

The Illusion of Violence

Combat Acting 101: Basic Sword

“Safety. Simulation. Storytelling.”

–David McCormick

The Illusion of Violence

- **Safety:** Performer, partner, actors, crew, audience
- **Simulation:** Making it appear **realistic** or **authentic**
- **Storytelling:** Intentions, character, story impact, audience response

Safety Methods

- Distance
- Target
- Timing
- Cooperation

Rehearsal Rules

- Maximum **safe** velocity
- Choreograph everything

Warm up

- Jogging
- Jumping
- Joint rotations

Lesson 1: Injuries and Kills

- Ending a sword fight
- Injuries (cuts)
- Kills (thrusts)

Lesson 2: Movement A

- Thrust and Lunge
- Advance/Retreat
- Pass
- Half-Pass
- Double pass
- Partnering for timing and footwork

Lesson 3: Parries A

- Lines
- Parries 1-5
- Cut to Head Review
- Cut to Targets in order
- Add simple movement

Lesson 4: Slashes A

- Review Horizontal slash and Duck
- Rassemblement
- Half-pass back, lift foot, jump

Lesson 5: Corps-a-corps A

- What's the goal?
- Entering and finishing the classic confrontation

Lesson 6: Prises-de-Fer *A*

- When and why to take the blade
- Bind
- Croisé

Lesson 7: Attacks on the Blade *A*

- Closed Lines
- Beat
- Counter-Beat
- Dégagé, Coupé
- Refusing the Blade
- Remise and Circular Parries

Lesson 8: Parries B

- Review Parries 1-5
- Parries 5A-8
- False Edge against Thrusts only!
- Review dégagé
- Canadian Shuffle
- High Variations

Lesson 9: Movement B

- Review of Movement A
- Grande Lunge
- Patinando
- Balestra
- Volte
- Cross-Step
- Punto Reverso
- Passata-Sotto

Lesson 10: Attacks on the Blade B

- Rolling Cuts, Yield Parries
- Review Beats
- Pressure
- Froissement

Lesson 11: Prises-de-Fer B

- Around the World: circular parries
- Canadian Shuffle with Remise
- Review Prises-de-Fer A: Binds
- Envelopment
- Shunt

Lesson 12: Slashes B

- Review horizontal slashes
- Diagonal Slashes vs. Thwarts
- Ribbon Cuts
- Chasing the unarmed dupe

Lesson 13: Disarms

- Hand parries
- Disarms by pain
- Disarms by threat
- Disarms by leverage
- Returning the sword

Lesson 14: Corps-a-corps B

- Review Corps-a-corps A
- Shoulder shove and wrestling
- Pommel strikes

Choreography and Rehearsal

FDC Examination

- A scene with dialogue from a published play (3 minutes maximum)
- A fight in which both sides can display a variety of techniques from each lesson
- Performed at full performance speed as if in a professional play.
- A written test to show understanding of terminology and theory.



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