

Mike Yahn

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Professional Profile

SAFD certified teacher (Society of American Fight Directors), fight choreographer, and SAG stunt performer based in New York City. Currently a partner in the stage combat teaching company Combat Incorporated (www.combatinc.com), a senior instructor at City WingTsun classes in self-defense, and a private instructor to professional actors, military personnel, police officers, and corporate heads. His work includes major motion pictures, television, stage fights, commercials, self-defense instructional videos, and comic books.

Training and Education

B.F.A. in Drama, New York University Tisch School of the Arts, 2003
Society of American Fight Directors' Teacher Training Workshop, 2007

National WingTsun Kung Fu Seminar, 2004-10
New England Shakespeare Festival First Folio Technique Workshop, 2002-05
International WOW Company Workshop, 2003
Hangar Theater Lab Company, 2001

Stage Combat: Classes and private instruction with Fight Masters nationwide including: J. David Brimmer, Richard Ryan, Michael G. Chin, K Jenny Jones, Dale Girard, J. Allen Suddeth, Richard Raether, David Woolley, Chuck Coyl.

Viewpoints: Lane Savadove, Mahayanna Landowne, Josh Fox

First Folio Shakespeare Techniques: Demitra Papadinis

WingTsun Kung Fu: Grandmaster Leung Ting, Sifu Carson Lau (7th level Master), Sifu Alex Richter (3rd level instructor)

Russian Kettlebell Strength Training: Dr. Mark Cheng

Taoist Yoga: Grandmaster Paulie Zink, Sifu Damon Honeycutt

Teaching Experience (Professional)

Combat Inc, NYC (2005-Present) www.combatinc.com

Instructor, Society of American Fight Director skills proficiency tests: taught multiple classes for the last 4 years, each of which culminated in SAFD proficiency tests and renewals. Such classes included Sword and Shield, Knife, Unarmed, Single Sword, and Quarterstaff techniques for theatrical and film use as well as an in-depth history of the weapon's origins and martial usage.

Instructor, Advanced Stage Techniques and Skills Renewal: created and taught an advanced stage combat forum and class where experienced fighters could train as well as explore advanced fighting and acting concepts. The class culminated in an SAFD skills renewal test (100% pass rate and 100% examiner's awards for excellence) based around unusual and unique choreography pairing different weapon styles against each other.

Instructor, Viewpoints and Violence (Workshop): Explored stage combat with a group of professional actors through the paradigm of Viewpoints. Actors used spatial relationships, kinetic responses, and tempo to influence and discover organic movement within choreography. Class culminated in actors creating their own choreography based upon the Viewpoints concepts.

Co-Instructor, Blood, Guts and Gore (Workshop): Taught the basics of blood creation and usage, along with SFX designer Laura Moss, to professional actors. Culminated in creation of believable latex wounds as well as performances of various types of injuries.

Co-Coordinator, Broadsword Duel Certification: Coordinated space and housing for the first duel certification class for the Society of American Fight Directors and Fight Directors Canada. Adjudicated by SAFD Fight Master Michael G. Chin and FDC Fight Master Jean-Francois Gagnon.

Teatro IATI, NYC (2009-Present)

Instructor, Intro to Stage Combat (Workshop): Taught a professional group of Latino actors a 8 week course designed to grant them a working knowledge of unarmed stage combat, falls, basic sword work, theatrical firearm safety, and blood techniques.

City WingTsun East Village, NYC (2008-Present) www.citywt.com

Head Instructor, WingTsun Kung Fu: Created and taught an ongoing series of self-defense classes in NYC's East Village under the International WingTsun Association. Working with students from all walks of life, the class is designed to train complete novices at martial arts and movement to expert level instructors and fighters. This class includes not only a large amount of cardio and fight work but also teachings on the history of kung fu, the Cantonese language, de-escalation techniques, NY state self-defense law, and confidence building programs.

Creator, Instructor, Women's Self-Defense Class: A monthly course taught free to the general public designed to empower and teach women real world self-defense tactics and attitudes as well as the NY state laws pertinent to their situations.

Creator, GLBT Self Defense Class: Course designed to reach out to the GLBT community and educate them about tactics, attitudes and skills designed to keep them safe as well as situational awareness and de-escalation tactics.

