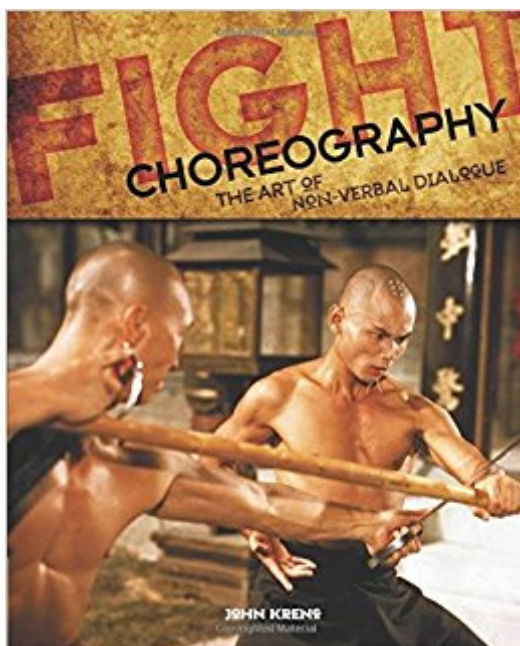


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# Fight Choreography: The Art Of Non-Verbal Dialogue



## Synopsis

All of us have seen films in which the story and acting might be great, but the film suffers because the action and fight sequences are not convincing enough, are terribly shot or edited, or do not integrate seamlessly into the story, causing them to be ineffective, gratuitous, or worst of all, unintentionally humorous. However, when done well, fight and action scenes support and heighten the story and expand the characters. *Fight Choreography: The Art of Non-Verbal Dialogue* helps filmmakers ensure that the fight scenes in their films add to the film's overall quality. Creating a stage fight with a high level of clarity and entertainment value is a very complicated endeavor and requires skills that acting classes and martial arts schools cannot teach. This book helps filmmakers make sense of this art form and how they can use it to create their own styles of fights for a variety of projects, whether they be feature-length films, shorts, or television shows. The book is instructional, informative, and entertaining, and focuses on every important element involved in fight choreography, from basic philosophies, initial concept, and planning, to filming, editing, adding special effects, and sound mixing the final product. The book is not only an indispensable resource for filmmakers, but will also interest film buffs who want to learn how great fight sequences are made so they can better appreciate the action.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"...one of the most impressive books I've ever read about fight choreography and should be essential reading, not only to stunt fighters and film-makers, but any full blooded fan of the fight-film

genre. Kreng doesn't try to lecture, but he gets his point across as you realize this is someone who is still a fan of the genre, but also works within the genre and has been on the receiving end of the action beats he talks about." - Mike Leeder, *IMPACT MAGAZINE* (UK)"Kreng knows what he is talking about! The book's 12 chapters explain the intangible aspects of movie fight scenes that karate schools or acting class just can't teach you." - Patrick Vuong, *BLACK BELT MAGAZINE*"This is the first time in any language that a real unifying approach of how to mix all the cinematic elements of fight choreography has been engagingly detailed into a veritable know-how of historical and technical clarity.... Solidly lays down a path for anybody interested in learning the process of creating a simple or stylized fight scene for TV, film, stage and videogamesâ |. Any university that claims to have reputable Film Departments or intense extension programs that boast about providing complete curriculums and courses that fully prepare their students for a career in film, TV and video production, should use 'Fight Choreography' as a required text." - Dr. Craig Reid, *KUNG FU CINEMA.COM*"If you're planning a low-budget "starter" film with a couple of brief action sequences, intending to work your way up the budget scale, you'll probably use this book until the spine breaks and the pages fall out. Trust me, this is a compliment! Even for someone who only intends to a few fight sequences, this book could save them from some costly mistakes. Plus, a reader may just discover a whole new love in fight choreography!" - Monika Deleeuw-Taylor, *MICROFILMMAKER.COM*

Author John Kreng has been studying martial arts since 1973 and currently holds third-degree black belts in Tang Soo Do and Te Katana Jujitsu. He has taught numerous professional athletes and actors to get ready for their roles. Whether it's for the playing field, the screen, or the individual's personal evolution, John has proven himself a very capable teacher. His love of martial arts/action films led him to become a contributing editor for several martial arts and film review magazines. For the twenty-fifth anniversary of the release of *Enter the Dragon*, John was the writer, coordinating editor, and project supervisor for the Bruce Lee Tribute issue published by TC Media.

