

# Filipino Martial Arts

Digest

Great Grandmaster  
Ernesto A. Presas

Special Edition  
2009



**Kombatan**

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We solicit comments and/or suggestions. Articles are also welcome.

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## **From the Publishers Desk**

### **Kumusta**

Well it has taken some time, but the FMAdigest finally was able to get a Special Edition on Great Grandmaster Ernesto Presas and Kombatan and also some interviews with four of his top representatives.

The FMAdigest would like to thank Jose G. Paman for his great contribution in making this Special Edition materialize and Alex France for putting up with the FMAdigest which continually talked to him about getting something for you the readers on Great Grandmaster Presas and Kombatan.

I met Great Grandmaster Presas in 2002 at a seminar he was doing at Lake Tahoe, California. He is a wealth of knowledge, and it is an experience to observe Great Grandmaster executing techniques flawlessly, demonstrating the style of Kombatan. In visiting his seminar it was an experience I will not likely to forget.

Students were eager to learn and even during a break they continued to practice what they had learned instead of running off for relaxation. His seminars seldom if ever end on time due to the enthusiasm of the participants.

There have been many practitioners which have trained with Great Grandmaster Presas only to move on to what they think are greener pastures. However the dedicated which have stayed with him have continuously gained a wealth of knowledge and are true Kombatan practitioners.

If ever a chance comes to attend a seminar or training camp of Great Grandmaster Presas it is most highly recommended. If you wish to train in the art, contact one of the practitioners that were interviewed and they will be most willing to assist you in locating a Kombatan practitioner near you.

Well hope you will like this Special Edition and that it will spark your curiosity to further investigate the art of Kombatan.

**Maraming Salamat Po**

## **Kombatan Founder Ernesto A. Presas**

### **The Man, The Method**

By Jose G. Paman



The art of Arnis has always resided within the hearts of Filipino people. It emerged, from colonial Spanish times, as a weapon with which to defend the weak and to rebel against oppressive invaders. Arnis exists today as a popular martial system drawn upon by military, law enforcement and civilians alike seeking effective techniques and tactics for real-world combat.

While there exists some anecdotal evidence that Arnis skills were utilized in guerilla and regular armed forces operations during World War Two-era Philippines, the practice of the art itself was not as widespread as current-day Western historians would have their readers believe. Indeed, Arnis largely thrived on a regional basis, disparate methods being handed down from one to a few individuals and changing to fit the combat demands of the time.

By the mid-1960s, most Manila residents considered Arnis to be outdated - a rural activity or cultural exhibition art inferior to the more popular arts like karate, judo, and aikido, and practiced only by people from the provinces or the slums of Greater Manila, as well as public school students. (There is a real division between students attending private schools and public schools in Manila and elsewhere in the islands. Public school attendees have been traditionally looked down upon by the aristocratic Manila residents). Rich mistisos (people of mixed Filipino and Spanish/Chinese/American parentage) practiced the foreign martial systems, while those of the lower classes from provinces and outlying areas practiced Arnis.

In the late 1960s Arnis masters attempted to reintroduce the art to the Filipino population at large. To do this, they needed to go to Manila, where the media coverage would be greatest, and the art would reach the largest audience. The Philippine education secretary at the time, Alejandro Roces, helped sponsor the Arnis Revival Movement. This was a concerted drive launched by the Samahan ng Arnis sa Pilipinas (Arnis Association in the Philippines). The participating groups presented arnis demonstrations at different venues, as well as on national television.

This attempt at revival consequently led to Manila's so-called Martial Arts Golden Age, which began in 1970. That year, many martial arts schools opened around Quiapo, at the heart of Manila's downtown business district. Different fighting disciplines were represented besides Arnis, including Okinawan and Japanese karate, Judo, Aikido, Yaw-Yan, TRACMA, Sikaran, Tat Kun Tou, Thai Ki Do, and Ngo Cho Kung-fu.

Arnis became distinctly visible in the capital city at this time. Interestingly, most Arnis masters of the period did not have elaborate facilities in which to teach their craft. Most taught at Rizal Park (Luneta) and other parks, or simply held classes at a student's home or backyard. Revisionist history written by contemporary, non-Filipino writers indicates otherwise, presenting these masters as if they offered instruction under dojo-like conditions.

The move by the Presas brothers Remy, Ernesto and Roberto to Manila in 1970 marked a crucial point in modern-day Filipino martial arts. Ernesto and his brother Remy had traveled to Osaka, Japan that year to demonstrate Arnis at the Expo 70, a world's fair event. Upon returning to the Philippines, Ernesto decided to permanently reside in Manila. He established the Arjuken (a composite word representing ARnis, JUjitsu, and KENdo) Karate Association, and opened his school on Quezon Boulevard in the downtown area of Quiapo. There, Presas taught the arts of Modern Arnis, Shotokan Karate, Combat Jujitsu, Okinawan weaponry, and the Japanese fencing sport of Kendo. The school would relocate only twice within a two-block radius in the next 30 years, once due to a building fire and another time for expansion purposes.

### The Leader Emerges



Ernesto A. Presas Sr. was one of the youngest teachers to be recognized as a Grandmaster in the birthplace of the Filipino martial arts.

Ernesto Amador Presas, Sr. was born in May of 1945 in the coastal fishing village of Hinigaran in Negros Occidental. His father José Bonco Presas, a renowned Arnis fighter in the area, began teaching Ernesto the fundamentals of Arnis at the age of eight. A capable learner, he mastered his lessons well and soon expanded his martial arts education to include the study of Judo, Jujitsu, Karate, and eventually Kendo.

In the time-tested custom of Arnis practitioners of that era, Presas trained intensely and fought many challenge matches against other practitioners. One memorable encounter in 1970 saw him facing an Arnis fighter from the Manila suburb of Paranaque, who wanted to test the skills of the upstart who had just moved to the city from a rural area. The two fought in the middle of a rice paddy, where lateral movement was severely limited, and falling into thigh-deep mud was a distinct possibility. They began with a trial to see who could disarm the other of his stick. Using his complete knowledge of levers and disarming methods, Presas successfully took the other fighter's stick away in two successive clashes. Not satisfied with this turn of events, the other fighter insisted on an all-out skirmish. Presas went on to disarm his foe once again and delivered a rain of blows that knocked his opponent into the mud.

Other fights would follow, with the frequent condition that the other fighter was always the challenger - Presas did not seek conflict, but never backed down from it either. Because his knowledge was not limited only to combat with weapons, Presas also bested karate practitioners while fighting barehanded, including one opponent who fell into the river the two were struggling near after Presas pounded him with hard punches and kicks. These battles, he would later divulge, formed an important facet in the development of his comprehensive fighting system.