Creator, Instructor, Martial Arts in Public: taught a 3-week course to aspiring martial artists on using stage combat and film magic tricks to enhance their demonstrations.

Instructor, Private Kung Fu Classes: ongoing self-defense classes taught privately to current students, NYPD officers, corporate heads and international visitors.

City WingTsun Midtown, NYC (2005-Present) www.citywt.com

Instructor, Basic, Intermediate, and Advanced WingTsun: A 12-month course designed to teach both martial arts experts as well as novices the moves, steps and punches of WingTsun. Every 3 months the students are tested by a qualified International WingTsun Association Si-Fu (teacher) for advancement within the organization.

Instructor, Intro to WingTsun: a series of private classes designed to prepare new potential students for the “Basic WingTsun” classes and concepts. The secondary purpose is to screen students who are not truly interested in learning WingTsun. This requires a grounded knowledge of WingTsun techniques, history and concepts, but also the ability to rapidly adapt to hostile and potentially unsafe situations.

Imagine Me, NYC (2006)

Instructor, Stage Combat (Workshop): Taught basic stage combat (hair pulls and falls) to class of 5th graders with a special emphasis on the consequences of violence and violent behavior.

Instructor, Castles and Kings (Workshop): Lecture and demonstration of broadswords and medieval weapons for 2nd-3rd grade children. Games placed emphasis on consequences of violent actions as well as the art of physical storytelling.

SAFD-Sanctioned Workshops (2004-Present)

Instructor, Summer Sling X-XIV (2007-2011): taught a variety of classes including Chi-Gung Tricks and Tips, Contact Sensitivity, Advanced Throws and Sweeps, Falls and Rolls, and Basic Broadsword.

Instructor, Philadelphia Cheesesteak Workshop 2010: taught a variety of classes including Chi-Gung Tricks and Tips, Quarterstaff, and co-taught Karate vs. Kung Fu with Ian Rose.

Substitute Instructor, Philadelphia Cheesesteak Workshop 2009: taught a basic quarterstaff class assisted by Fight Master J. David Brimmer. Covered basic attacks and defense, stance, footwork and incorporation of acting values.

Instructor, Winter Wonderland Workshop in Chicago 2010: taught a variety of classes including knife renewals, basic WingTsun, Broadsword, and an exploration of the ranges of unarmed fighting.

Intern: Served on staff of the SAFD’s national workshop at the University of Nevada in Las Vegas (2006). Duties included assisting members of the teaching staff, weapons checkout and maintenance.

Head Intern, Summer Sling IX (2006): Coordinated the Interns for Fights4 (NYC-based group of certified Fight Masters and Fight Directors). Duties included screening and scheduling interns, opening and closing the space, and on-the-spot problem solving.

Intern, Summer Sling VII, VIII (2004-05): Served on staff of regional workshop. Duties included assisting teachers in a variety of classes, maintenance of weapons and other jobs as designated by Fights4.

Fights4, NYC (2004-06) www.fights4.com

Assistant (Private Classes): Assisted Fights4 certified teachers in a variety of certification classes including: broadsword, broadsword and shield, small sword, knife, unarmed, single sword, and quarterstaff.

Teaching Experience (Academic)

New York University, Tisch School of the Arts, NYC (2002-Present)

Instructor, Stage Combat, a brand new class format created to under NYU's New Studio philosophy. The class was taught in a variety of film, motion capture and stage fighting techniques.

Instructor, Stage Combat, taught at NYU's Classical Studio while Fight Master J. David Brimmer was under medical leave.

Substitute and Assistant, Stage Combat I, II, III, IV: class created by Fight Master J. David Brimmer for NYU certification courses in Unarmed, Broadsword, and Rapier and Dagger.

New York Film Academy, NYC (2009-Present)

Instructor, Fighting for Film: an 8-week course introducing both theatrical and film techniques in the art of combat to a variety of international students.

Instructor, Advanced Fighting for Film: an 8-week course used as a refresher for MFA students to explore film and theater combat techniques in greater depth. The class culminates in a professionally-shot film utilizing a variety of fighting and stunt techniques.

Adelphi University, Long Island (2006-Present)

Substitute and Assistant, Intro to Stage Combat: Class created by Ray Rodriguez for basic unarmed and armed stage combat techniques. Semester-long classes culminated in a SAFD skills proficiency test.

