Permanent University Work

I am interested in getting involved (circle any that apply):

Material Donations - Merchandise - Grant Writing - Publicity/Promotion - Data Entry - Publications - All

Current Skills Proficiency Test Results (Please list most recent SPT for each weapon)

| WEAPON | Month/Year | Instructor | Adjudicator |
|-----------------|------------|------------|-------------|
| Broadsword | | | |
| Knife | | | |
| Quarterstaff | | | |
| Rapier & Dagger | | | |
| Single Sword | | | |
| Smallsword | | | |
| Sword & Shield | | | |
| Unarmed | | | |

Photocopy & Mail with payment to:

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

Call for SAFD Historical Information

The Cutting Edge is seeking additional historical information on the Society of American Fight Directors (SAFD). In honor of the SAFD's 30th anniversary, we are looking to update the website and establish a more concrete system of record keeping to preserve the legacy that was started by our founders.

We are looking for the following:

1. Photos from past SAFD events with captions;
 - Please send photos as jpg, tif, or eps files.
 - We accept black & white as well as color photos.
 - 300 dpi is preferred, but contact us if you are having problems.
 - Please include name of photographer, subjects names and membership levels.
2. Lists of attendees for any and all SAFD sanctioned events.
3. Detailed examples of how the SAFD has assisted you as an artist, an educator, and/or choreographer.

Please send submissions and any questions to our email, cuttingedge@safd.org. This is a tremendous opportunity to share your favorite memories and inspire new generations of members. We hope that you will find the time to take advantage of this opportunity.

Definition

Coupe

Main Entry: **cou·pé**
Pronunciation: **koo·pey**
Function: *noun*

- 1 : a short, four-wheeled, closed carriage, usually with a single seat for two passengers and an outside seat for the driver
- 2 : the end compartment in a European diligence or railroad car
- 3 : Ballet. an intermediary step to transfer the weight from one foot to the other
- 4 : (in Continental heraldry) party per fess

SAFD Definition:

A changement executed from an engaged guard position that takes the blade around the point of the opposing blade. Sometimes called a cutover. Opposite of Disengage.

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**Submissions for the
September/October
issue are due
July 1st!**



The Society of American Fight Directors
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