In 1972, Presas secured teaching positions as a physical education instructor at the University of Santo Tomas, the University of the Philippines, Far Eastern University, the Lyceum of the Philippines, and Central Colleges of the Philippines. He also began teaching Arnis at military and law enforcement institutions including the Philippine National Police Academy, the Far Eastern Military Academy, the General Headquarters Military Police Academy, and the Officer's Schools for the Philippine Army and Air Force.

During those formative days, the Arjuken Karate Association held classes from Monday through Saturday and also held special events and demonstrations on Sundays. Arnis classes featured basic training in groups, with students executing blocking, striking, and disarming techniques with single or double sticks. Sparring was practiced both with and without the use of protective equipment such as headgear, body armor and gloves. Equipment allowed students to make hard contact, while sparring unprotected called for more controlled action as only rattan sticks were available (the soft, foam sticks later developed in the U.S. for training and tournaments would never gain popularity in the Philippines). Instruction on anyo (forms) and practice with bladed weapons were largely conducted on a one-on-one basis because of spaces limitations and for safety reasons.

In addition to the Arnis classes, students could learn; JKA-line Shotokan Karate, Jujitsu throwing and locking skills, Okinawan weaponry (tonfa, bo, nunchaku and sai), as well as Kendo. (There exists today, particularly in Australia and Canada, a system known as Arjuken karate, popularized by early Presas students). Presas was a firm advocate of cross-training, as he believed that this better prepared the student to deal with the greatest variety of possible attacks and weapons. Exponents of other martial arts could often be seen visiting, observing and practicing alongside the school's regular students.

### **Attracting Followers**

The Arjuken drew converts from other fighting systems such as Okinawan Shorin-Ryu Karate (originally the prevalent Karate form in Manila, due to the efforts of Latino Gonzales and his sons, screen actors Roberto and Rolando, and his daughter Magna), judo, tae kwon do and other Arnis styles. Presas' younger brother Roberto served as a senior instructor in the association. Some of the earliest instructors included figures who would later stand out as pioneers in future generations: Pepe Yap, Willie Madla, Earl Villanueva, Pepito Robas, Romy Quiambao, Danny Diaz, Jess Arroyo, Rey Yatsu, Jess Bonso, and European Arnis pioneer Jackson Cui Brocka.



Great Grandmaster Ernesto A. Presas demonstrates a trapping and counter technique during a California seminar in 1991.

With the implementation of widespread instruction and influences from the West came a need to make adjustments to the art and practice of Arnis. Presas introduced several important innovations in his early years of teaching. First, he organized a standard curriculum and progression of techniques that could be effectively used for teaching large groups of students. The program included basic striking, blocking, and countering patterns, and effective footwork and angulation. Prior to this formalization, Arnis practice largely consisted of undisciplined and disorganized milling about (known as bara bara), during which students randomly swung their sticks and often struck each other in sensitive areas like the fingers, wrists, forearms, elbows, and face. A teacher taught more by instinct and simply showed the students whatever movements he felt like demonstrating at any given time. He might, alternately, just hand the student a stick and order him to defend himself against the teacher's strikes; a painful learning process. Little concern was given to safety or the practitioner's longevity in the art. This resulted in a high dropout and only the most dedicated students remained in training long enough to truly learn the art.

Presas also influenced the Filipino martial arts uniform now in wide use. Although some consider the wearing of uniforms to be a more modern innovation influenced by judo and karate, practitioners of different groups of Arnis have naturally dressed in similar fashion within their groups for years. Donning similar clothing brought about a sense of unity. It instilled a certain mindset in the practitioner that once the uniform was donned, it was time to set other concerns aside and concentrate fully on training. A standard uniform was also selected to allow the freedom of movement required by the practice of the art.



Great Grandmaster Presas executes a knife thrust counter.

too hot and humid for sweats); some preferred sweat pants with tank tops; and some wore karate pants with vests. The Filipino martial arts uniform with the karate-like top cut short at the waist and loose-fitting pants was an early Presas design. He also devised distinctive patches to better identify his organization's members.

Prior to 1970, Arnis practitioners wore a variety of uniforms: some simply practiced and performed in loose-fitting civilian clothes; some wore khaki pants and t-shirts; some wore karate gi; some wore red pants and t-shirts; some wore sweat suits (although weather in the Philippines was often



Finally, Presas instituted a ranking system based on colored belts to plainly identify the level each student had achieved. This originally consisted of the three ranks of likas (green belt), likha (brown belt) and lakan (black belt). The lakan stage has ten degrees, from lakan isa (first degree) to lakan sampu (tenth degree). He also began issuing certificates indicating the given practitioner's rank.

The Arjuken was very active in promoting the various martial arts, especially arnis, via numerous public demonstrations. One particularly memorable demonstration was held at the Rizal Memorial Coliseum in 1975, during an Asian karate championship tournament attended by goju-kai karate master Gogen Yamaguchi. Many others followed, including demonstrations at universities, churches, local festivals, military bases and holiday celebrations.

Presas' pioneering efforts also gave rise to the First Intercollegiate Karate-Arnis Tournament, held in Manila in 1975. Participants included the University of Santo Tomas, the University of the Philippines, the Far Eastern University and the Lyceum of the Philippines. Arjuken fighters from the UST swept the championships in both the arnis and karate categories.

By 1977, Presas began traveling to the U.S. to teach Arnis. In 1981, he wrote his first book, entitled 'The Art of Arnis'. He went on to establish branches in the U.S., and in numerous countries including Australia, Canada, New Zealand, England, Germany, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, Austria, Finland, Mexico, Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Israel, Saudi Arabia, India, Japan, Thailand, and South Africa. He also organized the International Philippine Martial Arts Federation (IPMAF) as a monitoring and promotional Organization linking his followers the world over.

The First IPMAF Arnis Tournament and Congress was held on April 20, 1989 at the University of Santo Tomas in Manila. This event featured such distinguished guests as José Mena, who founded one of the first established arnis schools in Manila, in the tough slum district of Tondo; Ciriaco and Dionisio Canete of the Doce Pares Club; Benjamin Luna Lema of lightning scientific arnis; Antonio Ilustrisimo of kalis ilustrisimo; and the famed Tortal brothers of Pekiti Tirsia.

Presas has taught tens of thousands of students over a 40-year time span, many at his Federation Headquarters in Manila, and others through his training camp held every other year at Presas Beach in his ancestral town of Hinigaran. Others yet have received training at the numerous open clinics and workshops Presas conducts at branch schools in six continents. He has influenced and gained the admiration of many outstanding instructors, including kosho-ryu kempo headmaster Bruce Juchnik and noted combat expert Hock Hochheim. He has, in addition, contributed a full line of books presenting information valuable information on his form of Arnis, which came to be known as Kombatan.

