

WHAT IS THE HVFC?

The Hudson Valley Fight Club is a donation-funded weekly impromptu stage combat workshop / open training session hosted at various locations in Dutchess and Ulster county NY. Our mission is to empower actor-combatants, choreographers, directors, and filmmakers of all levels of experience by providing an open-forum space to train, share expertise, and prepare oneself to safely and confidently engage in stage combat related disciplines.



Inspired by pre-rehearsal/show fight calls for productions at live theater venues, HVFC meetings offer a physical warm-up followed by a 1-hour member-led or guest-led workshop, on topics including:

- General-Curriculum Stage Combat Training
- Fight-Call Audition / SAFD Exam Prep
- Fight and Intimacy Choreography
- Violent Scene Study
- Stunt Reel Production
- Polearm Woodworking
- ...and much more!

Guest lectures, field trips, and film shoots are planned contingent on donations, which also fund our armory. Members will have access to borrow and rent items from our armory as needed for productions and projects, and are invited to donate any old or disused stunt weapons, LARP gear, cosplay weapons, armor, martial arts equipment, lightsabers, 'mall ninja shit', etc. that we might salvage or reforge into a form suitable for safe non-decorative use in our armory.

WHO ARE WE?

The Hudson Valley Fight Club is an independent and unregistered social club organized by Yurble and Erin Hebert:



Yurble (they/them) is a SAG-AFTRA actor and combatant certified for performance in multiple weapon disciplines with the Society for American Fight Directors (SAFD). They work as a Fight Corps cast member at the NY Renaissance Faire, and have conceived, choreographed, and captained numerous stage fights in plays, musicals, and Shakespeares in the Hudson Valley area. Yurble also aggregates a professional network of stunt performers, armorers, filmmakers, martial artists, and movement specialists.



Erin Hebert (she/her) began training in fight choreography during undergraduate study at Yale, training under Yale School of Drama fight choreographer Michael Rossmly. Over the past 4 years, she has established herself as a go-to fight choreographer for the Hudson Valley, having choreographed 20+ shows in that time. Favorite credits include *She Kills Monsters*, *Henry V*, *Rebel Without a Cause*, and *Romeo & Juliet*.

ATTENDING A MEET:

- Each week, we'd love it if you **sign up** on the Facebook page or via email so we know who's coming; we keep attendance so we can keep track of our curriculum and make sure we don't throw things at you that you're not ready for; some classes may have limited weapon availability!
- Please **arrive 10-15 minutes early** so we can begin on time!
- **Parking** will be communicated via email before a meet, or on the Facebook page, depending on the location.
- **Bathrooms are available** at almost every location we meet, and any exceptions to this will be communicated via email and on our facebook before meets.
- On occasion we will ask you to bring/wear something in particular (such as eye protection, knee pads, or costuming), but at a typical meet, **all members are asked to bring the following:**
 - **Gloves;** light gardening or softball batter gloves work wonderfully.
 - **Comfortable workout shoes;** and for indoor days, please ensure they're clean!
 - **Water bottle;** to hydrate! We will have access to a water source to refill.
 - **A notepad and writing utensil;** to take notes; if you didn't write it down, it didn't happen!
 - **Some spare change?** Our meets are funded by a suggested donation of 10\$/class; but if you'd like to support us more please feel free! We hope to provide a 'shareware' skill distribution model to ensure movement arts can be learned by all regardless of your finances. We also take Venmo!
- **For meets involving swordwork, we ask you please purchase and bring a guarded (hilted) Wooden Bokken,** or a similar wooden sword.
 - Aim for a total length of ~1m including the handle, and a nice strong wood like oak. You can also use a ken made of polypropylene, though it'll be rather light-weight, so we recommend wood!
 - We won't be training with kens made of steel, foam, or generic plastic; blades of a kind play nice together!
 - If your ken comes in the mail and the hilt is some cheap plastic, don't worry! Let us know and we'll make you a better one.
 - We have some to lend, so come to class anyways even if you don't have one yet!

