

Performing Arts Safety Bulletin #9

STAGE COMBAT, STUNTS AND WEAPONRY



1. STAGE COMBAT/STUNTS:

- a) All stage combats and stunts should be choreographed or arranged by a fight/stunt director who has specific knowledge of the requested type of stunt.
- b) The fight/stunt director should be consulted about the design of the physical elements (scenery, props, costumes and weapons) for the production.
- c) The fight/stunt director should always take into account the physical limitations, training and skills of the individual artists.
- d) When a fight/stunt director is not engaged for the duration of the production, a competent person should be chosen to observe fight rehearsals and consult with the fight/stunt director during rehearsals on all aspects of the fight/stunt, and to conduct and monitor all run-throughs of the fights/stunts prior to each performance.
- e) Fights and stunts should be given adequate rehearsal time, such time requirements to be made in consultation with the fight director.
- f) The actual weapons(s), prop(s), costume(s), footwear and stunt equipment used in the fight/stunt should be made available to the performer(s) to allow for adequate rehearsal time.
- g) Stunts and fights should not be performed or rehearsed in temperatures or weather conditions that could compromise the safety of the participant.
- h) Rehearsal rooms should be of a size to allow for the safe use of weapons.
- i) Appropriate first aid equipment, including ice packs, must be accessible.
- j) There should be a person with the an appropriate level of first aid training present at all fight rehearsals and performances. Access to a telephone should be readily available in case of an emergency.
- k) During fights/stunts visibility and visual perception shall be adequate to ensure the safety of the performers.
- l) The floor surface should be free of debris and allow for secure footing for the performers.
- m) The danger of repetitive strain and bruise injuries should be minimized.

2. WEAPONS – GENERAL:

- a) All weapons are dangerous. Never indulge in horseplay while in possession of any weapon.
- b) Only weapons specifically made and designed for stage combat or approved by the fight director should be used. Ornamental (costume), antique or ceremonial weapons shall not be acceptable.

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- c) The fight director should be responsible for determining the safety of all weapons. In the absence of the fight director, the weapons handler should be responsible.
- d) The weapons handler should maintain all weapons in safe working order and, if necessary, replace them if they are deemed to be no longer safe for use.
- e) The weapons handler may designate any necessary assistants and should be given adequate time to familiarize them with the procedures they must follow.
- f) The only people to handle the weapon(s) shall be the weapons handler or assistant(s) and the performer who is to use it.
- g) There should be a fight run-through on the day of each performance.
- h) All weapons shall be secured when not in use.

3. WEAPONS – FIREARMS:

Refer to *Performing Arts Safety Bulletin #8: Safety With Firearms*

4. WEAPONS – BLADED:

- a) All weapons should have their points made safe and their blades properly balanced.
- b) All handles should provide a secure hold under fight conditions.
- c) Retractable and non-retractable weapons should be set out separately and be clearly marked so that one cannot be mistaken for the other.
- d) Each actor should use the same weapon in all performances and pre-performance run-throughs.
- e) Performers should check their own weapons prior to each performance in the presence of the weapons handler.

