**Stage Combat**

**Stage Combat is a dynamic and exciting art form used in theatrical productions and on film to create the illusion of violence while keeping the actors as safe as possible.**

Fights and violence tend to happen when words are no longer sufficient to express our emotions, and so it is not very surprising that writers often employ violence and fights at pivotal moments of the story they are trying to tell. Writers use violence to dramatically change the course of the story they are telling and actors must be capable of portraying that violence safely and effectively on stage and on film.

At its most basic level, stage combat is about safely performing fight moves on stage.  Stage Combat is acting in the most extreme physical and emotional situations that any character is likely to experience and requires skill, practice and training.

**REQUIREMENTS FOR PERFORMERS**

1. Work in a clear open space and try to practice on a wooden floor or carpet. Wear non-restrictive, comfortable clothing and supportive and protective footwear. Avoid high heels, boots, slippery shoes or socks.

2. Remove **all** jewelry and empty your pockets.

3. Respect and take care of your partner at all times.

4. Keep on the lookout for accidents that can happen around you and your partner. Watch out for other performers in your performance space.

5. Work at the same tempo as your partner whether you are working in slow motion while you learn a technique, or whether you are moving at a faster pace when you bring it up to performance speed. If you are uncertain what the tempo is, take a moment and make that decision together.

6. Respect the slower speed if two partners are working at different tempos. Everyone learns at a different rate of speed and it can be dangerous if one performer feels pressured to speed up before they are ready. Remember: *STAGE COMBAT IS A TEAM EFFORT.* It takes at least two people to create a stage fight.

7. Listen to each other’s suggestions, especially when they come from the partner playing the victim at that time. The Victim controls the fight.

8. Give equal weight to what each partner says. Neither one of you should work as the director, remember you are partners not in competition.

**Attacker**

The attacker is the combatant initiating the technique such as a punch, kick, or slap.

**Victim**

The victim is the combatant on the receiving end of any attack. Combatants can potentially change roles from attacker to victim many times throughout the fight.

**Stage Combat Moves You will learn**

**Hand-to-Hand**

*Offensive/Attack moves*

Upper Body

1. Wrist grab and release
2. Arm lock behind back
3. Push away
4. Clothes grab and release
5. Punch
6. Punch to the gut
7. Knee to the face
8. Hair pull
9. Slap
10. Throw over shoulder

Lower Body

1. Kick

*Defensive moves*

Upper Body

1. Arm block
2. Falls: side and back

Lower Body

1. Leg block
2. Duck
3. Jump

**Sword**

*Offensive/Attack moves*

1. Attack (thrust) 1, 2, 3, 4
2. Molinaise 1, 2
3. Slice

*Defensive moves*

1. Parry 1, 2, 3, 4
2. Head Parry 1, 2
3. Shunt
4. Throw away