Columbia Preparatory School, NYC (2003-05)

Assistant, Intro to Stage Combat (Workshop): Assisted J. David Brimmer in basic stage combat class created for young children (ages 8-10).

Poly Preparatory School, Brooklyn (2004)

Instructor, Basic Stage Combat Intensive (Workshop): Taught two 3-hour classes in basics of stage combat to high school and middle school students during a summer arts intensive.

Lee Strasberg Institute, NYC (2006)

Assistant, Stage Combat: Assisted J. Allen Suddeth in class designed for teaching an unarmed SAFD certification class to professional actors.

Fight Direction and Violence Consultation

Off-Broadway

Trust

Second Stage Theatre
(dir: Peter DuBoise)

Bachelorette

Second Stage Theatre
(dir: Trip Cullman)

The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity
(Associate Fight Director under David Woolley)

Second Stage Theatre
(dir: Eddie Torres)

The Talls

Second Stage Theatre
(dir: Carolyn Cantor)

The Offices

Atlantic Theater
(dir: Neil Pepe)

Chair	Theater for a New Audience (dir: Robert Woodruff)
Three Changes	Playwrights Horizons (dir: Wilson Milam)
Unidentified Human Remains and the True Nature of Love	The Lion Theater (Theater Row) (dir: Robert Bella)

National Tour

Spring Awakening (Associate Fight Director – winter 2008)

New York City

Whatever Man	NY Musical Theatre Festival
And Somewhere Men Are Laughing	NY Fringe Festival
Wild Oats	Columbia Prep School
Hamlet	Columbia Prep School
The Lord of the Flies	Columbia Prep School
The Beaux Stratagem	Columbia Prep School
Marisol	Barnard College
Chair	Barnard College
Macbeth	Redd Tale Theatre Company
The Books	Cherry Lane Studio Theater
Lonely Circus Beast	Lighthouse Theatre Company
Quantum Poetics	Stolen Chair Theatre
Theatre is Dead and So Are You	Stolen Chair Theatre
The Lunar Adventure of Dar and Matey	Stolen Chair Theatre's Dark Nights
Sweet Love Adieu	Oberon Theater Ensemble
Mad Forest	Hudson Guild Theater
Hurlyburly	American Academy of Dramatic Arts
Beggars in the House of Plenty	A.A.D.A.
Flight of the Earls	A.A.D.A.
The Birthday Party	A.A.D.A.
How the Other Half Loves	A.A.D.A.
Burn This	A.A.D.A.
Picnic	A.A.D.A.
Midsummer Night's Dream	Poly Prep School
Taming of the Shrew	Experimental Theater, NYU
Macbeth	The Classical Studio, NYU
Coriolanus	The Classical Studio, NYU
The Query	Lisa M. Film Productions
The Roof	Blue Collar Theater
Richard II	GAP Theater, NYU
Big Love	Meisner Acting Studio, NYU
The Distance from Here	Meisner Acting Studio, NYU
The Years	Oberon Theater Ensemble
In the Shadow of a Dream	Fresh Fruit Festival
Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde	Star Biz Productions
Comedie of Errors	Oberon Theater Ensemble
West Side Story	Jane Adams South Bronx High School

Fragments
The Collection
War
Medusa's Tale

Juicy Mo Mo productions
Dreamscape
Playwrights Horizons Theater School
P.H.T.S.

Regional

The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet
Taming of the Shrew
Richard III
Twelfth Night or What You Will

New England Shakespeare Festival
N.E.S.F.
N.E.S.F.
N.E.S.F.

Commercials

Pirates of the Caribbean Playsets

Zizzle Toys

Misc.