## The Making of Kombatan



Kombatan functions effectively at short, medium and long ranges of fighting.

Modern Arnis was originally a loose term used to collectively denote the fighting art brought to Manila in 1970 by the Presas brothers Ernesto, Remy, and Roberto from their native island of Negros. Shortly after Remy moved to the United States in 1975, he received extensive press coverage in which he was dubbed the “Father of Modern Arnis.” This led many people in the Western world to believe that he was solely responsible for developing the system known as Modern Arnis. In the meantime, Ernesto and Roberto remained in Manila teaching their respective methods at the Arjuken, also under the term Modern Arnis.

In order to avoid confusion and to best distinguish his art, Ernesto Presas put his system through a series of name changes in the latter 1980s. One consideration was Arnis, Presas Style but, in characteristic humility, he did not want to brand a system using his own name.

Moreover, because Presas is a shared surname, it did not properly identify Ernesto’s method. He ultimately decided on the name Kombatan, a title signifying a system of total combat embracing stick, blade, and empty-hand components. (Because he taught his art under the name Modern Arnis for many years, some of Ernesto Presas’ early Arjuken and IPMAF graduates possess certificates bearing the Modern Arnis designation).

Various features distinguish Kombatan as a fighting art. One is the use of longer and deeper stances associated with older-style Arnis practice. These stances facilitate the powerful execution of the techniques by providing a solid, grounded base. Some stances also serve as transitional positions allowing one to safely move from evasion and defensive mode to attack, and vice versa.

Kombatan footwork and body-angulation patterns were derived from traditional Filipino dances, such as the dandansoy, the itik itik and the sakuting, the latter of which uses two sticks in weaving patterns reminiscent of the sinawali/doble baston technique. The two major categories of footwork and body-angling are the “X” step and the “L” step. Each is designed to provide maximum protection for the practitioner in offense and defense.

Another unique feature is the use of the full grip when holding the system’s weapons. This strong grip allows one to deliver powerful techniques while minimizing the possibility of dropping the weapon or having it knocked loose from one’s hand.



Kombatan Arnis incorporates the use of stick, blade and empty hand applications.

Another yet is the uniform alignment of the weapon in relation to the practitioner's arm: A ninety-degree angle is maintained to lock the weapon in place with the practitioner's body, creating an uninterrupted line along which to deliver great force, branching from the feet up through the legs, waist, trunk, arm, hand, and into the weapon itself. Moreover, there is an emphasis on the delivery of powerful strikes to end a confrontation as soon as possible. Kombatan features a distinct wind-up whereby a practitioner retracts the weapon prior to releasing it in order to generate a more powerful force.

Kombatan utilizes a number of sticks and bladed weapons. The sticks include: the yantok, also called baston or garote, whose standard lengths can vary from 24 to 28 inches; the dulo dulo, a short palm stick similar to the yawara stick in Japanese combatives, and measuring about seven inches; and the bangkaw, or long staff. There is also the wooden daga, about 14 inches in length, which can either be a simple round stick or one shaped like a fighting knife and typically used for practice purposes.

Kombatan's shorter bladed weapons include the metal version of the daga and the Filipino fan knife called the balisong, whose handle has sections that swivel to form a sheath around the blade. Long blades include the itak or bolo, a common farm implement in the rural Philippines; the barang or flat-headed long blade; the dinahong palay named after a poisonous snake; as well as a number of blades such as the kris popular in the Islamic south.

Methods using the various weapons include the arts of solo baston, doble baston, espada y daga, daga sa daga, dos puntas (a specialized application with the stick held in the middle) and tres puntas (dos puntas with a knife held in the opposite hand). Kombatan's empty-hand component includes the striking aspect of mano mano and the native grappling art of dumog. Not relegated as a secondary component by any means, mano mano and dumog are recognized as vital facets in the continuum of combat that necessarily encompasses long, medium and short range conflict, and both armed and unarmed conflict.

While the total Kombatan knowledge base might seem overwhelming to the uninitiated, the method of teaching is where Great Grandmaster Presas' genius shines. He has uniquely designed a training progression that fluidly takes the student from the most basic technique to the most advanced application. Skilled Kombatan exponents demonstrate the ability to flawlessly switch from long range combat armed with the stick, sword or long staff, to medium range fighting using a knife, to close-quarters conflict utilizing strikes, throws and joint locks, and back to long range again. They also possess the flexibility to employ improvised weaponry, an important skill as one may find himself with nothing but common, everyday items to do battle with.

One of the youngest practitioners to be acknowledged, at age 24, as an Arnis Grandmaster in the birthplace of the art, Ernesto Amador Presas Sr. went on to become among the most readily-recognizable Filipino martial arts teachers in contemporary times. Under his able leadership, the IPMAF thrives as an organization linking dedicated practitioners the world over. His numerous book and video titles remain popular among the multitude of Filipino martial arts titles currently available. His training camp held every other year in Hinigaran, remains the longest-standing camp of its kind in the Philippines. His gymnasium, located at Quiapo in the heart of downtown, is the only martial institution continuously in operation for nearly 40 years.

Great Grandmaster Presas' method of Kombatán is one of the most widely-practiced and oft-imitated Filipino systems in modern times. Instructors of other styles attending his seminars have adopted his techniques and tactics, often without acknowledging the fact. Unfortunately, some of his early followers have also disassociated themselves from the current organization, some in search of elevated rank and others forming their own associations while bestowing higher ranks upon themselves. In a bizarre turn of events, some even circulated rumors, picked up by internet would-be pundits; that Great Grandmaster Presas passed away several years ago. As he ably continues to demonstrate, the rumors of his death were greatly exaggerated. Further, in typically amiable fashion, he harbors no ill will and readily invites practitioners and enthusiasts alike to come and train with his worldwide federation.



Modern Arnis de Mano. Arjuken. Kombatán. The International Philippine Martial Arts Federation. The astounding achievements by Great Grandmaster Ernesto A. Presas ensure the preservation of his combat method, the ultimate manifestation of skills handed down by warriors through centuries of warfare and bloodshed in the Philippine Islands.

**About the Author:** Jose G. Paman is a first-generation graduate of the Instructors Course at the original Arjuken Karate Association in Quiapo, Manila. He is the author of five books, including the best-selling *Arnis Self-Defense: Stick, Blade, and Empty-Hand Combat Techniques of the Philippines* (Random House, 2007) and *Ngo Cho: Southern Shaolin Five Ancestor Kung-Fu* (Unique Publications, 2007).

## Interviews with Four of Kombatán's Top Experts

### Alex France Secretary General



Based in the Northern California city of Vallejo, Alex France serves as the IPMAF's Secretary General, a post he has held for many years. France is a main organizer and advocate for Great Grandmaster Presas' art and effectively keeps the federation's vast membership linked and informed of current goings-on.

