

INTRODUCTION TO STAGE COMBAT



PHOTO: MATT MCKEE



INTRODUCTION TO STAGE COMBAT

PRESENTATION.

☆ Sword Fight

☆ **Introduction/Definition:** Stage combat is the art of using *carefully* planned, *safely* executed *cooperative* physical energy to create the *illusion* of violent action in a dramatic context – physical *acting* that tells a *story* about violence.

☆ **About SAFETY:** Partnering, Practice, Technique

☆ Unarmed:

Hair Grab
Strangles
Breakaway
Slaps
Punches
Kicks

☆ Swords:

Parts & Use
Vocabulary: Targets, Attacks, Defenses
Combinations: Same Fight, Different Swords

☆ **Sword Fight Move by Move**

☆ **Sword Fight Again**

☆ **Questions?**

☆ **Prop Weapon Show & Tell/Foam Weapon Photo Op**



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RESOURCES

☆ TRAINING:

Society of American Fight Directors (SAFD): [SAFD](#)

☆ BOOKS:

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

Richard Lane

The Art of Unarmed Stage Combat

Robert Najarian

Fight Directing for the Theatre

J. Allen Suddeth

Academy of Theatrical Combat Basics Level 1

Dan Speaker

Stage Fighting: A Practical Guide

Jonathan Howell

The Theatrical Firearms Handbook and The Screen Combat Handbook

Kevin Inouye

☆ Theatrical & Practice Weapons: Purchase:

Kult of Athena: [Kult of Athena](#)

Rogue Steel: [Rogue Steel](#)

Fiocchi Swords: [Fiocchi Swords](#)

Jesse Belsky Stageswords: [Jesse Belsky](#)

Zen Warrior Armory: [Zen Warrior](#)

Rent:

Fight Designer, LLC: [Fight Designer](#)

Preferred Arms: [Preferred Arms](#)

☆ PRESENTER:

[Chris Cardoni Stage Combat](#)





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GLOSSARY

GENERAL:

Attacker The actor/combatant who initiates the offensive action or attack.

Cue: a physical action or event that is a signal for someone to do something.

En Garde: The basic physical “ready” position of a combatant.

Eye Contact: A look to one’s partner to assure mutual awareness and readiness to perform the techniques.

Partnering: A process in which two or more combatants work together to perform theatrical combat safely.

Victim: The actor/combatant who receives the offensive action or attack.

UNARMED:

Avoidance: To dodge an attack.

Block: A defensive action intended to stop a punch, kick or similar attack, usually made

Strangle: Grasp or hold on the area of the throat made with the hand(s) or limb that gives the impression of strangling the victim.

Contact Strike: Any offensive action that strikes the body of the receiver.

Duck: The vertical lowering of the head and torso to avoid an attack at the head.

Hair Pull: A grasp with one or both hands in which the victim’s hair appears to be clasped in the fingers.

Knap: A technique for creating the sound of impact of a strike.

Non-Contact Strike: Offensive action that creates the appearance of contact with the intended target on the body of the receiver.

Punch: Any offensive striking technique made with a fist.

Slap: A strike delivered with an open hand.

SWORDPLAY:

Corps-à-Corps: Literally “body-to-body.” Describes the moment where distance is closed and there is body contact.

Cut: An attack made with the edge of the blade.

Disarm: An action of the blade or body that removes a weapon from the hand of one’s partner.

Grip: The manner of holding a weapon.

Moulinet: “Little windmill” The action of spinning the blade in a circular fashion (either forward or backward)

Slash: An attack made with the edge of the blade that is avoided.

Thrust: An attack made with the point of the weapon.

Avoidance: A movement of the body and/or feet vertically, horizontally or diagonally in order to dodge an attack.

Duck: The vertical lowering of the head and torso to avoid an attack at the head.

Parry: A defensive action which blocks or deflects an attack.

Circular Parry: A defensive action that begins in one line, travels in a full circle, returning to the line of the original parry.

FOOTWORK:

Advance: Linear footwork that carries the body forward by moving the lead foot first,

Lunge: The ‘extended’ leg position used as a method to ‘reach’ the partner on an attack.

Pass: Placing of the moving foot ahead or to the rear of the stationary foot without crossing the centerline.

Pivot: The adjustment of the hips, feet and body to face a new direction.

Retreat: Linear footwork carrying the body backwards by moving the rear foot first, followed by the lead foot.

Traverse: “Advance” or “retreat” in any direction. When moving to the right the right foot leads; when moving to the left the left foot leads.



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PRESENTERS

- ★ **CHRIS CARDONI** is an actor, director, and stage combat choreographer from Billerica, MA. Chris has taught and choreographed stage violence for professional, community, and educational theatres throughout eastern MA, Rhode Island, and New Hampshire, and has worked on 120+ productions in 26 years. Chris is a long-time member of the Society of American Fight Directors, and has been a member of the Independent Fight Directors Guild and a Visiting Lecturer at Curry College in Milton, MA presenting a full-semester Stage Combat elective.

His training includes unarmed, quarterstaff, small sword, broadsword, knife, rapier, saber, and rapier & dagger at Bay State Fencers Stage Combat Studio with SAFD instructors Stacy Eddy, Robert Walsh, Adam Mclean, Rob Najarian, and Ted Hewlett; master classes with Tony Wolf (*The Lord of the Rings*) and Anthony DeLongis (*Batman Returns*, *Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull*, *Jet Li's Fearless*); intensive SAFD workshops in Boston, Chicago, and Philadelphia; sport fencing (all three weapons): and classes in katana, krava maga, boxing, singlestick, and firearms. Chris has presented exhibition sword fights for Gore Place Mansion and the Romance Writers of America, and has presented workshops for the New England Theatre Conference, Somerville Public Library, the Rivers School, Pine Street Players, M&D Playhouse, and the Cambridge Center for Adult Education.

A partial list of the theatres and organizations at which Chris has worked includes Umbrella Center for the Arts, Concord Players, Melrose High School, Vokes Players, Hovey Players, Walpole Footlighters, Quannapowitt Players, Curry College, Salem Theatre Company, Theatre@First, Wellesley College, Atlantis Playmakers, Bay Colony Productions, Walpole Children's Theatre, Scituate Summer Theatre, Acme Theater, Arlington Friends of the Drama, and others.

His fight direction credits run the gamut from Gilbert & Sullivan to David Mamet, from modern farce to Shakespearian tragedy, and include *Appropriate*, *The Outsiders*, *Shakespeare in Love*, *Wolf Play*, *Henry V*, *Bent*, *I Hate Hamlet*, *She Kills Monsters*, *Les Miserables*, *Terra Nova*, *The 39 Steps*, *Moon Over Buffalo*, *Mauritius*, *Of Mice and Men*, *Dracula*, *A View from the Bridge*, *Disgraced*, *Bonnie and Clyde*, *The Pirates of Penzance*, *True West*, *Extremities*, *King Lear*, *Cyrano de Bergerac*, *Hamlet*, *Richard III*, *Macbeth*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Julius Caesar*, and many others. His website is cjfights.com.

- ★ **MELISSA SINE** is an actor and NASM-certified health and fitness trainer from Billerica, MA. She has trained at Bay State Fencers Stage Combat Studio, and has performed rapier, broadsword, unarmed, and other stage combat for over 21 years in productions at Shakespeare Now, Vokes Players, Salem Theatre Company, Atlantis Playmakers, Quannapowitt Players, Hovey Players and more, including *Romeo and Juliet*, *Hamlet*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Macbeth*, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, and *second*, among others.



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