Star Wars Legacy (uncredited)
 Issues 16, 19
Motion Capture Demo Reel
Captain Chris Close Combat Training

Dark Horse Comics
NYC Motion Capture
Close Combat Company

Assistant to the Fight Director (Fight Master J. David Brimmer)

Life in the Theater	Gerald Schoenfeld Theatre (Broadway)
Speed the Plow	Ethel Barrymore Theatre (Broadway)
The Cripple of Inishmaan	Atlantic Theater (Off Broadway)
Mindgame	Soho Repertory Theatre (Off Broadway)
Romeo and Juliet	Theater Breaking Through Barriers
Spring Awakening (the Musical)	Eugene O'Neill Theatre (Broadway)
Spring Awakening (the Musical)	Atlantic Theater (Off Broadway)
The Lieutenant of Inishmore	Lyceum Theatre (Broadway)
The Lieutenant of Inishmore	Atlantic Theater (Off Broadway)
The American Pilot	Manhattan Theatre Club (Off Broadway)
The Revenger's Tragedy	The Culture Project (Off-Broadway)
Camelot	North Shore Music Theatre (at Boston's Schubert)
Hiding Behind Comets	29 th Street Rep (Off Broadway)
BUG	Barrow Street Theatre (Off Broadway)
Bare	Dodger Productions (Off Broadway)

Stunt Performing

White Collar (ep. 301)

Epee/Saber Fencing

Pete Buccosi

Sherlock Holmes	Stunt Double: Mark Strong	Frank Ferrara
Zipcar Commercial	Sword Fight/Wirework/Falls	& Franklin Henson
NYC Motion Capture Reel	Chase, Utility Stunts	Drew Leary
Cornelius	Sword Fight, Katana	NYC Motion Capture
Lift Off (pilot)	Utility Stunts	Drew Leary
Honk	Utility Stunts	Drew Leary
Blue Caprice	Utility Stunts	Drew Leary
Art Works	Utility Stunts	Drew Leary
Decline of the Dog	Utility Stunts	Drew Leary
The Pit	Utility Stunts	Drew Leary
Crimson Mask	Sword Fight/Firearms/Falls	Ray Rodriguez
Kung Fu Granny	Unarmed Fight/Dive Roll	Mike Chin
Sister Nun	Unarmed Fight	Galway McCulloch
Invisible Man (Music Video)	Utility Stunts	Drew Leary
Pereza (Music Video)	Utility Stunts	Ray Rodriguez
Fight Quest (ep. 13)	WingTsun Kung Fu Demo	Discovery Channel
The Art of War (pilot)	Kung Fu Fight (Unarmed)	Ron Van Clief
Kingdom Come	Sword Fight/Falls	Ray Rodriguez
Insatiable book trailer	Tackle/Falls	Brady Hall
Pirates of the Caribbean Playsets	Sword Fight	Zizzle Toys

Skills

Weapons

- ❖ Expert level with Swords, Knives, Axes, Quarterstaves, Double Fence techniques
- ❖ Firearms (both real and theatrical)
- ❖ Experience with both Western and Eastern styles of fighting

Kung Fu

- ❖ Sifu (expert) in WingTsun (Wing Chun) kung fu, and a leading member of the largest Chinese martial arts association in the world (64 countries)
- ❖ Trained alongside Military (U.S.A., Germany, Hungary) and Police personnel, experience with both lethal and non-lethal takedowns and restraints.

Blood and Gore

- ❖ Creating and choreographing a wide variety of blood effects
- ❖ Constructing latex wounds and prosthetics

Contact Improvisation

- ❖ Leading exercises in safely sharing weight and impulses between bodies

Viewpoints

- ❖ Teaching basic aspects of movement within a Viewpoints paradigm
- ❖ Leading Actors in exercises designed to heighten body/space awareness

First Folio Unrehearsed Technique

- ❖ Performing Shakespeare's text using original Elizabethan methods

- ❖ Instantly following cues and stage directions in Elizabethan English
- ❖ Experience with cue scripts

Taoist Yoga (Yin Yoga)

- ❖ Chinese Yoga and stretching
- ❖ Qigong breathing techniques

Professional Affiliations

- ❖ Society of American Fight Directors (**SAFD**)
- ❖ Screen Actor's Guild (**SAG**)
- ❖ Association of Theatre Movement Educators (**ATME**)
- ❖ International WingTsun Association (**IWTA**)

References

Chris Burney, Associate Artistic Director, Second Stage Theatre
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J. David Brimmer, Fight Master, Society of American Fight Directors
Phone: 347-512-3932
Email: Jdavidbrimmer@aol.com

Glenn Kalison, Drama Department Chair, New York Film Academy
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Jon Stancato, Co-Artistic Director, Stolen Chair Theatre Company
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