What do I know about fight choreography? Nothing, until now. 489 pages later and I know more about fight choreography than I ever thought possible. What will you find in this book; definitions, terminology, how to put a fight scene together, technical elements of a fight, developing the choreographer's eye, resources and so much more. I have been a martial artist for over three decades. I live in South Georgia and have seen a serious increase in movie production in this area. I knew I needed to gain a serious education in fight choreography in order to break into the market

and have a possibility to use my hard earned skills. Well, I know I have found the "Holy Grail" of fight choreography. Thank you John Kreng for writing this incredibly detailed book. It is a must read!

I found this gem by accident looking for a book about fighting styles. While it does exactly that in one section, the core of book offers a whole lot more. This book is necessary for taking your fight scenes from generic to meaningful. From my perspective as an animator, this book addresses the fundamentals of storytelling by helping you thoroughly build your characters and mindfully preparing your scenes in an effective way. The difference this makes is that your fight scenes become much more than just action for it's own sake and go further and play a meaningful part of the story and the character's development. In return the scenes themselves will be more memorable. In school I read a book called *The Illusion of Life*, it was considered one of the so-called "bibles" of animation and I find that this book matches it in terms of the depth of character development. It covers pretty much every angle you would need to think of for setting up a fight sequence. I would recommend this book for anyone who plans to incorporate any form of combat in their productions, be it film, animation, or video game development.

John Kreng is not only a professional fight choreographer but is also a Hong Kong and Hollywood action cinema expert dedicated to bringing a deeper understanding of the art of fight choreography to the West. I am a Hong Kong cinema enthusiast and online kung fu movie reviewer who wanted to gain a real appreciation for the wonderful fight scenes I had admired for so long. I was ecstatic to finally get the low down on cinematic action through Kreng's book. *Fight Choreography* fully analyzes all the dramatic and physical elements of successful, and unsuccessful, fight scenes. Kreng's comparisons and contrasts clearly illustrate differences, and his orderly, explicit writing is simple yet far from shallow. My handicap is that I have not seen many of the Western films that he discusses but because he uses both Eastern and Western film examples, I was able to gain a solid foundation of understanding. The more I analyze Hong Kong action films using Kreng's information, the more valuable I find his book. Much like a book about sewing will not sew your jacket for you, *Fight Choreography* will not film a fight scene for you. It will, however, give you all the tools you need to create, analyze, appreciate, or just enjoy the complex non-verbal world of fight choreography. A must-have for Hong Kong action film fans who want to be in the know.

If you know nothing about fight choreography, then this book is an excellent introduction to the whole process of what makes a good fight scene and what must come together and go on behind

the scenes for those criteria to be met. Kreng references numerous action movies as examples of the various aspects of fight choreography that he discusses from chapter to chapter which serves to broaden the "applicability" of what he talks about. However, as a long time fan of HK choreography, my one gripe w/ the author is that he doesn't focus as much attention on major innovative choreographers such as Jackie Chan and Yuen Wo Ping as I think he could have. He does mention them and talk to some extent about their styles, but I felt there was so much more he could have covered in depth in relation to their method of envisioning and creating the signature choreography masterpieces that they have become famous for. Also, there were a few specific fight films whose choreography I really would have liked to read about in more detail (e.g. Legend of Drunken Master, SPL, Bourne films -- all of which, except for maybe the first, represent distinct changes in the standard choreography contexts from which they came out of). All in all, however, it is an informative and enjoyable read. (Note: this review is written by her grandson, to whom this book was given as a Christmas present.)

Books of any worth concerning stunt work and choreography are difficult to find as it is and this book is one of the finest I've seen if you are serious about understanding and getting involved in the stunt/fight choreography end of the film business. As someone who has been involved in martial arts for over 30 years, I'm, of course, obsessed with any film concerning martial arts. Mr. Kreng's insight is invaluable whether you are just looking for an insider view of how these films are made or are interested in getting involved in film/stunt industry as a martial artist. I hope we'll see more books of this kind from him in the future.

This and J. Allen Suddeth's book are my go to books for fight choreography. This one in particular because it covers the particulars of tv/film as well.

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