**FMAdigest:** *Can you describe your martial arts background and development?*

**Alex France:** I was about 10 years old in the late 1950's when I began my study of the martial arts. It was more of a "self study" for two reasons. First was, I didn't know of any school or club teaching martial arts at that time and second, even if I did, I wouldn't have been able to afford it anyway.

But Bruce Tegner's books were affordable through the public library. His books were easy to understand, and I would try out his techniques with any of my friends who were willing. There were not many who were. They would try out a technique or two with me but then would lose interest. How things have changed in the half century since! Now I have quite a few friends, in the hundreds, around the world that share the same passion. And I like to think that I've moved beyond the mere collecting of techniques. For introducing me to martial arts, albeit indirectly through his books, I will never forget Mr. Tegner.

My first in-person teacher was an American serviceman. He taught Judo in Sangley Point, a U.S. Navy Base in Cavite City, in the Philippines. That didn't last long because he was reassigned. What I remember of him all these years were the scar on his lip from surviving a knife attack, and the very nice way he treated us Filipino kids who came onto the base to take lessons from him free of charge.

Now, why judo? I graduated from high school in the Philippines but not one student in my entire school ever mentioned Arnis or Eskrima. Had I known about it at that time, I would have studied that. Judo was THE art at that place and time, in the mid 1960s.

I remember escorting a very pretty classmate, Corazon, "Cora," from our school in Makati to her home in Baclaran late one night. A school function had ended late. I thought I was being gallant and protective. Her parents invited me in, gave me refreshments as is our Filipino custom, and then had his daughter, and only her, accompany me to the bus stop and wait for me until I was safely on the bus. It turned out that Corazon's dad was the top Judo man in Baclaran and being his daughter, she knew how to take care of herself! In addition, nobody in their town in those times would dare try to harm her, or allow anyone else to, for fear of the father. On my long bus ride to Cavite City I quietly laughed to myself, seeing how the role of "bodyguard" had switched from me to her. Just who was guarding whom? To this day, I smile every time I remember it.

**FMA Digest:** *When did you begin training in Kombatan under Great Grandmaster Presas? Which other instructors in Kombatan have you trained with?*

**Alex France:** I was a die-hard Wado Ryu practitioner under Sensei Hidy Hiraoka when I first saw Filipino martial arts in action. Not in the Philippines, but here in a tournament in the States, of all places! Unfortunately, what I saw was two fully armored guys standing toe to toe, no footwork, just whacking away at each other. It made no sense.

It was only after then-Maestro, now Grandmaster of his clan, Jonathon "Jon" Bais came to Vallejo, California that I gave Filipino martial arts a chance. He was the one that converted me, showing me the deadly beauty of our country's art. I wasted no time in really getting into it but unfortunately Maestro left a year later for Europe, and there he stayed until just last year. I was so enamored with Filipino martial arts that when Maestro left, I converted the school into a sort of open academy where teachers from all legitimate Filipino martial arts systems could teach. I was like a kid in a candy store, sampling all of them.



It was at this time that I met then-Grandmaster, now Great Grandmaster, Ernesto Presas and then-brown belt, now Grandmaster, Warlito "Lito" Concepcion. Grandmaster Presas took me under his wing, becoming my mentor and instilling in me the foundation I needed to stand on my own and to discover things for myself.

And what a path of discovery that has been! It has led me to look into the "other half" or "third" if you consider, Grandmaster Roberto, who is just now getting known worldwide of the Presas House.

I never got to meet Great Grandmaster Remy, but when I saw his tapes, I sought out his eldest son, Dr. Remy Presas Jr. to help me learn his father's amazing art. Although Sr. and Jr. were separated for many years - Grandmaster Remy was in exile during the Marcos dictatorship - Remy Jr., through sheer force of will and persistence, is well on his way to mastering his father's art. He has so much to teach, and I have so much to learn.

And then, Balintawak Grandmaster, Veraqui "Ver" Villasin came to town. Is San Francisco Bay Area the place to learn Filipino martial arts or what?! Grandmaster Ver is an exacting teacher, teaching the way his teacher, Great Grandmaster Jose Villasin, taught him, patiently going over and over the same thing with his student until the student gets it perfectly, before moving on to the next lesson. It was Grandmaster Villasin that showed me the roots.

So in summary, I'm studying the arts of three Filipino warrior clans, Bais, Presas, and Villasin. Three families, four teachers. I hold them all close to my heart.

**FMAdigest:** *Do you have a school or training group? What is its name and where is it located?*

**Alex France:** The Philippine Martial Arts Academy, PMAA, was established in 1995, first located in Vallejo, California then moved to Pleasanton where I ran my "Pamana ng Mandirigma" program. And now we are in Hayward, where PMAA is the Filipino martial arts division of Hayward Martial Arts, at 1024 B Street, Suite 1, Hayward CA 94541.



[www.HaywardMartialArts.net](http://www.HaywardMartialArts.net)

**FMAdigest:** *Can you provide memorable learning or training experiences you have had in Kombatán?*

**Alex France:** There have been many; but the first had to be the first time I saw Great Grandmaster demonstrate his art. I wrote about it in the foreword of one of his books, Filipino Knife Fighting, Presas Style.

Another was the first time Great Grandmaster had me teach Kombatán. Most first-time teachers usually have the luxury of having their teacher present. Mine was half a world away. To top it off, I was to introduce Kombatán to the instructor staffs of three schools. These instructors were looking to incorporate an Filipino martial arts system in their curriculum. Great Grandmaster prepped me well and all three schools converted to Kombatán.

**FMAdigest:** *What do you consider to be the most important aspects of Kombatán?*

**Alex France:** The three schools I mentioned before incorporated Kombatán, not because I was impressive but because the art I demonstrated was impressive. People who see me outside of the school wouldn't be impressed with me. I don't look or act, like the stereotypical martial artist, much less a martial athlete. In fact, I often feel compelled to tell potential students not to concern themselves with how I look, a harmless, out of shape old man. Rather, I tell them I'm there to help them become proficient in a highly effective martial art system that is second to none. And then I just perform the art the way Great Grandmaster taught me. Those who don't know martial arts are wowed of course, but the experienced ones are wowed for another reason: they see. And when I have them do it, they understand. It's the system, so comprehensive, yet so tightly integrated. It's not just a collection of techniques. It retains the classical while adding the modern. It's the flow -from one range to another, from one strike to another, from defense to offense, from one weapon system to another, indeed, from Kombatán to and from other martial art systems. It's the way the system was engineered.

Finally, I have to say in closing, one time Great Grandmaster and I were sitting in a restaurant, and he said to me, "The man hasn't been born who can create a system as good as mine."



