Stage Combat Terminology and Definitions

**Action-Reaction-Action:** (Also Cue-Reaction-Action and Preparation-Reaction-Action): The process of giving and taking focus during a physical argument. The first "action" is the aggressor's cue and control point, for the attack. The "reaction" is that of the victim, who, upon reading the cue responds; letting their opponent know they are ready. The final "action" is where the two combatants complete the offensive/defensive action together. This may be attack and parry, attack and avoid, feint and reaction, etc.

**Arm Block:** A defensive action made with the hand or arm intended to stop a punch or similar attack. A block can be made on either side of the body and in all lines. These may be as follows:

- **Circular Block:** A block that goes from above the belt to below the belt, or vice-versa, in a semi-circular path on the same side of the body.
- **Cross Block:** An inside or outside block made across the body.
- **Descending Block:** A block delivered downward to defend against an ascending diagonal or vertical attack.
- **Inside Block:** A block made on the inside or inner part of the attacking hand, arm or leg.
- **Opposition Block:** A defensive action where the hand or arm is brought up as a solid wall or shield against the attack.
- **Outside Block:** A block made on the outside or backside of the attacking hand, arm or leg.
- **Parallel Block:** (also Double Block) A block made with the defending arms placed one beside the other for greater defense. The arms are not crossed.
- **Redirection Block:** A defensive action where the hand or arm intercepts the attack and then immediately displaces or removes the opponent by mastering the energy of the initial attack.
- **Rising Block:** A block delivered upward to defend against a descending diagonal or vertical attack.
- **Transfer Block:** (also Replacement Block) A block that uses both hands/arms, one after the other, to deflect and control the offending hand, arm or leg. One hand begins the block, the other is then used to complete the block, "checking" the offending limb and freeing the first hand for a counter attack.
- **Wing Block:** A defensive action made with the muscle groupings of the upper arm. The arm is bent, like the wing of a bird, the hand near the near the shoulder, presenting a shield against strong blows; taking the attack on the back of the forearm and outside of the upper arm.
- **X Block:** A block where both hands/arms are used together and are crossed, the one over the other, catching the attacking limb in the open "V" between the hands.

**Blocked Punch:** A defensive action that deliberately stops an incoming punch, usually with the forearm or hand.

**Break Fall:** Any maneuver which dissipates the energy or force from a fall or roll and gives the illusion of impact.

**Check:** The process of curbing, or restraining the offending hand, arm or leg after a successful block. The defending hand or arm remains in contact with the opponent's (without gripping, locking or holding) in order to sense their movements, feel or control the placement of the offending limb, and use that to both offensive and defensive advantage. These actions command the opposing hand or arm and may retain it or remove it with the action of an Expulsion.

- **Bind:** A checking action made on the opponent's hand, arm or leg, executed by blocking the attack and then moving it diagonally to the opposite quadrant (i.e., from the inside high to the outside low, or outside high to inside low, etc.).
- **Envelopment:** A checking action made on the opponent's hand, arm or leg, executed by blocking the attack and then by describing a circle with both arms in contact, bringing the opponent's arm back to the placement where the check began.
- **Expulsion:** (also Throw Off) Using the energy and movement of a check to throw or fling the opposing arm aside.
- **Transport:** A checking action made on the opponent's hand, arm or leg, executed by blocking the attack and then moving it vertically from a high line to a low line, or vice versa, but on the same side as the block took place.

**Choke Hold:** Any grasp or hold on the area of the throat made with any hand or limb that gives the impression of strangling the victim.

**Contact Blow:** A punch, kick, strike or blow that actually makes contact with the receiver, generally in view of the audience and/or camera, delivered to a large muscle group or muscle mass. Opposite of Non-contact Blow.

**Cue:** something said or done that provides a signal to a partner; eye contact can also be used as a cue.
**Distance:** The proper measure between two or more combatants to safely execute any particular technique in stage combat.

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

**Elbow Attack:** Any contact or non-contact strike, or attempt thereof, which seems to be made with the point of the elbow.

**Eye Contact:** A "cue" or "check point" in a fight that has the combatants frequently look in their partner's eyes to assure mutual awareness and readiness to perform the techniques.

**Forward Roll:** A roll or tumble executed down the back, rolling the length of the spine along the floor.

**Flip/Throw:** An offensive movement which controls or appears to control the victim's center, giving the illusion of lifting them off their feet and returning them to the ground - usually into a break fall or roll.

**Hair Pull:** A grasp with one or both hands in which the victim's hair appears to be clasped in the fist and aggressive force is applied.