TRAINING FORMAT:

- **Introduction** (5-10 minutes): The meet's instructor(s) will explain their background, the lesson's coverage, and their expectations; though most lessons are designed to be drop-ins, there may be usage of lexica and movement covered in prior lessons, which will be disclosed when the topic is advertised. Participants will also be given a space for quick introductions.
- **Warm-up** (10-15 minutes): The instructor or a volunteering member will lead a full-body warm-up, with particular focus on muscle groups to be used in the workshop.
- **Workshop** (1 hour): The instructor(s) will lead their workshop, with free open participation so long as you've signed a waiver.
- **Wrap-up** (10 minutes tops): The instructor(s) will close the meet and give information on next week's meet, upcoming events, etc. before passing the hat for cash donations, and offering a QR for Venmo donations. This is also a time for everyone to plug their own projects, combat related or not!
- **Open Practice** (time, energy, and space dependent): Members will have the opportunity to work independently or with oversight from their peers on anything they would like, i.e. form, choreography, scene study, shoot day / recital preparation, etc.

SAFETY:

- **Boundary Establishment, Consent, and Self Care:** HVFC aims to exemplify and educate modern theatrical intimacy standards, which includes robust and redundant definitions of consent and boundaries for actors, choreographers, directors, and all other personnel attending a meet:
 - **Boundary Establishment:** We make an effort to know our partners' boundaries and give/receive consent before engaging in physical choreography. Check in with each other before, during, and after scene work to ensure consent is being maintained, and boundaries are not being broken.
 - Generally before partnered trainings requiring ambiguous contact between persons, we often use the **Red-Yellow-Green Light** exercise for setting boundaries for bodily contact: gesturing **Red** to an area indicates that there is not consent for it to be touched, **Yellow** indicates an area where touching requires prior knowledge and understanding of the actions being taken before affirmative consent, and **Green** indicates an area that you consent to being touched by your partner in manners specific to the context and direction of the current scene and space. Setting these boundaries includes the intensity of touch and the specifics of how you are touching.
 - **Consent:** We affirm that consent is conditional, contextual, and revocable. Permission given in one place is not permission given in another. Consent-based practices involve everyone in the room, including instructors, members, directors, observers, and guests.
 - **Maintaining Physical, Mental, and Emotional Health:** As stage combat relates to theatrical intimacy, we recognize and celebrate that self-care is a part of the process of acting, and that your health and well-being matters more than anything else. Any exercises or movements we facilitate as part of our classes are presented as offerings, and as we strive to include methods of participation for various bodies and levels of engagement, we would like to stress that there is no obligation to participate. The trade of stage combat and intimacy may sometimes deal with situations of simulated violence that can be triggering, and putting your health and wellbeing first is paramount to us; please don't hesitate to act proactively for yourself and communicate your needs to us whenever and wherever they arise.
- **Calling Hold:** If you're not familiar, 'hold' is a commonly-used call-and-response signal in theater and film. When you hear someone call 'hold', please stop what you're doing, repeat 'hold', and listen. Anyone in the room, including you, should feel able to call hold to ensure swords and fists are down for an announcement, instruction, emergency, or other contingency.

- If you need a moment for something with your partner but don't want to 'stop the machine' by calling hold for the entire room; you can say **Pause!** This signal is meant to call a hold only for people interacting with you directly.
- **Etiquette:**
 - Please aim to give offerings to other actors instead of notes!
 - Don't discriminate against others for their bodies and capacities—including their dominant handedness!
 - Please vocalize your needs, even in the middle of a fight!
 - Please ask permission before filming or photographing during a meet, and ask permission before sharing on social media! Sometimes people will mistake simulated violence for real violence, so we want to make sure what we post online is context sensitive and permitted by all depicted.
- **Waiver:** All members will be asked to sign an accident waiver and release of liability form before participating in any activities. As is the case with any martial movement art, there is a risk of injury that we want to make sure you're completely informed of before engaging in!
- **Feedback Form:** An optionally-anonymous feedback form is available at the following link: <https://forms.gle/2euYjj4XGA4iXZR99>
 - Please use this at your leisure as both a suggestion box, and as a reporting tool for any health and safety needs that may arise. These forms are confidentially read by **Yurple**, and their content won't be shared without your express permission.
- **Contact Information:**
 - Erin Hebert:
erinhebert@comcast.net
(413) 535-5941
 - Yurple:
peter.kiewra@gmail.com
(845) 554 - 7484