I replied, "Oh, he's been born. I just haven't got around to it." I said it with a smile, of course!

### Jose G. Paman Original Arjuken



One of the most prominent martial arts writers in contemporary times, Jose G. Paman is also one of the longest-standing followers of Great Grandmaster Ernesto A. Presas. Paman represents a vital link between old-school and present-day disciples of Great Grandmaster Presas' techniques and training methods. He wrote the best-selling book 'Arnis Self-Defense' and leads the training group Original Arjuken, based in the Sacramento area of California.

**FMAdigest:** *Can you describe your martial arts background and development?*

**Jose G. Paman:** I was a reserved, introverted, skinny kid growing up in Manila in the 1960s who did not participate in team sports or hang out with the "in" crowds. This led me to experience bullying from other youths my age and older. My father, who grew up in the tough slum district of Tondo - where you could, and still can, get killed just for being an outsider - sensed this and began showing me some self-defense movements like basic parries and boxing punches, the front kick, and a head butt counter against a choking attack from behind.

My maternal uncle Nestor Goyena was the 1959 Philippine Judo Champion, in an era before the creation of weight divisions. Two cousins practiced karate under different instructors. From these men, I further learned basic lessons in self-defense.

In 1970, Grandmaster Ernesto A. Presas established the Arjuken Karate Association at Quiapo in Manila. Grandmaster Presas became my first formal instructor and mentor in the martial arts. Under him, I learned Karate, Jujitsu, and an early version of Kombatan system; it was still known as Modern Arnis when I started because all three Presas brothers were using that name back then. I rose through the ranks, earning black belts in both Arnis and karate, and became a graduate of the first instructor training program at the Arjuken.

In 1973, I was admitted into the Tong Hong, the Eastern Athletic Association that taught the Ngo Cho five ancestor system of Kung-fu, by Master Co Chi Po. I practiced at that gymnasium as well as the Arjuken, keeping the fact a secret as, in those days, most



Great Grandmaster Ernesto A. Presas with original Arjuken instructor graduate and noted author Jose G. Paman at a 1990 IPMAF event in San Francisco.

teachers demanded exclusivity - you couldn't be an active member of two schools at the same time. Grandmaster Presas found out after a time nonetheless but, fortunately, did not throw me out of the Arjuken. He saw that I was truly loyal to his group and in fact allowed me to demonstrate some of the kung-fu forms I was learning during our many public exhibitions.

I also learned the basics of a system simply called garote from Albert Villaraza, a college buddy, who said he had learned it in Mindanao. This consisted of a snapping style of delivery with two hands holding the stick at either end, loading the stick much like a slingshot with one hand, and releasing it with a snapping motion. I believe some refer to it as lastiko in current times.

Beyond this, I studied kung-fu forms from a number of sources, like Rey de la Merced, who knew a Northern tan tui form and a tiger crane set; the form shao chiu kong or small nine palaces from Lao Kian Beng; the tiger claw and Fukien monkey forms from Tan Kiam Hua; and the dragon form from my best friend, the late Ray Anthony Alfabeto. Another martial arts brother, Julian Valdoria, taught me the rudiments of Western boxing.

At the Tong Hong and beyond, I learned additional Ngo Cho forms, drills and techniques from Dee Se Giok, Tan Poeh Son and Lee Kim Siok.

Much later, in California, I studied Goshin Jitsu and Zen Budokai Aikijujitsu under Sensei Rod Goodwin. I also picked up some excellent training from Sensei Don Cross of Danzan Ryu Jujitsu, Sensei Dave Butler of Judo, and from Sensei Carolyn Penny of Yoshinkai Aikido. I also boxed under the guidance of Dr. Cloy Stapleton, a great coach at Sacramento City College.

**FMAdigest:** *When did you begin training in Kombatan under Great Grandmaster Presas? Which other instructors in Kombatan have you trained with?*

**Jose G. Paman:** I initially came in through the University of Santo Tomas (UST) program, as I was a high school student there at the time. The UST is a unique learning institution that offers education from kindergarten through the doctorate levels. I formally joined the Headquarters gym at Quiapo in 1973, when Great Grandmaster Presas began allowing UST high school and college students to train there.

Some of the instructors present during my early days were Great Grandmaster Presas' younger brother Roberto, Earl Villanueva, Romy Quiambao, Pepe Yap, Willie Madla, Jess Arroyo, Rey Yatsu, Jess Bonso, Danny Diaz, Jackson Cui Brocka, Pepito Robas and Cristino Vasquez. Of these, the people who trained me most directly, besides Great Grandmaster Ernesto, were Earl Villanueva - a very good Karate man, Grandmaster Roberto Presas - who was also very skilled in karate and arnis, Willie Madla, Rey Yatsu, and Danny Diaz. Danny presided over the exam for my first black belt. Jackson Brocka was around and, even in those days, had a reputation as a maverick in the gym. He would later help spark interest in arnis in what was then West Germany.

Besides this group of instructors, we had a great batch of students at the time. My contemporaries included Rey de la Merced, Julian Valdoria, Ricardo Rivera and Alex Pangilinan. Rey de la Merced and Julian Valdoria I have already mentioned. Ricardo



Rivera was just a tough fighter and Karate man, and Alex Pangilinan was a convert from taekwondo who shared some of his kicking techniques with the group. There was also Renato Salenga, from silat seni gayung, a Malaysian style, who joined the gym. He had exceptional floor techniques at the time when few considered ground fighting as a viable skill.

**FMAdigest:** *Do you have a school or training group? What is its name and where is it located?*

**Jose G. Paman:** We were first named Arjuken Martial Arts Club when I founded the training group in Sacramento in 1983. This was the first California affiliate of the IPMAF Headquarters. Over the years, I have taught or co-taught classes at the P Street Gym, Clunie Hall, McKinley Park, and at McClellan Air Force Base, which has since been closed down. Our school is now called Original Arjuken, after Great Grandmaster Presas' first gym in Quiapo. I teach Kombatan and Ngo Cho Kung-fu. It is a closed school and we have a core group of individuals who have been training together for over 10 years now.

**FMAdigest:** *Can you provide memorable learning or training experiences you have had in Kombatan?*

**Jose G. Paman:** Being an original Arjuken graduate - of the first instructor's course - is in itself an incredible, memorable experience. It's hard to imagine now, but Great Grandmaster Ernesto Presas himself reminded me recently that I am indeed one of his very first students at the Quiapo gym. Other practitioners were there, but many of them came in through Grandmaster Roberto. I am a direct product of Great Grandmaster Ernesto's teachings; he was my first karate and arnis instructor and I have been with his group since.