**Invitation:** Any movement of the weapon or body designed to lure the other combatant into an attack.

**Kick:** The use of the leg and foot in contact and/or non-contact striking techniques to strike with the foot.

- **Ax Kick:** A downward traveling kick that gives the impression of impact with the heel.
- **Back Kick:** A kick that travels directly backwards giving the impression of impact with the heel.
- **Crescent Kick:** A large, arcing kick traveling in a semicircular path that gives the impression of impacting with the edge of the foot. The kick may be made to the inside (Inside Crescent Kick) or to the outside (Outside Crescent Kick).
- **Front Kick:** A kick delivered with the ball of the foot, in which the knee of the kicking leg rises vertically.
- **Groin Kick:** (also Crotch Kick) Any kick that gives the impression of contact to the groin.
- **Reverse Roundhouse Kick:** (also Heel Hook) A kick in which the heel, or sole of the foot, that travels towards the target via a circular path.
- **Roundhouse Kick:** (also Turning Kick) A kick delivered from a chambered position of the knee which uses the top of the foot and is generally executed in a horizontal plane.
- **Side Kick:** A kick using the heel or edge of the foot, delivered out from the side of the body.
- **Snap Kick:** A fast kick, generally from a chambered position of the leg, which relies upon a whiplash like delivery.

**Knap:** A technique for creating the sound of impact of a non-contact blow to help heighten the illusion that contact has been made.

- **Body Knap:** The sound made by striking a major muscle group on the body.
- **Cage Knap:** The sound made when the hand or foot of one combatant is slapped into their partner's slightly cupped hands. The hands are crossed, forming a "cage."
- **Clap Knap:** The sound made when both hands clap together, usually made by the victim.
- **Partnered Knap:** (also Shared Knap) A knap created by both combatants; by one hand striking another or by striking a specific muscle mass to create the sound of impact.
- **Slip-Hand Knap:** A self knap on the attack where the aggressive hand slips past the non-aggressive hand to create the sound of impact.

**Knee Attack:** Any attack giving the illusion of contact with the knee.

**Lines of Attack or Defense:** Referring to the imaginary planes that bisect the body into four equal sections, one vertical (delineating Inside and Outside) and one horizontal (delineating High and Low). The line may be open or closed, according to the relationship of the attacking blade, the target, and the defending blade.

- **High Line:** The area of attack and defense located above the waist level. Opposite of Low Line.
- **Inside Line:** The area of attack and defense on a combatant, delineated by their vertical center line, which is furthest from their weapon bearing side. Opposite of Outside Line.
- **Low Line:** The area of attack and defense located below waist level. Opposite of High Line.
- **Outside Line:** The area of attack and defense on a combatant, delineated by their vertical center line, which bears the identifying weapon. The weapon-bearing half of the body. Opposite of Inside Line.
**Lock:** (also Joint Lock) A grasp or hold executed with a weapon or one or both hands, applied to the joints in the wrist, arm, leg, etc., to immobilize one's opponent, or to be used as a lever for further techniques such as a throw.

**Non-Contact Blow:** (also Non-Contact Strike) A punch, kick or strike that in actuality does not land on the recipient's body, is appropriately masked from the audience, with a well timed knap. Opposite of Contact Blow.

**Partnering:** A process in which two or more combatants actively work together to safely and effectively make nonviolent actions appear real and dangerous.

**Punch:** Offensive striking techniques with the hand(s) that are executed with the hand closed into a relaxed fist.

- **Back Fist:** A punch made with the back of the hand.
- **Cross:** A punch that travels horizontally across the victim’s jaw-line, from either the right to the left, or vice versa.
- **Double-Hand Hammer Punch:** (also sometimes Rabbit Punch) A large and violent punch made with the hands clasped one around the other, striking downward with the little finger side of the fists.
- **Hammer Punch:** A descending, vertical attack made with a closed hand which hits with the little finger down and thumb up, to strike like club or hammer.
- **Hook:** A rising diagonal punch delivered from the side that crosses the plane of the face (or body) with the arm curving through the air in a tight hooking motion.
- **Jab:** A straight, in-and-out punch delivered from the leading shoulder and foot. Opposite of a Straight Punch.
- **Rabbit Punch:** A sharp, chopping blow delivered downward in a diagonal plane, as if to the back of the neck, executed with a closed hand which is intended to hit with the little finger down and thumb up.
- **Roundhouse Punch:** (also Round House Punch, John Wayne Punch and Hay Maker Punch) A large, dynamic, hooking punch that travels in a wide arc across the victim's face, from either right to left, or vice versa.
- **Stomach Punch:** A hooking punch, delivered at close quarters towards the abdomen of the victim. A stomach punch may be delivered from either the right or left and may be either contact or non-contact.
- **Straight Punch:** A direct, linear punch delivered from the rear or back shoulder and foot. Opposite of a Jab.
- **Uppercut:** A left or right blow with the fist delivered with a bent arm in an upward motion.

**Shoulder Roll:** A roll or tumble executed by rolling on a diagonal from the large muscle groupings of one shoulder to the opposite buttock (forward shoulder roll) or vice versa (backward shoulder roll).

**Slap:** A non-contact blow delivered with an open hand, usually (but not exclusively) made to the face.

**Slip:** a.) A movement of the head or body, either to the right, left, forward or backward, used to avoid a punch or minimize its impact. b.) A circular step that takes the body off-line to either the right or left and ending with the legs crossed. See also Demi-Volte.