Being close to Great Grandmaster Presas throughout my teen years, I can recall many private conversations that have made lasting impressions on me. Early in my training days, for instance, he encouraged his students to compete in karate and arnis tournaments to increase our fluency and expertise in those arts. I once commented, "Those guys are too fast for me" and he replied, "Speed is not so important as timing. Even if someone is fast, his movements won't be effective if he can't time them with those of his opponent's. Work to develop your timing and you'll be OK." I found this to be profoundly true.

Personally, I have always been touched by Great Grandmaster Presas' benevolence. During my days at the Arjuken, there were local students who thought they had to stop coming to train because they had gotten laid off of work and could not afford the monthly dues. He nevertheless allowed these folks to continue training, with the advice to just start paying again when they were able to. I think that more than the capacity to learn and master martial technique, Great Grandmaster looks for people with a good heart - people who would ultimately represent our arts in a positive light.



Perhaps most importantly, Great Grandmaster Presas and his crew, my Arjuken brothers and sisters, kept me going straight during my teen years in Manila. This was during the tumultuous martial law days in the country. Things were rough on everybody.

Uncertainty ruled the streets. I saw some of my high school contemporaries fall into the lure of drugs and crime. Because my father had immigrated to California, I could have easily have gotten into all kinds of trouble. But the discipline from martial arts training kept me in line. I will never forget this.

**FMAdigest:** *What do you consider to be the most important aspects of Kombatan?*

**Jose G. Paman:** Kombatan is a complete martial art. It is not just an add-on stickfighting style to attach to your kenpo or karate, as Filipino martial arts are unfortunately often represented. Great Grandmaster Ernesto Presas' art encompasses all ranges and levels of combat, both armed and unarmed. Its techniques address situations ranging from minor annoyances to life-and-death predicaments. Kombatan is flexible, practical and realistic. It is for these reasons and more that I continue to practice, teach, research and write about our art.

## **Mike Bowers**

### **North American Chief Instructor**



Mike Bowers is the IPMAF's chief instructor for North America. The product of a tough upbringing, he reflects Kombatan's quality as a no-nonsense, practical fighting art. He operates one of the largest IPMAF training facilities outside of the Manila Headquarters. Following is the strong and eye-opening narrative on his personal voyage in Kombatan.

**FMAdigest:** *Can you describe your martial arts background and development?*

**Mike Bowers:** My background comes from the streets. From age of 16 to 21 that's where I lived, right in the heart of gang wars down in Southern California. Going to school as a kid I was flat out tormented every day. From the time I hit junior high through ninth grades, I would get picked on or beat up.

Even when I took the school bus home I was always thrown out of my seat no matter where I sat. You see, I was a surfer boy who just moved to the country and moved right next door to the Indian reservation when I started the seventh grade. It didn't stop until the end of ninth grade - that is when I went to the toughest guy in my neighborhood and asked him to help me learn how to fight. The way he trained me was, one summer, I would go over to his house and he would beat the #&%\* out of me. That lasted all summer. I could finally start to hold my own. I never was able to defeat my friend but he told me I hit harder than anyone he knew, and told me to stop coming over... we were done. For fun growing up in the country, we would hold boxing matches on Saturday.

**FMA Digest:** *When did you begin training in Kombatán under Great Grandmaster Presas? Which other instructors in Kombatán have you trained with?*

**Mike Bowers:** I never wanted to learn any martial art until I met my first instructor, who was giving a private lesson in knife-fighting in the aerobics room of Gold's Gym. I begged him for two months to train me and at last he did. His name is Dave Ryker. I trained with him off and on from 1990 to 1995. He took me up to brown belt in the old system of Great Grandmaster Ernesto. Then he turned me over to Carl Jackley, who was taking care of the Pacific Northwest for Great Grandmaster at that time. I was lucky enough to be able to train with Carl for one solid year. We would meet at Gold's Gym five days a week and train in the aerobics room with the manager of the club at that time. He was able to get me ready for my black belt, lakan isa, test. When I tested, it was in front of Carl and Doug O'Conner. That was 1996. Talk about a slow starter; I can't believe it took me six years to get my black belt. At that time in Carl's life, he had a lot going on, so he was unable to continue his position in IPMAF.

Carl turned me over to Great Grandmaster Presas in 1996 and I took over and became chief instructor of Portland, then it was chief instructor of Oregon, then I became chief instructor of the Pacific Northwest. I am currently chief instructor of North America. All my lakan rankings from there on out were given to me by Great Grandmaster as he is the one who took over my training. I worked with his son for a short time, but not that much.

How Grandmaster would train me was, I would grab one of my students and he would work every day with us, while he stayed with me, on the art. I was lucky enough to be able to record those training sessions. That way when Great Grandmaster left I could still continue my training. When he returned he would monitor the progress and add to it. Those tapes are priceless to me. You can see the morning sun all the way to sunset the days we trained, with Grandmaster correcting and guiding us and when he wasn't, he was cooking.

I am honored to be a direct student of Great Grandmaster, and am proud of the fact that I can represent his art in the way he wishes. Grandmaster believed in me when no one else did. He changed my life and made me a better person for it. He gave me hope with his guidance, and helped me understand what it really means to be a warrior.

**FMA Digest:** *Do you have a school or training group? What is its name and where is it located?*

**Mike Bowers:** I have been teaching since 1995. I had to teach for free for one year as part of my black belt requirements. Then I started to teach for pay in 1996 at Gold's Gym. They had me listed as one of their regular classes twice a week. Once 24 Hr. Fitness bought Gold's Gym out here in Portland, they gave me the boot, so I rented from another school to hold Arnis classes. One thing led to another and I have been teaching full-time since 2003. That's all I do now. We have our own place in a 2,500 square foot state-of-the-art facility. The name of the school is Berdugo Martial Arts Center. The art we teach is Kombatán and we offer over 20 classes a week. Not only that, I also teach at Mt. Hood Community College. The class I teach is Street Defense using the art of Kombatán. I have been teaching that course at Mt Hood



[www.kombatán.us](http://www.kombatán.us)

since 1999 and, yes, you can get an academic credit for that class. Mt. Hood's bookstore; carries Great Grandmaster's books and sticks and stick bags. I have over 220 registered members of IPMAF, although not all are still current. In the last two IPMAF camps I have attended, I have taken 16 students with me.

**FMAdigest:** *Can you provide memorable learning or training experiences you have had in Kombatán?*

**Mike Bowers:** My first seminar that I hosted for Grandmaster was a disaster. I had only met him a couple of times before and this was to be the very first seminar that I would be hosting. I find out his wife and son would be in attendance with him, and it is their first time to Portland. They are planning to stay a couple of weeks with me. No problem, I have plenty of room. I pick them up from the airport and our first place of destination is the Grotto, at the request of Great Grandmaster. My house is about 35 miles away and the Grotto is right next to the airport. It is quite beautiful there, so we took the whole tour, about 45 minutes, come back to the truck and three of the four suitcases were missing... we had been robbed. All the equipment was gone. That was about \$3000 worth of supplies. No sticks for a stick seminar.

I had posted flyers around town for the event and out of 22 students I had at that time I, had a verbal commitment from nine so I wasn't too worried about the turn out. Guess what...not one of my students showed up to this event. We had a total of seven guests, three were from the flyers and the other four came down from Canada, because Great Grandmaster called them. I just wanted to crawl under a rock and die. I wanted to make a great impression on Great Grandmaster showing him he made the right choice in appointing me chief instructor of Portland. It couldn't have gone more wrong, for me. To my surprise they didn't frown at me once. They told me not to worry, it will all work out. He was right, it did. My insurance paid for the stolen equipment, and I am now one of the largest schools in the world for IPMAF and the biggest one in the U.S.A. We have two master instructors at my school besides me. We are very lucky to have such a great art as this, and more so to have a Grandmaster like ours.

**FMAdigest:** *What do you consider to be the most important aspects of Kombatán?*

**Mike Bowers:** I practice this art because it's real. I come from the streets and what I have experienced is a lot martial art practitioners that fight out there don't hold up in the streets. They may be good in the ring but on the streets those guys don't last. Maybe it is just the practitioner as not all martial arts are guilty of this. Some martial arts don't understand the art of winning at all costs. Cheating and cheap shots are normal on the streets and being unfair is fair on the streets. That is the beauty of Kombatán - anything goes in this art. It will teach you how to make everything a weapon; that there are no rules in fighting. It will teach you to finish the attacker and the next one, so you can go back to being a nice person. This art gives you those tools; it walks hand in hand with the streets!



I have one parting comment: pay Grandmaster his dues. To all the people who use his name to teach the art or are teaching his art, become IPMAF members. If you teach his system and use his name, the least any student can do is become an IPMAF member and have any student you teach become an IPMAF member. It is only right. Pay Grandmaster his dues. Grandmaster doesn't ask for much - IPMAF membership fees and belt fees for when you promote a student in his system. That is not asking for a whole lot. I say, either pay him or quit using his name.

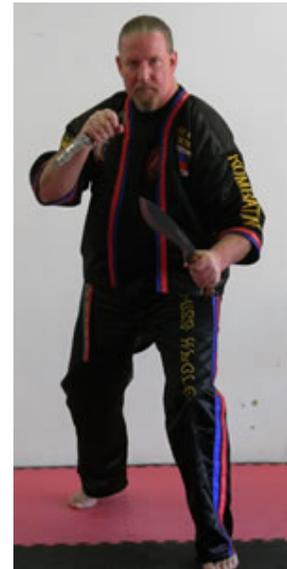
What's even worse are the people that give no support; Grandmaster knows them really well. Great Grandmaster considers some of them to be his top students and friends at one time or another. He has given them keys to unlock the system, and their payment is nothing. Some go on to have their own systems of martial arts with no acknowledgement of Great Grandmaster whatsoever. What a shame.

### **Andy Elliott** **The Australian Connection**

Andy Elliott is Kombatan's Man from Down Under. An ardent follower of Great Grandmaster Presas, he has trained with many of Kombatan's top instructors from a host of member countries. Elliott hosted the First World Abroad IPMAF Camp in his native Australia.

**FMAdigest:** *Can you describe your martial arts background and development?*

**Andy Elliott:** I have trained in and am graded in several martial arts. These are: Filipino Kombatan Arnis, Modern Arnis, Kali Arnis de mano, Kali Sikaran, Shukokai Karate, Wing Chun, Yawara Military Ju-Jitsu and Kyusho-Jitsu, I am also an authorized Trainer in AMOK! Edged Weapon Solutions, which is combatives, and not martial arts. Of these, I hold black belt rank or instructor level in Filipino Kombatan Arnis, Modern Arnis, Kali Arnis de Mano, Shukokai Karate and Kyusho-Jitsu.



**FMAdigest:** *When did you begin training in Kombatan under Great Grandmaster Presas? Which other instructors in Kombatan have you trained with?*

**Andy Elliott:** I started training in Arnis in 1995 and officially joined IPMAF in 1998, attending the 1st

Official Kombatan Camp in Negros in 1999.

I have trained with other Kombatan Instructors either from or in the Philippines, Australia, U.S.A., Canada, Sweden, Norway, Finland, Switzerland, Germany, Austria,

Poland, England, New Zealand, Portugal, Ireland, Mexico, Hawaii, Malaysia, Singapore, South Africa and Israel.

The highly-ranked Kombatan instructors I have had the pleasure to train with are Grandmasters Ernesto Presas Sr., Roberto Presas, Ernesto Presas Jr., Pepe Yap, Johan Skalberg, Simba Maalat, Lito Conception, Carlos Pulanco, Mike Bowers, Shelley Millsbaugh, Walter Hubmann, Zurg Zigler, Tim Hartman, Rick Manglinong, Robert Castro, and Emil Bautista. Others are Masters Michael Ermac, Oliver Garduce, Edgar Kawada, Randy Remolin, Allan Fami, Roger Solar, John Rudy, Joel Barkemayer, Allan Maravilla, Michael D'Arcy, Danny Tiliano, Jimmy Myagi, Michael Guingona, Julius Melegrito, Jeanette Morris, Gregory Harris, Darwin Duran, Tomi Harell, Per Sutter, Henning Hanson, Andreas Boruta, Peter Konschak, Kevin Lingasin and Perry Serron.

**FMAdigest:** *Do you have a school or training group? What is its name and where is it located?*

**Andy Elliott:** Yes, I run a full-time academy with over 100 students, mostly adults. The club's name is Kombatan Australia: Filipino Martial Arts Academy. This is the Australian HQ for Kombatan, the location is Level 1 / 211 Swan St. Richmond, Victoria, 3121, Australia.

**FMAdigest:** *Can you provide memorable learning or training experiences you have had in Kombatan?*

**Andy Elliott:** One of the most memorable times for me was hosting the first-ever World Abroad IPMAF Camp here in Melbourne, Australia. We came up with the idea, at the '05 camp in P.I., of "Why not hold a world camp on every in-between year of the bi-annual Philippines camp?" It was a great honor to personally host Great Grandmaster Presas, Sr., his son Grandmaster Presas, Jr. and son-in-law Senior Master Michael Ermac. The camp was a great success and well attended by Europe, America, Asia and nationally, with Great Grandmaster remarkably teaching in his usual effervescent way everyday, even though he really wasn't in the best of health! A true Filipino mandirigma!

My first time in the Philippines was a surreal experience. It was an amazing mix of seeing all the Filipinos demonstrating their art in their native land. Training was just so different to the norm, out in the open air under the hot sun, on a pebble mixed sand, having to stop every now and then to allow carabaos carrying building supplies as the camp was still getting built. Everyone at the camp also all pitched in and helped at various stages carrying sandbags, lifting up and placing portable cabanas on the beach front and so on. The cultural exchange, unity and goodwill were all clearly evident in all aspects. It was more than just a training trip!

Finally, teaching Kombatan seminars in Portugal, a completely different part of the world, talking a language that had to be translated. A subject matter from a completely different culture to myself and that of the group, and yet all the people in the room were able to unite and share a fantastic experience for the common love, interest and thirst of knowledge in Kombatan Filipino martial arts.

**FMAdigest:** *What do you consider to be the most important aspects of Kombatan?*

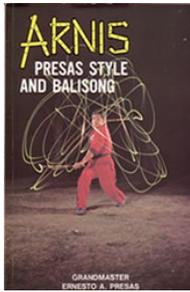


**Andy Elliott:** The most important aspect of Kombatarnis is flow. Flow creates the ability to multi-task. Multi-tasking leads to ambidexterity, which creates multiple choices, the ability to utilize opposing forces or opposing angles, different geometries, which creates economy of movement, which creates speed. Speed creates power! Flow makes Kombatarnis very three-dimensional and more likely to succeed in combat as opposed to some other one-dimensional, hard, traditional styles. Kombatarnis allows for a path of guided discovery within to suit and adapt to one's own individual, natural fighting style. The journey shouldn't be about a teacher or instructor telling you how to do this exactly this or that way. Resource the answer from within and discover what works for you!

## The Printed Word:

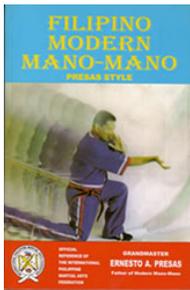
### Great Grandmaster Ernesto A. Presas Resource Material

**The Art of Arnis** (with Salvador Avendanio credited as co-author), 1981. Published by Ernesto A. Presas & Associates and the Arjuken Karate Association, this rare book features a unique glimpse into Great Grandmaster's art as it was taught in the 1970s and '80s. It includes photographs of a younger Great Grandmaster with some of the earliest Arjuken pioneers: Roberto Presas, Pepe Yap, Willie Madla, Pepito Robas, Cristino Vasquez, Rey Yatsu, Jose G. Paman and Jackson Cui Brocka.



**Arnis Presas Style and Balisong.** Manila, 1988. An elaboration of the prior book, this volume illustrates many techniques from the three main categories of stickfighting, solo baston, doble baston and espada y daga. The anyo, forms, of Kombatan are described in great detail, as are numerous fighting applications of the techniques. Empty-hand defenses against weapons are presented at length. A section on the balisong, the fan knife, explains methods of opening, closing and manipulating the native Filipino knife.

**Filipino Armas de Mano Presas Style.** Manila: Ernesto A. Presas, 1996. This book presents information on the lesser-known technical categories of Great Grandmaster Presas' art such as the dulo dulo, bangkaw and kris. A valuable text rounding out the Kombatan's student's education, this volume includes numerous applications of the techniques.



**Filipino Modern Mano-Mano.** Manila: Ernesto A. Presas, 1996. This manual reveals in detail the art's empty-hand strikes and kicks. Of equal importance to Kombatan's armed techniques, mano mano techniques provide the self-protection skills in the event that the practitioner is forced to engage in combat without his stick or blade.

**Filipino Police Combative Technique.** Manila: Ernesto A. Presas, 1996. Arnis techniques remain strong in the combative curriculum of police and military units in the Philippines. This book presents restraining and releasing methods, as well as the more serious and deadly aspects of armed conflict.

**Filipino Knife Fighting Presas Style.** Manila: Ernesto A. Presas, 1998. The essence of knife fighting is taught in this manual. Grips, blocks, cuts, thrusts and combinations are fully described, as are many practical applications. Although it is often mentioned that Kombatan stick techniques directly translate to knife fighting and unarmed combat, this book illustrates the actual usage of the blade.



**Dumog Presas Style.** Manila: Ernesto A. Presas, 2002. Dumog (alternately called bunu) is the grappling component of Kombatan allowing one to effectively deal with an attacker at extremely close quarters. Throws, takedowns, locks and groundfighting techniques are presented at length.



**Arnis Self-Defense: Stick, Blade, and Empty-Hand Combat Techniques of the Philippines.** Jose G. Paman. New York City: Random House, 2007.

This landmark volume provides a sober account of Filipino martial arts history and development, and demonstrates the theories, fundamentals and applications of Kombatan techniques. An original Arjuken instructor graduate who earned his black belt under Great Grandmaster Presas in 1975, Master Paman is an instructor, author, researcher, lecturer, artist, choreographer and Filipino language expert residing in the capital area of California.

**There are also many articles written on the art by author Jose G. Paman:**

**The Art of the Flow.** Originally appearing in Inside Kung-Fu magazine, this article is a vastly enlightening introductory piece describing the early days of the Arjuken and the beginnings of Kombatan. Lito Concepcion and Jose G. Paman appear in the pictorial. It also appears in the anthology *Best of C.F.W. Martial Arts 2000*.

**Kombatan's Empty Hand Skills** - Filipino Martial Arts, Jan. 2001. An article on Kombatan's barehanded techniques for use against empty hands as well as weapons attacks. Jose G. Paman and Lito Concepcion also appear with Great Grandmaster Presas in this one.

**Kombatan's 12 Strikes Fighting Method** - Filipino Martial Arts, Aug. 2001. A complete breakdown of the 12 strikes method. An explanation follows on how some of the strikes combine to make up Kombatan's striking patterns such as banda banda, ocho ocho and doblete.

**10 Steps to Filipino Martial Arts Mastery** - Filipino Martial Arts, Aug. 2001. As the title states, an informative article on how to increase one's overall proficiency in the Filipino martial arts. Photos of Great Grandmaster Presas, Master Paman and other Kombatan practitioners illustrate the article.

**Unarmed and Dangerous** - Inside Kung-Fu, Jan. 2004. An article about barehanded defense against a knife attack. Important principles such as awareness, prevention, avoidance and the basic angles of attack are outlined. Techniques showing the applications are demonstrated.



[www.presas.org/kombatan](http://www.presas.org/kombatan)



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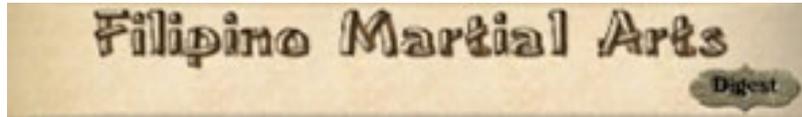
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